

# JET Transportation Subcommittee Recommendations

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## FCPS and County Bus and Vehicle Fleets

Fairfax County Public Schools and the Fairfax Connector system should transition to entirely electric bus fleets as rapidly as possible because traditional diesel buses are harmful to the environment and our public health. Diesel bus emissions release climate-changing carbon pollution into the atmosphere and cause respiratory diseases while also making existing problems like asthma even worse. Around the globe, electric buses are one of the fastest-growing portions of the electric vehicle market. By moving quickly toward electrification, the county and school system can “lead by example.”

Fairfax County Public Schools has a fleet of 1625 diesel buses, each with an average age of 18 years at the time of replacement. Currently, there are 520 buses within five years of the average replacement age. In addition to the bus fleet, the school division has 815 non-bus vehicles, including large service trucks. The average age for non-bus vehicle replacements is 12 years. Currently, there are 395 non-bus vehicles within five years of the average replacement age. None of the FCPS buses or other vehicles are hybrid or electric, though FCPS will receive eight electric buses this fall.

Fairfax Connector has a fleet of 350 diesel buses, each with an average age of 15 years at the time of replacement. Currently, there are 94 buses within three years of the average replacement age. In addition to the bus fleet, Fairfax County also has a very large number of fleet vehicles ranging from motorcycles to trash trucks. The only non-bus vehicles under consideration for electrification today are 4-seater passenger vehicles. The County owns 3 and plans to purchase a small number of 100% electric vehicles in the 2021 replacement cycle.

### Recommendations:

- **Bus Fleet Replacement:** The Fairfax Connector diesel bus fleet will be transitioned to electric alternatives by 2030, and the FCPS fleet by 2035. Appropriate benchmarks will be determined to help measure progress toward achieving these goals.
- **Non-Bus Fleet Replacement:** Determine which vehicles have electric (or other non-carbon emitting) alternatives and transition them by 2035. Develop a plan for mitigating the carbon footprint of others. Appropriate benchmarks will be determined to help measure progress toward achieving these goals.
- **Charging Infrastructure:** Necessary charging infrastructure will be installed to scale as fleets grow. Wherever possible, charging infrastructure will serve FCPS and the County.
- **Take Advantage of Grants:** Apply for grant funding for electric buses and the affiliated charging infrastructure whenever possible.
- **Use 100% Clean Fuel:** Develop a plan to fuel these electric vehicles using non-carbon emitting fuels and carbon offsets with a complete transition to 100% clean fuel by 2030.

Appropriate benchmarks will be determined to help measure progress toward achieving these goals.

- **Reserved Parking:** Reserved parking spaces will be marked at each school, admin, and county building for staff (and students as applicable) driving hybrid and electric vehicles.
- **Prioritize Equity and One Fairfax Lens:** To the extent possible, roll out new FCPS and Connector electric buses first in socioeconomically diverse areas.
- **Considering Transitional Costs:** When considering the cost of transitioning to electric alternatives, the social cost of carbon will be factored in with fuel, upkeep and other reduced costs to assess potential savings and determine breakeven points.
- **Coordination:** FCPS and the County should coordinate electrification efforts and share charging and maintenance infrastructure whenever possible. Each should develop legislative packages for the General Assembly to help achieve these recommendations.

## Biking, Walking, and Running

Transportation is one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. On-road vehicles such as cars, light trucks, buses, and freight contribute to 39% of greenhouse gas emissions in Fairfax County. Providing residents with safe, well-designed, and ADA compliant alternative transportation choices will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote healthier living, and increase access to jobs, education, medical services, local businesses, and other quality of life amenities. Thoughtful investments in our local infrastructure will lead to a more connected and robust series of bike lanes, trails, walkways, pedestrian bridges, and sidewalks so that students have safe options for getting to school, workers have more options for getting to the office, and all residents can enjoy all that Fairfax County has to offer.

Supporting a comprehensive, countywide transportation system can prove to be an effective tool to not only combat climate change but to support health, equity, and economic sustainability for all Fairfax County residents. With a little strategic planning we can integrate travel via roadways with parks, trails, and continuous sidewalks as well as improve connections to transit stations by foot, bike, and bus.

### Recommendations:

- **Improve Options for Safe Biking and Walking:** The forthcoming Active Fairfax Plan should prioritize increasing safe, well-designed, ADA compliant, and interconnected (including with mass transit) options for biking, walking, and running.
- **Develop a Safe, Continuous, and Interconnected System:** Enhance lighting, signage, and other safety features, i.e. lower speed limits where applicable. Work with VDOT to expand bike lane markings to interconnect trails and bus and metro stops with roads.
- **Increase Access to Grid-Improved Bike-Share Systems:** Review and mitigate legal and other constraints to promote access and use of bike-share systems, especially in underserved communities beyond the typical commercial hubs.
- **Encourage Use by Students, Workers, and Other Residents:** Expand and promote programs that incentivize biking and walking to school and work. Ensure adequate bike

racks at schools and transportation hubs. Hold county-wide events promoting trail systems, including bike rides, walks, etc.

- **Improve the User Experience:** Develop a plan for adding porta-potties or other restroom options; publicizing and marketing trail systems maps, to businesses, schools, and the general public; increasing tree canopy for better shade and shelter.
- **Prioritize Equity and One Fairfax Lens:** To the extent possible, roll out enhanced biking, walking, and alternative transportation options first in socioeconomically diverse areas.
- **Coordination:** FCPS and the County should coordinate their efforts internally and with neighboring jurisdictions for a region-wide network. Each should develop legislative packages for the General Assembly to help achieve these recommendations. Additional funding sources such as Smartscale and Northern Virginia Transportation Authority should be used.