

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Enrolled - Revised

House Bill 744

(Delegate Lafferty)

Environment and Transportation

Finance

Transportation - Complete Streets Policy - Adoption

This bill requires specified modal units within the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to adopt and implement a “complete streets policy” for the State’s highways, airport facilities, and transit facilities. A “complete streets policy” means a policy that provides information for the implementation of design features that accommodate and facilitate safe and convenient access and mobility to transportation facilities by all users, including bicyclists, motorists, pedestrians, and public transportation users. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2018.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MDOT can adopt a complete streets policy using existing resources. Implementation of the policy can likely be handled using existing resources, as discussed below. Revenues are not directly affected.

Local Effect: The bill does not directly affect local government operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The requirement to adopt a complete streets policy applies to the following modal units within MDOT: the State Highway Administration (SHA), the Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA), and the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). An exception from this requirement may be adopted when circumstances or laws exist that prohibit or limit the ability to provide favorable conditions for all modes of transportation.

A complete streets policy adopted under the bill must:

- be implemented to create a comprehensive, integrated, and connected transportation network that allows users to choose among different modes of transportation;
- ensure that all users are considered during the planning, design, construction, and reconstruction phases of a facility;
- benefit all users equitably, to the extent feasible while taking into consideration the needs of the most underinvested and underserved communities;
- require the accommodation of other modes of transportation, when practicable;
- recognize that all facilities are different and user needs should be balanced to ensure community enhancement; and
- incorporate best practices related to complete streets design features, as specified (*e.g.*, protected bicycle lanes, shared use pathways, and green stormwater infrastructure).

Current Law/Background:

State Highway Administration's Existing Complete Streets Policy

SHA is responsible for more than 5,200 miles or approximately 16,800 lane miles of road, 2,500 bridges, 3,500 small stream crossing structures, and 80 miles of sound barriers in the State. It also has responsibility for planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining these roads and bridges to safety and performance standards while considering sociological, ecological, and economic concerns.

In July 2012, SHA released a memo that outlines its [complete streets policy](#). The policy generally requires SHA to consider and incorporate complete streets principles and design elements that focus on multiple modes of transportation into planning, design, and construction projects. Although the policy has not been officially updated since 2012, SHA advises that the goals and vision set by the policy are still taken into consideration when it evaluates projects. SHA allows exceptions to the policy when circumstances or laws exist that prohibit or limit the ability to provide favorable conditions for all modes of transportation.

Maryland Aviation Administration

MAA has responsibility for fostering, developing, and regulating aviation activity throughout the State. MAA operates, maintains, and develops Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (a State-owned airport) as a major center of commercial air carrier service in the State and Martin State Airport as a general aviation

facility and as a support facility for the Maryland Air National Guard and the Maryland State Police. MAA does not currently have a complete streets policy.

Maryland Transit Administration

MTA operates a comprehensive transit system throughout the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area, including more than 50 local bus lines in Baltimore and other services such as the light rail, Metro subway, commuter buses, Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) trains, and mobility/paratransit vehicles.

MTA advises that, although it does not have a complete streets policy, it has made significant progress in providing bicycle accommodations at its stations and on its transit vehicles in recent years. For example:

- bike racks have been purchased and are being installed at all rail stations;
- all core service buses have bicycle racks;
- bicycles are allowed on metro and light vehicles at most times each day; and
- MARC train cars are being retrofitted for bicycle access.

State Expenditures: MAA and MTA can likely adopt a complete streets policy using existing resources, and SHA can likely update its existing policy using existing resources, if necessary.

Additionally, the bill only requires the adoption of a policy that *provides information for* the implementation of complete streets design features during the planning, design, construction, and reconstruction of a facility. MAA advises that this gives designers flexibility in implementing reasonable best management practices during the planning and design of projects. Furthermore, the bill grants the modal units flexibility to adopt exceptions to the policy, meaning that a modal unit could focus less on a complete streets design if it is untenable for a given project or would significantly increase project costs. For these reasons, the modal units can likely implement the policies adopted as a result of the bill into their existing plans and practices, as appropriate, using existing resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 850 (Senator Mathias) - Finance.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

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