



Supervisor

**Matt Letourneau**

Dulles Direct Newsletter



## October 2021

Welcome to the October 2021 edition of the Dulles Direct newsletter. With an election looming and Loudoun County constantly in the news again, it has not been a quiet fall so far. I have some information on the bond questions and some thoughts on the situation with LCPS in this month's newsletter.

I want to lead with a huge congratulations to our Department of Economic Development. When I first decided to run for the Board of Supervisors over a decade ago, one of the chief reasons for my candidacy was economic development. At the time, Loudoun County was lagging and doing very little to proactively attract businesses. Throughout my tenure on the Board, I have worked closely with County staff to build a full service organization dedicated to attracting and supporting businesses. The results have spoken for themselves and over the years, accolades for our team and our outstanding executive director Buddy Rizer have poured in.

Perhaps the most special recognition yet occurred earlier this month. On October 5, the International Economic Development Council named Loudoun DED the "Economic Development Organization of the Year" for localities with a population between 200,000 and 500,000. This is a remarkable achievement, especially this year, which has proven so difficult for businesses between COVID-19 and

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now workforce and supply chain issues. While the recognition is great, the results speak for themselves. FY21 saw 145 businesses open or expand in the County, boasting 3.7 million square feet of new commercial space and creating 4,239 total jobs, as well as over \$6.5 billion in new commercial investment. DED also launched and expanded several assistance initiatives during COVID-19, from the Business Interruption Fund, which granted \$12 million to 2,000 businesses, to the FireUp Business Mentor and Coaching Program, which provided resources to female and minority-owned small businesses. You can find DED's full annual report for FY21 [here](#). Congratulations to Buddy and the entire team for this prestigious award!

At the Board's October 19 Business Meeting, I presented a proclamation recognizing the Diwali holiday in Loudoun County. Diwali, also known as the "Festival of Lights," is observed annually by Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and some Buddhists. The holiday celebrates the victory of good over evil and light over darkness, a message that resonates with all citizens. Last year, we were unable to present the resolution in person due to the pandemic, so it was great to have some leaders from the community back in the Board Room. Happy Diwali!



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**Matthew F. Letourneau**

Dulles District Supervisor,  
Loudoun County Board of  
Supervisors

Chairman  
[Finance, Government  
Operations and Economic  
Development Committee](#)

Principal Director  
[Washington Metropolitan  
Area Transit Authority  
Board of Directors](#)

October was Fire Prevention Month in Loudoun County. This topic is of special importance as the weather gets colder and drier, and fires are more easily ignitable. For fire prevention and life safety tips from Loudoun's Fire & Rescue team, please click [here](#).

October was also Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Loudoun. The Board presented a resolution at our October 5 Business Meeting to raise awareness of this issue, support survivors, and recognize the various groups doing important work to prevent abuse in the County.



Veteran's Day will be observed on Thursday, November 11. As we honor those who have served this nation in the Armed Forces, several events will be taking place regionally to celebrate the holiday. To find an event near you, please visit the American Legion website [here](#).

I enjoy speaking to groups about local government and the work we do in Loudoun. This month, I had a chance to visit with both a high school freshman and high school senior class of the Young Men's Service League. I also spoke to a large class of freshmen at American University as part of their class on the different levels of government.

I have had a busy and difficult few weeks as a Metro Board member. A Metro train derailed several weeks

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**Quick Links**

ago. While no one was injured, this is a very serious event and the NTSB is leading an investigation into the cause. Metro has taken about 60% of our fleet out of service - all 7000 series cars. The issues are related to the width of the wheels on the cars. They are regularly inspected, but in recent months it appears that something is causing them to get out of variance, and that led to the derailment. Metro, the Metrorail Safety Commission, and the manufacturer Kawasaki are all party to the investigation. In the meantime, Metro is expected to have reduced service through at least November 15. [Details are here.](#)

Finally, as I mentioned last month, my recovery from last year's injury is now focused on the vestibular system. I have been diagnosed with Unilateral Vestibular Hypofunction, which basically means that the vestibular system on one side (the side that was struck by the baseball) is out of whack. Between the vestibular, my brain, and my eyes, signals get crossed and it causes balance issues and a vertigo sensation. I am being treated by a vestibular specialist at Georgetown and will be undergoing a series of tests over the next few months. I have also resumed physical therapy with a vestibular therapist at Inova Loudoun, and the doctor prescribed some medicine that is supposed to help with this. I'm generally able to function pretty well in daily life, but have trouble in certain situations and places. It is a little bit of trial and error to figure out exactly what those triggers are.

