Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2025, at 11:00 a.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)
Walter L. Alcorn, Hunter Mill District (Committee Vice Chairman)
Rodney L. Lusk, Franconia District
Andres F. Jimenez, Mason District
Daniel G. Storck, Mount Vernon District
Patrick S. Herrity, Springfield District

Board Members Absent:
Dalia A. Palchik, Providence District

Note: The Braddock District Supervisor position was vacant at the time of the meeting.

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-dec-2-2025

1. Opening Remarks

Committee Chair Bierman called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chair Bierman asked if there were any objections to approving the September 16, 2025, meeting summary. No objections were raised, and the September 16, 2025, meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Draft Active Transportation and Trails Plan

Nicole Wynands, Transportation Planner; Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT), briefed the Committee on the draft Active Transportation and Trails Plan (ATTP) – Active Fairfax Transportation Plan Study.

The presentation outlined the draft ATTP update to Fairfax County's Comprehensive Plan, which has a proposed adoption timeframe of Spring of 2026. The ATTP will provide guidance for walking, biking, and trails to create a safer, more connected, and more consistent countywide active transportation network. Building on planning and public outreach efforts since 2020, the draft plan streamlines conflicting policies, fills gaps in the planned network, and updates facility types and design guidance to reflect current best practices and federal and state standards. Community engagement in Fall 2025 showed strong support for expanded trails, improved multimodal connectivity, off-street bicycle facilities, and enhanced pedestrian safety and accessibility. Key components include an updated ATTP map with revised network symbology and facility recommendations; incorporation of the Active Transportation Toolkit to support implementation; and proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan (Transportation Element, Appendix 3 will be revised to reflect the plan's vision, commitment to all ages and ability design, and the revised facility types; Special Area Plans will be updated to reflect the combined Active Transportation Plan; and references to the standalone Bicycle Master Plan will be removed from Appendix 5). The Board was asked to provide feedback by December 20, 2025, on the proposed network and facility recommendations, and on updates to Appendix 3 of the Transportation Element of the Policy Plan.

The presentation is available at:
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/sites/transportation/files/Assets/Documents/PDF/btc/Dec%202%202025/ATT_BTC%20Slide%20Deck.pdf

Chairman McKay thanked staff for the extensive public outreach. He asked whether survey responses were geographically mapped to confirm countywide representation, and to recognize if there were any themes noted in specific areas of the county. Ms. Wynands confirmed that participation data could be shared and mapped. Chairman McKay also asked whether the draft plan currently posted online already reflected public comment. Ms. Wynands confirmed that the draft had been updated to incorporate received comments and that future public input would occur through Planning Commission and Board public hearings. Chairman McKay expressed his overall support for the plan and comfort with the three feedback questions posed by staff, while noting his disappointment with the relatively low number of survey responses and requesting confirmation that outreach was equitable across the County.

Supervisor Alcorn commended staff and asked for clarification regarding symbols on the plan map that appeared to indicate grade-separated crossings. Ms. Wynands confirmed these symbols represented recommended grade separations, such as bridges or tunnels. Supervisor Alcorn encouraged staff to review the plan one more time to ensure recently completed or underway trail projects – particularly those tied to new roadway infrastructure – were reflected. He expressed enthusiasm about the plan's progress and anticipated additional public feedback during finalization.

Supervisor Herrity raised concerns about reliance on voluntary public engagement and suggested that statistically valid surveys be considered in future planning efforts to capture broader public sentiment better. He asked whether the plan was fiscally unconstrained and whether staff had attempted to put a financial amount on the plan. Ms. Wynands explained that costs are difficult to estimate due to varied facility types, phased implementation through roadway projects and development, and new flexibility that allows for lower-cost neighborhood solutions. Supervisor Herrity emphasized the importance of maintaining flexibility so that plan recommendations do not become rigid development requirements that drive up project and housing costs.

Committee Chair Bierman asked staff to clarify language regarding federal funding eligibility and the designation of regional routes in the comprehensive plan. Ms. Wynands explained that many federal grants require facilities to be identified in adopted plans, making inclusion essential to unlocking future funding. Committee Chair Bierman noted that while the plan is aspirational, it can ultimately reduce costs by enabling access to federal funds. He emphasized the long-term planning horizon of the document and its role in preparing the County for future opportunities.

Supervisor Storck expressed strong support for the plan's visionary approach and acknowledged the complexity of the Mount Vernon District's geography. He referenced written comments submitted by Jim Klein of the Trails, Sidewalks, and Bikeways Committee. He asked whether staff responses would be provided. Ms. Wynands confirmed the comments were received and generally incorporated into the plan, and that a formal response could be provided. Supervisor Storck sought clarification on how future changes would be handled and whether the plan would be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. Staff confirmed adoption would occur through a Comprehensive Plan amendment and that future changes could be addressed through subsequent amendments, such as special area plans.

