



City Manager's Report

*Offices of the City Manager
Elected & Appointed Officials*

8-5-2024

City Manager – Sam Sanders (he/him)

- Met with leaders of the Friends of Cville Downtown group to discuss the challenges on the Downtown Mall and recent collection of business owner feedback.
- Participated in an interview for the Beacon Kitchen, where I shared the city's support of this unique opportunity to provide access to up to 75 small food businesses.
- Participated in a radio interview with Courteney Stuart on WINA - touched on a host of topics impacting the City.
- Conducted a series of interviews to fill the Director of Neighborhood Development Services position alongside Mayor Wade and Planning Commission Chair, Hosea Mitchell.
- Met with School Board & Schools Leadership on the subject of sustainability projects and funding allocations for projects on school facilities - agreed to meet again.
- Met with local legend, Eugene Williams, along with Chief Kochis and Chief Thomas.
- On Friday, July 12th, I was joined by all three deputies for a road trip to Buckingham County to tour The Bridge Ministry facility. We heard about the re-entry and rehabilitation program from founder, William Washington and Jay James.
- Held monthly meeting with Jeff Richardson, Albemarle County Executive.
- Hosted the quarterly Town Gown Meeting of the City, County, and UVA in City Hall on July 18th.
- Attended Jaunt Shareholder's Meeting on July 10th - key topic was the addition of a Fluvanna County representative.
- Participated in RSWA and RWSA Board of Director Meetings on Tuesday, July 23rd.
- FEMA Grant for \$198,930 for. Flood Protection Resiliency Design and Scoping Project - to look t wastewater facilities and the protection of that critical infrastructure in flood level rise events.
- Renaming IUMC to Ivy Solid Waste and Recycling Center.
- Drought Watch Reminder/Reference to monitoring and consideration of shift to Drought Warning where restrictions come for public adherence to protect the water supply for the region.
- Participated in CHO Board Workshop on July 9th, where we looked at critical reviews of airport needs by both local passengers and an evolving air travel system.

Deputy City Manager for Administration – Eden Ratliff (he/him)

- Rolled out a new legal intake system for the City Attorney's Office to streamline how we communicate with each other as well as to improve our internal workflow and assignment tracking for legal matters.

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

- Don't forget to catch our new Public Affairs TV show, Inside Charlottesville, on local channel 10. The show will include monthly updates from the City Manager, Police Chief and Fire Chief, various City departments, new hires, events, and more. The next episode premieres this Friday, August 9th.
- We celebrated the City Manager's one-year anniversary in his role last Thursday, August 1st with employees. It was a great event where the City Manager hosted a Q&A session, reflected on his first year, and discussed the promising year we have ahead. The event also gave staff an opportunity to get to know their colleagues from different departments over popcorn and snow cones.

Budget Office – Director Krisy Hammill (she/her)

- Lauren Roos has joined the Budget Office as a Budget Analyst. Lauren is a recent UVA graduate and looks forward to getting to work.
- The City's AAA bond rating has been reaffirmed by both Moody's and S&P. The City's next bond sale is scheduled for August 6th and the proceeds will be used to fund infrastructure improvements including the Buford School Reconfiguration, the new Bypass Fire Station as well as improvements to the City's utility infrastructure.

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

- The Office of Human Rights is currently in the hiring process for an Intake Specialist. The Office hopes to re-fill the position by sometime in August.
- The Human Rights Commission hosted a panel of state legislators, human rights commissioners, and other regional partners to discuss upcoming legislative priorities related to human rights generally and specifically to policies affecting housing, homelessness, and wraparound services such as mental health and substance use recovery supports. Information gleaned from this panel discussion and previous community engagement will be used by the Commission to draft a slate of legislative priorities for consideration by City Council.

- On July 25th, from 6:00 pm to 7:30pm, the Office of Human Rights will host a disability pride trivia event in recognition of Disability Pride Month. This event will be held at Firefly restaurant. Reservations are highly recommended, as Firefly trivia nights are popular events. To make a reservation, call Firefly at 434-202-1050. To request a reasonable accommodation to participate, call the Office of Human Rights at 434-970-3023. All entrances and restrooms at Firefly are ADA accessible, and trivia can be played from inside and outside.

