



Supervisor

Matt Letourneau

Dulles Direct Newsletter



May 2021

Welcome to the May 2021 edition of the Dulles Direct newsletter. I hope you are all doing well, staying healthy, and enjoying the warmer weather. As we approach Memorial Day weekend, I want to start by expressing my thanks and gratitude to those brave Americans who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms. I hope we can all find some time this weekend to reflect on their service.

As always, we have a lot of cover in this month's newsletter. I'll start with some good news. Every year I join County staff to meet with Wall Street credit rating agencies in my capacity as Chairman of the Board's Finance Committee. The agencies interview us about the County's financial state and review our internals, then provide credit ratings. This year we once again secured AAA bond ratings – the highest possible – which allow us to finance many of the projects in our six-year Capital Improvement Program with the lowest interest rates on the market. We conducted our bond sale earlier this week and sold General Obligation bonds at just 1.46% interest, which is a great result.

The credit ratings always provide a good snapshot of the County's performance. This year, the ratings noted that Loudoun has a "very strong economy" with "very strong management, with strong financial policies and practices." The reports further reflected

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on the County’s “strong budgetary performance” and “very strong budgetary flexibility.” The report also noted that “Loudoun County’s major employers reflect the County’s diverse industry base.” Given the challenges we’ve faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, I’m particularly pleased with this strong outside affirmation.

Speaking of COVID-19, things continue to look good. Governor Northam has announced that fully vaccinated people don’t need to wear masks in most indoor settings (more information in the COVID-19 section below), and a sense of normalcy is starting to set in. With more and more of our population receiving vaccines, activities are returning. For instance, Loudoun United played their first game of the year at Segra Field last week, and I encourage everyone to go check out a game this season.

At the Board’s May 4 Business Meeting, I co-sponsored a resolution proclaiming May 2-8 as Small Business Week in Loudoun County. Small Business Week is a great chance for the County to raise awareness and encourage community support for the businesses with less than 20 employees that make up 86% of our commercial sector. This year, I was joined by representatives from several small businesses in the County to accept the resolution: Frontier Kitchen, Foggy Mountain Pasta, Kindi Thai Rice, and Oh Graze Away.



Tax Relief for Elderly and Disabled Residents

Announcements

Matthew F. Letourneau

Dulles District Supervisor,
Loudoun County Board of Supervisors

Chairman

[Finance, Government
Operations and Economic
Development Committee](#)

Principal Director
[Washington Metropolitan
Area Transit Authority
Board of Directors](#)

Member

[Rt. 28 Transportation
Improvement District
Commission](#)

Member

[Northern Virginia
Transportation Commission](#)

Member

[Transportation Planning
Board](#)

Member

[Dulles Area Transportation
Association](#)

Contact Me

Mailing Address

1 Harrison St. SE,
5th Floor

The Board also presented a proclamation at the May 4 Business Meeting declaring May 16-22 as Emergency Medical Services Week. The resolution was a great chance to honor the dedication of Loudoun's frontline medical workers, who always do an amazing job and have been particularly busy during the pandemic. The resolution also serves to bring communities and medical personnel together to promote public safety.



Our second Business Meeting this month coincided with Youth in Government Day. In a normal year, students from LCPS schools around the County would join us on the dais and for activities throughout the week. This year due to COVID-19, students participated remotely. We had a number of students from Dulles District high schools participate, and I was pleased to spend some time with Jayden Thomas, who attends Rock Ridge High School. I am always excited to see young people with an interest in government, community leadership, and the political process.

Finally, I had surgery earlier this month to remove an 8 mm blood clot in my arm that was a complication from my hospital stay due to my facial injury. Everything went smoothly. On the vision front, I have not been cleared for strabismus surgery

P.O. Box 7000
Leesburg, VA 20177-7000

Email

matt.letourneau@loudoun.gov

Office Phone

(703) 771-5069

Legislative Aide

[Tom Parker](#)

Staff Aide

[Jared Midwood](#)



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yet and instead will have to do some additional work to help my brain process images from the injured eye better. Apparently, some of that function has been lost but should be able to be regained with practice. I am still hoping to have surgery this summer, but we'll be in a holding pattern for at least the next month while I work on these issues.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Latest Numbers and Updates

According to the official numbers released today by the Virginia Department of Health, there have been 27,902 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Loudoun County. 278 individuals have died from the virus in Loudoun. Virginia now has 674,439 confirmed cases with 11,152 deaths. You can see these numbers yourself at the Loudoun County COVID-19 [GeoHub](#).

