

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ACTION ITEM
BOARD MEMBER INITIATIVE**

SUBJECT: Brockman Lane Emergency Access Gate

ELECTION DISTRICT: Algonkian District, Dranesville District (Fairfax County)

CRITICAL ACTION DATE: At the pleasure of the Board

STAFF CONTACT(S): Benjamin Fornwalt, Staff Aide to Supervisor Volpe

PURPOSE: The Brockman Lane emergency access gate is in need of replacement to improve emergency access for the Lowes Island Estates as several incidents have occurred recently, which highlight the deficiencies with the existing manual gate.

RECOMMENDATION: To direct County Staff to create and evaluate options and cost estimates for replacement of Brockman Lane emergency access gate to an automatic gate system.

BACKGROUND:

Brockman Lane is an emergency access point that serves Lowes Island Estates and the residents on Seneca Road. This emergency access point is geographically located on the boundary line of Loudoun County and Fairfax County. During the rezoning of Cascades (1979, 1987), Brockman Lane was designated as an emergency access route in the 1988 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Closure of Brockman Lane Emergency Access Point (**Attachment**). Within this MOU, Fairfax and Loudoun agreed on measures to properly maintain this emergency access point and keep it fully operational. This lane was subsequently fitted with a locked emergency access gate accessible to only Fire & Rescue personnel.

Thomas Lane is also noted in the 1988 MOU. Fairfax County closed Thomas Lane after the completion of Algonkian Parkway (which is stated on page 3 of the MOU) and designated the road as an emergency access route. However, due to the nature and topography of the road, Thomas Avenue remains largely unused by Fire & Rescue personnel.

Despite this MOU, there have been several instances when Emergency Services were unable to utilize this route since 1988. Most recently, Sterling Volunteer Fire and Rescue was unable to gain access to this route on December 10, 2013, when a parked car on the Fairfax County side

blocked access to this route. Obstacles, such as this parked car, can drastically slow the response time, especially when Emergency Services have to change routes.

Since this incident on December 10, 2013, steps have been taken to alleviate this situation. Supervisor Volpe, Loudoun County Staff and Fairfax County Staff attended the January 23, 2014, Cascades Community Association Board Meeting. During this meeting, Staff addressed the various concerns of the homeowners. Since then, the Loudoun County Department of Fire Rescue, and Emergency Management (DFREM) and Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure (DTCI) staff have been working closely with Fairfax County to provide relief. Both Fairfax County and Loudoun County have agreed to implement fire lane pavement markings on both sides of the current emergency gate including proper signage. These actions have been completed in April.

DRFREM has also taken action within their department. There is a dual dispatch procedure in place Loudoun County will dispatch both Station 18/25 Cascades and Station 439 North Point from Fairfax, the closest station, for fire and rescue calls in the Lowes Island Estates community. A joint study of travel mileage to the intersection of Sinegar Place and Coyote Court, where Loudoun and Fairfax stations would likely converge, from the stations which surround Lowes Island revealed the following:

- From Station 18/25 Cascades through the Brockman Lane gate is 5.2 miles
- From Station 18/25 Cascades around the Brockman Lane gate (into Fairfax County and up Seneca Road) is 9.2 miles
- From Station 39 North Point (Fairfax County) is 3.7 miles
- From Station 12 Great Falls (Fairfax County) is 6.2 miles

For the foreseeable future, Loudoun County will continue to operate under this dual dispatch policy with both Station 18/25 Cascades and Station 439 North Point being called.

Furthermore, DFREM and the Sheriff's Office are currently in the process of updating/modernizing the Computer-Aided Dispatch System (CAD system). They currently have Board of Supervisors' authorization to negotiate with a CAD vendor. After the new CAD system is fully implemented, these public safety agencies will then work to implement a CAD-to-CAD project (in two phases) which will link Loudoun County's CAD system to that of surrounding jurisdictions, including Fairfax County. This project will allow for the quicker automatic dispatch of apparatus and emergency personnel from surrounding jurisdictions. CAD-to-CAD is being funded by federal Urban Area Security Initiative funds.

ISSUES: Emergency Services have, at times, experienced an inability to access Brockman Lane in cases of emergency in a timely manner. In some cases, these obstacles have caused serious time delays in response times. Additionally, using the current "knox-lock" master lock system is difficult and causes time delays for first responders to physically unlock the locks prior to proceeding through the access point.

Board Action on this item would task staff to evaluate the current situation and provide options and cost estimates for replacement of the existing manual gate with an automatic gate. This will include information on what legal requirements, if any are necessary since a portion of the emergency access is also within Fairfax County boundaries.

FISCAL IMPACT: The cost of staff time and possible engineering costs would be required.

DRAFT MOTION(S):

1. I move that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to create and evaluate options and cost estimates for replacement of the Brockman Lane emergency access gate to an automatic gate system and report back to the Board at a future business meeting.

OR

2. I move and alternate motion.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 1988 Memorandum of Understanding for the Closure of Brockman Lane Emergency Access Point

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into in duplicate this 29th day of February, 1988 between the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County, Virginia and the Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County, Virginia.

