Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.
Conference Room 11, Government Center

Board of Supervisors Members Present:
Jeffrey C. McKay, At-Large (Chairman)
Kathy L. Smith, Sully District (Vice-Chairman)
James N. Bierman, Jr., Dranesville District (Committee Chairman)
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:
Walter L. Alcorn, Hunter Mill District (Committee Vice Chairman)

Note: The Braddock District Supervisor position is currently vacant.

County Leadership:
Bryan J. Hill, County Executive
Jennifer Miller, Deputy County Executive
Beth Teare, County Attorney

Link to agenda and presentation materials:
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/board-supervisors-transportation-committee-meeting-sept-16-2025

1. Opening Remarks

Committee Chair Bierman called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chair Bierman asked if there were any objections to approving the June 3, 2025, meeting summary. No objections were raised, and the June 3, 2025, meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

3. I-495 Southside Express Lanes

Michelle Shropshire, P.E., DBIA, Northern Virginia Megaprojects Director, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), briefed the Committee on the I-495 Southside Express Lane Study updates. The presentation outlines key updates on the project, emphasizing public engagement, environmental considerations, and multimodal transportation improvements. It highlights plans to enhance bicycle and pedestrian connections with over 7 miles of trails and VDOT's commitment to preserving options for future Metrorail expansion on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Public input has been robust, with over 900 online submissions and a survey revealing strong support for improvements. Financial feasibility and potential public-private partnerships are still being assessed, with a commitment to transit investment agreements if no public subsidies are required. Additionally, VDOT stressed the importance of including the project in Visualize 2050 to secure necessary funding and support for this regionally vital project to deliver near-term congestion relief, expanded transit connections, and travel reliability to commuters and travelers in Virginia, Maryland, and D.C.

The presentation is available at:
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/sites/transportation/files/Assets/Documents/PDF/btc/sept%2016%202025/2025-09-16_VDOT%20I-495-Southside-Study-Fairfax-Transpo.pdf

Committee Chair Bierman requested confirmation that the project does not preclude a future Metrorail extension across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Ms. Shropshire confirmed that it does not preclude a future Metrorail extension.

Chairman McKay stated that it is clear that VDOT includes a future Metrorail extension on the bridge and was dismayed that some people will not believe it. He emphasized that the "no-build" scenario could result in one-hour delays and severe cut-through traffic, which he described as unacceptable. He noted that if traffic is congested on the Beltway, the congestion would likely spill over to local roads as people seek alternative ways to get around. Ms. Shropshire stated that when traffic flows better on the highway, people will not naturally divert to the side streets and will continue traveling on the main road. Chairman McKay underscored equity concerns, noting that this part of Fairfax County should receive the same benefits as other areas of the County under the One Fairfax policy. He will communicate with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Transportation Planning Board (TPB) to advocate for keeping this project alive and not delaying it. He emphasized the importance of maintaining momentum to keep the project viable with Maryland partners.

Supervisor Lusk supported the project's advancement but raised concerns about impacts to adjacent arterials. He called for expanded pedestrian and bicycle improvements, specifically referencing a planned pedestrian bridge over I-495 from Vine Street to Oakwood Road. He also noted concern with some of Maryland's comments but also stated Maryland's partnership is essential. He reiterated the importance of having a future Metrorail extension over the Woodrow Wilson Bridge.

When Committee Chair Bierman asked, all Supervisors raised their hands in agreement that Maryland must be an active partner in the project. He said that it is extremely important to get Maryland's cooperation to make this project successful.

Supervisor Herrity echoed support for the project. He cited the success of I-66 and I-495 Express Lanes in reducing side-road congestion (noted Fair Lakes and Fair Oaks specifically, as well as the areas around Gallows Road). He cautioned against overbuilding bicycle/pedestrian facilities without ensuring usage. He encouraged Maryland to support the project for a better commute for all the residents in the region.

