



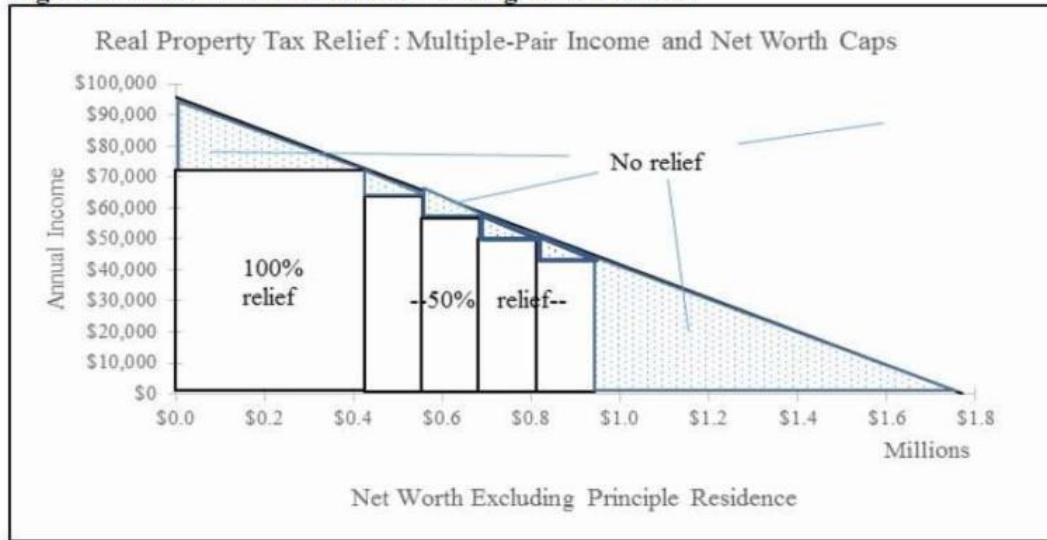
Dear Leesburg Resident,

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving! And I hope you have a very Merry Christmas and holiday season.

Real Estate Tax Relief for the Elderly or Permanently Disabled

At the November 8th business meeting, the Board discussed expanding the eligibility for the real property tax relief program for elderly or permanently disabled residents. [Staff recommends](#) the addition of four new brackets delineated by four new sets of caps on income and net worth in order to qualify for 50 percent tax relief (see recommended tax relief program structure in the figure below). The proposed changes would keep all currently eligible applicants in the program so long as they meet current eligibility requirements. The Commission on Aging requested a more equitable program to allow seniors with a low income but higher net worth to benefit from the program. The recommended expansion will go to a Board public hearing on Wednesday, December 13th at 6:00 pm in the Government Center Board room, 1 Harrison Street, SE in Leesburg. Please sign up to speak by calling 703-777-0200.

Figure 2: Recommended Tax Relief Program Structure



Transportation Update: Route 15 North

To improve safety in the short term, VDOT installed "mumble strips," or special rumble strips along the center of the roadway between North King Street and the Maryland state line in mid-November. Like regular rumble strips, mumble strips warn drivers when they leave their lane; however, mumble strips are designed to be more subtle and aim to provide adequate warning to drivers with less unwanted noise in residential areas. The strips also aim to help reduce roadway crashes along the Route 15 corridor. They will be the first of their kind in Virginia.

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, December 19th at 6:00 pm in the Board room of the Government Center on the proposed amendment to the 2010 Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) for US Route 15 north of Leesburg. Specifically, the amendment is to change the condition of Route 15 north of Leesburg from a two-lane (R2) to a four-lane divided (R4M) rural section roadway from just south of Tutt Lane north to Montresor Road. The proposed changes to the CTP reflect the recommendations of the Route 15 Congestion Report, which was presented to the Board in May 2017.