## COVID-19 UPDATE

### Latest Numbers and Updates

The Delta variant seems to occur in roughly two month waves, and that is holding true in Loudoun. Overall, we're trending in the right direction. According to the official numbers released today by the Virginia Department of Health, there have been

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[COVID-19](#)

34,176 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Loudoun County. 300 individuals have died from the virus in Loudoun. Virginia now has 924,771 confirmed cases with 13,907 deaths. You can see these numbers yourself at the Loudoun County COVID-19 [GeoHub](#).

Loudoun's latest percent positivity rate is 3.5%, down significantly from the 5.6% I reported last month. The vast majority of newly infected people remains unvaccinated and includes individuals in all age groups. Governor Northam's indoor mask recommendation is still in place for all individuals, regardless of vaccination status. The majority of cases in Loudoun and nationwide remains the Delta variant, which is highly contagious.

Everyone should continue following proper mitigation practices, especially if you haven't received a vaccine or are around those with immune system issues. In addition to vaccination, the Health Department recommends everyone wear a mask in indoor public settings and practice prevention measures that include staying 6 feet away from people who do not live in your household; covering your coughs and sneezes; washing your hands frequently; staying home when sick; avoiding contact with sick people; knowing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19; and getting tested if you're symptomatic or if potentially exposed to COVID-19, regardless of your vaccination status.

### **Latest News on Vaccination Efforts**

Loudoun County has resumed vaccination operations **by appointment only** at its Dulles Town Center site, located at 21090 Dulles Town Circle in Sterling.

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) has authorized local health districts to administer booster doses of the Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson (J&J), and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines for certain individuals as [recommended](#) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and [authorized](#) by the Food and Drug Administration. There are now booster

recommendations for all three available COVID-19 vaccines in the United States.

In addition, the CDC and VDH have approved a “mix and match” approach to boosters, allowing people to receive a different brand of vaccine for the booster dose than what they received in their initial vaccine series. For example, someone who received the one-dose J&J vaccine could receive either the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine as a booster.

Loudoun County is now offering booster doses of the Moderna and J&J vaccines to the recommended groups, in addition to the previously approved Pfizer vaccine booster, at the Dulles Town Center clinic by appointment only.

Anyone who received the J&J vaccine can receive a booster dose of any of the three vaccine types at least two months following their initial vaccination.

Anyone who received their initial two-dose series of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine at least six months (180 days) ago is eligible for a booster dose of any of the three types of vaccine if they are in any the groups approved by the CDC and authorized by VDH, which are:

- People 65 years and older.
- Residents of long-term care facilities.
- People 18-64 years old with [underlying medical conditions](#).
- People 18-64 years old who are at [increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission](#) because of occupational or institutional settings, such as, but not limited to, health care workers and caregivers for frail or immunocompromised people

You can find the date of your second dose on your vaccination card. If you received your second dose in Virginia and have misplaced the card, you can find the date of your second dose by [searching for your vaccine record online](#). If you need assistance over the



phone, call 877-VAX-IN-VA (877-829-4682). Assistance is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Residents seeking a vaccine booster are not required to offer any proof of risk.

Right now, COVID-19 vaccination for children under 12 years is not yet authorized. The Loudoun County Health Department is planning for the expected approval of the use of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5–11 years old. The necessary CDC approvals for vaccinating this group of children are expected as soon as next week.

All residents who need the initial series of COVID-19 vaccine or a booster may receive one from many providers in the community, such as medical offices and pharmacies including, but not limited to, CVS, Giant Food, Harris Teeter, Safeway, Walgreens, Walmart and Wegmans. These locations have the benefit of being able to also provide the flu vaccine at the same time. Visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find a vaccination site near you.

To make an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccine at the County's Dulles Town Center site, visit [loudoun.gov/covid19vaccine](https://loudoun.gov/covid19vaccine). The flu vaccine is not available at the Dulles Town Center clinic.

The [Virginia Department of Health has added a scannable QR code to vaccination records](#). The technology allows anyone vaccinated in Virginia to show proof of vaccination with a digital or printed QR code instead of a paper card. If you have moved to Loudoun from another state since receiving your second dose, you should check with the health department from your previous jurisdiction for your vaccination record.

Loudoun County encourages everyone to stay informed about COVID-19 and the upcoming vaccination recommendations.

- Sign up for email and text updates about Loudoun's response to COVID-19 at [loudoun.gov/coronavirus](https://loudoun.gov/coronavirus).
- Opt in to receive text message updates regarding the COVID-19 pandemic:

English: Text LCCOVID19 to 888777

Spanish: Text LCCOVIDESP to 888777

- Follow the [Loudoun County Government Facebook page](#) and [@LoudounCoGovt on Twitter](#)

For additional information about COVID-19, visit [loudoun.gov/coronavirus](https://loudoun.gov/coronavirus), call the Health Department's information line at 703-737-8300 or [email the Health Department](#).

