



City Manager's Report

*Offices of the City Manager
Elected & Appointed Officials*

2-5-2024

City Manager – Sam Sanders (he/him)

- Attended first meeting of the Land Bank Working Group on January 12th.
- Participated in regional gathering of my peer municipal leaders from Albemarle County, Orange County, Louisa County. Fluvanna County on January 19th.
- Met with the PHAR Resident Interns in Council Chambers on Tuesday, January 23rd – what a fun time we had!
- I extend my congratulations to the members of the Charlottesville Police Department and Charlottesville Fire Department who were recognized for recent promotions. It is great to see the growth in our staff as they demonstrate leadership by achieving higher ranks. I also welcome aboard the large class of new fire recruits who were also recognized during their graduation on January 26th.
- Thank you to everyone who joined me at the City Manager Budget Forum on January 23rd; I really appreciate the interest and participation in crafting the city budget.
- I met with the team at TJPDC to review the long list of transportation and housing projects currently in varying stages of pursuit for the city and the region.
- I am reviewing initial recommendations on employee engagement strategies from an internal working group assembled to highlight options for improving morale and recognizing staff achievements.
- My 2nd Quarter Work Plan Update will be posted on the City Manager’s Webpage on Monday, February 5th.
- Events/Meetings Attended:
 - CHO Board Meeting – January 9th
 - TJPDC Regional Safety Summit – January 10th
 - Rivanna Solid Waste Authority Board of Directors – January 23rd
 - Rivanna Water Service Authority Board of Directors – January 23rd
 - Retirement Commission Meeting – January 24th

Deputy City Manager – Ashley Marshall (she/her)

- **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT TRANSITION PLAN**
 - The Office of Social Equity and the City of Charlottesville ADA Coordinator would like to thank the Human Rights Commission and the Office of Human Rights for partnering to provide additional community education and engagement at their January 2024 public meeting. PIM Consultants were able to present information about the ADA and the process of updating a Federal Transition Plan to the Commissioners and public and received many wonderful questions. The presentation documents are available to the public online, and the Human Rights Commission meeting recording is also viable to review.

- PIM Consultants continue to complete the ADA Transition Plan Self-Evaluation process and currently are focused on City owned and rented facilities. The Self-Evaluation information will be used to create implementation plans that form the ADA Transition Plan update. While no plans have been drafted at this time, the plan information will be made public when ready and presented to the City Council during a public meeting as well.

Interim Deputy City Manager – Steven Hicks (he/him)

- The City Leaf Collection Service is scheduled to resume beginning on Monday, February 5th and will conclude on Thursday, February 29th. All collection zones will receive one loose leaf pickup service with this service restart cycle.

Revised collection dates for your zone can be found by Zone below:

Zone A: February 5th - February 9th

Zone B: February 12th - February 16th

Zone C: February 19th - February 23rd

Zone D: February 26th - February 29th

Office of Communications & Public Engagement (CAPE) – Director Afton Schneider (she/her)

- Be on the lookout for our new monthly public affairs show, *Inside Charlottesville*, which will premiere in March on Charlottesville TV10, Comcast Cable in the City and surrounding counties. It will air every Monday and Wednesday at 7:00 pm and every Tuesday and Thursday at 9:00 am. It will include a brief update from our City Manager as well as roundtable discussions with City employees. Our goal is to keep you informed!

Office of Sustainability – Director Kristel Riddervold (she/her)

- Our second Climate Program Specialist, Gabriel Sherzada, starts on February 5th!

Office of Community Solutions – Director Alex Ikefuna (he/him)

- OCS has partnered with Parks and Recreation Department to construct Pollocks Branch Trail Bridge at Jordon Park. The bid to select a contractor for the project is expected to be published no later than January 31, and will close on February 29. The benefits of the project include the construction of a bicycle and pedestrian ADA accessible bridge to connect Jordon Park to the developing Moores Creek trail between Avon Street and 5th Street. This project is funded with \$171,655.34 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) fund.

- The Charlottesville Affordable Housing Fund (CAHF) Advisory Committee has initiated the review of all the submitted Housing Operations & Program HOPS and CAHF. Once completed, the Committee will make recommendations for consideration by the City Council.
- OCS has finalized the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Manual for consideration by the City Council on February 5, 2024. The Manual is designed to align with the ADU provisions in the Zoning Ordinance that was adopted by the City Council in December 2023. The Manual sets forth the guidance, operational procedures, and implementation protocol that will guide the administration of the Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance.

Office of Economic Development – Director Chris Engel (he/him)

- Twice a year the Office of Economic Development visits properties in the city's six main shopping districts – Barracks Road, the Downtown Mall, McIntire Plaza, Preston Plaza, Seminole Square, and the Corner, to create an updated list of vacant retail spaces in these areas. The January 2024 Retail Property Vacancy Report has just been released and is available for viewing [here](#). With the exception of slight increases at McIntire Plaza, Barracks Road, and the Corner, studied retail areas saw a decrease in their respective vacancy rates.
- Overall the City of Charlottesville's shopping districts have a 4.22% vacancy rate, which is down from July 2023's rate of 7.21%. Leading the way was Preston Plaza, which maintained the same 0.00% vacancy rate it has held since January 2021. Seminole Square saw the largest drop-in vacancy rate of the retail centers from a rate of 15.55% in July 2023 to a rate of 4.44% in this report. The three areas which saw increases in their vacancy rate each experienced a single new vacancy over the past six months. After an increase in its vacancy rate during the last survey, the Downtown Mall's vacancy rate dropped to its lowest level since July 2021.
- Following a successful inaugural edition in 2023, Piedmont Pitch is back for 2024! A collaboration among the City of Charlottesville Office of Economic Development, Albemarle County Economic Development, and the Central Virginia Small Business Development Center, Piedmont Pitch provides entrepreneurs and emerging businesses in Charlottesville and Albemarle County with an opportunity to participate in an 8-week business training program and apply to pitch their concept in a final competition with a chance to win up to \$15,000 in prize money. The Business Essential Training course covers a variety of topics including concept development, building a business plan, marketing your idea, and much more. Individuals participating in Piedmont Pitch also have access to one-on-one business advising services offered through the Central Virginia Small Business Development Center. For more information about Piedmont Pitch contact events@cvsbdc.org or 434-295-8198, or contact the Charlottesville **Office of Economic Development** at ecodev@charlottesville.org or 434-970-3717.

Office of Human Rights – Director Todd Niemeier (he/him)

- All full-time staff of the Office of Human Rights team completed a 32-hour investigator training course in January 2024. The goal of training all staff is to ensure continuity of service and skill redundancy within the office, as pertains to the essential function of addressing individual complaints of discrimination.
- The Office currently has five open individual discrimination investigations in the protected areas of employment, housing, and public accommodation.
- The Human Rights Commission and Office staff are preparing for the Commission's Annual Planning Meeting in March, during which the Commission will select a focus area and develop its workplan for March 2024 through February 2025.

Treasurer's Office - Treasurer Jason Vandever (he/him)

- The Treasurer's Office is busy with past due notices for real estate and personal property taxes, assisting taxpayers who missed the December 5th deadline by bringing as many accounts current as possible. We are also in the very beginning stages of preparing the 1st half 2024 tax billing, preparing the system for testing. Our office is also assisting the budget office with revenue projections and estimates for the general fund, health care fund, and retirement fund in preparation for the FY25 budget.