W I T N E S S E T H:

WHEREAS, on September 27, 1979, pursuant to a court settlement, the Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County rezoned the 1,170 acre Cascades tract to permit the development of 1889 or 2052 residential units. The Cascades tract lies adjacent to the western boundary of Fairfax County north of Rt. 7; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 1987 the Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County approved an amended and revised zoning proposal for the Cascades tract resulting in no increase in the number of allowable residential units; and

WHEREAS, on May 10, 1979, the Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County rezoned the 270 acre Seneca Hills tract (now known as Great Falls Forest) to allow the development of approximately 430 residential units. The Great Falls Forest tract lies adjacent to the Cascades tract and the western boundary of Fairfax County north of Rt. 7; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 1987 the Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County rezoned approximately 100 acres known as the Sequoia Hunt tract to permit the development of 210 residential units. The Sequoia Hunt tract lies adjacent to Great Falls Forest and the western boundary of Fairfax County north of Rt. 7; and

WHEREAS, the sole public access for the Cascades, Great Falls Forest and Sequoia Hunt tracts is presently through Fairfax County by way of Brockman Lane and Thomas Avenue. Both Brockman Lane and Thomas Avenue connect Seneca Road in Fairfax County to portions of Loudoun County east of Sugarland Run; and

WHEREAS, Brockman Lane, Thomas Avenue and Seneca Road have not been designed and constructed to accommodate the volumes of traffic which will be generated from Cascades, Great Falls Forest and Sequoia Hunt; and

WHEREAS, primary access for the developments planned for Cascades, Great Falls Forest and Sequoia Hunt is to be by a planned four lane road (Algonkian Parkway) to be constructed through those developments and extending to the western boundary of Fairfax County, and thereafter from the western boundary of Fairfax County to Route 7 along the alignment of Holly Knoll Drive; and

WHEREAS, the construction of the Algonkian Parkway from Rt. 7 through the Cascades property can provide a safer and more efficient transportation route to the citizens who presently reside or will reside in the northeastern part of Loudoun County and can provide a convenient and safe alternate route to the Loudoun and Fairfax residents that now use Brockman Lane and Thomas Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County and the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County desire to adopt policies which will facilitate the construction of the Algonkian Parkway from Rt. 7 in Fairfax County through the Cascades property as a four lane road while at the same time minimizing the impact of the residential development in Loudoun County on Seneca Road and other roads in Fairfax County.

NOW, THEREFORE, in furtherance of public health, safety and general welfare, the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County, Virginia and the Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County, Virginia (the "Counties") adopt the following policies for those areas within the respective Counties located east of Sugarland Run, north of Route 7, and west of Seneca Road:

1. The Algonkian Parkway, built as a four-lane facility; is to be the sole access from Fairfax County for Great Falls Forest, Sequoia Hunt and the Cascades, with the exception of 78 single family detached dwellings which comprise Land Bay 1E of the Cascades.

2. Brockman Lane should be closed as a through road connecting the Great Falls Forest and Cascades development to Seneca Road, at such time as the Algonkian Parkway is completed as a four-lane road from Rt. 7 to Brockman Lane. When closing Brockman Lane, the Counties should provide for emergency vehicle access.

3. It is understood that Thomas Avenue may be closed by Fairfax County east of the proposed Algonkian Parkway at such time as that parkway is built from Rt. 7 to Thomas Avenue in a manner providing access to and from properties on Thomas Avenue west of Algonkian Parkway. When closing Thomas Avenue, Fairfax County should provide for emergency vehicle access from the cul-de-sac to be constructed on Thomas Avenue to the Algonkian Parkway.

4. The only uses within Loudoun County which will have direct or indirect access to Seneca Road will be 78 single family detached dwellings proposed in Land Bay 1E of the Cascades Amended Conceptual Development Plan and emergency vehicle access via Brockman Lane and Thomas Avenue. If Fairfax County and the Virginia Department of Transportation give necessary approvals to construct the Algonkian Parkway as a four lane road in the location generally following the alignment of Holly Knoll Drive and the existing Fairfax County Water Authority easement, and as shown on approved conceptual development plans, Loudoun County will not approve any site plan, subdivision plat or construction plan which would propose a road through Land Bay 7TS of the Cascades Amended Conceptual Development Plan which would intersect with the Fairfax County boundary line.

5. The Algonkian Parkway and the Springfield Bypass should align.

The Boards of Supervisors of Fairfax County, Virginia and Loudoun County, Virginia agree to adopt the foregoing policies by duly adopted resolution and

to utilize their best efforts to implement them. It is understood that an abandonment is a legislative act left to the discretion of the appropriate board at such time as the matter is brought forward for consideration. It is further understood that the approval of road plans is subject to the statutes, ordinances, proffers, regulations and standards adopted by the Commonwealth of Virginia; Fairfax County, Virginia; Loudoun County, Virginia; and the Virginia Department of Transportation.

WITNESS the following signatures:

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF FAIRFAX
COUNTY, VIRGINIA

By Audrey Moore 4/8/88
Audrey Moore, Chairman DATE

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF LOUDOUN
COUNTY, VIRGINIA

By Betty Tatum 3/7/88
Betty Tatum, Chairman DATE

STATE OF VIRGINIA

COUNTY OF FAIRFAX, to-wit:

I, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, whose commission as such expires on the 4th day of June, 1988, do hereby certify that AUDREY MOORE, Chairman for the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County, Virginia, whose name is signed to the foregoing document bearing date on the 8th day of April, 1988 has signed and acknowledged the same before me in my State and County aforesaid.

Given under my hand and seal this 8th day of April, 1988.

Maya B. Huber
Notary Public

STATE OF VIRGINIA

COUNTY OF LOUDOUN, to-wit:

I, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, whose commission as such expires on the 9 day of August, 1991, do hereby certify that BETTY TATUM, Chairman for the Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County, Virginia, whose name is signed to the foregoing document bearing date on the 29th day of February, 1988 has signed and acknowledged the same before me in my State and County aforesaid.

Given under my hand and seal this 7th day of March, 1988.

Mary Jo Thomas
Notary Public