



September 17, 2025

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

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Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement  
CB-072-2025 Restaurant Development and Acceleration

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**CB-072-2025** *(proposed by: Councilmember Oriadha)*

Assigned to the Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee (PHED)

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AN ACT CONCERNING BUILDING CODE - ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS - RESTAURANT DEVELOPMENT AND ACCELERATION for the purpose of accelerating the development of sit-down restaurants in underserved areas of Prince George's County; implementing a fast-track permitting concierge service for food service facility applicants; providing for pre-approved restaurant buildout plans and expedited review of permit plans; requiring annual program reporting; and generally relating to building permit approvals.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**Direct Impact:**

*Expenditures:* Probable modest expenditures.

*Revenues:* Possible increase in revenues.

**Indirect Impact:**

Potentially favorable.

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**Legislative Summary:**

CB-072-2025 was presented on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2025 and referred to the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee (PHED). This bill requires the Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement (DPIE) to offer additional support to eligible applicants applying for a permit. The Bill directs the Director (of DPIE) to establish a permit concierge service, providing for a dedicated liaison for the applicant to work with throughout the entire permitting process. Additionally, the Bill requires the Director to publish Code-compliant sample floorplan layouts to assist applicants with preparing ready-to-approve permit plans. Applicants utilizing these additional supports will be eligible for expedited plan review and reduced permitting fees. The legislation also authorizes DPIE to adopt and publish regulations to carry out this program and requires annual program reporting to the County Council. The program is limited to applicants establishing a new restaurant within (inside) the Capital Beltway area.

**Current Law/Background:**

This legislation adds language to Subtitle 4 (Building), Sec. 4-345 of the County Code. It seeks to assist and accelerate entrepreneurs who wish to open a sit-down restaurant within the area inside the Capital Beltway. The Bill recognizes the complex and often-times lengthy and possibly costly process of negotiating the permitting process to obtain a Use & Occupancy Permit in opening a restaurant within the County.

The County currently has two similar programs to assist in facilitating permits: The Third Party Plan Review Program (TPPRP) and the Peer Review Program. TPPRP allows an applicant to select a DPIE authorized third party plan review agency at their own cost to review and approve drawings of the building plans. This program can shorten the timeframe of building review, but can be costly. The Peer Review Program allows applicants to select DPIE certified reviewers at the applicant's own cost to expedite the plan review process. Results are reviewed and approved by County staff. Such a program can reduce a plan review and approval timeframe up to 50%, but again the cost is borne upon the applicant.

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**Resource Personnel:**

- Eric Irving, Fiscal & Legislative Specialist (Drafter)
  - Tiffany Hannon, Chief of Staff, Council District 7
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## Discussion/Policy Analysis:

The General Plan (Plan Prince George's 2035) recognizes the concerns with unhealthy food options in our jurisdiction, specifically the lack of quality sit-down restaurants as opposed to the high number (71%) of fast-food restaurants that currently exist in the County; that percentage is 11 points higher than averaging all restaurant establishments in the State of Maryland.<sup>1</sup>

The Bill proposes assistance for restaurant entrepreneurs who wish to locate a “new service facility” inside the capital beltway with County staff (a dedicated liaison), pre-approved buildout plans, expedited permit plan review (if utilizing drawings published by DPIE's Director), and a reduction in associated permitting fees.

This legislation recognizes the difficult process of an applicant navigating the permitting process. DPIE has established a Customer Service Unit (CPU) to address customer concerns and the need to escalate issues with permits and plans.<sup>2</sup> The Department has also noted that their Momentum system and ePermits program have been fine-tuned to assist customers with online permitting. Despite this, constituents have still been challenged by the entire permitting process, which may inhibit some entrepreneurs from even attempting to open a restaurant within the County.

There are numerous examples of what jurisdictions are doing to encourage restaurant development within their jurisdiction: one program initiated in Montgomery County (Maryland) is called “Recipes for Success Program”, which facilitates assistance in opening new restaurants or expanding existing ones. The program includes free design consultation meetings for potential restauranters, and the County provides an expansive brochure that lists tips and caveats in selecting a site, zoning and utility fee information, and precautions prior to the application process. The information piece also spells out the inspection schedule, food licensing issues, and provides links for resources and all the county departments that are involved in the plans, permitting, and licensing in opening a new/expanding an existing restaurant.<sup>3</sup> The brochure is especially helpful for individuals who may be challenged with the online process of restaurant upstarts.

Below are some questions that may need to be asked regarding the legislation:

- Eligibility- why does this program not apply to existing restaurants that want to expand on their present site?
- Will there be any liability concerns with the Department providing standardized pre-approved buildout plans, given the County provided the initial design that may be used by the applicant?
- Will the County be obligated in approving drawings published by the Director and used by the applicants within 30 days from plan submission if it is determined that initial completeness of the plans was in error by the Department?

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<sup>1</sup> Plan Prince George's 2035, p. 222.

<sup>2</sup> FY2026 DPIE Budget Report, pg. 7.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DPS/Resources/Files/Customer\\_Service/RecipeforSuccessRestaurantGuide.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DPS/Resources/Files/Customer_Service/RecipeforSuccessRestaurantGuide.pdf)

- How will the Director calculate the fee reduction for applicants participating in the concierge service program?
- Eligibility- the Bill's text is not specific to "sit-down restaurants". In fact, the text cites "new food service facilities" which is a broad definition consisting of many types of food operations. Eligibility should be specific to the legislation's purpose.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

- *Direct Impact*

Enactment of CB-072-2025 will probably have a modest negative direct fiscal impact on the County in the form of additional expenditures due to the increased staff for concierge liaisons, additional workloads in preparing standardized buildout plans and expedited plan review, and loss of fee revenue due to the Bill's mandate for permitting fee reductions (in some cases). This revenue loss, in time, may be offset by an increase in revenue through new restaurants opening and thriving in some of the County's older communities, increasing the County's tax base.

- *Indirect Impact*

Enactment of CB-072-2025 could have a favorable indirect impact on the County by increasing the social networks and connectivity of communities through new restaurant openings. As the Bill notes, restaurants provide important benefits to local communities, both economically and socially- restaurants are gathering places that foster social interactions, preserve culture, and increase community vitality. They can be the foundational building blocks that help revive communities and increase a neighborhood's attractiveness and social connectiveness.

- *Appropriated in the Current Fiscal Year Budget*

No.

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### **Effective Date of Proposed Legislation:**

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

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