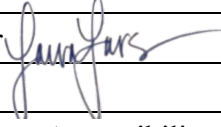




CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Laura Larsen, Budget Director 
DATE	January 27 th , 2026
SUBJECT	25-0119 Footways – Sidewalks – Accessibility

Position: Support

The Department of Finance is herein reporting on City Council Bill 25-0119 Footways – Sidewalks – Accessibility, the purpose of which is to require property owners and permit applicants to ensure that sidewalks next to their properties meet accessibility standards. It sets new sidewalk accessibility requirements, raises the minimum sidewalk width, and makes property owners responsible for inspecting, repairing, and maintaining sidewalks and curb ramps—especially during property sales, major renovations, or permit applications. It also grants the Director of Transportation new authority to order sidewalk repairs, increases fines for noncompliance, and updates related definitions and standards for accessible sidewalk construction and maintenance.

Background

Council Bill 25-0119 makes significant updates to how sidewalks must be built and maintained in Baltimore City, with a strong focus on accessibility, ADA compliance, and property-owner responsibility. Existing law makes property owners financially responsible for sidewalks next to their property. This legislation would require that these sidewalks meet ADA standards, requires proof of accessibility when applying for certain permits or selling property, increases the minimum sidewalk width throughout the City, strengthens enforcement, and adds penalties for non-compliance.

Fiscal Impact

The Department of Finance does not expect a significant fiscal impact from this legislation.

Fiscal Analysis

The Department of Finance surveyed surrounding jurisdictions to see if these jurisdictions had a similar fine, jurisdictions surveyed were Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George’s Counties as well as Washington, D.C. Only Montgomery County had a similar fine that penalizes a lack of alternate route when sidewalks are obstructed due to maintenance work occurring.

Jurisdiction	Code Citation	First offense	Second offense
Baltimore City (proposed)	Temporary Footway Required when work disturbs sidewalk	\$100	-
Montgomery County (in regulation)	COMCOR 49.11.01.06 Pedestrian Detour	\$500	\$750

	Standards and Signage		
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Other Considerations

The Department of Finance is currently overseeing a review of all of the City’s fines and fees. The Department is benchmarking the fines and fees against those in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George’s Counties as well as Washington, D.C. The Department of Finance encourages the administration and the Council to match proposed fines to surrounding jurisdictions.

Conclusion

Council Bill 25-0119 strengthens Baltimore City’s commitment to accessible, well-maintained sidewalks by modernizing standards, increasing accountability for property owners, and enhancing enforcement tools. The Department of Finance does not anticipate a significant fiscal impact. As the City continues its broader review of fines and fees, in order to ensure that proposed penalties remain consistent with surrounding jurisdictions.

For the reasons stated above, the Department of Finance supports City Council Bill 25-0119.

cc: Michael Mocksten
Nina Themelis