



June 6, 2025

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

TO: Colette R. Gresham, Esq.
Interim Council Administrator

Karen T. Zavakos
Associate Council Administrator

THRU: Josh Hamlin
Director of Budget and Policy Analysis

FROM: Alex Hirtle
Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement
CB-031-2025 Antilitter and Weed Ordinance

CB-031-2025 (*proposed by: Council Member Oriadha*)

Assigned to the Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment (TIEE) Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING ANTILITTER AND WEED CONTROL, for the purpose of requiring the Director to take certain actions to properly dispose of a commercial owners or commercial owner responsible persons litter or weeds, or both; providing for the conditions of disposal; providing for the payment of certain costs and administration fee; providing for a certain notice; imposing a certain fine; increasing a certain monetary fine for certain violations of Division 9. Antilitter and Weed Ordinance; providing for a certain tax lien; providing for an additional civil monetary fine for certain noncompliance with violations of Division 9. Antilitter and Weed Ordinance; and generally regarding Division 9. Antilitter and Weed Ordinance.

Fiscal Summary

Direct Impact:

Expenditures: Modest additional expenditures likely.

Revenues: Increase in revenues likely.

Indirect Impact:

Potentially favorable.

Legislative Summary:

CB-031-2025 was presented on April 29th and referred to the Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment (TIEE) Committee. This bill amends the Antilitter and Weed Ordinance by requiring the Director of the Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement to take certain actions to properly dispose of litter or weeds, or both of a commercial owner or a commercial owner's responsible person. It provides for the conditions of disposal, costs and an administration fee. It provides a certain fine and an additional civil monetary fine and a tax lien. It increases the civil monetary fine for certain violations of the Antilitter and Weed Ordinance from up to One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) to up to Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) for commercial owners or commercial owners responsible persons.

Current Law/Background:

CB-031-2025 amends Subtitle 13, Housing and Property Standards, Sec. 13-267 (Action upon noncompliance). It adds to the Code that after a fourth noncompliance action within 1 year by a commercial owner, the County will arrange disposal of litter and/or weeds, "every two weeks or once a month" at the property owner's expense plus 10% administrative fee. Section 13-271 adds expansion of the civil fine up to \$5,000 for noncompliance.

There have been indications from various Councilmembers, especially during the creation of this legislation, that certain commercial property owners have not been maintaining their property(ies) per County standards. These properties have been seen as adding to blight and have been targets for illegal trash dumping, which exacerbates the issue of litter, degraded community health standards, and unsightly blight.

Resource Personnel:

- Kathy Canning, Legislative Officer
 - Tiffany Hannon, Chief of Staff (District 7)
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Discussion/Policy Analysis:

The County has been challenged, especially in certain areas, by commercial businesses that do not regularly maintain their properties to the standards that are acceptable and up to County Code. The Council has had several briefings and discussions on the subject of commercial lots, especially vacant commercial lots, that are not only blight-like, but attract illegal dumping, both on a small and large scale- a dumpster overflowing with trash, a vacant lot with garbage in one area of the

parcel, a closed business with grass and weeds well over a foot high- these are precursors to litter creating more litter, dumping creating more dumping, and unsafe and unsightly properties. This legislation seeks to impose more stringent fines and be more pro-active in disposing of the trash and/or weeds by the County or contractor if the property owner does not adhere to proper maintenance protocol.

The legislation does not come without challenges, though. It is unclear the agency that handles property standards, the Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement (DPIE) has the full capacity to carry out the mandates of this legislation. The Department is going into the new fiscal year (FY 2026) with 14 vacancies (as of March 24th, 2025, there are 305 out of 319 funded employees).¹ Additionally, DPIE has suspended formal funding for the Clean Lot Program for the coming budget year²; this program integrates inspections, enforcement, clean-up (disposal), and issuance of fines for violations this legislation targets. With that said, Council leadership has indicated that DPIE will be performing the Clean Lot Program duties without the line-item funding.³

There is also the challenge of collecting the amounts imposed by violations. DPIE reported that there are \$2.7 million in liens pending directly from the Clean Lot Program.⁴ DPIE stated that they will be utilizing a collections agency in FY 2026, an update on this will probably be available late in the calendar year.

Fiscal Impact:

- *Direct Impact*

Enactment of CB-031-2025 will most likely have a favorable direct fiscal impact on the County. The increased demands on DPIE this Bill mandates will provide challenges to an under-staffed department, but the new fine structure for violations should exceed the expenses to the County to dispose of weeds and litter. The effectiveness of this will be the Department working with the Office of Finance to secure payments from violators who have been fined.

- *Indirect Impact*

Enactment of CB-031-2025 should have a favorable indirect impact on the County by increasing the cleanliness and safety of communities in and adjacent to commercial properties that have been habitually blight-ridden with litter and weeds. Improved lots can increase the value and tax base of real estate within the County. Cleaner lots can also reduce the amount of litter going into the public rights-of-way, as well as local water systems, lessening the burden of departments like the Department of Public Works & Transportation and the Department of the Environment.

¹ DPIE FY 2026 Budget, First Round Responses, page 6.

² FY 2026 Operating Budget <https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/departments-offices/management-budget>

³ Conversation with Council Chair on May 29, 2025.

⁴ FY 2026 DPIE Budget Report, page 6.

- *Appropriated in the Current Fiscal Year Budget*

No.

Effective Date of Proposed Legislation:

The proposed Bill shall be effective forty-five (45) calendar days after it becomes law.

If you require additional information, or have questions about this fiscal impact statement, please reach out to me via phone or email.