



County of Fairfax, Virginia

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

**Joint Board Matter
Hunter Mill District Supervisor Walter Alcorn
and
Lee District Supervisor Rodney Lusk**

**Countywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Initiative
January 28, 2020**

Mr. Chairman, today Supervisor Lusk and I are bringing to the Board's attention a rather daunting and long-term challenge that has been an area of increasing focus during the past decade – how to make Fairfax County safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The commitment of Fairfax County to address this is clear, including more than \$300 million in funding approved for stand-alone bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects over the past decade. Most of these projects have been implemented, while some are still in progress. It should be noted that the \$300 million in funding doesn't include bike and pedestrian projects that are being implemented as part of larger roadway projects, or in VDOT's repaving schedule.

Historically, our focus has been on protecting our most vulnerable residents – especially our children. Through the Safe Routes to School program we now have at least 26 school-walking-route sidewalk projects that have been improved to facilitate safe walks by students and parents. We also have prioritized pedestrian connections to our transit stations. These are both the right places to start.

But the challenge of how far we still need to go is sobering, underscored by the tragic deaths of two pedestrians on Richmond Highway just during the past three weeks. There were 16 pedestrian fatalities in our county in 2019, including last summer when a South Lakes High School student was killed while crossing the street in Reston.

Due to the General Assembly reallocating funding for Metro's State of Good Repair Initiative, the Board deferred a number of bike and pedestrian projects last year. And we all have examples of more bike and pedestrian projects to be done, if more funding were available. Fortunately, the General Assembly is looking at options for increasing transportation funding, but currently they don't go far enough.

Recognizing the need to expand current efforts, our Department of Transportation has initiated development of the ActiveFairfax Plan to improve opportunities for our residents to get around safely without getting into a car, bus or train.

Walter L. Alcorn, Supervisor

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As development of the ActiveFairfax Plan is about to begin and given the clear connection between transportation and public safety regarding these issues, Supervisor Lusk and I believe the time is right to evaluate current efforts. The ActiveFairfax planning process can be optimized to address what is literally a life and death issue over the short and long-term.

Mr. Chairman, in conjunction with Supervisor Lusk, I would ask that the Board direct staff and the Board's Transportation Committee to evaluate the potential for making Fairfax County safe for pedestrians and bicyclists through the ActiveFairfax Planning process. As part of this review, I would ask evaluations of:

- The working timeline for the ActiveFairfax Plan given the importance of this issue.
- The external communications strategy contemplated in the ActiveFairfax planning process.
- In conjunction with the ActiveFairfax Plan development, an evaluation of the current approach for funding pedestrian improvements (including how we braid funds from multiple and sometimes disparate sources).
- How the application of new technologies can help improve pedestrian and bicycle safety without waiting for finalization of the ActiveFairfax Plan.
- The ability of the County to establish and achieve measurable safety goals such as Vision Zero.

I would so move.

[after the vote and discussion]

I will include this topic on the agenda for the next Transportation Committee meeting for further discussion.

ADDENDUM

Background Data FYI:



Countywide
Pedestrian Crash Data



Richmond Highway
Pedestrian Incident

The ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan: Fairfax County Bicycle Master Plan and Countywide Trails Plan Update, Dec. 10, 2019

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/sites/transportation/files/assets/documents/pdf/btc/item-4-btc-activefairfax-plan-dec10.pdf>

Interactive Pedestrian and Bike Safety Map

https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/224f7e27c247417cb9ad97a9963f8215?fbclid=IwAR2tteYic--L7sVHZfIkVVG00K9Hk8l8mqhpOWSMIGtKkUyAQC-VM_hk3TY

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