

## Dulles Direct Newsletter August 2018

Welcome to the August edition of the Dulles Direct newsletter! Over 83,000 LCPS students returned to school last week, including all four of my children, the first time I've had all four in LCPS. I'm now getting to experience both full day kindergarten and middle school this year!

We opened three new school facilities: Goshen Post Elementary, Willard Intermediate, and the Academies of Loudoun. Many thanks to the teachers, administrators and parents that have worked to ensure the opening of those schools was a success. Back to school time should also mean being extra diligent on local roads. The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office [posted a video](#) outlining safety guidelines while walking, riding a bike, or driving to and from school. Please take a moment to watch it as a reminder of how we all contribute to the safety of our schoolkids.

The period right after Labor Day is when traffic is at its peak in the region. There are more cars on the road during this time than any other. That means congestion will be at its worst, and you should be prepared to give yourself extra time when you travel. We've already seen an uptick in both volume and accidents since school has started. In this newsletter, I have some

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important updates on one of the most congested intersections in the Dulles South area.

It has been an amazing summer for the Loudoun South Little League. All 3 age brackets won the District 16 championship, and the two upper age groups made deep runs in competitive regional tournaments. The Loudoun South American All-Stars won the 11/12 state championship and became the first District 16 team to compete in the southeast regional championship game - which was televised on ESPN. During their run, they outscored opponents 39-25 and secured a spot as one of the top ten teams in the entire nation in the 11/12 age range. The team fell just one game short of appearing in the Little League World Series! The 10/11 Loudoun South team also won the state championship in their age bracket and competed in the Tournament of State Champions in North Carolina, where they came just one game short of the championship game. I was joined by Congresswoman Barbara Comstock at a community celebration and Parade of Champions at Byrnes Ridge Park in Stone Ridge last weekend. Best of luck to all the players as they continue to grow on and off the field.



Earlier this month, we celebrated the opening of the newly widened and reconstructed Route 606. The process to work towards this project began during my first year in office and I am excited to see it opened to traffic. Thank you to everyone who patiently traveled on the road during construction. I'd also like to thank the residents of Loudoun Valley Estates III as well as



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all the 606 business establishments. Finally, I'd like to thank Shirley Contracting and VDOT for seeing this project through under somewhat challenging circumstances.



It is always good to see expanded service out of Dulles International Airport. Primera Air, a European low cost carrier, just began service to London-Stansted five times a week, and also announced they would be adding service to Brussels next spring. Also, United Airlines announced a new non-stop flight to Tel-Aviv beginning in May. The region has been working to bring non-stop service to Israel for many years, so this is a big win. Finally, this fall, I look forward to welcoming Cathay Pacific to Dulles for service to Hong Kong on the new A350.

## LOUDOUN UPDATES

### Inc. Magazine's Fastest Growing Companies List

Thirty-one companies from Loudoun made Inc. Magazine's [Fastest Growing Companies of 2018](#). I am proud to report that this is the most Loudoun businesses ever to make the list. Additionally, nine of our businesses were ranked in the top 1,000 entries, and Loudoun was home to the only winery represented. Most of the companies from Loudoun are tech-related

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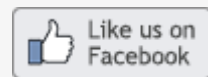
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or government contractors. However, a healthy diversity exists in other types of businesses that are represented.

### **Waxpool Road Widening Completed**

The County recently completed another important project: widening Waxpool Road. The portion of the road that was improved stretches from Unbridled Way to Faulkner Parkway. In total, 3,400 feet of Waxpool Road was widened - stretching two lanes to four with a median divider. A traffic signal was also needed at the Ashburn Village Boulevard intersection. It is my hope that Waxpool Road will serve as a viable Greenway alternative, since it has access to important points on Route 28 and other areas of interest.

## **DULLES DISTRICT UPDATES**

### **Loudoun County Parkway/Route 50 Area**

When new lanes open, traffic patterns change. When combined with growth, it can be a recipe for major traffic congestion. That's exactly what has happened in the Loudoun County Parkway/Route 50/Dulles Landing area. The opening of the final piece of Loudoun County Parkway, plus the newly widened Route 606 has brought new trips into this area, and the choke point has become the 50/LCP intersection. I've had a lot of questions recently about what we're doing about it, and the answer is "a lot, and its very complicated!" So, please bear with me while I explain it all to you.

