
Maryland Department of Transportation Fiscal 2026 Budget Overview

**Department of Legislative Services
Office of Policy Analysis
Annapolis, Maryland**

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For further information contact: Samuel M. Quist

samuel.quist@mlis.state.md.us

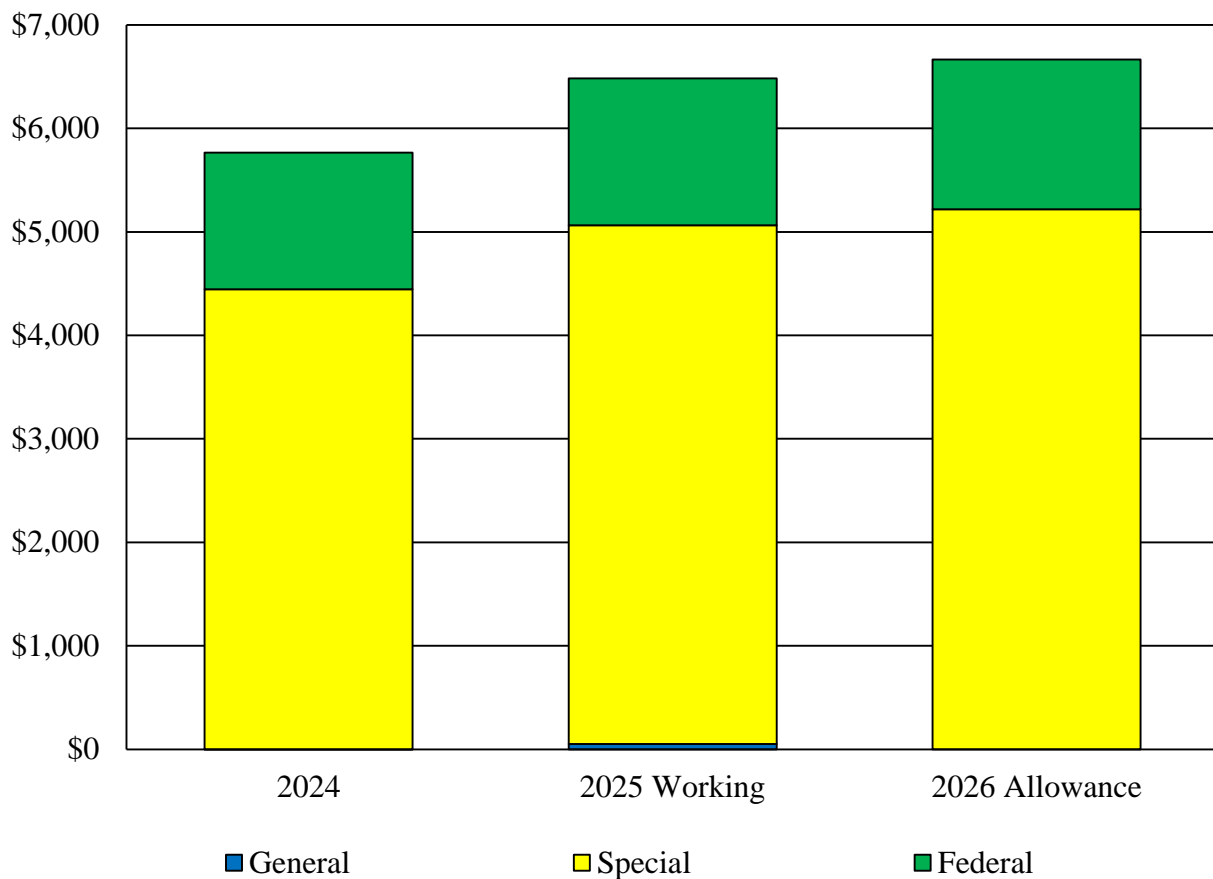
Analysis of the FY 2026 Maryland Executive Budget, 2025

Executive Summary

This analysis provides an overview of the status of the six-year Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) forecast, including revenue and spending projections, as well as a summary of the entire fiscal 2026 budget for the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT).

Budget Summary

Fiscal 2026 Budget Increases \$181.3 Million, or 2.8%, to \$6.7 Billion (\$ in Millions)



Note: The fiscal 2025 working appropriation accounts for deficiencies. The fiscal 2026 allowance accounts for contingencies. The fiscal 2025 impacts of statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and adjustments are not reflected in this agency’s budget. The fiscal 2026 impacts of the fiscal 2025 statewide salary adjustments appear in this agency’s budget. The fiscal 2026 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in DBM and are not included in this agency’s budget.

Key Observations

- The final fiscal 2025 to 2030 *Consolidated Transportation Program* (CTP) includes \$21.2 billion of programmed spending over the six-year period and is \$1.0 billion larger compared to the prior year CTP. Most spending reductions included in the draft 2025-2030 CTP have been restored. Despite projected decreases in federal fund availability and lower overall transfers from the general fund throughout the forecast period, special fund availability is projected to increase to support greater capital expenditures.
- MDOT’s January 2025 TTF forecast reflects the availability of new and increased transportation revenues created through legislation enacted during the 2024 session and assumes additional new and increased transportation revenues available beginning in fiscal 2026 through proposed legislation. These proposed new revenues total approximately \$470 million in fiscal 2026 and \$420 million annually in subsequent fiscal years.
- Departmental legislation has been introduced to establish a newly revised capital project prioritization model for the evaluation of certain major transportation projects for inclusion in the CTP.

Operating Budget Recommended Actions

1. Add annual language requiring notification of changes to the capital program.

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Fiscal 2026 Budget Overview

Transportation Trust Fund Overview

The TTF is a nonlapsing special fund that provides funding for transportation. It consists of tax and fee revenues, operating revenues, bond proceeds, and fund transfers. MDOT issues bonds backed by TTF revenues and invests the TTF fund balance to generate investment income. The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), the Motor Vehicle Administration, the Maryland Port Administration (MPA), and the Maryland Aviation Administration generate operating revenues that cover a portion of their operating expenditures.

The tax and fee revenues include motor fuel taxes, rental car sales taxes, titling taxes, vehicle registration fees, a portion of the corporate income tax, other miscellaneous motor vehicle fees, and other new tax and fee revenues enacted by the General Assembly during the 2024 session. A portion of these revenues is credited to the Gasoline and Motor Vehicle Revenue Account (GMVRA), the balance of which is used as the basis for calculating the amount of local aid to be provided through mandated capital appropriations. The funds retained by the TTF support the capital program, debt service, and operating costs.

Fiscal 2024 TTF Revenue Closeout

As shown in **Exhibit 1**, the TTF ended fiscal 2024 with a fund balance of \$631 million, which was \$4 million lower than the estimated closing balance of \$635 million.

Motor vehicle fuel taxes closed out \$22 million lower than expected; however, this shortfall was more than offset by higher-than-expected attainment in titling taxes (\$11 million) and the corporate income tax (\$28 million). A \$100 million transfer of general funds from the Revenue Stabilization Account (also known as the Rainy Day Fund) to the TTF to support planning for the Red Line and Southern Maryland Rapid Transit projects, originally expected to occur in fiscal 2024, did not occur until fiscal 2025. This delay contributed to revenues in fiscal 2024 closing out \$71 million lower than projected.

Total expenditures were a net \$67 million lower than expected, with increased spending on operations of \$13 million being more than offset by an \$80 million reduction in capital expenditures.

Exhibit 1
Fiscal 2024 Transportation Trust Fund Closeout
(\$ in Millions)

	<u>Projected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Starting Fund Balance	\$822	\$822	\$0
Revenues			
Motor Fuel Taxes	\$1,419	\$1,397	-\$22
Titling Taxes	1,040	1,051	11
Sales Tax – Rental Vehicles	42	45	3
Corporate Income, Registrations, and Miscellaneous Motor Vehicle Administration Fees	1,079	1,098	19
MDOT Operating Revenues (MAA, MPA, MTA)	444	418	-26
Federal COVID-19/Stimulus Funding	121	138	17
Transfers In/Out	367	267	-100
Other Receipts and Adjustments	35	69	34
Bond Proceeds and Premiums	0	0	0
Deductions – Other Agencies	-83	-90	-7
Total Revenues	\$4,464	\$4,393	-\$71
Uses of Funds			
MDOT Operating Expenditures	\$2,518	\$2,531	13
MDOT Capital Expenditures	1,372	1,292	-80
MDOT Debt Service	426	426	0
Highway User Revenue	334	333	-1
Total Expenditures	\$4,650	\$4,583	-\$67
Ending Balance	\$635	\$631	-\$4

MAA: Maryland Aviation Administration
MDOT: Maryland Department of Transportation
MPA: Maryland Port Administration
MTA: Maryland Transit Administration