## 2021 ELECTION INFORMATION

A general election will be held in Loudoun on Tuesday, November 2 for the offices of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, and seats in the Virginia House of Delegates. Three County government bond questions will be on the ballot. You can find a sample ballot [here](#).

The bond questions are listed below. These questions were placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors. As a reminder, **you are voting solely on the method of financing**, not whether or not we should undertake the projects themselves. The Board of Supervisors and School Board have decided the projects are necessary, fit within our capital budget, and the County will be constructing them sometime in the future. If the bond referendum fails, we would have to consider whether or not to move forward with these items using an alternative financing with higher interest rates, costing more money. I strongly encourage you to support the ballot questions.

*Ballot Question 1: Shall the County of Loudoun, Virginia contract a debt and issue its general*



*obligation capital improvement bonds in the maximum principal amount of \$135,026,000 to finance, in whole or in part, the design, construction, equipping and other costs of ES-32 Dulles South Elementary School, LCPS Facility Renewals and Alterations, and Valley Service Center Replacement and Bus Parking; and the costs of other public school facilities as requested by the Loudoun County School Board?*

**Explanation:** This will allow construction contracts to be awarded for school projects in the Capital Improvement Plan. These projects are vetted by both the School Board and Board of Supervisors in public sessions and are based on enrollment growth in specific parts of the County, and planned renovations at older schools. I've seen some commentary from those who are seeking to "punish" LCPS by voting no on the school bonds. That is a very bad idea. School projects are driven by need and will be undertaken regardless of how the vote turns out - except at a higher cost to the taxpayers. In addition, even if one does not agree with various LCPS activities, forcing children to attend overcrowded schools or sit in buildings due for renovations is not the way to deal with it.

*Ballot Question 2: Shall the County of Loudoun, Virginia contract a debt and issue its general obligation capital improvement bonds in the maximum principal amount of \$7,190,000 to finance, in whole or in part, the design, construction, equipping and other costs of Fire and Rescue Basic Training Facility and Fire and Rescue Station #28 Leesburg South; and the costs of other public safety facilities approved in the County's Capital Improvement Program?*

**Explanation:** These are projects for our outstanding Fire & Rescue department. The department has grown considerably since the training facility was built and it is in need of expansion and renovation. The other project is a new fire station in an identified service gap area.

*Ballot Question 3: Shall the County of Loudoun, Virginia contract a debt and issue its general obligation capital improvement bonds in the maximum principal amount of \$68,243,000 to finance, in whole or in part, the design, construction and other costs of improvements to Evergreen Mills Road (Reservoir Road to Watson Road), Farmwell Road Intersection Improvements, a roundabout at Route 9 and Route 287, Shellhorn Road (Loudoun County Parkway to Dulles Airport Property), Shellhorn Road (Dulles Airport Property to Moran Road), and Waxpool Road/Loudoun County Parkway Intersection Improvements; and the costs of other public road and transportation projects approved in the County's Capital Improvement Program?*

**Explanation:** These are our road projects, and the funding approved will be used for active construction projects. The Shellhorn project will augment the developer proffer sections and allow for a better link from Ashburn to Route 28.

Early voting ends today - Saturday, October 30. On Election Day, polls will be open from 6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. at your local precinct. You can check your registration, find your precinct, and make sure everything is correct on the [Virginia Department of Elections Citizen Portal](#). Have your acceptable ID with you when you go to vote. This includes voter card, driver's license, state ID card, and [more](#). Be prepared for social distancing measures in place at all voting locations, and please bring a mask as face coverings are required when entering County facilities.

## **DULLES UPDATES**

### **Route 606 Pavement Resurfacing Update**

Due to weather complications and regional material/labor shortages, completion of pavement resurfacing on Route 606 is taking longer than anticipated. 50% of linear markings are complete, mainly on the westbound side, with the long line crew scheduled to complete work by this coming Tuesday or Wednesday. After that, the handline crew will complete their work by November 15 at the latest (weather permitting). I haven't been happy with all the delays and the missing markings have made driving this section at night difficult. I am hopeful that VDOT will do all they can to keep the timelines from slipping any further.

### **Traffic Calming in Amberleigh**

At the October 5 Business Meeting, the Board voted to approve installation of “Watch for Children” signage at the entrances of the Amberleigh community. This comes after a request from the HOA to evaluate the community for traffic calming to deal with a speeding problem. Following a speed study and evaluation by the County Department of Transportation & Capital Infrastructure and VDOT, it was determined that the subject streets did not meet the requirements of the traffic calming program. However, we do have more flexibility when it comes to signage programs. Signs such as “Watch for Children” help remind to drivers that we need to take caution in our neighborhoods. The Sheriff’s Office also agreed to work with the community on enforcement and communication to their neighbors on speeding.

