

A Message from Mayor Catherine Read

s we celebrate the arrival of the New Year, I want to take a moment to reflect on a few highlights from 2023. Our City Council and staff, in partnership with city boards and commissions, neighborhood leaders, nonprofits, regional partners, and the local business community are working together to keep our city safe, vibrant, and forward-focused. Exciting things are happening here!

- Public restrooms are now available at Van Dyck Park, Draper Drive Park, Old Town Square, and near Fairfax Circle. Permanent restrooms are being considered for Thaiss Memorial and Kutner parks.
- The Homelessness Task Force was created in 2023 to address the pressing concerns in our community that impact those who are unhoused, city residents, and local businesses.
- We established the Community Response Team, a multidisciplinary team consisting of a licensed clinician, a community paramedic, and a CIT-trained police officer. The team provides real-time behavioral health crisis response along with targeted outreach, post-crisis follow-up, and shortterm case coordination.
- Three new events celebrated Fairfax City's diversity and commit-



ment to inclusivity: Fairfax Pride, Fairfax Fiesta, and Juneteenth. Additionally, the Asian Festival on Main continues to grow each year.

- Our CUE buses have a new distinctive look, and ridership has increased due to the fare-free pilot program. Outdoor seating and lighting have been installed at some locations, as well as digital real-time arrival signs at several bus stops. We continue to invest in public transit.
- Ten Capital Bikeshare stations are now available for anyone who wants to incorporate short bike trips into their commute or for running errands. Unlocking a bike is easy, affordable, and fun!

- A new crosswalk was installed to make walking between the library and the Main Street Marketplace easier and safer.
- We held 30 ribbon-cutting ceremonies for new restaurants, educational companies, and businesses in the health, beauty, fitness, and lifestyle industries. Fairfax City continues to boast the lowest commercial and retail vacancies in the region.
- Redevelopment of aging commercial areas continued with construction at the former Breezeway Motel site, Boulevard VI, Sutton Heights, The Moxley, Safford Brown Mazda, and Northfax West. Small area planning for Fairfax Circle is underway.
- Fairfax City became a V3-Certified Employer. The Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program continued on page 7

INSIDE CITYSCENE

City News/Council Reporter 2/3
Be Salt Smart this Winter 4
Five Minutes with Tommy Scibilia 4
Nominate Fairfax City
Women of Influence5
Live Life in the Arts6
Public Safety Meeting 6
Boy Scouts Collect Groceries 7
Voter Sticker Design Contest 8

CITY NEWS

Holiday Closure and Service Information

Monday, Jan. 1: New Year's Day

- Closed: city government offices, DMV Select, General District Court, Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center
- CUE Bus: no service

Tuesday, Jan. 2

Closed: General District Court

Monday, Jan. 15: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

- Closed: city government offices, DMV Select, General District Court
- CUE Bus: modified weekday service

Holiday Refuse and **Recycling Collection Schedule**

- Jan. 1: no service
- Jan. 2: Monday and Tuesday routes collected
- Jan. 15: no service
- Jan. 16: Monday and Tuesday routes collected

Please note: there may be a delay in yard debris collection citywide due to the holiday collection schedule. Please leave items at the curb until they are collected. Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "Refuse Holiday"), 703-385-7837

Museum, Blenheim Announce **January Closure Schedule**

In January, the exhibit areas of Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center will be closed to visitors, but the visitor center will remain open for inquiries from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. The Civil War Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim and Blenheim House will be closed to visitors; however, the grounds will be accessible from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Info: fairfaxva.gov/visitors, 703-385-8414



Prepare for Winter Weather

Winter is here, so be prepared: have a plan for managing snowfall, ice, utility outages, property damage, and other issues. Check out these resources for city news and information:

- Website: fairfaxva.gov
- Fairfax City Alert (on city website, click on "City Alert")
- Facebook and X (formerly known as Twitter): @CityofFairfaxVA

Visit fairfaxva.gov/oem for more information on emergency preparedness.

Stay Green This Winter: Recycle Holiday Greenery, Lights



Turn your live trees, garlands, and wreaths into mulch. Fairfax City refuse customers may place live holiday greenery at the curb on their collection day. Remember to remove ornaments, tinsel, wires, and other decorations.

Additionally, keep your string lights out of the trash by recycling them! Drop them off at Fairfax Ace Hardware (10310-B Main St.) and Fairfax City Hall during regular operating hours through Valentine's Day. Let's beat last year's record of nearly two tons of lights!

Composting: Turn Food Waste into Soil Nutrients

Composting is the most efficient and earth-friendly way to rid your household of rotten food, leftovers, and food scraps. The City of Fairfax Composting Center (open 24/7 adjacent to City Hall) accepts nearly all food, thanks to a special process that breaks down bones, oils, and other foods not typically recommended for backyard composting. Please remember to use compostable bags for your food waste, which are available at the center. Info: fairfaxva.gov/composting

Receive helpful composting tips by subscribing to the weekly e-newsletter Know Before You Throw! Info: fairfaxva.gov/cityclips



Nominations Sought!