First, the additional traffic is not unexpected. We knew that we would likely be seeing increased volumes here. However, knowing its coming and being able to have the road network in place to handle it are two different things. That said, we have been moving forward with plans in place to improve this area for years, and I have been working closely with my Blue Ridge District counterpart, Supervisor Tony Buffington, on getting funding and getting them built. We have also had many

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discussions with VDOT about signal timing, and I expect those adjustments will continue as traffic patterns become more established. Let me run through all the pieces of this puzzle:

**1) Loudoun County Parkway/Route 50**

**interchange:** This is the farthest out on the horizon and also the most expensive, with a price tag in the \$500 million range. While it was added to the County's capital budget, it was not assigned a fiscal year within the next 6 years, meaning that it will not be started until after that. The County will not be able to undertake this project without significant state support. As you may recall, the County did undertake an exercise to establish the base design for the intersection. That will go through a VDOT "Interchange Justification Report" process which will determine whether the design is appropriate-its possible that it could be scaled back. Since this isn't happening soon, we'll put this one aside for now.

**Timeframe: a decade or more.**

**2) Loudoun County Parkway/Route 50**

**intersection:** It is clear that interim improvements need to be made. The Route 50 corridor study that I had the County conduct identified a number of smaller improvements, and Supervisor Buffington and I directed others based on our observations. These include:

- A dedicated right turn lane from Loudoun County Parkway southbound to Route 50 westbound
- An acceleration lane along westbound Route 50 to the existing right turn lane for Dulles Landing
- A channelized "mini-ramp" to link the southbound to westbound movement for free flow of traffic
- An additional left turn lane from eastbound Route 50 to northbound Loudoun County Parkway
- Signal modifications

The County has a remaining balance of over \$6.5 million from a previous Northern Virginia Transportation Authority award for Loudoun County Parkway construction. The Board of Supervisors has dedicated those funds to the improvements mentioned

above, as well as some additional local tax funding to be made available in this year's budget. The County is currently soliciting proposals from our on-call design consultants for this work. At this time, it's not clear exactly how much can be completed within the budgeted amount. Early indications are that most of the way is already in place, but there appear to be several utility conflicts that will need to be addressed.

**Timeframe: 2020-2021**

3) **Dulles West Boulevard:** This roadway is planned to eventually connect from Dulles Landing, west to Northstar Boulevard, for the segment between Dulles Landing and Arcola Boulevard. Under the current plan, the County's CIP includes design funding, which has been allocated, and funding for land acquisition next year. Construction funding is anticipated to be available in 2022 to be timed with completion of the design and land acquisition process. For the segment between Arcola Boulevard and Northstar Boulevard, design funding is available in 2021 with funding for land acquisition coming available in 2022.

Construction funding is spread over 2 years from 2023-2024. A construction contract would not be awarded until design and land acquisition are complete and sufficient construction funding is in place. **However:** Myself, Supervisor Buffington, and the Planning Commission have been engaged with the developer of Arcola Center regarding their application to rezone a portion of the Arcola Center property from PD-CC (commercial shopping) to allow for more data centers. There's more detail on that land use case below. But as part of those negotiations, Arcola Center has agreed to begin construction on Dulles West Boulevard to Arcola Boulevard within 18 months of approval, to be opened by 2021. **Timeframe: If the Arcola Center project is approved, 2021; if not, 2024-2025.**

4) **Arcola Boulevard:** Arcola Blvd is the ultimate bypass to the 50/LCP intersection. It will connect from Route 50 at Gum Spring Road to the Route 606/Loudoun County Parkway intersection. Funding for design has already been allocated, land acquisition funding is scheduled for 2020-2021 and construction



funding is scheduled for 2022-2023. We will receive State Smart Scale Funding for this project in the amount of \$28.9 million, though the price tag for the entire road is higher than that. A construction contract would not be awarded until design and land acquisition are complete and sufficient construction funding is in place. **However:** This has also been part of our Arcola Center negotiations. Arcola Center has agreed to begin construction of the southern portion of Arcola Blvd, from Dulles West Blvd to Route 50, as soon as right of way is acquired and land is transferred. Just to add to the complications, the right of way acquisition is a proffer from a different land use application-Van Metre's Glascock Field application, which seeks to add an additional 12 townhomes to the small neighborhood north of the hospital and make other modifications. From my discussions with Van Metre, I know that right of way acquisition is just about complete, and that would be a requirement with the approval of their land use case. Therefore, the construction of Arcola Blvd could be put on the same trajectory as Dulles West Blvd. It should be noted that if Arcola Center is approved by the Board, the state award would shift to the northern half of the project, which would connect from Dulles West to Loudoun County Parkway/606.

