

city

What's happening in the City of Fairfax

scene

DECEMBER 2022



Annual Holiday Display Delivers Tidings of

JOY

and Donated Food

Christmas is a family affair for the McCarthy family. Each year, Chris and Stephanie, along with their children Paddy, Conor, Tara, and Lucy, create a Christmas Wonderland in their front yard. Holiday enthusiasts from around the region come to ogle at the seasonal spectacle.

Decorating the yard has been an annual tradition since 2003, when the couple married and moved to Barbara Ann Lane (then Sharon Court). Since 2018, they have put Cornell Road on the map (literally on fairfaxchristmaslights.com).

From around Thanksgiving until after the New Year, the McCarthys' yard brims with figurines, wooden characters, and 70 inflatables – all illuminated in an array of colored lights. “It’s a lot of work,” Stephanie said, “but we wouldn’t do it if we didn’t love it.”

Stephanie is particularly pleased with Paddy’s 40-foot “mega-tree” and her own hand-painted Peanuts characters, a crowd favorite. Husband Chris enjoys the “big Nativity” con-

structed by Stephanie’s father, a cabinetmaker. A 20-year-old inflatable Santa continues to stand the test of time. “Things break, but he’s still plugging along,” Stephanie said. A touch of Christmas magic, perhaps?

The family receives notes of gratitude from families who say they drive by every year. “Sometimes written by kids,” Stephanie said.

When the display began attracting visitors, the McCarthys capitalized on the exposure and placed a bin in the front yard to accept food donations, which they in turn donate to Britepaths, the Lamb Center, and St. Leo’s school pantry.

Please consider bringing non-perishable food for their donation bin if you drive by to enjoy the family’s festive decorations.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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CITY NEWS

Closure and Service Information

Friday, Dec. 2

(Employee Recognition Luncheon)

- Closed, 11:45 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.: City Hall municipal government offices, including DMV Select, Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- Open: General District Court in the City Hall Annex, Green Acres Center, Sherwood Community Center
- Emergency services will not be affected

Friday, Dec. 23

(Christmas Eve observed)

- Closed at noon: City government offices
- Closed all day: DMV Select, General District Court, Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: regular service

Saturday, Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve)

- Closed: Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: regular service until service ends at 7 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 25 (Christmas Day)

- Closed: Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: no service

Monday, Dec. 26

(Christmas Day observed)

- Closed: City government offices, DMV Select, General District Court; Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: modified weekday service

Sunday, Jan. 1, 2023

(New Year's Day)

- Closed: Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: no service

Monday, Jan. 2, 2023

(New Year's Day observed)

- Closed: City government offices, DMV Select, General District Court, Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim
- CUE Bus: modified weekday service

Holiday Refuse & Recycling Collection Schedule

- Dec. 23: Friday route collected
- Dec. 26: no service
- Dec. 27: Monday and Tuesday routes collected
- Jan. 2, 2023: no service
- Jan. 3, 2023: Monday and Tuesday routes collected

Please note: there may be a delay in yard debris collection citywide Dec. 26 through Jan. 7, 2023. Please leave items at the curb until they are collected. Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "Refuse Holiday"), 703-385-7837

Don't Bag It! Curbside Leaf Collection Provided Through Dec. 30

Residents who receive curbside refuse collection service from the city may rake their leaves loose to the curb for collection. **Please rake loose leaves to the curb no later than Dec. 23 for collection.** Bagged leaves are not collected until January 2023. Leaves are collected by neighborhood about once every two weeks (often more frequently). Heavy leaf fall or inclement weather may affect leaf collection schedules. Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "Leaf Collection"), 703-385-LEAF

Real Estate Tax Bills Due Dec. 5

City of Fairfax real estate tax bills are due Monday, Dec 5. A late fee is assessed for payments received after the due date, plus interest (if applicable). If you pay real estate taxes directly and have not received a tax bill, call 703-385-7900. If you receive a real estate tax bill but your mortgage company escrows the payment, please immediately forward the bill to your mortgage company.

