

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2022 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1419 (Delegates Barve and Stein)
Environment and Transportation

Highways - Proposed Expressway Expansion - Rail Evaluation

This bill requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), if the State Highway Administration (SHA) proposes an expansion of an expressway to add capacity, to evaluate the use of State rights-of-way adjacent to the expressway for rail transit of any kind (including subway, heavy or light rail, above or below ground rail, and monorail). The evaluation must be conducted during the initial project planning phase. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2022.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures increase, potentially significantly, beginning as early as FY 2022 to the extent the bill results in additional planning studies and/or project delays for affected State highway projects, as discussed below. Revenues are not affected.

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

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) is a modal unit within MDOT, and it 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, Baltimore Metro subway, commuter buses, Maryland Area Regional Commuter trains, and mobility/paratransit vehicles. Except for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, MDOT and MTA are generally the agencies responsible for the construction and operation of transit lines in the State.

SHA, which is another modal unit within MDOT, 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/noise 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.

The *Consolidated Transportation Program* (CTP), which is issued annually to the General Assembly, local elected officials, and interested citizens, provides a description of projects proposed by MDOT for development and evaluation or construction over the next six-year period, including transit and highway projects. The status of projects in the CTP can generally be categorized into either (1) the planning phase, where public input is received, appropriate entities are notified, and engineering and environmental studies and analyses are conducted or (2) the construction phase. Specific to highway projects, the planning phase is further broken down into the initial project planning phase and the final project planning stage. “Initial project planning phase” means the portion of the project planning phase that includes:

- notification of local, State, and federal officials;
- initial interagency review;
- initial systems planning;
- identification of alternatives for the scope and location of the project;
- estimates of right-of-way requirements, as specified;
- public meetings for discussions of the foregoing; and
- reports of consultants, if applicable.

State Expenditures: TTF expenditures increase, potentially significantly, to the extent the bill results in additional planning studies and/or project delays for State highway expansion projects due to the required rail transit evaluations. Any such impact depends on the number, type, scope, and location of future projects for which such an evaluation must be completed and, therefore, cannot be reliably estimated at this time. For example, an evaluation for a larger highway project affecting several miles of road (such as the I-495 and I-270 highway expansion project) is likely to be significantly more involved (and expensive) than an evaluation for a smaller project.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

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