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

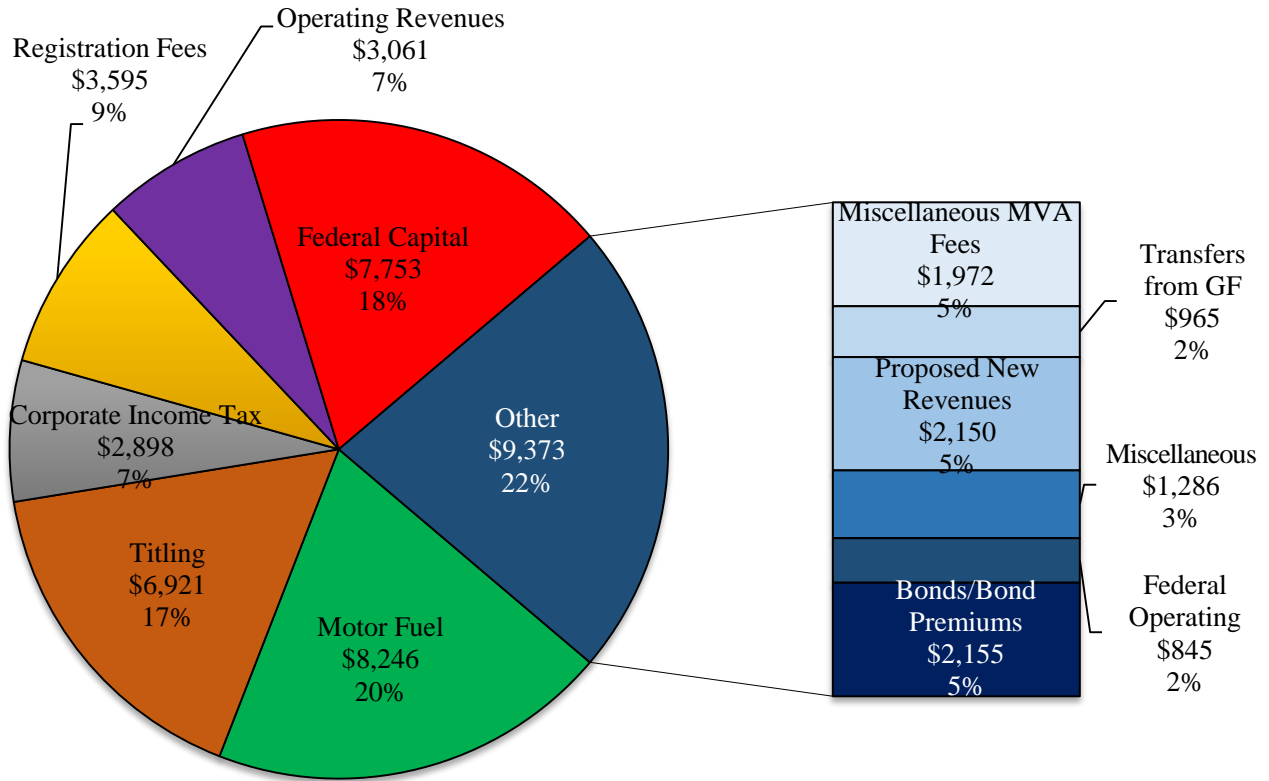
Fiscal 2025 Year-to-date Revenue Attainment

Fiscal 2025 revenue attainment through November 2024 from the TTF’s three largest State revenue sources – motor fuel taxes (MFT), titling taxes, and vehicle registration fees – was \$50.3 million lower than projections based on five-year average attainment rates. MFT attainment was \$22.9 million lower than expected, titling taxes were \$8.0 million lower, and registration fees were \$19.5 million lower. If revenue attainment continues at the same pace for the remainder of the year, collections will be \$133.8 million short of projections.

Fiscal 2025 through 2030 Revenues

Exhibit 2 shows that the TTF’s three largest revenue sources in the fiscal 2025 to 2030 forecast period are MFTs, federal capital assistance, and titling taxes, which collectively represent almost 55% of total projected revenue. In support of the capital program, MDOT is projecting \$2.2 billion in bond proceeds and bond premiums, representing 5.1% of total revenues. Additionally, the TTF forecast anticipates \$965 million in general fund transfers over the six-year forecast. These general fund transfers include already appropriated funds being shown in the year of expenditure as well as anticipated future appropriations for the dedicated capital grant for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in fiscal 2027 through 2030. No general fund transfers are projected in fiscal 2026.

Exhibit 2
Transportation Trust Fund
State-Sourced Revenues and Federal Funds
Fiscal 2025-2030
(\$ in Millions)



GF: general funds
MVA: Motor Vehicle Administration

Note: Does not include \$418.5 million in general obligation bond proceeds for Maryland Department of Transportation capital projects, which do not flow through the Transportation Trust Fund.

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation, Fiscal 2025-2030 *Transportation Trust Fund Forecast*, January 2025; Department of Legislative Services

Six-year Transportation Trust Fund Forecast Summary

Exhibit 3 shows the TTF forecast summary that includes the fiscal 2024 actual and the fiscal 2025 to 2030 projections. It lists opening and closing balances, revenue and expenditure projections, debt outstanding at the end of the year, the net income debt service coverage ratio, and a summary of capital program funding by source.

Exhibit 3
Transportation Trust Fund Forecast Summary
Fiscal 2024-2030
(\$ in Millions)

	<u>Actual</u>							<u>Total</u>
	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>2025-2030</u>
Opening Fund Balance	\$822	\$631	\$400	\$400	\$485	\$485	\$525	
Closing Fund Balance	\$631	\$400	\$400	\$485	\$485	\$525	\$525	
Net Revenues								
Taxes and Fees	\$3,501	\$3,743	\$3,855	\$3,967	\$4,025	\$4,076	\$4,154	\$23,820
Operating and Miscellaneous	741	648	1,155	1,142	1,159	1,175	1,188	6,467
Subtotal	\$4,242	\$4,391	\$5,010	\$5,109	\$5,184	\$5,251	\$5,342	\$30,287
Bond Proceeds	\$0	\$230	\$245	\$455	\$410	\$375	\$440	\$2,155
General Fund Transfers In	267	297	0	167	167	167	167	965
Fund Balance Increase/Use	191	231	0	-85	0	-40	0	106
Total Net Revenues	\$4,700	\$5,149	\$5,255	\$5,646	\$5,761	\$5,753	\$5,949	\$33,513
Expenditures								
Debt Service	\$426	\$430	\$428	\$445	\$468	\$485	\$500	\$2,756
Operating Budget	2,648	2,997	3,146	3,237	3,384	3,535	3,654	19,953
State Capital (Including State Aid)	1,626	1,722	1,682	1,964	1,909	1,733	1,794	10,804
Total Expenditures	\$4,700	\$5,149	\$5,255	\$5,646	\$5,761	\$5,753	\$5,949	\$33,513
Debt								
Debt Outstanding	\$3,005	\$2,925	\$2,864	\$2,997	\$3,068	\$3,089	\$3,163	
Debt Service Coverage: Net Income	3.6	3.6	3.1	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	

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	Actual							Total
	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>2025-2030</u>
Capital Summary								
State Capital	\$1,291	\$1,329	\$1,236	\$1,510	\$1,558	\$1,379	\$1,436	\$8,450
Other Funds	329	668	645	450	419	284	179	2,645
State Aid – Capital Grants	335	393	445	454	351	353	358	2,355
Net Federal Capital (Cash Flow)	1,065	1,278	1,303	1,271	1,392	1,210	1,299	7,753
Total Capital Expenditures	\$3,020	\$3,668	\$3,630	\$3,685	\$3,720	\$3,227	\$3,272	\$21,202

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation, Fiscal 2025-2030 *Transportation Trust Fund Forecast*, January 2025; Department of Legislative Services

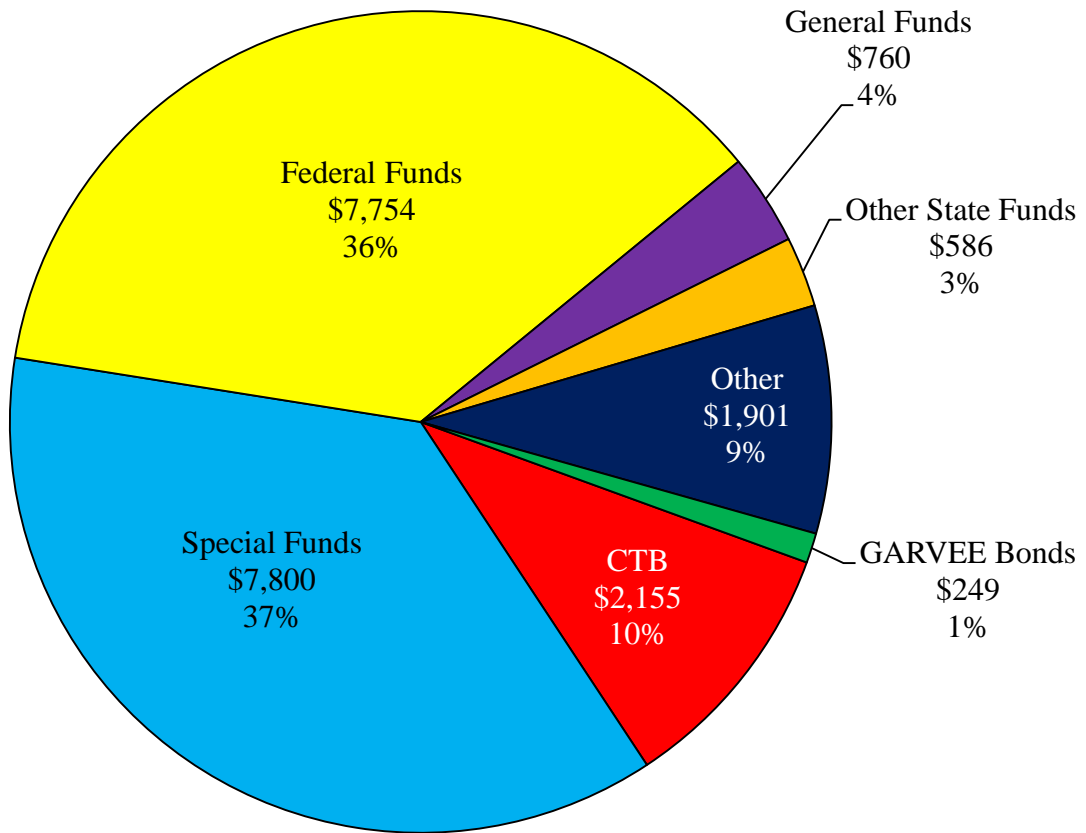
Revenues are first used to pay debt service and then to cover the department’s operating expenses. Remaining revenues are used for the capital program, which is also funded through the sale of bonds; federal aid; and, since fiscal 2020, general fund transfers from the Dedicated Purpose Account to cover all or a portion of a WMATA dedicated capital grant.

