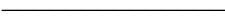


1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32

A BILL

25-577

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



To amend the Safe at Home Act of 2016 to include modifications intended to improve the physical accessibility of an off-street parking space as an eligible accessibility modification under the Safe at Home Program; to amend the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Amendment Act of 2016 to require that the District Department of Transportation establish multimodal measures of effectiveness for assessing transportation projects, and to establish a Public Life and Activity Zones Program within the District Department of Transportation that will select 3 corridors in the District to be closed to personal vehicle traffic and advise the Mayor on the issuance grants to support efforts to close the designated corridors to personal vehicles; to amend the Block Party Act of 2012 to modify the requirements for existing block party applications and to create a process for submitting expedited block party application for blocks that have been preauthorized; to amend section 47-2862 of the District of Columbia Official Code to exempt expedited block party applications and block party preauthorization applications from the prohibition against the issuance of licenses or permits; and to amend the Autonomous Vehicle Act of 2012 to establish interim requirements that people or entities engaged in autonomous vehicles (“AV”) testing must meet until an AV testing permit application is made available by the District Department of Transportation, to allow DDOT to restrict testing for safety concerns related to an AV testing entity’s failure to comply with its permit, to require that AV testing entities submit quarterly reports to DDOT, and to require that AV testing entities seek approval from DDOT before increasing the number of vehicles being tested.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Public Life and Activity Zones Amendment (“PLAZA”) Act of 2024”.

Sec. 2. Subsection 2(c) of the Safe at Home Act of 2016, effective November 26, 2016 (D.C. Law 21-168; D.C. Official Code § 7-551.01(c)), is amended as follows:

33 (a) Paragraph (7) is amended by striking the phrase “; and” and inserting a semicolon in its  
34 place.

35 (b) A new paragraph (7A) to read as follows:

36 “(7A) Modifications to improve the physical accessibility of an off-street parking  
37 space; and”.

38 Sec. 3. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Amendment Act of 2016, effective October 8,  
39 2016 (D.C. Law 21-155; 63 DCR 10143), is amended as follows:

40 (a) A new section 108 is added to read as follows:

41 “Sec. 108. Multimodal metrics of effectiveness.

42 “(a) DDOT shall not use automobile delay, as measured by vehicle level of service,  
43 vehicular throughput, or traffic congestion, as the primary metric of analysis for:

44 “(1) For the planning, design, and construction of transportation projects;

45 “(2) The selection of an approved concept and design of a street improvement  
46 project; and

47 “(3) The assessment of transportation impacts of new development, as may be  
48 required pursuant to Title 10 or Title 11 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations.

49 “(b) The Director shall establish multimodal metrics for analyzing the effectiveness of  
50 transportation improvements and design alternatives, to include the following considerations, as  
51 applicable:

52 “(1) Pedestrians and ADA compliance;

53 “(2) Bicycles and micromobility devices;

54 “(3) Transit;

55 “(4) Traffic calming and speed management;

56 “(5) Freight operations and curbside management; and

57 “(6) Related safety concerns.”.

58 (b) A new section 202 is added to read as follows:

59 “Sec. 202. Public Life and Activity Zones Program.

60 “(a) There is established a Public Life and Activity Zones Program (“Program”) within  
61 DDOT that shall:

62 “(1) Designate corridors in the District that shall be closed to personal vehicle  
63 traffic; and

64 “(2) Advise the Mayor on the issuance of grants to support efforts to close the  
65 designated corridors to personal vehicles.

66 “(b)(1) The Program shall publish on DDOT’s website a report no later than December 31,  
67 2025, selecting 3 roadways in the District, each no less than one-eighth of a mile in contiguous  
68 length, that are suitable for closure to personal vehicles (“designated corridors”) for at least 24  
69 cumulative hours per week.

70 “(2) At least one of the roadways selected for closure shall be in a neighborhood in  
71 Ward 5, Ward 7, or Ward 8 that suffers from high levels of traffic violence, air pollution, lack of  
72 safe access to public space, or low rates of physical activity.

73 “(3) Before publishing the report identifying the designated corridors, the Program  
74 shall solicit feedback from residents, business owners, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions,

75 Business Improvement Districts, Community Improvement Districts, Main Streets, and other  
76 entities within or abutting the designated corridor to personal vehicle traffic.

