



LOUDOUN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## 2015 BizVotes Questionnaire Results

### Board of Supervisors – Broad Run District

**Ron Meyer (R) / Al Nevarez (D)**



Answer is consistent with Loudoun Chamber's Position



Answer is inconsistent with Loudoun Chamber's Position or nonresponsive to the question



Answer is partly consistent with Loudoun Chamber's Position

#### 1) What is the biggest issue/challenge you believe Loudoun County faces in the upcoming term?

**RON MEYER (R):** I believe the biggest challenge is attracting new commercial investment in our Metro and Route 28 tax districts--enough investment to generate revenue for the road and school improvements Loudoun needs for the future. The rapid population growth in Loudoun, coupled with the lingering effects of sequestration and the '08 downturn, have left Loudoun's infrastructure in need of growth and improvement. The best way to accommodate this growth is to continue growing our commercial tax base, and the challenge becomes how to best reach that goal.

**AL NEVAREZ (D):** Loudoun is known as a great place to live, but it is also a great place to do business. We need to make sure influential business leaders from all over the world know this. While education and transportation investment will be top issues from 2016 through 2019, addressing those issues meaningfully requires significant job creation. The number of jobs added must improve its pace relative to population growth. Loudoun is home to one of America's most cost-effective cargo airports, which also serves the needs of business travelers with direct flight paths to as many as 125 destinations throughout the world. We also have an educated and highly skilled workforce, a feature sure to be enhanced by the expansion of rail transit to Loudoun. Not least, we have many affordable real estate options as little as 15 miles from the Capital Beltway. Local government must capitalize on this favorable environment.

#### 2) How do you propose to address this challenge?




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**RON MEYER (R):** Under the current Board, commercial tax revenue has grown 33%. We can continue this progress, attract new businesses, and expand our commercial tax base with better and more creative land use, transportation, and education policies. First with land use: We need to ensure the Metro-area CPAM is adopted calling for mixed use developments around our Metro locations. Modern businesses want to operate in walkable, urban-style developments that have exceptional retail and affordable places for their employees to live. Second with transportation: Companies will be more likely to move to our prime tax district land in Ashburn/Sterling if they can commute there without being stuck in traffic or being forced to pay \$6 each way. That's why we need to build alternative routes to the Greenway such as Shellhorn or Barrister which would connect our metro areas directly to Rt. 28. (Cont. on question 3 which covers similar topic)

**AL NEVAREZ (D):** 1) Increased investment into economic development programs that promote the ripe business environment in Loudoun. 2) Encourage county and agency staff to be deliberate about attracting and supporting businesses that create high-quality jobs that fit the skills and education of our residents. 3) Invest in infrastructure that reduces congestion, enhances the reliability of energy delivery and technology connectivity, and maximizes the job-creating potential of the area around the airport and the new Metro stations.

**3) Please detail the specific opportunities or regulatory measures that, if elected, you will work to see implemented to support the private sector's efforts to create jobs and make commercial investment in Loudoun County.**

**Chamber Position:** The Chamber supports significant investment in economic development and an aggressive effort to market Loudoun to recruit increased commercial investment. The Chamber supports a common sense regulatory environment that allows businesses to grow and invest in our community.

 **RON MEYER (R):** Third with education: We need to continue investing in our AOS and new Academy of Loudoun programs. Having top-notch public education is an incentive for businesses to move here, and we need to expand education opportunities from Kindergarten to college here in Loudoun. That's why we are working with GMU and local land owners to bring a tech-focused campus to the Ashburn Station. This campus would be a major business magnet and could drive growth at this location--servicing the whole Silver Line corridor. This is a creative way to differentiate Loudoun's use of Metro and execute our commercial growth. These three areas of reform--along with continued investment in Loudoun's successful economic development program--will help continue growing our commercial tax base.





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 **AL NEVAREZ (D):**

**4) What is your vision for supporting and growing the tourism industry in Loudoun County to better support the success and growth of tourism and related economic development that can come with it?**

**Chamber Position:** The Chamber supports Visit Loudoun as the Destination Marketing Organization for Loudoun County and supports a well-funded approach to marketing Loudoun as a visitor destination. The Chamber supports public investments in the activities and assets that generate the most tax revenue and create economic opportunities for existing businesses.