### **On-Street Parking Restrictions on Overland Drive and Pebble Run Place**

At the April 6, 2021 Board Business Meeting I brought forward a Board Member Initiative asking staff to work with VDOT to implement a daily prohibition of overnight on-street parking between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on Overland Drive and Pebble Run Place in the Dulles District.

This request came after receiving unanimous support from the Commercial Property Owners Associations representing all impacted properties on those streets. At our October 19 Business Meeting, the Board voted to authorize this restriction. Signage will be installed alerting customers of the restriction and will provide the Sheriff's Office a new tool to deal with vehicles that are left for long periods of time and have led to numerous incidents of vandalism.

### **Route 50/Elk Lick Road Intersection Median**

I am pleased to report that the final project to close the median at Route 50 and Elk Lick Road has been completed and the concrete barriers have been removed. The median closure was necessitated following significant serious accidents that were occurring at that location on Route 50. In conjunction with the closure, we worked with VDOT to restripe Defender Drive as traffic accessing westbound Route 50 was diverted that way. Work continues on the final project at the Elk Lick Road and Tall Cedars Parkway intersection as well. The County is in the process of securing needed right of way for that project. The flex posts will be replaced with a concrete median and channelized lanes similar to the Loudoun County Parkway and Center Street intersection.

### **Route 50/Loudoun County Parkway Interchange Funding Update**

While perhaps small in the scheme of the project - which is huge - there is some news to report on this interchange. At our October 19 Business Meeting, the Board voted to designate the Route 50/Loudoun County Parkway Interchange project as active, and directed budget adjustments of \$4,678,311.47 from the LCP – Dulles West Boulevard to Route 50 project and \$11,861,022.06 from the LCP – Creighton Road to Old Ox Road project to the interchange project. This adjustment will allow the timeline on designing the interchange to move

forward, and the other projects will receive funding from another source at some point in the future, if pursued.

As I have shared before, I previously had initiated a project for a turn lane from LCP onto westbound Route 50, but as the design moved forward we found major utility conflicts leading to significant time needed to complete, as well as increased costs. The project was running years behind schedule and the budget would have to be much larger than anticipated. The idea with that project was to provide “quick” relief at the intersection, but that clearly wasn’t going to happen. (Plus at this point we are getting close to having Arcola and Dulles West Boulevards coming online, which will provide some relief.) So after several meetings with our staff, I made the decision to abandon the previous project and put all our efforts towards the ultimate solution.

It is still too early in the process to know the anticipated timeline for the project, but the funds I mentioned will be used to initiate the Interchange Justification Report required by VDOT and to possibly acquire some needed right of way. I’ll be sure to update you as the process moves forward, but the estimated cost is \$500 million so we will still need significant state or federal funding involvement. It will be painstaking to get to the finish line, but we’ll move one step at a time.

### **Northstar Boulevard Groundbreaking Ceremony**

I'm pleased to report that the Northstar Boulevard construction project is finally about to get underway! The County has scheduled a groundbreaking ceremony for the Northstar Boulevard project between Route 50 and Tall Cedars Parkway. Once completed, the new segment will provide an alternative north/south connection to Route 50, improving capacity and safety on existing roadway networks in Dulles South. The new four lane roadway includes 10 ft. shared use paths on both

sides and signals at the Tall Cedars, Marrwood, and Route 50 intersections. The \$45.8 million project has an estimated completion date of early 2024.

The groundbreaking will be held on Friday, November 5 at 11:00 a.m. and is open to the public. The location is near the intersection of Northstar and Tall Cedars Parkway. Parking will be available at Arcola Elementary School, a short walk to the site of the event. For more information, visit the project page [here](#).

The northern segment of Northstar Boulevard is also in progress under a design/build contract, a different process than the southern section because federal funding is being used. A groundbreaking for that project is not expected until early next year. Because land acquisition and utility work run simultaneous with design, that project is expected to be complete at roughly the same time as south of Route 50.

### **Route 50 ITS Activated**

As you have probably noticed, the Intelligent Transportation System message boards are now active on Route 50 at locations east of Tall Cedars Parkway, east of Loudoun County Parkway, east of Stone Springs Boulevard, on Loudoun County Parkway north of Route 50 and on the Route 7 bypass west of Route 15. The ITS system was previously in place on I-66 inside the beltway before the implementation of tolling. The boards are operated by VDOT Traffic Operations staff located at their Public Safety & Traffic Operations Center (PSTOC) in Fairfax. The system provides display boards for drivers, transmits real time traffic data to VDOT, and integrates with routing software such as Waze. The boards can inform the public of travel times from the location of the signs to certain destinations, special events, and warnings of crashes or congestion. You'll notice sort of a hook at the top of the poles - those house the cameras. VDOT is in the process of updating their back end camera

system, so there are some limits to what is available at the moment, but that will change in the future. We're hoping to have VDOT use this system to collect data and better plan signal timings and measure delays (which could help build the case for funding in the future).

