Fairfax County Department of Transportation
4050 Legato Road, Suite 400
Fairfax, VA 22033

Subject: commentary on Fairfax County DOT 2025 TPP

June 18, 2025

I live in the Mt Vernon District of Fairfax County.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the 2025 Fairfax County TPP.

I oppose the construction of segment 6 of the proposed Cinderbed Road Bike Path (TPP#:109).

Do we really want this?

Or, would we prefer this?

This project apparently started in the public view in 2014 with a line drawn on a map and approved as a solution to a perceived need for additional pedestrian and bicycle access from somewhere to the Springfield Metro station. I find no study or analysis for the expected use for this route and there is apparently no study or analysis of the actual use of existing routes providing bicycle and pedestrian access to the Springfield Metro from the South.

Projects in the TPP should be re-evaluated for both ROI but also adherence to county policies, such as Resilient Fairfax. In this case, transportation projects in wetlands, floodplains, and globally rare habitat should avoid those areas.

I respectfully request that the funding for this section be diverted to an alternative route such as Loisdale Road

Alternatives such as Loisdale Road and Beulah Road have not been considered. I asked about this specifically on a conference call with Fairfax County DOT personnel which included the person responsible for analyzing alternatives. He specifically stated that he did not look at these roads as an alternative route to the proposed route.

Current infrastructure already exists today between Barry Road and Newington Road, but improvements, particularly on Loisdale Road's bike/ped infrastructure, could drastically improve the comfort and safety of this current connection.

In just the last five years this project's costs have ballooned from $6.2MM (as listed in the FY 2020-2025 TPP Project List) to $18.05MM. That is a 291% increase **in just 5 years.** $7.4MM of this project is still unfunded according to the June 2025 TDD report.

The original cost estimate in 2014 was approximately $4MM. That original estimate did not account for the actual terrain involved, having to build through extensive wetlands in the recently expanded Newington Conservation Area, or bridges over an environmentally sensitive acidic seepage swamp in the northern part of section 6.

The overall increase in the Cinderbed bikeway project from approximately or less than $4MM to $18.05MM is more on the order of 450% and growing!!!

These costs will continue to rise in light of inflation due to tariffs on steel and aluminum, labor wage increases, and **acquisition of the Aberleigh property or right of way most likely through the process of eminent Domain seizure** as **such an acquisition must be approved by two thirds plus 1 of all Amberleigh home owners through a general vote of the HOA.** This is in the HOA bylaws. As a past member of the Amberleigh Board of Directors, I view this approval as extremely unlikely.

These are my tax dollars, your tax dollars! They must be spent wisely!! I am retired on a fixed income. It astounds me that my taxes have gone up more than 15% in the past three years!! And yet they are being expended on this unnecessary segment 6.

Some of these dollars may be from State or Federal grants (if they are still available with this Administration), but they are still our tax dollars that need to be spent wisely.

Inclusion of segment 6 of this project is uncalled for and is tantamount throwing good money after bad while destroying sensitive environmental areas.

I listened in on the February 25th 2025 meeting of the County Transportation Committee. Supervisor Herrity specifically mentioned the extensive need for small fixes such as crosswalks in high risk areas and how far we are behind funding the large backlog of maintenance and repair of what has already been built.

I suggest that the money intended for the environmentally destructive segment 6 of the Cinderbed Road Bikeway would be better used for these and other critical purposes. As the county faces increasing budget challenges, please invest our limited funds and tax dollars on active transportation projects with far higher ROI and no impacts to our most sensitive wetland habitats.

In closing, I oppose the funding of Segment 6 or the Cinderbed Bike Trail.