



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

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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**

**July 18, 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-july-18-2023>

Committee Chairman Alcorn called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

### **1. Approval of Minutes**

The May 16, 2023, meeting minutes were accepted with no changes.

### **2. Cut Through Permit Program**

Neil Freschman, Chief, Traffic Engineering Section; Henri Stein McCartney, Senior Transportation Planner, On-Street Parking Team, Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT); Joanna Faust, County Attorney; and Captain Alan Hanson, Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) updated the Committee on the proposed Resident Cut-Through Permit Program. The Committee was briefed on the proposed program policies and procedures, as well as the draft ordinance development.

The draft policies and procedures specify community eligibility, the process to establish permit zones, resident eligibility and application procedures, and permit fees and annual renewal. Communities with existing restrictions and communities seeking new cut-through restrictions will require support from two-thirds of the community residents and Board approval of the Action Item. VDOT will then have to establish and implement the cut-through restriction for the permit zone. All permit applications must show proof of residence at the eligible address and vehicles registered at the residence address. The permits are valid for one year, and the residents must renew the application and pay an annual fee of \$25 per vehicle. Staff researched other permit fees for the region and while no jurisdictions have a cut-through program, the average fee for residential parking program permits is \$24. It will take 12 months to create the software and initiate the program. The new permit software would be developed by a third-party contractor at an estimated cost of \$225,000. The permit decal design, materials, equipment and signage to initiate the program are estimated to cost \$45,000. As such, the total one-time funding for the new permit software, equipment, materials, and signage is estimated to be \$270,000. Total recurring funding is projected to be \$185,000 per year. Annual operational and maintenance expenses are estimated at \$45,000, and the program also would require a new Full-time Employee (Transportation Planner II) at approximately \$140,000 annually.

Committee Chairman Alcorn noted that the cost estimates do not include the costs for enforcement. Captain Hanson said that during the first few weeks of the program, the police would enforce and educate the public about the new restrictions. The police department would have to use overtime to cover the costs. Committee Chairman Alcorn asked if there is an option for automatic enforcement technology available (if the General Assembly would give the County the legislative authority). Captain Hanson thought a license plate reader connecting to a database would be the easiest solution. However, he would need to do some research on it.

Chairman McKay questioned the proposed annual permit fee of \$25 per vehicle. He mentioned that the County does not charge a fee for the Residential Parking Permit Districts (RPPD). Ms. Stein McCartney responded that staff recommended the annual fee to cover the program's cost. She estimated that about 1,000 permits are issued annually, bringing in a revenue of \$25,000. She said that approximately 1,200 addresses Countywide could participate in this program. Chairman McKay questioned if this program and the permit fee collection could be included in the car tax or real estate tax programs. He was concerned about the process and wanted to find a way to reduce the cost and the administrative work associated with this initiative. Ms. Stein McCartney replied that staff would work with the Tax Department about the possibilities.

Supervisor Palchik expressed concern about the fee and wanted to see if the County could streamline this program with the RPPD program. She asked for a list of communities waiting for this program to be approved by the Board. Ms. Stein McCartney said she would provide the list to the Board.

Supervisor Foust noted that the General Assembly had passed the legislation for the program at the County's request. He acknowledged that this issue is not Countywide; however, the impacted communities are "severely impacted" by the traffic generated by the American Legion Bridge. He expressed concern that communities cannot access their own driveways because of the traffic caused by cut-through traffic. He agreed that the communities could participate in the cut-through restriction, but they want to be able to use this program. Supervisor Foust disagreed that

a new transportation planner position would be needed to oversee this program. He encouraged the Committee to approve the proposal to solve the problem.

Supervisor Gross expressed concerns about potential equity issues of neighborhoods that can afford to apply and those that cannot. She thought this program might create "a bunch of gated communities" that the County currently does not have. Supervisor Gross disagreed that the program would pay for itself. Therefore, she will not support this proposal to move forward.

Supervisor Walkinshaw questioned the staff requirement for the program. Mr. Freschman responded that the new position will also manage the parking and planning for Tysons area. Supervisor Walkinshaw expressed concern about the equity issue of funding a Countywide program that only a few neighborhoods would benefit from. He suggested a higher fee for the program to be self-sufficient.

Supervisor Storck disagreed with the fee and costs of the proposed program. However, he expressed a desire to find a solution to solve the problem for those affected communities.

Supervisor Smith shared concerns about the issues of the costs and people's problems with trying to get to their homes. She noted that enforcement would be a significant issue.

Chairman McKay raised a concern about GPS or wayfinding programs like Waze that will send people around traffic gridlocks into other streets or neighborhoods and how the restrictions would appear on those applications. Mr. Freschman responded that it would be similar to the existing cut-through program. Staff will follow the process to determine cut-through traffic, identify alternative routes, conduct public hearings, and seek final VDOT approval. However, it will not prevent someone from finding another way around. He stated that he expected drivers to obey the traffic signs regardless of the GPS's instructions. Chairman McKay thought that the Town of Vienna might have a cut through program. Mr. Freschman said that staff has not checked with the Town of Vienna, but the Town of Herndon does have a program. Mr. Freschman stated that the police in Herndon may know who can enter those restricted streets because it is a small town. Chairman McKay directed staff to get information from the Town of Vienna.

