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A Letter from Supervisor Cook: Outlook for 2016 -- Public Safety, Mental Health, Economic Development, & Land Use Lead Agenda

Happy New Year! I am looking forward to the promises of a new year and am honored to begin a new term as your supervisor. 2016 will be very busy and I want to share with you my priorities and agenda for the year.

Police Oversight

First, I am honored that Chairman Bulova named me Chair of the Board's Public Safety Committee. The Public Safety Committee provides oversight over the police and fire departments, 911 program and emergency management. My first order of business will be to lead the Board through a detailed review of the 142 recommendations made by Chairman Bulova's Ad Hoc Commission on the Use of Police Force. These recommendations include greater transparency and accountability, a shift in philosophy from a "warrior" approach to a "guardian" approach, establishment of a citizen's review panel, and more. I am committed to a thorough review of these matters and to working with our Chief, my fellow Board members, our officers, and the community to strengthen further the already strong connection between our police and citizens.

Mental Health

Next, I am deeply involved in the implementation of the County's new "Diversion First" initiative, which aims to provide treatment instead of incarceration for people with mental health challenges who come in contact with law enforcement and the legal system. Jail is a terrible place for a person with mental illness, and by providing treatment instead of incarceration, we will reduce crime, help people heal and advance in their lives, save money, and become a better community. I serve on the leadership group for this initiative and will also lead Board review through the Public Safety Committee.

Economic Development

Economic development is the key to the future of our county. As you know from news reports, our county and school budget situation is precarious, and that is primarily because our economy is not growing. We need to diversify our economy so we are not so dependent on federal government contracting, and the county needs to be a better place for small business to grow. I serve on a "building repositioning" committee made up of county staff and private business people. We are looking for new ways to use old, emptying office buildings, including attracting small business; creating "maker space," where goods such as furniture, jewelry, glass, and other products can be both made and sold;



Supervisor Cook has served on Fairfax County Board of Supervisors since 2009 and lives in Kings Park with his wife and children.

and allowing the private sector to build affordable housing. Some of the strategies involve simplifying county regulations and easing restrictions on new uses for old properties.

Braddock Road

The Braddock Road multi-modal study continues. Our citizen committee is reviewing three options for the future of Braddock Road from Guinea Road to the Beltway. The “no build” option shows failing intersections and congestion not only on Braddock but backing up into neighborhoods by 2030. A second option would add a lane in each direction from Burke Lake to the Beltway for buses and carpools. Such a project could involve a bus station/parking garage. A third option is being developed in response to community concerns. This option would not build extra lanes but would improve intersections, both for vehicular traffic as well as bikes and pedestrians. Traffic studies will be conducted by the county’s consultant for each of these options and they will all be presented to the community for discussion at a community meeting in April (the date has not been set).

Training Center Land

The Commonwealth of Virginia has announced plans to sell the 78-acre grounds of the Northern Virginia Training Center, located on Braddock Road across from Fairfax Memorial cemetery, to a private developer. Final proposals from the bidding developers were due in Richmond last week, and state officials advise they hope to select a buyer by early February. If that buyer presents a reasonable plan for the site that would benefit the community, I will schedule a community meeting to begin a comprehensive plan review process. Please note the county will not approve any rezoning or plan for this site without extensive community involvement. I hope we as a community can come together with a vision that includes some commercial options to serve the surrounding neighborhoods, reasonable residential development, parks and recreation for the greater community, and public uses which could include a school or workforce education center. We will know more next month if the state announces a buyer.

More Items

And there is more! The Park Authority hopes to begin a master plan review process for Lake Accotink Park. This is an opportunity for the community to come together with a vision for greater use of this gem in our district. I hope that vision maintains the natural beauty of the park and is environmentally friendly. We are also pushing the Park Authority to include much needed renovations to the Audrey Moore Recreation Center on the 2016 park bond referendum, scheduled to go to the voters next November. The widely used facility needs to be upgraded and repaired. Furthermore, I plan to hold a Community Leader Town Hall event later in the Spring to continue to provide training and information to current and future community leaders, who volunteer their time and talents to make our neighborhoods better places to live. My office will provide periodic updates.

