



NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY FY2024-2029 Six Year Program: Summary of Public Comments

I. Background

During the March 14, 2024 Authority meeting, NVTA unanimously approved the Public Hearing and Public Comment Period for the FY2024-2029 Six Year Program (SYP). The top of the [press release](#) announcing the public comment period is shown in **Figure 1**. The public comment period began on March 28, 2024 and closed on May 19, 2024.

Figure 1 - Public Comment Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Northern Virginia Transportation Authority Seeks Public Comment on 24
Candidate Projects for FY2024-2029 Six Year Program**
Public Comment Period March 28 – May 19, 2024

FAIRFAX, VA, March 28, 2024 – The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) invites **community input** on **24 candidate projects** as part of the FY2024-2029 Six Year Program (SYP). Nine Northern Virginia localities and the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) have submitted project applications seeking regional funding from NVTA.

With funding requests totaling **nearly \$1 billion**, the projects cover various transportation modes including transit, rail, roadway enhancements, technology, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and intersection/interchange improvements.

The project list, individual project description forms, maps, and detailed analyses can be found here: <https://thenovaauthority.org/fy2024-2029/>.

Opportunities for members of the community to provide feedback on the candidate transportation projects included in the FY2024-2029 SYP were publicized prior to and throughout the public comment period through NVTA's website, social media platforms (X/Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Nextdoor) and in newsletters. Many Authority members' transportation organizations, regional partners, elected officials and others helped amplify the information about NVTA's public comment

period, reaching as many community members as possible. A social media campaign (**Figure 2**) ran for approximately seven weeks. Additionally, information about the public comment period and Public Hearing were advertised in the Washington Post, El Tiempo and Korea Times in accordance with statutory requirements (**Figure 3**). This was one of the most intensely promoted SYP public comment opportunities ever.

Figure 2 – Social Media Campaign Graphics

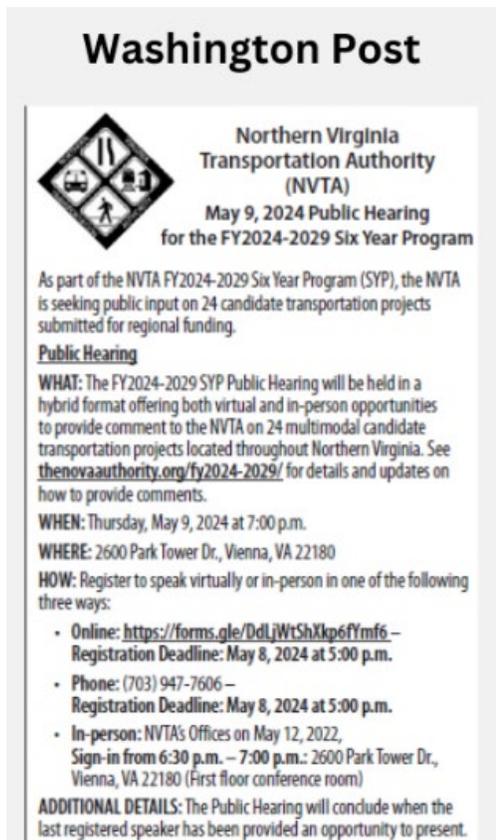


Figure 3 – Public Hearing Advertisement

In keeping with normal practice, citizens were able to provide comments through an online form by phone, by regular mail, and in-person or virtually during the SYP Public Hearing held on May 9, 2024. NVTA staff livestreamed the Public Hearing via YouTube.

All SYP materials including the application summary, evaluation summaries, candidate project location map, and individual project description forms were available on NVTA’s website during the public comment period at: <https://thenovaauthority.org/fy2024-2029/>. The following materials were made available for public comment:

- [FY2024-2029 SYP Candidate Projects List](#)
- [FY2024-2029 SYP Candidate Projects Map](#)
- [FY2024-2029 SYP Candidate Projects: Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluations](#)
- [FY2024-2029 SYP Candidate Projects: Congestion Reduction Relative to Cost \(CRRC\) Ratings](#)
- [FY2024-2029 SYP Candidate Projects: TransAction Ratings](#)



II. Total Responses Received

Public Hearing testimony was provided by five speakers, two in person and three virtually. However, the majority of responses were submitted through the online feedback form. 178 individuals submitted comments via the website and one through USPS mail. The comments received via mail were from one of the speakers at the in-person public hearing.

Testimony and responses submitted prior to the May 19, 2024 deadline were combined into a single database. Duplicate responses from the same individual were combined. Consultant staff reviewed and categorized responses, and converted responses into project-specific comments, including whether they expressed support, opposition, were vague, or were not project-specific. For

Collectively, these responses from 178 individuals and organizations represent 731 comments in the database. Some responses addressed multiple projects.

Table 1: Comment Channels

	Individuals responding	Projects mentioned	Not specific to a project	Total
Mail	1	24	0	24
Phone	0	0	0	0
In-Person	5	22	0	22
Website	174	674	11	685
Total:	178*	720	11	731