Transportation Update: NVTA

At the November 8th business meeting, the Board directed staff to apply to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) for Regional Funding on [nine County projects](#). The Board also endorsed the Town of Leesburg's Route 7 and Battlefield Parkway Interchange project in the amount of \$25 million. The Board's top three projects are U.S. Route 15 North (Battlefield Parkway to Montresor Road), Shellhorn Road (Loudoun County Parkway to Moran Road) and Northstar Boulevard (Shreveport Drive to Tall Cedars Parkway). I supported Route 15 being the number one priority for funding because it is listed as one of the most congested roads in the Greater Washington DC area by the Transportation Planning Board. I also supported adding safety improvements along Evergreen Mills Road to the list of nine projects.

True North Data Center

The [application for the True North Data Center](#) involves placing a 750,000 square foot data center on 105 acres about 4 miles south of Leesburg near the Panda Stonewall Power

Plant. First, I want to address the environmental concerns; and then, I want to get into the impact of this data center on the County's financial situation.

The data center itself would occupy less than 17% of the property and would employ a minimal staff. Ancillary buildings would increase that percentage. Although data centers generate significant tax revenues, they are not big employers, so they generate relatively little vehicular traffic. The applicant is proposing tree conservation areas, a 300-foot setback from Goose Creek (required by ordinance of all construction), and a dedication of land along the creek to the County's parks department for passive public use, which could include a natural trail accessible from adjacent park land and canoe/kayak take-out areas. This particular data center has been designed to use almost no water for cooling, so, with its minimal staff, it should have almost no impact on groundwater in the area or on Goose Creek. I have been in discussions with the applicant to encourage them to set aside native plant areas for pollinators, birds, and Monarch butterflies, in addition to the passive public use area along Goose Creek and tree conservation areas, and the reduction of paved parking areas and their replacement with environmentally sensitive "pervious" grass paving materials that allow rainwater to go into the ground. The applicant is setting aside 2 acres for pollinator gardens. The applicant has also offered to protect any local wood turtle population. I have also requested that they ensure that the data center is hidden from Goose Creek and Sycolin Road by tree buffers. And I have requested that they address concerns about any onsite fuel storage for any generators.

At present, the land is zoned for 10 homes. These homes could be built without any tree conservation or environmental protection areas, (except for the 300 foot buffer from the creek that applies to all construction), and without any public use areas along Goose Creek. The data center will provide an estimated \$22 million in tax revenue to the County every year. The tax revenue from the by-right homes, at the current tax rate, would be much less: \$112,500 in total if all ten homes cost \$1 million apiece. If each home had one public school student living there, there would be almost no net revenue to the County after the costs of public school education were accounted for.

Here are some of the reasons why I believe the \$22 million annual revenue stream is an important consideration.

1. For those of us who own an average priced home in the County and worry about our ability to pay our taxes, the taxes paid by the data center could be used to save a typical homeowner about \$185 a year in County real property taxes.
2. For those of us who worry about good schools, the \$22 million that will be generated by this data center every year would pay to educate an additional 2,383 students. We expect that over 2,383 new students will be added to the Loudoun County public schools over the next two years. We expect student numbers to increase by 1,800 next year alone. Based on the [LCPS 2017-18 Budget Fact Sheet](#), the annual budget to educate Loudoun County's 81,622 students is \$1,113,478,387, the equivalent of \$13,579/student. 68% of that revenue comes from County taxes and about 30% comes from the State. Federal contributions and other taxes make up the remaining 2%. Based on those numbers, the County spends about \$9,234 in County taxes annually to educate each of our students. This adds up to about \$753,674,694 in local tax dollars for the 2017-18 school year.
3. For those of us who worry about not having enough revenue to pay for transportation improvements, including roads, buses and Metro, we keep thinking about the following: When Loudoun County's prior Board of Supervisors agreed to help build