Supervisor Lusk praised staff outreach efforts and asked about changes to policy language regarding environmentally sensitive areas. He suggested modifying language to "avoid to the extent possible" or "minimize," rather than an absolute avoidance standard. Ms. Wynands agreed to review the request and respond back to the Supervisor. Supervisor Lusk also asked whether the finalized plan would be available in a GIS format. Ms. Wynands confirmed that data would be available through the County's open data portal with interactive mapping. He also asked about update frequency, and staff indicated a full review every five to ten years, with interim updates through special area plans. Supervisor Lusk closed by expressing appreciation for staff's long-term work.

Supervisor Alcorn added that inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan can trigger development-related improvements but noted that the district supervisors play a role in ensuring requirements remain reasonable. He emphasized that the plan represents a framework rather than a complete inventory of all pedestrian and trail facilities and that many smaller connections exist outside the mapped network.

Chairman McKay emphasized that one purpose of the plan is to prevent future development from blocking planned connections. He reiterated the importance of planning to support connections that make the trails and bicycle facilities, and pedestrian facilities more amenable.

Committee Chair Bierman concluded the discussion by acknowledging the challenges of comprehensive planning at the County scale and expressed full support for the plan. He stated that he, along with Chairman McKay, answered all three staff feedback questions affirmatively and thanked staff for their work.

4. Update on DMVMoves Efforts

Bryan Hill, Fairfax County Executive, and Clark Mercer, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), briefed the Committee on the proposed DMVMoves Plan

The DMVMoves initiative presents a unified regional strategy to address the Washington Metropolitan area's growing mobility needs and looming transit funding crisis by maximizing the value of existing transit and roadway infrastructure, modernizing Metro, and integrating regional services. The plan prioritizes reinvestment in Metrorail, development of a regional bus priority network (including seven key corridors such as Route 7), improved local bus and commuter rail service, and adoption of customer-focused regional standards for service quality, fares, and rider information. Core recommendations include fare integration across agencies (youth ride free, low-income discounts, regional passes), standardized bus stop design and information, shared procurement and training, and world-class transit with jurisdictional partnerships for planning and delivery. To support these improvements, DMVMoves proposes a sustainable, dedicated funding package of approximately $460 million annually, $142 million for Virginia, beginning in FY 2028, growing at 3 percent per year, with additional state and local investments for bus and commuter rail systems with Fairfax County's share estimated at roughly $33 million per year. Following approval by the COG and WMATA Boards in late 2025, the plan calls for coordinated regional advocacy, legislative action in 2026, and implementation funding beginning July 1, 2028, to deliver a seamless, reliable, and economically vital regional transit network.

Mr. Mercer summarized the DMVMoves process, emphasizing its inclusive regional structure and focus on identifying a realistic funding level to maintain and modernize the existing transit system. He noted that recommendations focus on the state of good repair, modernization, and bus network improvements, rather than rail expansion, but there is a need to utilize VRE passenger rail.

Mr. Hill emphasized that DMV Moves was intended as a foundation for continued regional collaboration, particularly as related efforts such as the Long Bridge and passenger rail expansion advance. He stressed the importance of equitable funding participation among Virginia, Maryland, and the District and highlighted the economic significance of WMATA.

The presentation is available at:
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/sites/boardofsupervisors/files/Assets/Documents/PDF/DMVMoves_CMercer_Fairfax_120225_v2.pdf

Chairman McKay underscored the importance of the Long Bridge project, likening its significance for VRE to the Rosslyn tunnel for Metro. He clarified that funding formula changes

were outside the scope of DMVMoves. He supported aligning bus systems across jurisdictions but stressed the importance of maintaining local control over bus operations. Chairman McKay emphasized that the plan's success depended on identifying a manageable funding number, improving system reliability, and establishing a dedicated revenue source with strong accountability measures. He emphasized that this is a "once in a lifetime opportunity" to fund Metro and have the political willpower to get it done. He stated that the WMATA Board took steps to improve the safety and reliability of the Metro system. However, the state of good repair is a key driver of reliability and ridership. Metro is the only system in the country without a dedicated revenue source, which prevents it from doing long-range planning and remaining sustainable. He stressed that the plan includes significant oversight and accountability. By endorsing the DMVMoves, the jurisdictions are sending a strong message to the General Assembly to work toward state funding for Metro.

Vice Chair Smith raised concerns about long-term Metro expansion plans, specifically the Orange Line extension to Centreville, and asked how to address community expectations during current comprehensive planning efforts. Mr. Hill and Mr. Mercer responded that while capacity constraints and funding remain challenges, interim strategies – such as BRT, express bus service, and phased development – can preserve long-term options. Chairman McKay added that interim transit investments (such as BRT) and supportive land use planning can help keep future Metro extensions viable.

Supervisor Herrity cited I-66 express lanes as an example of how dedicated lanes can support express bus and BRT service, noting potential applicability to other corridors.

