



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

September 30, 2022
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
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-sept-30-2022>

Committee Chairman Alcorn called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. Chairman McKay made a preliminary motion allowing for remote participation in the Transportation Committee meeting of September 30, 2022, by Supervisor Storck. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Gross and unanimously approved by the Committee.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of June 14, 2022, meeting were accepted with no changes.

2. Silver Line Phase 2 Implementation

Martha Coello, Special Projects Division Chief, Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT), and Joe LaHait, County Debt Manager, Department of Management and Budget,

updated the Board on the current activities of the Dulles Metrorail (Silver Line) Phase 2 project. Recent activities include operational readiness testing; safety and security certification activities; and completing punch list items for track, stations, and yards. However, no update was available on the Revenue Service Date.

Committee Chairman Alcorn asked Mr. LaHait to confirm if the County used the C&I (Commercial & Industrial Property Tax) fund to cover the additional \$40 million per the project funding agreement. Mr. LaHait confirmed that was correct. Chairman McKay asked if the County had not paid that \$40 million, what would be the consequence? Tom Biesiadny, FCDOT Director, responded that it might be a legal matter. He said that the County is responsible for that amount per the requirements in the funding agreement. Chairman McKay emphasized that the County has the contractual requirement to pay for the additional funding request.

Supervisor Foust asked about the contingency line item of the original budget, how it was spent, and why it was not considered for the cost overruns on the project. Mr. Biesiadny stated that the original contingency was used for different elements of the project, for example, the stormwater management, the additional rock that was found, and other issues. Supervisor Foust asked if the \$250 million additional funding request was the correct and final amount for the project. Ms. Coello responded that she had information confirming that the amount was right to settle the claims with the project contractors. However, the project will need to be reconciled for Phase 1 and Phase 2. If there were any amount left at the end, it would be returned to the County per the funding agreement. Mr. Biesiadny stated that the County did not participate in the negotiation of the final agreement. However, he noted that all parties have incentives to keep the costs as low as possible. Supervisor Foust raised a concern about all the negative news for the last five years about the project, the performance of the contractors, budget overruns, use of the contingency amount, and the additional \$250 million. He asked who was looking out for the County's behalf. Mr. Biesiadny responded that the project used a mediator to help with the contract negotiation; however, County staff were not permitted to participate in the process.

3. Proposal to Facilitate Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging in Common-Interest Communities

Kambiz Agazi, Director, Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination (OEEC), briefed the Committee on the proposal to install EV charging stations in common-interest communities in Fairfax County. Due to the increase of EV adoption by residents in common-interest communities, staff recommended installing EV chargers in new buildings and leveraging County assets to expand EV use. Charge Up Fairfax is a community-based engagement program developed to assist Homeowners Associations (HOAs) with the installation of publicly available shared charging stations. The three-phase process includes HOA exploration phase, Charge Up Fairfax engagement phase, and HOA implementation phase. OEEC plans to work with the Reston Association to pilot Charge Up Fairfax with the goal to expand this program to other HOAs in the County. OEEC will seek Board approval on November 1, 2022, to apply for federal funding. The One Fairfax equity lens will be applied to prioritize the HOA database for the Charge Up Fairfax program to determine the amount of the grant funding.

Committee Chairman Alcorn thanked Mr. Agazi for his presentation and stated that Fairfax County is ahead of the region, and even in the country, regarding this program. The demographic data for households in Fairfax County shows that about half of the population lives in a community that does not have a garage or space to install a charging station. EV charging

stations could be a game changer to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Chairman McKay stated that he wanted to ensure that the County would assist residents and HOAs) through the regulatory process to get the proper permits. Mr. Agazi noted that this is a unique program in the country. Fairfax County staff are prepared to work with HOAs through each phase until electronic vehicles are installed. He also stated that Bill Hicks, Director, Land Development Services, and his team are working on frequently asked questions (FAQ) and some design templates. Mr. Agazi stated that the information, a list of vendors, and how to select a contractor would be included in the engagement package for HOAs. He also spoke with Leslie Johnson, Zoning Administrator, Department of Planning and Development, about the zoning issues. The zMOD (Zoning Ordinance Modernization) project has done a great job allowing charging stations to be installed in communities. The County will provide financial assistance to HOAs so residents, visiting family members, and friends will benefit.

