



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

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## **Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee**

May 8, 2018

Government Center, Conference Room 11

### **Board of Supervisors Members Present:**

Sharon Bulova, Chairman  
Penelope Gross, Mason District (Vice Chairman)  
John Foust, Dranesville District (Committee Chair)  
John Cook, Braddock District  
Catherine Hudgins, Hunter Mill District  
Jeff McKay, Lee District  
Kathy Smith, Sully District  
Linda Smyth, Providence District  
Dan Storck, Mount Vernon District

### **Board of Supervisors Members Absent:**

Pat Herrity, Springfield District

### **County Leadership:**

Bryan Hill, County Executive  
Beth Teare, County Attorney

### **Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC):**

Jeff Parnes (Sully District), Chairman  
Michael Champness, Dranesville District

Link to agenda and presentation materials:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/btc>

Supervisor Foust called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

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

The minutes of the February 27, 2018, meeting were accepted with no changes.



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## **2. General Assembly Actions Related to Utility Undergrounding**

Tom Biesiadny, Director, FCDOT; and Noelle Dominguez, Legislative Liaison, FCDOT, briefed the Board on the General Assembly's actions and bills regarding utility undergrounding issue.

[The presentation is available online.](#)

Ms. Dominguez explained the various pieces of legislation introduced during the 2018 General Assembly session that addressed undergrounding of utilities. Supervisor Storck stated that he is committed to finding a solution that would address the community's concerns regarding undergrounding utilities. Supervisor McKay made it clear that there is no new funding provided by the legislation passed by the General Assembly. He disagreed with Supervisor Storck's assessment of the funding situation and emphasized that the secondary road construction program has many road improvement projects waiting for funding for decades. Undergrounding utilities are not road improvement projects. He said that there were no new funding and the approved funding legislations are not practical, since there are zero dollars attached to them. He asked Mr. Biesiadny about the effort to having Dominion Power make a financial contribution to the underground utilities. Mr. Biesiadny replied that he talked to Dominion Power last week, and there is nothing new to report. Chairman Bulova pointed out the dichotomy of a General Assembly bill that would provide funding for underground utilities, but required a 100 percent match by local government sources. However, she noted that the General Assembly took away some of the major local government sources. Mr. Biesiadny also pointed out that the Commercial and Industrial (C&I) taxes are local revenues, and that the bill required the County to match local revenues (C&I) with other local revenues.

## **3. Transportation Project Priorities (TPP)**

Mr. Biesiadny updated the Board on the progress of the TPP project. [The presentation is available online.](#)

Mr. Biesiadny addressed the implications of the General Assembly approval of HB 1539/SB 856 which provides \$154 million per year in capital funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), the funding sources, and the impacts on Fairfax County. In response to Supervisor Cook's question of "no new projects", Mr. Biesiadny clarified that all existing projects on the TPP list that are partially funded, will continue to be on the list. He will provide an update scheduled at the July meeting. Mr. Biesiadny stated that there is no funding to bring forward the new large projects that resulted from the outreach effort last year, i.e., new interchanges. Supervisor Foust asked about the funding that is available for the TPP. Mr. Biesiadny replied that there are ten different funding sources, including the C&I tax, the NVT A funding, County bond funds, federal revenues, and the state's Smart Scale program. If the federal government were to pass an infrastructure bill, the County already has many projects ready to advance, as compared to the last time that the federal government passed a stimulus bill. Mr. Biesiadny stated that his office will continue to work with each Supervisor on their list of projects prior to the July meeting.



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## **4. Fairfax Connector Student Pass Program**

Kala Quintana, Head of Marketing, FCDOT; and Michael Felschow, Section Chief, FCDOT, updated the Board on the success of the Fairfax Connector Student Pass Program and recommendations for SmartTrip and Metrobus pilot projects. [The presentation is available online.](#)

