



## **Testimony of the Mayor and Council of Rockville House Bill 12 - Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act Support**

The Rockville Mayor and Council thank Chair Barve, members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee, Chair Atterbeary, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee for the opportunity to comment on HB 12. We are thankful to Delegate Lewis for sponsoring this important legislation.

The Mayor and Council support HB 12. As proposed, the Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act would create a Transit-Oriented Development Capital Grant and Revolving Loan Fund to provide financial assistance to qualified transit-oriented development (TOD) sites throughout the state.

As an urban community that is home to two Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) commuter rail stations at Rockville and Twinbrook, one Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) train station and several stops of the planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lines in Montgomery County, Rockville has been actively supporting transit-oriented development for decades. Over time, land surrounding our Rockville and Twinbrook WMATA stations has evolved to become more urban in form, and future improvements are planned both to those stations, as well as the ½ mile walkshed surrounding them.

Rockville is working closely with WMATA and Montgomery County to conduct a study of the Rockville Metro station. This study will identify ways to incorporate the planned BRT lines into the Rockville station and better connect the station to Rockville's Town Center and surrounding neighborhoods. The result of this study will likely yield several infrastructure improvements that are necessary to increase safety and ridership of the station. Additionally, Rockville is seeing significant private investment in the land surrounding the Twinbrook Metro station with the Twinbrook Quarter and Twinbrook Commons developments. Together, these two developments will bring thousands of units of housing to our city, along with hundreds of thousands of square feet of new retail and office space.

The fund proposed in House Bill 12 will help communities like Rockville pay for the essential infrastructure improvements needed to maintain an aging transit system and to continue to spur private sector development along the spines of mass transit. Rockville endorses the \$10 million annual State investment in this grant program, which will provide new opportunities for local governments, transit, and development partners to transform and revitalize our communities. We view development in these areas as critical to our community's economy, as well as necessary to manage our city's expansion through Smart Growth principles.

HB 12 supports Rockville's planning, infrastructure, and economic development priorities. For these reasons, we urge the House Environment and Transportation and the House Ways and Means Committees to provide the legislation with a favorable report.