Chairman McKay emphasized that electric charging is a County priority, and that all agencies must work together to achieve a common goal. Mr. Agazi stated that the County would provide technical assistance to HOAs for feasibility analyses. The analyses will determine whether an HOA can put a charging station in the parking lot, the type of power source, some options to reduce cost, and grant opportunities. Bryan Hill, County Executive, and Mr. Agazi have communicated with Dominion Power regarding the process. Dominion is developing a program to reveal where they will install charging stations and set the rates which will be available next year. Dominion Power will pay for the upfront costs.

Supervisor Palchik stated that getting this effort started and outreach to communities in need are crucial. She suggested creating an outreach workgroup for the initial engagement part. Mr. Agazi stated that dealing with HOAs is difficult because some HOAs are staffed with resources, but some are not. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for working with HOAs. Staff will be heavily involved in working with HOAs to explain the process and guide them along the way. He suggested doing a couple of pilot programs with HOAs, other than the Reston Association. Mr. Hill agreed that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Dominion Power is working on its program, and the outcome may change depending on the partnership with them. The Board will be updated on how the equity process is being addressed and how specific communities are being addressed differently than others. Supervisor Palchik emphasized the importance of getting the initial process done correctly. Committee Chair Alcorn stated that the structure of the Reston Association is different from other HOAs. They do not own the parking lot garages, but a cluster of associations in Reston do.

Supervisor Walkinshaw stated that the public EV charging stations receive too much attention versus the at-home EV charging stations. If people can charge overnight at home, they probably will charge up the battery every night. Therefore, they may not need public EV charging stations for daily commuting. He stated that EV charging at home is happening in the County, which is an urgent issue. He suggested doing a pilot program at some different types of communities, for example, townhouses, condos, or RVs. He asked about the options and structure of the funding to start the program. Mr. Agazi said he would not recommend money upfront and highly suggested a reimbursement process. He explained the financial structure of the HOA pilot. HOAs will sign an agreement for the shared charging model and become eligible for the reimbursement process before County staff do a feasibility study. The Soil and Water Conservation Board will administer the grant program for the County. Supervisor Walkinshaw suggested using the term “submit” the form rather than the term “apply.”

Supervisor Smith raised questions regarding how the funding model process works, the amount of money put into the program, the administrative costs, the funding amount available for the grants, the number of charging stations at Level 2, the value of adding Level 3 stations in certain places, and the public facilities.

Supervisor Storck recommended bringing the private sector and other organizations into the process by providing incentives for the program to be successful.

4. Additional \$100 Million for Active Transportation Projects

Eric Teitelman, Capital Projects Division Chief; Michael Guarino, Capital Projects Section Chief; Lauren Delmare, Active Transportation Engineer; and Nicole Wynands, Active Transportation Program, FCDOT, briefed the Committee on the \$100 million for Active Transportation Projects. The first \$5 million is available and the next \$25 million will be considered on October 11, 2022. Staff provided the Board updated project prioritization methodology in March 2022. The first \$5 million will be divided to DPWES trail maintenance (\$1 million), FCPA trail maintenance (\$1 million), and \$3 million for the first group of projects. Staff developed short list of projects for Board members to consider for the proposed \$25 million. An online public survey will be planned in December 2022 to January 2023 in addition to the outreach suggested by Board Members. The Board Item with final list of projects and start implementation is anticipated in March 2023.

Committee Chairman Alcorn stated that he was comfortable with the next steps and a public information meeting. Supervisor Gross noted that under the first \$5 million dollars, schools had no money to maintain the sidewalks on safe routes to school. Mr. Guarino replied that staff would reach out to the school system regarding the sidewalks or walkways maintained by the school. Supervisor Lusk proposed Lockheed Boulevard from Hybla Valley Elementary School to Huntley Meadows Park for the next \$25 million project. This project has Chairman McKay's support.

Supervisor Foust asked how the prioritization process was determined. Mr. Biesiadny stated that the initial list was identified for very short-term projects. The Board's direction is that the \$5 million should go partially to maintenance and \$3 million to short-term, very quick-hit projects. Staff has the flexibility in the \$25 million to go beyond just a quick-hit project to other more complex projects. Supervisor Foust said he looked forward to working with staff on the \$5 million project funding.

Supervisor Herrity stated that maintenance projects are important, and he liked that they were included in the initial list. However, he wanted to see more maintenance projects included in the \$25 million list.