As you can see, it will be a busy year! I hope you will join me in these many opportunities for the community to play a significant role in the future of Braddock District and Fairfax County. It’s your community. Be an engaged citizen!

John

2015 – The Year in Review

2015 was a busy year for the Braddock District and Fairfax County. Here are some of the most notable things that happened last year:

Domestic Violence Awareness Event

Every October, events are held to increase consciousness about this issue that, unfortunately, is much more common than you may think. In September, Supervisor Cook read a proclamation declaring October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. In October, Sheriff Stacey Kincaid and Mayor Scott Silverthorne

joined Supervisor Cook as cohosts for the Braddock District's annual Domestic Violence Community Awareness event. The event featured information tables and supported opportunities for nonprofit organizations involved in domestic violence prevention, treatment, and awareness.

Sexual Assault Board Matter

On December 2, 2014, the Board of Supervisors approved Supervisor Cook's board matter that directed County staff to assess current methods to prevent sexual violence, and to utilize those assessments to develop new ideas on how to educate our public school students on sexual assault awareness. Supervisor Cook's board matter encouraged our community to engage in new efforts directed toward those who commit these crimes, and on March 11th, 2015, county staff released its report in response. Following the release of the memo, the community-wide sexual violence task force was formed to draft recommendations, which were presented and accepted by the Board on September 29th. The task force had been meeting since April 2015 and consisted of staff from different county agencies, Fairfax County Public Schools, community leaders, and staff members from the Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services. [To view the full report click here.](#)

Veterans Treatment Docket

On February 12th, Supervisor Cook spoke at the dedication ceremony for the Veterans Treatment Docket. The ceremony was the kick-off event for the docket, which is leading the mission in providing critical care for veterans and their families. The Docket is providing treatment for veterans who have found themselves in trouble due to substance abuse or mental health issues, especially as a result of combat service. The docket is the first of its kind in Virginia, but is part of a growing phenomenon across the country as judges, prosecutors, and public defenders grapple with a wave of Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans who have landed in the criminal justice system.

Ceremony to Honor World War II Veterans

In January 2015, the Board of Supervisors approved Supervisor Cook's board matter that directed the Board of Supervisors to invite World War II veterans to come before the Board in honor of the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. On June 23rd, Supervisor Cook hosted the ceremony and recognized World War II veterans for their courage and sacrifices made during what is considered to be one of the most devastating wars in history. Supervisor Cook welcomed forty World War II veterans to the Fairfax County Government Center and hosted a reception prior to the proclamation to welcome veterans and to thank them for their dedicated service. The ceremony began with a presentation of the colors by members of the American Legion Post 177, and the veterans were then presented with a proclamation by Supervisor Cook, which is now proudly being displayed at American Legion Post 177.

Diversion First Initiative

In August of 2015, a group of about 50 community and Fairfax County government leaders launched an effort, called Diversion First, with the goal of reducing the number of people with mental illness in local jails by diverting low risk offenders experiencing mental health crises to treatment instead of incarceration. The group set up a basic jail diversion program by early 2016, with the following initial components in place, to be expanded and further developed over the next 3 to 5 years:

- An ongoing program of Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for local law enforcement personnel, led by the Fairfax County Police Department in collaboration with the county Sheriff's Office and the CSB.

- A therapeutic Crisis Assessment Site at the CSB's new Merrifield Center, where police will be able to transfer custody of offenders who may need mental health services to a CIT-trained officer on-site, rather than taking the individual directly to jail.
- A second CSB Mobile Crisis Unit (MCU) to increase the county's capacity to provide emergency mental health personnel in the field when requested.
- A Mental Health Docket in the Fairfax County Court system. A Mental Health Docket is a specialized court docket that employs a problem-solving approach better suited than more traditional court procedures to addressing defendants with mental illnesses.

Securing long-term treatment and increasing the likelihood of a successful return to the community is the ultimate goal of the endeavor.

Fairfax County's Strategic Plan for Economic Success

In order to identify channels to diversify the local economy, the Board of Supervisors, along with the Fairfax County's Economic Commission and county staff, developed a Strategic Plan for Economic Success. The Plan was devised to work toward creating the environment and infrastructure necessary to encourage sustainable economic growth and development. This includes policies to support and foster small business growth and opportunity.