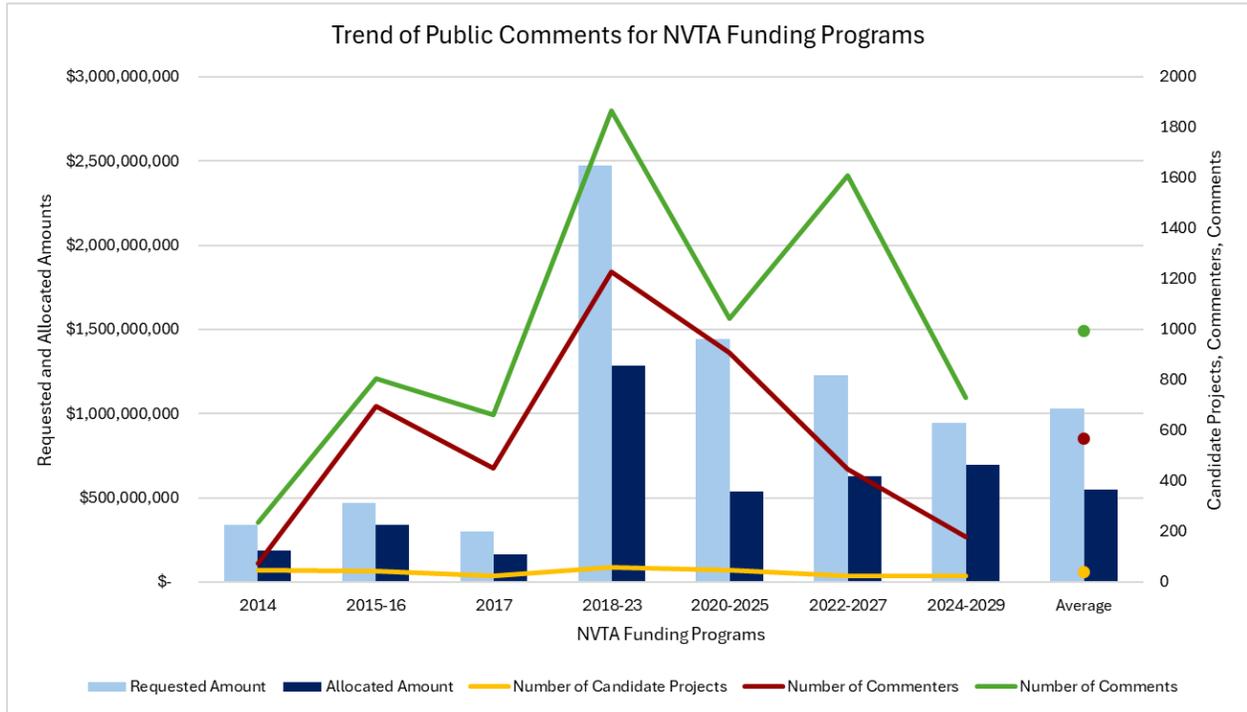
*Note: Two of the speakers at the public hearing provided written comments as well.

**Note: Numbers do not add up due to duplication in comments through different channels.

The summary of public comments will be posted on the FY2024-29 SYP webpage <https://thenovaauthority.org/fy2024-2029/>, together with the actual comments received, by Friday, June 7, 2024.

Figure 4 below shows a summary of trends in public comments received from NVTA’s first funding program (FY2014 Program) to the current program. This shows that participation peaked during the inaugural Six Year Program (FY2018-23 SYP) and started declining even though the staff effort on publicizing has steadily increased.

Figure 4 – Trend in Public Comments



III. Overview of Comments

Table 1 provides a summary of the 720 comments for individual candidate projects, including the method of submitting comments. Comments more often voiced support for a specific project (70% of all comments received) rather than opposition (17%). **Table 2** and **Figure 5** show how comments fell across different projects.

The project with the least number of comments received 11 and the project with the most received 69, with an even distribution between. The average number of comments across all projects is 30.

Five citizens provided testimony at the Public Hearing held on May 9, 2024. Two of these speakers represented advocacy organizations – the Coalition for Smarter Growth and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. Two were elected officials, from the Virginia State Senate and Prince William County Board of Supervisors. One speaker was a resident.

Many projects were discussed by the commenters including general remarks about the opposition to any and all road widening and the support for all project elements that improve safety, improve active transportation, and invest in transit. Support for intersection improvements that increase

safety and reduce the potential for crashes was stressed. Particular attention was given in support of projects with transit elements or that were transit supportive. Opposition, in general, focused on road widening projects.

Even when projects received a large number of comments, they were often (but not always) either overwhelmingly in support or overwhelmingly in opposition. For instance, ARL-023 (CC2DCA Multimodal Connection), which received the most comments (69), received 62 comments in support and only two in opposition. The project with the second most comments (52) ALX-029 (Safety Improvements at High-Crash Intersections), received 46 comments in support and only one in opposition.

The FFX-135 (Route 7 Multimodal Improvements, I-495 to I-66) project was mentioned in 45 comments, with 23 in support and 20 in opposition. Similarly, PWC-040 received eight comments in support and eight comments in opposition, and FFX-134 received 10 comments in support and six in opposition.

The FFX-135 (Route 7 Multimodal Improvements, I-495 to I-66) project has transit improvements, active transportation improvements, and road widening. This resulted in many comments stressing the need for the former without the latter (i.e., repurposing rather than widening).

The PWC-040 (Route 234 and Sudley Manor Drive Interchange) project creates a single-point urban interchange. Responses covered the gamut of supportive to reduce congestion and improve active transportation crossings to strongly opposed due to the cost or other assumptions. Several in opposition suggested road diets rather than a new interchange and suggested more investment in non-vehicular modes rather than facilitating vehicle movements.

The FFX-134 (Frontier Drive Extension and Intersection Improvements) project is a roadway widening that includes multimodal improvements. This led to support from those promoting active transportation but also opposition to road widening.

However, oppositions are also noteworthy. For instance, the projects in Loudoun County (LDN-029, Old Ox Road Widening – Shaw Road to Oakgrove Road and LDN-033, Sycolin Road Widening – Loudoun Center Place to Crosstrail Boulevard) received a high number of opposing comments relative to the support, with LDN-029 having 21 opposing comments and only two in support, and LDN-033 with 19 opposing and three in support. This contrast suggests a resistance to road widening projects in Loudoun County. According to **Figure 11** and **Figure 13**, the majority of the opposition to these projects are from commenters outside of Loudoun County.