Over the six-year forecast period, Consolidated Transportation Bond (CTB) proceeds and premiums are projected to comprise just under 20% of TTF special funds available for capital. Debt outstanding at the end of fiscal 2024 totaled slightly over \$3.0 billion. At the end of fiscal 2030, debt outstanding is projected to total just over \$3.2 billion. Bond covenants require MDOT to maintain a net income to maximum future debt service ratio of at least 2.0, and the department has an administrative practice of maintaining the ratio at no less than 2.5. As shown in Exhibit 3, the net income debt service coverage ratio is highest in fiscal 2027 at 4.0 and remains at or above 3.0 during all six years of the forecast period. These projections, however, assume that new revenues proposed in the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA) of 2025 totaling \$470 million in fiscal 2026 and \$420 million annually in subsequent fiscal years are approved. If no new revenues were approved, the net income to debt service ratio would fall below the 2.5 times administrative minimum in fiscal 2029 and would be approaching the 2.0 times minimum level allowed under the bond covenants in fiscal 2030.

Six-year Capital Program

Exhibit 4 shows six-year funding of the capital program by source. Federal and special funds comprise just over 73% of six-year funding. State-source funds make up nearly 55% of total six-year funding.

Exhibit 4
Six-year Programmed Capital Funding by Source
Fiscal 2025-2030
(\$ in Millions)



CTB: Consolidated Transportation Bonds
GARVEE: Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation, Fiscal 2025-2030 *Consolidated Transportation Program*; Department of Legislative Services

Programmed spending in the 2025 CTP, which covers fiscal 2025 to 2030, totals \$21.2 billion. Programmed spending for the five years that overlap the 2024 CTP (fiscal 2025 to 2029) totals \$17.9 billion, an increase of \$1.2 billion compared to the 2024 CTP, as shown in **Exhibit 5**.

Exhibit 5
Capital Transportation Program Comparison
January 2024 vs. January 2025
Fiscal 2025-2029
(\$ in Millions)

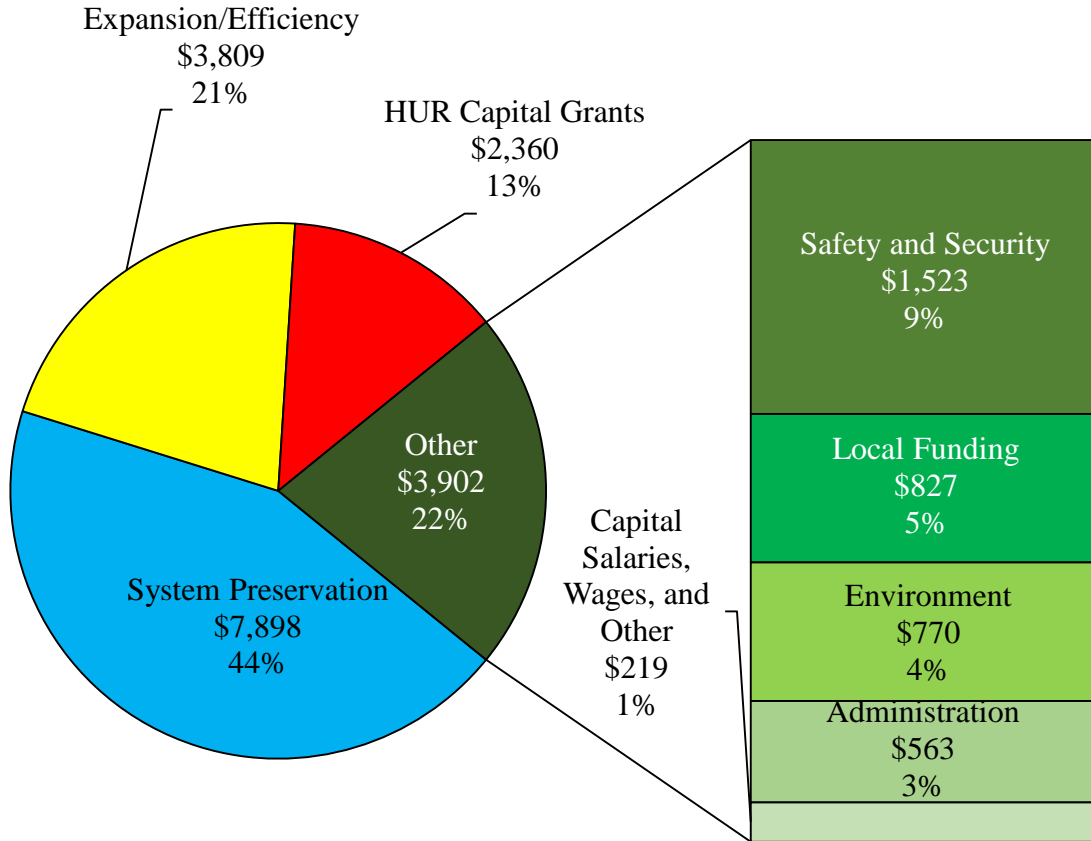
	<u>January 2024</u>	<u>January 2025</u>	<u>Change</u>
Secretary’s Office	\$103	\$153	\$50
Motor Vehicle Administration	61	82	21
Maryland Aviation Administration	847	980	133
Maryland Port Administration	1,316	1,661	345
Maryland Transit Administration	3,836	4,820	984
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority	2,657	2,679	22
State Highway Administration	6,131	5,555	-576
State Aid	1,818	2,001	183
Fiscal 2025-2029 Total	\$16,769	\$17,931	\$1,162
Funds			
Special Funds	\$6,928	\$8,343	\$1,415
Federal Funds	7,101	6,455	-646
General Fund Transfer	708	593	-116
Other Funds	1,449	1,708	259
Other State Funds	584	833	250
Fiscal 2025-2029 Total Funds	\$16,769	\$17,932	\$1,163

Note: Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding. Other Funds include federal funds received directly by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Exhibit 6 shows six-year spending by investment category, excluding the capital grants for WMATA. System preservation accounts for 44% of programmed spending.

Exhibit 6
Six-year Programmed Capital Spending by Investment Category
Fiscal 2025-2030
(\$ in Millions)



