



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

**February 13, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 11, Government Center**

Board of Supervisors Members Present:

James N. Bierman, Jr., Dranesville District (Committee Chairman)
Walter L. Alcorn, Hunter Mill District (Committee Vice Chairman)
Jeffrey C. McKay, At-Large (Chairman)
Kathy L. Smith, Sully District (Vice-Chairman)
James R. Walkinshaw, Braddock District
Rodney L. Lusk, Franconia District
Andres F. Jimenez, Mason District
Daniel G. Storck, Mount Vernon District
Dalia A. Palchik, Providence District
Patrick S. Herrity, Springfield 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-feb-13-2024>

Committee Chairman Bierman called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

The approval of the December 12, 2023, meeting minutes was deferred to the next meeting.

2. Cut Through Permit Program

Henri Stein McCartney, Senior Transportation Planner, and Neil Freschman, Chief of the Traffic Engineering Section, Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT); Joanna Faust, Assistant County Attorney; Scott Colwell, Fairfax County Traffic Division Commander; and members of the Department of Tax Administration; updated the Committee on the resident cut-through permit program. In July 2023, staff proposed program policies and procedures and developed the draft ordinance. The existing Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) /FCDOT Cut-Through Mitigation Program relieves residential communities impacted by cut-

through traffic. Access to neighborhood streets is restricted by prohibiting turns during specific times of the day. The proposed permits would allow residents to access restricted neighborhood streets. Three communities with existing cut-through restrictions could initially be eligible to apply for permits. Three additional communities are actively developing new restrictions, and four communities are currently on hold. The new County Ordinance and program policies and procedures were drafted and are under review. The software vendor provided the permit administration software. VDOT and the County updated information access agreements and the VDOT signage permit. The contract vendor will provide permit management, fulfillment, and payment processing. The average regional transportation permit fee is about \$25. The Fairfax County Residential Permit Parking District Program (RPPD) has no annual permit fee. If the County collected a \$25 permit fee, with the number of addresses from 355 to 555 and the number of permits from 1 to 3 per address, the potential program revenue with all projects implemented would range from \$33,000 to \$99,000 annually.

Regarding the cut-through review of neighboring jurisdictions, only the City of Falls Church has turn restrictions and a resident permit. The Town of Herndon, City of Alexandria, City of Fairfax, and Town of Vienna have turn restrictions but no resident permits. Arlington County has a complete street focus and does not implement turn restrictions.

Chairman McKay asked why the four communities were currently on hold or inactive. Mr. Freschman responded that sometimes the community task forces did not want to move to the next phase for many reasons. Chairman McKay asked how the police in the Town of Vienna performed enforcement. Commander Colwell responded that he did not know how police in other jurisdictions did it. He noted that it would be difficult to enforce the turn restrictions. Chairman McKay indicated that it would be critical to know if the other jurisdictions (Herndon, Alexandria, Fairfax City, and Vienna) have turn restrictions but no resident permits and how they enforce them. Chairman McKay remained concerned about enforcement issues.

Committee Vice Chairman Alcorn asked if automatic traffic enforcement technology is available. Ms. McCartney responded that she was unaware if any jurisdictions use automatic traffic enforcement for this application. However, the software vendor offered to install fixed cameras at the location to scan all license plates and determine whether one has a permit. The General Assembly would also have to authorize the County through legislation the ability to enforce such actions. The County would incur some costs for the cameras and installation of them. Supervisor Alcorn brought up issues that VDOT implemented policies to connect neighborhoods with multiple access points. However, some neighborhoods were not planned to be connected that way. Acting Director Gregg Steverson, FCDOT, stated that County staff have had conversations with VDOT to get them to understand the situation and the cut-through restrictions.

Supervisor Walkinshaw stated that finding a solution to the cut-through problems had a better outcome in his district than applying the restrictions. He was concerned about the proliferation of the program and the resulting enforcement issues. Mr. Steverson emphasized that staff must use the appropriate solutions with the correct cut-through issues.

Supervisor Jimenez asked where the potential program revenue would go. Ms. McCartney replied that it would go to the General Fund. Supervisor Jimenez suggested targeting the revenue for pedestrian safety issues.

Committee Chairman Bierman asked for verification about the restrictions in other jurisdictions (Herndon, Alexandria, Fairfax City, and Vienna), that no one can access the streets during the restricted times. Ms. McCartney confirmed that to be true. Supervisor Bierman stated that most people would follow the laws. He thought that, in reality, enforcement may not be as challenging as perceived. He agreed that the restrictions would not be equally applied to every community. However, it could be a helpful tool for needed residents.

2. I-495 NEXT

Martha Coello, Chief of the Special Projects Division, FCDOT, briefed the Committee on coordinating the I-495 NEXT project with VDOT. At the Board meeting on January 23, 2024, the Board drafted a letter requesting that VDOT address concerns about the lack of coordination, questions about the ramps, and deforestation issues. The County presented a plan for future coordination with VDOT and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and to consider future environmental coordination with appropriate County agencies regarding tree reforestation plans.

In the letter to VDOT, the Board

- Requested response from VDOT to the September 2023 letter
- Recommended a proactive approach to coordinate with Maryland and engagement with Fairfax stakeholders
- Highlighted concern regarding future traffic conditions
- Requested collaboration with County staff on a revegetation plan and strategies for community engagement
- Addressed existing efforts to handle cut-through traffic in the community

Existing coordination on the I-495 NEXT project included two monthly project meetings on updates on Maryland-managed lanes, construction updates, upcoming design reviews, outreach efforts, notifications on construction work, follow-up on inquiries, and future public meetings. FCDOT attended all VDOT meetings with the public. There were ad-hoc technical meetings and monthly meetings with the National Park Service staff on the George Washington Memorial Parkway construction work. The County agencies reviewing the plans were FCDOT, the Department of Planning and Development, and the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services.

