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Supervisor
Caleb A. Kershner
Catoctin District



Loudoun County	Agriculture Development	Rural Economic Development	Small Business Development	Fighting Lyme Disease	Community Services
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January 2020

Dear Catoctin Residents,

I hope you enjoyed our brief snow last week. It came just in time for the new Board's first business meeting. Lots of change and activity is afoot, and my office is working hard to manage the many projects and initiatives that affect the Catoctin District.

Our next board meeting is coming up on Tuesday, the 21st, just after our holiday weekend honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It is worth pausing to reflect on Dr. King's legacy for boldly and tirelessly championing the cause of civil rights. Over half a

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Map of Catoclin District

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century after his death, his letters and speeches still hold the power to inspire and to challenge us. As Dr. King put it, "The time is always right to do what is right."

I also wanted to let you know how our first business meeting went. During the meeting, I was able to amend a proposed change to the Rules of Order, which would have allowed controversial Board resolutions to be considered during this Board's term. Previously, Board resolutions were positive and used to commemorate people and events in the community. I did not believe it was necessary or productive to remove this language. I also voted against supporting legislation in Richmond that would do the following:

- *Issue driver identification cards for undocumented individuals*
- *Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)*
- *Give localities the authority to remove war memorials*

In addition, I voted against Loudoun County budget guidance that would significantly increase the property tax burden for Loudoun residents.

I hope you will find the issues we discuss below helpful and informative. Don't forget to check out [my webpage](#) for the latest updates in the Catoclin District.

Sincerely,

Caleb Kershner

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Contact Me

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First Board Meeting of the Year

The Board of Supervisors held its first business meeting of the year on January 7. At that meeting, I successfully amended our rules to avoid controversial resolutions, spoke out against a proposed tax rate increase, and pushed back on part of our legislative agenda.

Cutting Out Controversial Resolutions

When the Board voted on its new Rules of Order, I saw that we had cut out some language that said Board resolutions should be non-controversial in nature. Cutting that out didn't make sense. So I proposed a friendly amendment to bring that language back in. And I'm glad to say that Chair Randall and Vice Chair Saines unanimously accepted my amendment.

Opposing a Proposed Tax Rate Increase

Last October, the Board unanimously voted for a budget based on the equalized tax rate of \$1.02 per \$100 of assessed value. That rate that would keep the average homeowner's real estate tax bill the same as last year.

At our business meeting, however, County Administrator Tim Hemstreet advised the Board to scrap this plan. He said we should consider a tax rate no lower than \$1.035, and as high as \$1.055. That could potentially raise the average homeowner's tax bill by \$177 in a single year.

I voted against this proposal. Raising our residents' tax burden by that much in a single year is unacceptable. We need a more rigorous budget process, where we start budgeting at a lower level and add funding if justified. Our last two Boards successfully decreased the tax rate by 24 cents, from \$1.285 in FY 2013 to \$1.045 in FY 2020. I would hate to see us take the

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first step to incrementally wipe out those eight years of tax reductions.

Opposing Driver Privilege Cards, Equal Rights Act, and War Memorials

The Board also voted on our legislative agenda, which directs our county's lobbyist to support or oppose legislation in the General Assembly during the 2020 session. There were three items that concerned me and that I voted against.

First, I voted against supporting legislation that would give Driver Privilege Cards to undocumented individuals, who are in violation of federal law. That was not an initiative I could support. As a prosecutor, I have seen the unintended results of programs like this, and I don't believe the residents of Loudoun County would be supportive of that impact.

Second, I voted against supporting legislation that would ratify the ERA. The ERA is not necessary. At this point, its original intent has already been codified into our laws and is supported by Supreme Court precedent. Directing our county's lobbyist to concentrate on this issue dilutes our effectiveness to get other crucial things from Richmond, such as VDOT funding.