Real Estate Taxes: Payment Options

Pay real estate taxes online: on fairfaxva.gov, under *How Do I...* click on "Pay Tax & Bills." A convenience fee may be charged by the provider.

You may mail your payment or drop off your payment in the secure drop box at City Hall (on the circular driveway on Armstrong Street).

City of Fairfax
**Festival of
Lights
and Carols**

Listen to live holiday music
and enjoy s'mores and
hot cider noon to 6 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 3
in Old Town Square.
Join in caroling and
celebrate the lighting
of the tree at 5:30 p.m.

fairfaxva.gov/specialevents

TAP Offers Interest-Free Loans Available for Tax Payments

The Taxpayer Assistance Program (TAP) offers interest-free loans to pay real estate taxes. Borrow \$250 - \$15,000, and repay monthly for six to 10 months. Apply in-person with the Treasurer's Office. There is a 7.5% fee. Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "TAP"), 703-385-7900

Tax Relief Available

Fairfax City provides real estate tax relief options to qualified senior citizens and homeowners with disabilities: basic tax relief, tax deferral, tax freeze, or combination tax freeze and deferral. Additionally, disabled veterans (or their surviving spouses) may be eligible for real estate tax exemptions on their principal residences. Applications are due April 17, 2023. Info: fairfaxva.gov/government/finance, 703-359-2486



COUNCIL REPORTER

PLEASE NOTE: summaries have been edited. To read the full Council Reporter, visit fairfaxva.gov and click on "City Meetings."

COUNCIL ACTIONS OF OCT. 11, 2022

PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

- Presentation of a Commendation Certificate acknowledging John Coughlan, former City Treasurer.
- Presentation of a proclamation acknowledging Oct. 10, 2022, as National Mental Health Awareness Day in the City of Fairfax.
- Presentation of a proclamation acknowledging Oct. 9-15, 2022, as Fire Prevention Week in the City of Fairfax.
- Presentation of a proclamation acknowledging Oct. 22, 2022, as Arbor Day in the City of Fairfax.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

- Approved, unanimously, the adoption of the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approved, unanimously: Introduction of a supplemental appropriation of \$1.2M for the Old Lee Highway bridge deck rehabilitation project; Introduction of a supplemental appropriation resolution in the amount of \$2.8M for the first quarter FY 2023 recommended expenditures.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- Approved, unanimously, to enact an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 2, Article VI, Division 3, to provide for procurement under the Virginia Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act ("PPEA") and associated City Guidelines for Implementation, as presented.

ITEMS NOT REQUIRING A PUBLIC HEARING

- Approved, unanimously, that the City Council adopt the presented resolution, as attached to the staff report, approving the City of Fairfax guidelines for implementation of the Virginia Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act.
- Approved, 4-3, to authorize the purchasing agent to amend the contract in the amount of \$1.9M to Rinker Design Associates to provide engineering services for Old Lee Highway Multimodal Improvement Phase II. *(In favor: Councilmembers Miller, Ross, Stehle, and Mayor Meyer. Opposed: Councilmembers Harmon, Lim, and Yi.)*
- Deferred: Consideration of a resolution to endorse the city's updated concept for Chain Bridge Road/Eaton Place.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Approved, unanimously the Sept. 6, 2022, special meeting minutes
- Approved, unanimously the Sept. 13, 2022, regular meeting minutes.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- Approved, unanimously, to appoint Alvin Doehring to the Board of Equalization.

- Approved, unanimously, to reappoint Robert Traister to the Board of Equalization.
- Approved, unanimously, to amend David Hebert's current term on the Board of Equalization.

