

Chapter 346

(House Bill 590)

AN ACT concerning

Howard County – Transfer Tax – Use of Proceeds**Ho. Co. 12–26**

FOR the purpose of altering the name of the Howard County Agricultural Land Preservation Fund to be the Howard County Agricultural Preservation and Innovation Fund; specifying the use of certain transfer tax proceeds that are distributed to the Fund; and generally relating to the transfer tax in Howard County.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
The Public Local Laws of Howard County
Section 20.304
Article 14 – Howard County
(2019 Edition and October 2024 Supplement, as amended)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article 14 – Howard County

20.304.

(a) The Director of Finance shall collect and distribute transfer tax proceeds attributable to the rate of the transfer tax imposed under section 20.301(a) of this subtitle in the following manner:

(1) Twenty–five percent in a special fund known as “The School Site Acquisition and Construction Fund,” and disbursements from this fund shall be made only for the purposes set forth in section 9.102 of the Howard County Code;

(2) Twenty–five percent in a special fund known as “The Park Land Watershed Facilities Fund,” and disbursements from this fund shall be made only for the purposes set forth in section 19.100 of the Howard County Code; and

(3) The remainder in the general fund of the County, with the stipulation that the County Council shall budget this remainder as follows:

(i) Fifty percent plus the interest thereon for the Howard County Agricultural [Land] Preservation AND INNOVATION Fund TO SUPPORT THE AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM AND OTHER PROGRAMS,

SERVICES, OR INITIATIVES TO ENHANCE THE COMMERCIAL VIABILITY OR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF AGRICULTURE IN THE COUNTY;

(ii) Twenty–five percent for community improvement and housing programs primarily serving low income individuals and families and the homeless and for urban renewal; and

(iii) Twenty–five percent for the acquisition or leasing of land for new fire house sites and training facilities and the construction and maintenance of fire house and training facilities, the acquisition and maintenance of fire equipment, and supplementation of financial needs of fire companies.

(b) The Director of Finance shall collect any proceeds attributable to an increase in the transfer tax rate authorized under section 20.301(b) of this subtitle and distribute the proceeds to the general fund of the County to be used in the following manner:

(1) Twenty–five percent for capital projects for the Howard County Public School System;

(2) Twenty–five percent for capital projects for the Department of Recreation and Parks;

(3) Twenty–five percent for community improvement and housing programs primarily serving low income individuals and families and the homeless and for urban renewal; and

(4) Twenty–five percent for the acquisition or leasing of land for new fire house sites and training facilities and the construction and maintenance of fire house and training facilities, the acquisition and maintenance of fire equipment, and supplementation of financial needs of fire companies.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor, April 28, 2026.