 **RON MEYER (R):** Metro was a major factor that could improve our tourism. Right now, much of our tourism centers around the great wineries, distilleries, and breweries in Loudoun. Metro offers DC and inner-suburb residents the chance to visit these great businesses--if we continue to grow the bus routes that would enable them to get to Western Loudoun. Western Loudoun also offers access to the Appalachian Trail, which I believe could be a larger attraction. I also believe there is an opportunity for tourism if we build an attraction around one of our metro stations, and we should be thinking creatively on how to leverage these spaces.


 **AL NEVAREZ (D):** I believe the vision for the growth of the industry should come from the business leaders who have successfully grown Loudoun's tourism over the past decade. The role of local government is to help them implement that vision while being mindful of the County's other needs and goals. Having said that, I believe the local government has a role in making travel to Loudoun's tourist destinations more convenient. We also need to preserve the conditions that make Loudoun an attractive tourist destination to begin with. A healthy balance between these two needs is going to be critical to the future success of Loudoun's tourism industry.


**5) How do you believe Loudoun County should prioritize local transportation funds to ensure citizens and businesses have an efficient multimodal transportation system?**

**Chamber Position:** The Chamber supports performance-based prioritization of transportation projects with emphasis on congestion reduction, economic development and time savings. The Chamber also supports VDOT granting Loudoun County officials authority to design and construct transportation projects.




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 **RON MEYER (R):** We must keep approved improvements on schedule, including finishing Gloucester and Russell Branch Parkways, taking signals off Rt. 7, and widening Rt. 606 and Rt. 28. Our next challenge is to build alternatives to the Greenway which would cut commuting time (especially for Broadlands and Brambleton), connect commuters to the Dulles North bus station, and create direct access from the new Metro stations to Route 28. We will also need a good local bus network to move residents from their homes to Metro. Neighborhood circulator buses could move through communities such as Broadlands and Ashburn Village and get people from their homes to Metro. A bus network from Metro to employment/retail areas, such as One Loudoun and the Dulles Town center will also be needed. The Board's current initiative to identify and plan for the completion of the multi-modal network in proximity to Metrorail stations should also be aggressively implemented.

 **AL NEVAREZ (D):** Congestion in and around Loudoun County is a significant source of public dissatisfaction and a major obstacle to securing more economic investment. Thus, the primary objective of the County, with regards to transportation, should be to reduce congestion within the County, and along the major corridors ushering traffic to and from the County, by: a) Maximizing transportation funding from state and federal sources that provide short-term and long-term congestion relief. b) Making strategic public transit enhancements that are, first and foremost, attractive for commuters. c) Partnering with major employers of Loudoun commuters to develop/purchase facilities that serve as telework centers and satellite offices. d) Using more general funds to invest in programs that facilitate the growth of industries that employ Loudoun residents and/or are positioned to tap into Loudoun's talented and highly educated workforce, with special attention given to existing Loudoun businesses that have growth potential in those industries.

**6) What role do you believe mixed-use development and availability of affordable and diverse housing choices has in the County's economic development success? What policies would you implement to support your position?**

**Chamber Position:** The Chamber supports land use policies and designations that reflect the current and future business needs, including developing the full potential of transit station areas and creating walkable urban mixed-use environments. The Chamber supports a comprehensive county-wide Housing Plan that addresses the need for market rate, workforce and affordable housing And reform of the County code to achieve this result.

 **RON MEYER (R):** I believe in mixed use, and we've already seen its success at Loudoun Station and One Loudoun. We need these types of developments to attract



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businesses and retailers here. We should focus these developments around Metro and the Route 28 and Route 7 corridors. With residential, we should focus on urban, walkable living around Metro and allow age-restricted and high-value single family units (similar to what is being built at One Loudoun) outside the immediate Metro area. With policy, we need the Metro-area CPAM, and we need to allow rezonings that follow that vision. We also need to look at reforming the entire comprehensive plan to maximize proffers and the land use between Ashburn and Leesburg. The next Board will need to work to implement the recommendations of the Housing Stakeholders Group, update County policies to be able to better leverage non-profit affordable housing groups, and encourage building more ADUs.



**AL NEVAREZ (D):** Affordable and diverse housing options can give the community more stability over the long term. Affordable housing allows families to stay near each other, giving Loudoun's youth more options for staying in Loudoun when they leave their parents' home. It also provides more options for Loudouners looking to downsize after the nest has emptied. Young adults and senior residents tend to have a lower impact on the county's budget since they aren't as likely to have children in public schools. With regards to mixed-use development, it plays a role in facilitating the stability noted above, but I also think the infusion of fresh, updated retail options has various positive effects on the local economy, placing pressure on existing complexes to up their game in order to remain competitive. I also think mixed-use development is a positive step towards reducing the impact of new residential development on our transportation infrastructure.