Things continue to improve in the community, with the positive PCR test rate in Loudoun all the way down to 3.3% at the time of writing. Case and death rates continue to drop dramatically with more and more people receiving vaccinations. That being said, please continue to follow proper mitigation practices, especially if you haven't received a vaccine or are around those with immune system issues.

Latest News on Vaccination Efforts, Testing, and More

The Loudoun County Health Department is now offering COVID-19 vaccinations by appointment to adolescents ages 12 to 15, following [approval by the Virginia Department of Health](#) (VDH). Vaccinations are free of charge for everyone regardless of immigration or health insurance status.

[Sign up for Alert Loudoun](#)

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

[Loudoun Online Land Use Applications \(LOLA\) System](#)

[COVID-19](#)

The VDH approval for use of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for individuals in this age group follows [endorsements by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), the CDC's [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices](#) (ACIP), and the [Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA).

The Loudoun County Health Department has streamlined the appointment making process to make it easier for parents and others to schedule their own appointments online in one single step. Residents may now make appointments in real time without first registering in the Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS). The system no longer requires users to wait for an email that prompts them to schedule an appointment.

To schedule an appointment for your child or yourself, simply visit Loudoun County's website: loudoun.gov/COVID19vaccine and then click on "Schedule A Vaccine Appointment" and follow the "Step 1" instructions. On the VAMS appointment page, [submit a request](#) for an appointment by following the prompts in the online form.

Anyone who needs assistance making an appointment, such as those who do not have access to the internet, should call the COVID-19 Information Line at 703-737-8300 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. They can also send an email to health@loudoun.gov.

Individuals ages 12 to 17 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian to their vaccine appointment. The vaccination site continues to operate by appointment only. All individuals who would like to be vaccinated must have an appointment.

Other vaccine providers in Loudoun County, such as retail pharmacies, may also begin to offer the COVID-19 vaccine to individuals ages 12 to 15. These providers operate independently of Loudoun County. Visit vaccines.gov to find other COVID-19 vaccine providers in our community.

COVID-19 vaccines continue to be safe and effective. New vaccines are typically studied in adults first, and then gradually include younger age groups. This is a standardized process intended to study a new vaccine in the safest way possible. Pfizer-BioNTech's request to expand use of the vaccine to 12- to-15-year-olds is based on data from a [clinical trial of 2,260 adolescents](#) that showed that the vaccine was safe and effective in this age group.

Learn more about the safety of COVID-19 vaccine on the [CDC's website](#).

It is important that parents and everyone who receives a COVID-19 vaccine keep the vaccination card received at the time of vaccination. The Loudoun County Health Department does not provide vaccination records. If you lose the vaccination card and need a record of your vaccination, you may obtain a copy of your record in the VAMS system by logging into your account at vams.cdc.gov. In addition, you can contact the VDH for a record by [submitting a request form online](#). I recommend taking a picture on your phone of your vaccination card.

Governor Northam has issued an executive order detailing that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear face coverings or masks in most indoor settings (except where businesses still require them) – with the exception of public transit, healthcare settings including vaccination clinics, and congregate care settings. Students, teachers, staff, and visitors on school properties must continue wearing masks. For more information, click [here](#).

Learn more about how to protect yourself and others on the [CDC's website](#).

As of today, 183,677 (44.4%) Loudoun residents are fully vaccinated, with 232,783 (56.3%) having received at least one shot.

Loudoun County continues to offer free COVID-19 testing weekly. More information about COVID-19 testing opportunities is posted online at loudoun.gov/covid19testing.

Loudoun County encourages residents to stay informed about COVID-19.

- Sign up for email and text updates about Loudoun's response to COVID-19 at loudoun.gov/coronavirus.
- Opt in to receive text message updates regarding the COVID-19 pandemic:
- English: Text LCCOVID19 to 888777
- Spanish: Text LCCOVIDESP to 888777 · Follow the Loudoun County Government [Facebook page](#) and [@LoudounCoGovt](#) on Twitter.

As the number of people receiving vaccines continues to rise and case rates in our community go down, Loudoun's COVID-19 information line is scaling back their hours of operation and eliminating weekend call center operations. You can now reach the information line Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Anyone needing assistance or having questions about COVID-19 can also email the Health Department at health@loudoun.gov.