5. Transportation Priorities Plan (TPP) FY 2024-2029

Tom Biesiadny, Director; Ray Johnson, Funding Section Chief; and Smitha Chellappa, Transportation Planner IV, FCDOT, updated the Committee on the framework for TPP for FY (Fiscal Year) 2024-2029. Staff updated the Committee on the process, revenue highlights, allocation highlights for FY 2024-2029, project impact and findings, and recommendations or

next steps. Staff recommended that the Board to consider funding new projects before 2029, previously approved projects could be deferred or eliminated to allow additional funding for new projects. Staff asked the Board to review proposed projects for 2024-2029 funding, and requested Board feedback on extent of public input for 2024-2029 TPP. The County will continue to pursue additional sources of revenue to addressed funding needs via local, regional and federal levels through FY 2029.

Supervisor Lusk asked for the reasons for the significant increase in costs for the Frontier Drive extension and the Town Center Parkway projects. Mr. Biesiadny pointed out that there were some adjustments in the scope of the projects due to the development process and community input. He offered to meet with Supervisor Lusk to explain the reasons in more detail.

Supervisor Gross stated that the Seven Corners project is very important and suggested reaching out to communities with language diversity, such as Spanish, Vietnamese, and others (i.e., faith-based organizations).

Supervisor Smith stated that she was very concerned about the recommendation to “*consider funding new projects before 2029, previously approved projects could be deferred or eliminated to allow additional funding for new projects.*” She stated that most of those projects are in design or ready to move forward to construction. She cautioned staff not to set high expectations at community meetings for projects when funding is unavailable. She noted that the General Assembly’s actions to remove funding impacted some current projects. Supervisor Herrity stated that he was also concerned about this. The General Assembly’s actions affected one project in the Springfield District. He suggested studying road bond options. Supervisor Foust commended staff for the public outreach efforts on the previous TPP’s, and suggested staff should duplicate the same work this time. He asked for the proposed project expenditures for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Supervisor Walkinshaw recommended going back to the community meetings to solicit public input. Staff should tell the public which projects have the higher priority and which projects will be deferred by noting a clear project status.

6. Implications of Free Fares on the Fairfax Connector

Due to the time constraint, this presentation was postponed to the next meeting. A hard copy was handed out to the Committee members for information.

Committee Chairman Alcorn called for a recess at 12:33 p.m.

Committee Chairman Alcorn called for the meeting to resume at 2:06 p.m. Supervisor Storck and Supervisor Palchik did not attend this session. Committee Chairman Alcorn announced that Chairman McKay could not participate in this briefing at the beginning because he was representing Virginia at the DC Chamber of Commerce Regional Forum this afternoon. However, Chairman McKay was able to join in the discussion section.

7. VDOT Northern Virginia Megaprojects Update

Susan Shaw, Megaprojects Director; Abraham Lerner, Special Megaprojects Manager; and Bryan Campbell, Environmental Specialist for Megaprojects Program, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT); updated the Board on the status of several mega projects in the NOVA region.

The presentation is available at:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/board-supervisors-i-495-and-i-66-megaprojects-update-continuation-transportation-committee-sept-30>

The Northern Virginia regional Express Lanes network consists of over 90 miles of Express Lanes network. There are 71 miles in service on I-95, I-395, I-495, I-66 Inside the Beltway, and I-66 Western Segment. There are 35 miles under construction on I-66 Outside the Beltway, I-95 to Fredericksburg, I-495 Northern Extension, I-95 Express Lanes/Opitz Boulevard Ramp. The I-495 Southside Express Lanes is a 11 miles segment that is under study. There are a total of three contractors working in the Express Lanes network. The details of the I-66 Outside the Beltway Express Lanes and the Western Section were discussed. The I-66 Outside the Beltway project is expected to be completed in summer 2023. New HOV-3+ rule will go into effect across the entire I-66 corridor – 24/7 for Outside the Beltway, and during peak directions and peak periods for Inside the Beltway. New and expanded commuter bus services on I-66 will soon be available. VDOT will be working on the I-495 Express Lanes Northern Extension Project (495 NEXT). The public and stakeholder outreach will be planned in 2023 with the anticipated project completion by 2026. VDOT is working on the the right-of-way and design noise analysis process. Maryland and Virginia are working on together to coordinate Maryland's Phase 1 South project and Virginia's 495 NEXT project.

Committee Chairman Alcorn thanked Ms. Shaw for the presentation. Supervisor Walkinshaw asked for the I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study status and the relationship between Virginia and Maryland. Ms. Shaw responded that the VDOT-led meetings are jointly hosted and closely coordinated with MDOT. Supervisor Walkinshaw posed a hypothetical question regarding a situation when the project is ready for construction on Virginia's side but delays or no action occur on Maryland's side. Ms. Shaw stated that Virginia would build, own, and operate a system that would tie into Maryland and vice versa. Maryland would have to approve whatever Virginia proposed.