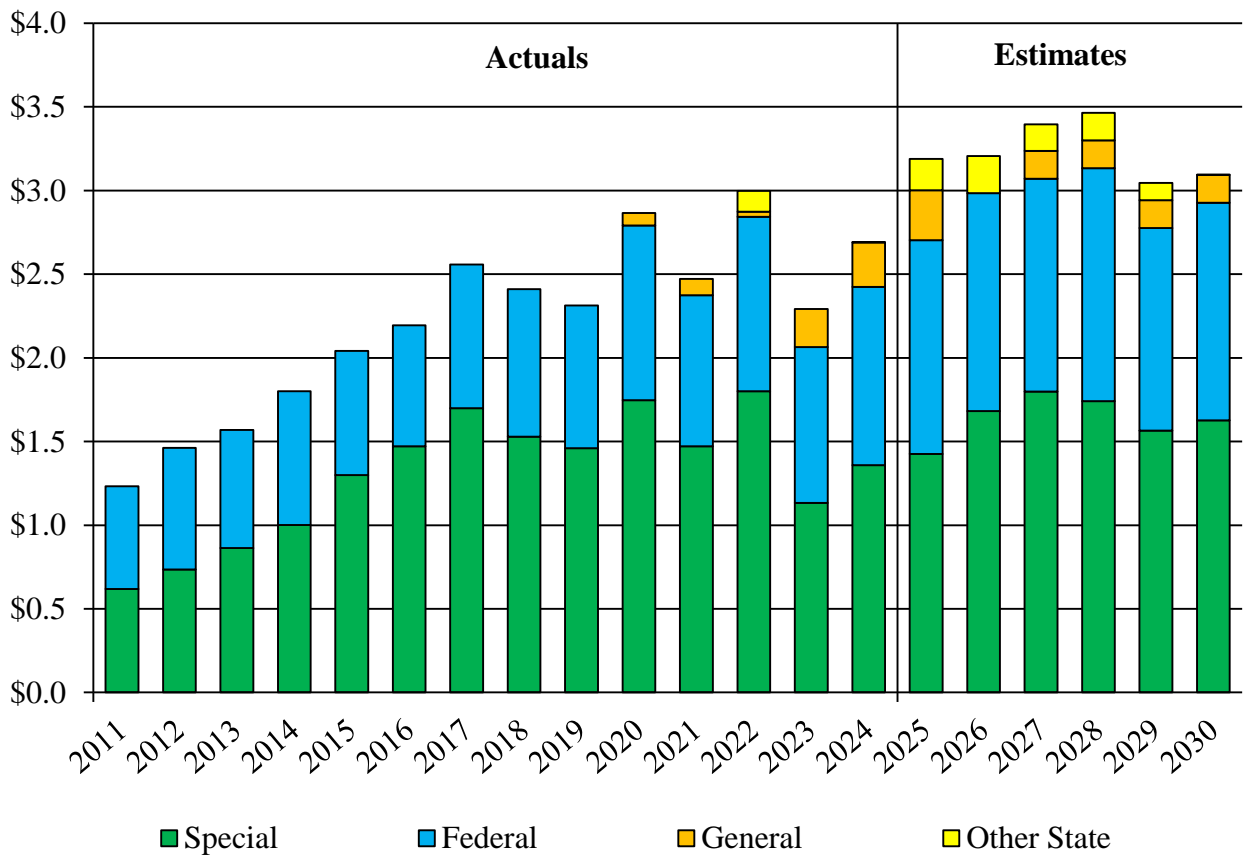
HUR: Highway User Revenue

Note: Excludes capital grants totaling \$3.2 billion to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, categorized as Local Funding in order to avoid skewing other category percentages under which this funding would fall were it not a grant to a non-MDOT system.

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation, Fiscal 2025-2030 Consolidated Transportation Program; Department of Legislative Services

Exhibit 7 shows the actual capital spending, excluding other funds that do not flow through the budget, from fiscal 2011 to 2024 and planned capital spending through fiscal 2030. Combined State and federal capital spending is projected to exceed \$3 billion for the first time ever in fiscal 2025 and peak during the forecast period in fiscal 2028 at just under \$3.5 billion. Capital spending is projected to decline in fiscal 2029 and 2030 due to the availability of special, federal, and other State funds.

Exhibit 7
Capital Spending Trends
Fiscal 2011-2030
(\$ in Billions)

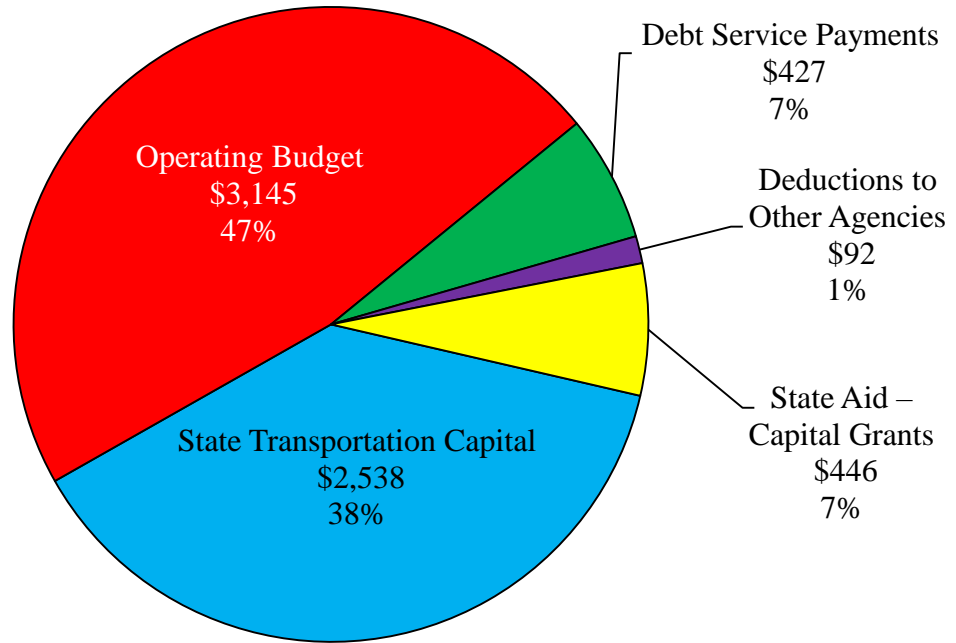


Source: Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Budget Overview

Exhibit 8 shows all expenditures from the TTF by category for fiscal 2026, with expenditures totaling just under \$6.6 billion. The State capital program (excluding State aid capital grants) accounts for 38% of TTF spending with departmental operations comprising an additional 47%. The remainder of TTF expenditures cover debt service payments, State aid capital grants, and deductions to other State agencies.

Exhibit 8
Fiscal 2026 Transportation Trust Fund Uses
(\$ in Millions)



Note: The chart includes special funds from the Transportation Trust Fund and federal funds. It excludes \$645 million in other funds for the capital program and includes operating contingencies. Other Funds can include airport revenue bonds, loans from the Maryland Transportation Authority, passenger facility charges, customer facility charges, local county participation, general obligation bond proceeds used to support the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and federal funding received directly by WMATA.

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation, *Financial Forecast*, January 2025; Department of Legislative Services

Proposed Budget

Exhibit 9 shows the operating and capital budgets along with the amounts budgeted for debt service and State aid capital grants. The exhibit includes the fiscal 2024 actual through the fiscal 2026 allowance.

Exhibit 9
Transportation Budget Overview
Fiscal 2024-2026
(\$ in Thousands)

	Actual 2024	Working Approp. 2025¹	Allowance 2026	\$ Change 2025-2026	% Change 2025-2026
Operating					
Secretary’s Office	\$108,604	\$114,076	\$127,408	\$13,331	11.7%
WMATA	485,191	639,488	679,488	40,000	6.3%
State Highway Administration	367,176	359,204	384,729	25,525	7.1%
Port Administration	57,667	53,081	58,887	5,806	10.9%
Motor Vehicle Administration	237,240	230,977	263,750	32,773	14.2%
Maryland Transit Administration	1,140,336	1,246,500	1,317,500	71,000	5.7%
Aviation Administration	251,504	239,047	253,273	14,226	6.0%
Subtotal	\$2,647,717	\$2,882,375	\$3,085,036	\$202,661	7.0%
Debt Service	\$426,454	\$432,151	\$427,476	-\$4,674	-1.1%
Local Highway User Grants	\$333,214	\$393,233	\$445,803	\$52,570	13.4%
Capital					
Secretary’s Office	\$42,345	\$64,106	\$36,221	-\$27,885	-43.5%
WMATA	348,209	351,800	351,700	-100	0.0%
State Highway Administration	1,102,322	1,088,888	1,049,066	-39,822	-3.7%
Port Administration	130,789	363,094	364,234	1,140	0.3%
Motor Vehicle Administration	28,412	21,862	25,487	3,626	16.6%
Maryland Transit Administration	570,181	693,895	753,753	59,858	8.6%
Aviation Administration	135,269	191,055	125,028	-66,027	-34.6%
Subtotal	\$2,357,527	\$2,774,700	\$2,705,489	-\$69,210	-2.5%

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	Actual 2024	Working Approp. 2025¹	Allowance 2026	\$ Change 2025-2026	% Change 2025-2026
Total of All Funds					
General Fund	\$350	\$50,998	\$0	-\$50,998	-100.0%
Special Fund	4,445,375	5,013,502	5,219,666	206,164	4.1%
Federal Fund	1,319,187	1,417,957	1,444,138	26,181	1.8%
Reimbursable Fund	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Grand Total	\$5,764,912	\$6,482,458	\$6,663,804	\$181,347	2.8%

WMATA: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

¹ The fiscal 2025 working appropriation does not include budget amendments that have been processed to date totaling \$109.5 million (\$109.2 million in special funds and \$0.3 million in federal funds) in increased operating expenses. The actual year over year change in operating expenditures from fiscal 2025 to fiscal 2026 will be less than shown in this exhibit as a result of these budget amendments.

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding. The fiscal 2025 working appropriation accounts for deficiencies, planned reversions, and contingent reductions. The fiscal 2026 allowance accounts for contingencies. The fiscal 2025 impacts of statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and adjustments are not reflected in this agency’s budget. The fiscal 2026 impacts of the fiscal 2025 statewide salary adjustments appear in this agency’s budget. The fiscal 2026 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in DBM and are not included in this agency’s budget.

Source: Governor’s Fiscal 2026 Budget Books; Department of Legislative Services

MDOT’s total fiscal 2026 allowance of \$6.7 billion is an increase of \$181.3 million (2.8%) from the current year working appropriation. Increases in operating expenses (\$202.7 million) and local transportation aid (\$52.6 million) are partially offset by decreases in debt service (\$4.7 million) and the capital appropriation (\$69.2 million).