Metro out to Ashburn, they incurred significant financial obligations that we will be forced to pay, for decades to come, including dedicating all gas tax revenues to Metro, starting in FY2019. Loudoun is on the hook for 4.8 percent of the cost of the Metro Silver Line rail extension, a share estimated to come out to \$273 million. After a federal loan worth about \$195 million, which the County expects to pay off in 2042, [Loudoun still needs to come up with \\$78 million.](#) Loudoun County's Gas Tax revenues, valued at \$6.9 million in FY2017, will no longer be available for funding transportation projects other than Metro. Furthermore, according to the [FY18 County Budget and the Capital Improvements Program](#), Loudoun anticipates needing at least \$27.4 million in local tax funds (cash) in FY19 for transportation projects. We pay cash for 10% of our transportation projects, bonding out the rest. This \$27.4 million figure is the cash amount and does not even include funds for high priority projects such as safety improvements to Route 15 North, which may eventually cost up to \$85 million, and Evergreen Mills Road.

4. For those of us who worry about the County budget: [Loudoun County is projecting an almost \\$107 million shortfall](#), starting July 1, 2018, if the Board of Supervisors decides to hold real property tax bills level and votes for a real property tax rate of \$1.11. This is the tax rate at which the average taxpayer's real property bill would stay the same as it is this year - this tax rate is sometimes called the "equalized rate." It would be a decrease from the current real property tax rate of \$1.125. Most of this shortfall is due to the needs of the Loudoun County Public Schools, whose school population continues to grow, in numbers and in community service requests, such as expanding full day kindergarten, ensuring that we build enough new schools to eliminate the overcrowded conditions many of our students face, and providing that all high schools be equipped with artificial turf. Loudoun County's data centers currently generate over \$100 million/year in tax revenues to the County. That is approximately 13% of the amount the County spends on educating our children. Loudoun's data centers currently pay for the total annual education costs for about 10,830 students. The True North Data Center is projected to add \$22 million annually to the County's total tax revenues. That is the equivalent of the local tax dollars needed to educate an additional 2,383 students. So this particular data center can pay for the education of these new students and provide the County with an additional \$5 million/year.

Some citizens have opposed the True North Data Center by asking the Board to respect the Envision Loudoun process in the Transition Policy Area (TPA). At present, the Envision Loudoun process has veered away from what many Loudoun citizens want and has resulted in a recommendation from the Envision Loudoun Stakeholders Committee to allow an additional 18,000 houses in the TPA. The Board of Supervisors has stated our opposition to adding even the 12,000 additional units recommended by County staff.

These are the considerations I will need to keep in mind when this application comes up for a vote on Tuesday, December 5th. Residents are encouraged to speak during the public input session at 6:30 pm. Advanced sign-up is available by calling 703-777-0200 until noon the day of the business meeting.

Pennington Garage Update

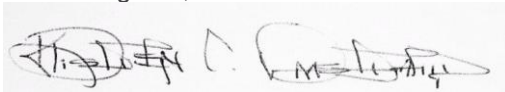
Ongoing remediation and ground improvements are progressing. With a total of 208 drill holes required to perform sinkhole remediation, 180 are complete as of November 28th, representing 87 percent completion. The expected completion of sinkhole remediation efforts is still planned for December 2017.

Ongoing efforts to protect foundations in areas at-risk of future sinkhole development are also progressing. With a total of 284 drill holes required to protect foundations, 71 are complete as of November 28th, representing 25 percent completion. The expected completion of foundation protection efforts is still March 2018.

Due to delays associated with the sinkholes, project completion is now expected in Fall 2018.

The second Board business meeting on December 21st was cancelled due to the holiday. Thank you and I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and wonderful holiday season.

Warm Regards,



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Mayor Kelly Burk's Corner

Holidays in Leesburg kicks off on Friday, December 1st with our annual Christmas Tree lighting ceremony on the Town Green. The ceremony begins at 6:00 pm with musical performances by local students. I'll throw the switch to light the tree, followed by festive entertainment. After the ceremony, stay downtown for December's First Friday celebration of the arts, holiday-style.

Downtown Leesburg and the Village at Leesburg both have a full lineup of fun holiday events and special sales, too. Photos with Santa, horse-drawn carriage rides, strolling carolers, and more. Downtown parking is free through January 1st. Get the details at <https://downtownleesburgva.com>.

