

Dulles Direct Newsletter August 2017

Welcome to the August edition of the Dulles Direct newsletter. Last week, over 80,000 students went back to school in Loudoun, making LCPS the 3rd largest school district in Virginia! Some of those students helped open Brambleton Middle School, our 90th school. Many thanks to our teachers, faculty and staff that worked hard to prepare for this school year. I know there have been some ongoing concerns about transportation. If you are experiencing issues, you can contact School Board Chairman and Dulles District Representative, Jeff Morse, at jeff.morse@lcps.org.

While the Board doesn't meet in August, I have been busy working on constituent issues and on several regional bodies. In particular, the discussion about Metro funding has continued in earnest-I've included some additional information below about that issue.

This month, I was pleased to join the Maharaj family at the opening of D&V Auto Body "Masters" which will handle exotic and specialized cars. They opened a brand new, separate facility in Dulles Trade Center West off of Evergreen Mills Road this month. D&V has been in business for almost 30 years and has taken care of many cars in our community, including mine! It

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is fantastic to see a local, family owned business thrive and expand.



I also enjoyed speaking with the Loudoun Valley Estates III community at their Annual Meeting earlier this month. The VDOT Construction Manager for the Route 606 project was there and we discussed some of the upcoming milestones. That community has been particularly impacted by the construction, so I thank the residents for their patience. This fall, you will notice work beginning on sound walls which will be installed in the front of the community.

LOUDOUN COUNTY PARKWAY

Back to school always means "back to bad traffic." It didn't seem like there was much of a break this year, but the next few weeks are some of the worst of the entire year for our region. However, here in Loudoun, there will be a major new project open to help alleviate some of the bottlenecks. On September 6, we will be cutting the ribbon for the final piece of Loudoun County Parkway that connects to Route 606!

More than any other, this project was the one that inspired me to get more involved in local government. One of the first things the Board of Supervisors did when I took office in 2012 was



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conduct a "missing links" study that guided our prioritization for the local road network. This missing link was at the top of the list. Getting this project to fruition required a great deal of effort from a lot of people. The road was constructed as a proffer from Brambleton, but that proffer was adjusted and renegotiated during the last Board's term. The initial design for the intersection was clearly going to be inadequate for traffic volume, so then-Chairman Scott York and I halted everything and forced a redesign to allow for 3 left turn lanes on the westbound side.

Once the 606 project kicked off, Shirley Contracting committed to having this intersection open in September 2017, and they have delivered. As a result of these changes, you will need to be alert driving through the area as things will be different.

Here is what to expect:

- Yesterday, traffic shifted so that the northbound/eastbound (towards Sterling) traffic will utilize the new ramp spur. Westbound/southbound (towards South Riding) traffic will remain in its current configuration in a single lane through the intersection. On September 1, 2017, the signal will be placed in "flash mode".

- Traffic will remain in this configuration until the night of September 5. Between August 30 and September 5 work will be completed on all of the striping and signage needed for the opening and traffic will remain in a single lane in each direction using barrels.

- During the overnight hours of September 5 into September 6 the signal will be activated and the triple left turn lanes for southbound traffic will be opened. At this point all of the striping will be complete.

- Following the ribbon cutting on September 6 and under coordination with law enforcement and adjacent projects, the barrels that are closing off the road will be removed and the full intersection with access to Loudoun County Parkway will open.

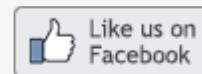
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Quick Links



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Some of this work is weather dependent, so be on the lookout for signage to provide notice on changes as the week progresses. I will be sending out an email news alert when the road is officially open.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Metro Matters

Through my role on the Council of Governments and the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, I have been deeply involved in the discussion about how to ensure the long term viability of the Metro system. Since Loudoun is making the investment to become part of the Silver Line, we need to make sure that the system is safe, reliable and efficient for the future.

Over the course of the last 4 months, I worked with County Administration to develop an alternative plan of finance for Metro that could help sustain the system while larger issues are dealt with. WMATA jurisdictions provide a capital contribution and an operating contribution. The amounts are based on formulas that take into account the amount of track, number of stations, number of rides, and size of the jurisdiction. For both, Loudoun's contributions will be between 3-4 percent.

The problem is that Metro's capital needs are ballooning, and local governments won't be able to pay for the increases that are needed without it really impacting their budgets. That is what has driven some to call for a regional sales tax to pay for Metro, a proposal that I don't support for a variety of reasons.

The concept that we've been working on is called a Service Contract Agreement, and it would allow jurisdictions to maintain their existing level of contribution, while essentially pooling resources and allowing for the financing of capital expenditures.

As a very fast growing County, we have a lot of needs, and financing allows us to meet growing demands for schools, parks, transportation, libraries and public

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safety facilities. As I've written about before, we very carefully manage our debt load, and as a AAA rated County, receive the best possible interest rates. We always pay back our debt-usually early, and several of the credit rating agencies have noted that they believe our debt load is very manageable and less than they would expect for a County of our size that is growing.