CONVENE A CLOSED MEETING TO DISCUSS APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

COUNCIL ACTIONS OF OCT. 25, 2022

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

- Approved, unanimously, the adoption of the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- Approved, unanimously, the request for renewal of special use permit to allow a school and daycare (as an accessory use) to a religious institution, on property in the Residential High, Commercial Retail Zoning, and Architectural Control Overlay districts at 10830 Main St., subject to conditions.
- Approved, 5-1, to amend the main motion to delete and remove the sentence on page 41 that reads, "While not all buildings will be seven stories, there is flexibility for higher building heights to provide critical mass to support an active street-life." *(In favor: Councilmembers Harmon, Lim, Miller, Stehle, and Yi. Opposed: Councilmember Ross.)*
- Approved, unanimously, the main motion to adopt the attached resolution approving and adopting the Kamp Washington Small Area Plan in the draft dated Sept. 23, 2022.
- Approved, unanimously, to adopt the attached resolution approving and adopting the amendments to the City of Fairfax 2035 Comprehensive Plan identified in Attachment A.
- Approved, unanimously, to enact an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 110 (Zoning) to amend portions of articles and sections contained therein, including, but not limited to, site development standards; decision-making bodies and officials; development review; and defined terms pertaining to floodplain regulations.
- Approved, unanimously, to enact an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 86 (Subdivisions) to amend portions of articles and sections contained therein, including, but not limited to, design and improvements and administration pertaining to floodplain regulations.
- Approved, unanimously, an appropriation resolution for \$1.2M to provide additional funding for the Old Lee Highway bridge deck rehabilitation project.
- Approved, unanimously, an appropriate resolution for \$2.8M to fund the FY 2023 first quarter recommended supplemental expenditures.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Approved, unanimously, the Sept. 27, 2022, special meeting minutes.

CONVENE A CLOSED MEETING TO DISCUSS APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS AND CONSULTATIONS WITH LEGAL COUNSEL



Jumpstart your New Year fitness goals with Mason Recreation. Patrons can enjoy a variety of activities at the Aquatic and Fitness Center (AFC), Recreation and Athletic Complex (RAC), or Skyline Fitness Center on Mason's Fairfax Campus. Community memberships are \$75 a month; \$750 annually. Discounts for seniors and the military are available.

Discounts are applied only to memberships purchased in person at the recreation facilities on campus.

- Senior Discount: 60 years of age or more receive a 10% discount.
- Military Discount: Valid active/retired military personnel receive a 15% discount.

Info: <https://recreation.gmu.edu>



Fairfax City to Conduct Stream Condition Assessments in New Year

Fairfax City Stormwater Management Division staff will assess the main stem of Accotink Creek and all of its tributaries starting in December. Residents may observe staff wearing fluorescent safety vests as they document and rate conditions in the stream corridors. The stream condition assessment is expected to conclude in April 2023.

The city's current water quality and quantity improvement plans are based on a 2008 stream assessment. The new data gathered by the team will be evaluated to determine which stream segments require attention. Staff will record and rate factors such as stream-bank and streambed erosion and conditions in the floodplain, RPA, and at outfalls (where stormwater runoff enters creeks).

Accotink Creek originates in Fairfax City and flows south toward the Potomac River. The city is responsible for the quality of the water within its borders. Stream restoration and other projects implemented in the upper reaches of Accotink Creek have a positive impact on water quality downstream. In addition to existing conditions, the team will assess the performance of previously restored stream segments.

The assessment will occur along Accotink Creek and all of its branches, including unnamed tributaries. For questions or concerns, call 703-273-6073 or email stormwater@fairfaxva.gov.



Public Works Crew Pull All-Nighter to Prevent Traffic Delay



Shortly after 2 a.m. on Sept. 25, the city's Sign and Signal crew was ready to go home. Bobby Keller, Traian Olteanu, Tom Terry, Joe Cotellessa, and Lucian Stoica had spent eight hours replacing a signal cabinet, and they knew they were due to report for work again in the morning. They wanted to answer the call of their beds, but instead they received a call from the police dispatcher, telling them a traffic signal pole had been knocked down at the intersection of Main Street and Whitacre Road.