As a part of the Strategic Plan for Economic Success, a working group was created to tackle one of the major issues facing the future of the region's economy: repurposing older, vacant office buildings for which there is little or no demand. Chairman Bulova and Supervisor Cook serve as members of the group, along with some of the area's top business leaders. In order to return these properties to economic viability, the workgroup is focusing on finding new and innovative ways to repurpose existing, obsolete properties, whether as housing, schools, individual, or alternative commercial structures.

Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission

On March 3, 2015 Chairman Bulova received the Board's endorsement for the creation of an ad hoc commission to review Fairfax County Police Department policies and practices related to critical incidents, use-of-force training policies, threat assessments, as well as those within the Internal Affairs Division. The Commission was also created to review procedures relating to how and when information is released to the public; to consider the roles of Police, Public Information Officers, and the Office of Public Affairs; and to assess the relationship between the FCPD and the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney. On October 20th, the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission provided its final report and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Over a six-month period, the Commission and its five subcommittees held 40 meetings to develop the 142 recommendations presented in the final report. [To view the final report please click here.](#)

Braddock Neighborhood News

Supervisor Cook hosts his monthly television show, Braddock Neighborhood News, on Fairfax County Channel 16, which is available through most cable providers. Each month, Supervisor Cook invites guests to share pertinent and informative items with the viewers.

This month's show focuses on Fairfax County's Hypothermia Prevention Program. For those who are homeless, winter can be an especially dangerous time of year. Unfortunately, this means that many people will be in danger because of the extreme cold. We have organizations here in Fairfax that care deeply about this issue and the Hypothermia Prevention Program managed by Facets is successfully keeping these homeless families safe during the frigid winter nights. Joining Supervisor Cook on this show are Barbara Schultheiss, Program Director for Single Adult Programs at Facets, and Cyndi Jones, Hypothermia Coordinator from Annandale United Methodist Church.

The shows air throughout the month and can be seen Sundays at 5:00 p.m., Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. and Fridays at 5:00 p.m.

2016 Lines of Business (LOBs)

Fairfax County is currently conducting a comprehensive review of its nearly 400 Lines of Business (LOBs) as a part of the multi-year planning initiative. The process will include a review by the Board and the community focusing on the priorities of the County in the context of the LOBs. The purpose of this review process is to allow for greater transparency with the community and to better understand the impacts of future budget decisions. For further information please visit the Department of Management and Budget's website.

Stuff the Bus

As the cold winter months settle in, many people continue to go hungry in our community. For many local, nonprofit food pantries, this is the time of year where donations drop to one of their lowest points. From January 16 to February 15, Fairfax County is promoting its annual "Stuff the Bus: Helping Fairfax Families" program at fourteen locations. This program is a partnership among Fairfax County Government, local grocery stores, and nonprofits to restock the shelves. Each week a Fastran bus will park at a different location and collect food donations. Donation hours are from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A full list of donation sites can be found by [clicking here](#).

Take an Express Bus to Tysons

In May of 2015, Fairfax County inaugurated an express weekday bus service to the Spring Hill Metro station in Tysons from the Burke Centre VRE. There is free parking at the VRE station and the bus makes three additional stops in Braddock District: Guinea Road at Olley Lane; Braddock Road at Kings Park Drive and Braddock Road at Wakefield Chapel Road. In addition to the Spring Hill Metro, the bus stops in Tysons at Galleria Drive and Tyson Blvd., Greensboro Drive and International Drive and Jones Branch Drive and West Branch Drive. The first morning bus departs from the VRE station at 5:40 a.m. and continues about every thirty-five minutes until 11:50 a.m. The first return bus in the afternoon departs at 2:40 p.m. and the last evening bus departs at 7:05 p.m. For a detailed schedule contact Customer Service for the Fairfax Connector at 703-339-7200. You can also stop by the Braddock Supervisor's office in the Kings Park Library during normal business hours or access the schedule on line at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/connector/pdf/may2015/495.pdf>. The bus uses the 495 Express Lanes to access Tysons. This is a great alternative to sitting in traffic. The one-way fare is \$1.75.