## DULLES LAND USE UPDATES

### **The Shops and Tech at Arcola Center**

[ZMAP-2020-0007](#), [SPEX-2020-0017](#), [SPEX-2020-0018](#), [ZMOD-2020-0011](#), [ZMOD-2020-0012](#), [ZMOD-2020-0013](#), [ZMOD-2020-0014](#), [ZMOD-2020-0015](#), & [ZMOD-2020-0016](#)

At Our October 5 Business Meeting, the Board voted 8-0-0-1 to approve the Shops and Tech at Arcola Center applications. As I reported in my [September newsletter](#), the applications seek to convert nearly half of the existing retail-zoned land on the north side of Dulles West Boulevard to flex industrial. I agreed with the applicant's analysis that there is much more commercial zoned property than demand, and the flex uses will allow for a variety of services and business types which ultimately will benefit the area. We were able to clarify with the applicant that certain accessory uses such as record storage does not count as "data center space," and so we were able to negotiate down the amount of data center in the application to 67,500 square feet (a minimum of 15% or maximum of 20% of the total project, depending on which types of buildings are actually built). In addition, even for that small amount, the types of data centers they are seeking are different than the big buildings we are used to seeing, and there can be no substations in this vicinity, which limits the appeal. I therefore think this was a reasonable outcome to get some commercial going in Arcola Center, which has been languishing on commercial for a very long time.



**AT&T - Stone Ridge Antennas**

[CMPT-2021-0003](#)

At our November 19 Business Meeting, the Board will discuss an application from AT&T to allow for installation of nine panel antennas and related telecommunication equipment atop a water storage tank west of the Stone Ridge community. Because this application is a commission permit, there is no public hearing required under law. Instead, the application must go through the Planning Commission (who voted to ratify at their September meeting) and the Board of Supervisors.

During the Planning Commission review, there were concerns expressed about 5G technology and health. However, under federal law the Board is not legally allowed to consider 5G issues or any peripheral matters such as health as part of the land use process. We must stick strictly to parameters established for land use consideration. On many telecommunications applications, visual impact is a concern, but that is really not the case here because the antennas will be placed on an existing structure with minimal visual impact. They do not add to the height of the water storage tank and the applicant has agreed to paint them the same color.

**Poland Road Substation Expansion**

[SPMI-2021-0003](#)

At our November Public Hearing, the Board will hear a minor special exception application from Dominion Energy to modify the width of a Type C Buffer yard in a planned expansion area of their substation on Poland Road. The proposal is to reduce the width of the rear southern buffer yard from 25 feet to 15 feet to match the southern buffer yard of the existing substation.

I am reserving judgement until I hear the item at the meeting, and I'll provide further updates after the hearing. Staff is recommending approval of the SPMI

since a reduction in the rear southern buffer yard would lead to a consistent buffer width along the southern perimeter of the substation and backs up to only data centers, so it wouldn't be visible. The applicant has agreed to all conditions. If you wish to speak on this or any other topic on the agenda, please click [here](#).

## **Avonlea II**

[ZMAP-2016-0011](#), [SPEX-2016-0037](#), [SPEX-2020-0002](#), [SPEX-2020-0003](#), [ZMOD-2021-0010](#), [ZMOD-2021-0011](#), [ZMOD-2021-0012](#), [ZMOD-2021-0013](#), [ZMOD-2021-0014](#), & [ZMOD-2021-0048](#)

The revised version of the Avonlea application came before the Planning Commission this week for a Public Hearing and initial review. There were no public speakers and the Commission voted to send the application to a work session for further discussion and review of the proposal. You may recall that I shared in an earlier newsletter Peterson's decision to pivot away from a full mixed use retail project and instead seek up to 447 multifamily residential units, up to 207,000 square feet of commercial, and a 300,000 square foot continuing care facility with up to 220 beds. The commercial component is comprised of the potential for up to 100,000 square feet of office, an automobile service station with gas pumps, car wash, motor vehicle service and repair facility, potential for restaurant pad sites, and a drive through food location. Peterson and Toll Brothers' agreement to partner together and expand the site by nearly 50 acres has fallen through, meaning that they are now working on separate components. I shared information on Toll Brothers' Bryant Property in an earlier [newsletter](#).

Planning staff has acknowledged that the different uses on the property come close to meeting the Suburban Mixed Use Place Type that has been identified for the property, but they are concerned that the uses are not adequately integrated into a cohesive development that would be pedestrian

friendly. From my perspective, the layout is somewhat disjointed and doesn't lend itself to a true mixed use feel. Residential components are financially necessary to make other uses work, but the Comprehensive Plan calls on them to be integrated. More than anything, I'm looking for a sense of place with some amenities that existing residents will actually use.