The crew arrived on the scene to find the pole lying in the road surrounded by debris. A pickup truck had hit the pole, knocking it down, and a second vehicle had driven into the debris. The scene was a mess. The crew knew repairing the pole would be challenging, and they knew the work had to be completed before the Monday morning rush hour. The clock was ticking.

Stoica, the Sign and Signal supervisor, closed the lanes and placed signs to create a safe working environment for the crew. Installing a temporary wooden pole requires digging. "I called Miss Utility on an emergency ticket, and they showed up and marked all utilities within four hours," said Stoica.

With the utilities identified, the crew was able to remove cables and clean up the debris from the shattered signal. The intersection was a hive of activity, with two signal bucket trucks, a front-end loader, a dump truck with trailer, and a utility pole truck. Sign and Signal Superintendent Johnnie Greer said it takes a high level of skill to work around high voltage. "To take on the task as if it's something we rehearse daily is just unbelievable," he said.

The crew's work to clean up and prepare the area made it much safer for the Relee Construction team to drill

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New Dominion Energy Program Offers Instant Rebate on Smart Home Kits

New smart home technology can reduce energy usage in your home and reduce your utility bill. To encourage customers to adopt this new technology, Dominion Energy offers rebates on smart home products.

When a smart home device is integrated with a smartphone or voice assistant, you gain increased control over your home's energy use, even remotely. You can schedule your devices schedule, allow devices to perform energy-efficient actions on their own, and connect to other smart technologies.

Dominion Energy customers may purchase a smart home kit online and receive an instant \$25 rebate. The

base kit includes a Kasa Smart Plug with Energy Monitoring, two Kasa Smart Wi-Fi Plug Minis, the Philips Hue Smart White Ambiance LED Starter Kit, and a Philips Hue Motion Sensor. Additionally, other equipment purchased to enhance your smart home setup may be eligible for rebates.

Learn how you can leverage integrated energy-efficient smart home products to reduce and manage your home's energy consumption. *Info: smarthome.domsavings.com*



Winter is coming

BE WINTER SALT SMART

Winter weather can create a higher risk of car accidents, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks from overexertion. Here's how you can prepare to endure the winter months safely.

- Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery backups
- Stock up on water, prescriptions, and hygiene items
- Prepare for power failure
- Schedule a tune-up for your vehicle
- Keep a blanket, water, chains, jumper cables, ice scrapers, first aid kit, and warm clothes in your car
- Stay off roads when possible. If trapped in your car, stay inside.
- Limit your time outside and watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia
- Reduce the risk of a heart attack by avoiding overexertion when shoveling snow and walking in the snow

Sign up for Fairfax City Alerts so you can be first to know of any disruptions: fairfaxva.gov/fairfaxcityalert

Applying winter salt to roads and sidewalks after a storm allows businesses, government, and social services to stay open with little interruption. But did you know a teaspoon of salt can permanently pollute five gallons of water?

Since there's no easy or cheap way to remove salt from our environment, we all can do our part to reduce the amount of salt we use. Protecting our drinking water sources (the Potomac River and the Occoquan Reservoir) depends on all of us being winter salt smart.

If you choose to apply salt, follow the directions, and apply it sparingly. Excess salt raises sodium levels in our drinking water and increases treatment costs; harms fish, plants, and other wildlife; and corrodes vehicles, roads, bridges, and parking lots, making our community more expensive to maintain.

