

APRIL 2023

cityscene



Come enjoy historic reenactors, hands-on activities, food trucks, live music, a petting zoo and more!

Where can you find the most interesting mashup of 19th-century history and 21st-century environmental awareness? **Fairfax HisTree Day!**

Join us from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on April 22 (Earth Day) at Historic Blenheim to experience local history presented by costumed reenactors and meet the Fairfax City staff members

who protect our natural resources. Admission is free.

Fairfax HisTree Day promises to be full of experiential learning and fun focused on local history and the environment. Meet an early 19th-century scientist and ogle at his peculiar, preserved specimens. Learn how modern stormwater management

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CITY NEWS

You Need a Permit for That

Warm weather is here, and you may be considering home improvement projects. Whether you're installing a pool or a portable storage unit, resurfacing a driveway or building a shed, you'll need a permit from the city. Please visit fairfaxva.gov/zoning to learn which permits you need and how to obtain them. Please remember: short-term rentals are not allowed in Fairfax City, and removing a tree and building a deck both require a permit.

Curbside Leaf Collection Provided Tuesdays in April

On Tuesdays in April, vacuum trucks will collect loose leaves raked to the curb in residential neighborhoods that receive city curbside refuse collection service. Please rake leaves to the curb by 7 a.m. on collection days: April 4, 11, 18, and 25. *Bagged leaves are not collected in April.* Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "leaf"), 703-385-7995

Reminder: Follow Yard Waste Collection Rules

When disposing of yard waste, please use paper bags and refuse receptacles (marked "yard waste"), or bundle debris with twine. **Yard waste in plastic bags will be marked with a red tag and left at the curb.** It's an easy fix: just transfer the bag contents to the proper container or bundle the materials. Prohibiting plastic bags for yard waste disposal reduces plastic pollution in the city. Info: refuserecycling@fairfaxva.gov, 703-385-7837

Real Estate Tax Relief, Rent Relief Applications Due April 17

The City of Fairfax provides real estate tax relief and rent relief for senior citizens and city residents with permanent and total disabilities. Different types of relief are granted

on a sliding scale and based on income. Qualified homeowners may choose basic tax relief, tax deferral, tax freeze, or a combination tax freeze and deferral. Rent relief is available for senior citizens and renters with permanent and total disabilities. Virginia offers a real estate tax exemption for the primary residence of certain disabled veterans and their surviving spouses. Pick up applications from the Finance Department. Submission deadline is April 17. Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "tax rent relief"), 703-359-2486

Drug Take Back Day April 22

Bring unwanted or expired prescription and over-the-counter drugs to the City of Fairfax Police Department (3730 Blenheim Blvd.) from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 22. Pills, ointments, and liquids in sealed containers are accepted. (No needles, syringes, or Epi-Pens.) Dropoff is anonymous; no identification or prescription information is required. Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "take back") 703-385-7829

FY23 Budget Review, Discussions Continue Through May 2

Join the mayor and city council in the discussion of the city's proposed annual budget and Capital Improvements Program. Download the proposed budget and CIP at fairfaxva.gov/budget. Review the schedule to share your input with the City Council in person or electronically. Meetings and work sessions are held at the City Hall Annex and televised on Channel 12. The budget is scheduled for adoption on May 2. Info: fairfaxva.gov/budget, WeCare@fairfaxva.gov, 703-385-7870

Take Your CUE Fare-Free

Hop on the CUE Bus and explore Fairfax City for free! All CUE Bus rides are fare-free for everyone, any age, resident or visitor. Shorten your wait time with live CUE Bus tracker and arrival information via the TransLoc app and cuebus.org

website. *Take your CUE* to city parks, schools, restaurants, shopping centers — as well as to George Mason University and the Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metrorail Station. Info: cuebus.org, 703-385-7859

2023 Real Estate Assessments Reflect Continued Growth

Fairfax City's overall real property tax base grew 5.2% from last year. Excluding value added for commercial and residential new construction, total assessed value increased 2.1% percent. Residential assessments increased 2.3% and commercial assessments increased 1.7%.

