

Dulles Direct Newsletter January 2018

Welcome to the January edition of the Dulles Direct newsletter. Within the next couple of weeks, you should also be receiving my Annual Report in the mail. It contains a great overview of all the most frequently asked questions, so watch out for it in your mailboxes.

For 2018, my colleagues on the Board once again selected me to continue to serve as Chairman of the Board's Finance, Government Operations and Economic Development Committee, which oversees our day to day operations and our fiscal policy.

I also will be taking on some new leadership positions in the regional organizations on which I serve. I am truly honored to become the first Loudoun Supervisor since 1983 to be Chairman of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Board of Directors. COG is a regional association, with a membership of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures and U.S. Congress. COG serves as the region's designated Metropolitan Planning Organization with responsibility for air quality, federal grants, regional public safety issues and overall cooperation and communication. The Board of

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Directors is COG's governing body and is responsible for its overall policies, functions and funds. At my first meeting as Chairman, I announced two new initiatives for this year: TIME (Traffic Incident Management Enhancement) and safety and security of public facilities. TIME will be focused on ways that the region can work together to better respond to traffic incidents that have impacts across jurisdictions. Safety and security will aim to establish best practices for municipal facilities and schools. In addition, Metro will continue to be a major focus at COG this year, as we are the only body that all funding jurisdictions are represented on.

In addition to COG, I was also elected Vice Chairman of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, which oversees public transit in Virginia, with oversight of Virginia's Metro Board Members and finances, Virginia Railway Express, and bus services. NVTC is heavily involved in the discussion taking place regarding financing for Metro. I am the first Loudouner to serve in this position.

This month's newsletter includes information on the True North Data Center, DC United facilities lease, and the upcoming FY19 budget; among other things.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

I-66 Tolling

I shared with you last month news about efforts to gain some momentum for changes to the I-66 tolling program. Once again, this month Supervisor Ron Meyer and I worked to convince our NVTC colleagues to pass a fairly mild resolution that called for the Secretary of Transportation to consider evaluating the program to lower toll rates.

The Commission instead passed a substitute motion asking the Secretary or her designee to return to the Commission in May with more data (instead of studying ways to lower the toll). The substitute motion passed 11-8, with myself, Supervisor Meyer, Delegates LaRock (Loudoun), LeMunyon (Fairfax-Loudoun)



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Minchew (Loudoun), Senator Ebbin (Alexandria), Supervisor Cook (Fairfax) and Supervisor Foust (Fairfax) opposed. We opposed because we supported the original motion.

So, we did a little better, and at least the program will continue to be evaluated, but clearly many of our regional colleagues view these issues differently. The Deputy Secretary of Transportation, who was at the meeting, did say that in the coming weeks, they would be taking a look at the traffic patterns and examining the algorithm. I certainly will continue to be active in the discussion, and provide my constructive feedback to VDOT and the Administration in various ways. Tolls have gotten as high as \$46 one way, which makes this the most expensive stretch of road in America. I understand better than anyone (since I drive this corridor to DC every day) that this is a complicated issue, but I think we've merely traded one set of drivers that could legally use 66 for another, smaller group, which doesn't really help anything.

FY19 Budget Development

The Board of Supervisors recently provided final budget guidance to the County Administrator. The guidance provided by the Board was for the proposed budget to be based on the funding provided within the estimated equalized tax rate with options for either increasing or decreasing the rate by a penny. The current tax rate is \$1.125/\$100 and the estimated equalized tax rate for FY19 is \$1.09/\$100.

The Superintendent recently presented his proposed budget to the School Board. This proposal requests an increase of \$88.9 million (8%) over the current year to fund employee pay increases, expansion of full-day kindergarten, serve an additional 1,483 students (1.8% increase in enrollment), provide students with more mental health support, and open three new schools. The School Board won't finalize their proposal until early February, but currently the equalized tax rate would bring us within \$11.2 million of the Superintendent's proposal.

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Quick Links



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There is still much work to be done on the FY19 budget. The County Administrator will present his proposed Capital Improvement Plan to the Finance Committee on February 13 and his proposed operating budget to the full Board on February 14. We will hold a series of public input sessions in late February and begin our budget work sessions in March. The final budget is scheduled for adoption at our April 1 Board meeting. Be on the lookout for information on the public input sessions as they get closer.