WHAT TO DO DURING AND AFTER A STORM

- Shovel snow early and often
- Try traction materials, such as sand, native-blend bird seed, and zeolite crystals
- Apply salt after clearing snow and only where needed
- Be patient and give the salt time to work – the colder it is, the longer it will take for the salt to melt what snow or ice remains after shoveling
 - Let the sun do some of the work before you apply salt
 - Securely store salt and traction materials
 - Sweep up extra salt or traction material to reuse
 - Remember: nitrogen and phosphorus salts are illegal in Virginia





LIVE LIFE IN THE ARTS

We Need a Little Bronze (Bells)

8 p.m., Dec. 2

Sherwood Community Center

Music to Free Bronze

Unlimited Ensemble

Tickets: \$15; available at Musictofree.org

Main Street Community Band: Home for the Holidays

4 p.m., Dec. 4

Katherine Johnson Middle School

Bonita Lestina Old Town Hall Performance Series: Chantilly Trio (cello/piano/flute)

8 p.m., Dec. 9, Old Town Hall

Northern Virginia Youth Winds: Opening Concert

3 p.m., Dec. 11

Katherine Johnson Middle School

ArtScreen:

Nutcracker: The Motion Picture

Dec. 16, Doors open 7 p.m.

Movie starts 7:30 p.m.

Sherwood Community Center

City of Fairfax Band:

Christmas in Fairfax

7:30 p.m., Dec. 17, Fairfax High School

2022 Sherwood Center GIVING TREE

Fairfax City Parks and Recreation Department is partnering with Fairfax City Public Schools in order to provide assistance for families in need in Fairfax City this holiday season.

The Parent Liaisons/School Counselors from Daniels Run and Providence Elementary have assisted in identifying families from each school. These families completed a form with their information and wish list. This is a great opportunity for departments, companies, individuals or anyone who is looking to give back this season.

Donation Options:

Please Commit by November 20:

- A. Sponsor a small family*: Buy gifts for a family of 3 children or less
- B. Sponsor a large family*: Buy gifts for a family 4 or more children

Ongoing Donations Until December 2:

- C. Gift Card Donations: Local Grocery Stores/ Target/ Walmart/VISA
- D. Check/Cash donation: Staff will buy the gifts to donate to the families. (Online donations can be made at fairfaxva.gov/givingtree)
- E. Amazon Wishlist: Link will be on fairfaxva.gov/givingtree
- F. Wrapping Supplies (Bags, Paper, Tissue Paper, Ribbon, Bows, Etc.)

If you would like to donate to the Sherwood Giving Tree, please complete the donation form at fairfaxva.gov/givingtree or scan the QR code.

Questions? Contact us at parksrec@fairfaxva.gov or 703-385-7978

Work Crew Pull All-Nighter

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a hole for the temporary pole. Once the pole was erected, the Sign and Signal crew installed signal heads and other equipment they had available.

Greer arrived around 4:30 a.m. to observe the work, which gave him a chance to gauge his technicians' abilities in an emergency operation. He observed his more experienced crew members leading newer members throughout the day. After 12

hours of work, the temporary pole and signals were operating by 3 p.m. Sunday. The crew's all-nighter had paid off.

"When individuals can rally together in such a short time and do this amount of work, it is just unheard of," said Greer. "I'm retiring in a few months, but it feels good to know that when I took this job, I was asked to try and help others prepare to take on the leadership role. And if you would have seen what I had a chance to witness, I can say without a doubt the City of Fairfax has the best traffic system team I have ever been a part of in 32 years."

Old Town Square transforms into a magical outdoor craft market for two weekends in December.

FIRST TWO WEEKENDS OF DECEMBER
OLD TOWN SQUARE
10415 NORTH STREET

- DECEMBER 2-4 •
- DECEMBER 9-11 •

FRIDAYS 5PM-8PM • SATURDAYS 12PM-6PM
SUNDAYS 12PM-5PM

FIND OUT MORE AT
WWW.FAIRFAXVA.GOV/SPECIALEVENTS

Shop for unique gifts & tasty treats!

