



BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Mission Statement

On behalf of the Citizens of Baltimore City, the Land Use & Transportation Committee is committed to shaping a reliable, equitable, and sustainable future for Baltimore's land use and transportation systems. Through operational oversight and legislative action, the committee aims to develop and support lasting solutions grounded in principles of good governance.

The Honorable Ryan Dorsey

CHAIR

PUBLIC HEARING

9/25/2025

10:00 AM

CLARENCE "DU" BURNS COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Bill: 25-0078

***Title: 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)***

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Meeting: Bill Hearing

Committee: Land Use & Transportation

Bill # 25-0078

Title: 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)

Purpose: For the purpose of condemning and closing portions of certain streets and alleys bounded by the 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.

REPORTING AGENCIES

Agency	Report
Planning Commission	Favorable
Department of Transportation	Favorable

BACKGROUND

Bill Summary

Council Bill 25-0078 authorizes the Department of Transportation to condemn and close portions of certain streets and alleys within the area bounded by Riggs Avenue, North Payson Street, the former bed of Mosher Street, and land owned by the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak).

The bill identifies three parcels that will be affected by this action.

1. Parcel B contains approximately 2,376 square feet (0.055 acres) and is located along the north side of the former bed of Mosher Street, adjoining a ten-foot-wide alley.
2. Parcel C consists of approximately 900 square feet (0.021 acres) and lies along the west side of North Payson Street at the terminus of a ten-foot-wide alley.

3. Parcel D is the largest, containing approximately 12,418 square feet (0.285 acres), situated along the south side of Riggs Avenue and the west side of North Payson Street, adjoining Amtrak property.

These parcels are more particularly described on Plat No. 316-C-5, which was prepared by the Survey Section and filed with the Department of Transportation on May 6, 2025.

The bill provides several key provisions governing the closure of these streets and alleys. First, the proceedings for condemnation and closing must comply with all applicable provisions of state and local law, as well as all relevant rules and regulations. Second, all subsurface structures and appurtenances currently owned by the Mayor and City Council will remain City property until such time as they are abandoned. Any person wishing to remove, alter, or interfere with these structures must first secure permission from the City and agree to bear all associated costs.

Additionally, the bill prohibits the construction of any buildings or structures, including railroad tracks, on the closed portions until all City-owned subsurface structures are either abandoned or relocated at the expense of the developer under the supervision of the Director of Transportation. Subsurface structures owned by private parties must be removed by their owners, at their expense, promptly upon notice from the Department of Transportation. The bill also preserves the right of the City to access the property at any time to inspect, maintain, repair, relocate, or replace subsurface structures without the need for permission from, or compensation to, the property owner.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fiscal Note: There should be no fiscal impact.

Information Source(s): 25-0078 1st reader.

Analysis by: Julianne Jemmott
Analysis Date: 8/21/2025

Direct Inquiries to: 410 – 396 - 1268

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 25-0078
(First Reader)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Bullock

At the request of: The Administration (Department of Transportation)

Introduced and read first time: June 16, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

Assigned to: Land Use and Transportation Committee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Planning Commission, Department of Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ORDINANCE concerning

2 AN ORDINANCE concerning

3 **City Streets – Closing – Portions of Certain Streets and Alleys Bounded by**
4 **Riggs Avenue, N. Payson Street, and the Land of National Railroad Passenger Company**
5 **(Amtrak)**

6 FOR the purpose of condemning and closing portions of certain streets and alleys bounded by
7 Riggs Avenue, N. Payson Street, the former bed of Mosher Street and the Land of National
8 Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) as shown on a plat numbered 316-C-5 Series for
9 Group A prepared by the Survey Section and filed in the Office of the Department of
10 Transportation; and providing for a special effective date.

