



Dulles Direct Newsletter February 2019

Welcome to the February edition of the Dulles Direct newsletter. This time of year is one of the busiest for the Board as we work on the upcoming fiscal year's budget. We have a lot of new revenue coming into the County, but also a lot of needs driven by growth. We'll be working on a budget that strikes the right balance over the next month.

Thank you to everyone that joined me for my Town Hall at Lunsford Middle School earlier this week. In addition to my general update on County topics, I was joined by staff members from VDOT and the Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure to discuss planned configuration changes at the Tall Cedars/Elk Lick intersection. We've been looking at this intersection for quite some time in conjunction with the intersection of Elk Lick and Route 50 as well as Defender Drive. I have some additional details below on that and you can watch the video from the meeting on Facebook [here](#).

I was honored to speak at the annual Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce Board of Supervisors breakfast, where I gave a presentation on the County's finances and economic development efforts - including our continued status as the top performing County in

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Virginia. I always enjoy joining the Chamber for these events, and I appreciate the chance to update our local business leaders on our continued economic growth.



I had the privilege of bringing a resolution to the Board of Supervisors to honor a great Dulles District resident, Charlene Jones. Charlene co-founded the Dulles South Food Pantry back in 2014 and recently stepped down as Executive Director after five years of tireless service to the Dulles South community. She built a group of volunteers into a full-fledged Board of Directors that is eager to carry on her work after her retirement. In her tenure at DSFP, Charlene raised over \$350,000 and 1.1 million pounds of food for those in need. Her efforts touched over 5,200 unique families. Most recently, DSFP was in the news for being a partner organization to assist federally furloughed workers. I have been proud to support Charlene's mission and assist in any way I can over the years. Charlene is an example of someone who saw a need and took it upon herself to do something about, and I admire that spirit. I know she'll continue to be an active supporter of the food pantry and other causes.



Matthew F. Letourneau
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Development Committee](#)

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DULLES UPDATES

Beach Commercial Property

As I shared in last month's [newsletter](#), Van Metre is pursuing a Special Exception to permit an automotive service station without gas pumps, a car wash, and a convenience food store with gas pumps. The project would take place on a 3 acre parcel located on the north side of Tall Cedars Parkway, west of Pinebrook Road, at Meadows Farm Court. There is no current end user identified, but Van Metre is looking to attract potential users for this commercially zoned property.

I'm not excited about another gas station here and my concerns were shared by several residents that attended to speak on the application. Not being excited about a use is not a valid reason to deny an application, so I continue to work to see if there are any other alternatives. Unfortunately it is a very oddly situated parcel which was created by the alignment of the County-built Tall Cedars Parkway extension. It backs up to an industrial area and there simply aren't a lot of great uses for it. I expect the application back before the Board at our March 5th meeting.

Elk Lick / Tall Cedars Intersection

We have been actively studying and working on the Tall Cedars/Elk Lick intersection since I introduced a

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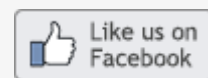
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Quick Links



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[VDOT 511 Traffic
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[Loudoun County Road
Maintenance
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[VDOT Snow Plowing
Information](#)

Board Member Initiative on it back in 2015. In 2017 following completion of a study, staff recommended a median closure on Route 50 at Elk Lick Road and modifications to the Elk Lick approach to allow right-in and right-out turning movements. The County's transportation staff also recommended a new lane configuration on Defender Drive between Elk Lick and South Riding Boulevard due to the increase in traffic volume expected to be rerouted when the median closed.

We implemented those changes last spring and after a period of several months reevaluated the traffic patterns to see whether there was any noticeable improvement at the Elk Lick and Tall Cedars intersection. Unfortunately, we continue to see accidents occurring there at an alarming rate - one every 35 days - and very little traffic volume change on Elk Lick.

After years of analysis and no improvement, the time has come for action. I pushed VDOT and our County staff to work with the traffic consultant JMT on a recommended solution to make this intersection safer. Their recommendation is to remove the stop signs from Tall Cedars and to restrict left turns from Elk Lick. This dramatically reduces the number of conflict points. VDOT ruled out a traffic signal due to the close proximity to the existing signal at South Riding Blvd - it would not meet federal and state guidelines. Analysis has been done on alternative routes. Depending on the direction, some traffic patterns will need be adjusted. However, the engineering study found minimal impact on surrounding intersections because traffic will be widely dispersed and volumes are relatively low - the most common movements will remain available. We will be closely tracking changes once the improvements have been made and can make adjustments to signal timing if needed.

