

## GOCA Update - September 7th, 2024

Dear Oakton Neighbors and Friends,

The 4th annual Oakton Day in the Park drew more than 800 local residents, our biggest attendance to date. As one resident commented, Oakton Day “had a small town, community vibe with something for everyone.” GOCA thanks our sponsors and all the local volunteers who made this community celebration possible!

### Community News

- Update on AT&T Site Development
- County Vote on Data Center Regulations Now Scheduled for Tuesday, September 10th
- Community Feedback Sought for Active Transportation and Trail Network
- Latest on Casinos in Fairfax County

### GOCA News

- Pony Rides in Oakton Community Park
- Next Running of the Popular Jim Lewis History Bus Tour!
- Oakton Community Directory Now Available
- Annual GOCA Meeting Scheduled for Wednesday, November 6th
- Oakton Community IMA Site Co-Leader receives County Award

### Other Items

- Providence Community Day and Back to School Celebration
- Fairfax for Safe Streets Membership Meeting
- Vale Club Fall Fair
- Roundabout Clean-Up
- Invasive Plant Removal
  - Blake Lane Park
  - Borge Street Park
  - Difficult Run Stream Valley Park
  - Oakton Community Park
- Thank You Again to Our Oakton Day Sponsors

## Community News

**Update on AT&T Site Development.** GOCA continues to stay abreast of community input related to the proposed development at the AT&T site. In July, the developer, EYA, submitted a second version of its traffic impact study to FCDOT and VDOT in response to their comments, and is now waiting to learn whether this second version will be accepted. In the meantime, a coalition of HOA leaders has met with Providence District Planning Commissioner Jeremy Hancock and Supervisor Palchik's Chief of Staff Devin Pharr to express their continued concerns. The group argued that the proposed development does not meet the definition of a suburban center, as its current zoning describes the site, and moreover that with its proposal EYA has not fulfilled its promise to improve the transportation infrastructure as it indicated it would in its original application for the amendment. If you too are concerned, we suggest that you consider signing the [“Our Smart Growth for Oakton”](#) petition and also review the efforts by [Options for Oakton](#). If the planning process continues as outlined, there will be a community meeting on the traffic study in the Fall, and then Board of Supervisors consideration of the overall amendment possibly by the end of this year. Shortly after that, if the amendment is approved, the project will be reviewed for rezoning.

**County Vote on Data Center Regulations Now Scheduled for Tuesday, September 10th.** A Board of Supervisors vote on new regulations for data centers in Fairfax County is now scheduled for Tuesday, September 10th after a vote at its July public hearing had to be rescheduled because insufficient public notice was given. The Board will hold the new public hearing to decide, as we mentioned in our last newsletter, whether to implement the staff-recommended enhanced regulations for data centers recommended by the [Planning Commission](#), and/or whether even stronger regulations are needed. Data centers are environmentally challenging as they require tremendous amounts of electricity, water and land, and they also generate continual noise. A significant amount of land in the county is zoned for data centers “by-right”, which affects, by fallout, adjoining properties no matter their zoning district designation. Some residents are asking the Supervisors to reject by-right construction of such facilities and require all data center

applications to undergo public hearings before the Planning Commission, as well as an individual project assessment, hearing and vote by the Board. 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 Board or, if you would like to offer public testimony on this important issue, [sign up to testify here](#).

### **Community Feedback Sought for Active Transportation and Trail Network.**

The Fairfax County Department of Transportation is holding a series of open houses this fall to get public input on its plans to combine the Fairfax County Bicycle Master Plan and the Countywide Trails Plan, with the goal of ensuring a safe, comfortable and convenient network of active transportation options and trails. Twelve open houses will be held around Fairfax County along with four virtual meetings. The workshop for Providence District already took place on September 3rd, but [residents are welcome to attend any of the other sessions](#).