77 “(c) The report required by subsection (b)(1) of this section shall include a summary of the  
78 corridors considered and the rationale for selecting the designated corridors, including:

79 “(1) If the designated corridor has been closed to personal vehicle traffic for another  
80 event, such as an Open Streets event, farmer’s market, or festival:

81 “(A) A description of the other event and any challenges associated with  
82 those prior events; and

83 “(B) Recommendations for addressing challenges identified pursuant to  
84 subparagraph (A) of this paragraph;

85 “(2) Notable safety concerns regarding the designated corridor as identified by  
86 DDOT or the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency;

87 “(3) Recommendations for any new or improved traffic infrastructure that would  
88 promote:

89 “(A) Pedestrian travel to and within the designated corridor, such as  
90 sidewalk extensions and curb bump-outs, developed in consultation with the Pedestrian Advisory  
91 Council;

92 “(B) Bicycle travel to and within the designated corridor, such as bike lanes  
93 or cycle tracks, developed in consultation with the Bicycle Advisory Council;

**ENGROSSED ORIGINAL**

94                   “(C) Accessibility for multimodal users and persons with disabilities or  
95 mobility challenges, developed in consultation with the Multimodal Accessibility Advisory  
96 Council; and

97                   “(D) Access to public transit to or within the designated corridor, including  
98 Metrorail, Metrobus, and Streetcar service;

99                   “(4) Plans for ensuring public transportation, government fleet, emergency and first  
100 responder vehicles, and freight and delivery vehicles maintain access to the designated corridor;

101                   “(5) How the street closure can be implemented without additional agency staffing,  
102 including the use of barricades;

103                   “(6) The anticipated cost of closing personal vehicle traffic on the designated  
104 corridor, including any traffic infrastructure described in paragraph (3) of this subsection or grants  
105 issued pursuant to subsection (a)(2) of this section;

106                   “(7) The number of parking spaces eliminated by the proposal to close personal  
107 vehicle travel within the designated corridor and its anticipated impact on businesses within the  
108 designated corridor;

109                   “(8) The feasibility of permanently closing the designated corridor to personal  
110 vehicles; and

111                   “(9) Feedback received from the residents, business owners, Advisory  
112 Neighborhood Commissions, Business Improvement Districts, Community Improvement  
113 Districts, Main Streets, and other entities within or abutting the designated corridor to personal  
114 vehicle traffic, and the Program’s responses to that feedback.

115           “(d) Following the publication of the report, in order to obtain community feedback  
116 regarding the selected designated corridors, DDOT shall:

117                   “(1) Publish on its website a form through which District residents may provide  
118 feedback regarding which of the 3 designated corridors should be closed to personal vehicle traffic;

119                   “(2) Convene at least one public meeting, properly noticed in the D.C. Register at  
120 least 30 days prior to each public meeting, for each designated corridor; and

121                   “(3) No later than March 31, 2026, announce which of the 3 designated corridors  
122 will be closed to personal vehicle traffic for, at a minimum, 24 cumulative hours per week,  
123 beginning October 1, 2026.

124           “(e) Beginning March 31, 2026, the Mayor shall, in consultation with the Program, with  
125 respect to the designated corridor selected:

126                   “(1) Issue grants to businesses and other entities not to exceed \$2 million in total to  
127 support efforts to close the designated corridor to personal vehicle traffic and promote the use of  
128 the designated corridor by residents and visitors, including grants to:

129                           “(A) Install or expand streateries;

130                           “(B) Commission and install artwork;

131                           “(C) Safely facilitate deliveries to restaurants and retailers during street  
132 closures;

133                           “(D) Construct venues to be used for public events; and

134                           “(E) Reimburse residents, businesses, and other entities for permit fees  
135 related to construction within the designated corridor; and

136                   “(2) Implement the recommendations for any new or improved traffic infrastructure  
137 as described in subsection (c)(3) of this section.”.

138                   “(f) Beginning October 1, 2027, any updates to the District’s Multimodal Long-Range  
139 Transportation Plan shall include plans to close the remaining 2 designated corridors to personal  
140 automobile traffic for, at a minimum, 24 cumulative hours per week.”.