Finally, I voted against supporting legislation that would give localities the authority to remove "war or veterans monuments and memorials" on their property. Loudoun County already has the authority to erect monuments on its property; this new legislation would only give it the new power to tear monuments down. And frankly, I don't believe we need that power. Our unique history is our strength, not our weakness. We can't learn from that history if we censor it.



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Waterford Traffic Calming Program Feedback Requested



After many years of discussion, County Staff is bringing an item to the Board next week with [recommendations for traffic calming in the Village of Waterford](#). I want to thank Supervisor Higgins for his hard work on this project for so many years.

Staff is proposing the following recommendations:

1. Initiate the process to install three pole mounted speed display signs at locations designated in the January 21, 2020 Board item, as an interim traffic calming measure in the Village of Waterford, and assign the responsibility for perpetual maintenance of the signs to the Department of General Services.
2. Authorize the transfer of \$100,000 from the Traffic Calming Contingency account in the Capital Fund to the Traffic Calming Signs Project in the Capital Projects Fund for the installation of pole mounted speed display signs in the Village of Waterford.

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3. Direct staff in the Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure to review the viability of other traffic calming measures such as chicanes (concrete curb extension) and chokers at the three entry points of the Village of Waterford (where the pole mounted speed signs are located) in the Catoctin Election District as described herein, and report back at a future business meeting.

I would ask our Waterford residents to please take a moment to review the proposal and let my office know your thoughts and views. I would also like to know your views on consideration of a potential bypass designed to route cut-through traffic out of the Village.

Please e-mail [Jonathan Bales](#) in my office with your thoughts and views.

Heritage Commission Report

At the upcoming Board business meeting on January 21, the Heritage Commission will [present their recommendations](#) for expanding and preserving Loudoun County's historic courthouse, its grounds, and its memorials.

First, the Heritage Commission recommends that we start the process of registering the County courthouse and grounds as a National Historic Landmark.

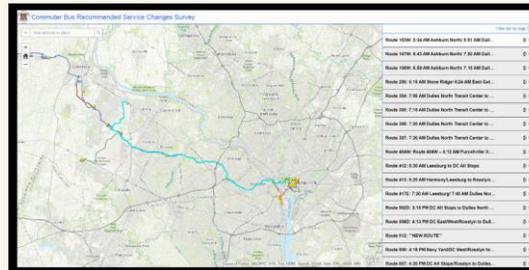
Second, they recommend that we form a committee, composed of the Commission and a selection of judicial and court personnel, to consider renaming the courthouse. The Commission added that their preference would be to rename the courthouse after Charles Hamilton Houston, a prominent

African-American attorney who played a leading role in the fight for civil rights.

Third, they recommend that we coordinate the development of a historical interpretive "Path Toward Freedom" trail, using a series of memorials to describe significant events during the Antebellum, Civil War, Reconstruction, and Civil Rights eras through the stories of local events and people associated with the courthouse.

Fourth, they recommend that we begin facilitating a community discussion on the design and placement of those memorials, including new memorials to commemorate the Reading of the Declaration of Independence, Loudoun's Union soldiers, and the Enslaved.

Loudoun Wants Your Input on Proposed Changes to Commuter Bus Route



The County has launched an [online survey](#) to get feedback on proposed changes to our commuter bus service's route and schedule. All responses will be taken into consideration before a final decision is made on those proposed changes.

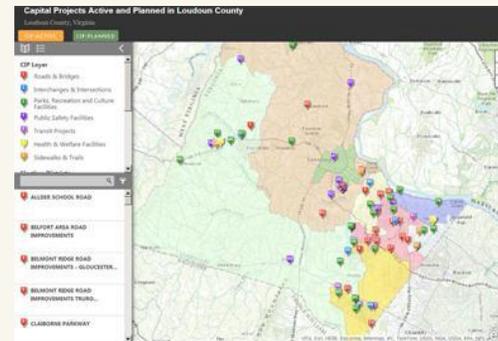
The proposed changes are scheduled to go into effect in Spring 2020. They are focused on improving the on-time performance of the various routes that pass through Washington, D.C. One major change would be to split the "All City" routes into "DC East" and "DC West." This would aim to shorten the travel time for riders on the district's east side while improving the schedule reliability for riders on the west side.

