

Candidate Name (Affiliation): **Dan Storck (D)**

District: **Mount Vernon**

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 ride Metro, trains, buses and bikes to work whenever possible. I am on the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Operations Board and its Finance Committee Chair, while also serving as an alternate on the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) Board. A more reliable, trustworthy and flexible VRE and Metrorail system will attract more ridership and improve overall transportation in our area; however, our most essential transit for increasing ridership and reducing greenhouse gasses is our bus system. I have led bringing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to the Richmond Highway Corridor (now branded "The One"), and am committed to ensuring the Corridor becomes a future Metrorail line.

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:

As an avid walker, runner and cyclist throughout the Mount Vernon District, I personally experience and hear from constituents almost every day of the need for safer and more enjoyable sidewalks, trails and bike lanes, and intersections that support that safety as well. I have effectively worked with FCDOT [Fairfax County Department of Transportation] and VDOT [Virginia Department of Transportation] to dramatically increase these improvements throughout the District and our County including more sidewalk and trail connections and new sections, bike lanes, improved crosswalks and pedestrian alert signals.

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: **Yes**

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 would do this by continuing to make sure our land use decisions reflect the importance of density along our urban main streets, bringing more BRT [bus rapid transit] lines, reliable, more frequent bus and Metro service, and more last mile solutions to improve access for all users. We need to continue investing in these solutions. As a School Board Member and Mount Vernon District Supervisor, I have championed providing students free public transit passes and am proud to have supported our expansion of free Connector and Metro bus fares for all our young riders to encourage a lifetime of public transportation users.

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:

I disagree, Virginia and VDOT [Virginia Department of Transportation] clearly have responsibility for roadway safety improvements, they have just not adequately invested in them in Fairfax County. As a result, the County many times must step in to protect the lives of our residents. Doing so is very time consuming, cumbersome, as well as costing the County staff time, money and our residents' tax dollars. Over the past couple years, substantial safety responsiveness and improvements by VDOT seem to be occurring, however, more time, support and funding are needed.

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 successfully advocated a year ago and ensured the FCPS [Fairfax County Public Schools] Safe Routes to Schools position was retained, but it is urgent that FCPS expand their support for this critical opportunity to enable more students to walk to school and the benefits it has to overall health. Funding to support the sidewalk and trail gaps by Fairfax County and in Mount Vernon District continue to be available and our highest priority.

Schools must continue to upgrade their walking, biking and driving educational instruction for all ages, incentivizing walking and biking and disincentivizing single occupancy vehicle transport to school. Recognizing and rewarding the behavior we want and making less convenient and more expensive single occupancy vehicle transport we don't want.