Vice-Chairman Smith asked whether VDOT evaluates traffic conditions after implementation of managed lanes, specifically asking if there is data since the I-66 Outside-the-Beltway project has been completed. Ms. Shropshire explained that VDOT uses real-time traffic data (INRIX), which can provide historical traffic speed data and concessionaire data to monitor post-implementation performance and indicate how the lanes perform.

Supervisor Palchik highlighted the importance of regional connectivity and urged that bicycle/pedestrian features are not treated as afterthoughts.

Supervisor Storck stated that residents are cautious about the project's net community benefits and reiterated that Maryland's cooperation is critical to avoid a "dead end" at the Bridge (noted the American Legion Bridge as a comparison).

Chairman McKay closed by emphasizing the importance of integrating the project's bicycle/ pedestrian network with the high-quality facilities already available on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge.

4. Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) – Report and 2025/2026 Work Plan

Members of the TAC who attended the meeting include:

- Chair Michael Champness, Dranesville District
- Vice Chair Christie Garton, Fairfax Area Disabilities Service Board
- Secretary Keith Foxx, Franconia District
- Kevin Morse, Braddock District
- Shiva Pant, Hunter Mill District
- Peter Weyland, Mount Vernon District

Commissioners Adwoa Rey (At-Large), Roger Hoskin (Mason District), and Sonya Breehey (Providence District) watched or listened to the meeting online.

The TAC presentation covered their advisory role, membership, and recent work. The TAC has been collaborating on the Transportation Policy element (of the Comprehensive Plan) with the Planning Commission’s Transportation Committee and County staff. Significant milestones include drafting a letter commenting on the Comprehensive Plan's Transportation Policies and Objective section, participating in urban development workshops, attending joint meetings, and providing feedback on many projects.

Outlined 2025/2026 Work Plan:

- Focus areas: transit network planning, microtransit, micromobility, autonomous vehicles, and trails/bikeways.
- Partnerships with the Planning Commission, Department of Economic Initiatives, and others.
- Emphasis on community outreach and stressed the importance of expanded outreach and partnerships.

The presentation is available at:
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/sites/transportation/files/Assets/Documents/PDF/btc/sept%2016%202025/TAC-Presentation_BTC_Sept-16-2025.pdf

Chair Bierman thanked the TAC members for volunteering their time to advise the Board on transportation issues. He praised the TAC's focus on microtransit and autonomous vehicles, calling them timely priorities. He mentioned the opportunity for a microtransit pilot program in the Town of Herndon.

Chairman McKay also thanked members of the TAC for their service. He requested clarification regarding the March 2025 TAC letter and whether any specific policies were hindering innovation. He stressed that the Comprehensive Plan must be flexible enough to adapt to new technologies and community needs. TAC Chair Champness responded that the recommendation was not driven by a single policy but by a broader need for flexibility. He emphasized that TAC does not want the Board "handcuffed" by outdated rules and highlighted the importance of placemaking that responds to different community contexts.

Supervisor Palchik commended the TAC's focus on transit-oriented development (TOD), noting that TOD should extend beyond Metrorail to include bus rapid transit and high-frequency commercial routes. She also encouraged TAC to promote micromobility and connectivity, encourage seniors to ride a bus, and attract new riders, highlighting the role of e-bikes in expanding accessibility. TAC Chair Champness agreed with the idea of inspiring people, especially seniors and middle school students, to ride the bus.

Supervisor Lusk praised the TAC's belief in Fairfax as a "test bed for innovation" and requested further exploration of Fairfax as a pilot site for emerging technologies. TAC Chair Champness explained that Fairfax has been recognized previously for its innovative efforts, such as its autonomous bus pilot program. He noted Commissioner Thiel has raised important challenges in designing autonomous vehicle systems that go beyond county-level considerations. The TAC intends to study these issues further, including outreach to research groups. Chair Champness encouraged the Supervisors to forward new ideas to the TAC, emphasizing that the Commission is "open for business" and ready to incorporate emerging topics into its work plan.

5. Transportation Priorities Plan (TPP) – Overview and Discussion

Ray Johnson, Chief of the Funding Section, Fairfax County Department of Transportation, updated the Committee on the Transportation Priorities Plan (TPP). The TPP is the County's primary document for guiding transportation investments in roadways, transit, and active

transportation. It is updated when significant funding changes occur or when reprioritization is needed.

