



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 1, 2021

Board Auditorium, 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)
James Walkinshaw, Braddock District
John W. Foust, Dranesville District
Rodney Lusk, Lee District
Daniel G. Storck, Mount Vernon District
Patrick S. Herrity, Springfield District

Board Members Absent:

Dalia A. Palchik, Providence District

County Leadership:

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

Link to agenda and presentation materials:

[Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee Meeting: March 1, 2022 | Board Of Supervisors \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)

Committee Chairman Alcorn called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 1, 2022, meeting were accepted with no changes.

2. Silver Line Phase 2 Implementation

Martha Coello, Chief, Special Projects Division, Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT), updated the Board on the current activities of the Dulles Metrorail (Silver Line) Phase 2 project. Recent activities include operational readiness testing and completing punch list items. When the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) and the Washington

Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) declares operational readiness, there will be approximately 90 days before the start of revenue service. The Board approved the Silver Line Phase 2 bus service plan on February 22, 2022. Work on Package K (installing sidewalks on Sunrise Valley near Reston Parkway and Wiehle bus bay removal) is ongoing.

Committee Chairman Alcorn asked when Phase 2 of the project would open. Ms. Coello responded that she thought it would be open by early summer 2022. Tom Biesiadny, Director, FCDOT, clarified that the WMATA Board will determine the opening date once they are satisfied that all pre-revenue activities are complete. Supervisor Foust asked if the schedule showed the start of revenue service. Mr. Biesiadny responded that the schedule is based on the time frames, and the time frames are based on the outcome of the testing. Testing is underway. Once the operational readiness testing is complete, there will be a better idea of the opening date. Due to the above reasons, there is no projected date for revenue service shown on the schedule. Supervisor Foust emphasized that the schedule should show the estimated completion date for a multi-billion-dollar project like the Silver Line. Mr. Biesiadny explained the challenges with Phase 1 of the project, where the opening dates were made public, but those dates were repeatedly missed. In Phase 2, the management decided not to have an actual date. Bryan Hill, County Executive, stated that he had asked WMATA for the timeline at a meeting yesterday and will inform the Board after he receives a response.

Supervisor Lusk asked for an update on the "heat tape deficiency" issue. Ms. Coello explained that the heat tape prevents the icing from occurring on the third rail which would affect the contact between the cars and the track. The heat tape ensures that the tracks stay at a specific temperature. MWAA has found that 16 out of 500 segments of heat tape were deficient. The manufacturer was contacted to determine the cause and will submit a report to MWAA.

Supervisor Herrity asked for the approximate fiscal impact of the opening subsidy. Mr. Biesiadny replied that the approximate fiscal impact has been incorporated into the County Executive's proposed FY 2023 budget. The budget includes funding to pay the subsidy for rail service starting on July 1, 2023.

Chairman McKay stated that he was frustrated not having a firm schedule and appreciated that staff had pressed for the information. He wanted to ensure that the County would not be subject to financial liability for the deficiency issues. He asked for the term of the contractor's service warranty for the elements that have caused the delays. Ms. Coello stated that typically there is a two-year warranty, but this varies for specific aspects of the project. As a result of the issues with Phase 1 of the Silver Line, WMATA is exploring an escrow settlement option for things like concrete to ensure funding is available to reapply sealant for many years.

Chairman McKay stated that the County wants to have the service open as quickly as possible; however, WMATA should work on the issues to ensure that it is safe and does not cause any long-term maintenance issues. Supervisor Foust also made it clear that the work must be done according to the standards of the contract, but it should not be rushed to get it done. Chairman McKay concurred that the work should be done correctly. The project should have a schedule with a timeline.

3. Safe Streets for All Program

Chris Wells, Active Transportation Program Manager; Lauren Delmare, Active Transportation Engineer; Nicole Wynands, Active Transportation Planner; and Michael Guarino, Capital Projects Section Chief, FCDOT; updated the Board on the draft Safe Streets for All Program, the outreach conducted, the updated recommendations and next steps.

Committee Chairman Alcorn stated that he liked the idea of increasing the speed of implementation for items like reducing vehicle speeds on certain roads. He asked if the General Assembly had given the County the authority to reduce the vehicle speed limit. Mr. Biesiadny replied that the bill did not pass during this year's legislative session. He said that further discussion with the Board regarding this issue would be needed.