Supervisor Gross asked for the timeframe of the I-95 Express Lanes Fredericksburg Extension (through Stafford) and the appearance of the noise wall facing the homeowners' side. Ms. Shaw stated she could answer the Fredericksburg extension question to Supervisor Gross at a later time. Regarding the noise walls, Ms. Shaw said that how both sides of the walls would be constructed depends on the location. For example, some sections of the noise wall have a simulated stone appearance on both sides. In addition, the walls depend on the right-of-way that VDOT owns. Supervisor Lusk asked for the specific impacts of the recommended preferred alternative of the I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study to some of the property owners on the Beltway in the vicinity of Oakwood Road and along Vine Street. Mr. Campbell responded that before the recommended preferred alternative phase, VDOT will have more details on the impacts in the Summer 2023.

Supervisor Foust raised concerns about removing a cell tower and cell service at Old Dominion Road and the Beltway. Staff discovered that the cell tower would have to be removed. Ms. Shaw stated that the need for the relocation of the cell tower was identified over a year ago. VDOT has been working with American Cell Towers, the company that owns the tower. That tower carries service for AT&T and another carrier. VDOT has started a meeting every two weeks with the tower company. Initially, the tower was supposed to be moved by September 30, but the move date has now been extended to December 31, 2022. The tower company stated that cell service along the Beltway will be degraded by moving the tower. They also noted that they could decrease the amount of data degradation or lessen the impact on cell service by making adjustments to adjacent cell towers. Ms. Shaw said that the rezoning process for a temporary cell tower is long. However, the cell tower company has not found a temporary location that would be acceptable to them. Ms. Shaw stated that VDOT is working hard to try to resolve the issue. Supervisor Foust stated that he would try to expedite the process if they found an acceptable site. He noted that the 9-1-1 emergency service would not be impacted because of the other carriers in the area. Ms. Shaw responded that would be a question for the cell tower company, because they told VDOT that they could not guarantee it.

Committee Chairman Alcorn mentioned that in the Hunter Mill District, the carriers were not necessarily exhibiting any sense of urgency in these types of situations with cell towers. The issue has been known for about a year, and nobody has done anything about it. Ms. Shaw replied that the tower is located next to the Old Dominion Bridge and that the bridge must be removed in a multi-phase process, which will be very challenging to work around. Chairman McKay concurred with Committee Chairman Alcorn. He stated that it had been a year since the tower removal issue was identified, and nothing was done. He was very concerned and wanted to find out why County staff did not consider a temporary tower an urgent process. It is a serious issue, because people are more reliant on cell phones to work from home during and after COVID-19. He asked VDOT to provide the proposed permanent and temporary locations for the cell tower. Ms. Shaw responded that the working group meets every two weeks, including members from the Department of Planning and Development and the representatives of the tower owners. Chairman McKay wanted to see what role and flexibility the County could have in this situation. Supervisor Foust stated that staff felt they had limitations on what they could approve as a temporary relocation. He acknowledged that everyone recognized it as an emergency. Fairfax County Attorney, Beth Teare, stated that she also has been aware of the situation. One of the major obstacles to moving forward, in this case, was that the cell tower company had not even suggested a temporary location. There is no pending application of any kind, so the County staff does not know where the cell tower company might relocate the tower.

Supervisor Foust asked construction vehicles for this project to use the ramp coming off I-495 at Balls Hill Road's staging area to access the staging area rather than going up on Georgetown Pike and coming into Balls Hill Road at Cooper Middle School. Mr. Lerner responded that the truck drivers were instructed to use the ramp. Supervisor Foust asked how bus service would operate during the time of construction in both Virginia and Maryland. Mr. Biesiadny stated that the Fairfax Connector has proposed routes from Tysons to Montgomery Mall and to Rockville. During construction, using the bus or private vehicle will be relatively slow. However, riding the bus is an alternative that some people might prefer over driving a car.

Supervisor Herrity stated that the Stringfellow and Monument ramps to the I-66 Express Lanes that can be accessed from the regular lanes significantly impact the Springfield District. He

requested FCDOT staff to help with the communication effort before the Express Lanes were open for service. Supervisor Herry said he was happy to see the extension across the American Legion Bridge. He suggested studying a regional bus service going over to Maryland and an express bus service on major routes.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:02 p.m. The next Board Transportation Committee is scheduled for December 13, 2022, at 11:00 a.m.