Updates on Woodglen Lake and Lake Royal

The contractor for Woodglen Lake has now reached substantial completion for this project. Construction equipment has been removed and removal of silt at the bottom of the lake was finished at the end of December. The lake is now about six inches below its normal depth and filling rapidly. There is additional planting that will be undertaken in the spring and there will also be a restocking of fish. The Park Authority has not yet completed work on the natural surface trail.



Bids on the dredging for Lake Royal will be solicited in January and opened in mid-February. Once a contractor is selected, Supervisor Cook will host a “Pardon our Dust” meeting with affected communities. It is currently anticipated that this meeting will be held in March.

The Latest from Fairfax Water

Based on the recommendation of the Finance & Audit Committee and following a public hearing, the following changes regarding rates, fees and charges have proposed to become effective on April 1st.

Increase the following:

- Availability Charge for 5/8-inch services from \$3,950 to \$4,100
- Local Facilities Charge from \$9,750 to \$10,240
- Service Connection Charge from \$1,090 to \$1,150
- Account Charge from \$36 to \$37
- Quarterly Billing Service Charge for 5/8-inch services from \$9.80 to \$10.10
- Commodity Charge from \$2.55 to \$2.68 per thousand gallons
- Peak Use Charge from \$3.55 to \$3.80
- Turn Off/Turn-On Charge from \$50 to \$52
- Installation of a Sewer Use Meter from \$45 to \$46

Decrease the following:

- Overhead Charge for Labor from 110% to 104%
- Overhead Charge for Materials from 25% to 16%.

VDOT: People & Plows Are Ready

The Virginia Department of Transportation’s neighborhood-plowing website, plow-tracking technology, and expanded on-road monitoring are among the tools the agency will use this winter in northern Virginia.

VDOT is responsible for 17,737 lane miles in Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties (Arlington County maintains its own secondary roads). During winter weather in northern Virginia, crews remove

snow on both networks concurrently.

Last winter's budget for northern Virginia was about \$50.5 million and \$128.5 million was spent. This year's budget is \$70.7 million. The region's snow budget is part of VDOT's overall statewide maintenance budget of approximately \$1.5 billion.

Highlights for winter 2015-16 include:

Neighborhood plowing status: For the third year, when it snows more than two inches, residents of Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William can enter their address at www.vdotplows.org to see whether plowing is underway, completed or not yet started in their neighborhood.

Equipment: More than 3,500 contracted trucks and plows are available and equipped with automatic vehicle locator (AVL) equipment. Special equipment includes:

- A **jet-powered snow melter** for park-n-ride lots where snow piles can block spaces.
- Seven **high-pressure flush trucks** clear snow and ice around the bollards separating the I-495 Express Lanes and regular lanes.
- **Two front loaders with 20-foot blades** plow interstates during severe storms.
- **Speed-activated anti-icing equipment** puts the right amount of material on the road.

Pre-treating: Crews will pre-treat 850 lane miles of trouble spots including:

- 350 lane miles on interstates—including bridges and ramps prone to freezing such as the Springfield interchange and Capital Beltway at Route 1—with liquid magnesium chloride.
- 500 lane miles on major roads, such as Fairfax County Parkway, routes 1, 7, 28, 29, and 50, are pre-treated with salt brine. Brine (77 percent water, 23 percent salt) prevents ice from bonding to the road surface, reduces the need for salt to melt ice, is kinder to the environment, and can lower snow removal time and costs.

Monitor program expanded: This year, 150 VDOT employees will be assigned on-road duty to monitor road conditions and snowplow progress. This works out to about one monitor for every five snow assignment maps in northern Virginia.

Chantilly brine pilot continues: For the second year, crews will pre-treat several roads with brine, plow when snow has fallen and then re-treat with brine. VDOT is testing the effectiveness of this method, which has seen success in some Western states and could further reduce the need for salt.

Resources for drivers and residents:

- See the status of plowing in northern Virginia neighborhoods: www.vdotplows.org
- Follow VDOT Northern Virginia on Twitter: [@vadotnova](https://twitter.com/vadotnova)
- Report safety concerns: 800-367-7623

Lake Braddock Boys & Girls Cross Country Teams Are 6A State Champions

Congratulations to the young men and women of the Lake Braddock Secondary School's Cross Country Teams for winning the 6A Cross Country Championship in November at Great Meadow. In addition to the team win, Lake Braddock Junior Kate Murphy, took first place, finishing the race in 18:20. This accomplishment marks the eleventh state championship for the Lady Bruins and back-to-back state championship victories for the Boys Cross Country team. The boys team kept all runners in the top thirty throughout the entire race and the girls finished with seven runners in the top fifty. The teams were brought before the Board at the January 12th board meeting to be recognized for this incredible accomplishment!



