



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2023

Conference Room 11, Government Center

Board of Supervisors Members Present:

Jeffrey C. McKay, Chairman
Penelope A. Gross, Mason District (Vice Chairman)
Walter Alcorn, Hunter Mill District (Committee Chairman)
Kathy L. Smith, Sully District (Committee Vice Chairman)
John W. Foust, Dranesville District
Patrick S. Herrity, Springfield District
Rodney Lusk, Franconia District
Dalia A. Palchik, Providence District
Daniel G. Storck, Mount Vernon District
James Walkinshaw, Braddock District

Board Members Absent: None

County Leadership:

Bryan J. Hill, County Executive
Rachel Flynn, Deputy County Executive
Elizabeth Teare, County Attorney

Link to agenda and presentation materials:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/board-supervisors-transportation-committee-meeting-jan-31-2023>

Committee Chairman Alcorn called the meeting to order at 11:22 a.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 31, 2023, meeting were accepted with no changes.

2. Additional \$100 Million for Active Transportation Access and Safety Improvements

Michael Guarino, Chief, Capital Projects Section; Nicole Wynands, Active Transportation Planner; and Eric Teitelman, Chief, Capital Projects and Operations Division, Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT), updated the Committee on efforts to identify projects for the proposed additional \$100 million for Active Transportation access and safety improvement projects. Specifically, their presentation focused on proposed allocations to be considered by the Board for the next \$25 million. The Board approved the first \$5 million in

allocations on November 1, 2022. The next steps are to finalize the proposed \$25 million list and present it to the Board for formal consideration on April 11, 2023. The project prioritization review process will be completed by June 2023. Staff will work with the Board on a short list of projects based on the network connectivity and trip generators before September 2023. Staff proposed that the Board consider a final list in fall 2023 following public input. Staff will then prepare the scoping documents and implementation schedules for the selected projects.

Committee Chairman Alcorn stated he was comfortable with the staff's proposed approach. He acknowledged the leadership of Chairman McKay and Supervisor Foust in pushing for the \$100 million in funding. Chairman McKay was also comfortable with staff's approach. He asked why the County did not receive the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) federal grant. Mr. Guarino responded that the County was rated acceptable overall, but was lacking in two categories. The federal government was looking for 1) project readiness and 2) more data and details to support the application's claims for safety improvements, equity, and improved access. Mr. Guarino said that staff is already working on the project list to be ready for the next funding opportunity. Chairman McKay noted that the County could accomplish these projects and more with some funding from regional partners.

Supervisor Palchik said she was pleased with the rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) installed at the trail crossing on Prosperity Avenue. Drivers stop for people on the trail when the RRFB is activated. She asked if they could be installed elsewhere along the Cross County Trail (CCT) or as part of future plans. Mr. Guarino said that additional locations along the CCT were not part of the current Plan. He recalled that a location in Reston may have the RRFB on the Washington and Old Dominion (W&OD) Trail. Mr. Guarino noted that staff could consider installing RRFBs on trails that have regional connectivity. Supervisor Palchik asked about the process and timeline for implementing projects, especially those in the pipeline. Tom Biesiadny, FCDOT Director, said that after the list was evaluated and prioritized, the top projects could be implemented as funding is available. Staff will not have to redo the list each year. Implementing additional projects will depend on available funding; however, staff will use this list to identify projects as funding is available. Bryan Hill, County Executive, stated that the County would look at the Third Quarter Review, and whenever funding is available to reach the \$100 million target set by the Board.

Supervisor Foust stated that he was supportive of the process and project lists. Supervisor Lusk asked if there was a need for technology or some other tool to help to conduct the prioritize action of projects more efficiently. Mr. Guarino responded that FCDOT used the demand tool from the Active Fairfax Transportation Plan process to narrow 2,800 projects down to about 600 projects. Staff went through the list and reduced it to 400 projects. Staff also used GIS analysis to help reduce the entire list to a more manageable list. He said that in the future, staff could develop an automated process for taking project requests, systematically analyzing them, and expediting future project selection process efforts. Supervisor Lusk asked if there was anything else that staff might need regarding the tool or method to improve the process. Mr. Guarino replied that he would discuss it with his team and would inform the supervisor.