DULLES UPDATES

VDOT Pavement Resurfacing Update

VDOT is resurfacing several roads in Dulles South this paving season. Below is the latest information available on each project, and you can also visit VDOT's [Paving Status Map](#) for more details on other projects in the area:

- **Millstream Drive:** Millstream Drive between eastern and western Tall

Cedars Parkway will be resurfaced with a latex sealing. This coating is used to seal asphalt on roadways that see a higher traffic level than residential roadways and is not applied as roughly as the slurry sealant that VDOT uses to extend the lifetime of neighborhood streets. The first phase to eradicate the existing pavement markings has already begun; temporary crosswalk markings were applied last week at our request after they were removed. The contractor's current schedule is to return around June 20 to begin the sealing process. Following completion of sealing the roadway, all pavement markings will be reapplied. This schedule is subject to change depending on weather or schedule impacts to other projects in the area.

- **Riding Center Drive:** Riding Center Drive between Loudoun County Parkway and Braddock Road will be resurfaced with a latex sealing. This coating is used to seal asphalt on roadways that see a higher traffic level than residential roadways and is not applied as roughly as the slurry sealant that VDOT uses to extend the lifetime of neighborhood streets. The first phase to eradicate the existing pavement markings has already begun and temporary crosswalk markings were applied last week (also at our request). The contractor's current schedule is to return around June 20 to begin the sealing process. Following completion of sealing the roadway, all pavement markings will be reapplied. This schedule is subject to change depending on weather or schedule impacts on other projects in the area.

- **Eastgate View Drive:** Eastgate View Drive has had patching performed, as well as pavement markings eradicated and temporary pavement markings placed, except for the in the crosswalk area, with that portion currently underway. The latex overlay will be applied in about a month.
- **Elk Lick Road:** Elk Lick Road between Route 50 and Tall Cedars Parkway has been milled. Weather permitting, the repaving with new asphalt should be complete in the next week. Newly applied pavement markings will be laid down shortly after the paving is complete.
- **Gum Spring Road:** Northbound Gum Spring Road from Frontier Spring to Route 50 will receive a full mill and repave. The contractor is currently expected to complete this project during night shift work hours, and they plan to begin in August. I will provide updates on this timeline as it gets closer.

Hanson Regional Park Update

Construction continues at the Hal and Berni Hanson Regional Park project site on Evergreen Mills Road in Arcola. Current work includes construction of boardwalks and piers, mulching on trails, installation of synthetic turf at Championship Fields, and fine grading at the splashpad. Crews are also making progress installing the irrigation system and lighting on the athletic fields. Other progress is taking place on concrete masonry walls, stonework, columns and metal decking, roofing, fire protection, utility work, and ductwork. Crews at the on-site Hanson House have begun framing the second floor and front porch and pouring concrete for the porch. They are also

working to install exterior siding. Elsewhere in the park, crews are continuing earthwork, asphalt paving, curb and gutter installation, and the spreading of topsoil and mulch.

I will continue to update you on progress made at the park site. Expected completion is currently spring 2022. For more information, visit the project page [here](#).



Name Change for John Mosby Highway

In September and December last year, a pair of Board member initiatives directed staff to create an inventory of confederate and segregationist items and symbols in the County and develop a process to consider renaming Route 7 (Harry Byrd Highway) and Route 50 (John Mosby Highway). Staff from Loudoun's Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure are facilitating meetings with staff from Fairfax, Fauquier, and Clarke Counties to research and coordinate. A working group was also formed with members of Loudoun's Departments of Planning & Zoning and Mapping. At our May 18 Business Meeting, the item came back before the Board for direction. Because Route 7 and Route 50 are primary roadways, the Codified Ordinance process for renaming does not apply; ultimately, it is up to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Commonwealth Transportation

Board (CTB) to approve renaming. However, if the County is proposing a new name, we have to develop a process for identifying a shortlist of potential names. After a long and very dense discussion at the business meeting, we agreed on setting a structure for the renaming process and identifying which steps we will take next.