For 2023, the average single-family property increased from about \$589,000 to \$602,400. Nearly 60% of residential property assessed value increase; the remainder were unchanged or equalized. *Residential properties include condominiums, duplexes/duets, townhouses, single-family attached, and detached homes.*

Real estate taxes provide nearly half of the city's total general fund revenues. Residential property comprises 65.9% of total property assessments, and the balance (34.1%) is comprised of commercial property assessments.

The city assesses all real property at 100% of fair market value, as of January 1 each year. 2023 assessments will be used to apply the real estate tax rate set by City Council on May 2, with the FY24 budget approval. Info: fairfaxva.gov, (search "real estate assessment")

Contractors Must Dispose of Their Debris

Residential property owner do-it-yourself projects are limited to repairs and improvements initiated and completed by the property owner or household residents. Projects cease to be do-it-yourself when they require labor and resources from additional, non-residential assistants (paid or unpaid). In these cases, the work becomes contracted work, and the city will not collect that debris from the curb. Info: 703-385-7810

COUNCIL REPORTER



PLEASE NOTE: summaries have been edited. To read the full Council Reporter, visit fairfaxva.gov and click on “City Meetings” or scan QR code at left.

COUNCIL ACTIONS OF FEB. 14, 2023

PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

- Presented a proclamation acknowledging Black History Month.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approved, unanimously, the City Council meeting minutes for Dec. 13, 2022, and Jan. 10 and Jan. 24, 2023. *(Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)*
- Approved, unanimously, establishing a City of Fairfax Homelessness Task Force to address the impacts of homelessness within the City of Fairfax, both for those experiencing homelessness and the greater community. *(Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)*
- Approved, unanimously, designating 9640 Fairfax Blvd. (Lamb Center/Wesley Housing) as a Revitalization Area, a criterion by which Virginia Housing evaluates applications for Low Income Housing Tax Credits. These credits provide financing for affordable housing developments. *(Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)*

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- Approved, unanimously, reducing the supplemental appropriation directed to Human Services and the affordable housing initiative from \$825,000 to \$700,000 for future housing affordability options. *(Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)*
- Approved, unanimously, appropriating \$3.4M to fund the FY23 second quarter recommended supplemental expenditures. *(Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)*

ITEMS NOT REQUIRING A PUBLIC HEARING

- Approved, unanimously, the adoption of the City Council goals for the 2023-24 term. *(Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)*

CLOSED MEETING

- Discussed personnel matters and consult with legal counsel regarding actual/probable litigation. *(Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)*

COUNCIL ACTIONS OF FEB. 21, 2023

CLOSED MEETING

- Conducted interviews for and discussed appointments to boards and commissions. *(Councilmembers Lim and Stehle were absent.)*

COUNCIL ACTIONS OF FEB. 28, 2023

CLOSED MEETING

- Conducted interviews for and discussed appointments to boards and commissions. *(Councilmember Stehle was absent.)*

PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

- Presented proclamations honoring the life of city resident Etta Bowles Richards-Strozier, acknowledging Fairfax City Restaurant Week on March 6-12, and acknowledging Procurement Professionals’ Day on March 8.
- City Manager Rob Stalzer presented the proposed FY24 budget.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approved, unanimously: the Feb. 14 regular City Council meeting minutes. *(Councilmember Stehle was absent.)*
- Approved, unanimously, the following board and commission appointments and reappointments (as amended during the Feb. 28 closed meeting): Brian Singleton to the Board of Architectural Review; Mitchell Cho to the Economic Development Authority; David Meyer to the Fairfax County History Commission; Frank Franz to the Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Citizens Advisory Board; Matthew Hoffert to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board; Douglas Stewart as the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board representative to NOVA Parks; James Feather to the Planning Commission; James Feather as the Planning Commission representative on the Board of Architectural Review; Matthew Rice for a one-year term as the Planning Commission representative on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board; James Feather as the city representative on the One University Task Force. *(Councilmember Stehle was absent.)*
- Approved, unanimously, endorsing the city’s application to the Transportation Planning Board’s Regional Roadway Safety Program, a competitive grant program that helps local jurisdictions reduce the number of injuries and fatalities on the region’s roadways, for technical assistance to conduct roadway safety audits on two streets (Main Street between Old Town Fairfax and the eastern city line and Pickett Road between Main Street and Fairfax Boulevard) *(Councilmember Stehle was absent.)*
- Approved, unanimously, amending the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board bylaws to reflect the current duties as outlined in city and state code. *(Councilmember Stehle was absent.)*
- Approved, unanimously, the city’s participation in the proposed settlement of opioid-related claims against various named entities and authorized and directed the execution of any documentation necessary to effectuate the city’s participation in the settlements. *(Councilmember Stehle was absent.)*
- Approved, 4-0-1, the Feb. 21 special City Council meeting minutes. *(In favor: Councilmembers Bates, Doyle Feingold, Greenfield, and Ross. Abstained: Councilmember Lim. Councilmember Stehle was absent.)*

CLOSED MEETING

- Discussed a prospective business. *(Councilmember Stehle was absent.)*



**LIVE LIFE
IN THE ARTS**

**TAKING IT TO
THE STREETS**
APRIL 21 - MAY 7

www.fairfaxspotlight.org

Art doesn't just belong in concert halls and fancy galleries — art can be found everywhere! That is why, for the 2023 Spotlight on the Arts Festival, we are "taking it to the streets" to celebrate all the fantastic art opportunities for everyone in Fairfax City.

The city's streets are buzzing with creativity everywhere you look. From April 21 through May 7, let Spotlight be your guide. Take a walk down Main Street to meet local artists creating their next masterpiece. Attend a theatre performance in a historical building! Experience dance in Van Dyck Park or enjoy a glass of wine and some jazz at Historic Blenheim.

**Bonita Lestina Old Town Hall
Performance Series**

The Sushansky/Lundy Duo
8 p.m. April 14, Old Town Hall

District 5

8 p.m. April 28, Sherwood Center

Friday Morning Music Club
Noon, April 20, Old Town Hall

**EGG-STREME
TEEN EGG HUNT**
THURSDAY APRIL 6
8PM - HISTORIC BLENHEIM
3610 BLENHEIM BLVD.

Pre-registration required!

Enjoy an evening searching for eggs and prizes in the dark! Perfect for kids ages 10-14 who are just not ready to give up the hunt! Bring a flashlight and a bag or basket. Visit with the Easter Bunny starting at 7:30 p.m. fairfaxva.gov/specialevents

**WHISKEY
BASICS** April 15
4PM
Historic Blenheim
3610 Blenheim Blvd.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED!
For more information, please visit
fairfaxva.gov/specialevents

Come get schooled in whiskey basics by MurLarkey's Distilled Spirits. Enjoy various tastings as you relax at your own table on the grounds of Historic Blenheim. Tickets cost \$150/table (maximum six people per table).

**Save
the
Date**

**FAIRFAX
Uncorked
JAZZ & WINE FESTIVAL**

**Saturday, May 6th
3:30-8 p.m.
Historic Blenheim
3610 Blenheim Blvd.**

Showcase your winery in the heart of Fairfax City at one of our most beautiful, historic sites!

Fairfax Uncorked Jazz & Wine Festival is hosted by Fairfax City Parks and Recreation in conjunction with Spotlight on the Arts Festival. Hear marvelous George Mason Jazz Studies musicians and enjoy the fine fruits of local Virginia wineries on the bucolic grounds of Historic Blenheim. A big thank you to The Wine House for sponsoring this event. To purchase drinking and non-drinking tickets, visit fairfaxva.gov/specialevents.

Free CUE Bus Connects International Mason Student to Nation's Capital

Grace Furlong is an international student-athlete from Cork, Ireland. She is studying public administration with a concentration in public communications at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government.