Supervisor Gross recalled that in 1999, each district had \$100,000 for spot improvement projects. It took a long time to get things done. She said it took 14 years for a trail project on Annandale Road and 37 years to get sidewalks on Sleepy Hollow Road (now under construction). There are currently two projects in the Mason District; both are at the locations of recent tragic deaths. She asked whether these two projects were selected because fatal accidents occurred at these

locations. Mr. Biesiadny responded, "unequivocally yes." There are several projects on the list that are as a result of incidents and fatalities.

Supervisor Storck asked about the criteria for using the RRFB on roadways with a speed limit of 40 mph or above. Mr. Guarino said he would have to research and respond to the supervisor.

3. The Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) Long-Range Plan: Visualize 2050 and the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Discussion

Malcolm Watson, Senior Transportation Planner, FCDOT, and Noelle Dominguez, Chief, Coordination and Funding Division, continued discussing the Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) Long-Range Plan: Visualize 2050 and the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The Visualize 2050 update effort is officially underway. Visualize 2050 will include a "zero-based budgeting" (ZBB) approach where all jurisdictions must resubmit most existing projects, rather than carry them over from Visualize 2045.

Visualize 2050 will extend the out-year of the Plan from 2045 to 2050 with a new financial plan, new Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets (MVEBs), and the ZBB process. The Plan includes multiple build scenarios with exempt and non-exempt projects. Projects under construction or currently funded are exempt. These projects do not need to be reviewed against the TPB planning priorities and goals. Projects in development or that have no committed funding and new projects will be considered non-exempt. These projects need to be reviewed and justified against the TPB planning priorities and goals. Fairfax County has 25 exempt projects and 33 non-exempt projects. Visualize 2050 will also consider climate change mitigation with strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. County staff is reviewing the Comprehensive Plan and other ongoing efforts to identify potential additional projects to be considered for Visualize 2050, such as Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), the Orange Line Metrorail extension to Centreville, the Yellow Line Metrorail extension to Hybla Valley, the I-495 Southside project, the I-95 counter flow Express Lanes, and the Seven Corners Ring Road project.

Staff proposed two public meetings in April 2023, one meeting in person at a centralized location and one virtual online meeting to secure public feedback on the County's inputs. Under the current timeline, comments on the project lists are due on April 28, 2023, and Board endorsement of project submissions will be scheduled for May 23, 2023. The timeline expects the TPB to adopt Visualize 2050 and the FY 2025-2028 TIP by December 2024.

Mr. Biesiadny stated that staff would update the attachments (handouts) before the public meetings. Committee Chairman Alcorn noted that he and Supervisor Walkinshaw serve on the Transportation Planning Board. He stated that there are numerous discussions regionally about the process. The goal is to combine this effort with the long-range planning process that addresses local air pollution issues and climate change goals. He noted that inner jurisdictions do not want more roadway projects. However, the outer jurisdictions want roadway projects to address their traffic problems. He said that Fairfax County is in a unique situation, as the County has the opportunity to bring those two approaches together.

Chairman McKay noted that these issues are also being discussed at the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) meetings. He said that Fairfax County needs to balance roadway projects with multi-modal projects. He noted that the time between the two public meetings and the deadline for submitting comments on April 28, 2023, was very short. He

wanted to ensure that the public has enough time to provide input before the deadline. Mr. Biesiadny responded that if the Board was comfortable with the proposal, staff will try to schedule these meetings in early April. Supervisor Herrity reminded staff that spring break and a three-day budget hearing were already scheduled in April.

Supervisor Palchik asked for maps to show the projects referenced and advised staff to provide Spanish translation at the two meetings. Mr. Biesiadny replied that the County typically would provide language translation for Spanish and Korean in addition to English at those meetings. Ms. Palchik asked how dedicated bus lanes can be submitted with projects. Mr. Biesiadny said that when the County submits the Route 7 BRT project, staff would indicate where buses run in dedicated lanes or mixed traffic.

Supervisor Lusk expressed his support for the Yellow Line Metrorail extension to Hybla Valley as one of the potential additional projects that County staff is considering for submission.

Supervisor Gross said that she supported the Route 7 BRT project and wanted to see it run from Tysons to Alexandria through the Mason District. She endorsed the Seven Corner Ring Road project.