While I am supportive of the initiative, I am concerned about the impacts to the 300+ businesses and residences and the costs they will incur to change their addresses. At the meeting, I pushed to maintain a multi-step public input process with appropriate input from stakeholders. We ultimately approved a process very similar to what County staff initially recommended but with an accelerated timeline for completion. A task force will be created with seven members of the existing [Heritage Commission](#) and one appointee from each member of the Board (16 task force members total). The task force will conduct significant public outreach and research and eventually identify a list of ten names for Board approval. The chosen names will then go to VDOT and the CTB for final approval. The proposed names will have certain conditions attached: they will meet the requirements of the Codified Ordinance and not already be used elsewhere in the County. They will be appropriate to Loudoun's history, culture, or geography.

The Board also voted to direct staff to establish a capital projects account for funds required to facilitate the renaming process. \$87,000 will be transferred from the Capital Project Management fund to fund highway sign inventory, which is the next step in the process. The balance of the estimated cost for sign replacement (\$621,000 - \$3.2 million depending on the size of the new signs) will go to the FY21 CIP. It should be noted that the high end cost estimates are for new names that are longer than the existing ones and would require new sign infrastructure. I requested at the meeting that staff provide the Board and the newly formed task force with the exact character amount that would

necessitate the larger signs so that we can stay under it and not incur those costs.

Nominations for the task force are expected at the second business meeting in June.

The new schedule approved by the Board is as follows (note that it is an estimate of how long it will take to complete each step, not a list of hard deadlines):

Task 1 — Coordinate with other jurisdictions and neighboring Counties: January 2021 to end of process

Task 2 — Conduct sign inventory, June 2021 to September 2021

Task 3 — Create task force, July 2021 to November 2021

Task 4 — Prepare alternate road name list, July 2021 to November 2021

Task 5 — Public outreach, July 2021 to November 2021

Task 6 — Board selection and approval of alternate road names, January 2022 to February 2022

Task 7 — VDOT & CTB approval of new road names, January 2022 to TBD

Task 8 — Implement new road names, January 2022 to TBD

DULLES LAND USE UPDATES

SVK SAI Child Care

SPEX-2019-0043

At our May 18 Business Meeting, the Board voted 6-2-1 to support my motion to approve the SVK SAI Child Care Center application. The application was for a special exception to permit a 9,500 sq. ft. facility on the south side of Braddock Road between Lunsford Middle School and Paul VI High School. I have received a few questions from constituents

about the Lidl-anchored shopping center, which is in a different location at the corner of Braddock and Gum Spring and to the best of my knowledge is still moving forward. This child care site is east of PVI. The center will service up to 157 children at any given time. In addition, the application includes a 5,500 sq. ft. outdoor play area and associated parking. Overall, the project will occupy a 4.32-acre portion of an undeveloped parcel in the Transition Policy Area. On a separate piece of the parcel, six single-family residential units are permitted by-right. Overall, the site will retain more than 50% open space/undeveloped – which is one of the goals for this location. The applicant confirmed the open space dedication at the Business Meeting, as well as a commitment to tree conservation areas on the parcel. As I covered in my April newsletter, a point of contention for this application at both the Planning Commission and Board Public Hearing was staff's determination that the child care was not consistent with the 2019 General Plan's vision for the Transition Large Lot Neighborhood Place Type (which envisions detached single-family homes, low-density communities, or agricultural uses). I commented in that newsletter that the inconsistency didn't bother me due to the similar places that already exist nearby – Paul VI High School, other schools, and other child care establishments. Staff's reasoning as to why a child care isn't permitted in the Transition Large Lot Neighborhood Place Type was that it is a commercial enterprise, but I think that's arguable when discussing a daycare and the overall intensity of this project is less than its neighbors, which were previously approved.

One other issue that I noted in my April newsletter was the traffic pattern analysis. The applicant proposed a right-in/right-out only on Braddock, which I supported, but I had questions about other traffic flow patterns in the area. Analysis from the applicant and County staff showed that access will operate fine in this area, and the operator has agreed to provide access maps for patrons that will provide detailed routes for them to take when reversing direction. Given the resolution of these relatively

small concerns, I saw no reason to oppose the application.