Fiscal 2025 General Fund Appropriation and Proposed Deficiency Appropriations

The fiscal 2025 general fund working appropriation for MDOT totals \$51.0 million and includes both one-time spending for certain legislative priorities and proposed deficiency appropriations in the Secretary’s Office, MPA, and MTA. Outside of proposed fiscal 2025 deficiency appropriations, the fiscal 2025 general fund working appropriation totals \$950,000 and includes funding for legislative priorities included in the fiscal 2025 Budget Bill, including:

- \$750,000 in MPA, for the purpose of a drone-based security system at the Port of Baltimore (reduced from an original appropriation of \$1.0 million due to Board of Public Works (BPW) cost containment actions);

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- \$100,000 in MTA, for the purpose of providing grants to the Maryland Senior Rides Program within the Transportation Association of Maryland, which provides statewide transport services for low- and moderate-income seniors, and to the Neighbor Ride program, which provides door-to-door transportation services for seniors in Howard County; and
- \$100,000 in the Secretary’s Office, for the purpose of providing a grant to the Town of Forest Heights for traffic management improvements.

The fiscal 2026 budget contains additional proposed deficiency appropriations totaling \$61.7 million, including \$50.0 million in general funds and \$11.7 million in special funds. These proposed deficiencies include:

- \$58.5 million (\$46.8 million in general funds and \$11.7 million in special funds) in MTA to fund the settlement agreement with State Center LLC relating to the redevelopment of State Center in Baltimore City, as approved by BPW in November 2024;
- \$4.0 million in general funds in MPA to reappropriate funds from fiscal 2022 for the Howard Street Tunnel project that were inadvertently reverted during the fiscal 2024 closeout process; and
- a negative deficiency in MPA to eliminate the general fund appropriation of \$750,000 for a drone-based security system at the Port of Baltimore.

Operating Budget Summary

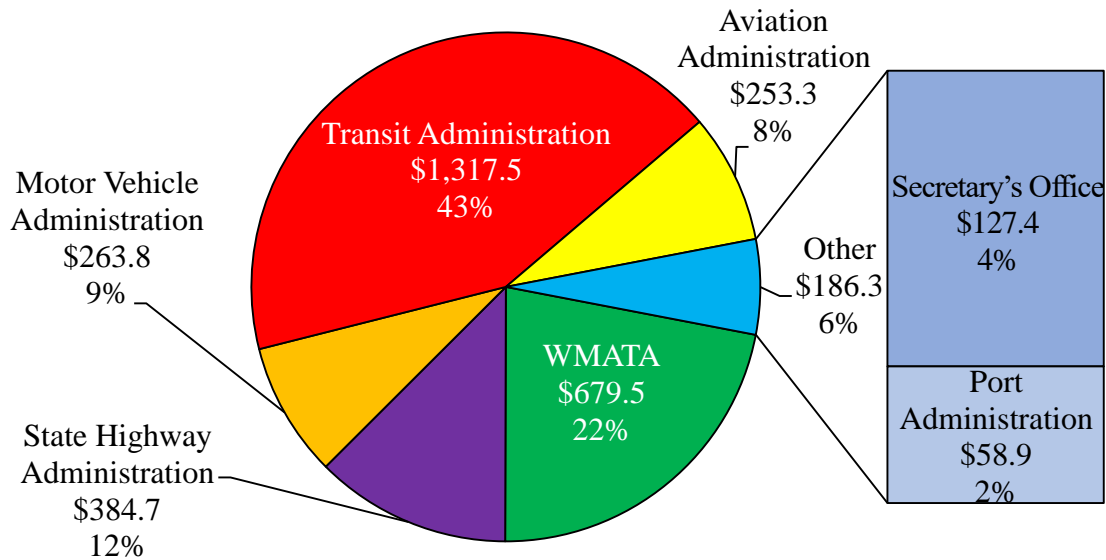
MDOT’s fiscal 2026 operating budget allowance (including debt service) is approximately \$3.5 billion, an increase of \$198.0 million (5.9%) over the current year working appropriation. Approximately 88% of the operating allowance is used for the operating expenses of each of the modes with debt service accounting for the remaining 12%.

Fiscal 2026 Proposed Budget

Operating Programs

The fiscal 2026 allowance for the modal operating budgets totals nearly \$3.1 billion, an increase of \$202.7 million (7.0%) over the fiscal 2025 working appropriation. **Exhibit 10** shows the fiscal 2026 operating budget allowance by mode. Transit spending, the combined operating budget allowances for MTA and WMATA, represents the largest share of the MDOT operating budget at just over 65% of spending for all modes.

Exhibit 10
Fiscal 2026 Operating Budget Allowance by Mode
 (\$ in Millions)



WMATA: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Note: The Transportation Trust Fund financial plan includes \$60 million in modal contingencies that are not included in the allowance. This funding, if needed, is added during the fiscal year by budget amendment.

Source: Governor’s Fiscal 2026 Budget Books; Department of Legislative Services

Personnel

As shown in **Exhibit 11**, the number of regular positions in the fiscal 2026 allowance increases by 209, to 9,402.5, while the number of contractual full-time equivalents (FTE) decreases by 25.0 to 90.0. The majority of new positions (171) are in MTA. Ninety-two new positions in MTA are the second installment of 200 total new positions (108 new positions were created in MTA in fiscal 2025) created to improve the delivery and reliability of existing transit services. An additional 78 new positions in MTA are created to allow recruitment and training of MTA Police in preparation of the opening of the Purple Line. In the State Highway Administration (SHA), 25 contractual FTE positions are converted to 20 new regular positions. Additionally, 26 new positions across MDOT support priority areas of cybersecurity, asset management, and project delivery.

Exhibit 11
Regular and Contractual Full-time Equivalents
Operating and Capital Programs
Fiscal 2024-2026

	Actual 2024	Working Approp. 2025	Allowance 2026	\$ Change 2025-2026	% Change 2025-2026
Regular Positions					
Secretary’s Office	317.5	322.5	328.5	6.0	1.9%
State Highway					
Administration	2,956.5	2,956.5	2,984.5	28.0	0.9%
Port Administration	216.0	216.0	218.0	2.0	0.9%
Motor Vehicle					
Administration	1,706.5	1,706.5	1,706.5	0.0	0.0%
Transit Administration	3,366.5	3,484.5	3,655.5	171.0	4.9%
Aviation Administration	507.5	507.5	509.5	2.0	0.4%
Total Regular Positions	9,070.5	9,193.5	9,402.5	209.0	2.3%
Contractual Positions					
Secretary’s Office	10.0	17.0	17.0	0.0	0.0%
State Highway					
Administration	42.9	68.0	43.0	-25.0	-36.8%
Port Administration	1.5	5.0	5.0	0.0	0.0%
Motor Vehicle					
Administration	7.0	7.0	7.0	0.0	0.0%
Transit Administration	0.4	16.0	16.0	0.0	0.0%
Aviation Administration	1.0	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0%
Total Contractual Positions	62.8	115.0	90.0	-25.0	-21.7%

Source: Department of Budget and Management

Debt Service

The fiscal 2026 allowance for debt service payments is \$427.5 million, a decrease of \$4.7 million (1.1%) compared to the fiscal 2025 working appropriation. The fiscal 2026 allowance reflects debt service on currently outstanding debt and the planned issuance of \$230 million in fiscal 2025 and \$245 million in fiscal 2026. At the end of fiscal 2026, debt outstanding on the department's CTBs will total nearly \$2.9 billion, which is within the statutory cap of \$4.5 billion. The MDOT forecast indicates that debt service coverage ratios will remain above the administrative minimum target level (2.5 times net income), which is higher than the minimum allowed in its bond covenants (2.0 times net income), in all years of the forecast period. These projections, however, assume that new revenues proposed in the BRFA totaling \$470 million in fiscal 2026 and \$420 million annually in future fiscal years are approved. If no new revenues were approved, the debt service coverage ratio would fall below 2.5 in fiscal 2029 and approach 2.0 in fiscal 2030.

State Aid – Mandated Capital Grants

Prior to fiscal 2020, local governments shared in a portion of the tax and fee revenues that are deposited into the GMVRA, commonly referred to as Highway User Revenue (HUR). The local share has varied over time, but from fiscal 2009 to 2019, the local share of HUR was 9.6% of the GMVRA with MDOT retaining 90.4% of revenues to support its operating and capital budgets. Chapters 330 and 331 of 2018 converted this local aid from a share of the GMVRA revenues to mandated capital grants based on a percentage of the total GMVRA and also increased the amount that local governments would receive to an amount equivalent to 13.5% of the GMVRA for fiscal 2020 to 2024. This change increased MDOT's bonding capacity since it now retains all GMVRA revenue. Chapter 240 of 2022 establishes 15.6% of the GMVRA as the new base for local governments beginning in fiscal 2024 and provides temporary increases to 18% in fiscal 2025 and 20% in fiscal 2026 and 2027.

Exhibit 12 shows the mandated capital grant amounts for fiscal 2024 through 2026. The fiscal 2026 mandated capital grant funding of \$445.8 million is \$52.6 million (13.4%) higher than the fiscal 2025 working appropriation.

