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Board Matter

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Support for a Bicycle Master Plan for Fairfax County

Madam Chairman—Use of the bicycle as a mode of transportation in Fairfax County has grown in recent years. Reasons include the spike in gas prices, environmental and health concerns, and the desire for transportation choices. The opportunity for bicycling to have a significant impact in these areas can be seen in the simple fact that nearly 40% of all vehicle trips are less than 2 miles and could be taken by bicycle.

The County has taken important first steps in fostering bicycle transportation by installing bike racks on all Connector buses, creating the Fairfax County Bicycle Map which shows cyclists the best routes through our communities, and funding the position of bicycle coordinator. The next phase, as proven by other large jurisdictions around the country, is the creation of a bicycle master plan that would serve as a blueprint for integrating bicycling into our transportation infrastructure.

This blueprint for bicycle accommodations must include goals and objectives, analysis of the existing network, a prioritized list of needed improvements which includes bicycle parking and other end-of-trip facilities, and an implementation strategy. A Fairfax County Bicycle Master Plan would build on the information in the Trails Plan and the County Bike Map and create a coordinated, simple strategy for the County.

Therefore I move that the Board endorse the concept only at this stage of a bicycle master plan. I fully understand the county's current fiscal situation and therefore ask that the Department of Transportation staff investigate the cost of such a plan and provide a longer term recommendation to the Board for the possible funding and development of a plan.