So the question is not really whether to finance our Metro contribution, but whether all of us should do it ourselves individually or together through a contract. The advantage of the Service Contract Proposal is that it provides a steady stream of funding to Metro for a given period of time as a managed cost.

There are a lot of reforms that have been discussed, and this fall, a report from Former US Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood will come out and is expected to make several recommendations.

Ultimately, more money is going to be needed from the state and federal government, but I don't think that request will be met with success until those entities are convinced that Metro has righted the ship.

That's why a short term Service Contract Agreement may make sense. Changes to Metro require the agreement of DC, Virginia, Maryland, and all the jurisdictions. It's hard to get that many entities to agree on anything so this is not going to be an easy process and it will likely take time. In Virginia, we'll have a new Governor in January who I'm sure will have his own thoughts about how to approach this as well.

In the meantime, I will continue to work to represent Loudoun's interests and the interests of the region as a whole to improve the system.

Loudoun Home to 24 of the Fastest Growing Companies

According to a list recently published by Inc., 24 of the fastest-growing companies in the country are located in Loudoun County. Only five of these companies made the list for the first time. This shows long term sustained growth by the majority of the Loudoun

companies that made the list. Some are on their fifth and sixth consecutive year.

Loudoun has also been ranked #3 in job growth in the nation by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It is good to see continued growth in our commercial tax base and the sustained job growth that Loudoun is experiencing. I have always said that bringing quality jobs into Loudoun is one more way to help our traffic issues by lessening the need to travel outside the County for employment.

DULLES DISTRICT UPDATES

Dulles South Recreation and Community Center/Senior Center Update

I continue to receive weekly updates on the progress being made to complete our long awaited Recreation and Senior Center. We are still awaiting final work on a completion date from the contractor and a schedule for outfitting the building and training all staff. I still expect that opening should come early in 2018. I know that the delay is frustrating-believe me, the County staff is also frustrated. Our contract with the contractor does include provisions for liquated damages should deadlines not be met, but those are legal issues that will be ironed out after the project is completed. Right now, the focus for the County is making sure that the work is being done right, and the facility will be in perfect shape when it does open. In the coming weeks, I am hopeful that we will be able to announce an opening date, but that is entirely dependent on the work being done. Once the building is completed, we need about 90 days to get all the staff on board and get everyone trained and ready to go for what we expect will be a very busy facility. Having been inside the building throughout the process, I think you will find that it is worth the wait.

Overall, final inspections are being performed for plumbing, mechanical, fire alarm, and elevator. Any items that are identified from the inspections are corrected as soon as possible. The building is more

than 80% through the commissioning, testing, and balancing process. The original parking lot surface at the site has been resurfaced.

In the Senior Center, finish work continues throughout the space. A final clean has been conducted and final flooring installation is underway in the exercise room. Finishing items and accessory installation is underway including window treatments in the multipurpose room, coat racks, etc.

In the Rec Center, the pool work is complete. The wood flooring in the gym has been installed and finished. The sports flooring in fitness areas on the both floors is underway. Millwork, lighting and work in the locker rooms continues.

There are some lingering impacts from the vandalism incidents that have occurred. Some of the replacement parts have to be custom made and won't be ready until October. This should not cause any additional delays as everything else is moving forward. The contractor is responsible for site security until the site is turned over the County. There is 24 hour security at the site. Stay tuned for further updates when I have them.

Update on Signal at Gum Spring Road and Tall Cedars Parkway

The Tall Cedars Parkway construction project is making great progress. It is expected to be finished in spring 2018, but could beat that time based on current progress. I worked to expedite the signal at Gum Spring and Tall Cedars ahead of the construction project and we had hoped to have it in operation before school started. However, there were some delays in getting the electricity service and communications link to the signal. Currently we expect to have the signal in "flash mode" shortly after Labor Day. It would go into full operation after flashing for a few days. I will post updates to my Facebook page as this moves along.

Elementary School Boundary Changes

The School Board is going to be taking up the issue of attendance boundary changes for the new Goshen Post Elementary under construction next to John Champe

High School. This school is set to open in fall 2018. As a reminder, the Board of Supervisors has no role in the topic of attendance boundaries. My role is to help secure needed sites and appropriate the funding for construction of new schools.

The attendance boundary work sessions will begin on October 16 and run until the School Board is expected to adopt new boundaries on December 12. These boundaries could impact Aldie, Arcola, Buffalo Trail, Cardinal Ridge, Hutchison Farm, Liberty, Little River, and Pinebrook. For more information, [click here](#). As a preview, School Board Chairman and Dulles District Representative Jeff Morse and I will be hosting a joint Town Hall meeting in late September-stay tuned for details.

Vandalism Concerns

We had a lot of vandalism and petty theft this summer. There is information below about the 9 pm routine, which the Sheriff's Office is promoting to help ensure that vehicles and homes are locked. Beyond that, we've had incidents of tires being slashed, and even some gun shots fired on neighborhood streets. The Dulles South sector has seen extra patrols over the last few weeks, and LCSO has conducted various operations to try to catch those responsible and prevent additional incidents. Hopefully, with school back, things will calm down. But, be vigilant at night, and don't be afraid to call the Sheriff's Office at 703-777-1021 if you see suspicious activity.