You can submit your comments on the proposed changes on an [online interactive survey map](#), which illustrates each proposed route or schedule change. Clicking on a route name will pull up a summary of the current route, as well as all of its proposed changes.

The survey will remain open through February 3, 2020.

Loudoun County Capital Improvement Projects

Use the county's [interactive map](#) to track capital improvement projects in Loudoun. The map provides tabs for 'active projects', which will provide a list of capital projects currently funded and in a stage of design or construction development, and 'planned projects,' which are the capital projects planned for funding in Fiscal Year 2016-Fiscal



Year 2020 as part of the Board of Supervisors's Adopted Capital Improvement Program.

Road Project Updates

The latest on County and VDOT projects impacting Catoclin District residents

Crosstrail Boulevard

Segment B - the design and construction from Kincaid Boulevard to Russell Branch Parkway. Bonding requirements for Permittee Responsible Mitigation are being finalized; the required permits have been secured. A contract award for construction of this proffer item was approved at the Board Business Meeting on December 3, 2019.

Woods Road Intersection Improvements

The purpose of this project is the construction of turn lanes on Evergreen Mills Road at relocated The Woods Road. It is the final phase of the original scope of The Woods Road Relocation. VDOT estimates the cost of the project to be \$2.8 million. Construction began in the summer of 2019 and is currently underway.

John G. Lewis Memorial (Featherbed Lane) Bridge over Catoclin Creek

The purpose of this project is to develop conceptual bridge alternatives to address the existing historic truss bridge. VDOT presented three options to the State Department of Historic Resources. The DHS chose option 2A: building a new structure

from the deck down, allowing the trusses to remain as ornamental.

John G. Lewis Memorial Bridge (Route 673 - Featherbed Lane) over Catoctin Creek is a single span steel pin connected Pratt through truss with a timber deck and asphalt overlay, supported on stringers and floor beams. The bridge was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on June 25, 1974. It is 157 feet long, has an overall width of about 14 feet and clear roadway width of 11.16 feet. It carries one alternating traffic lane. The bridge was originally erected in 1889 on the Leesburg & Alexandria Turnpike (Route 7) over Goose Creek, to replace a bridge destroyed by flooding. In 1932 the bridge was dismantled and moved to its current location. The bridge was posted 15 tons in 2004 and reduced to 3 tons in 2013 due to insufficient capacity. The existing bridge has an average traffic count of 57 vehicles per day with daily truck traffic less than 3 trucks.

The right of way acquisition phase is currently underway.

Route 7 & Route 287

This project provides for the planning, design, and construction of improvements for the Route 7 and Berlin Turnpike (Route 287) interchange. The project is funded using local tax funding and VDOT Smart Scale funding.

The PAG interviewed the shortlisted design firms and DFP issued a notice of shortlist and final ranking on August 22, 2019. Contract negotiation is ongoing with the top ranked design consultant and was planned to continue into late 2019, with a draft contract package to be forwarded to VDOT seeking authorization to award the contract.

[Route 7 & Route 690](#)

This project funds the design, right-of-way acquisition and construction of an interchange at Route 7 and Route 690 in Purcellville. The geotechnical work is in progress. A Stage 1 Bridge report has been submitted, and a Summary of Route 7 Bridge Inspection Report is currently being reviewed. The revised Environmental Assessment was submitted to VDOT on November 20, 2019, and the 60% design plans were submitted on November 27, 2019.

Route 7 & Battlefield Parkway

This project will replace the traffic signal at Route 7 (East Market Street) and Battlefield Parkway with a grade-separated interchange, and remove or modify the signalized intersection at Route 7 and Cardinal Park Drive to reduce congestion and improve traffic operations. Other improvements include accommodations for cyclists and pedestrians, and new interchange lighting. The Town of Leesburg has executed an agreement with VDOT to administer this project on the Town's behalf. The Town has also executed a reimbursement agreement with NVTA.