Supervisor Hudgins asked about the differences between the District of Columbia program versus the Fairfax Connector program regarding funding and the transit card. Ms. Quintana replied that the District program has changed, and that Montgomery County's program shares many similarities with the Connector program. Mr. Biesiadny stated that District does not have many school buses, so their students, if they do not walk to school, receive a pass to use on Metrobus or Metrorail to travel to school. Supervisor McKay stated that District students have the DC One Card to use for many activities, for example, to check out library books, to check in at school, to use the WMATA transportation system, and many other things. He has advocated for a universal card for Fairfax County students. He asked how a lost student pass/SmartTrip card would be handled. Ms. Quintana replied that the cards would be registered through the school system, and the school could shut down a lost card per a student's request. The school would have greater control of the cards and prevent any inappropriate usage. Supervisor McKay stated that he really liked the program and the recommendations to provide access to students and to explore activities and opportunities that they do not currently have. He stated that the Board should have a conversation with the School Board about a cost sharing mechanism and a joint ownership for this program. Ms. Quintana stated that all principals of the schools that participate in the program are fully supportive of the Student Pass program. Supervisor McKay stated that he would like to see uniform enthusiasm about the program. He recounted how Edison High School was not included in the initial proposed pilot program, but now the program is successful at Edison, because of the support of the school.

Chairman Bulova stated that she would like to see the program continue and expand. She suggested to find a way to track the usage of transit after students graduate from high school to measure the success of the program in building and developing future transit riders. Supervisor Gross asked how the multiple languages would be handled. Ms. Quintana replied that all marketing materials are printed in both English and Spanish. Supervisor Gross stated that she was pleased to see that Falls Church and Annandale High Schools could be included in the program in the future. She asked about the paths that J.E.B. Stuart/Justice High School students would use for the bus to go to school. She also thought that it was a good idea to have this new program at the same time that the school changes its name to Justice High School.

Supervisor Storck praised Principal Penny Gros of the Stuart/Justice High School as one of the best principals in the County. He asked about the absentee cards that were used a decade ago at Stuart. Principal Gros confirmed that they are no longer used at the school. Supervisor Storck asked how staff came up with the proposed cost/budget. Ms. Quintana replied that assumptions were made by using the data at the highest performing schools, the cost of the trip, the number



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of the trips, and the average number of passes during the highest ridership month. She doubled the number to give some cushion to the estimate. She stated that staff will closely monitor the program.

In response to Supervisor Storck's question about the SmartTrip cost negotiation with WMATA, Mr. Biesiadny replied that staff started a discussion with WMATA for possible discounts. The County may be able to negotiate a cost of less than \$2 per trip, but the negotiation process has not occurred yet. Ms. Quintana stated that she thought that the estimate is based on realistic data and would be in the ball-park range. Supervisor Storck was supportive of the program and the idea of getting the School Board's full commitment.

Supervisor Foust asked if there are any high schools that are not served by either the Connector or Metrobus. Mr. Biesiadny replied that there are some schools that are not directly served by transit. Supervisor Foust suggested that staff could adjust the Connector routes to serve all high schools. Ms. Quintana said that there are eight middle and high schools that are not served by the Connector and she will circulate the list to the Board members. Supervisor McKay reminded the committee that there are many activities that use the high schools as a meeting place, for example public meetings, athletic activities, theatrical performances, etc. He stated that there should be transit access to all the high schools in Fairfax County. Mr. Felschow stated that staff could identify the schools and make adjustments to move bus stops. Supervisor Smith asked for the usage of Chantilly High School and the other schools.

Supervisor Foust stated there was support from the Board for the two recommendations. Mr. Biesiadny stated that there is no funding request for the program, because they can use the existing Connector's budget that the Board approved for FY 2019. He stated that there is no commitment beyond FY 2019, and any further actions will require the Board's approval. After consulting with Chairman Bulova, Supervisor Foust directed staff to prepare an Action Item so the Board can formally approve the two recommendations from the Transportation Committee.

## **5. Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC)'s Planning for the Future**

TAC Chairman Jeff Parnes and Commissioner Michael Champness, Dranesville District Representative, briefed the Board on the TAC Future Working Group's (FWC) efforts to plan for the future. [The presentation is available online.](#)

Commissioner Champness stated that the goal of the FWC is to identify and evaluate opportunities to incorporate emerging transportation concepts into the County transportation plans and strategies. The TAC took the initiative to focus on the transportation issues of the future.