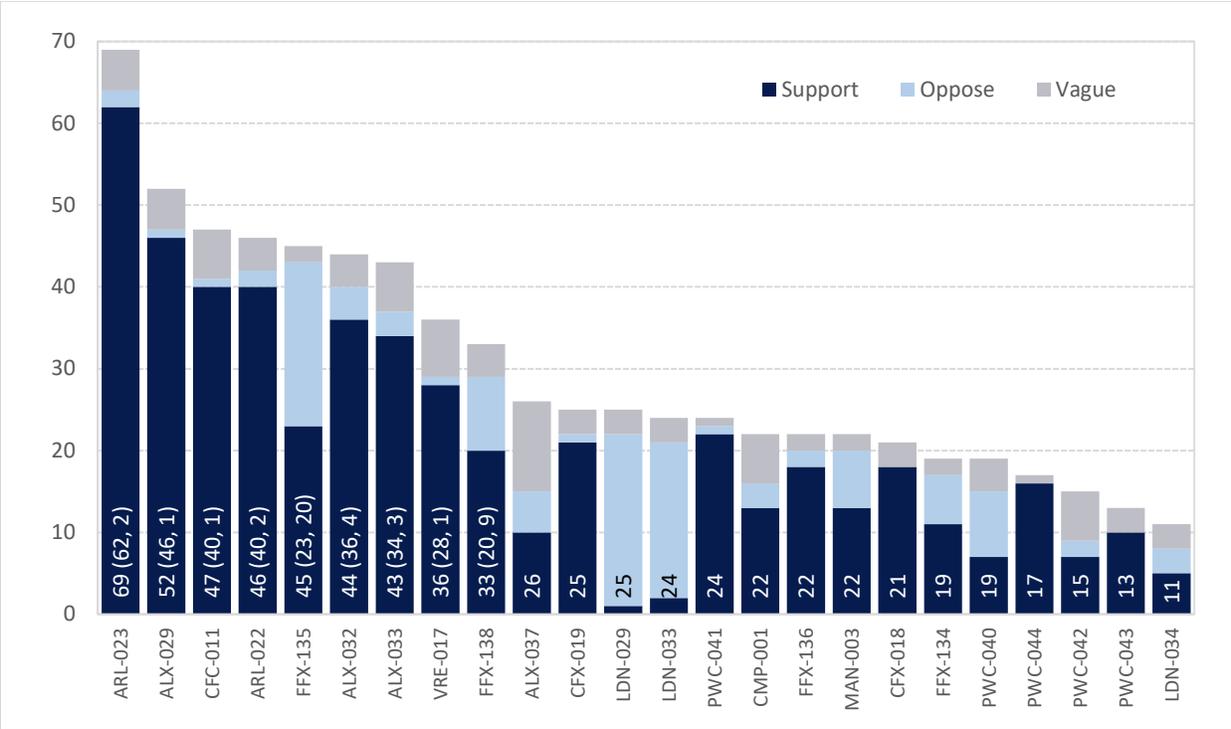
Table 2: Project and comment overview

Application ID	Jurisdiction / Agency	Project	Total	Support	Oppose	Other/Vague
ARL-022	Arlington Co	Shirlington Bus Station Expansion	46	40	2	4
ARL-023	Arlington Co	CC2DCA Multimodal Connection	69	62	2	5
FFX-134	Fairfax Co	Frontier Drive Extension and Intersection Improvements	19	11	6	2
FFX-135	Fairfax Co	Route 7 Multimodal Improvements (I-495 to I-66)	45	23	20	2
FFX-136	Fairfax Co	Braddock Road Multimodal Improvements Phase II (Humphries Drive to Southampton Drive)	22	18	2	2
FFX-138	Fairfax Co	Seven Corners Ring Road Improvements	33	20	9	4
LDN-029	Loudoun Co	Old Ox Road Widening – Shaw Road to Oakgrove Road	25	1	21	3
LDN-033	Loudoun Co	Sycolin Road Widening – Loudoun Center Place to Crosstrail Boulevard	24	2	19	3
LDN-034	Loudoun Co	Route 15 at Braddock Road Roundabout	11	5	3	3
PWC-040	Prince William Co	Route 234 and Sudley Manor Drive Interchange	19	7	8	4
PWC-041	Prince William Co	Route 234 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Over I-95	24	22	1	1
PWC-042	Prince William Co	Route 234 Operational Improvements	15	7	2	6
PWC-043	Prince William Co	The Landing at Prince William Transit Center	13	10	0	3
PWC-044	Prince William Co	Triangle Mobility Hub and First/Last Mile Connection Improvements	17	16	0	1
ALX-029	City of Alexandria	Safety Improvements at High-Crash Intersections	52	46	1	5
ALX-032	City of Alexandria	South Van Dorn Street Bridge Enhancements	44	36	4	4
ALX-033	City of Alexandria	Alexandria Metroway Enhancements	43	34	3	6
ALX-037	City of Alexandria	Smart & Connected Vehicle Infrastructure	26	10	5	11
CFX-018	City of Fairfax	Northfax Network Improvements – Northfax East-West Road	21	18	0	3

Application ID	Jurisdiction / Agency	Project	Total	Support	Oppose	Other/Vague
CFX-019	City of Fairfax	Blenheim Boulevard Multimodal Improvements	25	21	1	3
CFC-011	City of Falls Church	City of Falls Church Signal Prioritization Project	47	40	1	6
MAN-003	City of Manassas	Roundabout at Route 28 and Sudley Rd	22	13	7	2
CMP-001	City of Manassas Park	Route 28-Centreville Road Corridor Improvements	22	13	3	6
VRE-017	Prince William County	VRE Backlick Road Station Improvements	36	28	1	7
Total Comments:			720	503	121	96

*Note: Does not include 11 comments which did not mention a specific project. There were no comments regarding the SYP process.

Figure 5: Project Support and Opposition



Several comments received had similar language. These submittals often expressed support for transit and multimodal projects that encourage walking and cycling and provide additional, more reliable transit options. They also oppose all road widening projects. Examples of these comments are listed below.

The following example mentions support for all Arlington, Alexandria, and Prince William County projects as well as FFX-138 (Seven Corners Ring Road Improvements). It was submitted nine times from the same Arlington ZIP Code (22201).

I strongly support funding the Alexandria, Arlington, VRE, and PWC projects I checked above because they support alternatives to driving, such as transit, walking, and cycling. I also support funding the Seven Corners Ring Road, as it will improve alternatives to driving despite roadway expansion. I strongly discourage financially supporting most of the other projects listed, as they only make walking, biking, and transit more dangerous by expanding the roadway. Even the projects listed as having multimodal improvements just contain turn lane expansions that make crossing the road objectively more dangerous. Continuing to fund roadway expansions and fuel car dependency is objectively bad for our climate and accessibility goals.