Exhibit 12
State Aid – Highway User Revenue Capital Grants
Fiscal 2024-2026
(\$ in Millions)

	<u>Actual</u> <u>2024</u>	<u>Working</u> <u>2025</u>	<u>Allowance</u> <u>2026</u>	<u>2025-2026</u> <u>Change</u>
Baltimore City	\$203.7	\$240.3	\$271.9	\$31.6
Counties	79.3	93.9	107.0	13.1
Municipalities	51.3	59.0	66.9	7.9
Totals	\$334.3	\$393.2	\$445.8	\$52.6

Note: Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding.

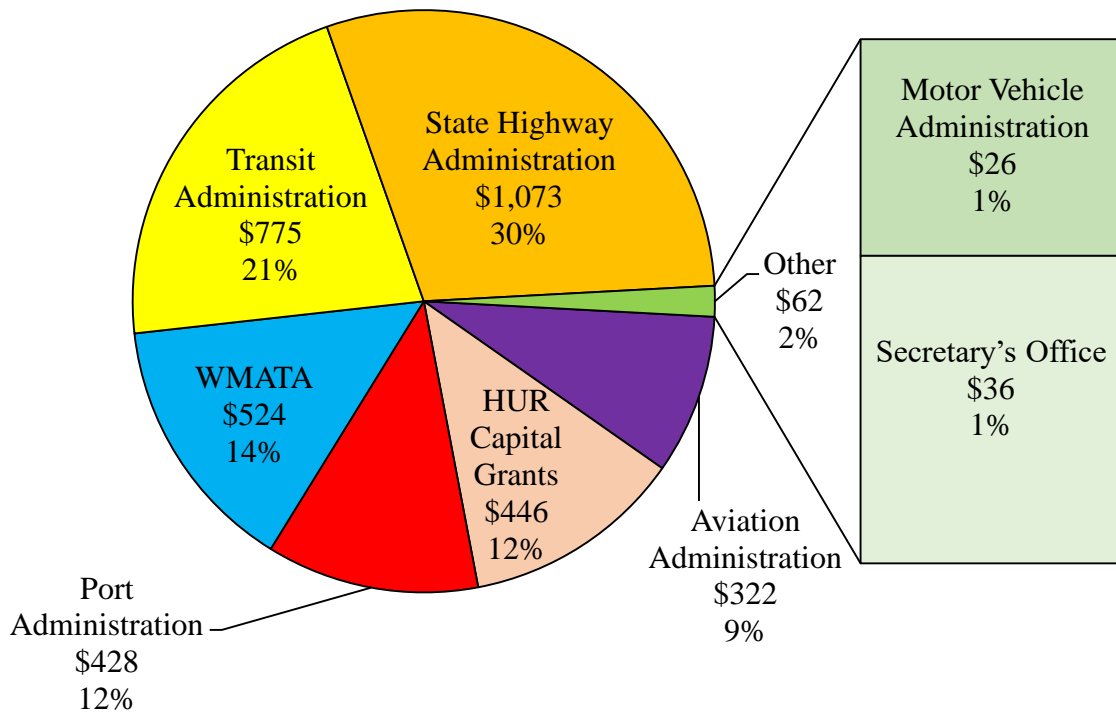
Source: Governor’s Fiscal 2026 Budget Books

PAYGO Capital Budget Summary

Fiscal 2026 Capital Budget

Exhibit 13 shows MDOT’s fiscal 2026 capital budget by mode. Including other funds that do not flow through the MDOT budget, fiscal 2026 capital spending is projected at \$3.6 billion, a decrease of \$39.7 million (1.5%) over capital spending programmed for the current year. The majority of this decrease is due to decreases from planned general fund transfers and other funds that do not flow through the TTF, which are partially offset by increased special, federal, and other State funds.

Exhibit 13
Fiscal 2026 Capital Funding by Mode
 (\$ in Millions)



HUR: Highway User Revenue
 WMATA: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation, 2025-2030 Consolidated Transportation Program; Department of Legislative Services

First-year Construction and Design Funding

Chapters 27 and 563 of 2022 require the CTP, beginning with the January 2023 CTP, to include tables listing projects receiving first-year funding for design or construction either in the budget year or the current year (if the funding was not shown in the budget year in the prior year CTP). **Exhibit 14** shows the total first-year funding by mode.

Exhibit 14
First-year Funding for Design and Construction by Mode
Fiscal 2025-2026
(\$ in Thousands)

	<u>Total Programmed</u>	<u>State Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>State Only Total</u>	<u>State Only Current Year</u>	<u>State Only Budget Year</u>
Maryland Aviation Administration							
Construction	\$42,569	\$11,417	\$4,244	\$26,909	\$5,538	\$2,666	\$2,242
Design	11,940	1,913	3,861	6,165	1,884	1,832	53
Subtotal	\$54,509	\$13,330	\$8,105	\$33,074	\$7,422	\$4,498	\$2,295
Maryland Port Administration							
Construction	\$35,687	\$23,292	\$9,496	\$2,899	\$21,463	\$3,858	\$17,605
Design	21,141	3,385	15,091	2,666	3,070	1,669	1,401
Subtotal	\$56,828	\$26,677	\$24,587	\$5,564	\$24,533	\$5,527	\$19,006
Maryland Transit Administration							
Construction	\$72,918	\$45,226	\$27,592	\$100	\$37,581	\$933	\$36,648
Design	86,239	7,135	78,808	296	1,758	1,274	484
Subtotal	\$159,157	\$52,361	\$106,400	\$396	\$39,339	\$2,207	\$37,132
State Highway Administration							
Construction	\$1,500	\$1,387	\$113	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Design	2,657	1,465	600	592	1,000	500	500
Subtotal	\$4,157	\$2,852	\$713	\$592	\$1,000	\$500	\$500

	<u>Total Programmed</u>	<u>State Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>State Only Total</u>	<u>State Only Current Year</u>	<u>State Only Budget Year</u>
The Secretary’s Office							
Construction	\$994	\$994	\$0	\$0	\$993	\$902	\$91
Design	2,227	2,227	0	0	2,227	1,284	943
Subtotal	\$3,220	\$3,220	\$0	\$0	\$3,220	\$2,186	\$1,034
Total	\$277,871	\$98,440	\$139,805	\$39,626	\$75,514	\$14,918	\$59,967

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation, 2025-2030 Consolidated Transportation Program; Department of Legislative Services

This information may be helpful in identifying opportunities to defer lower priority capital projects before they begin in order to generate capacity to add funding for legislative spending priorities. However, caution should be exercised when considering delaying specific projects. Many MDOT capital projects are funded from a mix of State, federal, and nongovernmental sources. While the State funds made available by deferring a project can easily be used for another transportation purpose, federal and other funds are generally restricted by specific project, and there could be significant challenges to repurposing those funds.

The specific project listings used to create the summary in Exhibit 14 will be included in the individual administration budget analyses.

Other Funds

The CTP lists “Other Funds” as a fund source for some projects. Generally, the “other funds” designation denotes funding that does not flow through the State budget. Traditional examples of other funds are passenger and customer facility charges at the Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport, Maryland Transportation Authority loans, county participation, private funds, and federal funds received directly by WMATA. The CTP includes some nontransportation State-source funds in the other funds category, notably the general obligation bonds used for the Howard Street Tunnel project, the dedicated capital grant to WMATA, and the Greenbelt Metro interchange on the Capital Beltway. **Exhibit 15** lists the projects in the CTP receiving other funds totaling \$660.1 million in fiscal 2026.

Exhibit 15
Other Funds
Fiscal 2026
(\$ in Thousands)

<u>Project</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Maryland Aviation Administration		
Concourse A/B Connector and Baggage Handling System	Revenue Bonds	\$125,834
Concourse A/B Bag Claim 0-5 Reconfiguration	Passenger Facility Charge	17,343
Concourse E Baggage Handling System Expansion	Passenger Facility Charge	14,268
Consolidated Rental Car Facility Improvements	Customer Facility Charge	6,141
Concourse E Ticket Counter Expansion	Passenger Facility Charge	5,000
Snow Equipment Replacement	Passenger Facility Charge	4,828
Checkpoint D/E Expansion	Passenger Facility Charge	3,930
Integrated Airport Security System Replacement – Phase 1	Passenger Facility Charge	3,360
Multi Use Flight Information Display Systems Replacement	Passenger Facility Charge	3,000
BGE Feeder and Substation Upgrade – Phase 2	Passenger Facility Charge	2,580

