


FROM	NAME & TITLE	CHRIS RYER, DIRECTOR	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 8 TH FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET		
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill #25-0078 / City Streets – Closing – Portions Of Certain Streets And Alleys Bounded By Riggs Avenue, N. Payson Street, And The Land Of National Railroad Passenger Company (Amtrak)		

TO The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
City Hall, Room 400
100 North Holliday Street

DATE: September 19, 2025

At its regular meeting of September 18, 2025, the Planning Commission considered City Council Bill #25-0078 for the purpose of condemning and closing portions of certain streets and alleys bounded by Riggs Avenue, N. Payson Street, the former bed of Mosher Street and the Land of National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) as shown on a plat numbered 316 C 5 Series for Group A prepared by the Survey Section and filed in the Office of the Department of Transportation; and providing for a special effective date. The purpose of this street closure is to allow for consolidation of several Amtrak properties by closing portions of streets and alleys surrounded by those properties.

In its consideration of this Bill, the Planning Commission reviewed the attached staff report which recommended approval of City Council Bill #25-0078 and adopted the following resolution:

RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission concurs with the recommendation of its departmental staff, and recommends that City Council Bill #25-0078 be **approved** by the City Council.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Eric Tiso, Division Chief, Land Use and Urban Design Division at 410-396-8358.

CR/ewt

attachment

cc: Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor's Office
The Honorable John Bullock, Council Rep. to Planning Commission
Ms. Rebecca Witt, BMZA
Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Zoning Administration
Ms. Stephanie Murdock, DHCD
Ms. Hilary Ruley, Law Dept.
Mr. Francis Burnszynski, PABC
Mr. Luciano Diaz, DOT
Ms. Nancy Mead, Council Services
Ms. Leah Gatlin, Amtrak



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

PLANNING COMMISSION

Jon Laria, Chair; Eric Stephenson, Vice Chair

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

September 18, 2025

REQUEST: Street Closing – Closing of Portions of City Streets and Alleys Bounded by Riggs Avenue, North Payson Street, and the Land of National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak)

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Austin C. Davis

PETITIONER: Department of Transportation (on behalf of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation - Amtrak)

OWNER: Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

SITE/GENERAL AREA

Site Conditions: The subject parcels include various unimproved portions of public right-of-way bounded by Riggs Avenue to the north, North Payson Street to the east, West Lafayette Avenue to the south, and Amtrak-owned rail infrastructure to the west. These areas include alleys and former street beds that dead-end into Amtrak's rail corridor and serve no external properties. The subject rights-of-way lie adjacent to and between multiple parcels currently owned by the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak). These parcels form a triangular assembly of land that is central to the southern terminus construction activities for Amtrak's Frederick Douglass Tunnel Project.

General Area: The site lies within the Midtown-Edmondson and Bridgeview/Greenlawn neighborhoods of West Baltimore, in Council District 9. The surrounding area consists of a mix of industrial rail infrastructure, institutional land uses, and residential blocks. The rail corridor and surrounding Amtrak facilities dominate the western and southern boundaries.

HISTORY

There are no previous legislative or Planning Commission actions specific to these parcels. However, this application is part of Amtrak's broader Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program, which has received various levels of federal, state, and local coordination and review.

ANALYSIS

Background: The applicant seeks the closure of specific unimproved and disjointed rights-of-way to consolidate parcels for construction staging, access, and long-term site improvements related to Amtrak's Frederick Douglass Tunnel Project. The closures requested in **City Council Bill 25-0078** (DLR25-0364) will be followed by the conveyance of certain areas to Amtrak as authorized by **City Council Bill 25-0079** (DLR25-0365).

Purpose of Closing: The rights-of-way proposed for closure are wholly surrounded by Amtrak-owned property. These dead-end alleys and streets do not connect to public-serving destinations, are not necessary for through traffic, and do not provide access to properties under private ownership.

Justification: The Department of Transportation has reviewed the application and determined that the road segments being closed are not necessary for public use. The closure and sale will allow Amtrak to consolidate land, facilitate construction staging and access for the southern end of the new tunnel, and eliminate orphaned segments of right-of-way.

The closures involve three distinct parcels:

- **Parcel B** – 0.055 acres
- **Parcel C** – 0.021 acres
- **Parcel D** – 0.285 acres

All subsurface utilities owned by the City or third parties will either be retained via easement or relocated at the applicant's expense, per standard procedure.

Equity:

Given that the affected rights-of-way are surrounded by a single landowner (Amtrak) and have no functional public utility or community use, the closure does not adversely impact the general public or surrounding residents. The project supports long-term regional mobility improvements and economic development associated with high-speed rail infrastructure.

There are no anticipated impacts to equity or access, and no significant use of City resources is expected beyond standard legislative processing.

Notification: DOT and DOP staff have coordinated on this application. Based on the legislative history and email correspondence, community engagement has occurred at the district level. The Western District Planner and Councilmembers have been briefed. Formal notification has been or will be issued to impacted stakeholders.



Chris Ryer
Director