



**WABA**  
WASHINGTON AREA  
BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION



**Coalition for Smarter Growth**  
DC • MD • VA

November 15, 2024

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors  
12000 Government Center Pkwy  
Fairfax, VA 22035

**Re: 2025 Draft Legislative Program**

Dear Chairman McKay and Members of the Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) and the Coalition for Smarter Growth (CSG), we are writing to express our support and offer select comments on the County's 2025 Draft Legislative Program.

Overall we are encouraged by the inclusion of active transportation and multimodal language in the County's priorities and seek to strengthen and expound on those priorities in small but important ways. In particular, we deeply appreciate the County's clear understanding of what is and will continue to drive our success – sustainable, transit-oriented, and walkable communities – as referenced below (*emphasis ours*):

Provide funding assistance for the transportation needs of major activity centers to lay the groundwork for economic growth – Fairfax County contains a number of major activity centers (such as Tysons, Springfield, Seven Corners, Centreville, Reston, and the Richmond Highway Corridor) that generate public benefit for the County and the Commonwealth, *and must be sustainable, transit-oriented, and walkable communities to remain successful and accommodate predicted growth.*

To build on this shared vision, we offer the following amendments to the 2025 Draft Legislative Program text.

1. Within **Overarching Priorities > Funding Core Services > 3) Transportation Funding**, we would encourage amending the text as shown below in **bold**:

The Commonwealth should build upon the successful enactment of significant transportation revenues by the 2013 and 2020 GAs to ensure sufficient funding for transportation needs, which include new projects, state road maintenance (encompassing improved repaving, snow removal, mowing in the right-of-way, **sidewalk/sidepath maintenance**, and stormwater management), **roadway**

**safety improvements**, and continued state assistance for local and regional transit systems (including the Fairfax Connector, the Virginia Railway Express, and WMATA).

Fairfax County faces an immense backlog of sidewalk and trail repairs, a reality this Board of Supervisors attempted to address beginning in 2021 with a one-time commitment of \$100 million over 6 years. But more is needed to ensure our active transportation network – much of which falls within state-managed rights-of-way – remains usable now and into the future. We also believe strongly that safety improvements deserve a standalone reference; while safety undergirds both new projects and in maintenance efforts, we think it is meaningful to elevate its importance in the County’s stated priorities around transportation. To that end, the County might also include the following new bullet under **3) Transportation Funding**:

Provide sufficient funding for safety-focused roadway improvement programs including quick-build/rapid-deployment safety treatments.

2. Within **Overarching Priorities > Governance > Local Flexibility**, we encourage the inclusion of active transportation as an additional area where localities deserve increased flexibility to explore innovative solutions. Modal shift, and in particular active transportation, is and should be a critical part of our carbon emission reduction strategy and should be reflected in the text as shown in **bold** below:

The state should provide localities with increased flexibility to explore initiatives that promote clean air, energy efficiency, conservation, new investment in green construction, tree preservation, reduced waste, recycling management, **active transportation**, and other critical measures that could spur the development of innovative approaches to address the impact of global climate change on health and the environment, and increase sustainability throughout the Commonwealth.

3. Within **Position Statements > Environment > Global Climate Change/Environmental Sustainability Initiatives**, we encourage the County to expand its definition of EVs to include electric bicycles. Research has shown that e-bikes can effectively replace car trips (therefore reducing carbon emissions *and* congestion/VMT) and that e-bike rebates are more cost-effective than EV rebate programs. If the County’s stated position embraces EVs, it ought also to embrace e-bikes as shown in **bold** below:

Support state income tax incentives, funding, and rebates for businesses or residents to defray the cost of new construction, building improvements, and the transition to more efficient or alternative fuel vehicles (including the purchase of new and used EVs **and the purchase of new electric micromobility**

**devices**), as well as flexibility in determining rebate eligibility in high cost-of-living areas like Northern Virginia. Also support programs like the mileage choice program (a voluntary program for drivers of fuel-efficient vehicles and EVs that allows drivers to pay the highway use fee on a per-mile basis based on actual usage), that incentivize the use of EVs while also ensuring all drivers make fair contributions to support the Commonwealth Transportation Fund.

Support adequate state resources for localities to invest in EVs (**including electric micromobility**) and related infrastructure.

4. Lastly, within **Transportation > Transportation Safety and Coordination**, we note the County's support for better regulation of modified exhaust emissions, certainly a quality of life if not necessarily a major safety issue. An issue we *do* see as having major safety implications worthy of additional regulation is too-dark window tints. The County's "Take A Moment" campaign specifically highlights the importance of bicyclists and pedestrians making eye contact with other road users to ensure they see you moving into their line of travel; this is made near-impossible by the preponderance of 'blacked out' or heavily-tinted windows on cars in the County. We would encourage the following additional bullet:

Support state action to better regulate the sale, application, and installation of windows and window tint treatments rated below the state legal limit (currently no tinting of windshields and no tints rated less than 50% VLT [visible light transmission] on front side windows).

Together, these small additions can help ensure that the County's admirable priorities and positions continue to center safety and fully encompass the active transportation modes so critical to our success. We are grateful for the opportunity to provide this feedback and look forward to working with you and our state legislators in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Kevin O'Brien, Virginia Organizer  
Washington Area Bicyclist Association

Sonya Breehey, Northern Virginia Advocacy Manager  
Coalition for Smarter Growth

About Us:

*The Washington Area Bicyclist Association has worked for over 50 years to transform the capital region by improving the conditions for people who bike. Our work to advocate for dedicated bike*

*infrastructure, pass laws that promote safe roadway behavior, and provide education programming for all road-users has resulted in a drastically different cultural and political approach to biking for transportation. Bicycling can and should be an equitable, safe, low-cost, time-saving, and sustainable way to navigate our communities for all.*

*The Coalition for Smarter Growth is the leading organization in the Washington, DC region dedicated to making the case for smart growth. Our mission is to advocate for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.*