141                   Sec. 4. The Block Party Act of 2012, effective October 23, 2012 (D.C. Law 19-190; D.C.  
142 Official Code § 9-631 *et seq.*), is amended as follows:

143                   (a) Section 2 (D.C. Official Code § 9-631) is amended as follows:

144                   (1) Existing paragraphs (1) and (2) are redesignated as paragraphs (2) and (3),  
145 respectively.

146                   (2) A new paragraph (1) is added to read as follows:

147                   “(1) “Authorized resident” means a District resident who was listed on a block party  
148 preauthorization application, as described in section 3a(b)(2), that has been approved by the  
149 Department and can submit an expedited block party application for a preauthorized block on  
150 which they reside.”.

151                   (3) A new paragraph (4) is added to read as follows:

152                   “(4) “Preauthorized block” means a section of roadway for which an authorized resident  
153 can submit an expedited block party application following the approval of a block party  
154 preauthorization application as described in sections 3a and 4.”.

155                   (b) Section 3 (D.C. Official Code § 9-632) is amended to read as follows:

156                   “Sec. 3. Block party application and requirements.

157           “(a) The Department shall create a block party application and make it available for in-  
158 person pickup and online.

159           “(b)(1) Any District resident who is 21 years of age or older may submit a block party  
160 application requesting that a street on which they reside be closed for the purpose of holding a  
161 block party.

162                   “(2) The block party application shall, at a minimum:

163                           “(A) Be completed on the form provided by the Department;

164                           “(B) Identify the street name and cross streets of the block to be closed;

165                           “(C) The date and time of the closure; and

166                           “(D) Include either:

167                                   “(i) A list of at least 51% of the residents, owners, or businesses  
168 abutting the section of the street requested to be closed who have consented to the block party,  
169 excluding any property that has been identified as a vacant building, as that term is defined in  
170 section 5(5) of An Act To provide for the abatement of nuisances in the District of Columbia by  
171 the Commissioner of said District, and for other purposes, approved April 14, 1906 (34 Stat. 114;  
172 D.C. Official Code § 42-3131.05(5)); or

173                                   “(ii) Approval from all of the Advisory Neighborhood Commissions  
174 abutting the section of the street requested to be closed, in a manner to be determined by the  
175 Advisory Neighborhood Commission.

176           “(c)(1) A street closure conducted pursuant to a block party permit shall:

177                           “(A) Not last longer than 12 hours; and



178 “(B) End by 10:00 p.m.

179 “(2) The Department may publish guidance on its website or issue rules limiting  
180 the physical length of block parties conducted pursuant to a block part permit.”.

181 (c) A new section 3a is added to read as follows:

182 “Sec. 3a. Block party preauthorization application; expedited block party application.

183 “(a) The Department shall create a block party preauthorization application and an  
184 expedited block party application and make it available for in-person pickup and online.

185 “(b)(1) Any District resident who is 21 years of age or older may submit a block party  
186 preauthorization application requesting that a street on which they live be designated a  
187 preauthorized block which, if approved, allows authorized residents to submit an expedited block  
188 party application requesting that the preauthorized block be closed for the purposes of holding a  
189 block party.

190 “(2) In addition to the requirements for block party applications described in section  
191 3(b)(2), the block party preauthorization application:

192 “(A) Shall include

193 “(i) A list of District residents, accompanied by the residents’  
194 signatures, who are allowed to submit an expedited block party application for the block that the  
195 applicant is requesting be designated as a preauthorized block; and

196 “(ii) A description of the means the authorized residents will use to  
197 close the streets; and

**ENGROSSED ORIGINAL**

198                   “(B) May require any other information the Department deems necessary to  
199 consider the block party preauthorization application.

200                   “(3)(A) The designation of a preauthorized block shall remain in effect for the  
201 purposes of requesting an expedited block party application for the following time periods:

202                                 “(i) For block party preauthorization applications approved within  
203 one year after the effective date of the Public Life and Activity Zones Amendment (“PLAZA”)  
204 Act of 2024, as approved by the Committee on Transportation and the Environment on November  
205 25, 2024 (Committee print of Bill 25-577), a preauthorized block shall be effective for 6 months  
206 after the date the block party preauthorization application was approved, or until the end of the  
207 calendar year during which the block party preauthorization application was approved, whichever  
208 occurs first; or

209                                 “(ii) For block party preauthorization applications approved on or  
210 after the date that is one year after the effective date of the Public Life and Activity Zones  
211 Amendment (“PLAZA”) Act of 2024, as approved by the Committee on Transportation and the  
212 Environment on November 25, 2024 (Committee print of Bill 25-577), preauthorization shall be  
213 effective for one calendar year.