The first TPP was approved in 2014 ($1.4 billion, FY 2015–2020) and updated in 2019 (over $3 billion, FY 2020–2025). The proposed FY2025–2030 update totals nearly $4 billion. The proposed TPP details include an estimate of $3.9 billion in revenue over six years, comprising contributions from federal, state, regional, local, private, and developer sources. A significant portion is committed to recurring obligations (e.g., $40 million annually for Connector operations, $13 million for Metro capital, and $13 million for Silver Line loan repayment).

The expenditures were proposed at $1.8 billion for major roadway projects (most with bicycle/pedestrian elements), $1.16 billion for transit operating and capital needs, $368 million for active transportation, $237 million for intersection/spot improvements, and $75 million for Reston and Tysons service district projects, and $20 million set aside for smaller or unexpected projects.

Challenges confronting the adoption of a revised TPP include rising costs due to inflation, labor, land, and materials, as well as revenue constraints. Staff propose focusing on completing existing projects rather than adding new ones unless swaps are made. Public engagement for the TPP update was conducted in July 2025, and approximately 330 comments were received. About 85 percent of the comments were project-specific, while about 15 percent were general, including opposition to widenings and calls for more multimodal options. The next step is for the Board's consideration in November or December 2025.

The presentation is available at:
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/sites/transportation/files/Assets/Documents/PDF/btc/sept%2016%202025/20250916_BTC_Presentation_TPP.pdf

Chairman McKay acknowledged cost challenges but stressed another key issue: project delivery delays. Projects take too long to complete. He emphasized timeliness as a distinct challenge and asked how the plan would adapt if new transit funding were to emerge from the DMVMoves Task Force or the General Assembly. He urged that if funding breakthroughs occur, the TPP should be amended to reallocate resources, particularly to free up funds for other transportation needs. Gregg Steverson, Director, FCDOT, responded that the TPP can be revisited and redistributed if major new revenues emerge. Options include bringing the entire TPP back for amendment or reallocating internally, depending on the Board's direction. He confirmed staff will present additional information on project timelines and delay factors at a future Transportation Committee meeting. Chairman McKay emphasized the need to ensure that Fairfax's internal processes are not contributing to delays, in addition to external factors.

Committee Chair Bierman strongly agreed, noting, "Time is money," and urged faster delivery within County processes.

Vice-Chairman Smith expressed frustration about project listings and timelines. She cited Sully District projects (e.g., Route 28 widening, Franklin Farm Road intersection) that appear unclear or have not advanced. She requested a meeting with staff to review all Sully projects. She

questioned how small projects can be advanced under the current framework. Mr. Steverson explained that $20 million is reserved for small-scale or unexpected projects, allowing flexibility.

Supervisor Herrity suggested reviewing state and federal mandates that create duplication and delay, referencing past successes in removing local mandates. He also emphasized the importance of engaging utilities early and leveraging Supervisors' connections to expedite the process.

Supervisor Storck asked how much of the $1.4 billion approved in the 2014 TPP and $3 billion in the 2019 TPP has been completed. Director Steverson stated we would have to get back to the Committee with that information. He highlighted the delays in Richmond Highway improvements. He emphasized the importance of accountability, clear ownership, and effective communication between staff and Board offices to prevent surprises and expedite delivery.

Supervisor Palchik emphasized that public engagement remains insufficient (330 comments countywide). She urged stronger outreach, especially on climate-related impacts, since 43% of Fairfax's greenhouse gas emissions come from transportation. She encouraged the Board to help staff reach diverse communities and ensure multimodal priorities are incorporated.

Supervisor Jimenez echoed the frustration, urging the County to stop "having meetings about meetings" and instead streamline processes to deliver projects more efficiently.

6. New Business

No new business was raised.

Adjournment:

Committee Chair Bierman adjourned the meeting at 3:04 PM. The next Board Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2025, at 11:00 AM.