Mr. Biesiadny stated that transportation technologies are evolving very quickly, and the transportation system in the future may look very different than it is today. He appreciated that the TAC is willing to work on this issue. Supervisor Foust stated that events like the Smart



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Cities Workshop, the Hack-a-Thon, and the autonomous vehicle demonstration are very popular and have a lot of interests. He thought it would be very helpful for the TAC to take on this role. Chairman Bulova stated that she was glad to see the TAC has embraced looking ahead into the future of transportation issues. She suggested that the TAC could start by examining the impediments preventing the County going forward with new concepts. The Board would like to know if there are any issues with the state laws, impediments with infrastructure and energy, and any other issues that need to be addressed. Commissioner Champness stated that the TAC would like to be able to make some useful recommendations. Chairman Bulova stated that she would like to see a plan to overcome those issues, not just things that could stop the County moving forward with future technologies.

Supervisor Storck asked about qualifications of new TAC members that Commissioner Champness laid out in the presentation. Commissioner Champness replied that the TAC will be looking for people with transportation policies experience with the ability to analyze complex issues and willingness and dedication to serve with the right attitude. The TAC and new members will work on each area identified in the transportation issue development areas. They can start working on the telecommuting issue and see if they can make any recommendations. Supervisor Hudgins stated that the TAC could look at how to integrate individual components into a larger system using the resources and tools in the transportation system to connect people and their activities. Mr. Biesiadny stated that this activity may have a tie-in to the County strategic planning activities that will happen later this year. Supervisor Foust stated that it also ties into the economic success plan. Commissioner Parnes reiterated the last recommendation that the TAC could bring in people with expertise to help with specific topics. These people would attend TAC meetings as needed. Supervisor Foust stated that the Board is very supportive of this effort and suggested that the TAC develop a more detail scope.

## **6. Silver Line Phase 2 Implementation**

Mark Canale, Chief, Special Projects Division, FCDOT, updated the Board on the construction progress of the Silver Line Phase 2 Project. [The presentation is available online.](#)

Supervisor Smyth asked how the construction on Old Meadow Road will be done by the end of the year, since the work on Colshire Meadow Drive has not been completed yet. Mr. Canale replied that VDOT and MWAA stated that they are trying to finish it by the end of this year; however, there are many remaining issues.

Chairman Bulova stated that while it looks like the work on the stations will be done in 2019 with service beginning in 2020, the Board has just received some shocking news from WMATA that they will shut down rail service at some stations to reconstruct parts of their system. The Board expressed their concerns about the lack of advance information and coordination from WMATA. The Board would like to know how the maintenance work would affect rail service in Fairfax County and how to minimize the impact to the region. She stated that during SafeTrack, the County stepped up efforts to provide service to mitigate the impact, and that the County will need to do it again. Mr. Biesiadny stated that he completely agreed with her



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assessment. He just had a discussion with Paul Wiedefeld, WMATA General Manager and CEO, to talk about planning for the work and how the County could help to minimize the impacts. He said that the work will not be done until next year, and there is time to work with WMATA and VDOT on the coordination and minimize the impact. This topic will be included on the agenda scheduled for the July 17, 2018, Board Transportation Committee meeting.

Supervisor McKay stated that there was no communication from WMATA, and suggested that the community may have good ideas and suggestions. The conflicting message that WMATA was sending to the region was that they need to build up the ridership; however, they are going to shut down service next summer. The I-395 corridor is under construction and causes daily gridlock. This is the same corridor that WMATA wanted to shut down. He wanted to know about other feasible options that could be considered and stated that the Board needs a full briefing on this issue. Supervisor Hudgins stated that it should be the first item on the July meeting. This is part of a two-year discussion about getting a better commitment from WMATA as a result of the investments that the region has made to the Metrorail system. The extension of the Silver Line must not have the same problems as the current system is currently experiencing.

Mr. Canale addressed the issue of the inadequate concrete panels that was mentioned in the Washington Post. The problem panels came from one of three precast contractors that supplied a total of 1,700 panels to the project. There are 66 suspected panels and only 33 panels have to be replaced. The other 33 panels will have some remediation work on them. It has nothing to do with the structural integrity, but with the 100-year durability. MWAA and WMATA are working to address the issue.

The meeting adjourned at 3:11 p.m. The next BTC meeting is scheduled for July 17, 2018, at 11:00 a.m.