



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT


Office of Audits and Investigations

September 23, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert J. Williams, Jr.
Council Administrator

William M. Hunt
Deputy Council Administrator

THRU: Josh Hamlin 
Senior Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

FROM: Alex Hirtle *AJH*
Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

RE: Policy and Fiscal Impact Statement
CR-86-2020 FY 2021 Annual Transportation Plan for Maryland Public Transportation
Program and Disabilities Act Program

CR-86-2020 (proposed by: County Executive. Sponsored by: Councilmembers Turner, Anderson-Walker, Ivey, Glaros, Taveras, Hawkins, Dernoga, Harrison, Streeter, and Davis.)

Assigned to Committee of the Whole (COW)

A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR MARYLAND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM AND AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT PROGRAM for the purpose of authorizing the Director of the Prince George's County Department of 4 Public Works and Transportation to file grant funding applications for Fiscal Year 2021 with the 5 Maryland Transit Administration of the Maryland Department of Transportation under the 6 Annual Transportation Plan (ATP), Maryland's Public Transportation Programs (PTP), the 7 American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Program and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 8 under the Low or No Emission Vehicle Program (Low-No).

Fiscal Summary

Direct Impact:

Expenditures: No known additional expenditures.

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Revenues: Significant additional revenues as a result of grants.

Indirect Impact:

Positive.

Legislative Summary:

The Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Transportation Plan for Maryland Public Transportation Programs and Americans with Disabilities Act Program authorizes the Director of the Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation to file grant funding applications for Fiscal Year 2021 with the Maryland Transit Administration of the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) under the Annual Transportation Plan (ATP); Maryland's Public Transportation Programs (PTP), which its goal is to enhance access of people to public transportation systems; the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Program, which assists with providing general purpose transportation for persons with disabilities; and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under the Low or No Emission Vehicle Program (Low-No), which helps fund transit buses that have zero or low-emissions, as well as construction of supporting facilities. Grants are provided on a competitive basis.

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) is the designated recipient in Maryland for grants under the Federal Transit Act, and the Administrator of the MTA is authorized to make grants to counties and local governments for public transportation projects in small urbanized and rural areas, as well as for specialized transportation projects statewide. Applicants for financial assistance have certain obligations, which includes a local share of the costs for certain projects and/or programs. Additionally, the United States Department of Transportation, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, requires an application for assistance under the Federal Transit Act to give assurance that it will comply with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the United States Department of Transportation requirements thereunder.

Current Law/Background:

The Resolution was introduced on September 9th, 2020, by the County Council, and was referred to the Council of the Whole (COW).

Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) has submitted applications to the FTA for financial assistance under Section 5339 the Low-No Program; the Department has submitted applications to the MDOT-MTA for financial assistance from the following state funding programs: Section 5311 Funds; the Large 4 Urban Program State Funds; and the ADA Operating Fund. . These are for the most part, recurring grants that the Department has gotten annually for many years, with the exception of the Low-No grant, which is new. The only change is that the MTA now requires the County to specifically cite the programs under which the jurisdiction has long received funding in the annual request resolution. MTA had previously only required the County to specifically cite the Statewide Specialized Transportation Assistance Program request (which the County has received for 37 straight years) in an annual resolution, which was passed in the spring of this year. The grant requests will now all be combined into one resolution listing all of the programs.

Resource Personnel:

Marisol Peralta, Department of Public Works & Transportation

Discussion/Policy Analysis:

The County has received transportation grants from the Statewide Specialized Transportation Assistance Program request, which the County has utilized for decades via an annual resolution. Although there is a local share of the grant that the County has to pay into for the net operating deficit, the percentage usually ranges from 10-25% contingent on the specific type of funding.

Prince George's County has consistently supported the initiatives that the State and federal grants are funding within this request, including enhanced access of people utilizing public transportation systems, providing transportation assistance for disabled and elderly people, and coordination of transportation programs and services to facilitate efficiency. Additionally, with the No-Low grant which incentivizes jurisdictions to purchase (or lease) and operate zero or low-emission buses within their transportation programs, the County now has the opportunity to replace some of their older buses with a cleaner and more efficient fleet.

Fiscal Impact:

- *Direct Impact*

Adoption of CR-86-2020 will have a negligible impact on the County-matching funds that have been accounted for in the budget but will likely have a positive impact in the amount of grants awarded.

- *Indirect Impact*

Adoption of CR-86-2020 may have indirect impacts on the County through cost-savings associated with a newer and cleaner bus fleet, including reduced health concerns by residents, increased quality of life through enhanced transportation services, and lower long-term costs for electric buses.¹

Appropriated in the Current Fiscal Year Budget

Yes.

Effective Date of Proposed Legislation:

The Resolution is required to be passed and submitted to the appropriate agencies prior to the Director (of DPW&T) filing grants for and receiving funding.

If you require additional information, or have questions about this fiscal impact statement, please reach me via phone or email.

¹ <https://www.eesi.org/papers/view/fact-sheet-electric-buses-benefits-outweigh-costs>

