



## GOCA Update

June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Dear Oakton Neighbors and Friends,

We know you are enjoying the warmth of summer. We are glad to live in Oakton with so many trees that provide us with shade and respite. Please read on for updates about things going on in our community.

### Community News

- AT&T Site Development
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- Invasive Plant Removal

### Community News

**AT&T Site Development.** GOCA has continued to stay abreast of community input relating to the development at the AT&T site and we are appreciative of several groups of citizens who are focusing their efforts to make sure that this development is a good fit for our community. We suggest that you consider signing the [“Our Smart Growth for Oakton”](#) petition and also review the efforts by [Options for Oakton](#).

Earlier this year, EYA submitted the traffic impact study that it commissioned for its proposed development. The study described several turn lanes and intersections that rate as failing according to VDOT parameters even before new developments in the area are built. VDOT and FCDOT have provided their review comments to EYA. In a recent meeting, EYA representatives

told GOCA that they anticipated having their reply to these comments by the end of June, after which the State and County would have 45 days to react. EYA was asked by the County to look at broader mitigations to the traffic issues near the site. EYA has suggested to us, however, that it does not see its planned development as contributing to a worsening of traffic, and that as a result, most of the funding for any agreed mitigation measures would be on the County or State.

**Board of Supervisors To Meet on Data Centers.** On Tuesday, July 16th, at 7 pm, the County Board of Supervisors (BoS) will hold a public hearing and decide whether to implement enhanced safeguards for data centers on or abutting residentially zoned or residentially used properties as recommended by the [Planning Commission](#). Data centers are an environmentally challenging use of land that is rapidly proliferating throughout the County and will play a major role in shaping our County's future because a significant amount of land throughout the county adjoin "by-right" data center sites. On the 16th, the BoS will consider whether to increase building setbacks, restrict placement of diesel generators and affirm the status of applications now under review but not yet approved. At present, owners of by-right zoned properties do not require a Special Exception review, which includes public hearings, and have no such restrictions. Some citizens believe all data centers should undergo Special Exception public review. The County Planning Department's study is [here](#) and the Planning Department's presentation to the Planning Commission from May 9th is [here](#). As is customary, the public is invited to submit letters to the BoS or, if you would like to offer public testimony on this important issue, [sign up to testify here](#).

**I-66 Signage.** Last newsletter, we reported that the sign indicating Oakton at Exit 60 heading eastward on I-66 was re-installed due to GOCA successfully pressing the case that Oakton was too big to be left off the signage. Happily we can report that VDOT has now installed a similar sign on westbound I-66 indicating Oakton at Exit 60. Thank you very much to the staff in Supervisor Palchik's office for their assistance in mediating this issue! Next we just need a sign AT the exits indicating which way motorists should turn after getting off of 66 to get to Oakton. One step after another!

**Casinos in Fairfax County.** According to the [Oakton Patch](#), one of the possible sites being considered for a casino in Tysons is currently off the table. Many in the Tysons area remain concerned, however, that another push will be made in the upcoming VA General Assembly session to introduce legislation that would permit a casino in the County. Senator Marsden has publicly said that as long as the BoS is at least neutral, he plans to introduce new casino legislation when the Virginia General Assembly convenes in January 2025. A group called the [NoFairfaxCasino](#) Coalition, which played a big role in keeping the original legislation from being adopted in the last session, is seeking to influence the BoS to take a stand against the casino project, voicing concern about the fit of casinos in our County, and the implications for increased crime, gambling addiction, traffic, and the County's economic bottom line. NoFairfaxCasino has prepared a petition, which can be accessed [here](#). The petition asks the Board of Supervisors to publicly oppose a Fairfax County casino and advise the General Assembly of their opposition to any legislation for a casino in the County. Those who support allowing casinos in the County point to the increased revenues they say a casino would bring the County, an argument those opposed to a casino say fails to factor in the added expenses that the County would incur for mitigating traffic congestion, increasing public safety and social service resources to tackle crime and addiction, and the lost tax revenues caused by the likely negative impact on other local businesses and home values. As a non-elected body, GOCA has remained neutral on the

topic, but we encourage our members to follow the issue and make their thoughts known to their County supervisor. Two simple ways of following the issue are to visit the [No Casino website](#), and/or join the [NoFairfaxCasino Facebook page](#).