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

- Bridge for Connectivity over Pollocks Branch Creek at CRHA on First Street: OCS, in collaboration with Parks & Recreation, submitted a grant application to the Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation and was awarded \$307,639.51 to fund the construction of a trail bridge over the Pollocks Branch creek that will connect the Pollocks Branch Trail at 1st Street South at the CRHA community with Rockland Avenue across the creek.
- FY2024 SCAAP: The Office of Community Solutions has submitted the application for the FY2024 State Criminal Alien Assistance Program. The State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) provides federal payments to states and localities that incurred correctional officer salary costs for incarcerating certain undocumented criminal aliens. The award amount is based on the number of undocumented persons incarcerated at the Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail.
- Blue Ridge Area Food Bank (BRAFB): Construction of the new, expanded CDBG-funded commercial cooler and the associated extension of the existing exterior roofline to cover both the existing freezer unit and the new cooler, as well as the staff/volunteer work area has been completed. Food Bank staff report that the new cooler was almost completely filled with donated fresh fruits, melons and produce within 48 hours of them being approved to begin operations. OCS staff thank everyone who helped make the ribbon cutting ceremony such a great event!
- Pollocks Branch Trail Bridge at Jordon Park: An update from the Parks & Rec project manager indicates that construction of the new CDBG-funded trail bridge connecting Jordan Park to the developing Moores Creek trail between Avon Street and 5th Street is substantially complete. Parks & Rec staff is in the process of completing the final punch list items, after which a ribbon cutting celebration will be planned through the Office of Communications and Public Engagement.
- ADA Accessibility Enhancements Program at Johnson Elementary School Playground: City Council approved CDBG funding for Public Works on June 17 for

a series of ADA enhancements at Johnson Elementary. No anticipated final date has been identified yet for the completion of this project, but Public Works has begun site prep work and plans to be done well before the start of the new school year.

- Citywide Grants Inventory Report: The Grants Inventory Report Volume II has been drafted and is being reviewed by upper leadership.
- Friendship Court/Kindlewood, Phase 2: The Funding agreement for Phase 2 of the project has been approved by City Council. This phase of the project would create 104 affordable units. There are four phases in the project. The City Council has approved a total of \$5.750 million in the City Capital Improvements Plan to support infrastructure development and Friendship Court/Kindlewood redevelopment of Phase 2. Staff will begin working on the funding agreement for Phase 3.
- HEAT's Land Bank Component: The City Manager, along with the Deputy City Manager of Operations, met with the OCS Director and Housing Program Manager to discuss the Land Bank component. The City Manager will brief the City Council on HAC recommendations. Following the briefing, staff will be given direction on the next steps.
- Abatement Program Development: Regarding the development of the Abatement Program, the OCS team met with the Deputy City Manager of Operations and the Director of Economic Development to discuss further design and development.
- CRHA's South First Street, Phase 2: The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and related Ordinance for South First Street Phase 2 have been approved by the City Council and are now fully executed. OCS is coordinating with the finance and budget staff to establish the necessary accounting mechanisms to support this phase of the project. We are closely monitoring the progress of CRHA's financing and construction plans, which are dynamic and may evolve.
- CRHA's Sixth Street, Phase 1: The Sixth Street Phase 1 project is progressing, with a second reading and council approval scheduled for the August 5th council agenda. This step will advance the city's efforts to increase affordable housing units in the area.
- Grants Management and City Investments Tracking Software: OCS staff have begun work to adopt a new grant management tool, Neighborly Software, and hopes to be able to begin working directly with our subrecipients in the fall of 2024. Neighborly offers program staff and comprehensive set of grant management, monitoring and reporting tools and will provide our community partners for the first time a unified, secure portal through which they will be able to manage many of their city-funded grant programs. Neighborly is used by many of our peer cities throughout the Commonwealth and also offers a robust set of tools for managing and tracking housing program activities.

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

- The Resilient Together project team recently opened the application window for the Climate Resilience Cohort, a grant opportunity to fund community participation in preparing for the local impacts of climate change. The initiative is looking for up to ten community-based organizations that serve disadvantaged or vulnerable community members to participate in the planning process and to help design community-led resilience projects. It is funded by an Environmental Justice Government-to-Government grant from the Environmental Protection Agency. More information and application materials are available [here](#).
- The Climate Program completed the City's community-wide and municipal greenhouse gas inventories for calendar year 2022. Community-wide emissions are down 42% and municipal emissions are down 36% from the 2011 baseline year. More information is available [here](#).
- The Climate Program recently delivered the inaugural Climate Action Update Report, a summary report on progress made towards Charlottesville's emissions reduction goals since the adoption of the Climate Action Plan in January of 2023. In addition to the [report](#), the City's Climate Action Workplan was updated for FY25 and is available [here](#).
- The Office of Sustainability is pleased to have recently launched the [Charlottesville Climate and Sustainability Action Dashboard](#), an engagement tool designed to increase awareness of and involvement in environmental action in the community.
- LED Streetlights Project – The first set of streetlight conversions is being designed by Dominion Energy and we are awaiting confirmation of schedule for installation. Subsequent work orders are being developed for delivery to Dominion.
- City status renewed as Sustainability Partner for 12th year in a row in the Department of Environmental Quality's Virginia Environmental Excellence Program.
- The City received notification of selection for award through the Environmental Protection Agency's 2023 Clean School Bus rebate program. \$420,000 in rebates are intended to support replacement of 2 diesel school buses with electric buses.
- Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority put Charlottesville and Albemarle County in a voluntary drought watch. The Water Conservation Program and Albemarle County Service Authority have put out water conservation public service announcements to encourage the community to save water.