Supervisor Lusk asked how to incorporate the implementation of technological innovations to address traffic safety issues. He suggested having four quadrant crosswalks at intersections whenever possible to provide an additional level of safety.

Supervisor Storck asked what the County needs to do to secure VDOT's buy-in with the Countywide Complete Streets Policy and Design Guide and improved road design standards. Ms. Delmare stated that the County has been working with VDOT on urban street standards and hopes that VDOT will continue to work with the County on this issue. Supervisor Storck asked if the problem is regional or if there is an issue with the state's top officials. Mr. Biesiadny replied that it is a Northern Virginia issue, and VDOT has partnered with the County. However, he said that there is a need to work with the new administration, so they understand Fairfax County's priorities and what the County is trying to accomplish.

Supervisor Storck asked how the County could secure support to build the urban core in the future. Mr. Wells replied that the County needs to work with VDOT on the issues and push for legislative changes with the General Assembly or technical changes with VDOT. He stated that VDOT had partnered with the County to establish a pedestrian program for the County in 2002. There are rules and technical standards that need to be modernized. One of the biggest challenges the County has in implementing a Safe Streets for All policy or Vision Zero is that the County does not own or operate its roads. The public needs to be aware of that, because Fairfax County's situation is very different from cities, towns, and Arlington and Henrico Counties.

Supervisor Storck asked for the status of reducing the speed limit on Richmond Highway. Mr. Biesiadny responded that VDOT is analyzing the problem. Staff will update the Board in the spring. Mr. Biesiadny stated that it would be before implementing the BRT system, but he did not have the time frame. Supervisor Storck asked about the next steps after the VDOT's community meeting in May. Mr. Biesiadny replied that he would have the information to Supervisor Storck's question before the official briefing. Committee Chair Alcorn thanked Supervisor Storck for bringing up the issues with improving street design standards. He also reminded staff to look back at the process with the Tysons and Reston street design standards as staff advances other places in the County.

Supervisor Gross stressed the importance of public education about the process, design standards, safety aspects, and the reasons projects cannot be done more quickly.

Supervisor Foust asked staff to provide the cost estimate for and prioritize the list of 60 items on the [Safe Streets for All Program Recommendations – Draft 2022](#). Mr. Wells stated that staff is not asking for the Board's endorsement at this time or in May 2022. The 60 business plan items are the tools needed for the County to establish the program should the Board approve the program. Staff will continue to analyze and report to the Board annually on the recommendations that would help the Board to make the best decisions. Mr. Biesiadny stated that staff would appreciate any feedback the Board has on items in the document that should have been given higher priority. Mr. Guarino stated that FCDOT would submit a request for staffing positions in the FY 2024 budget, so staff can start identifying the needs, resources, timeline, and begin reaching out to other departments and agencies.

Committee Chair Alcorn asked if the activity centers would include transit centers and Metrorail stations. Ms. Delmare confirmed that they would. He said that he appreciated staff work, and it is going in the right direction.

4. Prioritization and Project Selection Approach for Additional Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding

Chris Wells, Active Transportation Program Manager, and Tom Biesiadny, Director, FCDOT, updated the Board on the proposed Active Transportation capital project prioritization methodology. The proposed project selection process included four steps: spatial analysis, the Board's identified other high-priority locations, staff evaluation and shortlist, and staff recommendations.

Committee Chair Alcorn stated that the prioritization and project selection process is consistent with the One Fairfax policy. He applauded Supervisor Foust for his leadership in discussing the current \$5 million funding available for smaller active transportation projects.

Chairman McKay asked for the timing of the spatial analysis process and to confirm that its costs are outside of the \$5 million funding. Mr. Wells replied that staff had done the work in GIS when they prepared the list. The spatial analysis process can be done quickly. If the Board is interested in short-term projects, i.e., maintenance or crosswalks, staff would be ready to make recommendations before the spatial analysis process is complete. Chairman McKay emphasized that he wanted to use the funding for projects that are ready to move forward. He directed staff to focus on maintenance, low-cost, high-impact, and equitable projects.