True North Data Center

The Board of Supervisors voted 5-4 to approve a 750,000 square foot data center complex in the vicinity of Sycolin Road and the Dulles Greenway, between Leesburg and Ashburn. This application was controversial because it was located in the Transition Policy Area, and fronted the Goose Creek.

The discussion on this item was difficult and the atmosphere divisive. The Board received a great deal of opposition by email, though very few of those came from the Dulles District. I found the debate over this application to be among the more misleading that I have experienced, and further found that I when I engaged in discussions with others about this application, they often felt differently about it than what they read in various special interest group emails that went out opposing it.

I have been pretty clear and consistent in my position supporting the application. I will restate the reasons: the context for this location was key for me. In the immediate vicinity are a very large natural gas power plant, Loudoun Water's new water treatment plant, and a large data center campus (Stonewall Business Park). Across Sycolin from the site is the Academies of Loudoun campus opening next year. That school project will have a far greater impact on traffic and conditions for residents in the immediate vicinity than the data centers will. This property directly abuts the Dulles Greenway. While I understand that it is proximate to the Goose Creek, we cannot escape the fact that a 6 lane highway is next to the property, with

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all the noise and issues that come with that. I could make a very strong case that data centers are better suited next to highways in areas with existing industrial development than in some of the suburban areas that we currently have them in.

Concerns were raised about the impact of the project on the creek, as well as on an apparently rare form of moss located on the property. There have also been concerns about the implications for the Transition Policy Area. I appreciate and understand those concerns. The data center developer itself is considered the industry leader in environmental sensitivity. That shows in the attention to detail in the project. They are taking great care with how they are handling the Goose Creek, and I think there's a very good chance the Creek will be healthier and better off with the project than without. They are also providing public access which currently doesn't exist, and wouldn't exist in the future if the property were to develop with by-right residential development because it would remain private property.

This one project is projected to generate about \$22 million a year in tax revenue for the County. That equates to almost 3 cents on the tax rate. The reality is that we are going to continue to grow, and we are going to continue to have needs such as schools, roads, parks and libraries. We need this kind of commercial development to help offset costs on residents.

Given the fact that this area is already industrial, I think overall the project is a good fit.

DC United Facilities Lease

I'm excited to report that our efforts to bring minor league soccer and numerous soccer opportunities to Loudoun have moved forward. The Board voted to approve a Memorandum of Agreement and direct staff to execute a lease agreement between the County and D.C. United to locate team offices and training facilities on county-owned property at Philip A. Bolen Memorial Park in Leesburg. The County would also become home to D.C. United's professional second division team.

The team will be repaying the County for the cost of constructing these facilities, so this agreement is a win for our finances and for our residents. We will provide land for the facilities and approximately \$15 million in financing for construction of the fields, offices, training facility and an approximately 5,000-seat stadium. D.C. United will make regular lease payments to the County that will fully offset any debt payments incurred as part of the financing package.

Four soccer fields will be constructed adjacent to the facility, two of which will serve as the team practice fields and two of which will have shared use with the County during peak recreational periods. The stadium will be available for other purposes, such as college sports, concerts and other events. Parking associated with the stadium would be available during the day for park and ride facilities that the County would need to construct anyway. Approximately 50 employees would work at the team's facility and the second division team is expected to play a 30-game schedule, with 15 home dates.

Opposition to this agreement has come from two quarters: a conservative group (Americans for Prosperity) that is trying to compare this with other stadium deals in other places that they say are subsidized, and residents in a neighborhood in Leesburg that live north of Bolen Park and the County Adult Detention Center. AFP's characterizations are just wrong and ignore the community benefits of having a project like this. Yes, the County is conducting some up front financing, but the team is paying back the full amount AND the County gets to keep the facility for its own use. That's nothing like most of these kinds of deals. As far as neighborhood concerns, the Board will work through this during the land use process for the stadium. They appear to be short term problems that will be solved by road network changes that are already well underway.