**County's Charge-Up Program.** For those of you who live in townhouse communities, we wanted to make sure you were aware of Fairfax County's Charge-up Program, for which applications are due by June 30th. Under this program, the County will help overcome challenges, both technical and financial, by installing on-site electric vehicle (EV) charging stations for residents and their guests. More information on this program, and an application, can be found [here](#).

## GOCA News

**Oakton Day in the Park.** Mark your calendars for the 4th annual Oakton Day in the Park, which this year will be **Sunday, August 25th from 1 - 4 pm**. New this year, acclaimed Magician Eric Henning will perform shows in the historic Oakton Schoolhouse. Local Musicians Molly and Mark will be returning and Settle Down Easy will provide a nice, easy place to listen to the music and enjoy a cool beer. Famous Daves, Taco Rock and Ben & Jerry's will provide the food. Additionally, local residents will show off their antique cars, Teddy the mini-horse will be walking the grounds, the Friends of the Library will be selling books, and there will be lots of crafts and games for the kids. And wait until you see the beautiful, artist painted birdhouses that will be raffled at the event! Finally, we need your help—if you would like to volunteer at the event, [please sign up here](#).

**Calling All Local Businesses for the Oakton Community Directory.** GOCA will be publishing an updated version of its community directory this summer. If you own a business, no matter how small, please [get in touch with us](#) by June 30th. The directory will provide complimentary listings for all local businesses, or businesses owned by local residents. We are also offering sponsorships, which includes advertising in the directory and at Oakton Day in the Park.

**Latest on the Historic Schoolhouse.** For the past year, GOCA has been working with representatives at the Park Authority, which owns the historic schoolhouse in Oakton Community Park, to obtain easier access to the schoolhouse. This has culminated in a Memorandum of Agreement that GOCA has reviewed and hopes to complete this summer. GOCA's vision is that the schoolhouse could be an asset to those in our community who are looking for unique places to gather.

Along with representatives of other historic schoolhouses in the area, GOCA representatives have also founded the Historic Schoolhouses of Northern Virginia (HSNVA), organized for the purpose of raising the public's awareness of these wonderful historic resources in our area. One of GOCA's many goals is to provide educational programming for local 4th graders studying Virginia history and envision opening the schoolhouse for field trips. If you would be interested in helping to establish programs such as this, [please contact us](#).

Also, we continue to work toward making our schoolhouse a “living history” museum for the community. If you have any items from the late 1800s to early 1900s that relate to education during that time and would like to donate or lend to us, [please contact us here](#).

**Pony Rides in Oakton Community Park.** What a fun time in the Park! Thanks to Linda Byrne, Karen Ampah and her family and many volunteers, we once again had pony rides in Oakton Community Park in May. We had so much fun that we will again have pony rides Saturday, September 28th. Our next newsletter will have more information and a link to sign-up.

### Other Items

**Clean-Up Along Hunter Mill Road.** Thank you to Oakton resident Dave Seager and a team of volunteers for cleaning up the roadway on either side of the roundabout.

**Invasive Plant Removal at Difficult Run Stream Valley Park.** July 20th, 9-11 am and July 21st, 9-11 am. Come out to support Annabelle’s Eagle Project! [Sign up here for July 20th](#) and/or [sign up here for July 21st](#).

**Invasive Plant Removal at Oakton Community Park.** July 6th, 9 - 11 am and 1 - 3 pm and August 10th 9 - 11 am and 1 - 3 pm. If you would like to register for one of these sessions or be notified directly about upcoming opportunities, [please email Karin Lehnigk](#).

We welcome your feedback at any time.

With best regards,

The GOCA Board  
Lauren Crum and Shelley Deutch, Co-Chairs  
Jody Bennett, Linda Byrne, Jackie Davey, Mark Deaton, Janet Kerr-Tener (Founding Co-Chair),  
Kris Olsen, Robin Thurman, and Gary Wong  
[www.greateroakton.com](http://www.greateroakton.com)

*GOCA is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization, and 100% of your donations go to our community efforts. To donate, please visit our [Paypal link](#). If you would like to become more actively involved, email us at [contact@greateroakton.com](mailto:contact@greateroakton.com) and we can match you with the right opportunity.*