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Dulles Expo Center to close after last 2025 event in advance of Ikea conversion



The Dulles Expo Center is closing.

ABDULLAH KONTE/WBJ



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Oct 29, 2025 **Updated** Oct 29, 2025 4:39pm EDT

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Story Highlights

- Dulles Expo Center will close permanently in December for Ikea conversion.
- Eight events remain on the center's 2025 calendar before closure.
- Event promoters struggle to find replacement venue for future shows.

The Dulles Expo Center's days are officially numbered.

The center's management informed some event promoters Wednesday that the Chantilly venue would permanently close after the last event in December in advance of its conversion into an Ikea, the Business Journal has learned. The Swedish furniture retailer is expected to announce it is leasing the property in a release Thursday.

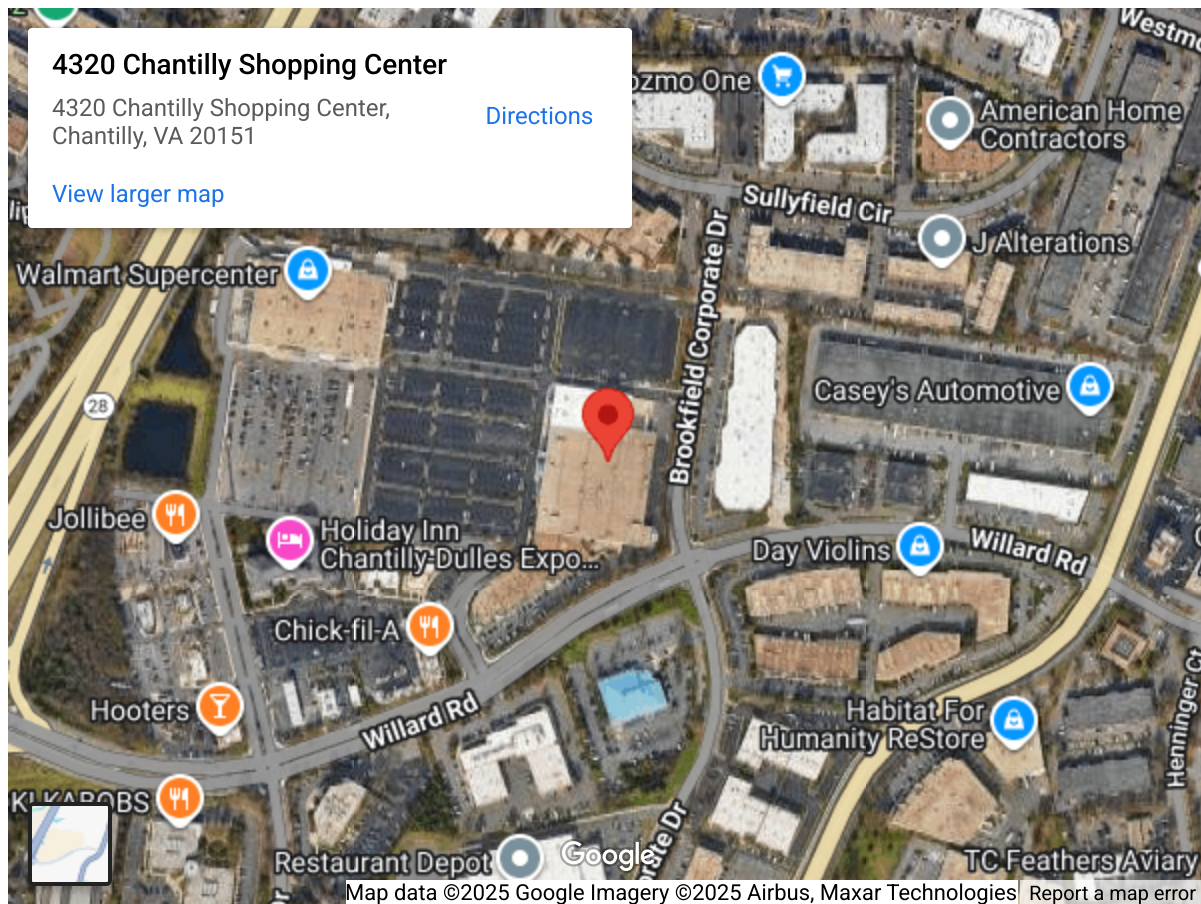
The closure impacts both the North and South Halls, leaving no room for Northern Virginia's go-to venue for large-scale events to continue hosting its shows.

There are eight shows remaining on the Expo Center's 2025 calendar, starting this weekend with the return of the D.C. Big Flea. The final events of the year on the center's calendar are the International Gem & Jewelry Show and Greenberg's Train & Toy Show over the weekend of Dec. 19-21.

The Business Journal first reported in September that [Ikea was planning to build a store at the Expo Center's address](#), 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center,

though it wasn't clear at the time it would actually replace the center. The Burn later reported Ikea [was taking only the 109,000-square-foot South Hall](#) but leaving the 30,000-square-foot North Hall. I have confirmed Ikea is taking the whole thing.

Neither the Expo Center's general manager nor the property's owner, Geoff Pence of the Pence Group, were immediately available for comment.



Ikea is expected to convert the Expo Center into one of its fairly new midsize models. As opposed to its storefront-sized “plan-and-order” locations found in Fairfax and Gaithersburg ([and soon, Georgetown](#)), this one will carry thousands of items to take home and will include an Ikea restaurant, but it will still be significantly smaller than the massive Ikea warehouses found in Woodbridge and College Park.

Event promoters, meanwhile, have been scrambling to [find a replacement and coming up empty](#). Though there is market interest in creating a new expo center, either by building anew or by converting an existing facility, like a warehouse or a shuttered big-box store.

The Expo Center [opened in 1995 as the Capital Expo Center](#), carved out of a former Kmart. So it can be done.

T H E L I S T

Here are the 57 largest meeting and banquet facilities in Greater Washington

Total square feet of meeting space

Rank	Prior Rank	Name/Prior/URL
1	1	Walter E. Washington Convention Center
2	4	Nationals Park
3	2	Capital One Arena
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