**Southern Half Timeframe: If the Arcola Center project is approved, 2021, if not, 2024-2025.**

**Northern Half Timeframe: 2025.**

- **Northstar Boulevard:** This roadway is planned to connect from Tall Cedars Parkway in Stone Ridge to Shreveport Drive in Brambleton. For the segment between Tall Cedars and Route 50, the design process is complete with land acquisition underway. Construction funding is made available beginning in the current budget year and continuing into next year. For the segment between Route 50 and Shreveport Drive, design is underway and funding for land acquisition and construction is scheduled for allocation between the current budget year and 2024. The County will receive funding awards from NVTa for a portion of the cost to construct, and the County also received a \$25 million federal TIGER grant. A construction contract would not be awarded until design and land

acquisition are complete and sufficient construction funding is in place. **Timeframe: South of Route 50: 2022 North of Route 50: 2025-2026**

- **Dulles Landing's Exit to Route 50:** I'm asked about this all the time, but on this one, I don't have much to share. This is the responsibility of Dulles Landing. The wrinkle is that VDOT would require an acceleration lane on Route 50. As you may recall from above, the County project would build such a lane between Loudoun County Parkway and Dulles Landing (but not beyond, which would be needed). My hope would be that Dulles Landing would consider adding the part to the west so that they could begin utilizing the exit onto Route 50. This is something I have discussed and will continue to discuss with Beatty, the owner of the shopping center. But, it is not within the County's control. **Timeframe: We don't know.**

Considering that I've been working on all of these in one form or other for almost the entire time I've been in office (since 2012), you can see how difficult it has been to accumulate funding and get projects moving. There are different funding sources that have to be lined up, each with their own requirements and timelines. The projects mentioned above were behind other priorities like 606 widening and Loudoun County Parkway, and when we began this process, there was not nearly as much funding available. The County's decision in 2012 to dedicated a portion of local tax revenue to road construction for the first time was a critical component in beginning to move forward with badly needed projects, and the transportation bill the following year also helped. As you may recall, I forcefully fought changes to that bill during the last session which will have the effect of reducing the amount of transportation funding available in Northern Virginia in order to fund Metro capital needs. However, while those changes will indeed have an impact in the long term, these particular projects have worked their way through the process and are not at the top of the list within the region. They should not be impacted by reduced funding.



Road construction is still a lengthy and arduous process, usually on the front end. It is a little bit easier for private entities like developers because they do not have to follow the state's strict procurement rules and bid process, which can easily add 6 months or more to a project timeline, which is why you see shorter timelines projected for the portions that Arcola Center would construct, if their application is approved. In the case of Arcola Blvd, the award is actually federalized money, which adds more complexity and time as the County has to jump through an extra layer of federal regulation. For more information on planned construction projects in Loudoun, visit [www.loudoun.gov/underconstruction](http://www.loudoun.gov/underconstruction).

### **Claiborne Parkway Construction Update**

Claiborne Parkway is being constructed as a four-lane median divided road between Ryan Road and Croson Lane. The roadway is approximately 85% complete, storm drainage is approximately 80% complete, and utility installation is approximately 90% complete. The extremely wet summer has slowed progress a bit, but we still anticipate completing and opening to traffic this fall.



### **Signal at Tall Cedars Parkway / Stone Springs Boulevard Update**

This is a signal project to be constructed by the County. We are still working through the process to secure final VDOT plan approval for construction. The invitation for bids will be posted this fall and following contract award by the Board of Supervisors, construction should be set to begin this winter. It generally takes 6-8 months to complete construction, weather permitting. I'm a little bit frustrated that the schedule on this seems to have slipped some during the design process-I anticipated this signal would be in place by the end of the calendar year, but now I think it will probably bleed into 2019.

### **Route 50 Blighted Properties Update**

#### **- Former United Rentals Building:**

Even though the property owner has indicated that he plans to secure a contract for demolition of the building on his own, the County continues to push forward on the necessary processes to do the work ourselves.

**There will be an item before the Board on September 4<sup>th</sup> to consider an estimate of nearly \$400,000 to demolish the building.** With Board approval, the item will go to the **Board's Public Hearing on October 10** to obtain approval in expending the funds to complete demolition of the building. If approved and completed, the County would place a lien on the property to recoup the costs associated with demolition (with interest). Stay tuned for more details on the public hearing and opportunities to show your support for moving forward with demolition. The property owner appears to be taking action now on his own to demolish the building before the County acts, which would be a good outcome. But if they don't follow through, the County must be prepared to move forward.