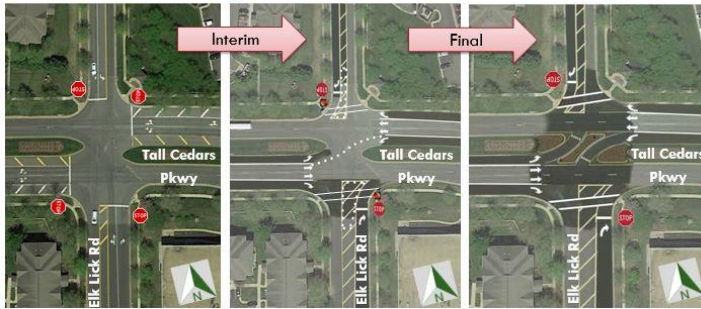
[Loudoun County Traffic Incident Map](#)

[Sign Up for Alert Loudoun](#)

[Loudoun Express Request \(LEx\) Citizen Request System](#)

[Loudoun County Government Master Calendar](#)

Tall Cedars Parkway and Elk Lick Road



We're going to implement this change in two phases. The first phase will be to install flex posts which will act as barriers. The second phase is permanent medians and "pork chops" in the road. There will need to be repaving and restriping done. Last week, I was able to secure the necessary funding for an interim improvement to get this in place as soon as possible. The permanent solution would have to go through a complete design and engineering process so it will take a bit of time to implement. County staff will be getting the project ready for procurement shortly and we will be publicizing a timeline as soon as the picture becomes clear.

There is plenty of additional information available about these changes, including the full consultant [report](#) and the [presentation](#) from my town hall meeting.

Route 50 / Northstar Boulevard Interchange Conceptual Design

Even though Northstar Boulevard between Tall Cedars Parkway in Stone Ridge and Shreveport Drive in Brambleton hasn't been built yet, the County is already working on a conceptual design for the planned interchange where it will cross Route 50. We must take action now to designate our alignment because of pending land development projects in this area. Having an alignment in place will allow us to obtain right of way for when we need it down the road.

At our February 21 Business Meeting, the Board heard a report on the interchange study that has been

completed at this location. There are four specific conceptual interchange designs analyzed in the study, and we will be endorsing one of the options at our March 21 business meeting to ensure that any development that occurs in the area will accommodate the future plans. Staff is recommending that we support a single point urban interchange concept because it has the least amount of right-of-way impacts and a lower cost estimate than the other configurations while providing an acceptable level of service into the future. The Board deferred action until our second meeting in March to allow some additional time for impacted property owners to provide feedback on the alternatives being considered. More information on the options presented in the study is available [here](#).

Route 50 / Fleetwood / Lenah Mill Intersection

The mast arms and poles have been installed and the signal was placed in flash mode on Tuesday evening. It should be fully operational within the next few days. It took VDOT a long time to obtain the steel poles, and we're having similar issues with the other signal projects in our area.

Silver District West

I have been speaking about Silver District West for several months. It is a proposal for a 158-acre mixed-use community between the Ashburn and Loudoun Gateway Metro stations that would have 3,706 residential units, over one million square feet of non-residential construction such as office space, and recreational amenities such as trails.

The developer is proffering to widen Loudoun County Parkway between Ryan Road and Shellhorn Road and make several intersection improvements through the corridor. They have also proffered to construct Barrister across the Greenway and Shellhorn Road. While there is a timeline they have provided to complete construction after receiving certain approvals, we are still working on specific backstop language. This will ensure that if things get delayed, the County doesn't get more units than we can handle.

The initial proposal failed to include any sort of phasing for bringing on much needed commercial office space concurrently with residential units. The updated proposal provides 125,000 square feet of commercial development prior to the 1,501st residential zoning permit and 250,000 square feet prior to the 2,501st residential zoning permit. That will be constructed as office space, which our Department of Economic Development told the Board is sorely needed and I specifically communicated to the applicant.

The application came back before the Board at our February 21 meeting, but action has been deferred until March 21. Besides the issues I identified, we also need to see commitment on making the southern portion of the development more accessible to Metro through transit routes and pedestrian connections.

Look for an update on the Board's action in next month's newsletter.

MWAA Noise Contour Map Update

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) released updated noise contour maps for Dulles Airport. This update was necessary due to changing aviation environments and flight tracks since 1993 when the last contours were released. Noise contour maps influence local land use planning in the immediate vicinity of the airport. These updates, which took over a year to complete, amend twenty-five year old contours that serve as the basis for Loudoun and Fairfax's establishment of airport impact overlay district zoning.

