

State of the County | Leadership Fairfax

March 13, 2015

Quotations that I use and/or find inspirational:

Never let a good crisis go to waste”

— [Winston S. Churchill](#)

- Rahm Emanuel, White House Chief of Staff

Other Bulova-isms:

“Don’t Let the Perfect Get in the Way of the Possible”

“Reasonable People Can Disagree Reasonably”

2014 WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR

1. The Standout was the Opening of the Silver Line on July 26th, which extended the Metro from Falls Church to the Wiehle Avenue Station and Garage in Reston. We have already realized 60% of a full year’s ridership projection for the first year. Wiehle became one of the heaviest used stations in the entire system during its very first week in operation.

Work is now under way for Phase 2 of the Silver Line Project, which will extend Metro to Dulles Airport, with stops along the way at three new stations – Reston Town Center, Herndon and Innovation Center – ending in the Ashburn area of Loudoun County. Completion of Phase 2 is expected by the end of 2018.

2. The I-95 Express Lane project was completed in December, providing added lane capacity and faster, more predictable travel options for travelers. The 95 Express Lanes operate for about 29 miles, from Garrisonville Road in Stafford County to the Edsall Road area on 395. Carpoolers are able to ride in the Express Lanes for free. Commuters with an EZPass can now pay to enter the Express Lanes and have a guaranteed travel time from Stafford County to Tysons.
3. Another major success of 2014 was the opening of the new Springfield Town Center. This redevelopment of an older deteriorating shopping mall and commercial area is just the beginning of a major, exciting mixed use community in the heart of Fairfax County.

The new Springfield Town Center is a great demonstration of how Fairfax County is accommodating its future growth – by encouraging revitalization of older commercial and industrial properties, especially in areas served by transit. It is a great way to spur economic growth and business development in Fairfax County and to offer our residents more lifestyle choices in addition to our stable and attractive suburban communities.

4. In 2014 the Board of Supervisors adopted a Master Bicycle Plan which, coupled with the passage of last Fall's Transportation Bond Referendum, will provide for more bike and pedestrian opportunities for residents to use for pleasure, exercise and transportation.

The Wiehle Reston Station is one example of "if you build it they will come." The station includes a unique, state-of-the-art bike room, equipped with secure bike lockers and a repair room. On the very first day of operation, the bike room was nearly sold out. Fortunately, it is expandable.

5. We celebrated a number of Park and Recreation successes during 2014 – Fairfax County is among the top park systems in the country, winning three

National Gold Medal Awards to date. In 2014 we completed the renovations of the Oak Marr REC Center and the expansion of a fantastic new fitness center with an elevated running track at the Spring Hill RECeter. One of my favorite highlights was the naming of the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail in June. Our cross county trail system runs through all of our Supervisor Districts and connects with a National network of trails that reach all the way from New England to Key West.

Our park system makes up over 23,000 acres of land, including over 300 miles of trails, skate parks, athletic fields and lakefront parks, historic sites, water parks, playgrounds, golf courses and RECenters. Last year more than 15 million people visited our parks.

6. A major highlight and number one priority for our Board of Supervisors is our world class school system. Our Board partners with the School Board to ensure an excellent educational experience for our Fairfax County families.

Almost 53% of our County's General Fund Budget goes to our school system. In 2014 our School District became the 10th largest in the Nation, with 187,000 students.

While we have our share of challenges and needs within the students population - our students come from every country in the world and speak more than 200 languages - Our students continue to exceed their counterparts in the state on academic achievement.

- Our graduation rate of 92.9 % exceeds the state average of 89.9%.
- Our School system boasts of great Career and Technical education programs that prepare our students for the needs of the changing workforce.....35 percent of our graduates - graduate with one or more industry certifications.

In 2014, our Board was glad to support the School Board in the launching of **Full-day Mondays for all elementary students.**

The Schools also opened the new **Bailey's Upper Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences**. The new school was converted from an empty five story office building and is the first urban-style school in the County and an excellent example for repurposing older commercial spaces, which is **something our Board is interested in exploring further**.

I will stop here. We have had many successes, as well as challenges during the past year.

We continue to build on the good things, and
We continue to NOT WASTE THE CHALLENGES OR THE CRISESES. And there are always challenges.

Our Board looks forward to working with Leadership Fairfax to help keep our community the great place that it is to live, work and play.
A well-informed and Engaged Community is a Well Served Community. And Leadership Fairfax helps to make that happen.