The Planning Commission will be discussing this further at a work session meeting in the near future. Dulles District Commissioner Jeff and Salmon and I have been in regular contact and I think we're on the same page in terms of what we are looking for. After the Planning Commission makes a recommendation, the application will come before the Board of Supervisors for a Public Hearing and discussion.

## LOUDOUN UPDATES

### **Statement Regarding Loudoun County Public Schools Incident**

There's a lot of concern about actions and events within Loudoun County Public Schools. As most of you know, the Board of Supervisors has no operational authority over LCPS and is responsible only for appropriating an overall budget amount. Our system of government gives us an elected School Board, and they are in charge of the school system, whether folks agree with the decisions they've made or not.

I normally refrain from commenting on School Board issues other than those the Board of Supervisors has involvement in, such as the budget and school construction. However, given the gravity of what has occurred, I think it is appropriate for all of us in government to be engaged. A few points I'd like to share:

- The School Board in particular has been receiving death threats and threatening emails. I've seen it said on various forums that "they deserved it" or "they had it coming." No, they did not. Under no circumstances is it acceptable to threaten either individual members of the School Board or the Board as a whole, no matter the level of frustration. The Board of Supervisors gets its share of nasty emails, but some of the emails to the School Board are direct threats to Board members and their families and have required law enforcement investigation. That's both sad and wrong, and it is NOT the way to handle concerns about the school system.
- There are lots of concerns over various issues the School Board has handled - COVID-19 restrictions, equity, admissions policies to the Academies, reading material, the transgender student bathroom use policy, and others. Many of us have our own opinions on these topics, and just like my Board, there are a variety of opinions on the School Board. Not every Board member agrees with every decision that the majority has made, and there have been debates and split votes on many of these topics. Citizens should take the time to understand their representative's positions and communicate with them respectfully about them. Ultimately, if citizens don't agree with their School Board members, they will have the opportunity to vote for new ones in 2023. Sadly, Broad Run District School Board Representative Leslee King recently passed away, and the School

Board appointed Andrew Hoyler, who ran in the previous election, to replace her for a year until a special election is held. I've had a chance to get to know Mr. Hoyler a little bit. He's a young, relatively recent graduate of LCPS now working as a commercial pilot, and I think his perspective on the School Board will be valuable. Another School Board Representative, Beth Barts, recently resigned and was the subject of a recall petition that was about to proceed in the court system, so the School Board will also be appointing a new Leesburg Representative and will be having a special election next year in that district.

- The most recent issue of concern is two cases of sexual assault. As a parent of four LCPS students, there are many aspects of this situation that concern me. In addition, I have been contacted by parents about other assaults which occurred in the past, and that is very disturbing. Clearly LCPS needs to do a better job protecting students. In this particular circumstance, an individual was accused of sexual assault at Stone Bridge High School. The assault was reported to the School Resource Officer, and then investigated by the Sheriff's Office. Months later, charges were filed. The student was released from incarceration and then ultimately enrolled at a different high school, where another incident occurred and an arrest was made. Last week, a judge determined that there were facts sufficient that the defendant committed these crimes, and next there will be a disposition hearing of the case.

- The School Board received an email from the Superintendent notifying them that an allegation of sexual assault had been made at Stone Bridge, and that law enforcement was handling the case. That is the only communication the School Board says it received about the incident. When the second assault occurred in October, the School Board was not told that the individual was the same one as had been involved in the May incident. There have been many allegations of a “coverup” by the School Board, and even demands that the School Board resign because of this incident. There are legitimate questions as to why the School Board wasn’t told more than it was, but having spoken to my School Board counterpart Jeff Morse, I do not believe that the School Board knew any more than they are stating, nor do I think that this case was related to the transgender student bathroom use debate that was occurring. In fact, several members of the School Board did not support that policy, so it would make no sense for them to be “covering up” this type of incident. I’m never a fan of rushing to judgement before facts are actually known and understood.
- LCPS has discussed restrictions about sharing information and taking action due to federal Title IX regulations. The Superintendent has stated he was not notified by the Sheriff’s Office when the individual was charged. LCPS has also said that they cannot discipline a student until the law enforcement investigation has taken place. There seems to be some dispute with the Sheriff’s Office about whether notification did occur. I have yet to see

any definitive evidence either way, but that's something I want to know.