Supervisor Cook in the Community

Northern Virginia Leadership Awards: On December 3rd, Supervisor Cook attended the Northern Virginia Leadership Awards, which are sponsored annually by Leadership Fairfax and was held at the Waterford at Fair Oaks.

Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Hong Kong: On December 4th, Supervisor Cook hosted a delegation from the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Hong Kong at Braddock Hall. These are local government officials from Hong Kong who were in the DC area and wanted to learn about how our local government operates.

Taste of Braddock: On December 9th, Supervisor Cook hosted another successful Taste of Braddock reception. Thanks to all of the local establishments that donated food for the evening.



Tour of Ronald Reagan Airport with Local Elected Officials: On December 11th, Supervisor Cook

took part in a VIP tour for local elected officials of Ronald Reagan Airport at the invitation of MWAA President and CEO, Jack Potter.

VRE Santa Train: On December 12th, Supervisor Cook and his family took a ride on the VRE Santa Train.

Annual Christmas Party at the Silas Burke House: On December 12th, Supervisor Cook

stopped by the annual Christmas Party at the Silas Burke House.

Port Royal Road Meeting: On December 14th, Supervisor Cook took part in a meeting of businesses on Port Royal Road to discuss parking and other issues that the owners face.

Swearing in as Fairfax County Supervisor: On December 15th, Supervisor Cook

was honored to be sworn in for another term as

your Braddock District Supervisor.

Land Use Update: The Year in Review

A number of re-zonings were approved in Braddock District during 2015.

Approved Projects Currently under Construction:

Penns Crossing: Ten single family homes off DeQuincey Drive and Aspen Hollow Way are being constructed by Evergreene Homes.

Ox Road Estates: Ten single family homes off Adare Drive at its intersection with Ox Road are now under construction by McShay Homes.

Residences at the Government Center: 270 multifamily workforce apartment units off Government Center Parkway and Monument Drive are under construction by a public private partnership. Members of the partnership are Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the Jefferson Apartment Group, and Stratford Capital Group.

Public Safety Center: This is a new 274,000-square-foot Public Safety Headquarters for Police and Firefighters adjacent to the Herrity Building off Government Center Parkway. It is anticipated that construction on the facility will be substantially complete at the end of 2016, but police and firefighters won't move in until spring 2017. This will replace the Massey building which will be demolished.

The following projects were approved after public hearings and are now undergoing rigorous site plan review:

Burke Junction 17 single family homes at Guinea Road and Zion Drive;

Chick-fil-A: new restaurant at 5812 Burke Center Parkway.

Christopher at Kenilworth: Nine single family homes on Braddock Road near DeQuincey Drive.

Giant Food at University Mall (significantly enlarges the existing store).

Forest Ridge: 40 single family homes on Lee Highway and Forest Hill Drive.

SD Homes: Two single family homes on Twinbrook Road near Braddock Road.

It is anticipated that the following projects will undergo public review and analysis during 2016. Further information will be forthcoming. Other applications may be received during the year.

Northern Virginia Training Center. The Commonwealth is proceeding with its review process for the sale and disposition of 78 acres of land on Braddock Road, and has asked that applicants submit final and best offers by January 7th. Any developer chosen by the Commonwealth must then be subject to the county zoning ordinances.

Heritage Mall. On January 12, the Board approved Supervisor Cook's request to allow the start of a Comprehensive Plan Amendment process for the Mall. The landowner is proposing to develop the western

portion of the 11 acre site with 68 single family attached dwellings and associated residential amenities, a community center, and additional enhancements to the shopping center parking lot and plaza areas.

Congregate Living Facility. Suoliang Xie has submitted an application to convert a single-family residence on Taylor Drive for use as a congregate care facility for up to eight international students attending private schools in Fairfax County. A public hearing is currently scheduled for May 12, 2016.