Supervisor Alcorn referenced the Tysons planning experience as an example of preserving future transit corridors while conditioning density on funding availability. He also clarified the distinctions between DMVMoves' regional funding figures and the separate Virginia-specific numbers from the SJ28 workgroup, emphasizing the importance of addressing both capital needs and operating baselines. He said that the $460 million is the total regional capital need for WMATA, including the District, Maryland, and Virginia. There's another number just for Virginia, $400 million, that's come out of SJ28. That number includes the Metro portion for capital needs, as well as VRE and local bus. If we are going to do this once a generation, we need to tackle re-baselining. A dedicated funding revenue source is important and helps relieve reliance on Fairfax County's General Fund.

Supervisor Lusk commended the extensive collaborative effort behind DMVMoves and recognized the leadership of staff and regional partners.

Mr. Hill reiterated that identifying sustainable funding sources is the next major challenge and expressed hope that legislative discussions would provide flexibility in using state funding allocations.

Committee Chair Bierman concluded by emphasizing the significance of regional consensus around a shared funding target, describing it as a major step toward solving long-standing transit challenges. He encouraged Board members to support the SJ28 process and engage the General Assembly to advance dedicated transit funding. He thanked the presenters for their work.

5. 2026 Board Transportation Committee Topics

Gregg Steverson, Director of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation, discussed with the Committee the potential list of Board Transportation Committee topics for 2026.

Mr. Steverson provided an overview of anticipated Transportation Committee topics for the coming year, noting that five meetings were planned. He emphasized that the agenda was shaped by issues raised during prior committee discussions and was intended to address the Board's interests and questions directly.

Mr. Steverson stated that the first meeting, anticipated in February, would focus on Smart Scale, including a detailed examination of the program's scoring methodology and what he described as the "black box" behind project evaluation. He explained that staff intended to present lessons learned from prior rounds and outline a recommended strategy for Fairfax County's upcoming Smart Scale submissions.

He outlined additional planned topics, including:

- Fairfax Connector: with a discussion of electric and hybrid fleet considerations and ongoing propulsion discussions;
- Project timelines: including factors that contribute to delays and how timelines are developed;
- A "Funding 201" discussion: building on a prior introductory session, addressing local funding questions raised by the Board;
- Active Transportation Projects: update on the $100 million for active transportation projects; and
- Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit: later in the year, coordination with the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission on recommendations related to the eastern section of Route 7 and future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) planning along the corridor.

Mr. Steverson concluded by inviting committee members to suggest additional topics or areas of interest as staff finalized the annual schedule.

The presentation is available at:
https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/sites/transportation/files/Assets/Documents/PDF/btc/Dec%202%202025/2026%20BTC%20Topics.pdf

Chairman McKay stated that a key missing topic was a focused discussion on strategies for expediting project delivery. He emphasized that lengthy project timelines were a significant concern. He noted frustrations shared by the development community regarding permitting and coordination with VDOT. While acknowledging that these challenges were not unique to Fairfax County, he stressed the need for the County to improve delivery speed. He requested a presentation specifically addressing strategies to accelerate projects.

Mr. Steverson responded that the planned discussion on project timelines and costs would address many of these issues. However, he was open to expanding or separating the topic to allow for deeper discussion if the Committee desired.

Committee Chair Bierman stated that the overarching theme for the coming year should be to complete projects faster, more efficiently, and at lower cost, noting that reducing delivery time can yield significant cost savings. He indicated that discussions on project timelines, costs, and active transportation updates aligned with that goal. He also noted that the Audit Committee's work plan for the first quarter included an audit of active transportation processes to identify opportunities to improve efficiency and delivery performance. He emphasized that delivering projects on time and on budget should be a consistent priority for Fairfax County.

Chairman McKay added that the terminology used should reflect the County's goals, stating that the phrase "standard project timelines" was unacceptable. He requested that future discussions be framed around expedited timelines and improved cost efficiency, rather than maintaining existing standards.

Supervisor Herrity emphasized the importance of a strategic approach to Smart Scale, stating that the focus should be on how Fairfax County aligns and packages projects to maximize competitiveness under the program's existing rules. He also stressed the need for transparency about where delays originate – whether from County processes, VDOT requirements, or other external factors—so that the Board can pursue legislative or policy changes where appropriate. He noted that regulatory reform had been accomplished in the past and could be pursued again with sufficient information.

Mr. Steverson acknowledged that while Smart Scale rules are largely fixed, staff may identify areas—such as the balance between project cost and benefit—where policy changes would be desirable. He indicated that staff may return to the Committee with recommendations on issues that could warrant advocacy or further discussion.

Committee Chair Bierman stated that understanding which aspects of project timelines are under VDOT's control and which are within County control would help inform state-level advocacy efforts. He reaffirmed the County's commitment to improving efficiency within its direct authority.

Supervisor Storck encouraged staff to identify best practices from other jurisdictions, asking whether there are examples elsewhere in the country of projects being delivered faster, cheaper, or more effectively. He suggested that learning from peer jurisdictions could reveal alternative processes or techniques worth considering in Fairfax County.

6. New Business

No new business was raised.

Adjournment:

Committee Chair Bierman thanked members and staff for the discussion and noted that the meeting concluded on time. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 PM. The next Board Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.