On the additional coordination on the project, staff requested future cooperation with VDOT to allow staff to join existing coordination meetings with MDOT, follow-up with Board offices on updates from VDOT on the project, and regular briefings from VDOT for the Dranesville and Providence Districts. On future coordination on the revegetation plan, staff pressed for a

comprehensive plan addressing deforestation concerns, to include Urban Forestry in the review, and to have a follow-up meeting with VDOT on comments.

Staff asked for the Board's feedback on the letter to VDOT by February 29, 2024, and the Board's guidance on coordinating revegetation plans and deforestation concerns, as well as engaging with VDOT more extensively.

Committee Chairman Bierman expressed his frustration with the lack of response from the Virginia Secretary of Transportation to the letter that the Board sent in September 2023. Chairman McKay expressed his disappointment with VDOT and state officials for not coming forward with an explanation for not responding to the Board. Chairman McKay directed staff to find a way to impose themselves on the VDOT-MDOT meetings. Staff will ask VDOT for the meeting schedule and then attend the meetings. Regarding the environmental issues, Chairman McKay also directed staff to set a meeting immediately with VDOT or asked VDOT staff to come and brief the Board of Supervisors.

Supervisor Lusk said that he fully supported the letter. He brought up the issues with the I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study. He wanted VDOT to take a similar approach to this study regarding schedule, questions, and answers from the citizens. Ms. Coello agreed and stated that as a lesson learned, staff may have to be more proactive and highlight our concerns and expectations to VDOT regarding the design, clearing of land, and revegetation plans. Supervisor Lusk added the impacts to local streets and the improvements on the Maryland side of the project to the list of concerns.

Supervisor Bierman thanked FCDOT staff for bringing up the issues with the Board. He urged the County to keep pushing VDOT regarding reforestation plans and community meetings and for people from nearby and downstream communities, such as Providence District, to participate in those meetings. He stressed the importance of keeping up with the challenges of unfulfilled promises from VDOT and Maryland's inactions. Chairman McKay said the Board would update the letter based on the comments today and send it out in a few days.

3. PowerPoint and NIP Letter Attached Draft Bicycle Parking Guidelines

Nicole Wynands, Senior Transportation Planner, FCDOT, updated the Committee on the draft bicycle parking guidelines. In 2023, the Parking Reimagined amendment of the Zoning Ordinance (ZO) made the provision of bike parking spaces and compliance with the Bicycle Parking Guidelines a requirement in most cases. However, the new requirements do not align with the 2014 Bicycle Parking Guidelines. In addition, the ZO does not provide short-term (visitor) and long-term (secure) bicycle parking ratios, detailed design guidance, or information about siting, wayfinding signage, rack spacing, bike room layout, security needs, and other amenities. The Board will review the Bicycle Parking Guidelines in mid-February 2024, the public review is scheduled in early March 2024, and Board endorsement in Spring or Summer 2024.

Chairman McKay stated that the issues are those existing commercial properties that do not provide bicycle facilities and how the County can use the guidelines to bring those communities into compliance. Mr. Steverson stated that it was important for the County to update the guidelines and for staff to approach those properties to discuss updating bicycle parking on their properties.

Supervisor Walkinshaw asked about the process where the property owners may be unable to meet the recommended ratio between short and long-term parking by land use. Ms. Wynands responded that the property owners often provide more bicycle parking spaces than required. It is not the ratio, but the number of short- and long-term parking spaces can be flexible to help the property owners reach the bicycle parking spaces' requirements. Supervisor Walkinshaw asked if there was a conflict between bicycle parking and landscaping. Ms. Wynands said visitor parking near the main entrance of a property or business usually causes the most conflict. However, it was often integrated into landscaping, such as a bicycle rack and bench.

Supervisor Jimenez raised a question about e-bike parking. Ms. Wynands responded that the number of e-bike parking and charging stations was based on total bike parking. Supervisor Lusk supported the bicycle guidelines and the ability to have parking spaces to secure and charge those e-bikes. Supervisor Alcorn asked if there were any overlaps between the guidelines for fleet bicycles like Capital Bikeshare and individual bicycle usage. Ms. Wynands explained that the design guidelines for Capital Bikeshare stations are on a larger scale and require solar power, more space, convenient location, and security. The e-bikes can use regular bike racks. Supervisor Alcorn asked if there were discrepancies between the different area guidelines across the County. Ms. Wynands replied that if the design were based on the 2014 Public Facility Manual, it would need to be updated. However, the rack design requirements have not been changed for over 15 years, so most bike facilities are okay.

Supervisor Storck asked about bicycles that had been abandoned and the procedure for removing them. Ms. Wynands said that there are existing procedures for abandoned bicycles. They will be tagged and held for a few months for the owners to claim before disposal or donation. Supervisor Storck asked if there were any standards to cover or protect individual bicycles. Ms. Wynands stated that providing a bicycle locker for short-term parking or having covered visitor parking would be a preferred solution. Supervisor Storck asked if art could be applied to the design. Ms. Wynands said art can be used in the design if the local zoning ordinance allows it. She said the guidelines can be adopted by the Park Authority and the School Board if they want to use them. Chairman McKay stated that when projects from the Park Authority or the school system were coming for improvements, expansion, and rehabilitation, the County encouraged them to follow the bicycle guidelines to update their facilities.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 p.m. The next Board Transportation Committee is scheduled for June 18, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.