



Mayor and Council Rockville
House Bill 649 – Transportation – Highway User Revenues – Revenue and Distribution
SUPPORT

The Mayor and Council are thankful to Chairman Barve and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee for the opportunity to share written comments on House Bill 649: Transportation – Highway User Revenues – Revenue and Distribution. The Rockville Mayor and Council, in partnership with the Maryland Municipal League, strongly support this legislation. We thank Delegate Anderton for his leadership.

House Bill 649 is the solution that would bring permanent restoration of municipal HUR by:

- Removing the funding sunset currently set up to go into effect after FY2024 when municipal highway user revenues (HUR) would revert to Great Recession level lows; and
- Increasing municipal HUR beginning in FY2025 to the approximate levels that existed prior to the massive State diversion in FY2010.

An important aspect of this bill is that there is no funding increase until FY2025. This timeline provides the State the time needed to adjust its funding allocations. We recognize the additional pressures on the State budget resulting from the unprecedented COVID-19 global pandemic. However, one item that can be addressed immediately, and without immediate impact to the State budget, is removing the sunset set to take place after FY2024. The bill provisions would provide critical certainty to municipal governments that the funding is long-term and protected.

We are very grateful to the General Assembly for approving, in 2018, the approximately 85% restoration of municipal HURs in FY2020-FY2024. The FY2021 Rockville allocation is approximately \$2.47 million. The increased funding is extremely helpful to Rockville and other municipalities who must maintain critical transportation infrastructure. There are 102 bridges in the City of Rockville – vehicle and pedestrian and we maintain 367 lane miles and roads. However, with the sunset looming after 2024, it is difficult to engage in long term transportation project plans.

The increased funding has enabled the City to make a larger investment in capital improvement projects, including road and sidewalk projects, bridge maintenance, and pedestrian safety and traffic calming devices that help to keep our residents safe. As we move forward with the implementation of our Vision Zero plan, with the goal to end traffic crash deaths and serious injuries by 2030, sufficient and stable HUR funding is needed to support this critical priority.

Municipalities must have surety in planning for transportation infrastructure that is integral to public safety and healthy local economies. This is especially true in the challenging COVID-19 fiscal climate, which has negatively impacted municipal budgets. It is critical that the General Assembly re-engage in the discussion of fully and permanently restoring highway user revenues to local governments. We urge the Committee to provide House Bill 649 with a favorable report and forward it to the House floor.