MWAA put together several Local Jurisdictional Stakeholder Working Groups, including one from Loudoun County, to assess the effects of noise from Dulles International Airport on surrounding communities. Here's the [report](#). You may be aware of noise contours due to the Silver District West application, which proffers small sections in the Ldn 65 contour and has been the source of some contention.

MWAA will host a noise contour workshop tonight - Thursday, February 28 - from 6-8 PM in the second floor conference room at the IAD office building: 45045 Aviation Drive in Sterling. There is free parking in front of the building. By following [this link](#), you can submit a comment or question before or during this workshop.

LOUDOUN UPDATES

FY20 Budget

On February 13, County Administrator Tim Hemstreet proposed his FY20 budget to the full Board of Supervisors. He also proposed an updated Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to the Finance Committee a day earlier. The budget is proposed at an equalized tax rate of \$1.045, with some additions and deletions above and below that rate. The equalized tax rate provides enough revenue to cover many County needs in large part due to the business personal property tax, which has been responsible for \$300 million in revenue - mostly from data centers. For all the complaints we get about data center construction, they are providing a remarkable revenue stream for the County. Without tax revenue from the computers and hardware that are housed in data centers, our tax rate would be significantly higher.

Also notable is that the equalized tax rate, as proposed, would fully fund the budget request from the School Board. The Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure, which has struggled to keep up with the volume and complexity of projects due to being stretched so thin, will be assisted by additional staffing resources in project management and procurement/contracting. The proposed budget also allows us to increase County pay across the board as we move toward market competitiveness (\$11 million alone is budgeted for targeted individual position salary increases, a 2% across the board raise with another 3% for merit based raises). These salary increases are needed after our Classification and Compensation Study found we were only paying 86% of market

salary for many of our positions. Finally, the proposed budget provides the money to establish new staff positions in departments that desperately need them, such as Child Protective Services. In CPS alone, eight new staff positions and three new intake positions are proposed

The Board of Supervisors will host a budget public hearing on Saturday, March 2 at 9 AM at the Loudoun County Public Schools Administration Building: 21000 Education Court in Ashburn. All are encouraged to attend, and anyone who wishes to speak may sign up in advance for a speaking slot by calling 703-777-0204.

Public hearings which take place at the government center will be available for viewing on Comcast Government TV Channel 23, Open Band Channel 40, and Verizon FiOS Channel 40. They will also be webcast and archived [here](#).

Members of the public may also:

- Leave a message on the Board of Supervisors' Comment Line at 703-777-0115
- Send an [email](#) to the Board of Supervisors or write to the Board of Supervisors: P.O. Box 7000, Leesburg, VA 20177
- Provide comments through the Loudoun County government's Facebook and Twitter pages

The FY2020 proposed budget is available [here](#). The updated Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) can be found [here](#).

The Board will be holding budget work sessions in March and budget approval is expected at our Business Meeting on April 2. I always provide a comprehensive budget report after that meeting.

TDR Program

At our February 21 Board Business Meeting, we heard an information item regarding a potential TDR program for Loudoun County, which stands for "transfer of

development rights." TDRs would allow rural landowners to sell credit for homes they could build on their land to developers in other areas. The County would set up sending (where development limits are sought) and receiving (where increased growth and density are desirable) areas for the development density. "Sending area" property owners voluntarily sever development rights from their property for sale. "Receiving area" property owners would then pay for additional development rights, which would usually be applied to projects as by-right density bonuses. Developers then compensate "sending area" property owners for severed rights at a market rate. TDR "banks" would exist for the purpose of buying, selling, and holding development rights for facilitating private TDR transactions.

The Virginia General Assembly adopted enabling legislation for local TDR programs in 2006. TDR programs have been implemented by some of the counties around us but the Loudoun Planning Commission, during the process of crafting the Comprehensive Plan, expressed some concern about the program and removed references to it from the draft plan they are working through.

I applaud efforts to preserve the rural nature of Western Loudoun County, but I strongly oppose this program. I am concerned that this program will lead to unplanned density in eastern Loudoun that will further tax our already overrun infrastructure. These development rights would be added as by-right units, meaning that the developer wouldn't have to proffer improvements or seek legislative approvals for increased densities like we normally see. This program could also place more pressure on our transition policy area to develop at higher rates than we would like to see. Despite my opposition, the Board voted 6-3 to send the TDR item to the Transportation and Land Use Committee (TLUC) so that County staff can study the scope of the program and its potential future uses. I will be challenging my colleagues who support this item to tell me exactly where they want to see unplanned additional residential density without proffers. Some

have pointed to the Metro area, but as you can see from the discussion on the Silver District, we are already seeing applications for thousands of units and we are requiring developers to proffer hundreds of millions of dollars in transportation improvements to even consider them, so I'm not buying it. Although I don't sit on TLUC, I'll be watching this closely.