La Vang Parish in Fairfax County

In my March newsletter, I mentioned that I have been receiving questions from residents in the Blue Spring Farm Community about a land use proposal in Fairfax County (Sully District) for a church (20,000 sq. ft. with 400 seats and associated offices and other areas), parish hall (25,000 sq. ft. with 860 seats and a 3,800 sq. ft. hall to support services), rectory (10,000 sq. ft. with a garage), and private nursery school (60,000 sq. ft. for children in kindergarten through eighth grade) near the intersection of Pleasant Valley Road and Herndon Avenue. The La Vang Catholic Parish application is undergoing the Special Permit process (which Loudoun does not have), which allows an application to bypass the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors and go directly to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Last week, Fairfax County provided updated information on the proposal and a traffic impact analysis. Loudoun's Department of Planning and Zoning staff is reviewing this information in order to provide input on behalf of the County. Since the application is in Fairfax, Loudoun has no direct say over its ultimate approval; however, the application is adjacent to the County (and the Dulles District) and traffic increases will impact some of our residents if it is built. Therefore, my office and County staff are keeping an eye on the application's progress moving forward.

Fairfax staff are still finalizing their own analysis, and a final report is anticipated on June 2. Loudoun staff will be reviewing that report and offering information and feedback. The application will come to a Fairfax BZA Public Hearing on June 9. For information on how to watch and participate in the hearing, please click [here](#). For information on the special permit process in Fairfax, click [here](#). The

Fairfax County project page for this application can be found [here](#).

As a note for those who are interested, La Vang is currently a mission church of St. Veronica's Catholic Church in Chantilly, and provides ministry to the Vietnamese Community in the region.

Airport Impact Overlay District Update

At the May meeting of the Transportation and Land Use Committee, the committee discussed and ultimately made recommendations to the full Board related to Dulles Airport's Impact Overlay District. The Overlay District is intended to compliment the FAA's noise contour studies by displaying areas of airport noise impact, and by restricting certain types of development in the areas with the loudest noise. We are currently in the process of updating the Impact Overlay District to match our General Plan and zoning ordinance rewrites.

TLUC voted on several motions to recommend action to the Board. They voted 3-2 to recommend adoption of the updated 2019 noise contours with an exception for the area south of Arcola Mills Drive and west of Loudoun County Parkway, which is designated as Suburban Mixed-Use place type in the Comprehensive Plan. The reason for this exception is that there are areas here that are placed in the most restrictive Ldn 65+ category solely as a result of a potential fifth runway, which is not on the horizon anytime in the near or even long-term future. I will need to review the exact work of TLUC but I am generally supportive of this approach. TLUC also voted to maintain the restriction on residential development in the Ldn 65+ corridor, and they voted 3-2 to remove the one mile buffer outside of the 60-65 Ldn contour. A full list of the motions and votes taken at the meeting can be found [here](#). I do not support removing the one mile buffer on the noise contour maps. While residential development isn't restricted here, notification is required when residents

move into this area which is best practice for areas with airports around them. I will be seeking to change this outcome of removing the buffer at the full Board. Another question addressed by the committee was how to treat existing residential homes that would fall under the most restrictive category. While the restrictions would only apply to new development, the committee recommended exempting those homes from the new contour lines as well. I have mixed feelings on this - in terms of real world impact, it won't change much, but I do think that residents moving in as resale buyers should be aware that they are in a high-noise area.

LOUDOUN UPDATES

D.C. Statehood Resolution

This item is under the “Loudoun Updates” section because it reflects a full Board initiative, but whether it actually is an item relevant to Loudoun was the subject of my comments on this matter. The Board approved a resolution in support of current efforts to make the District of Columbia a state on a 6-0-2-1 vote. (6 in favor, none opposed. Supervisor Buffington and I abstained with Supervisor Kershner absent). I continue to be concerned by “mission creep” on the Board of Supervisors, which over the last year and half has seen longer than ever meetings and busy agendas. This includes a flurry of resolutions on different national, political or social issues that in my view are outside the scope of the Board of Supervisors. I’ve always thought that one of the characteristics that keeps the Board functioning despite ever-deteriorating partisan political division is our ability to focus on local and community issues. There will always be disagreement and differences in philosophy even on local issues which is healthy and expected, but it is easier to avoid some of the pitfalls of partisan politics when our discussions are limited to Loudoun County

governance. This particular resolution was another example of an item brought to the Board that falls outside of our jurisdiction. The standard that I apply as to whether to weigh in on a topic is if a matter is within our jurisdiction, or if we have a unique interest or voice in the subject that can impact its outcome. In this case, we certainly don't since D.C. statehood is a federal issue, and our federal representatives all have well established viewpoints on this topic which we as individuals may agree or disagree with. Therefore, I abstained from the vote, and I will continue to do so when items like this are brought to the Board - whether I personally agree with them or not.

