



Testimony of the Mayor and Council of Rockville HB 386 – Metro Funding Modification Act of 2026 SUPPORT

The City of Rockville is thankful to Chair Guzzone and the members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee for the opportunity to provide written comments in support of HB 386. We thank Delegate Korman for sponsoring this important legislation, which aligns with our Economic Development, Affordable Housing, Transportation, and Climate Action Plan goals.

The Rockville Mayor and Council unanimously support HB 386, which would withhold 35% of the appropriations in the annual budget for the sole purpose of providing grants to the Washington Suburban Transit District to pay the capital costs of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The appropriation would be contingent upon the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia also providing funding, WMATA providing performance assessments of its entire operations, and approving a rail signaling and automation workforce transition plan.

This legislation is vital to the region. WMATA rail and bus systems are key drivers of economic competitiveness and community livability. Increasing WMATA's resources would support further progress as they work to upgrade their infrastructure and equipment and advance efforts to improve the safety of their services. In November 2025, DMVMoves, a WMATA and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) joint task force, prepared a plan to strengthen and better integrate the region's transit systems and to improve transit service in the region. This plan, "DMVMoves: Seamless, Integrated, World-Class Transit for the National Capital Region," outlines the need for an additional \$460 million in new annual capital funding for WMATA beginning in FY 2028.

WMATA is critical to the Rockville community and its transportation network. Numerous WMATA bus routes run through our city neighborhoods. Further, the Twinbrook and Rockville Metro stations are located within the city, and the Shady Grove Metro station is near our borders. Metro transport provides safe and environmentally sustainable transportation for those who walk, bike, and roll. Additionally, Metro stations support transit-oriented development, encourage a diversity of housing options, and attract economic investment in Rockville and in other jurisdictions in Maryland.

In the City, there are opportunities and activities near Rockville Metro stations. In January 2025, the Mayor and Council approved the Rockville Town Center Master Plan, which includes a plan to augment the pedestrian bridge to Rockville Station to improve convenience and accessibility, and to build a new train hall at the station, creating an iconic gateway and multi-modal hub that connects the greater area, enhances the experience of downtown Rockville as a destination, and maximizes safety for commuters and residents. The city has partnered with the Maryland Transit Administration to seek federal funding for the initial design phase of this project. Furthermore, the Mayor and Council requested that WMATA move forward with the necessary processes to proceed with the joint development of its properties at the station. This project will enhance wayfinding in our Town Center and facilitate the construction of hundreds of

new housing units. We are very excited about the opportunities and amenities this project would bring to our community.

Phase 1 of the Twinbrook Quarter Development, near the Twinbrook Metro, opened in October of 2024 and includes a 452-unit multi-family development and 80,000 square feet for a Wegmans supermarket, which opened in June 2025. Additionally, the site includes 25,000 square feet of small shop retail space, and it is anticipated that new retail will soon open.

HB 386 is an important step forward to continue the regional collaboration and support of WMATA, benefitting local economies, providing critical transportation services to our community, and supporting transit-oriented development. It is increasingly important to make smart investments that support economic development, livability, environmental sustainability, and increased housing stock. For these reasons, we urge the Committee to provide HB 386 with a favorable report.