The Board also considered an initiative from Chair Randall to explore a Purchase of Development Rights Program (PDR). This program is technically on the books in Loudoun and used to be in place in the early 2000s. From what I understand, it didn't go smoothly. In that type of program, County tax dollars are used to purchase the rights to develop certain properties. The potential for abuse seems very large, since the County would have to pick and choose which parcel owners essentially get paid for not developing. Furthermore, many of the properties in question have zoning which only allows for 1 unit per 20 acres anyway - so what type of development potential really exists? I didn't support this program either, and the motion to study it was defeated 6-3, so it is not moving forward at this time.

C-PACE Financing Program

Commercial property-assessed clean energy (C-PACE) is a funding structure that is employed for certain energy efficiency initiatives. Property owners can borrow money for projects involving energy efficiency, water usage efficiency, and renewable energy. They then make repayments through an assessment on their property tax bill. The financing arrangement is tied to the specific property rather than the owner(s), which means that even when the property is sold it remains under the structure. The purpose of C-PACE, therefore, is to encourage long-term investment and energy efficient solutions for construction projects. C-PACE is often funded by private investors and government programs. Virginia is one such state that enables C-PACE via legislation and various programs.

At our February 21 Business Meeting, the Board approved the ordinance to establish the C-PACE program after receiving a favorable Attorney General opinion and staff made a few minor changes. Due to the AG opinion, the item was altered slightly to reflect that the capital provider will service and collect the payments for its C-PACE loans. However, the option is retained to allow the program administrator to service the loans with the loan payments remitted to the County. This revision allows more County flexibility.

As I mentioned in my last newsletter, the C-PACE program will be especially helpful for the hotel owner on Route 50 in Eastgate, who is specifically working on obtaining financing through this program. Financing can often hold back ventures such as this one, so I was happy to see the C-PACE program pass. It will provide funding alternatives that I'm sure will be put to good use.

Dulles Greenway

I haven't touched on the Greenway since [December](#) when I explained why the deal brokered by Delegates Bell and Reid was a bad one for Loudoun commuters. A lot has happened since then, so I want to cover some bases while making sure we don't lose sight of the big picture.

The Greenway officially withdrew its endorsement of the Bell-Reid deal and did not pursue further legislation. The Bell-Reid bill was substituted for a version that would have studied combining operations of the Greenway with the Dulles Toll Road; this bill failed to make it out of committee. State Senator Bill Stanley introduced a bill intended to reform SCC processes, prevent political donations coming from toll revenue, implement distance-based tolling for on-peak hours, and ensure that material benefit was achieved by Greenway users. It was a positive bill that garnered unanimous Republican support in the General Assembly. Unanimous that is, except for State Senator Amanda Chase (an original co-sponsor of the bill), who voted against it with the Greenway's lobbyist literally

standing next to her in the room. The bill was thereby killing it in committee. I was disappointed with how things turn out in Richmond, but the County still has a path forward to fight toll increases. At least no harm was done and we weren't locked into a long term agreement to raise tolls as was originally proposed.

The Herring Law, which has capped toll increases at CPI+1% for the last ten years, is expiring in 2020. We have a good case to go to the State Corporation Commission (SCC) and broker a deal with the Greenway to prevent future toll increases. Expiration of the Herring Law allows us to retain our bargaining power while letting us challenge what operating expenses the Greenway can include in their toll revenue (spoiler alert, things like political and charitable contributions shouldn't be coming from toll revenue that the Greenway expects to recover costs on, even if the General Assembly didn't explicitly make it illegal.)

I will continue fighting for Loudoun commuters and against the high tolls that have become such a staple of the Greenway.

Firearms Discharge Discussion at TLUC

The Transportation and Land Use Committee had a meeting to discuss the potential changes that Supervisor Meyer (Broad Run) and I proposed to the County's ordinances on firearms discharges. These changes are needed due to multiple incidents of stray bullets hitting homes with no prosecution of the offenders. It isn't the Sheriff's Office or Commonwealth's Attorney's fault that prosecutions have not come through: it's due to the fact that the exact shooters can't be identified when multiple people are using the same firearm. In some cases, the shooters themselves may not even know which one of them fired the bullet that struck the house. For the last several months, a group called "Virginia Constitutional Conservatives" has been spreading outright lies and blatant misinformation in an attempt to turn this discussion into a political battle over the Second Amendment. They've claimed that Supervisor Meyer

and I have proposed widespread bans on hunting and shooting in Loudoun (we haven't) and that even having a discussion about updating an 18 year old ordinance to account for development represents an assault on their rights. Of course, these emails never fail to include fundraising requests. It's a shame that some people only see this misinformation and actually believe it.