**Latest on Casinos in Fairfax County.** The No Fairfax Casino Coalition is holding a virtual community leadership planning webinar on September 18th at 7 pm. Leaders of Oakton HOAs, civic associations, clubs, service organizations, faith organizations, etc. or their representatives are invited to attend to hear brief presentations from national experts on the impacts of a casino, learn about the coalition's educational campaigns, and have their questions addressed. Interested parties should [register at this link](#). As we reported in our last newsletter, all signs are that Senator Marsden intends to reintroduce legislation that would authorize a referendum asking County residents whether they would support a casino in Fairfax County. Those who support allowing casinos in the County argue that a casino would increase County tax revenues. Those opposed to a casino say this argument fails to consider the casino tax revenue data compiled by states that host casinos and also fails to factor in the added expenses that the County would incur for mitigating traffic congestion, increasing public safety, resources to tackle crime and addiction, and the lost tax revenues caused by the likely negative impact on other local businesses and home values. Two simple ways of following the issue are to visit the [No Casino website](#), and/or join the [NoFairfaxCasino Facebook](#)

[page](#). The No Fairfax Casino Coalition is continuing to gather signatures on a petition, which can be accessed [here](#).

## GOCA News

**Pony Rides in Oakton Community Park.** Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 28th and [sign up here to register](#) for rides between 11 am to 2 pm.

**Next Running of the Jim Lewis History Bus Tour of the Hunter Mill Rd Corridor.** On Saturday, October 19th, from 9 am to 1 pm, acclaimed local historian Jim Lewis is returning for his popular bus tour. Come see all the artifacts of the area's colorful history "hiding" in plain sight. For those who have taken the Oakton-only tour, this is "Part 2", extending along the length of Hunter Mill Road. See [here](#) for more detail. Space on the bus tour is limited to 22 people. If you would like to join us, [please sign up here](#).

**Oakton Community Directory Now Available.** The 2024 edition of GOCA's Community Directory is now available at Oakton Library on the shelves behind the information desk. The directory lists local businesses and important contact information for services, government, and other resources. Owners of any local business, no matter how small, who wish to add a complimentary listing or purchase a sponsorship for next year's edition, are encouraged to contact us at any time.

**Annual GOCA Meeting Scheduled for Wednesday, November 6th, 7 - 9 pm.** Please join us for our annual gathering at Oakton Community Library at which GOCA reports on the status of priority projects and solicits input for its focus in the coming year. We will review the latest on important issues confronting Oakton, and hope to have exciting news about the historic schoolhouse!

**Oakton Community IMA Site Co-Leader Receives County Award.** Congratulations to IMA Site Leader Karin Lehnigk, who on July 18th received recognition as one of Fairfax County Park Authority's 2024 Outstanding Volunteers.

## Other Items

**Invasive Plant Removal at Borge St Park.** Sunday, September 8th, 10 am - 12 pm. at 3030 Borge St. Please contact [Jen Pradas](#) to register interest.

**Fairfax for Safe Streets Membership Meeting.** Monday, September 9th, 6:30 pm via Zoom. For more information, use this [link to their August Newsletter](#).

**Invasive Plant Removal at Blake Lane Park.** Sundays, September 15th, 22nd, and 29th, 10 am - 12 pm, at 10033 Blake Ln. Please contact [Jen Pradas](#) to register interest.

**National Public Lands Day Park Volunteer Event (Habitat Restoration at Difficult Run Stream Valley Park).** Saturday, September 28th, 9 - 11 am at 3119 Miller Heights Rd. [Sign up here](#).

**Providence Community Day and Back to School Celebration.** Saturday, October 5th from 11 am - 3 pm at George C. Marshall High School, co-sponsored by Supervisor Dalia Palchik and Chair of the Fairfax County School Board Karl Frisch. A fun-filled day featuring food, games, crafts, contests, and entertainment for all ages intended to connect local residents with their community and showcase local organizations.

**Invasive Plant Removal at Oakton Community Park.** Saturday, October 12th, 9 - 11 am and 1 - 3 pm. If interested in helping, please contact [Karen Lehnigk](#).

**Difficult Run Stream Valley Park Habitat Restoration for Indigenous Peoples Day.** Monday, October 14th, 10 am - 12 pm at 3119 Miller Heights Rd. [Sign up here](#).

**Vale Club Fall Fair.** Saturday, October 19th, 11 am-3 pm. Corner of Fox Mill and Vale Rds. In partnership with Vale United Methodist Church. Food, music, games, family fun.

**Roundabout Clean-Up.** Resident Dave Seager is looking for an organization or neighborhood that would like to assist in cleaning up the roundabout on Hunter Mill Road this fall. If you would like to help, please contact [Dave Seager](#). Or if you would like to contribute to the costs to maintain the roundabout, please [donate here](#).

**Finally, THANK YOU AGAIN to our Oakton Day sponsors, local businesses and nonprofits** whose support of the community is greatly appreciated.

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Vale Club

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

See our website at: [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.*