### 7) What specific initiatives do you support to enable access to the reliable, affordable energy required to support the needs of Loudoun's businesses and to sustain our community's high quality of life?


**Chamber Position:** The Chamber supports a County-wide energy plan that emphasizes energy generation, transmission and conservation. The Chamber supports Loudoun County implementing a PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) loan program, to allow property owners to finance energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.



**RON MEYER (R):** This is one of Loudoun's current successes. Our unique location to internet traffic and abundant energy has led to a thriving data center industry. We need to continue this development, which has led to a spike in commercial tax revenue. We need to ensure that the infrastructure network is laid out in a way to both serve the needs of Loudoun businesses and minimize any possible negative impact on surrounding properties. Also, supporting home grown energy, such as the upcoming Panda Stonewall energy plant, is something that should be encouraged.





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 **AL NEVAREZ (D):** I am a strong supporter of projects that bring us more renewable energy sources, and towards cleaner production overall, but I'm also mindful of the reality our existing grid plays in our economy and our daily lives. The development of new power sources increases every day, and for most of us, our livelihoods, if not our very lives, depend on access to reliable energy sources. Therefore, I believe it is the responsibility of every public official to consider the pros and cons of every project without ideological prejudice.

**8) What is your position on the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process, and what would you do to make these or any other proposed environmental regulation or strategy “Loudoun appropriate” given the diversity of land types and uses in Loudoun County?**

**Chamber Position:** The Chamber objects to unfunded and onerous Federal and State water quality mandates that diminish economic growth. The Chamber supports an environmental strategy that is flexible, uses market-based incentives and is tailored to Loudoun’s unique needs and businesses.

 **RON MEYER (R):** We all support clean water and a healthy environment, but this overarching federal mandate that is being imposed on Virginia will hurt businesses without providing clear benefits to citizens. This is one of the major issues that is delaying Phase 2 of the Silver Line. I am concerned about the Federal Government’s overreach with the TMDL process and strongly support the Board’s current strategy of avoiding drastic action while so much uncertainty still surrounds this process. I plan to work with Loudoun’s federal and state representatives to minimize impacts on Loudoun businesses and homeowners and adopt common-sense solutions to protect our waterways in a cost-effective manner. We need to encourage Virginia's national lawmakers to reform these executive regulations in the Board's federal legislative agenda.

 **AL NEVAREZ (D):** Though I'm certainly not an expert in environmental science, I trust the scientists at the EPA. Given the amount of damage the watershed had taken prior to the passage of the act, I believe we should be extremely cautious about altering the recommendations from the scientific community for preserving it.


**9) Do you believe that Loudoun County’s Comprehensive Plan should be revised given Northern Virginia is predicted to attract both significant numbers of jobs and**




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**residents over the next 20 years? What specific policies would you like to see incorporated in a revised Comprehensive Plan?**


**Chamber Position:** The Chamber supports regular updates to Loudoun's Comprehensive Plan, in part to allow for the full complement of current and future market demands, such as for walkable urban mixed-use environments.

 **RON MEYER (R):** Loudoun's Comprehensive Plan is long overdue for an update. Many professional planners recommend that jurisdictions update their plans every five years, and in Loudoun's case it has been almost fifteen years since our last update. While in the past the Plan has been a contentious political flashpoint, I don't believe that needs to be the case moving forward. One specific area that needs to be re-planned is the Sycolin Road corridor between Ashburn and Leesburg. Current planning does not reflect community realities in this area and it will be vital to better plan the transportation network and land use polices to 'fill in the gap' in a smart and responsible way between suburban areas in Ashburn and Leesburg in this small corner of the Transition Area.

 **AL NEVAREZ (D):** Not necessarily. I do believe the plan should be reviewed, but I don't believe an overhaul is a given. Many aspects of the plan have served the County well, and we should pay close attention to how the existing plan has served to make Loudoun such an attractive place to live.

**10) How do you propose to ensure that there are adequate schools, parks and recreational facilities for current and future residents in Loudoun County?**

**Chamber Position:** The Chamber supports working with developers to encourage and sustainable development and development of schools, parks and recreational facilities, without burdening the development process.

 **RON MEYER (R):** This is exactly why questions 1-to-3 are so vital. We can deliver more and better services with more commercial revenue, and the current Board did this. We should continue to follow their model. I wrote about this in a recent Letter to the Editor in the Washington Post, explaining how additional commercial revenue allowed for a \$215 million increase in funding for LCPS: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-solution-for-loudoun-countys-crowded-roads-and-schools/2015/06/26/1c2cb44c-19b1-11e5-bed8-1093ee58dad0\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-solution-for-loudoun-countys-crowded-roads-and-schools/2015/06/26/1c2cb44c-19b1-11e5-bed8-1093ee58dad0_story.html). We should also continue using the proffer system for rezonings to build more facilities, schools, and roads. With the abundance of new applications set to come next term, there should be many opportunities. Sound fiscal



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management is another key factor in providing public facilities. Loudoun's AAA bond rating has allowed the County to borrow at a very low cost for constructing public facilities. As a Supervisor, I will protect the financial policies and debt ratios that have achieved Loudoun's AAA rating.



**AL NEVAREZ (D):** We need to make better use of the land taken up by new schools and plan better so that those schools will be large enough to handle the additional load of all probable development in the vicinity. Loudoun has a superb mix of public and private recreational facilities. Though we should diligently review existing practices on an ongoing basis to ensure fiscal responsibility, continuation of existing practices would seem to serve the county well.

### 11) How do you propose to address the increasing funding requests by Loudoun County Public Schools to ensure our children receive a quality education?

**Chamber Position:** The Chamber believes Loudoun County Public Schools, the School Board and the Board of Supervisors must implement cost reduction and operational efficiencies within our school system. The Chamber strongly supports a review of local education spending to identify areas where efficiencies can be implemented.



**RON MEYER (R):** Thankfully, we have a new superintendent who seems to be interested in making this process as harmonious as possible. That's one reason why the Board fully funded the last budget request. The other is the 33% increase in our commercial tax base. The current Board of Supervisors invested an additional \$215 million in schools since 2012 — a 28 percent increase. Our cost-per-pupil investment has gone from \$11,014 to \$12,705, a higher percentage increase than for Fairfax County. I hate to be a broken record, but that is the progress we must continue. We also must work to build good relationships with our counterparts on the School Board. Communication instead of competition will allow both Boards continued success. I currently have a strong working relationship with our current School Board representative, Kevin Kuesters, and have discussed many of the upcoming challenges with him.



**AL NEVAREZ (D):** I propose putting more trust in the wisdom of Loudoun's citizens, and in the School Board officials they elected to ensure Loudoun's schools provide a high-quality education, by fully funding the budget when the County has the means to do so. Long-term, we should look to diversify the County's revenue sources so that fluctuations in the housing market don't prevent the Board of Supervisors from providing LCPS with the funds needed to educate our children.







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**12) Given the increasing number of uninsured and underinsured individuals in the county, how do you propose to increase access to affordable health care in Loudoun County?**


**Chamber Position:** The Chamber supports expansion of healthcare infrastructure to meet community need; appropriate local planning for emergency preparedness and public-private partnerships to address pandemic preparedness; and expanding services offered by safety net healthcare providers.

 **RON MEYER (R):** The County's jurisdiction is not healthcare--it is roads, schools, and land use. However, bringing more employers to Loudoun that offer healthcare would certainly improve the lives of those at risk. The Board also helps fund local nonprofits who help those at risk, and we should continue investment in those programs. The Board can also utilize its legislative agenda to call for better state and federal policy that includes creative solutions such as those implemented in Indiana--which use partially-funded HSA accounts to encourage people without insurance to get personalized care.

 **AL NEVAREZ (D):** The local government's ability to address this question meaningfully is quite narrow. Until the state expands Medicaid in Virginia, affordable health care options will be severely limited. I will be sure to work closely with county staff to ensure we are doing as much as we can for Loudoun's residents given the existing limitations.

**13) How would you assess the County's efforts to engage the Loudoun business community on important public policy issues and how would you improve or otherwise change those efforts?**

**Chamber Position:** The Chamber believes government must be responsive to its citizens and businesses and believes that Loudoun County's business community must have the opportunity to work with government officials to develop and implement legislative and regulatory policies that will impact Loudoun's economy and quality of life.

 **RON MEYER (R):** Loudoun County Department of Economic Development led by Buddy Rizer have done an excellent job with relatively modest funding. We need to bolster this program, and certainly their move to Loudoun Station should help with county branding. I am confident in Mr. Rizer's plan going forward. During the past four years, I believe communication with the business community, especially through avenues such as the Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDAC), has markedly improved. I



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want to build on this success by ensuring businesses have a seat at the table when the Board is setting policy that impacts the business community. One way I think the process could improve would be to allow EDAC to formulate and independently recommend potential policy changes to recommend to the Board as they see fit.

**AL NEVAREZ (D):** The County has taken some positive steps over the past decade to improve Loudoun's marketability over the past decade, particularly with regards to the development of a vibrant rural economy, but it has not put enough emphasis on creating jobs that fit our workforce. As Supervisor, I will emphasize the necessity of job creation as a means for serving the long-term interests of our community.

**14) Please briefly describe what best qualifies you to hold the office for which you are running.**

**RON MEYER (R):** Broad Run district has more happening in it in the next 4 to 8 years than any other district in the commonwealth. With the developments of 3 metro stops in Broad Run, we have the chance to dramatically improve the lives of those in Northern Virginia and Loudoun. To do this, we need a leader who can build this future-looking vision for the county. Around Metro, the business community and employers want to target the Millennial generation to move in around Metro. As a Millennial, a frequently cited expert on this generation, and a small businessman, I offer a unique perspective we do not yet have on the Board. I also have dynamic energy and deep understanding of technology that is often lacking in typical politicians. A next-generation leader will help us create a next-generation Loudoun County.

**AL NEVAREZ (D):** As an experienced research professional who understands the complexities of analyzing data, I will bring a critical skill set to the Board that enhances the County's ability to make decisions objectively. But, as a homeowner with two children, I will always serve with the community's interests at heart.

**15) What is the chief factor that differentiates you from your opponent(s) (if you have one)?**

**RON MEYER (R):** My support from the business community is one of the many differences between my opponent and me. Our campaign has been endorsed by DARPAC, raised more than \$60,000 almost entirely from the NOVA business community, and has support from leaders including: Til Hazel, Scott Hamberger, Bob Johnson, John Touns, Chuck Kuhn, Barbara Comstock, Tom Davis, Scott York, Robert Bassam, Mark Foster, Gene Frogale, Casey Veatch, Paul Breux, Wes Foster, Bobbie Kilberg, Bill Holtzman,



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John Jacquemin, Bob Clohan, Van Metre, Toth Financial, Earle Williams, Jim Cheng, Cliff Keirce, David Butcher, John Hughes, Glory Days Grill, Geoff Pohanka, Larry Beerman, Clyde's Restaurant Group, Frank Stearns, Bud Morrisette, Jim Maple, and Randy Minchew, among many others. This type of trust, especially for a young leader, says a lot about the trust our community has in our vision for Broad Run. With this team around me, I am excited for what we can accomplish.

**AL NEVAREZ (D):** Professional experience and community roots.

### **16) Is there any other personal or professional information you would like the business community to know about you that is not already covered?**

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**AL NEVAREZ (D):**

### **Campaign Committee Information:**

Candidate's Name (as it will appear on ballot): Ronald A. "Ron" Meyer, Jr.

Campaign Manager: Andrew Mowry

Campaign Address: 43805 Central Station Dr. #420, Ashburn, VA 20147

Campaign Phone: 571-421-5818

Campaign Website: <http://ronmeyer.com>

Campaign Twitter: @Ron4VA

Candidate's Current Occupation: President, Springboard Media Strategies



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Candidate's Political Experience: Youth advocate

Candidate's Business Experience: Runs personal small business

### **Campaign Committee Information:**

Candidate's Name (as it will appear on ballot): Al R. Nevarez

Campaign Manager: Adriana Batista

Campaign Address: 21081 Stanford Sq 401#

Campaign Phone: 571-354-6648

Campaign Website: <http://alnevarez.com>

Campaign Twitter: @nevarez\_al

Candidate's Current Occupation: Research Associate

Candidate's Political Experience: BOS candidate in 2011

Candidate's Business Experience: As project lead for numerous large-scale research projects, I've had to supervise junior researchers, negotiate with information suppliers and technology vendors, guide budget priorities, and oversee both the technology and product life cycles.