#### **- Hotel Site:**

In April, the property owner submitted a Site Plan Amendment to the County to incorporate additional parking and a parking garage for the hotel. They have been working with the County to resolve issues around stormwater management and remain engaged in the process. After site plan approval, they will be in a position to reinstate their building permits and begin work when they finalize their financing. This has been a very slow process and I remain somewhat less than optimistic about the financing aspect. Because this is an active site plan, utilizing the blight ordinance will be more difficult, although the County has gone through the notification process. From what I understand, the owner of the property is still having difficulty with the finance side, and it is difficult for me to judge how easily that will be resolved.

## **RETAIL UPDATES**

### **Avonlea**

Peterson Companies continues to work with H&R Retail to handle marketing and leasing for the project. They are seeing a lot of interest and activity for the smaller inline stores, but still need the anchor tenants to be in a position to secure the necessary financing. There are no new announcements at this time.

### **Arcola Center**

As indicated above, there is good news regarding the planned Wegman's. Wegman's is moving forward with its plans to construct in this location, and could begin construction by the end of next year, for a planned opening in early 2021. There are several other tenants that the center has been working with for other space, one of which has signed a letter of intent.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **2018 Loudoun Out of the Darkness Walk**

The fourth annual Loudoun Out of the Darkness Community Walk to benefit the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention will take place on Sunday,

September 16 at Ida Park in Leesburg. The walk will support the AFSP's ambitious goal of reducing the annual suicide rate 20% by 2025. The 2017 walk saw about 250 participants raise almost \$40,000. This year those numbers will increase, with nearly 400 people expected and a goal of \$50,000 raised. To register for the walk, please visit [www.afsp.org/Loudoun](http://www.afsp.org/Loudoun) or contact AFSP's National Capital Area Director Ellen Shannon at [eshannon@afsp.org](mailto:eshannon@afsp.org) or (646) 632-5189.

### **Inaugural Ellie's Hats Open**

Ellie's Hats is a South Riding nonprofit dedicated to helping children who are battling cancer. The inaugural [Ellie's Hats Open golf tournament](#) will take place on Friday, September 28 with proceeds benefitting the organization. The South Riding Golf Course at 43237 Golf View Drive will host the tournament, which begins at 9 am after breakfast at 8. The event contact is Jay Coakley, who can be reached at [jay@ellieshats.org](mailto:jay@ellieshats.org).

### **October 20-21 Fall Farm Tour**

Loudoun County Farms is organizing a fall farm tour on October 20 and 21. The tour will start both days at 10 am and end at 4 pm. Participating farms will be released mid-September when the tour brochure is published. The Fall Farm Tour is intended to "showcase the colors, people, and products of the Loudoun Valleys." The tour is free and self-guided, with participants driving their own vehicles to the farms. During the 2017 spring tour, nearly 30 farms and 60 breweries were on the itinerary, as well as additional venues and agriculture-related events. For more information, please visit <https://loudounfarms.org/farmtour/>.

### **ShareHouse Reopening**

ShareHouse is a local nonprofit that provides used clothing and shoes to Loudoun and Fairfax residents who are in need. ShareHouse was forced to close in January due to lack of volunteers and funding. Thanks to contributions and the commitment of community

members, it will be reopening on September 23. ShareHouse is currently looking for the following, before it opens:

- Funding to purchase 150 recycle bags
- Funding to purchase 100 youth and adult size aprons
- Funding to purchase or donation of 8 folding camping carts
- Volunteers for upcoming events (see website at <https://sharehousecs.org/>)
- Donation of 33 gallon trash bags, 50 gallon black trash bags, \$25+ gift cards to Target, Walmart, Home Depot, Visa, and Mastercard to help purchase supplies
- Funds to purchase a storage shed or container
- Clothing donations (gently used) including shoes, from infants to adults
- Winter clothes such as jackets, hats, gloves, scarves, and boots for the upcoming cold season

ShareHouse will be hosting a grand reopening / school drive event on September 23 at Pleasant Valley United Methodist Church Community Center at 25350 Poland Road Chantilly, VA 20151. The volunteer work will run from 1-3 pm, and the distribution will take place from 4-6. To sign up to volunteer, please visit the ShareHouse website or Facebook page.

### **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](mailto: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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