LCPS Construction Project Information

It's no surprise that new schools serving our area make up the majority of the LCPS Capital Improvement Plan. If you are interested in keeping up on the latest progress of the new school under construction near your neighborhood, you can visit <https://www.lcps.org/page/1771>, click "Under Construction" on the left side and then choose the project you want to learn more about.

Food Truck Depot

There have been questions popping up on the various social media groups about the Food Truck Depot that is

being held every Thursday on Elk Lick Road, and potential issues with the County. I thought I would cover some of the details and the current status here:

- Food trucks are regularly inspected by the Loudoun County Health Department. The Department of Zoning received a referral from the Health Department about the Food Truck Depot in South Riding and asked that Zoning Enforcement investigate to make sure that the activities are consistent with what is allowed in the zoning ordinance.

- There is no provision in the County ordinance for food trucks. However, the County's approach has been to regulate only for food safety as long as the food trucks rotate on a regular basis between different locations. There are food trucks that operate regularly in the County, and often make stops at places like wineries, breweries, and special events. However, the shared characteristic is that they are not regular events in a stationary location.

- The zoning for the lot that the Food Truck Depot is occurring on is CLI--commercial light industrial. There are specific uses allowed in that zoning district by-right, but food service is not one of them. There is an existing, approved site plan on that site for a daycare center. Therefore, the activity that would be allowed under the ordinance on the site without any further review is a daycare.

- The purpose of the zoning ordinance is to ensure safety of pedestrians, adequate parking, and appropriate use for a given site. That's why approvals are needed for activities. Without these, the community would look a lot different. Zoning Administration is an independent entity within County government--the Zoning Administrator issues opinions much like a judge does, absent from interference from political entities like the Board of Supervisors. The decisions made can be appealed both to the Board of Zoning Appeals, Board of Supervisors, and ultimately the legal system.

- In this case, Zoning Enforcement has informed the

property owner that the Food Truck Depot is not in compliance with the ordinance. The model of the business is that a permanent structure is being used as storage and support for the food trucks, and individual spots are being leased out to food trucks on a weekly basis for a non-permitted use.

-No enforcement action has been taken yet, and Zoning Enforcement has indicated that they would like to discuss the issue with the property owner and discuss options for moving forward.

A few items to consider:

-The County does issue special event permits for unusual activities on a site that may deviate from the approved use. In order to obtain one, the property owner must demonstrate that they can handle the crowd, provide adequate parking, or a plan to move people to and from a site. These types of things have come up locally at the event/conference center on Route 50--when they have a large event that exceeds the number of parking spaces on the site, they are required to obtain a special event permit that is reviewed by law enforcement and public safety officials. However, one criteria for a special event permit is that it cannot be issued less than 14 days apart in the same location.

-The property owner can also seek a special exception to the ordinance to allow for the use. This goes through a legislative review process with staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors, and issues like the number of parking spaces, etc would be reviewed. This process does take 6-12 months and there are expenses involved. Zoning Enforcement does have discretion to stay enforcement while the process is being undertaken to get a property into compliance.

-For my part, as I mentioned, the zoning side is separate and not something I can influence. I personally enjoy food trucks and I understand that this has been a nice addition to the community this summer. Should there be a legislative solution needed,

I am certainly happy to work with the property owner on that.

I'm sure there will be more information and discussions as things progress and maybe some changes to make it fit within the ordinance while still being an asset for the community. My office has already facilitated a meeting between the operator and Zoning staff to discuss his specific plans and the steps needed to apply for a special events permit and ensure that approvals for the other uses of the property are properly secured.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LCSO 9 PM Routine

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office is part of a larger initiative called the [9 PM Routine](#). The 9 PM Routine is in response to a growing number of vehicle and property thefts that occur in our neighborhoods on an almost nightly basis. In the vast majority of these cases, vehicle and property doors are unlocked. If you leave your vehicle unlocked, even in your driveway, there is unfortunately a very good chance that either property will be stolen from it, or the entire vehicle will be stolen. The same is true for garage doors and even doors to your house. These crimes rise significantly in the summer, but can happen year round. The idea behind the 9 PM Routine is to get in the habit of checking your vehicles and doors every single night at 9 pm to make sure they are locked. If you follow the [Sheriff's Office](#) on social media, they are providing reminders on many nights at 9 pm. Don't be a victim!

Dulles South Food Pantry

The Dulles South Food Pantry provides food assistance to any person who resides in the school attendance zones for Freedom High School, John Champe High School or the upcoming Independence High School in Brambleton. The food pantry is open Wednesdays in the historic white chapel at Arcola United Methodist Church, 24757 Evergreen Mills Road, Dulles, VA 20166. Call 703-507-2795 or email info@dsfp.org to schedule an appointment. See the Dulles South Food Pantry's website at <http://www.dsfp.org/> for

information on how you can help the food pantry fight local hunger. Donations to the Dulles South Food Pantry, Inc. are tax deductible.

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