



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Authorizing Public Hearings to evaluate more cost efficient and effective methods for the City of Philadelphia to address its perennial pothole problem.

WHEREAS, Potholes start in cold temperatures when groundwater freezes and expands. Once the ground thaws out, it returns to a normal level, but pavement pushed up during the ground freeze remains raised. This causes a gap between the pavement and the ground. Vehicles riding over these gaps cause the road surface to crack and fall into that hollow space; and

WHEREAS, Potholes are a perennial problem in Philadelphia, causing much concern and frustration among the populace over safety and nuisance issues; and

WHEREAS, The Highway Unit is a division of the Transportation Engineering Division of the Philadelphia Streets Department and is responsible for the maintenance of over 2,525 miles of public city streets. The unit constructs, repairs, and maintains City streets, highways, and bridges and is the primary response unit in weather events such as snow and ice; and

WHEREAS, Roadway deficiencies include potholes, cave-ins (or sinkholes), and ditches; and

WHEREAS, A recent NBC10 Investigators report checked Streets Department records and found potholes which had been unrepaired for weeks, months, and in some cases nearly a year. Moreover, their report discovered a problem in the department's record-keeping. For example, the City's 2015 records show a pothole on Richmond Street which was first reported on January 22, 2015 but wasn't marked as "closed" until January 12, 2016- 354 days later; and

WHEREAS, The NBC10 Investigators reviewed more than 8,000 requests for pothole repairs submitted by drivers and residents through the City's 311 system last year and found the department was often missing its own 3-day deadline. More than half of pothole requests weren't addressed for at least 5 days, and well over 1,000 repairs were listed as taking more than 200 days; and

WHEREAS, More cost-efficient and cost-effective methods of pothole and roadway repair than are currently used are available, including spray injection patching. An average pothole repair using spray injection patching takes only 45-60 seconds and lasts for years. Moreover, spray injection patch workers employ GPS technology to better map and perform roadway repairs in a time-efficient manner that is more accountable to citizens; and

WHEREAS, It would be advantageous to the City and to its populace to have the most economical, efficient, and effective pothole repair process available; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes public hearings to evaluate more cost-efficient and effective methods for the City of Philadelphia to address its perennial pothole problem.