Unmet Housing Needs Strategic Plan

As I mentioned in my April newsletter, the Board directed staff in September 2019 to initiate a process to define how the County will address unmet housing needs over the short and long-term. In April, staff presented to us the draft Unmet Housing Needs Strategic Plan. The stated goals of the UHNSP are as follows:

1. Establish a coordinated, collaborative, and integrated housing network
2. Secure land resources needed to address unmet housing needs
3. Obtain viable funding sources
4. Reduce barriers to the development and preservation of affordable housing
5. Implement policy changes to support affordable housing production and preservation

I included a more detailed discussion of unmet housing needs and the struggle of affordable housing in the last newsletter, so I won't reiterate it all here. It is a complex issue, and I think that government can only do so much to make housing affordable or provide options for unmet housing. Loudoun has taken steps through zoning and usage of our Housing Trust Fund to do what we can, but the need obviously still remains and is perhaps getting even worse with

the hot housing market that is pushing prices higher and higher.

At our May Public Hearing, the Board heard from many members of the community about the importance of affordable housing and the need for such housing in Loudoun. As I stated last time, there are ideas in the draft plan that I like and ideas I don't, and we will be working collectively to refine it going forward. The draft will next go to TLUC on June 16, and all Board members will receive individual briefings from staff in the coming weeks. I look forward to more discussion about the plan and working to make it the best possible for residents in Loudoun. You can review the draft plan [here](#).

Transit Summit

The Board of Supervisors held its annual Transit Summit on Tuesday evening. The Transit Summit is a chance to get updates on critical transit-related projects and hear proposals and timelines for future projects. At our summit this year, we heard information on:

- The opening of Metrorail Silver Line Phase 2 in Loudoun County (as a Metro Board member, I've been updating you on that regularly: it is currently scheduled for 1Q 2022)
- Commentary on transit-related issues from advisory boards including the Commission on Aging, the Disability Services Board, the Loudoun Health Commission, and the Transit Advisory Board
- Findings from the Unmet Transit Needs of Seniors and Disabled Residents Study
- Overview of the Loudoun County Transit route design and modification process

- Results of a study to identify strategies for using existing park and ride lots as Metro extends into Loudoun

The takeaways from the summit are the County has some work to do to provide transportation to our disabled and elderly population. We will be having some discussion about enhancements in the FY23 budget which I will likely hold in the Finance Committee this fall. On park and ride lots, pre-COVID we were seeing strong utilization particularly in Dulles South. We will be losing several lots in the Metro corridor including the Dulles North Transit Center (which is being reclaimed by its owner, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, as per prior agreements). The Board has some decisions to make about this corridor and has had discussion on various options. Outside that corridor in places like Dulles South, we are expanding service to have some “neighborhood” options in which citizens could walk to a bus stop and be taken to a Metro station. This type of service is more expensive but may provide enhanced convenience for residents.

Survey of County Residents

Loudoun County conducts scientific surveys of residents (through a third party vendor) every two years to gather residents’ satisfaction with County services, obtain residents’ opinions on key issues, and collect demographic information. County staff and the various departments review survey results with the goal of improving community services. The Board heard the results of the latest survey at our May 4 Business Meeting, and I want to share some of the numbers with you here. The survey is made up of solicitation to 3,000 households and an offer of open participation. In the end, 1,468 responses were recorded with a + or – 3% margin of error.

The bottom line is that residents continue to rate the quality of life in Loudoun very highly. 87% of participants in the survey rated the overall quality of

life in Loudoun as excellent or good, and 90% rated the County as an excellent or good place to live. 89% saw Loudoun as a good place to raise their children, while 85% thought that Loudoun had an overall good image or reputation (which is higher than the national benchmark). 85% of respondents are likely to recommend living in Loudoun to someone who asks, and 83% plan on staying in the County for the next five years or more. About 87% rated the economic health of the County as excellent or good, which is important since 80% rated the economy as very important or essential to the County's overall wellbeing. Loudoun scored higher than the national benchmarks in every category under economic health, from quality of businesses and services establishments to shopping and employment opportunities.