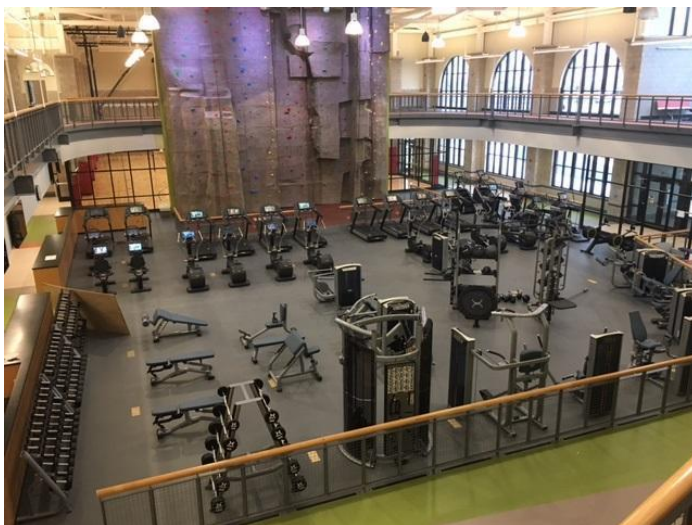
DULLES DISTRICT UPDATES

Dulles South Recreation and Community Center/Senior Center

The contractor continues working through punch list and mechanical work within the facility. Corrective work from the Commissioning and Testing and Balancing processes also continues. Specifically, there have been deficiencies noted with the water balancing. These items are all required for Substantial Completion by the contractor. These are not unusual problems with this type of facility, nor do they seem to be difficult to correct. The County is being very thorough and does not want to take possession of the building until all issues have been addressed.

From the time that the facility is completely finished until PRCS is ready to open it will be about 6 weeks. I'm not going to publicly speculate on that date yet, but rest assured that as soon as I have it, you'll know about it.

I have shared some pictures below from inside the fitness areas to show you just how nice a facility this is going to be.





Elk Lick/Route 50 Intersection Update

As I have shared in prior newsletters, the County is working with VDOT to close the median at Route 50 and Elk Lick Road. In addition to the median closure, Elk Lick Road will be converted to a right in/right out at Route 50 and Defender Drive will be restriped between Elk Lick and South Riding Boulevard.

Unfortunately, some of the work to complete this is temperature dependent and cannot be completed during the winter. However, I have worked with VDOT to implement the median closure at Elk Lick and Route

50 as soon as the needed materials have arrived. They expect them to arrive in early February and will use temporary markings as needed until they can perform the permanent markings this spring. Defender Drive will be marked in the spring as well. Look for more information when VDOT confirms that the barriers have been received and a date for implementation has been set.

RETAIL UPDATES

I have added a section to the newsletter that will provide information related to ongoing retail and commercial development in the Dulles South area. That seems to be the most frequently asked topic, especially updates on Avonlea.

Avonlea

There's been a lot of activity but not a lot to report. Peterson is actively recruiting tenants and I have been involved in one particular pitch that would allow the project to move forward. I know how strong demand and interest is and I hope these latest efforts are successful.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Interpretive/Master Plan Stakeholder's Meeting for Arcola Slave Quarters

PRCS and the Friends of the Slave Quarters have been working with the contractor History Behind the Scenes for the past year on the development of an interpretation plan for the Arcola Slave Quarters site. An input session for interested parties and stakeholders is scheduled for Saturday, February 3, 9:00 am - 4:30 pm at the PRCS offices (20145 Ashbrook Place, Suite 170) in Ashburn. Please RSVP to Wanda.Argen@loudoun.gov by 1/31/18.

Inova Loudoun Hospital Mobile Health Services

Inova Loudoun Hospital Mobile Health Services will be providing blood pressure screenings at the Dulles South Multipurpose Center (24950 Riding Center Dr. in South Riding) on Tuesday, February 6, 10:00 am to noon. For further information call the Mobile Health

hotline at 703-858-8818 or
visit www.inova.org/mobilehealth.

VDOT Snow Removal

When we have an event of at least 2" of snow; VDOT's goal is to have at least one passable lane on every road within 24 hours when snowfall is 2-4", 48 hours for 4-6", over 6" is expected to be at least 72 hours. If you feel that your street is missed after these timeframes have passed, you can use the resources below to get more information on plowing status and/or report your issue directly to VDOT:

- www.virginiadot.org/novaemergency: for news releases, important messages, frequently asked questions and links to many other resources, including:
- [@vadotnova](https://twitter.com/vadotnova) on Twitter
- www.511virginia.org for road conditions and traffic cameras
- www.vdotplows.org for neighborhood status and locations of plows
- www.my.vdot.virginia.gov or 800-FOR-ROAD (367-7623) to report issues

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 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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