The following example mentions only ARL-023 (CC2DCA Multimodal Connection), but it was submitted nine times from five different ZIP Codes, all in Arlington.

ARL-023: SUPPORT! CC2DCA would dramatically improve non-car access to National Airport. CC2DCA would put DCA in easy reach for those who: live in Crystal City, live near the MetroWay BRT system, live near the Mt Vernon Trail or a connecting trail, live near a VRE Station, and eventually even anywhere served by Regional Amtrak.

The following example mentions CFC-011 (City of Falls Church Signal Prioritization Project) and was submitted eight times from two different ZIP Codes in and near the City of Falls Church.

I support this grant application because it will improve transit options and operations, along the future Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit route. The project will enhance service frequency and capacity at bus stops and stations, resulting in more consistent schedules and reduced waiting times for passengers.

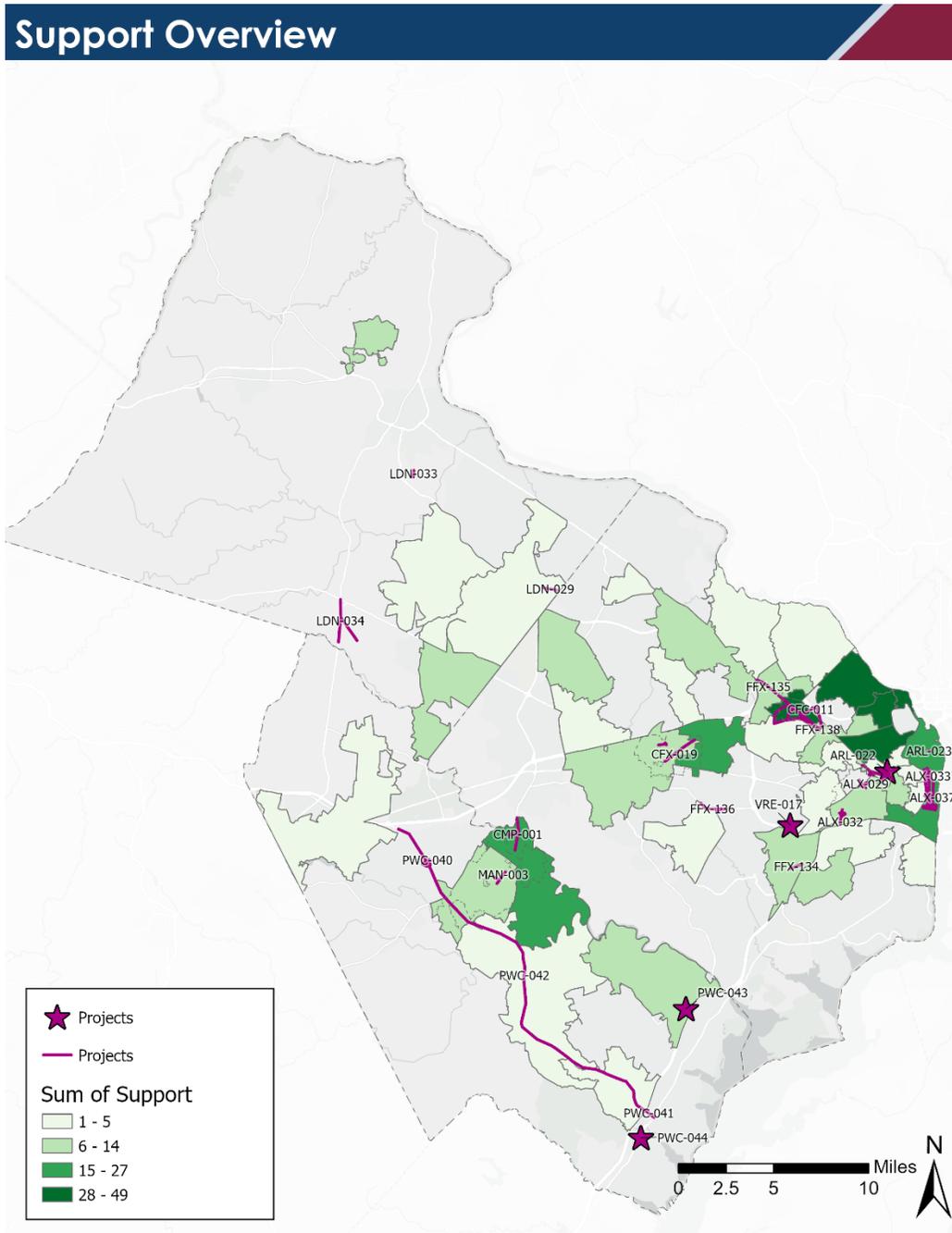
Moreover, many respondents addressed the need to include additional features, or alternative features, as part of the project scope on which they were commenting. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the full set of comments to consider these public suggestions while developing their projects further, regardless of whether they are eventually included in the adopted SYP.

IV. Spatial Distribution of Comments for Selected Projects

Comments were received from 64 ZIP Codes. **Figure 6** and **Figure 7** show the total comments by ZIP Code expressing support or opposition for any project, respectively. Comments were not received from all Northern Virginia ZIP Codes, such as the lack of responses from western Loudoun County and Manassas. Comments are concentrated in more urbanized areas such as Arlington, Falls Church, Fairfax, and Alexandria. 50 respondents listed Washington, DC ZIP Codes, which are not included on the map.

Supportive comments were most concentrated in Arlington and Alexandria, with relatively even distribution among Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax, and Prince William County projects. Comments also indicated high support from Falls Church related to signal prioritization (CFC-011); 24 of the 49 supportive comments from ZIP Code 22046 were for CFC-011 (City of Falls Church Signal Prioritization Project).