MAKING *History*

Christmas in Camp and Making Do at Home, Dec. 4

Learn how soldiers and their loved ones at home celebrated Christmas during the Civil War. Meet living history presenters around the campfire, practice drilling techniques, and join in with a cease-fire exchange of gifts. Make handmade Victorian ornaments and meet a Civil War-era Santa. This free event will be held from noon to 4 p.m. at Historic Blenheim. *Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "Making Do")*

Holiday-Focused Guided Tours of Ratcliffe-Allison-Pozer House, Dec. 11

Enjoy a free guided tour of the Ratcliffe-Allison-Pozer House to learn about holiday customs from time periods related to the house's many owners and residents. Then, take advantage of holiday gift specials at Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St. Tours are conducted from 1-3 p.m. *Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "Holiday-Focused")*



HELPING HANDS

THE CITY NEEDS PEOPLE LIKE YOU

SERVE ON CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Board of Architectural Review (one vacancy for a business representative, and one city resident); **Board of Building Code Appeals** (one mechanical or plumbing vacancy); **Human Services Committee** (one vacancy); and the **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board** (four vacancies). Vacancies are subject to change.

To apply, visit fairfaxva.gov and search "boards and vacancies," or call 703-385-7935.

The City of Fairfax Police Department



NOW HIRING

Join Our Team.
Make A Difference.



Competitive Salary Excellent Benefits

Police Officers
Certified Police Officers
Police Dispatchers
School Crossing Guards

Recruiting
Line:
(703) 293-1655



Scan QR
Code To
Apply

The average American family uses 1,500 plastic bags a year...

DON'T FEED THE BAG MONSTER Bring Your Own Bag!



5¢ Plastic Bag Tax Effective January 1

Disposable plastic bags provided at point of sale to consumers at grocery stores, convenience stores and drugstores in Fairfax City will be subject to a 5-cent tax. Keep your change, bring a reusable bag!



FREE reusable grocery bags will be available to residents while supplies last. Pick up a bag at Fairfax City Hall Atrium, 10455 Armstrong St., weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

For more information, visit www.fairfax.gov.

City Hall • 10455 Armstrong St. • Fairfax, VA 22030

Cityscene is produced by the city's Communications and Marketing Office

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contact us
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- Large Print
- Recorded
- Braille

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Cityscene is available in large print, Braille, and audio upon request.

Para solicitar ayuda con servicios de la ciudad o preguntas sobre esta publicación, por favor llame al 703.385.7800.

본 간행물과 관련하여 문의 사항이 있으시면
 ☎ 703-385-7800 (으)로 전화 주시기 바랍니다.

Follow us:
 @CityofFairfaxVA



To report a problem or request a service, please use Fairfax City Resolve. Look for the "Report" button on fairfaxva.gov.

City Seal Retirement Ceremony

The city seal, adopted in 1973, will be retired during a short ceremony at 6 p.m. on Dec. 6 in the City Hall Council Chamber. The city seal was redesigned as part of the Connecting Fairfax City for All initiative, with creative direction by city residents through a public survey on Engage Fairfax.

The City of Fairfax Fire Department and Police Department badges and patches will be retired during the ceremony - as both departments' badges and shoulder patches include elements of the former city seal - and new badges and patches will be pinned on public safety team members' uniforms.

The Police Department has proudly served our community while wearing its badge and patch since 1980, shortly after the former city seal was adopted. For 20 years, the fire department has protected lives and property while wearing its badge and patch, which features elements of the former city seal. Staff from both departments were instrumental in designing the new badges and patches.

The ceremony will be televised on Channel 12 and livestreamed on the city website.



Make Your Season Bright

RECYCLE YOUR STRING LIGHTS:

- Drop off any broken string lights between Thanksgiving and Valentines day at one of the convenient drop-off locations.
- Lights only please. Remove any packaging or decoration prior to drop off.

FAIRFAX ACE HARDWARE
 10310-B MAIN STREET, FAIRFAX
 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Monday-Friday
 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Saturday
 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Sunday



FAIRFAX CITY HALL ATRIUM
 10455 ARMSTRONG STREET, FAIRFAX
 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday-Friday



For more information, visit fairfaxva.gov/recycling or call 703-293-1661