



# CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

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**DATE:** Jan. 11, 2022  
**TO:** Mayor Tarter, Vice Mayor Hardi, and City Council Members  
**FROM:** Citizens' Advisory Committee on Transportation  
**SUBJECT:** CACT 2022 Annual Report and 2023 Priorities

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Here are highlights of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Transportation's (CACT) 2022 efforts and its priorities for 2023:

## Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program

The CACT continued to help City staff administer the Neighborhood Traffic Calming (NTC) program. Recent accomplishments include:

**Great Falls Street and Dorchester Road** | A Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB) was installed at this busy intersection used by many families visiting Lincoln Park and a school bus stop. The original design was modified to accommodate future bike lanes on this designated bike route.

**Oak and Lee Streets** | Traffic calming measures approved in 2021 were installed.

**East Columbia Street** | An August 2022 traffic study showed a disturbing top speed in this residential area of **72 mph** and 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds of 30 mph or above in both directions on all three days of the study. In October, CACT approved initial light solutions. The City speed trailer was briefly dispatched, and a longer deployment is in the works.

**Lawton Street** | Three speed humps were installed in October using NTC and developer funds.

**Gresham Place** | CACT approved initial light solutions, including recommended signage updates, since some drivers trying to access I-66 may not see the small "dead end" signage.

**Greenway Downs** | CACT reviewed 30% plans in August. Staff is reviewing intersection geometry regarding school bus access. Additional community outreach is planned in early 2023.

**NTC Program Revisions** | Continuing a multiyear effort of evaluating and refining the NTC program, CACT is participating in a staff-led effort to accomplish the Council Work Plan goal of updating NTC procedures incorporating lessons learned from recent projects.

## **Bicycle Infrastructure Lessons Learned**

On March 17, 2022, nearly 50 people attended a [joint meeting of the CACT and the Environmental Sustainability Council](#) to hear lessons learned from local transportation professionals about their approaches to installing bike infrastructure.

To aid ongoing efforts to improve bicycle infrastructure, including an earlier [Work Plan goal](#) to build a mile of protected bike lanes, CACT compiled [top lessons learned](#), including:

- DDOT focuses on creating low-stress bike facilities that can be used by people ages 8-80 wherever possible to attract/retain cyclists and meaningfully improve mode share.
- Bike lanes make roads safer for drivers and pedestrians, too, by narrowing travel lanes and calming traffic.
- For transportation designs, safety should be the first consideration, not vehicle capacity.
- Bike lanes have constituents whose needs should be met.
- When redesigning a street, start from a blank slate and define priorities around access and safety first, rather than starting negotiations from the existing built environment and trying to squeeze in bike infrastructure on the edges.
- Piggybacking on regular road resurfacing can economize and expedite bike lane projects.
- With bike projects, try to connect places or fill gaps in your transportation network. Ask, “What are we trying to solve?”
- Look for ways to build quickly through pilot projects and tactical urbanism, then figure out how you can make the infrastructure permanent if it’s a success.

## **Bike Master Plan Input**

In August 2022, CACT shared a [15-page memo](#) of bicycling observations, history, and resources with the Virginia Tech studio class that reviewed bicycling in the City.

The CACT chair attended the Dec. 7 Planning Commission meeting where the [students shared their findings](#). CACT will examine the [116-page “Review of Bicycling in Falls Church” report](#) that submitted on Dec. 15 and remain involved in upcoming discussions about how to incorporate the students’ recommendations into the Bicycle Master Plan from 2015.

## **Prioritizing Bikes Lanes and Micro-Mobility Infrastructure**

Following up on its 2021 [Recommended Locations to Construct Protected Bike Lanes](#), the CACT sent a February 2022 letter entitled “Why Falls Church Should Prioritize Bikes Lanes and

Micro-Mobility Infrastructure” to City leaders. The Planning Commission and [Environmental Sustainability Council also signed onto the letter](#) as well.

“The City of Falls Church — through its size, density, amenities, and public transportation access to the broader Washington metropolitan area — is well-positioned to reduce residents’ and visitors’ dependency on motor vehicles for daily activities,” the letter begins. “The W&OD Dual Trails and new bike bridge were major advances, and now the City must make more investments in expanding and connecting its safe, equitable access to multimodal transportation options.”