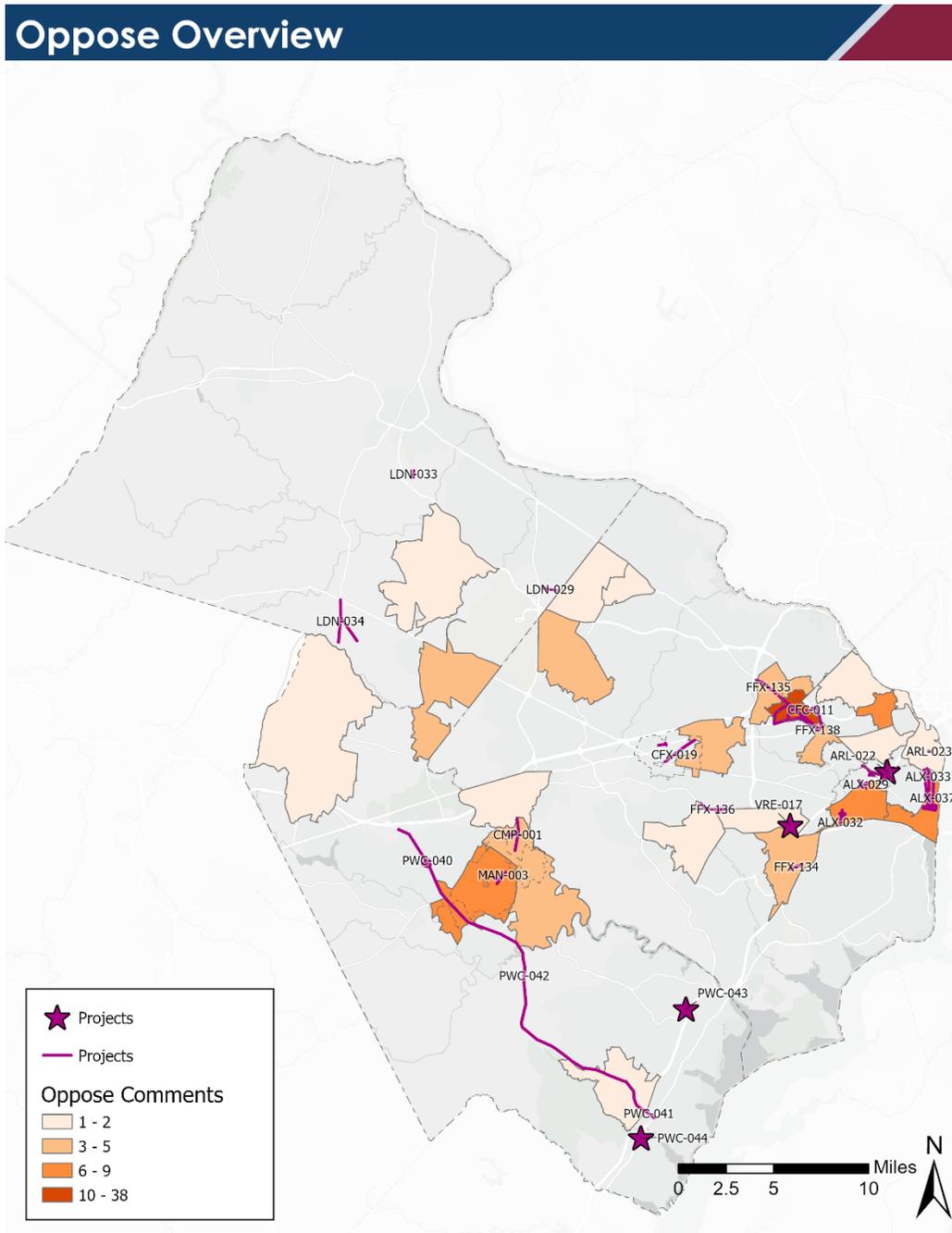
Figure 6: Support Comments by ZIP Code*



*Note: Map includes responses submitted from Northern Virginia only.

Opposing comments were especially concentrated in Falls Church, Alexandria, and Fairfax County. These were primarily regarding Route 7 multimodal improvements (FFX-135) and the widening of Old Ox Road (LDN-029) and Sycolin Road (LDN-033).

Figure 7. Opposing Comments by ZIP Code*



*Note: Map includes responses submitted from Northern Virginia only.

The three most mentioned projects were ARL-023 (CC2DCA Multimodal Connection), ALX-029 (Safety Improvements at High-Crash Intersections), and CFC-011 (City of Falls Church Signal Prioritization Project). The support for these projects from Northern Virginia ZIP Codes are indicated below in **Figure 8**, **Figure 9**, and **Figure 10**. Opposition to all of these projects was low. Notably, the majority of supportive comments for ALX-029 came from Arlington ZIP Codes, despite the project's location in Alexandria.