As an international student landing in a completely new place, a lot of worries crossed my mind: Will I be okay in my classes? What will the people be like? How will I get around?

For me, these questions were answered very quickly. The classes were interesting, the people were friendly, and the buses were – free?

I took my first CUE Bus ride with a fellow international student one week into our move to the U.S. We both talked for days about what we wanted to see in D.C., a city neither of us had ever visited before, and how we were going to get there. When she told me about the CUE Bus service, she said the two buses come to GMU's campus at least every half hour and will bring you to various places throughout Fairfax City, culminating at the Vienna/Fairfax-GMU Metro Station.

We used the online CUE Bus tracker to see when our Green Bus

was coming. Twenty minutes later we arrived at the Metro station alongside fellow students and local residents. The drivers were incredibly informative, kindly notifying us of our stop, when we should get off, and where we should go from there. I spent my entire first trip in disbelief that the service was free and operated seven days a week.

Months later, when my mom arrived in Fairfax to visit me, I informed her about the CUE Bus service, and she too used the bus to visit me on campus and for her own trips to D.C. and back to her hotel on Chain Bridge Road.

I've been using the, CUE Bus since I first moved here a year and a half ago and have loved the freedom and independence the service has given me. It's so easy for me to cycle to the campus stop, lock up my bike, and jump on the CUE Bus to the Metro. This bus has made D.C. so accessible — I find myself there once a week meeting friends or sightseeing.

Getting home is just as easy. During the day, arriving back at the Metro station, I have never waited longer than 10 minutes for a CUE

I've been using the CUE Bus since I first moved here a year and a half ago and have loved the freedom and independence the service has given me.

— Grace Furlong, international student-athlete from Cork, Ireland



Bus to arrive, and I've never struggled to find a seat. The ride is always seamless, and I've become proud of my ability to recognize parts of Fairfax City as we drive through it.

Though being a student isn't always easy, at least the public transport is!



24TH ANNUAL ANTIQUE CAR SHOW

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 20

The Antique Car Show features vehicles 25 years and older and is held at City Hall. Twenty trophies will be awarded, and the event includes music, food by the Knights of Columbus, and desserts from Rita's. High school auto tech programs will have displays, and the city police and fire departments are hosting a Kids Safety Day. The event is a joint effort of the City of Fairfax and The Northern Virginia Regional Group of the Early Ford V8 Club of America.



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technology improves the health of our streams and reduces flooding. Admire Historic Blenheim's towering trees on a guided walk with the city's urban forester.

Kids will be fascinated by the *Enviroscape*, an interactive model that demonstrates the impact community development and pollution have on our waterways. (Fairfax City is located at the headwaters of Accotink Creek, a tributary of the Potomac River.) This hands-on activity teaches kids that protecting our environment is a shared responsibility. Learn how you can contribute to the health of this important waterway.

Visit the domestic arts tent to make a quilt square featuring a tree or other nature themes. Meet early craftspeople, including a blacksmith, a weaver, and a photographer, and

watch them demonstrate their trades. Meet 19th-century schoolmarm and a roving reporter, plus see how Civil War soldiers and civilians made coffee and cornbread. There will be so many reenactors on-site, you'll think you've traveled back to 1863!

Civil War-era soldiers, including the United States Colored Troops, will engage visitors and discuss camp life. Learn how to follow flag signals used on the battlefield and join as a "green" recruit to practice drills.

Scramble around straw bales, then head over to talk with the tavern keeper. On your way, don't forget to pet some farm animals. Enjoy popular Civil War-era songs on 19th-century brass instruments by the 8th George Mason University Regimental Band.

Curious about the history of your own backyard? Library and archival experts from Fairfax County and George Mason University will connect you to the past of your own home or neighborhood.

Grab a bite to eat at one of the



food trucks and purchase a bag of ever-popular Colonial Kettle Corn. Enjoy other activities and exhibitors including a monarch butterfly conservation tent, a bike tent, an electric vehicle and transit tent, and craft projects such as building bird feeders.