In keeping with the discussion we've been having surrounding affordability, 86% of participants said that the cost of living and housing is essential or very important. Unfortunately, only 20% rated the cost of living in Loudoun as excellent or good, and 22% said that Loudoun had affordable quality housing – shortcomings that we are working to address with our Unmet Housing Needs Strategic Plan and other initiatives.

The survey also highlighted some areas that were trending upwards and some that were trending down. The percentage of people who rated Loudoun's land use and planning as excellent or good is on the way up, clocking in this year at 43%, as well as the percentage who rated the overall design or layout of residential and commercial areas as excellent or good (61%).

Of more concern - but not surprising, 55% of respondents listed the quality of new development as excellent or good. I think this is a result of fatigue with data centers and the inability to get the mixed use projects we'd like off the ground.

On a positive note, government trust ratings have remained stable in the County, and Dulles District residents actually had the highest level of satisfaction with County government. 71% of Dulles residents stated that they felt that the County government is open and transparent, which was about 10 points higher than the overall County average. 66% of Dulles residents felt that local government was doing a good job of informing residents about issues facing the community. Hopefully that includes this newsletter!

The impact of COVID-19 no doubt played a large role in people's responses. Ratings for public places, opportunities for entertainment and the arts, and residents' perceived connection and engagement with their community all went down – for understandable reasons. Meanwhile, things like traffic flow, ease of travel by car, and watching public meetings online or on TV received higher marks, for reasons that were also related to the pandemic. While the 2020 results in areas such as these might not be representative of overall long-term trends, it is also important to gauge resident satisfaction in unusual situations. The more permanent factors such as quality of life and long-term economic health of the County all received high marks.

Respondents to the survey identified some important County issues going forward: schools, cost of living, traffic alleviation, increased broadband access, employment opportunities, road maintenance, youth activities, crime prevention, and the proliferation of trails and bike paths Countywide. I think I generally have a pretty good idea of what residents want to see (even if some of those things are out of our control) and what their expectations are, but surveys like this are helpful so that the entire Board can see where there may be gaps in specific areas of the County or where we need to focus more attention.

You can review the full survey results [here](#).

Tax Relief for Elderly and Disabled Residents

In April, the Board of Supervisors approved increasing the limit of tax relief for elderly and disabled residents in Loudoun by 6.5% to reflect the rise in the Consumer Price Index since 2015, the last time the amount was adjusted.

Furthermore, the Board directed staff to research further changes to Chapter 872 that would allow for periodic updates to the annual gross household income limits to keep pace with CPI inflation. I requested that these proposed changes go through the Finance Committee first, and they came back to the Board at our May 18 Business Meeting. The Board approved a review of the annual qualifying income limits every four years. The Board felt that four years was a good interval for potentially adjusting the upper limits of tax relief, as it is important to take inflation in context.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dulles South Recreation & Community Center Closure for Annual Maintenance

The Dulles South Recreation and Community Center will be temporarily closed for annual maintenance from June 1 through June 7, reopening June 8. The competition and leisure pools will be closed for maintenance June 1 through June 15, reopening June 16.

The closure does not impact child care programs. DSRCC will post any updates on its [Facebook page](#). Call 571-258-3456 for more information.

Loudoun Workforce Resource Center LinkedIn Learning Opportunity

Loudoun County job seekers, as well as current workers seeking to upgrade their skills, will have access to free skills training offered by LinkedIn Learning through a new program available from the Loudoun County Workforce Resource Center.

LinkedIn Learning offers more than 10,000 online courses that can help job seekers gain skills and certifications that will assist them as they seek a career path. The training available from LinkedIn Learning allows users to learn at their own pace using a desktop or mobile device. Participants who receive a free license for the training from the Loudoun Workforce Resource Center will also have access to additional resources, including employment coaching and other services.

The program is part of an initiative of the [Virginia Career Works Northern Region](#). The Loudoun Workforce Resource Center is a Virginia Career Works affiliate.

Anyone interested in the LinkedIn Learning program is encouraged to contact the Loudoun Workforce Resource Center at 703-777-0150, (press option 0), or by email at wrc@loudoun.gov.

The Loudoun Workforce Resource Center provides no-cost resources and equipment to both job seekers and businesses and connects businesses and job seekers to help them achieve their employment goals.

More information about the services provided by the Loudoun Workforce Resource Center may be found online at loudoun.gov/wrc.