214                   “(B) Notwithstanding subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the Department  
215 may:

216                                 “(i) Rescind the designation of a street as a preauthorized block for  
217 good cause, including noncompliance with the requirements of the permit; and

218                   “(ii) Require that an authorized resident submit a new block party  
219 preauthorization application for good cause, including changes to the characteristics of the  
220 preauthorized block.

221           “(c)(1) A District resident may submit an expedited block party application with respect to  
222 any preauthorized block for which they are an authorized resident.

223                   “(2) The expedited block party application shall, at a minimum:

224                           “(A) Be completed on the form provided by the Department;

225                           “(B) Specify the date and time of the closure;

226                           “(C) Include:

227                                   “(i) A sworn statement that the authorized resident has posted or will  
228 post notice of the street closure, at least 72 hours before the date of the proposed street closure, in  
229 at least 4 locations on the preauthorized block; and

230                                   “(ii) Photographs of the posted notices.

231           “(d)(1) A street closure conducted pursuant to an expedited block party permit shall:

232                           “(A) Not last longer than 12 hours; and

233                           “(B) End by 10:00 p.m.

234                   “(2) The Department may publish guidance on its website or issue rules limiting  
235 the physical length of block parties conducted pursuant to an expedited block party permit.

236           “(e) An authorized resident may submit an expedited block party application for any day  
237 that is not prohibited by the Department in the block party preauthorization permit as described in  
238 section 4(b-2) and is:

- 239                   “(1) A weekend;
- 240                   “(2) A District of Columbia holiday;
- 241                   “(3) October 31; or
- 242                   “(4) A scheduled day off for all students during the District of Columbia Public
- 243 Schools school year.”.

244                   (d) Section 4 (D.C. Official Code § 9-633) is amended as follows:

245                   (1) Subsection (a) is amended by striking the phrase “approving block party

246 applications” and inserting the phrase “approving block party, expedited block party, and block

247 party preauthorization applications” in its place.

248                   (2) Subsection (b) is amended by striking the phrase “a completed application” and

249 inserting the phrase “a completed block party application or block party preauthorization

250 application” in its place.

251                   (3) New subsections (b-1) and (b-2) are added to read as follows:

252                   “(b-1) The Department shall approve or deny, and notify the applicant of its determination,

253 for:

254                   “(1) An expedited block party application within 3 business days after receipt of

255 the application;

256                   “(2) A block party application within 10 business days after receipt of the

257 application; and

258                   “(3) A block party preauthorization application within 20 business days after receipt

259 of the application.

260           “(b-2) When notifying an applicant of its approval of a block party preauthorization  
261 application, the Department may place additional reasonable restrictions and conditions on permits  
262 for expedited block parties, including restrictions or on the dates and times that the street is eligible  
263 for closure or conditions on the manner of closure.”.

264           (e) Section 5 (D.C. Official Code § 9-634) is amended as follows:

265                   (1) The lead-in language of subsection (b) is amended to read as follows:

266                   “(b) A block party application or expedited block party application shall not be denied  
267 unless:”.

268                   (2) A new subsection (c) is added to read as follows:

269                   “(c) An application for a block party preauthorization shall not be denied unless the  
270 Department determines that:

271                           “(1) The application fails to meet the requirements of section 3a;

272                           “(2) Frequent closures of the block would create significant public safety concerns  
273 or traffic problems; or

274                           “(3) There is substantial neighborhood opposition to the application.”.

275           Sec. 5. Section 47-2862(d) of the District of Columbia Official Code is amended by striking  
276 the phrase “to an applicant for a block party permit pursuant” and inserting the phrase “to an  
277 application for a block party permit, an expedited block party permit, or a block party  
278 preauthorization permit pursuant” in its place.