11 BY authority of
12 Article I - General Provisions
13 Section 4
14 and
15 Article II - General Powers
16 Sections 2, 34, 35
17 Baltimore City Charter
18 (1996 Edition)

19 **SECTION 1. BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
20 Department of Transportation shall proceed to condemn and close portions of certain streets and
21 alleys bounded by Riggs Avenue, N. Payson Street, the former bed of Mosher Street and the
22 Land of National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) and more particularly described as
23 follows:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS indicate matter added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Council Bill 25-0078

1 All that land known as Parcel B and contained within the following metes and bounds:

2 Beginning on the north side of the former bed of Mosher Street, 66 feet wide, as
3 condemned and opened under Ordinance No. 87, approved June 9, 1886, at its
4 intersection with the east side of a 10 foot wide Alley lying parallel to and 80 feet, more
5 or less, west of the west side of N. Payson Street, thence binding on the north side of the
6 former bed of Mosher Street, with all courses of this description referred to the meridian
7 established by the Baltimore City Survey Control System, South 87 degrees 27 minutes
8 45 seconds West 10.00 feet to the west side of said 10 foot wide Alley, thence leaving the
9 north side of the former bed of Mosher Street and binding on the west side of said 10 foot
10 wide Alley, North 02 degrees 38 minutes 56 seconds West 237.57 feet to intersect the
11 south side of another 10 foot wide Alley there situate, thence leaving the west side of the
12 firstly abovementioned 10 foot wide Alley and binding on the south side of the secondly
13 abovementioned 10 foot wide Alley, North 87 degrees 27 minutes 45 seconds East 10.00
14 feet to the east side of the firstly abovementioned Alley, thence binding thereon, South 02
15 degrees 38 minutes 56 seconds East 237.57 feet to the place of beginning.

16 Containing 2,376 sq. ft. or 0.055 acres, more or less.

17 All that land known as Parcel C and contained within the following metes and bounds:

18 Beginning on the west side of N. Payson Street, 66 feet wide, at its intersection with
19 the south side of a 10 foot wide Alley lying parallel to and 89.76 feet south of the south
20 side of Riggs Avenue, thence binding on the south side of said Alley, with all courses of
21 this description referred to the meridian established by the Baltimore City Survey Control
22 System, South 87 degrees 27 minutes 45 seconds West 90.00 feet to the western terminus
23 of said Alley, thence binding thereon, North 02 degrees 38 minutes 56 seconds West
24 10.00 feet to the north side of said Alley, thence binding thereon, North 87 degrees 27
25 minutes 45 seconds East 90.00 feet to the west side of N. Payson Street aforesaid, thence
26 binding thereon, South 02 degrees 38 minutes 56 seconds East 10.00 feet to the place of
27 beginning.

28 Containing 900 sq. ft. or 0.021 acres, more or less.

Council Bill 25-0078

All that land known as Parcel D and contained within the following metes and bounds:

Beginning on the south side of Riggs Avenue (formerly Tenant Street), 66 feet wide, as condemned and opened under Ordinance No. 39, approved April 10, 1882, at its intersection with the west side of N. Payson Street, 66 feet wide, thence leaving the west side of N. Payson Street and binding on the south side of Riggs Avenue, with all courses of this description referred to the meridian established by the Baltimore City Survey Control System, South 87 degrees 25 minutes 04 seconds West 195.00 feet to intersect the outlines of the land which by deed dated December 7, 2021 and recorded among the Land Records of Baltimore City, Maryland in Liber M.B. 24953, Folio 246 was granted and conveyed by National Railroad Passenger Corporation to National Railroad Passenger Corporation, thence leaving the south side of Riggs Avenue and running and binding on the outlines of said conveyance, the two following courses and distances, viz: North 02 degrees 38 minutes 56 seconds West 34.95 feet and North 40 degrees 33 minutes 56 seconds East 42.56 feet to the north side of Riggs Avenue, thence binding thereon, North 87 degrees 25 minutes 04 seconds East 165.86 feet to the west side of N. Payson Street, thence binding thereon, South 02 degrees 38 minutes 56 seconds East 66.00 feet to the place of beginning.

Containing 12,418 sq. ft. or 0.285 acres, more or less.