- The part of this that is so hard to understand is why this individual was allowed to enroll in a different school, after having been charged with such a crime. So far, I don't find any of the explanations to be sufficient or directly on point to that question. Did someone (even if it wasn't the Superintendent) know that these charges had been filed? Does the law really require the school system to provide in person education for students in this situation? Was the school system informed when the individual was charged, and who exactly has a role in determining how the case should be handled? Does the judge, the prosecutor, or law enforcement have a say, or is it up to the school system?
- LCPS has announced that it is taking steps to change the policy regarding investigations of discipline so that they can run concurrently with law enforcement, which may require agreement from the Sheriff's Office. The School Board is also seeking changes to Title IX to allow them more flexibility in handling these types of cases. These sound like reasonable steps, but I still think the community needs better answers to the questions I've posed.
- While some of the initial reporting about this incident was not accurate, it was accurate that LCPS had not been reporting sexual assault cases. It is difficult to fathom how and why this could have occurred, and it needs to be corrected immediately.



Those are the facts as I understand them as of right now. The community has every right to be angry about what occurred - in fact, I'm angry about it. My heart goes out to the victims in these cases and their families. I hope that in the coming days, we can get answers to the key questions I have posed and get to the truth about what happened so that LCPS can be sure it never happens again. Although I may have no formal role in this matter, as a representative of this community I will continue to speak up and ask these questions.

### **Route 50 & Trailhead Drive Roundabout**

The Board has awarded a design and construction contract for the Route 50 and Trailhead Drive roundabout project to Shirley Contracting Company Inc. in the amount of \$5,997,300. If you recall, this project will be constructed as a hybrid roundabout with the potential for future expansion. Two westbound lanes will be built to provide for left turning and through/right turning traffic. The northbound approach from Trailhead will include a bypass lane to eastbound 50. Land acquisition and utility relocation will follow the design process and is currently estimated for spring of 2023. I'll update you as the process moves forward, and you can visit the project page [here](#) to view plans and related documents.

### **Belmont Ridge Road - Truro Parish Drive to Croson Lane**

The Board has awarded a design and construction contract for the Belmont Ridge Road widening project from Truro Parish Drive to Croson Lane to Shirley Contracting Company Inc. in the amount of \$27,793,801. This project will turn Belmont Ridge between Truro Parish and Croson from a rural two lane road to a four lane median divided suburban roadway with shared use paths on each side. Project funding is coming from a variety of sources,

including local tax funding, General Obligation Bonds, and NVTAF funding. Construction is currently expected to begin next spring with completion anticipated in winter 2025, weather permitting. I'll update you as the process moves forward, and you can visit the project page [here](#) to view plans and related documents.

### **Hanson Park Construction Update**

Crews continue their work at the Hal and Berni Hanson Regional Park site. Current work on park features includes installation of a concrete slab at the splashpad and play equipment at the west side playground. Crews are caulking and painting exterior siding at the historic Hanson House. Ongoing work includes installation of underground utilities, electrical transformers, turf irrigation systems, and concrete at plazas and sidewalks. Athletic field lighting tests were performed last week. There have been some delays on completing final electrical service to the site and receiving some needed materials, but the planned opening next spring is not impacted at this point.



*Hanson Park construction progress*

### **Redistricting Update**

Every ten years following the U.S. Census, governments must adjust districts based on population changes. For the County, the Board of Supervisors has the responsibility to draw districts for the Board and School Board districts. I covered what that could mean for future elections in my June newsletter, which you can read [here](#). I won't repeat that information this time around, but I will talk about the action the Board took on October 19 and how you can get involved going forward.

The Board began the process by deciding to keep 8 magisterial districts, and one Chair elected at large Countywide. Based on census data, each district will have a minimum of 50,000 residents and a maximum of 55,000, with a target of 52,641. The current Dulles District has about 65,000 districts, so for those of you in my district reading this, the new district you will be in starting in 2024 will be smaller. The next set of elections in 2023 will use the new districts.

The Board established criteria for the creation of districts, one of which is to keep communities of common interest together. In other words, the Board should seek not to split an HOA if possible, or draw a district that has too many disparate areas.

Staff provided the Board with eight examples of new districts on October 19. While all of them are the right size, some don't follow the criteria. These examples are just that - a way to demonstrate how the process is going to work. The County is utilizing an online GIS-based redistricting tool named Esri that should be available for public use starting next week on the [redistricting hub](#). The examples will be uploaded to give citizens an idea of various starting points. The public will be allowed to submit their own suggestions, and I expect various stakeholders to get involved - HOAs, political parties, etc. Over the course of my decade on the Board, I have developed my own thoughts about what works and what does not in terms of districts, so I'll certainly be applying that judgement as I evaluate these possibilities. While the current Dulles District is manageable, I think

some of our current districts do a very poor job and present very difficult tasks for their elected Board members. Above all, the new districts should make sense, be free of partisan gerrymandering, and group communities together when possible. The Board's process will take until next spring, and I look forward to engaging with the community on this topic.