279           Sec. 6. The Autonomous Vehicle Act of 2012, effective April 23, 2013 (D.C. Law 19-278;  
280 D.C. Official Code § 50-2351 *et seq.*), is amended as follows:

281 (a) Section 2(1D) (D.C. Official Code § 50-2351(1D)) is amended by striking the phrase  
282 “means a person applying” and inserting the phrase “means a person or entity applying” in its  
283 place.

284 (b) Section 3a (D.C. Official Code § 50-2352.01) is amended as follows:

285 (1) Subsection (d) is amended to read as follows:

286 “(d) A person or entity shall not test or operate an autonomous vehicle on a District  
287 roadway without an AV testing permit, unless the Department has not yet made an AV testing  
288 permit application available and:

289 “(1) There is a test operator physically present in the vehicle who is performing the  
290 dynamic driving task or is prepared to take over the dynamic driving task from the autonomous  
291 driving system;

292 “(2) The person or entity complies with other local and federal laws and regulations;  
293 and

294 “(3) The person or entity provides the Department with electronic notification at  
295 least 10 business days prior to commencing testing or operating in the District, including the  
296 following information with respect to operations in the District, the:

297 “(A) Number of autonomous vehicles;

298 “(B) Model, make, and type of autonomous vehicles;

299 “(C) Operator training and license information;

300 “(D) Geographic testing or operation locations; and

301 “(E) Time period of testing or operation.”.

302 (2) Subsection (f)(1)(E) is amended to read as follows:

303 “(E) An increase in the number of vehicles tested;”.

304 (c) Section 3b (D.C. Official Code § 50-2352.02) is amended to read as follows:

305 “Sec. 3b. Restrictions on testing.

306 “(a)(1) The Department may order an AV testing entity to temporarily restrict testing on  
307 select roadways, or District-wide, under certain circumstances identified by the Department  
308 through rulemaking, including a person or entity’s failure to comply with the requirements of this  
309 act or other applicable laws, emergencies, special events, or specific roadway conditions that raise  
310 safety concerns.

311 “(2) To the maximum extent practicable, the Department shall provide an AV  
312 testing entity with reasonable notice about how, where, and when testing will be restricted, and the  
313 reasons for such restriction.

314 “(3) This subsection shall only apply to associated autonomous vehicles when  
315 under autonomous operation.”.

316 (d) Section 3c (D.C. Official Code § 50-2352.03) is amended as follows:

317 (1) Subsection (a) is amended by striking the phrase “a semi-annual basis” and  
318 inserting the phrase “a quarterly basis” in its place.

319 (2) Subsection (c) is amended as follows:

320 (A) Paragraph (1) is amended by striking the phrase “An AV testing entity  
321 shall” and inserting the phrase “An AV testing entity, or a person or entity engaged in AV testing  
322 as described in section 3a(d), shall” in its place.

323 (B) Paragraph (2) is amended by striking the phrase “AV testing entity  
324 shall” and inserting the phrase “AV testing entity, or the person or entity engaged in AV testing as  
325 described in section 3a(d), shall” in its place.

326 (e) Section 3e (D.C. Official Code § 50-2352.05) is repealed.

327 (f) Section 3f(a)(1) (D.C. Official Code § 50-2352.06(a)(1)) is amended by striking the  
328 phrase “An AV testing entity” and inserting the phrase “A person or entity” in its place.

329 Sec. 7. Applicability.

330 (a) Sections 3(b), 4, and 5 of this act shall apply upon the date of inclusion of their fiscal  
331 effect in an approved budget and financial plan.

332 (b) The Chief Financial Officer shall certify the date of the inclusion of the fiscal effect in  
333 an approved budget and financial plan, and provide notice to the Budget Director of the Council  
334 of the certification.

335 (c)(1) The Budget Director shall cause the notice of the certification to be published in the  
336 District of Columbia Register.

337 (2) The date of publication of the notice of the certification shall not affect the  
338 applicability of this act.

339 Sec. 8. Fiscal impact statement.

340 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact  
341 statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975, approved  
342 October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

343



**ENGROSSED ORIGINAL**

344           Sec. 9. Effective date.

345           This act shall take effect after approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the  
346 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as  
347 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24,  
348 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)).