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<u>Project</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Residential Sound Insulation Program	Passenger Facility Charge	2,425
Consolidated Rental Car Facility Electrical Infrastructure for EV	Customer Facility Charge	2,000
Consolidated Rental Car Facility Reallocation	Customer Facility Charge	1,800
Electrical Substation Reconstruction	Passenger Facility Charge	1,424
Expand Group V Aircraft Parking Position	Passenger Facility Charge	949
Concourse A/B Ticket Counter Expansion	Passenger Facility Charge	900
Consolidated Rental Car Facility Fire Alarm and Fire Suppression System	Customer Facility Charge	615
Consolidated Rental Car Facility Wayfinding Signage	Customer Facility Charge	615
Property Acquisition	Passenger Facility Charge	125
<i>Subtotal – Maryland Aviation Administration</i>		<i>\$197,137</i>
Maryland Port Administration		
Upgrades to Howard Street Tunnel	GO Bonds	\$31,500
Upgrades to Howard Street Tunnel	CSX	22,044
Intermodal Container Transfer Facility Rail Modernization Project	Ports America Chesapeake	7,210
Clean Ports Program: Zero Emission Development	Various	2,666
Zero Emission Electric Locomotives for CSX Curtis Bay Yard	CSX	657
<i>Subtotal – Maryland Port Administration</i>		<i>\$64,077</i>
Maryland Transit Administration		
Agency Fare Systems Next Generation Planning and Implementation	Certificates of Participation	\$18,783
Purple Line – University of Maryland Bike Path	University of Maryland	2,096
Bus – East West Priority Connector	City of Baltimore	320
Purple Line – Montgomery County Incentives	Montgomery County	100
MARC Martin State Airport Improvements	Amtrak	100
Second Transit Oriented Development Grant – Purple Line Corridor	University of Maryland	57
Freight – Warner Street Highway Rail Grade Crossing	City of Baltimore	4
<i>Subtotal – Maryland Transit Administration</i>		<i>\$21,460</i>
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority		
System Performance	Direct Federal Funds	\$171,870
Governor's Dedicated Capital Funding	GO Bonds	167,000
<i>Subtotal – Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority</i>		<i>\$338,870</i>

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<u>Project</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>Amount</u>
State Highway Administration		
I-95/I-495 Capital Beltway (Greenbelt Metro)	GO Bonds	\$23,500
Reimbursable Projects	Various Localities	14,338
MD 210 – from MD 228 to I-95/I-495	Prince George’s County	398
MD 3 – from Waugh Chapel Road to MD 32	Anne Arundel County	210
MD 2 – from US 50 to Arnold Road	Anne Arundel County	54
<i>Subtotal – State Highway Administration</i>		<i>\$38,500</i>
Total -- Other Funds		\$660,044

GO: general obligation

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Issues

1. New and Proposed Transportation Revenues

Legislation enacted in the 2024 session created new revenues and increased existing revenues for transportation. The fiscal 2026 allowance assumes additional new and increased revenues that are included in the BRFA for consideration by the General Assembly. **Exhibit 16** shows the revenues increased in 2024 and those proposed for consideration in the current session. **Exhibit 17** shows how the new funding is used based on a comparison of the 2024 and 2025 TTF forecasts.

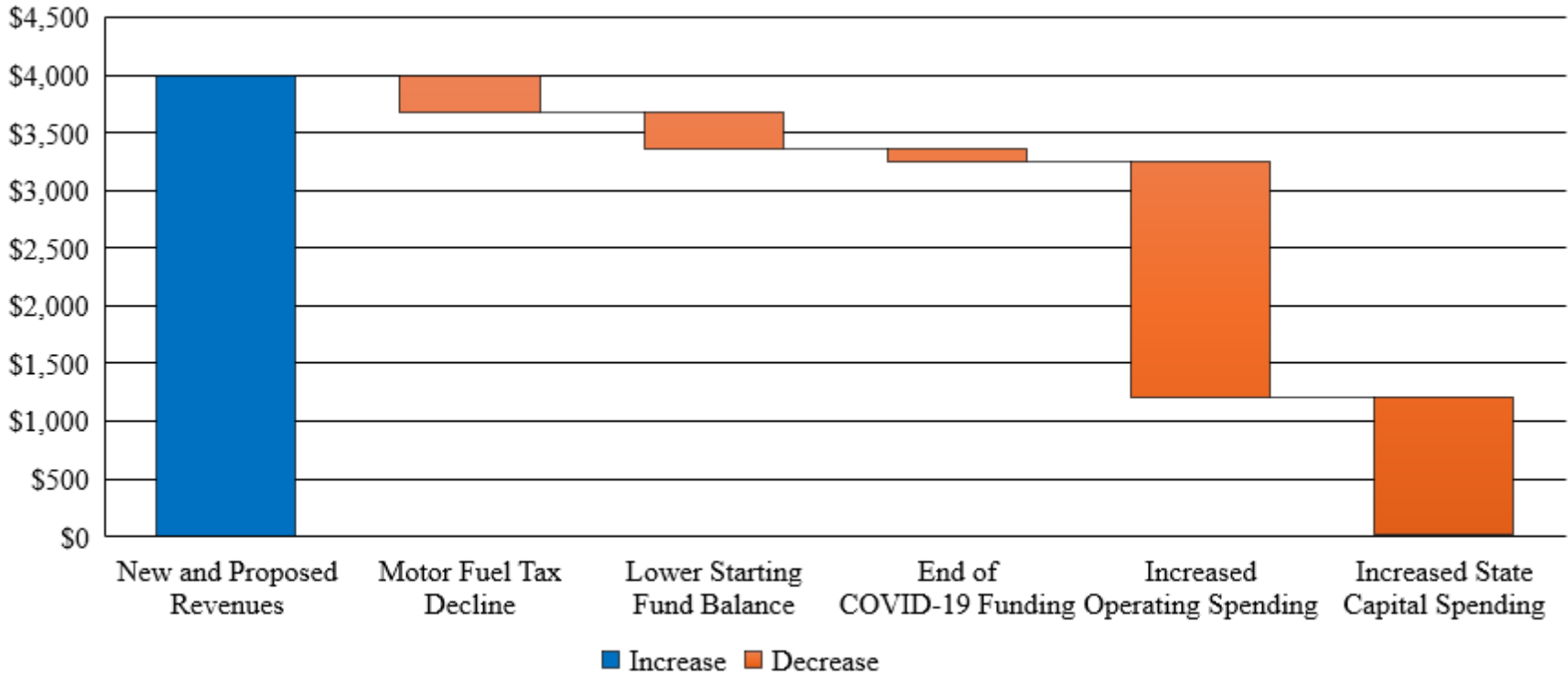
Exhibit 16
New and Proposed Transportation Revenues
Fiscal 2025-2030
(\$ in Millions)

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>2025-2030</u>
Enacted 2024							
Registrations – Non-Highway User Revenue	\$152	\$170	\$220	\$245	\$250	\$255	\$1,292
Transportation Network Company Fee	33	36	39	42	47	53	250
Electric Vehicle Surcharge	9	27	34	45	58	72	244
SHA Work Zone Safety	5	11	10	9	8	8	50
Sales Tax – Electricity	1	1	1	2	2	2	10
Subtotal – Enacted 2024	\$199	\$244	\$304	\$343	\$365	\$390	\$1,845
Proposed 2025							
Retail Delivery Fee		\$225	\$225	\$225	\$225	\$225	\$1,125
Repeal Vehicle Trade-in Allowance for Most Vehicle Purchases		140	140	140	140	140	700
Accelerate Registration Fee Increase Phase-in		50	0	0	0	0	50
Increase VEIP Fee and VEIP Late Fee		30	30	30	30	30	150
Assess Installment Fee on Vehicle Registration Payment Plans		10	10	10	10	10	50
Modify MVA Cost Recovery to Up to 115%		15	15	15	15	15	75
Subtotal – Proposed 2025		\$470	\$420	\$420	\$420	\$420	\$2,150
Total Enacted and Proposed	\$199	\$714	\$724	\$763	\$785	\$810	\$3,995

MVA: Motor Vehicle Administration
SHA: State Highway Administration
VEIP: Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Exhibit 17
Use of New and Proposed Transportation Trust Fund Revenues
Fiscal 2025-2030
(\$ in Millions)



Source: Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

2. BRFA Provisions

The BRFA (HB 352/SB 321) includes a series of transportation-related provisions, including the proposed 2025 session revenue actions listed above and also four additional provisions impacting MDOT revenues, expenditures, and financial forecasting in future fiscal years. These provisions include the following.

- ***Elimination of Requirement of Operating Expense Growth in TTF Forecast:*** Eliminates the requirement that MDOT’s TTF financial forecast increase the estimates for operating expenses beyond the budget request year by at least the five-year average annual rate of change in operating expenses through the most recently completed fiscal year and eliminates the requirement that the assumed rate of future operating budget growth may not increase or decrease by more than 0.5 percentage points from the growth rate assumed in the previous forecast. **The Department of Legislative Services recommends rejecting this provision as understatement of future operating costs is one factor that contributed to MDOT’s budget challenges.**
- ***Increase of the Amount of CTBs That May Be Issued:*** Increases the amount, from \$4.5 billion to \$5.0 billion, of the maximum allowable outstanding debt limit on consolidated transportation bonds.
- ***Expands Pledge of Future Aid to Include Major Rehabilitation of Existing Light Rail:*** Expands the allowable uses of the Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle (GARVEE) bond funding to include major rehabilitation of the existing light rail system, including replacement of light rail vehicles and related station and maintenance facility improvements. The fiscal 2025-2030 CTP includes \$814.1 million in funding for this purpose in MTA over the six-year period, including \$248.7 million in GARVEE bond funding along with \$244.4 million in special funds from the Transportation Trust Fund and \$321.0 million in federal funds. The total project cost, which includes additional planned expenses beyond the six-year forecast period, is estimated at \$1.4 billion, of which \$643 million would be supported through GARVEE bond funding, \$415.3 million through special funds from the TTF, and \$321.0 million through federal funds.
- ***Delay Requirement for MTA to Purchase Zero-emission Vehicles:*** Delays by five years, from fiscal 2027 to fiscal 2032, the requirement that MTA only purchase new buses that are zero-emission buses.