### **Collective Bargaining Public Hearing**

[I have written extensively](#) in the past about the County's proposed implementation of collective bargaining for public employees, which is now set to move forward. I have some serious concerns with the draft ordinance that will be presented to the public at the Board's November 10 Public Hearing. Besides general concerns that I've expressed before about collective bargaining, the ordinance codifies items which should be part of individual collective bargaining agreements and not part of an ordinance.

The Public Hearing is a chance for anyone to come speak on this topic. There is an orchestrated campaign by the union that is seeking to control the process, but the Board has not heard from residents and taxpayers on this topic yet. For information on how to speak at the meeting, please click [here](#).

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Friends of the Gum Spring Library Used Book Sale**

Friends of the Gum Spring Library will host a used book sale in early November at the Gum Spring Library, located at 24600 Millstream Drive. Here are the dates and hours of the sale:

- Friday, November 5: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

- Saturday, November 6: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- Sunday, November 7: 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### **Step Up Loudoun Youth Competition**

Working as a team or individually, middle and high school youth across the County are encouraged to identify an issue of their choice and share their project during the Step Up Loudoun Youth Competition and win prize money for their hard work. This year, registration closes December 17. For more information about making meaning contributions to your community in this competition, please visit [loudounyouth.org](http://loudounyouth.org).

More information about the county's recycling and waste management programs is available by calling 703-771-5500 or visiting [loudoun.gov/wastemanagement](http://loudoun.gov/wastemanagement).

### **Dulles South Neighborhood Closet**

Dulles South Neighborhood Closet is assisting elementary, middle, and high schools in the Freedom, John Champe, Lightridge, and Independence clusters to gather more than 300 new winter coats by November 12. The new coats will go to students in need and their younger siblings. If you can help, please sign up for a coat [here](#). Dulles Closet is also collecting gently used coats and jackets, new socks, new underwear, gloves, mittens, hats, and scarves. See [DullesCloset.org](http://DullesCloset.org) for drop-off information and volunteer opportunities. Please save all other clothing, shoes, and accessories until the end of November when donations open for a community clothing event at Lightridge High School on December 4.

### **Dulles South Soup Kitchen**

Dulles South Soup Kitchen provides fresh and nutritious hot meals to anyone in need within Loudoun County.

Donations to the Dulles South Soup Kitchen can be made on their [website](#) or at their location by appointment. Call (202) 930-3775 or [email](#) to make an appointment.

Dulles South Soup Kitchen distributes food every Wednesday from 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the StoneSprings Hospital Center parking lot by Route 50. [Registration](#) is required on their website.

### **Donations to Local Food Banks**

Donations to the Dulles South Food Pantry can be made in person at their temporary location at the Arcola Volunteer Fire Department Annex, 24300 Stone Springs Boulevard, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM, or [online](#). Donations to the Dulles South Food Pantry, Inc. are tax deductible. The Dulles South Food Pantry provides food assistance up to twice a month to any person who resides in the attendance zones for the following high schools: Freedom, John Champe, Lightridge, Independence, Rock Ridge and Briar Woods. Call 703-507-2795 or email <mailto:info@dsfp.org> to schedule an appointment. See the Pantry's [website](#) for information on how you can help fight local hunger.

Donations to Loudoun Hunger Relief can be made in person at 750 Miller Drive SE in Leesburg or via their [website](#).

### **Blood Donation**

The American Red Cross continues to have an urgent need for blood and platelet donations. Donation sites follow the required social distancing during the collection events. No drop-in donations are allowed. To schedule an appointment, please visit [redcross.org/give-blood](https://redcross.org/give-blood).

Inova Blood Services has blood drives scheduled and takes donors by appointment.

Visit <https://www.inovablood.org/> to schedule an appointment.

Locally, Arcola Volunteer Fire Department in partnership with INOVA Blood Donor Services will be hosting a blood drive on Wednesday, November 3 from 12:30 to 5:00 p.m. at the Arcola VFD Annex located at 24300 Stone Springs Blvd. [Sign up today.](#)

### **Medical Reserve Corps Volunteering**

The Health Department continues to seek volunteers for the Loudoun Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). With the COVID-19 pandemic a reality, the need for Loudoun Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers - both medical and nonmedical personnel - is greater than ever. The MRC is asking medical doctors, nurses, physician assistants, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, dentists, veterinarians, and other medical professionals to consider volunteering their time to help protect the community's health during the pandemic and beyond. Nonmedical professionals can operate the Loudoun County Health Department's information line or help support testing activities, contact-tracing efforts, logistics support, and other nonmedical functions. For more information, visit [loudoun.gov/mrc](https://loudoun.gov/mrc). Register through the [Virginia Volunteer Health System](#).

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