Supervisor Foust stated that the outreach process that FCDOT had done in 2013 was one of the best public outreach efforts that he had ever experienced. He asked staff to provide the funding allocated to pedestrian and bicycle projects from the additional \$100 million funding for active transportation. Mr. Biesiadny stated that the Board had approved the Transportation Priority Plan (TPP) in 2019, a 6-year plan with allocated funding. The additional \$100 million in funding is a supplement to the TPP. Supervisor Foust asked if there was any new money for pedestrian and bicycle projects. Mr. Biesiadny explained that by approving the TPP projects, the Board had allocated anticipated transportation funding for those projects in the TPP over a 6-year period. There was no ability to add additional projects to the TPP; however, it does not mean that projects cannot be moving forward. The additional \$100 million funding will allow staff to add projects to the list. Mr. Biesiadny stated that staff would bring back the project list to share with the Board.

Supervisor Herrity stated that some of the \$5 million should be used for maintenance of existing facilities.

Supervisor Lusk stated that he supported the methodology that staff presented and wanted to see the \$5 million funding be used for crosswalks and addressing areas with previous conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. He concurred with Chairman McKay that projects need to cover all areas of the County.

Supervisor Gross stated that she agreed with Chairman McKay on moving quickly with the \$5 million funding. She stressed the importance of knowing the owners of the facilities and whether funding maintenance is built into their budgets. For example, she cited the pedestrian bridge across Route 50 at Route 7 built with state funding. No maintenance funding was allocated to keep the bridge clear from debris and trash. Mr. Wells stated that he has had conversations with the Park Authority and Stormwater Management Division of the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES). They have a heavy backlog of maintenance needs. The Park Authority indicated that they have about 40 bridges to be replaced. However, some of the work could be done quickly because of size. He stated that the other type of maintenance involved vegetation and debris removal. DPWES is facing supply chain issues with asphalt. Supervisor Gross emphasized that there needs to be a real plan implemented for maintenance, and ideally, one phone call for maintenance will get all work done accordingly. Committee Chair Alcorn thanked Supervisor Gross for her comments and thought that the Board could work on the lighting issues in the same way.

Supervisor Smith stated that the pedestrian and bicycle data used in the Route 29 corridor in the Sully District were outdated. She asked staff to include new data that contain pedestrian and bicycle collisions and fatal accidents in the corridor. Mr. Wells stated that VDOT is updating its database. He noted that his team would have the information needed in GIS when they update the Board in the future. Supervisor Smith stated that she agreed with Chairman McKay on moving quickly with the \$5 million funding.

Supervisor Storck stated that for every project, the County should have the funding information available to the public to help them understand how the County is spending its money. He stated that he wanted to use the funding to connect segments of walkways, trails, and pathways mainly related to the Safe Routes to School projects. He requested that staff provide a detailed briefing to his office in the next couple of weeks on the charts and analyses that staff presented today.

Supervisor Walkinshaw stated that staff must be aware of situations in less dense parts of the County with 45-mph speed limit roads and pedestrian crossings or crossing to a school, public facility, or a bus stop. They may not be a factor in the maps or the analysis. Mr. Wells acknowledged his concern was similar to Supervisor Smith's. He stated that staff would incorporate that in the study.

5. Transit Strategic Plan

Michael Felschow, Transit Planning Section Chief, and Hejun Kang, Planner IV, FCDOT, briefed the Board on the major update of the Fairfax Connector Transit Strategic Plan (TSP). Fairfax Connector is required by law to develop a ten-year TSP by the end of FY 2023. The four-

step process includes a system overview and strategic vision, planned improvements and modifications, a financial plan, and recommendations for TSP.

6. Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) 's 2022 Work Plan

Michael Champness, TAC Chair, presented the 2022 Work Plan for the TAC. The TAC will focus on multimodal aspects of the transportation network to work collaboratively with all stakeholders, especially FCDOT. The goal of the TAC is *"not just to take a position, but point to a solution."* He thanked Mr. Biesiadny and FCDOT staff for their support of the TAC.

Committee Chair Alcorn applauded the TAC for their work advising the Board with different perspectives, and studying the details. Supervisor Storck stated that the importance of the TAC role is to be independent, and to convey that independent perspective to the Board. He thanked Pete Sitnik, TAC Commissioner for the Mount Vernon District, for his work on transportation issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:42 p.m. The next Board Transportation Committee is scheduled for June 14, 2022, at 3:00 p.m.