Supervisor Foust indicated that he plans to put forward a budget consideration item and put the money in at carry-over.

Supervisor Palchik asked Captain Hanson to share his thoughts about the enforcement of the proposed program. Captain Hanson reiterated his concerns about limited resources and the use of overtime to cover for the enforcement.

### **3. Spot Improvement Program**

Neil Freschman, Chief, Traffic Engineering Section; and Vanessa Holt, Engineer IV, Traffic Engineering Section, FCDOT, briefed the Committee on the Spot Improvement Screening Program. The priority locations developed in the Screening Program can be used to inform the existing project implementation processes.

The Screening Program goals are:

- a) provide a means to identify and prioritize locations for improvements using a data-driven and equitable approach;
- b) prioritize safety as a metric used for evaluating transportation projects in the County; and
- c) provide information to respond to resident concerns.

The Spot Improvement Screening program features a data-driven process that prioritizes safety and evaluates and prioritizes intersections Countywide. The framework document includes the spot improvement screening process (completed in 2021), a pilot program (2022), and a Countywide program (2023). The results of the spot improvement screening process showed a total of 3,966 locations (Countywide), including 287 (7%) high priority, 1,715 (43%) medium priority, and 1,964 (50%) lower priority locations. Staff would only proceed with program implementation at the direction of the Board, and after finalizing spot priorities that require additional funding and resources. The program recommendation includes:

1. Focus on high priority spot locations
  - a. Continue coordination with VDOT to strategize funding and implementation for spot location improvements
  - b. Focus County resources on high priority spot locations where there are no programmed safety-related projects.
2. Perform corridor studies for roads with multiple high priority spot locations
3. Update the Program every three to five years
4. Identify resources to perform studies, as well as design, and implement spot improvements

Committee Chairman Alcorn cautioned that in the effort with the Transportation Priority Plan (TPP) and the Active Transportation Plan, staff will need to communicate to the public to avoid confusion. For future updates of the list of spot improvement projects, he advised staff to include other datasets in the system.

Chairman McKay stated that it is important to note locations with fatalities and to determine whether the cause was a road design issue, speeding, or human behavior. Staff will need to try and coordinate a high priority location with a nearby, programmed project to implement them. Chairman McKay suggested having public hearings for their input and managing public expectations.

Supervisor Palchik suggested incorporating other data sources from VDOT into this project. Gregg Steverson, Acting Director, FCDOT, agreed with the suggestion of more safety data points and will discuss incorporating the result of the Street Simplified study with the Board. Supervisor Lusk agreed with including the data from the Street Simplified study. He asked staff for a discussion about the method and process for determining low and medium-priority projects.

Supervisor Walkinshaw stated that VDOT needs to take more responsibility and dedicate more funding to pedestrian and bicycle safety issues. He asked staff for guidance or metrics to determine the eligibility for rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) on a mid-block or unsignalized crossing. Ms. Holt responded that staff does not have specific metrics for RRFBs for this process because of lack of data points. County staff uses fatal and severe crash data for bikes and pedestrians to determine the location for RRFBs. VDOT also produced an information

and instruction memorandum (IIM) as guidance for locating RRFBs. Supervisor Walkinshaw suggested that the County should develop its own criteria for locating RRFBs, in addition to VDOT guidance.

Supervisor Gross asked if the list considers locations on privately owned roads and what could trigger the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. She cautioned that the NEPA process could significantly delay a simple project. Ms. Holt replied that the screening does not involve the NEPA process.

Supervisor Herrity noted that spot improvements were not included as congestion relief projects. Ms. Holt said spot improvements were included in the multimodal piece of the project framework. County projects traditionally focus on the congestion management process. For this process, staff is focusing more on safety and equity. However, delays for all signalized intersections and average annual daily traffic data are included in the multimodal process. Supervisor Herrity asked staff to share the criteria for equity and multimodal with the Committee.

Supervisor Foust recommended that staff consider public meetings to gather input from the community. He asked staff to clarify the terms "vulnerable users" and "multimodal." Ms. Holt responded that she would share the details with the Committee.

Supervisor Smith was concerned about the many programs that the County has and the need to clarify the process involving public input and how the project uses data. Ms. Holt said that staff will ask the public for feedback on the priority list and incorporate their comments into the design of the projects. If the Board approves the list, staff will ask for public comments again. Mr. Steverson said this process serves as a cross-referencing tool for many programs such as the \$100 million in funding for Active Transportation projects and those included in the TPP. Depending on how often a project is checked on a program, the project could be deemed as high priority by the Supervisor.

#### **4. Blue/Orange/Silver Capacity & Reliability Study**

Committee Chair Alcorn brought to the attention of the Committee the Blue/Orange/Silver Capacity & Reliability Study from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). It is a long-range planning process focused on the capacity constraints at the Rosslyn Tunnel. The County will provide comments in September 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m. The next Board Transportation Committee is scheduled for October 17, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.