Figure 8. ARL-023 — CC2DCA Multimodal Connection

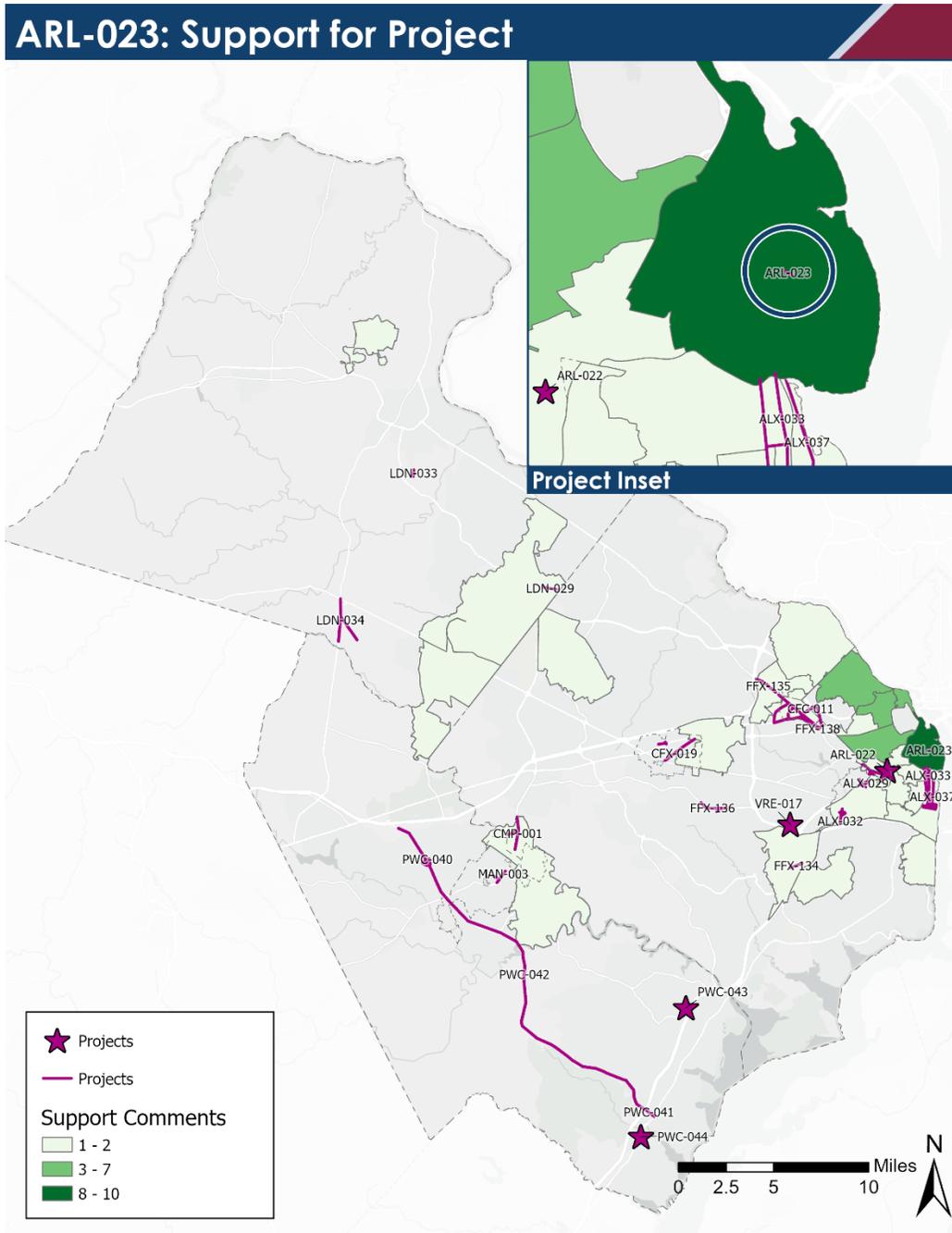


Figure 9. ALX-029— Safety