A Notice to Proceed was issued on November 22, 2019. Construction began on November 26, 2019, with a slight traffic shift expected on Route 7 in mid to late December.

Route 9 & Route 287 Roundabout

This project includes design and construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Charles Town Pike (Route 9) and Berlin Turnpike (Route 287). The 60% design plans are currently being developed.

Route 15 - Route 15 Interchange at Edwards Ferry/Fort Evans Road

This project includes the design and construction of grade separated interchanges at Route 15/Edwards Ferry Road and

Route 15/Fort Evans Road. The project is on hold, pending funding.

Town of Hamilton Pedestrian Improvements

This project provides drainage improvements and repair to the existing pedestrian sidewalks along Route 7- Colonial Highway adjacent to the Town's western limits. This is a Transportation Alternatives project managed by the Town of Hamilton. A Notice to Proceed was issued in 2019.

Waterford Mill

The purpose of this project is to restore the Mill structure and construct building access improvements. This project is funded by Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Transportation Enhancement funds.

Phases 1 and 2 of the project are finished. Phase 3 will include an outdoor classroom, permanent restroom facilities, an ADA walkway and viewing platform, a kayak and canoe launch, a small pavilion, and engineering to stabilize the Stone House. By October 2019, zoning approval was coordinated for the boat launch, additional safety signage was installed, an electric service was provided to the shoreline so a security camera could be installed, there was ongoing coordination with the HOA to acquire an easement for the waterline for the new restroom, and the waterline design plans were underway.



If you'd like to keep up or find out more about ongoing or upcoming VDOT projects that affect you, you can check out [the VDOT website](#).

You may be interested in VDOT's [Paving Conditions and Schedule](#).

Loudoun Express Request



Loudoun Express Request is a helpful tool for contacting county staff regarding a wide spectrum of issues. Internet service, property use, environmental health, and much more can be entered on LEX. Enter your question or concern and LEX will contact appropriate county staff! Learn more [here](#).

Community News

Congratulations!



The Thomas Balch L

To **LEE LAWRENCE** and **CAROL LEE** for receiving the 27th annual Loudoun History Awards.

Both were honored by the Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission for their efforts to preserve Loudoun's history.

Lee Lawrence was recognized for her work in restoring a historic building in Upperville, Virginia. The building was going to be demolished before Lawrence intervened. She researched its history, spoke with descendants, and helped to preserve and restore the building. In addition, Lawrence was recognized for editing and transcribing two local women's diaries, *Societies of Rebels* and *Dark Days in Our Beloved Country*, which have been added to Loudoun's collection of historical records.

Carol Lee was recognized for her work in getting the historic African American village of Willisville added to the State Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. Willisville is a small southwest Loudoun community of 15 houses and a church that dates back to Reconstruction. Lee worked with the Mosby Heritage Area Association to prove the village's provenance and secure its place on the two official registers. She also organized a gospel concert that brought in

almost \$30,000 to help establish the Willisville Preservation Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, which oversees the village's cemeteries and promotes its heritage.

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Volunteer with Loudoun Cares

The holidays are a perfect time to think about volunteering. Check out volunteer opportunities with [Loudoun Cares Volunteer Center](#). The Volunteer Center is the one-stop resource connecting nonprofit organizations in Loudoun County to individuals in the community looking for a place to volunteer their time and resources.

Let Your Friends in on the Latest!

Do you have a friend or a neighbor who would benefit from the information in this newsletter? Then, forward this on!

My office is working to ensure as many Catocin residents as possible are being informed about important issues -whether those are public hearing notices, road closure announcements, inclement weather advisories, or other updates on issues of importance to the district and to the county.

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Sincerely,

Supervisor Caleb Kershner

Board of Supervisors - Catoctin District
Loudoun County, Virginia

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