The letter outlines how bike lanes would be a cost-effective way to help accomplish all eight core values in Falls Church Vision 2040. It also urged City Council, City staff, and other boards and commissions to take five actions related to:

- The last half-mile to the secondary schools’ campus
- Park Avenue Great Streets
- South Maple Avenue and Annandale Road
- Broad Street developments
- Updating the Bicycle Master Plan

## **Development Project Input**

CACT continues to follow the latest designs of these projects and provide input focused on transportation safety and increased multimodal transit:

- Founders Row II
- Broad and Washington
- One City Center
- West End
- Greening of Lincoln Avenue
- Maple and Annandale roundabout
- Park Avenue Great Streets

With these large developments changing local traffic patterns, the CACT encourages the City to:

- Seek more funds from developers for traffic calming, multimodal, and sidewalk projects on nearby streets
- Require developers to provide level of service (LOS) studies for pedestrians and people on bicycles — as other jurisdictions do — not just motor vehicle LOS

## **2023 CACT Priorities**

- Share recommended refinements to the NTC program and handbook with City Council
- Work with City staff to identify highest-priority projects for DPW’s much-anticipated rapid safety improvements team, which may include these earlier recommendations:

- [Updated CACT Pedestrian Safety Improvement Recommendations](#) (January 2022)
- [Walkability and Spot Pedestrian Improvements](#) (2019)
- Participate in discussions about updating the Bicycle Master Plan
- Work with City staff to improve process of requesting speed trailer deployment
- Collaborate with stakeholders to host a demonstration bike lane event
- Develop a dashboard ([draft](#)) of key metrics to track City's progress on goals listed in Mobility for All Modes
- Encourage the City to create a streamlined transportation safety intake process to consolidate, analyze, and prioritize suggestions, including for sidewalks and accessibility improvements, from the public, staff, and other stakeholders
- Recommend locations to build bike lanes
- Recommend the development of a public transit master plan with the goals of increasing transit ridership and transit mode share while reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Explore expanding NTC into more of a Complete Streets program that would include sidewalk improvements
- Encourage the City to incorporate sidewalk and accessibility improvements while constructing nearby projects; these may also help calm traffic as well
- Drive accountability for adherence to transportation policy (e.g., Bicycle Master Plan implementation requirements, including work plan item on adding bike lanes during repaving.)

### **More Issues CACT Will Monitor in 2023**

- Monitor staffing levels and budgets in City departments related to transportation safety
- Track school zone speed cameras and 20 mph speed limits implementation/enforcement
- Review Complete Streets and Vision Zero efforts in other jurisdictions
- Assess requests for parking restrictions with considerations for equity and needs for Citywide multimodal improvements
- Track injuries of pedestrians and people on bicycles in and around Falls Church
- Participate in Fairfax County discussions related to West Falls Area active transportation plan and proposed Seven Corners Ring Road
- Examine transportation details of \$10 million Smart Cities grant
- If needed, update [Guiding Principles for Neighborhood Sidewalk and Accessibility Program](#) and [Evaluations and recommendations for safer bicycle routes to middle and high schools](#)
- Review development projects for safety concerns and multimodal improvements
- Continue efforts to improve safe routes to schools
- Review regional bus rapid transit planning efforts and implementation/enforcement
- Track discussions on free/reduced transit fares and WMATA bus network redesign
- Administer NTC projects, including Greenway Downs
- Track Park Avenue Great Street and Greening of Lincoln Avenue CIP projects
- Encourage decarbonizing efforts: electric vehicle charging stations and incentives

## Acknowledgements

We appreciate the opportunity to serve the growing, evolving City of Fall Church by collaborating with City leaders, staff, and fellow citizens to improve transportation safety.

The CACT is supported by Transportation Planners Zoe LaRive and Jeff Sikes, and was supported in recent years by Department of Public Works Senior Engineer Ana Mazidi before her departure in early summer 2022.

We would also like to thank our City Council liaison Dave Snyder, Planning Commission liaisons Melissa Teates and Andrea Caumont, Planning Director Paul Stoddard, Public Works Director Zak Bradley, City Manager Wyatt Shields, Assistant City Manager Cindy Mester, and all of City Council and the entire City staff for their guidance and support improving transportation safety.

We look forward to another productive year of working to improve City transportation safety.

Very much appreciated,

- Erin Kampschroer, chair
- Jason Garman, vice chair
- Dave Gustafson, past chair
- Arthur Agin
- Jessica Hegenbart
- Andrew Olesen
- Stuart Whitaker