Supervisor Walkinshaw asked Mr. Watson to provide more detail on determining "*what is regionally significant*" and why the Braddock Road multi-modal project is not considered regionally significant. He asked how that determination was made and who made it. Mr. Watson responded that the federal government's definition for "regionally significant projects" is defined as "*projects or facilities which serve regional transportation needs (such as access to and from the area outside the region or major activity or transportation terminals), including all principal arterial highways and all fixed guideway transit facilities that offer a significant alternative to regional highway travel.*" In terms of the TPB, it matters whether a project will add or remove capacity and require the air quality conforming analysis. Supervisor Walkinshaw asked who would submit projects in Fairfax County, about the relationship between the County and VDOT, and how to address disagreements. Mr. Biesiadny responded that submissions could be made by the County, VDOT, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), or any regional agencies. For example, VDOT would be responsible for submitting the I-495 Southside project and the I-95 Counter Flow Express Lanes project. NVTC may submit the Route 7 BRT, because they have been coordinating that project. County staff is still working on the Orange Line and Yellow Line projects. Any regional agency can submit them. The Plan is to bring forward a list of projects in Fairfax County for the Board's consideration. Mr. Biesiadny said that staff would work through any disagreements before a project is considered by the Board.

Supervisor Walkinshaw asked what it means if a project is not included in Visualize 2050. Mr. Biesiadny responded that Visualize 2050 is intended to demonstrate what projects the region can afford to implement between now and 2050. Regarding the Braddock Road project, the project already has funding and will be included in the update. Visualize 2050 will estimate the amount of money generated through transportation sources currently anticipated between now and 2050 to support a list of regionally significant projects. If a project is not on the list, the sponsoring agency must identify a funding source and request approval from the TPB independently. That project will not go forward until there is such an amendment. Supervisor Walkinshaw asked for clarification about whether projects are able to go forward or would not go forward with federal funds. Mr. Biesiadny explained that if a project is regionally significant, it must be

included in this Plan. He gave an example of a sidewalk project that is not considered regionally significant. However, such a project can advance with local funds without being included in Visualize 2050. Supervisor Walkinshaw stated that a good project in the 1980s (e.g., Braddock Road widening) might not be suitable in 2023 for climate goals or other reasons.

Supervisor Storck asked how the study on the Blue Line and Yellow Line extensions will be considered in the Plan. Mr. Biesiadny explained that the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) studied the Yellow Line Metrorail extension to Hybla Valley, which matches the Comprehensive Plan. However, the Blue Line Metrorail extension is more expensive and not included in the Comprehensive Plan. In the future, any agency can recommend the Blue Line be included in the next Visualize plan. Supervisor Storck expressed his support to extend the Yellow Line past the Hybla Valley area. Mr. Biesiadny explained that the Board would need to amend the Comprehensive Plan to reflect that change.

Supervisor Smith stated that she wanted the Orange Line extension to Centreville to be studied as well. She had questions about two projects: the Manassas Battlefield Park Bypass and Stringfellow Road between Route 50 and Fairfax County Parkway. She will discuss these projects offline with staff.

Supervisor Herrity said that he would ask specific project questions to staff at a later time. He advised that staff look at not just dedicated bus rapid transit (BRT) lines but semi-dedicated roadways with HOV networks or express lanes. He repeated his request for staff to study the ability to run express buses with pull-offs on newly designed BRT projects.

Committee Chair Alcorn noted that one of the technical requirements for the Orange Line extension is a new Rosslyn Tunnel. He asked who would coordinate that because it is not in Fairfax County. Mr. Biesiadny said that the County will coordinate with WMATA, because WMATA likely will add some core capacity projects into Visualize 2050. He noted that WMATA conducted a study of the Blue, Orange, and Silver (BOS) lines to address the Rosslyn tunnel bottleneck and developed several different alternatives. WMATA will have to choose an option to include in Visualize 2050. Committee Chair Alcorn asked for the timeline of BOS study. Mr. Biesiadny said he would ask WMATA about their schedule. Committee Chair Alcorn noted that staff does not have a model that shows a project's impacts on climate change. However, he asked staff to provide a high-level analysis on which project may potentially affect climate change.

Committee Chair Alcorn observed that this was the last Transportation Committee meeting Mr. Biesiadny would attend before retiring in May 2023. On behalf of the Transportation Committee, Chair Alcorn thanked Mr. Biesiadny for everything he has done for the Committee, the County, and the region. The Board greatly appreciated his support and dedication to transportation over the years. Mr. Biesiadny said that it had been his pleasure working with members of the Board for over 34 years, and it exceeded everything he could have ever asked for.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m. The next Board Transportation Committee is scheduled for May 16, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.