



County of Fairfax, Virginia

Fairfax Connector Riders Advisory Committee (RAC)

Board Transportation Committee

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Issue



- At the June 4, 2013, Board of Supervisors Meeting, during the approval for Fairfax Connector's Silver Line bus service plan, Supervisor Hudgins asked that the Board refer the issue (of community outreach) to the Transportation Committee meeting to explore the establishment of a Transit Riders Advisory Group to provide input on transit issues



Research



- Staff researched various transit riders advisory groups including:
 - WMATA: Riders Advisory Council (RAC)
 - Arlington County (ART): Transit Advisory Committee (TAC)
 - Charlotte, NC (CATS): Transit Services Advisory Committee (TSAC)
- Reviewed other Fairfax advisory committees
- Reviewed by-laws, guidelines, resolutions, procedures, roles, responsibilities, membership composition, and meeting frequency



Research

- Reviewed other Fairfax County advisory Committees
 - Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC)
 - Disability Services Board (DSB)
- Attended meetings, conducted interviews
 - WMATA RAC
 - Met with WMATA RAC coordinator to seek insights into the operation of the committee
 - Fairfax County Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)
 - Attended meetings of the TAC to discuss RAC concept and solicit the group's input



Research

- Typical Purpose: A committee that can advise the governing body on transit service from the riders perspective
 - Service plans
 - Communications and outreach
 - Transit policies and procedures
 - Performance standards
 - Emerging issues in public transportation
 - Feedback on Connector service





Research

- Typical Composition: Varies
 - Depends on governance
 - One member for each district/jurisdiction that is on the transit board
 - Members are typically transit riders of their local system
 - Body's size can range from 13 to 21 members
 - Bodies usually include a representative from the disabled community
 - Other representatives can include at-large or area specific, such as north and south county



Consultation

Transportation Advisory Commission

- The Board directed staff to seek input from the Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC)
- At the May 5, 2014, meeting of the TAC, staff presented a series of questions regarding the nature and role of the RAC to the Commission and asked for input
- Staff subsequently met with the TAC on August 19, 2014, and September 16, 2014, to review and discuss the Commission's response to the questions



Consultation

Transportation Advisory Commission

- Summary of commissioners response to first question:
Is there a role for the RAC?
 - Name of proposed RAC should reflect service type (i.e. Fairfax Connector) that will be the focus of the group. This reflects the fact that WMATA currently maintains a riders advisory council (RAC) for Metrorail and Metrobus services
 - Differing Connector service levels and availability across the county may make it challenging to identify a qualified representative from each magisterial district



Consultation

Transportation Advisory Commission

- Summary of commissioners response to second question: How would the RAC's purpose differ from the TAC's purpose?
 - Narrowly define RAC's role to operational matters affecting Fairfax Connector to avoid overlap with TAC's role
 - TAC is more broadly focused on all transportation issues affecting the county
 - RAC would be focused on assessing and improving current bus services from the viewpoint of the rider



Consultation

Transportation Advisory Commission

- Summary of commissioners response to third question:
How would the RAC and TAC interact?
 - Initial TAC suggestion of folding this role into the existing TAC, but subsequent discussion argued for a separate bus riders group that would focus on service issues
 - Open invitation to TAC and RAC representatives to attend each other's meetings as needed to share information
 - RAC input/recommendations could be forwarded to TAC for their consideration as part the overall county transportation scheme



Proposal

If the Board believes a Riders Advisory Committee would be a valuable tool to provide advice on Fairfax Connector service, staff recommends the following:

- Name: Fairfax Connector Rider's Advisory Committee (RAC)
- Mission: Provide input on customer service and operational issues that affect Fairfax Connector bus service
- Purpose: Represent consumers and residents perspective and improve bus operations and customer service

