



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education

House Bill 12

Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act

Date: February 2, 2023

Position: Support

To: Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Erik Fisher, AICP, MD Land Use Planner

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) urges a **FAVORABLE** report from the House Environment & Transportation Committee on HB 12. If adopted, this bill would prioritize Transit-Oriented Development as the preferred land use in and around transit stations with a dedicated fund to advance supportive capital improvements.

Transit-Oriented Development supports healthy communities and can help clean up local waterways. Emissions from passenger vehicles are a significant source of air and water pollution. Nitrous oxides from tailpipes can aggravate respiratory conditions such as asthma. These oxides also precipitate into streams, creeks, and the Chesapeake Bay, adding excess nitrogen that drives algae blooms, cloudy water, and low oxygen conditions that harm aquatic life. Transit options can be far less impactful on a passenger-mile basis, providing communities with more transportation options, cleaner air, and clearer water.

The carefully designed density, mix of land uses, and connections between transportation modes inherent to TOD are essential to building an inclusive, equitable, and environmentally supportive transportation system. The supportive land use and development patterns of TOD maximize ridership and the environmental benefits of transit. Redevelopment can also improve stormwater management in the area and reduce development pressure on outlying farms and forest land.

HB 12 would integrate needed capital funding with existing state and local priorities to advance Transit-Oriented Development. TOD often requires up-front capital investment to unlock its powerful economic and environmental returns. Development sites adjacent to transit can require updated infrastructure, clearing or remediation of past uses, and public-private partnership to ensure that affordable housing and other inclusive practices can be part of the project. The fund established by HB 12 would help fill this gap, leveraging existing programs like Community Development Block Grants and the Complete Streets program. It would also encourage compatible land use regulation at the local level. Scoring and reporting requirements in the bill would provide assurance that funds are distributed in an equitable manner within communities and across the state. Nested within existing state programs and policies that are already calibrated with environmental goals, the investments directed by HB 12 are positioned to return an economic, social, and environmental triple bottom line.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 12.

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney at mstegman@cbf.org.

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 300,000 members and e-subscribers, including over 109,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.