During this holiday season, there are lots of opportunities to give back to the community and to those less fortunate. There are collection boxes at Town facilities for Toys for Tots (through December 13th) and Sweats for Vets (through December 22nd). The Salvation Army on Cardinal Park Drive is accepting donations for their annual holiday baskets. I will have the honor of handing out the first basket on Thursday, December 14th at 8:00 am. On Saturday, December 16th, please join me at Ball's Bluff National Cemetery for Wreaths Across America at 11:00 am. We'll be placing wreaths on all of the headstones in the cemetery.

Enjoy all of Leesburg's holiday activities and I hope you have a safe and happy holiday season!



Business of the Month Comfort Suites

Comfort Suites is conveniently located in Leesburg. The 80 room all-suite hotel features a wide variety of amenities you would not typically find in a mid-range hotel. Whether

you want to spend a relaxing weekend away from home or you need some place to stay for a couple of weeks, Comfort Suites is sure to meet all your needs including all-inclusive business-class amenities-at prices lower than you might expect. Comfort Suites Managing Partner Bob Patel has a heart of gold. As a private citizen, he has gone above and beyond to help those in need in the community.

Events & Info



Leesburg's First Friday: Stroll around historic downtown Leesburg on the First Friday of each month (except January) to enjoy numerous live music performances

throughout the town, art exhibits, wine tastings, lectures, and so much more! Over 45 specialty shops, art galleries, antique shops and restaurants are open until 9 pm or later, many offering free refreshments and/or special sales. Mark your calendar for the next First Friday event on December 1st.

Leesburg's First Friday

Christmas Tree Lighting: Friday, December 1st at 6:00 pm on the Town Green. Join friends and neighbors and celebrate the start of the holiday season in Leesburg at the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. The festive ceremony will feature performances from local groups and a holiday message.

Holiday Fine Arts & Crafts Show: December 2nd and 3rd at Ida Lee Park Recreation Center in Leesburg. This show features over 90 local and regional artisans selling hand-made items including candles, stained glass, carved wood, jewelry, leather products, table linens, and much more. Find something for everyone on your shopping list and a little something to brighten your home this season. Free admission and parking!

Are You Sure? Parent Seminar: Sunday, December 3rd from 3:00 to 5:00 pm at the Leesburg Junction, 215 Depot Court Southeast in Leesburg. Many parents are unaware of the pressures teens face as they transition into high school. This seminar is a wake-up call for parents to understand the challenges and to strengthen connections and communications that will help build resilient teens. There is limited space for this free event so please [register](#). Childcare will be provided for children 12 and under.

Annual Christmas & Holiday Parade: Saturday, December 9th from the front field of Ida Lee Park promptly at 6:00 pm. The parade proceeds down King Street to Fairfax Street. King Street will be closed to traffic from 5:30 pm until about 9:00 pm for the parade. The parade will usher Santa and his friends through Historic Leesburg.

Cut Your Own Holiday Tree: Did you know there are farms in Loudoun County where you can cut your own Christmas tree? Fill your home with that wonderful scent of pine, fir, cedar or spruce from a tree grown right here in Loudoun. Help a County business by buying holiday wreaths, poinsettias and garlands. For more information on where you can cut your own tree or buy Loudoun-grown holiday products, visit <http://loudounfarms.org/>.

Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign: It's that time of the year again when we start seeing red kettles and people ringing the bells. The Red Kettle Campaign is one of the Salvation Army's oldest annual charitable fundraisers. The funds raised will help those in our community with coats for the homeless, food for the hungry and countless social service programs year-round. But we can't make this happen without YOU. Volunteers are needed to ring the bell at the kettles. Click on this [link](#) to find a location, date and time that best suits your schedule. We can't do this without you!

The new captain of Loudoun's Salvation Army, Pradeep Ramaji, and Keith Moore (photo credit below), recently visited my office. In June 2017, Pradeep and Priscilla Ramaji, both uniformed pastors and captains, became the leaders of the nonprofit organization.



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