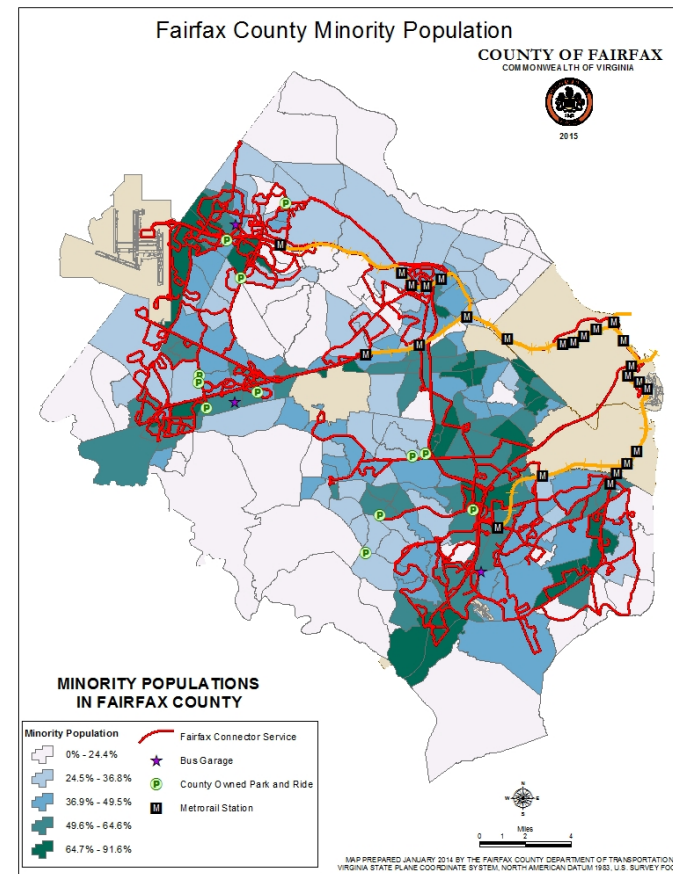
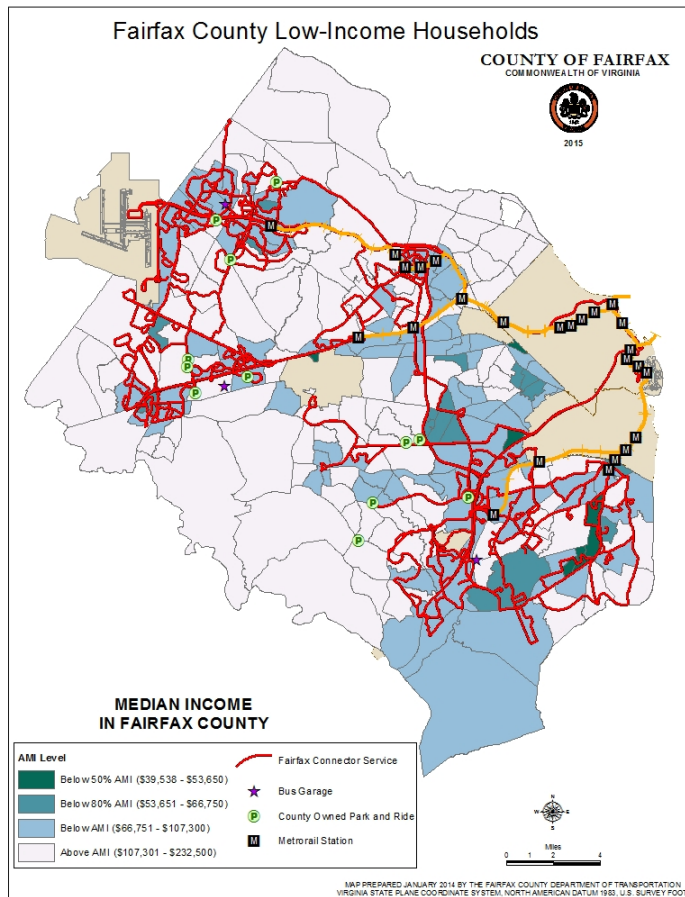


Proposal

- 13 members
 - Ten, one from each magisterial district plus one at-large citizen representative appointed by Board Chairman
 - One nominated by Disabilities Service Board
 - One Non-rider nominated by Fairfax Federation of Citizens Association
 - One Non-rider nominated by Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce
- Recruitment coordinated by FCDOT Transit Services staff
 - Membership should be representative of the demographics of Fairfax County and reflective of Title VI requirements [MINORITY REPRESENTATION ON PLANNING AND ADVISORY BODIES. Title 49 CFR Section 21.5(b)(1)(vii)]



Demographics





RAC Appointments

- On-line application process
 - On-line form (www.fairfaxconnector.com) would identify applicants by magisterial district
 - Ask Supervisors to encourage potential candidates to apply for available slots on the RAC
 - FCDOT Transit Services staff would vet the applications received
 - Eligible applicants from each magisterial district would be forwarded to the respective Supervisor for their review
 - Supervisor would recommend their candidate nomination to the Board
 - At-large member of RAC to be selected by Board Chairman



RAC Appointments

- Disabilities Service Board, Fairfax Federation of Citizens Association, and Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce
 - will each nominate a candidate
 - Candidates vetted by FCDOT Transit Services staff and ratified by the Board of Supervisors



RAC Appointments

- RAC members will be appointed to staggered two year terms.
 - Initial appointments will take this into account by appointing seven members to two year terms, and six members to three year terms
- RAC officers will include a chairperson and vice-chairperson.
 - Officers will be nominated and elected by the RAC



Recommended Action

- Staff believes a RAC can provide valuable input that will lead to improved Fairfax Connector service and recommends the Board consider, at a subsequent regular meeting, adoption of a resolution for the establishment of a 13 member Fairfax Connector Riders Advisory Committee. The committee will be governed by proposed by-laws to be included in the Board meeting item



Questions/Comments