ADA – Coordinator Paul Rudacille (he/him)

- Project Updates:
 - The ROW (Right-of-Way) report is progressing well. We have completed the initial facility data collection for the time being and are now focused on the final edits and data analysis. The team is also QA/QCing (Quality Assurance/Quality Control) all the facility data.
 - We plan to start the Web assessment work when Kevin McDaniel (PIM) returns from vacation in August.
- ADA Requests:
 - The ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) coordinator received 31 requests for information or complaints during this month.
 - Next Steps:
 - Continue finalizing the ROW report, including the data analysis and QA/QC work.
 - Prepare to launch the Web assessment project when Kevin McDaniel is back in August.
 - Monitor and respond to the 31 ADA-related requests received this month.

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

- OED's Ready to Work program has added two new participating employers: Woodard Properties and Design Electric! Woodard Properties, a Charlottesville property management and development company, has been serving local businesses, students, and the community for over 40 years. Design Electric, founded in 1982, is an electrical contractor providing commercial, industrial, and telecommunications services in Central and Western Virginia. They join ten other City employers committed to offering guaranteed interviews to graduates of the Ready to Work program.
 - Ready to Work certifies job seekers in soft skills, assists with resume and cover letter preparation, and provides mock interview support. Graduates receive guaranteed interviews with any participating Ready to Work employer of their choice. These employers, all City businesses, pay at least \$15 an hour, maintain low barriers to entry-level employment, and offer career ladders for upward mobility. The program is free for both job seekers and employers. To learn more and/or enroll [click here](#).
- Twice per year the Office of Economic Development performs a vacancy study to determine the percentage of vacant 1st floor retail space in six of the City's main retail areas – The Downtown Mall, The Corner, Barracks Road, McIntire Plaza, Preston Plaza, and Seminole Square. While not an all-encompassing study, results of the survey allow OED staff to make determinations as to the overall

health and vibrancy of the City's retail business community. Overall the number of vacancies in these areas rose slightly from 19 in January of this year, to 21 in the July study. This equates to an increase of less than half a percentage in the overall retail vacancy rate, moving from 4.22% to 4.67%, which is still below the 4.9% average for the Charlottesville region according to the Virginia Realtors "Q2 2024 Retail Market Report". Of the six retail areas studied, three saw an increase in the vacancy rate, two experienced a decrease, and one remained consistent with the January report. Notably, two of the areas surveyed, McIntire Plaza and Preston Plaza, both have a 0.00% vacancy rate in the July study. No single area experienced more than two new vacancies in this study. To view the full July 2024 Retail Property Vacancy Report, please visit the OED website.

Finance Office – Director Chris Cullinan (he/him)

- The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) awarded the City with its Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the fiscal year 2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management. The City has received this award for the 44th consecutive year.
- Charles Clemmer recently joined the Finance Department as the new Comptroller. Charles was previously the Director of Finance for the City of Buena Vista, Virginia. He is a graduate of James Madison University and is a CPA. The previous Comptroller, Glen Pack, was promoted to the position of Assistant Finance Director.

Revenue Office – Commissioner of the Revenue Todd Divers (he/him)

- Charlottesville Homeowner Assistance Program (CHAP) is taking applications through September 2. Call 434-970-3160 or visit www.charlottesville.gov/RELIEF for more information.

Circuit Court Clerk's Office – Llezelle Dugger (she/her)

- The City of Charlottesville will be holding its 5th Congressional District Republican Primary Recount on Thursday, August 1st, 2024, starting at 7:30am at Trailblazer Elementary School Gymnasium (formerly Venable Elementary School Gymnasium). This is open to the public.