Noise Ordinance: The New Rules

The new law, which becomes effective February 17, 2016, prohibits certain noises during specific hours. For full details go to the following website: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news2/new-noise-ordinance-passed/>

Below is a summary of noise that is prohibited by the new ordinance:

- **Loudspeakers/Amplifiers:** Using a loudspeaker or amplifier between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- **Noise Heard in Other Homes:** Making noise that can be plainly heard in another person's home with the doors and windows closed between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, or between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on Fridays, Saturdays, and the day before a federal holiday.
- **Power Lawn Equipment:** Operating power lawn equipment, including lawn mowers: (a) between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. when operating the equipment within 100 yards of a dwelling; or (b) between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. when operating the equipment 100 yards or more from a dwelling; or (c) between 9:00 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. for golf course maintenance when operating the equipment 50 yards or more from a dwelling; or (d) between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. for golf course maintenance when operating the equipment less than 50 yards from a dwelling. However, on all properties, the operation of leaf blowers is prohibited between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- **Fixing Cars:** Fixing cars or mechanical devices outside between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- **Collecting Trash:** Collecting trash or recycling within 100 yards of a residence between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- **Loading/Unloading Trucks:** Loading or unloading trucks outside within 100 yards of a residence between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- **Dog Parks:** Using dog parks Monday through Friday before 7:00 a.m. or after dusk or before 8:00 a.m. or after dusk on Saturday, Sunday or the day before a federal holiday.
- **Animal Barking, Howling, Etc.:** Barking, howling, meowing, squawking or quacking animals between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. when it can be heard inside a home with its doors and windows closed, or if these sounds can be heard between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. for more than five minutes consecutively or non-consecutively during a 10-minute period.
- **Athletic Fields** Noise from athletic fields is permitted between 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Sunday through Thursday, or between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. on Friday, Saturday or the day before a Federal holiday. However, loudspeaker use remains prohibited between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

Proposal to Extend Shirley Gate Road Advances

On December 7, 2015 the Fairfax County Department of Transportation hosted a second community meeting to hear comments and concerns from affected residents on the proposed creation of a new exit on the Fairfax County Parkway that would extend Shirley Gate Road from the Parkway to Braddock Road. The meeting summarized the findings of a Task Force, which met over the summer to come up with a preferred

alignment for this proposal. The project also hopes to relieve congestion on the Fairfax County Parkway by replacing the Popes Head Road intersection with an interchange. The project has been a part of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan for Fairfax County since 1991.

While this project is located entirely in the Springfield Magisterial District, it will have significant impacts on current residents of Shirley Gate Road in Braddock District. Project engineers presented an alignment that ran largely on the border of Patriot Park in order to avoid having to condemn private property. The combined cost for both aspects of the project is expected to be approximately \$60 million. This project is expected to significantly reduce traffic on Braddock Road, on Popes Head Road and on Route 123. Construction of the entire project would take five to ten years. Funding is now in place for the design in the Board of Supervisor's Six Year Transportation Plan that will include an Environmental Analysis of such things like loss of trees.

If the proposal is approved, the current schedule anticipates two years for design, one year for right-of-way acquisition, and three to five years for construction. There will be additional analysis of Shirley Gate Road between Braddock Road and Lee Highway to assess improvements that might be made to improve access and movement of current residents. There will also be coordination with the City of Fairfax on extending Government Center Parkway and future widening of Jermantown Road to improve traffic flow. Copies of the presentation and the preferred alignment identified by the Task Force can be viewed in the Braddock Supervisor's office.

Human Services Corner

It is important to keep walkways around the home clear of snow and ice, but snow shoveling can cause serious injuries to people who are elderly, have chronic health problems, or are not used to strenuous activity. If you are in one of these categories, you may want to use a snow blower or hire a snow removal service. If you choose to do this heavy work yourself, remember that your body may tire quicker in the cold. Do not overextend yourself. Take short breaks in between shoveling. Exhaustion can make the body more susceptible to cold injuries.

