

Candidate Name (Affiliation): **David Fiske (D)**

District: **Dranesville**

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: **For several years I rode Metro every day from Greenbelt Station in Maryland to Crystal City Station in Arlington. At that time the Yellow Line did not go all the way to Greenbelt, so there was a transfer in each direction. Later, my wife and I lived in Crystal City with one car, which she typically drove to work daily, leaving me to walk or take public transportation. My experience was that these modes of transportation were relatively slow but reliable through the District and within Arlington. They were often unavailable or impractical for any business needs elsewhere in the region.**

Since we moved to McLean, I sometimes take Metro into the District, but it is often more time- and cost-effective to drive. The lack of parking along the Silver Line makes it difficult to take from McLean. The Orange Line stations have more parking but are out of the way.

Public bus access is not possible in many Dranesville neighborhoods. The County should consider investing more in first/last mile options that connect neighborhoods to the main transportation network. These options could include smaller vehicles that can more easily enter smaller neighborhood streets and could include an on-demand

component that allows the resources to be used effectively. The County could try to reduce the number of full-sized buses running on underutilized fixed routes.

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: **No**

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

Candidate’s Response: **I had a serious bicycle accident in my twenties and have two children who ride bikes in and around our neighborhood. I’m keenly aware of the dangers associated with bicycling at all ages and interested in safety improvements where possible. We are fortunate to have safe walking paths from our house to most points of interest within walking distance, but I’m aware that many parts of the County lack any walkway along major roads and need further development of sidewalks or trails.**

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: **The County is too diverse in infrastructure and topography to have a single answer for such a broad question. The Board of Supervisors and the County staff are able to address this issue in context of the needs of individual communities and street conditions.**

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: **No**

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: **I do not support automated speed enforcement, but I do support many of the other aspects of the program. I would have preferred to answer "partially" to Question 4a.**

Most roadway safety improvements are the responsibility of the state, but the County should (and in many cases does) advocate for residents with VDOT to help identify needs and prioritize resources.

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: **No**

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 could be swayed by new evidence, but I answered "no" to Question 5a because my personal experience as a parent with children at two public schools is that most car trips are based either on schedule conflicts or weather, neither of which can be mitigated by County investments.**

I support focused investment in sidewalks, trails, and crosswalks that connect neighborhoods to schools and are close enough to school that bus service is not offered for the cases where pedestrian/bike safety is priority concern of nearby parents.