Loudoun County Transit App

Loudoun County Transit has launched a new mobile app called “Transit.” Loudoun County will provide all updates regarding any impacts to bus service through the Transit app. The app replaces the county’s previous text service - LC Alerts and SV Alerts - which has been discontinued. Loudoun

County encourages all subscribers to the former service alerts to download the Transit app to continue receiving accurate, real-time service updates from Loudoun County transit.

The Transit app improves how the county communicates with bus riders by adding new and improved capabilities. The app allows bus riders to easily navigate the region, aided by nearby bus options, departure times, accurate real-time information, trip planning and step-by-step navigation. The app will simplify commuting for the county's bus and Metrorail riders, providing a single source of information.

Upon launching the app, Loudoun County Transit riders will see nearby options and departure times for local, commuter and Metro connection bus services. App users will have the ability to receive important service alerts and breaking news information directly on the Transit app's home screen. Users of the app can customize how they receive service alerts through their mobile phone's notifications by signing up for push notifications for specific routes.

Helpful features of the Transit app will allow users to:

- Check nearby departures
- Track their ride
- Plan a trip
- Get step-by-step directions
- Identify favorite bus routes
- Connect with the Regional Transit Network

The Transit app is available for free download to iPhone and Android phones. For instructions on downloading the app, frequently asked questions and to learn about the App's functionality, visit loudoun.gov/transitapp.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Schedule

Loudoun has released its schedule of household hazardous waste collection events for 2021. All events run from 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM.

· **Saturday, June 26: Freedom High School, 25450 Riding Center Drive, South Riding, VA 20152**

· Saturday, July 31: Lovettsville Elementary School, 49 South Loudoun Street, Lovettsville, VA 20180

· Saturday, September 11: Harmony Park and Ride, 39464 East Colonial Highway, Hamilton, VA 20158

· Saturday, October 23: Leesburg Park and Ride, 19730 Sycolin Road, Leesburg, VA 20175

· Saturday, November 20: Claude Moore Park, 46150 Loudoun Park Lane, Sterling, VA 20164

The household hazardous waste program provides a safe and free way for residents to get rid of hazardous material that may have accumulated in their homes. Household hazardous waste is any waste produced in the home that is dangerous or potentially harmful to human health or the environment. Please don't bring ammunition, propane tanks, motor oil and car batteries, electronics, medical waste, or paint. The limit per household is 15 gallons of liquid waste and 40 pounds of solid waste with a maximum container size of 5 gallons.

For more information about the Household Hazardous Waste Program, call 703-771-5500 or visit the [website](#).

Donations to Local Food Banks

Donations to the Dulles South Food Pantry can be made in person at their temporary location at the Arcola Volunteer Fire Department Annex, 24300 Stone Springs Boulevard, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM, or [online](#). Donations to the Dulles South Food Pantry, Inc. are tax deductible. The Dulles South Food Pantry provides food assistance up to twice a month to any person who resides in the attendance zones for the following high schools: Freedom, John Champe,

Lightridge, Independence, Rock Ridge and Briar Woods. Call 703-507-2795 or email <mailto:info@dsfp.org> to schedule an appointment. See the Pantry's [website](#) for information on how you can help fight local hunger.

Donations to Loudoun Hunger Relief can be made in person at 750 Miller Drive SE in Leesburg or via their [website](#).

Blood Donation

The American Red Cross continues to have an urgent need for blood and platelet donations. Donation sites follow the required social distancing during the collection events. No drop-in donations are allowed. To schedule an appointment, please visit redcross.org/give-blood.

Inova Blood Services has blood drives scheduled and takes donors by appointment.

Visit <https://www.inovablood.org/> to schedule an appointment.

Medical Reserve Corps Volunteering

The Health Department continues to seek volunteers for the Loudoun Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). With the COVID-19 pandemic a reality, the need for Loudoun Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers - both medical and nonmedical personnel - is greater than ever. The MRC is asking medical doctors, nurses, physician assistants, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, dentists, veterinarians, and other medical professionals to consider volunteering their time to help protect the community's health during the pandemic and beyond. Nonmedical professionals can operate the Loudoun County Health Department's information line or help support testing activities, contact-tracing efforts, logistics support, and other nonmedical functions. For more information, visit loudoun.gov/mrc. Register through the [Virginia Volunteer Health System](#).

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Supervisor Matt Letourneau | 1 Harrison Street, S.E., 5th Floor, P.O. Box 7000, Leesburg, VA 20177-7000

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