In any event, staff did some good research and created an interactive map that shows the current ordinance prohibition area, and potential changes to it. It was revealed that under the current ordinances, there are 2.7 square miles in the County's Suburban Policy Area where discharging a weapon is permitted. These are areas mostly just west of Brambleton and west of Gum Spring, north of Braddock. There is no reason why anyone would want to discharge a weapon in these areas (things like self-defense are exempted; we're talking about recreational shooting), and I think the lines ought to be updated to account for the fact that when they were drawn, much of the development just west of 659 didn't exist. When the lines were drawn, they clearly were done to include suburban neighborhoods - they are simply outdated. The Committee, however, did not take action on that. They did, however, vote to further study a berming requirement, which would essentially require a natural barrier or man made berm for target shooting. This is a common sense measure and no responsible gun owner should even want to be shooting at a target without having some sort of backstop in place. The staff proposal was for basic requirements that would be enforced on a complaint basis by the Sheriff's Office. I think this proposal is reasonable and would have prevented several of these incidents (in one instance, some landowners hung a sheet from a tree and shot right through it, hitting a house where a baby shower was occurring). I don't serve on TLUC and thus can't vote, but I did attend some of the meeting and will be following it closely.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

VDOT Snow Plowing Information

As mentioned before, we've already experienced the first snow of the season.

When we have a snow event this winter, 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 time frames have passed, you can use the resources below to get more information on plowing status and/or report your issue directly to VDOT:

- http://www.virginiadot.org/about/emer_response.asp for news releases, important messages, frequently asked questions and links to many other resources, including:
- @VaDOTNOVA on Twitter
- www.511virginia.org for road conditions and traffic cameras
- www.vdotplows.org for neighborhood status and locations of plows
- <http://www.virginiadot.org> or 800-FOR-ROAD (367-7623) to report issues

Free Rides on Loudoun County Transit to Metro

Beginning Monday, March 4, 2019 and continuing through March 30, 2019, passengers will ride free on all Loudoun County Transit buses that provide connections to Metro stations - including Wiehle-Reston East and West Falls Church.

Bus schedules can be found [here](#).

The free bus rides are part of the ISHARE66 Commuter Choice program designed to reduce traffic congestion and promote alternate modes of transportation through the Interstate 66 corridor.

Friends of the Gum Spring Library Book Sale

Friends of the Gum Spring Library will be hosting their annual book sale on three different upcoming dates. The first will take place on Friday, March 15 from 10 AM-7 PM, the second will be on Saturday, March 16

from 10 AM-5 PM, and the third will happen on Sunday, March 17 from 1-3 PM. There will be books, movies, music, and more for sale. Proceeds will benefit the Gum Spring Library, with donations also accepted February 23-March 12. Gum Spring Library is located at 24600 Millstream Drive in Stone Ridge.

INOVA Nurse Scholarships / Blood Pressure Screening

The Ladies Board of Inova Loudoun Hospital is accepting applications for nursing school tuition assistance. Scholarships are available to eligible students in various programs of study, including degrees at the associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels.

Applications and additional information are available [online](#) or by calling 703-777-6357. Applications are also available in Leesburg at The Gift Shop at Inova Loudoun Hospital, 44045 Riverside Parkway; Inova Loudoun Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 235 Old Waterford Road, NW, and Twice Is Nice thrift shop, 305 E. Market Street. The deadline for applications is Tuesday, April 9.

Inova Loudoun Hospital Mobile Health Services will be providing a blood pressure screening at the Dulles South Multipurpose Center (24950 Riding Center Drive in South Riding) on Tuesday, March 5 from 9 AM - noon. For further information call the Mobile Health hotline at 703-858-8818 or visit www.inova.org/mobilehealth.

Dulles South Food Pantry

The Dulles South Food Pantry provides food assistance up to twice a month to any person who resides in the school attendance zones for Freedom High School, John Champe High School, Independence High School, Rock Ridge High School and Briar Woods High School. The Pantry also provides one-time emergency food assistance to anyone in need. 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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