Historic Blenheim is located at 3610 Blenheim Blvd. Park for free at Fairfax High School (3501 Lion Run) and Daniels Run Elementary School (3705 Blenheim Blvd.), and grab a ride from Fairfax High to the *HisTree Day* event on the free CUE Bus shuttles that run throughout the event.

Info: fairfaxva.gov/histreeday

Community Flood Resilience Planning Underway

Public Meeting Slated for April 19

Low-lying Fairfax City neighborhoods are not the only areas at risk of flooding. The city's floodplain map indicates the expected limits of a 100-year storm event, a storm with a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. However, many areas of the city can flood during less intense storms.

The City of Fairfax is developing a flood resilience plan to provide the community with an analysis of the most vulnerable areas and an overview of the opportunities to address flooding, with a focus on using cost-effective nature-based solutions where possible.

A critical part of developing the city's flood resiliency plan is public input. Please join us at 7 p.m.



April 19 at the Sherwood Center to learn about the project. The project team will provide details, outline the project timeline, and share opportunities for public involvement.

The majority of the project's funding is provided through a state Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) grant. Developing the plan qualifies the city for future

CFPF funding to implement projects that help address flooding.

The plan will provide the city with points toward ranking in FEMA's Community Rating System, a program that can provide discounts on flood insurance premiums in jurisdictions that exceed FEMA's minimum standards for floodplain management.

Info: engage.fairfaxva.gov



LEARN ABOUT LAND DEVELOPMENT

A panel discussion featuring local real estate industry leaders will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. May 10 in the Economic Development Authority conference room at 10300 Eaton Place.

This is your chance to learn about the basics of land development from the perspectives of developers who have done projects in Fairfax City.

This event is hosted by Fairfax City EDA, Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, and Fairfax City Citizens for Smarter Growth. All are welcome; free admission. *Info: Douglas Stewart, douglasbstewart@gmail.com*



HELPING HANDS

THE CITY NEEDS PEOPLE LIKE YOU SERVE ON CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Board of Architectural Review, (one vacancy for a business representative); **Board of Building Code Appeals** (one mechanical or plumbing vacancy); **Board of Zoning Appeals** (one vacancy); **Commission for Women** (one vacancy); **Commission on the Arts** (one vacancy for city resident); **Environmental Sustainability Committee** (one vacancy for city business representative); **Fairfax Area Disability Services Board** (one vacancy); **Fairfax Village in the City Advisory Board** (one vacancy for At-Large Member); **Historic Fairfax City, Inc.** (one vacancy); **Human Services Committee** (one vacancy).

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



Help the Independence Day Celebration Committee raise funds for Fairfax City's Fourth of July Celebration by honoring local heroes!

Sponsor a wreath to be placed on a veteran's grave this December at the Arlington National Cemetery.

Scan the QR Code to make a donation or visit:

www.wreathsAcrossAmerica.org/VA0409P



va811.com



Dig With **CARE**

Call Before You Dig

Before you start digging holes for new plants and fenceposts, call 811. Utility representatives will mark underground utilities for you for free. This protects you from harm and prevents damage to pipes, gas lines, electric wires, and fiber optic cables. Please allow two full business days. *Info: va811.com*

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

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

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To report a problem or request a service, please use Fairfax City Resolve. Look for the "Report" button on [fairfaxva.gov](https://www.fairfaxva.gov).

LET'S GET PHYSICAL! Mayors' Fitness Challenge

Mayors'
FITNESS CHALLENGE
We Need YOU!
www.fairfaxva.gov/specialevents
FAIRFAX CITY
2023
NOW THROUGH MAY 6

The City of Fairfax, the Town of Vienna, and the City of Falls Church are competing to see who has the most "fit" town! Register to participate in this challenge and help our city win the cup! Participants will keep track of the number of minutes they exercise via the Clockify app. More information on how to use the app will be sent via email when you register. Get the whole family to start moving!

[fairfaxva.gov/specialevents](https://www.fairfaxva.gov/specialevents)