



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

HB 230

DATE: February 17, 2026

SPONSOR: Chair, Appropriations Committee (By Request – Departmental – Transportation)

ASSIGNED TO: Appropriations

CONTACT PERSON: Melanie Wenger (melanie.wenger@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: Support (Montgomery County Department of Transportation)

Transportation – Consolidated Transportation Program – Prioritization (Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2026)

The Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2026 modernizes the State's approach to transportation project prioritization, commonly referred to as Chapter 30. The core of the bill enhances transparency and clarity for how transportation projects are identified for funding. The bill requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to clearly articulate how localities can request feasibility studies, as well as announce the funding available for surface transportation capacity expansion projects. The localities will also have to describe the scoring methodology and any updates to the methodology. Project rankings will be shared, along with the recommendations for project funding, as part of the draft Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). The bill also offers an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft CTP, and revisions can be made prior to it being finalized. Lastly, the bill will require a regular review and potential update to the scoring process. This allows MDOT the flexibility to select and refine the best measures to address the goals.

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation supports this bill because it will improve flexibility and transparency in the Chapter 30 process, which has long been criticized for opacity. The bill proposes to evaluate projects based on how they address the following: safety, accessibility and mobility, climate change and the environment, social equity, economic development, and sustainable land use and transportation demand management. These broad goals are in close alignment with Montgomery County's priorities.

This bill will benefit the County by increasing transparency and predictability in State transportation funding decisions. It also emphasizes and makes explicit goals that have been shared by the State and County across multiple administrations. The County is focused on delivering projects that improve safety; expand transportation options for County residents, businesses, and visitors; improve the efficiency of the existing system with limited roadway expansion; mitigate the climate impacts of the transportation sector; address past inequities; and support more compact and walkable land use patterns, all goals identified in the County's long range Thrive 2050 General Plan

In the past, when the County's projects have not scored favorably, staff were not clear why and therefore could not modify future submissions to perform better. The new goals proposed in the bill and the current scoring methodology that was piloted resulted in a more favorable evaluation of the County's transportation projects and a better understanding about project weaknesses and improvements that can be made. The past year's pilot provided a lot of benefit, and we think resulted in changes to the legislation that respond to lessons learned. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation appreciated having the opportunity to work with MDOT to submit projects to test the proposed scoring methodology and provide feedback to inform the current legislation. This should be a model for how future transportation policy and partnership between localities and the State can work.

The County is focused on advancing projects such as bus rapid transit, growing our active transportation network, and other investments that address capacity without widening County and State roadways. Having the State prioritize projects such as these through funding commitments would positively impact County residents and businesses, through the expansion of transportation choices, improving travel and supporting future growth.

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation respectfully request that the Appropriations Committee issue a favorable report on House Bill 230.