Additional discussion of these BRFA provisions can be found in the fiscal and policy note for HB 352.

3. Proposed New Capital Expansion Prioritization Program

Departmental legislation has been introduced (SB 198/HB 20) that would require MDOT to develop, in consultation with the applicable metropolitan planning organizations, and for the Maryland Transportation Commission’s review, a new project-based scoring system to evaluate certain major surface transportation projects for potential inclusion in the CTP. The system developed by MDOT is required to use objective and quantifiable measures for the goals established and to prioritize the consideration of the benefits of a project relative to its costs to the State.

Background

The CTP is MDOT’s six-year budget for the construction, development, and evaluation of transportation capital projects and contains a list of current and anticipated major and minor capital projects for the fiscal year it is issued and for the next five fiscal years. Statute establishes the requirements for the development of the CTP, which includes the submission of county priority letters, publication of an annual draft CTP by September 1 of each year, visiting each county in the fall of each year for review of the draft CTP, and submission of the final CTP to the General Assembly as part of the Governor’s annual budget submission.

Chapter 36 of 2016 initially required MDOT to develop a project-based scoring system using certain goals and measures, in accordance with federal transportation requirements; to develop weighting metrics for each goal and measure; and to rank major transportation projects for inclusion in the draft and final CTP using the system that it developed. Chapter 30 of 2017 subsequently required MDOT to continue development of this project-based scoring system model for ranking major transportation projects; however, Chapter 30 did not require MDOT to use this model to prioritize projects for inclusion in the CTP.

The current annual scoring cycle for major transportation projects required by Chapter 30 begins in January of each year. Applications must be completed and submitted by proposing entities by March 1. MDOT subsequently processes applications, validates project information and eligibility, collects necessary technical data, and completes all modeling and forecasting. Beginning in July, MDOT utilizes the modeling results and technical data to evaluate each project across nine goals and 23 measures (established in statute), calculate the scores, and determine the final ranking of projects. These rankings inform the development of the draft CTP in August. The draft CTP is released in September and final project scores and rankings are included as an appendix in the draft CTP and posted on MDOT’s website.

During the 2023 interim, the Maryland Commission on Transportation Revenue and Infrastructure Needs (TRAIN Commission) studied the current project prioritization process and solicited feedback on the current CTP development process. Common concerns and criticisms of the current process included that the process lacks transparency, it is unclear why projects are or are not funded, scoring results are not reflected in the projects selected for inclusion in the CTP, and the overall fairness and availability of using one scoring system to compare multiple types of projects. In its 2023 interim report, the TRAIN Commission included the following recommendations related to the current project prioritization process:

- that MDOT develop a new draft prioritization process to present to the commission during the 2024 interim, with the goal of implementation for the fiscal 2026 to 2031 CTP;
- that the prioritization process has performance metrics related to safety, accessibility and mobility, climate change and the environment, equity, economic factors, and land use; and
- that in developing a prioritization process, MDOT should standardize local priority letters, create a process to provide comments to local governments related to request projects, and always present a balanced draft CTP in September prior to visiting local jurisdictions.

MDOT’s Proposed Model

MDOT has outlined a proposed data-driven, performance-based project prioritization process that will create a ranking of potential new projects to maximize value to the State while increasing transparency and fairness. The prioritization model would apply to certain major surface transportation projects only, including highway, public transportation, and nonmotorized projects, consistent with the current parameters of Chapter 30. Eligible projects would be “capacity enhancing”, greater than \$5 million in total project cost, and meet certain readiness requirements, including having achieved a minimum level of design; a feasibility study; or as applicable, alternative analysis.

Potential eligible project applicants would be expanded to include county governments, State government agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, transit agencies, independent cities, and municipalities. The number of allowable submissions per funding level per applicant would be limited and scaled to size, so that larger entities can submit more applications compared to smaller entities. Two levels of funding would be created to apply for (1) projects under \$20 million and (2) projects between \$20 million and \$400 million. Projects with costs above \$400 million would be considered outside of the proposed prioritization model.

The following fund types would also be exempt from this process: HUR; Locally Operated Transit Systems funding, the Transportation Alternatives Program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, the Carbon Reduction Program, and federal discretionary grants that require a State match. Any other State or federal funding source under MDOT control would be included if being used for an otherwise qualifying project.

Project evaluation under the proposed prioritization process for qualifying projects would occur every other year, in contrast with the current model. Moving from an annual to a biennial evaluation process would not change the total amount of funding available for award but would increase the funding available to award in a single funding cycle. A biennial process would reduce the number of times applicants can apply for funding and would provide staff with additional time to review prioritization process and make improvements based on results. Additionally, it would allow for the opportunity to fully fund projects creating a greater certainty for communities, as well as MTA/SHA and their contractors.

MDOT has outlined the following measures within each metric for evaluating projects that would form the basis of the prioritization model:

- ***Safety:***
 - reduction in fatalities and serious injury;
 - reduction in fatalities and serious injury per 100 million vehicle miles traveled;
- ***Accessibility and Mobility:***
 - increase in the access to jobs;
 - increase in non-single occupancy vehicle trips;
- ***Climate Change and the Environment:***
 - reduction in greenhouse gas emissions;
 - reduction in criteria pollutants;
- ***Social Equity:***
 - increase in access to jobs for disadvantaged communities;
 - reduction in fatalities and serious injuries in disadvantaged communities;
- ***Economic Development:***
 - reduction of person hours of delay;
 - increase in productivity of land supported by the project; and
- ***Sustainable Land Use and Demand Management***
 - increase in nonwork accessibility.

Measures used for project evaluation are rooted in the State plan, quantitative, outcome based, tied to the key inputs informing the target outcome, and would evaluate outcomes as directly as possible. The overall score of a major surface transportation project will be based solely on the benefits of a project toward the goals and measures established relative to a project's cost to the State. A project's total score based on the above metrics would be divided by project cost to calculate total benefits per dollar spent.

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By August 15 of each even-numbered fiscal year, MDOT would be required to make publicly available the scores of all projects evaluated and the list of all projects recommended for inclusion in the CTP. MDOT has stated the following goals related to improving transparency in the new proposed process:

- soliciting public feedback and local priorities in the final CTP decision making process;
- establishing standards for local priority letters;
- publishing applications online; and
- soliciting public comments during the draft CTP review process.

Generally, a three-step selection process would be utilized for project evaluation and prioritization using the new model:

- (1) project scoring based on data and objective analysis, reported based on benefit per dollar of cost;
- (2) publication of rankings and projects selected for funding for public review and input during the CTP tour; and
- (3) the Secretary of Transportation makes changes to the funded project list (if desired) based on public support and input, geographic equity, or other factors and presents this final list to the Maryland Transportation Commission at a public meeting to explain any project substitutions for review and acceptance.

If enacted, SB 198/HB 20 would have an effective date of July 1, 2025.

Operating Budget Recommended Actions

1. Add the following language:

Provided that it is the intent of the General Assembly that projects and funding levels appropriated for capital projects, as well as total estimated project costs within the Consolidated Transportation Program, shall be expended in accordance with the plan approved during the legislative session. The department shall prepare a report to notify the budget committees of the proposed changes in the event that the department modifies the program to:

- (1) add a new project to the construction program or development and evaluation program meeting the definition of a “major project” under Section 2-103.1 of the Transportation Article that was not previously contained within a plan reviewed in a prior year by the General Assembly and will result in the need to expend funds in the current budget year; or
- (2) change the scope of a project in the construction program or development and evaluation program meeting the definition of a “major project” under Section 2-103.1 of the Transportation Article that will result in an increase of more than 10% or \$1,000,000, whichever is greater, in the total project costs as reviewed by the General Assembly during a prior session.

For each change, the report shall identify the project title, justification for adding the new project or modifying the scope of the existing project, current year funding levels, and the total project cost as approved by the General Assembly during the prior session compared with the proposed current year funding and total project cost estimate resulting from the project addition or change in scope.

Further provided that notification of project additions, as outlined in paragraph (1) above; changes in the scope of a project, as outlined in paragraph (2) above; or moving projects from the development and evaluation program to the construction program shall be made to the General Assembly 45 days prior to the expenditure of funds or the submission of any contract for approval to the Board of Public Works.

Explanation: This annual budget bill language requires the department to notify the budget committees of proposed changes to the transportation capital program that will add a new project that was not in the fiscal 2025 to 2030 Consolidated Transportation Project (CTP) or will increase a total project’s cost by more than 10%, or \$1 million, due to a change in scope. Reports are to be submitted with the draft and final versions of the CTP with each using the 2025 session CTP as the basis for comparison. In addition, notification is required as needed throughout the budget year if certain changes to projects are made.

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Information Request	Author	Due Date
Capital budget changes from one CTP version to the next	Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)	With draft CTP With final CTP
Capital budget changes throughout the year	MDOT	45 days prior to the expenditure of funds or seeking Board of Public Works approval