As delineated on a plat numbered 316-C-5 prepared by the Survey Section and filed on May 6, 2025 in the Office of the Department of Transportation.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That the proceedings for the condemnation and closing of 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) and the rights of all interested parties shall be regulated by and in accordance with all applicable provisions of state and local law and with all applicable rules and regulations.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That after the closing under this Ordinance, all subsurface structures and appurtenances now owned by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore continue to be the property of the Mayor and City Council, in fee simple, until their use has been abandoned by the Mayor and City Council. If any person wants to remove, alter, or interfere with them, that person must first obtain permission from the Mayor and City Council and, in the application for this permission, must agree to pay all costs and expenses, of every kind, arising out of the removal, alteration, or interference.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That no building or structure of any kind (including but not limited to railroad tracks) may be constructed or erected in or on any part of the street closed under this Ordinance until all subsurface structures and appurtenances owned by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore have been abandoned by the Mayor and City Council or, at the expense of the person seeking to erect the building or structure, have been removed and relaid in accordance with the specifications and under the direction of the Director of Transportation of Baltimore City.

SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, That after the closing under this Ordinance, all subsurface structures and appurtenances owned by any person other than the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore shall be removed by and at the expense of their owners, promptly upon notice to do so from the Director of Transportation.

Council Bill 25-0078

1 **SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That at all times after the closing under this
2 Ordinance, the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, acting by or through its authorized
3 representatives, shall have access to the subject property and to all subsurface structures and
4 appurtenances used by the Mayor and City Council, for the purpose of inspecting, maintaining,
5 repairing, altering, relocating, or replacing any of them, without need to obtain permission from
6 or pay compensation to the owner of the property.

7 **SECTION 7. AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED,** That this Ordinance takes effect on the date it is
8 enacted.

Baltimore City Council



Land Use & Transportation Committee

Bill: 25-0078

**Title: 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)**

Agency Reports



MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the City Council
c/o Shamoyia Gardiner Legislative Director, Council President's Office

From: J Hardy, Special Assistant/ Constituent Liaison

Date: June 26, 2025

Re: 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)

Position: Support

The Department of Real Estate submits this report in support of City Council Bill 25-0078, which authorizes the Mayor and City Council to close certain streets and alleys bounded by Riggs Avenue, N. Payson Street, the former bed of Mosher Street, and the land of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), as delineated on Plat 316-C-5 Group A filed with the Department of Transportation.

This bill is in regards specifically to Parcels B, C, and D, totaling about 15,694 square feet. These parcels are no longer needed for public street purposes. The closing of these right-of-way facilitates coordinated infrastructure and property planning in partnership with Amtrak and supports future development objectives.

The Department supports this action as a practical measure to dispose of excess right-of-way, reduce the City's maintenance responsibilities, and promote long-term planning that aligns with public transportation and infrastructure needs.

For the reasons stated above, the Department of Real Estate supports the passage of Bill 25-0078.

CC:

KC Kelleher, Deputy Chief of Staff, Comptroller's Office
Eric Evans, Director of Real Estate, Comptroller's Office

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



CITY OF BALTIMORE
MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT

TO	The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
FROM	Veronica P. McBeth, Director, Department of Transportation
CC	Mayor's Office of Government Relations
DATE	August 4, 2025
SUBJECT	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)

Position: Favorable

BILL SYNOPSIS

The Department of Transportation (BCDOT) has requested the introduction of this legislation at Amtrak's request. If passed, this bill and its accompanying bill, 25-0079, would allow Amtrak to consolidating existing lots by removing segments of right-of-way located between them. The land surrounding the portions of these streets to be closed is owned by Amtrak, and the streets being closed dead-end at Amtrak property. These road closures are an important part of Amtrak's Frederick Douglass Tunnel Project and will facilitate work at the southern terminus of the tunnel.

SUMMARY OF POSITION

The roadways being closed are not necessary as they do not connect to any property outside Amtrak ownership. Therefore, BCDOT respectfully requests a favorable bill report on 25-0078.