Improvements at High-Crash Intersections

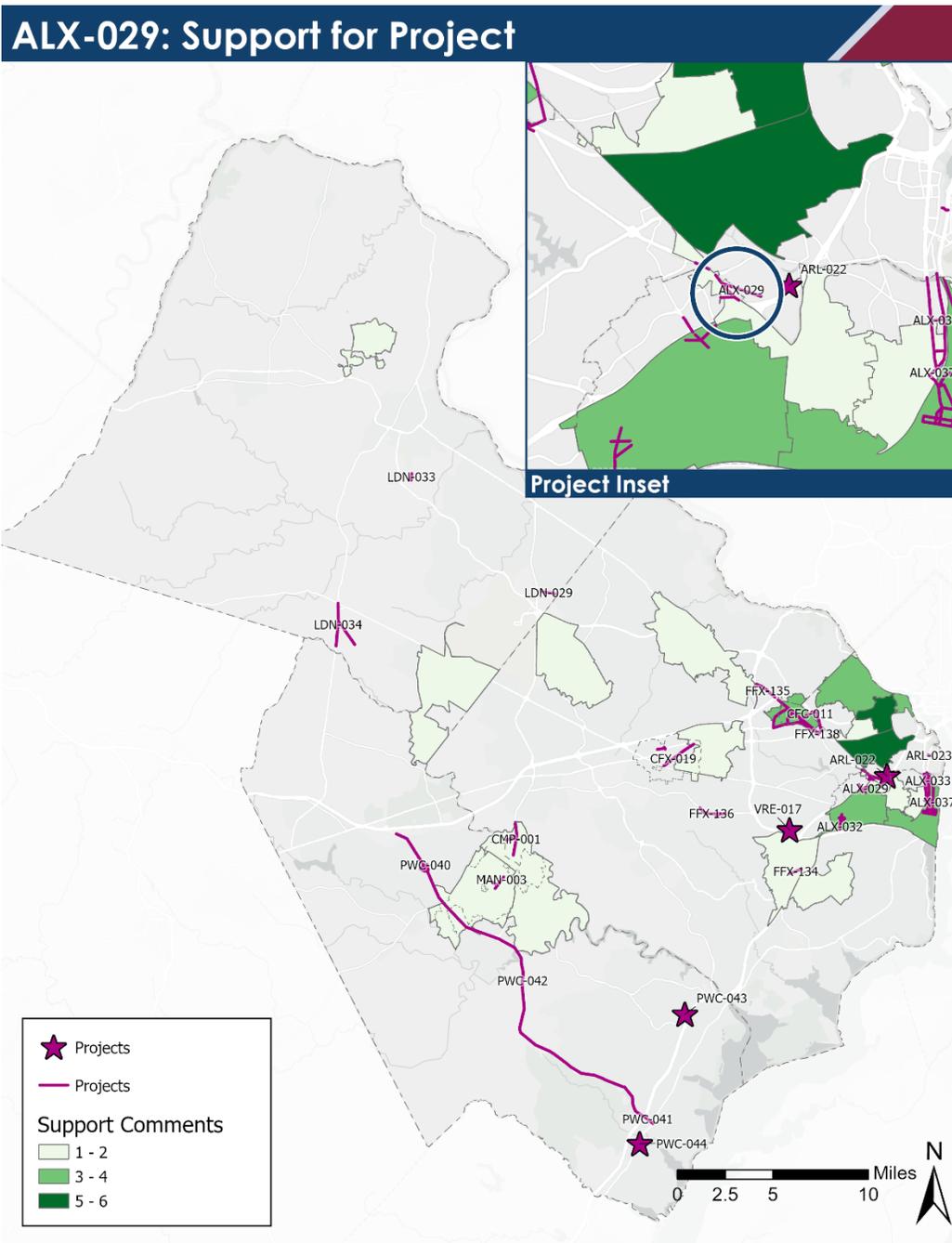
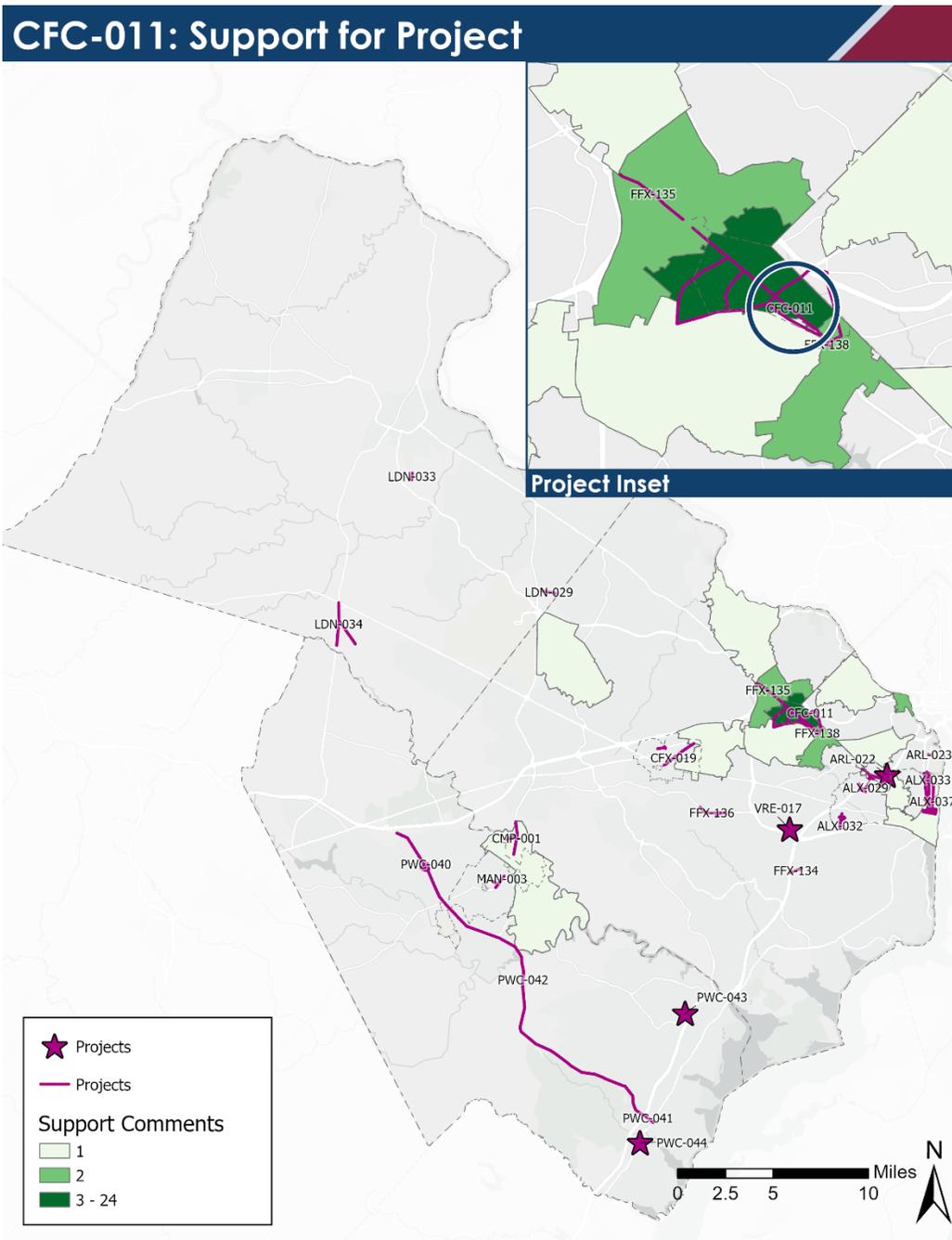


