

Candidate Name (Affiliation): **Jimmy Bierman (D)**

District: **Dranesville**

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## 1. Improving Public Transit

Public transit is the backbone of a sustainable, equitable transportation system and a thriving economy, and Fairfax County has admirable plans to expand its bus rapid transit (BRT) network to ensure fast, frequent, and reliable service for residents. While public transit ridership on some systems has been hit by the pandemic with reduced commute trips due to increased teleworking, transit remains key for essential workers, and for supporting compact, walkable communities.

Do you support increased funding for public transit to address budget shortfalls and make improvements to better serve riders?

Candidate's Response: **Yes**

What is your experience riding public transit? What ideas do you have to improve public transit in Fairfax County?

Candidate's Response: **I rode the Metro to work for years and enjoyed the convenience of how close it took me to work. It has been frustrating to watch the Metro become less and less reliable with longer wait times, especially during peak periods. My hope is that with the finalization of the Silver Line, Metro will see increased ridership and greater attention, which will lead to better service.**

**We need to expand bus routes and start orienting our County bus system to support all residents. In Dranesville in particular, we need to make sure that our County bus lines allow more residents throughout McLean, Herndon, Falls Church, and even parts of Great Falls to get to our Metro Stations. We should be doing our best to increase Metro-ridership for McLean and Herndon residents in particular, which will require new lines and opportunities to take people from the central business districts in both towns to Metro stations.**

## 2. Active Transportation Funding

The ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan – the County’s most significant overhaul of its bicycle, pedestrian, and trails plans – is expected to be finalized this year. The plan’s recommendations address critical safety needs for residents who already walk and bike and also make improvements to allow more residents to walk and bike conveniently and safely for daily needs. Realizing the Plan’s vision will require substantial, dedicated, and consistent funding.

Would you support Fairfax committing dedicated annual funding to support the ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan, even if that meant potentially delaying road expansion and interchange projects?

Candidate’s Response: **Yes**

What is your personal experience dealing with or advocating for pedestrian or bicyclist safety issues?

Candidate’s Response: **My neighborhood itself lacks sidewalks and there are no sidewalks connecting my neighborhood to downtown McLean. As such, I don’t have great places in my neighborhood to go for a walk with my two and a half year old son, and if we do go to downtown McLean, there aren’t many walking options available at all. I support additional pedestrian and bike infrastructure wholeheartedly, both would greatly enhance the lived experience of families like mine.**

### 3. Low-Stress Bike Network

Fairfax County has committed to reducing the amount people have to drive and associated transportation-related carbon emissions. The County’s climate plan calls for meeting a goal of 30% non-auto commuting trips by 2030. To make this shift, the County will need robust, accessible alternatives and bicycling is an ideal, low-cost, carbon-free alternative. But that mode shift requires dedicated infrastructure including an expanded network of trails and comfortable, protected, low-stress bicycle facilities – not just painted bike lanes or sharrows – to make bicycling meaningfully safer, more appealing, and more accessible and often requires roadway redesign that reduces parking and/or vehicle lanes.

Compared to the current prioritization, do you think greater priority should be given to the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians in the County’s roadway designs?

Candidate’s Response: **No**

How would you ensure that people of all ages and abilities have robust active transportation access to and along the County's major and most important thoroughfares and connecting streets?

Candidate's Response: **I believe that the County is already making strides to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, and I would like to see it continue on this path while also working on expanding road infrastructure and reducing our overall traffic. Herndon has a large cycling community that I want to support and McLean is interested in various pedestrian/bicyclist-friendly projects such as studying the impact of a potential pedestrian/bicycle bridge across Dolley Madison Boulevard near McLean Central Park and installing pedestrian lights in certain intersections. I would like us to continue investing in our bike trail systems, install bike lanes where possible, and increase walkability throughout the County. Concurrent with these efforts, I would like to increase the utilization of traffic cameras across the County, especially in school zones, to reduce speeding around high-traffic pedestrian areas.**

## 4. Safe Streets for All

On May 10, 2022, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors unanimously endorsed the Safe Streets for All Program, a comprehensive initiative to address systemic transportation safety issues for people walking, biking, taking transit, and driving. Included in the recommendations is a call for roadway infrastructure changes to slow traffic on our community's streets. Unfortunately, the County has not yet dedicated staff or funding to begin executing the program. At the same time, Fairfax County experienced a troubling uptick in traffic-related pedestrian fatalities in 2022.

Do you support the full implementation of the Safe Streets for All Program in Fairfax County, including changes to roadway design guidelines and an expanded automated speed enforcement program?

Candidate's Response: **Yes**

What proven traffic safety improvement policies, programs, and/or technologies would you like to see implemented in your district and throughout the County? Given the lack of clarity around who has the legal and budgetary authority to make roadway safety improvements stemming from state ownership of County roads, what steps would you propose to ensure that these roadway safety improvements are implemented?

Candidate's Response: **Road safety is a major concern in many of our large intersections and residential neighborhoods. I would like to see traffic calming measures implemented throughout the County with an all of the above approach utilizing various Institute of**

**Transportation Engineers (ITE) recommendations such as well placed medians, speed bumps, and raised crosswalks/speed tables. I would also like to see, as indicated above, greater utilization of traffic cameras to help reduce speeding and promote safer driving.**

**While roadway safety improvements are largely under the purview and control of VDOT, the job of a Supervisor is to work closely with VDOT and push VDOT to make the necessary changes and improvements to help local neighborhoods and communities. I take that role seriously and have little problem being a thorn in the side of VDOT when necessary and useful.**

## 5. Safe Routes to School

Trips to and from schools are among the best opportunities to reduce car trips in Fairfax County. A robust Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program can play a critical role in encouraging more families to walk and bicycle to school, which has been shown to increase confidence and sense of independence among children while also reducing pickup/dropoff vehicle congestion and associated carbon emissions. Unfortunately, the County's SRTS program includes just one dedicated staff position for a public school system that serves 185,000 students.

Would you support expanding the Safe Routes to School program, including additional staff capacity, to get more kids to walk and bike to school?

Candidate's Response: **Yes**

What other policies or budget items will you pursue to upgrade transportation infrastructure so kids can safely walk and bike to school?

Candidate's Response: **I would like the County to continue to invest in sidewalk improvements and pedestrian traffic signals to make it easier for children to walk to school since many families worry about their safety. I would also like the County to consider traffic calming measures in school zones. And, again, I want to utilize speed cameras in school zones.**