Tips:

- Wear sturdy shoes with rugged soles to help prevent slips and falls.
- Never smoke while shoveling. Tobacco smoke constricts blood vessels just as cold air does; the combination could be dangerous.
- If you become short of breath while shoveling, stop and rest. If you feel pain or tightness in your chest, become dizzy, faint or start sweating heavily, stop immediately and call for help.
- Have a partner monitor your progress and share the workload. If you have a heart attack, your partner can call for help and, if trained, perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) until help arrives.
- Use a sturdy, lightweight shovel to push the snow out of the way. If you must lift the snow, take small scoops. A shovelful of dry snow can weigh about four pounds; wet snow can weigh significantly more.
- Warm up before shoveling by walking and stretching your arms and legs for a few minutes. Warm muscles are less likely to be injured and work more efficiently.

- If you use a snow blower, keep in mind that pushing a snow blower through heavy, packed snow can present a health risk.

2016 Tax Aid Sites February 1st - April 18th

The AARP Tax-Aide Program helps low to moderate income taxpayers by assisting with tax services and ensuring they receive applicable tax credits and deductions. The service is free and is provided by trained volunteers. The following sites provide income tax filing assistance. The sites operate on a walk-in basis.

Note: All tax returns are filed electronically. All taxpayers MUST bring government-issued picture IDs and Social Security cards for all persons included on the tax return.

Super Sites/Walk-In Clients:

Mason District Government Center
6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale
Mon. & Thurs., 1-8 p.m.
Tues., Wed., Fri., 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Sat., 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Closed February 13 and 15

SunTrust Bank of Vienna
515 Maple Avenue E., Vienna
Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Closed February 15

Standard Sites/Walkin Clients:

Providence Community Center
3001 Vaden Dr., Fairfax
Tues. & Fri., 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Mott Community Center
12111 Braddock Road, Fairfax
Thurs., 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Sat., 1:15-5 p.m.

Reston Community Center
2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston
Tues., 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Thurs., 4:30-8:30 p.m.
Sat., 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

100 Exciting Offerings this Winter at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

If you have a passion for learning, nearly 100 stimulating, diverse, exam-free daytime courses and special events, plus social and cultural activities, are in store for you this winter term (Jan. 19 - Feb. 15, 2016) by joining the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at George Mason University.

OLLI courses, created by members for members, are taught by Washington newsmakers, university professors, outside experts and OLLI members themselves. Courses this winter include: Harper Lee: A Close Reading of Her Two Novels (*To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Go Set a Watchman*), Retirement Questions, Exploring the Future, and Becoming a Fairfax County Citizen Ambassador.

OLLI is an independent, thousand-member nonprofit founded in 1991 that offers Northern Virginians a vast array of intellectual, social and cultural experiences throughout the year. Classes are held in Fairfax (4210 Roberts Road, between Braddock Road and Main Street, adjacent to the George Mason campus), Reston and Loudoun County.

If you'd like to get a feel for OLLI, you can sample two class sessions for free; then, if you decide to become a member, there's a one-term rate of \$150, or a year of classes for \$375 that can be paid in monthly

installments. The registration period for winter term classes began Dec. 1st. Call **703-503-3384**, email olli@gmu.edu, or go to olli.gmu.edu for more information.

GrandInvolve – Change the World – One Child at a Time

Would you like to have a unique and interesting volunteer experience while making a difference in a school, a classroom, a family, or in the life of one child? The Positive Aging Coalition, in partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), is recruiting Grandparents and Boomers as volunteers who would like to become mentors, reading and math helpers, and classroom helpers. The program is designed to require little work for the teacher and no experience from the volunteer. If you'd like to have a rewarding volunteering experience, with flexible hours and varying responsibilities, please join us at one of 3 schools this year. Contact information for schools:

- Contact Elizabeth Williams at EWilliams@fcps.edu (703) 619-2800, for Mt Vernon Woods Elementary School in the Route 1 area of Alexandria.
- Contact Afifa Bolte, at abolte@fcps.edu, (703) 914-6900, for Parklawn Elementary School in the Lincolnia area of Alexandria.
- Contact Sara Crummett at SLCrummett@fcps.edu (703) 923-5400, for Crestwood Elementary School in Springfield.

Community Events in January & February

Aging in Place, Jan 20: Aging in Place will take place at 9002 Burke Lake Road on January 20th at 1:00 p.m.