Figure 10. CFC-011— City of Falls Church Signal Prioritization Project



The three projects with the most comments in opposition were LDN-029 (Old Ox Road Widening – Shaw Road to Oakgrove Road), FFX-135 (Route 7 Multimodal Improvements, I-495 to I-66), and LDN-033 (Sycolin Road Widening – Loudoun Center Place to Crosstrail Boulevard) with 21, 20, and 19 comments in opposition, respectively. The opposition for these projects from Northern Virginia ZIP Codes are indicated below in **Figure 11**, **Figure 12**, and **Figure 13**.

Figure 11 – LDN-029: Old Ox Road Widening – Shaw Road to Oakgrove Road

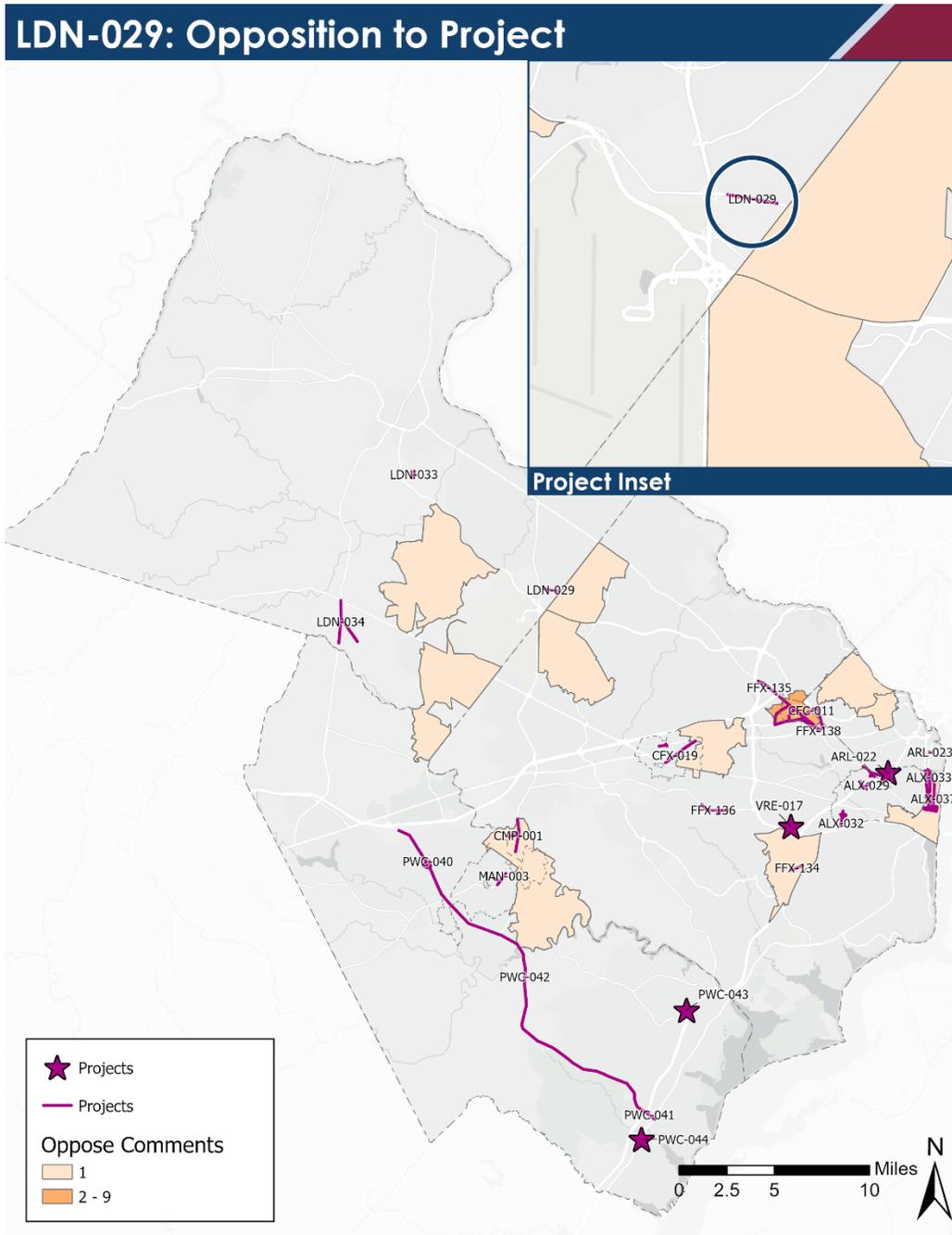


Figure 12 – FFX135: Route 7 Multimodal Improvements (I-495 to I-66)

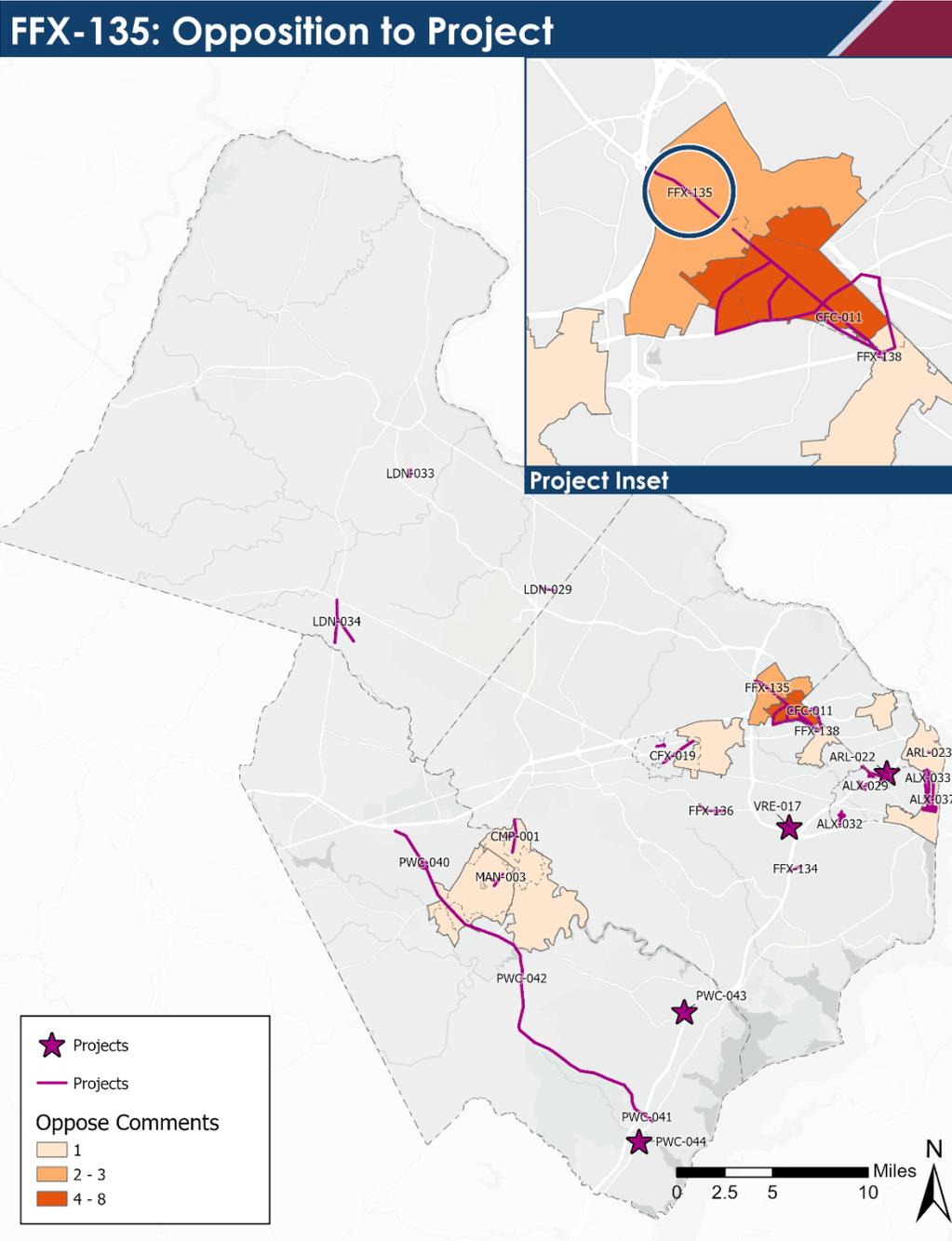


Figure 13 – LDN-033: Sycolin Road Widening – Loudoun Center Place to Crosstrail Boulevard

