



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COUNTY OF FAUQUIER
2017 STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

Richard R. Gerhardt, Chairman
Fauquier County Board of Supervisors

2017 has been a year of many accomplishments for Fauquier County and its citizens. The County has continued to experience growth in revenues from real estate, personal property and sales tax. The County has seen an increase in commercial investment, which will benefit the commercial tax base in years to come. Unemployment continues to trend significantly lower than state and national averages.

2017 has been a busy and exciting year:

- In recognition of its careful, fiscal stewardship, the County has received national awards for both its finance and budgeting operations. Fitch Rating Services continues to rate the County's bonds as AAA, allowing us to borrow money at more favorable rates for major capital projects. In November, the Board of Supervisors engaged in a day-long retreat to consider strategic and facility planning for current and future years. Our focus continues to be providing the most effective services to our citizens at the most economical cost.

- Economic development remains pivotal. The groundbreaking for the Puller Veterans' Care Facility at Vint Hill, in partnership with the Commonwealth of Virginia, was a tremendous accomplishment. The Center will not only provide much-needed resources for our veterans, but will act as an economic hub to attract other providers in the medical and hospitality industries.
- The County's ongoing quest to provide adequate broadband services to its unserved and underserved residents received an energetic leg-up this year. The Board of Supervisors included almost \$20 million in the Capital Improvements Plan over the next five years. Although we hope to conserve some of this funding by partnering with the private sector, the Board's action demonstrates their strong commitment to broadband. The County will be able to implement a "hybrid" solution, which includes both wireless and fiber, to meet the differing needs of the County's various regions.
- State and federal funds for major improvements at the Warrenton-Fauquier Airport have become available. The next two years will see the construction of a state of the art aviation terminal, which is expected to be a serious economic driver for the Midland area and the County as a whole.
- The Board of Supervisors' has focused on the health, safety and welfare of our citizens this year. In the area of public safety, the Board, in conjunction with Culpeper and Rappahannock Counties, engaged in a competitive bid process and awarded a contract for the replacement of our public safety radio communications system. This project came in significantly under budget. The Board also approved the filing and acceptance of a grant for 12 new fire and rescue personnel to help provide needed emergency response services to the citizens of the County. This year also saw the first transfer of a Volunteer Fire and Rescue Station to the County. The Upperville Volunteer station had a long and venerable history before its transfer to the County. That transfer will ensure that citizens are served quickly and effectively. November saw the groundbreaking for a new Fire and Rescue station in Orlean. This was made possible by a great deal of work on the part of the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association and County staff.
- In the transportation safety area, the Board, in response to a series of tragic traffic accidents, is working with the Virginia Department of Transportation on remedial safety measures along Route 29. This County is also working with our state legislators on stricter penalties for distracted driving.

- Planning and design for the Central Sports Complex continues to move forward.
- The new transport facility at the Corral Farms Landfill is complete. The County is now able to transport its debris rather than burying it forever in a landfill.
- The Board took a significant step towards solving the wastewater problem in Catlett and Calverton this year. The Board has recently entered into a contract with English Construction to address ongoing septic concerns in the Catlett-Calverton region. The County received a \$7m low-interest loan from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality for this project.

As busy as 2017 has been, 2018 will only bring more challenges and opportunities to our great County. I look forward to working with my fellow Board members, staff, and citizens to address them. It has been my singular honor to serve as your Chairman. God bless us all as we move forward into a new year.