Shepherd's Center Lunch N' Life, Jan. 21: Lunch N' Life will take place from noon until 2:00 p.m. and will feature the Capital Swing Quartet, a women's a cappella group. It will take place at the Lutheran Church of Abiding Presence (6304 Lee Chapel Rd., Burke). To register call 703-620-0161. For transportation needs, call 703-323-4788.

Growing Support for Family Caregivers, Jan 22:

Join a representative from AARP who will discuss the important role caregivers play in the lives of seniors in our community. If you are a care-

giver, learn about options available to you so you can take care of yourself, as well as the senior you love and support. Adults. This event begins 2:00 p.m. at the Kings Park Library.



Housing Basics 101, Feb 3:

This workshop will introduce families to the rapidly changing world of housing for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The workshop will cover

topics including the rationale for moving beyond residential programs to integrated, independent housing, how Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Services work in integrated, independent housing, a general overview of integrated, independent housing resources in Northern Virginia, and more. To register for the February 3rd workshop that will take place from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m., [click here](#).

Environmental Update

Sure, it's January, but it's never too early to start thinking about what you will plant next spring. In 2016, why not make the resolution to go all native? After all, native plants provide important habitat and food for wildlife, including our threatened pollinators. The [Plant Nova Natives website](#) includes terrific, picture-filled, and easy to follow information that will help you choose native species that are suited to your property and available at local nurseries.

Winter Lecture: Arts of Garden Wildness

On January 17th from 1:30 until 2:30 p.m., there will be a winter lecture titled, "Arts of Garden Wildness" located at the Green Spring Gardens (4601 Green Spring Road, Alexandria, VA 22312). Don't view nature from a computer screen, view it from your own garden of biodiversity! Alan Ford and Laura Beaty of the Virginia Native Plant Society show you how to use a native plant palette to invite birds and beneficial insects to join your garden party. Learn about the natural relationships that bugs and birds have with these plants and how to recognize who has been visiting your garden. Your biodiversity sponsorship will be rewarded by the hum of life that graces your space. Please [RSVP in advance](#) to save some money. The cost is \$10 for advance registration or \$12 at the door. Call 703-642-5173 for more information.

Conservation Assistance Program: Need Funding for Your HOA's Conservation Landscaping or Energy Efficiency Program?

Want to do more on your civic association property? Is heavy runoff causing distress in your neighborhood association? Is your condo association paying exorbitant utility fees on leaky community-owned buildings? The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District's new Conservation Assistance Program can help. It provides technical assistance and 50 percent matching funding for conservation landscaping practices or energy efficiency upgrades on community owned land or buildings. Energy efficiency projects can still apply for the fall 2015 funding round, with final applications due by January 31st. Conservation landscaping projects will be considered in the next round of funding, but feel free to get your applications in early. Learn how to get your application started at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/cap/>.

Rebuild Warehouse College Scholarship

Do you know a high school senior who has done exceptional work in the field of environmental sustainability? The ReBuild Warehouse is offering up to \$2,500 in scholarship money for students who have excelled in supporting the Warehouse's overall goal of increasing sustainable practices. [Applications](#) are being accepted now, and the winner will be announced in the spring of 2016.

Winter Tree ID

Do you know your sweet gum from your hickory? On January 16th from 1:30 until 3:30 p.m., come learn winter tree identification basics and go for a hike to practice new skills at Huntley Meadows Park (3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria). Please [RSVP in advance](#) or call 703-768-2525 for more information. For ages 12 and up. \$7 per person for county residents; \$9 for all others.

Permaculture Design Certification Course

On March 5th through March 13th, the Mason Sustainability Institute will be hosting a 72-Hour Permaculture Design Certification Course, taught by Wayne Weiseman of the Permaculture Project LLC. Topics and activities include: soil remediation, urban food production, native plants, companion planting, design planning, hydro/aquaponics, renewable energy, and many more. The course is open to community members and no prior experience is necessary. Participants will earn a certificate in Permaculture Design, as well as Continuing Education units if requested at the start of class.

The course will take place from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Catered lunch and dinners will be provided, and a light breakfast fare with snacks will also be available. The total cost for this course is \$1,100.

More information on the instructor, Wayne Weiseman, go to: <http://www.permacultureproject.com/>
More information on the course, as well as registration, can be found here: <http://ocpe.gmu.edu/programs/green/permaculture.php>