

Commissioner Sargeant's Draft Remarks CIP Committee Meeting and CIP Mark-up

When the Planning Commission began its work on the FY 2021 – FY 2025 Capital Improvement Program, little was known about the coronavirus and the effects of this pandemic on the local, national and global economy. As the situation evolves, it is difficult to project all of the impacts to the County budget and the CIP. Fairfax County's CIP serves as a planning instrument to identify needed capital projects and to coordinate the financing and timing of these improvements. We now know that some of the timing and financing for the capital program may change as the situation unfolds. The Planning Commission has conducted several meetings so far this year, beginning with our initial review at the February 28th Committee meeting. We then hosted our annual Agency CIP Workshop on Thursday, March 12th, with a Public Hearing the same night. We had the opportunity to hear from 10 County representatives about CIP projects and solicited feedback on the CIP from residents of the County.

On April 7, 2020, the County Executive presented a revised FY 2021 budget proposal which includes the elimination of all proposed tax rate and fee increases to alleviate pressure on the County's taxpayers. Spending adjustments have been refocused on essential services only. Some of these budget adjustments, if approved by the Board, will impact the CIP. For example, the revised budget proposal defers the \$25 million bond referendum for early childhood facilities from 2020 to 2022. This deferral is recommended as the operational expenses associated with increased facility capacity are likely to be difficult to fund for the foreseeable future. The revised budget package indicates that all items included in the projected Fall 2020 referendum plan will be reevaluated later in the year, and the final plan will be dependent upon the extent of the economic recovery at the time.

Tonight, the Planning Commission held a Committee meeting to discuss and clarify their CIP recommendations for the Board of Supervisors. First, I would like to take this opportunity to thank staff for all of their hard work during this extraordinary CIP process. I would like to thank all of the County staff that presented their capital programs to the Commission at the March Workshop and the CIP staff coordinators, including: Martha Reed, Elif Ekingen, Dennis Holder, Tiya Raju, Michelle Stahlhut, and Evelyn Mitchell. Each year this staff reviews and updates the CIP to ensure that it is affordable and conforms to the Ten Principles of Sound Financial Management. Staff strategically adjust the Bond Referendum schedule to enable capital projects to move forward and for the County to take advantage of both timing and partnership opportunities.

For several years, staff has been working to more closely align the CIP with the Comprehensive Plan. This has been discussed over time with the Planning Commission. Staff in concert with the Planning Commission, is continuing to explore ways to more closely link the two documents, such as updating the Public Facilities Plan portion of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, the Commission has discussed other process improvements and motions well as the need for overall flexibility in moving forward with the CIP capital plans.

With this background in mind, I'd like to now make a series of motions on the CIP --- Mr. Chairman:

I MOVE THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVE THE ADVERTISED FAIRFAX COUNTY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR FISCAL YEARS 2021 THROUGH 2025, WITH FUTURE FISCAL YEARS TO 2030.

- Recommend that the Board of Supervisors authorize consideration of a comprehensive plan amendment to update the Public Facilities element of the Policy Plan. During that review, staff should review the alignment of those updates with the CIP.
- Recommend that staff from the Department of Planning and Development and the Fire and Rescue Department, during any future update of the Public Facilities element of the Policy Plan, explore the possibility of ensuring that Emergency Vehicle Preemption (EVP) equipment is considered during the review of land use cases. New Policy Plan language would more specifically describe the strategic placement of EVPs to make them more of a priority. In addition, Fire and Rescue staff should look for other potential funding sources to support prioritized EVP installations.
- Recommend that staff identify options for funding the Tysons Fire Station if proffer contributions are delayed. Currently proffer funding has been received to support the design of this station and it will be essential that anticipated proffer funding be received in order to proceed to the construction phase. It is recommended that staff from the Fire and Rescue Department reprioritize their future CIP projects if it is determined that the pace of receipt of the proffer contributions will delay the construction of the station. It is important to note that the current Fire Station at Spring Hill Road remains in place and operations can continue from that station until such time as the replacement station is constructed.
- Recommend that staff consider reprioritizing the fall 2020 Bond Referendum program to include funding for identified infrastructure replacement and upgrade projects if funding is not available for these projects at year end. In order to maintain the County's existing facilities and address category "F" rated infrastructure replacement projects, bond funding should be considered if General Fund support is unavailable.

I further move that the Planning Commission...

- Support the deferral of the \$25 million for Early Childhood Education Facilities from the fall 2020 Bond Referendum to the fall 2022 Referendum based on the uncertainty of the operational dollars to support programs within these facilities. The Planning Commission further recommends that staff reevaluate the proposed Fall 2020 Bond Referendum plan to include the reprioritization of Library, Human Services and Park projects, if required, to align with the economic recovery at the time.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman.