FAA TOWER TOUR 6-23-26

By: Georgia Graves – Chair: Aviation & Airport Activities Committee

On Tuesday, June 23, 2026, a small group of the Aviation & Airport Activities Committee of CFD had the privilege to visit the FAA Tower at Dulles International Airport. The FAA oversees air traffic for the entire airfield and is classified as a Level 10 FAA facility. A Level 10 FAA facility is an air traffic control installation categorized by its high volume of traffic and complex airspace management. It houses air traffic controllers who manage runway takeoffs, landings, and ground movements. The Tower height gives them an unobstructed view of the airfield to prevent collisions and safely sequence aircraft.

Our members were able to walk around and chat with the Air Traffic Control Tower(ATCT) team and observed a calm, focused group of professionals and as one member said, “we saw teamwork style rhythm between controllers that demonstrated just how in sync they were with each other which plays a significant role in maintaining safe controlling of constant aircraft traffic.”

There are 4 Towers at Dulles:

- The Original Saarinen Tower: The iconic 178-foot tower designed by famed architect Eero Saarinen opened in 1962. It was retired in 2007 because new runway configurations made it difficult to see all parts of the airfield. It is now a dormant architectural landmark

- The Main ATCT Tower 325-foot structure is equipped with advanced systems like ASDE-X to track aircraft and vehicles on the ground and

- Two Ramp Control Tower for all ramp activity including service vehicle tracking and aircraft pushback from the gates which is a significant safety factor that allows the ATCT Tower to focus solely on taxing, departures, and arrival.

We send our appreciation to Luke Dosier and Matt Laxton, Staff Support Specialists ATCT, for working with our Committee Members, Lou Pack and Vince Mickens, to make this visit possible.

THANK YOU, GENTLEMEN!