DETAILS P. 5

2023 Commercial Recycling Reports Due March 1

City business owners must submit their annual commercial recycling reports to the city electronically between Jan. 1 and March 1 using a form on the city website. The report details actual or estimated weight or volume of recycled materials provided by the business' recycling vendors. Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "Commercial Recycling Report")

Connect and Engage with the Homelessness Task Force

Stay abreast of the city's Homelessness Task Force meetings and activities with these resources.

- Engage Fairfax lists upcoming meetings, available resources to use or share, recommended reading, and sections for questions and comments: engage.fairfaxva.gov
- Subscribe to the task force's e-newsletter at fairfaxva.gov/
- Follow Fairfax City on Facebook and X (formerly known as Twitter): @CityofFairfaxVA

Home Heating Crisis Assistance Available

City residents who need help with heating bills this winter may apply for Fairfax County Family Services Crisis Assistance through March 15. Crisis assistance can be used to pay bills for utilities that are in danger of being disconnected. Info: fairfaxcounty.gov/ familyservices/public-assistanceemployment-services



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 NOV. 14, 2023

PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

- Presentation of proclamations: acknowledging Nov. 25, 2023, as Small Business Saturday in the City of Fairfax; acknowledging November as National Family Caregivers Month in the City of Fairfax; and acknowledging Nov. 11-18, 2023, as National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week in the City of Fairfax.
- Presentation of the city's Organizational Strategic Plan.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Approved, 4-1, the adoption of the agenda with amendments to defer agenda item #8a to Dec. 12 (Public hearing and council action on a special use permit for keeping chickens at 3818 Egan Drive) and to defer agenda item #8c to Jan. 23, 2024 (Public hearing and council action on the proposed zoning text amendments including, but not limited to: zoning districts and regulations, site development standards, development review and definitions). (In favor: Councilmember Bates, Greenfield, Ross, and Stehle. Opposed: Councilmember Doyle Feingold.) (Councilmember Lim was absent.)

CONSENT AGENDA

Approved, unanimously: Consideration of the Oct. 10, 2023, regular meeting minutes; Consideration of the Oct. 24, 2023, regular meeting minutes; Consideration of the revised financial policies and the suggested FY25 Budget Guidelines; Consideration of an award of construction contract for Farr Avenue Extension (Northfax West): Consideration of an award of construction task order for City Hall renovations; Consideration of a resolution affirming and endorsing the city's participation in the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act and agreeing to the formation of a combined plan with Fairfax County, with the county acting as the fiscal agent. (Councilmember Lim was absent.)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Approved, unanimously, an ordinance amending portions of articles and sections contained in City Code Chapter 110 (Zoning), including zoning districts and regulations, and site development standards. (Councilmember Lim was absent.)

COUNCIL ACTIONS OF NOV. 28, 2023

Approved, 4-0, remote participation for Councilmember Lim. (In favor: Councilmember Bates, Doyle Feingold, Ross, and Stehle.) (Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)



ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Approved, unanimously, the adoption of the agenda. (Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)

CONSENT AGENDA

Approved, 4-0-1, approval of the Nov. 14 regular Council meeting minutes. (In favor: Councilmember Bates, Doyle Feingold, Ross, and Stehle.) (Councilmember Lim abstained.) (Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)

www.chocolatefestival.net

Approved, unanimously: Consideration to affirm, acknowledge, and accept the 2023-2026 City of Fairfax Organizational Strategic Plan; Consideration of a resolution approving the Title VI - Civil Rights Program adoption; Consideration on approving a Mission Statement for the Office of Historic Resources; Introduction of a supplemental appropriation resolution for \$4,063,600 for FY24 fall non-discretionary and council-authorized expenditures. (Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public hearing on the City of Fairfax 2024 Legislative Program policy statements and program areas for consideration by the General Assembly for the 2024 long session. (Council action slated for Dec. 12, 2023.) (Councilmember Greenfield was absent.)



As the temperatures drop, be mindful of slippery roadways and walkways and the overuse of de-icing salt. When overused, de-icing salt can contaminate waterways and impact wildlife. Be salt smart this winter season and follow these tips to protect yourself and the environment:

- Shovel snow early and often and allow the sun to do much of the melting before applying salt. If you need to add de-icing salt for safety, apply it only after clearing away any snow and only where needed. Never place de-icing salt on snow.
- Use no more than a 12-ounce coffee mug worth of salt for about a 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares. Using salt doesn't melt ice faster.
- 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.
- Consider trying natural traction alternatives to de-icing salts, such as sand, native-blend bird seed, or zeolite crystals.
- Securely store de-icing salt and traction materials in a cool, dry place.
 Remember to sweep up and reuse extra salt or traction materials.

The city's snow removal crews are doing their part to reduce salt usage without compromising safety. Pre-treating roadways with brine when appropriate, monitoring air and pavement temperatures, and monitoring road conditions and forecasts to decide how to respond to a winter storm are just some of the techniques used to make roads safer for travel without excessive salt application. *Info: fairfaxva.gov (search 'salt')*

5 MINUTES WITH ...

TOMMY SCIBILIA

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW OMBUDSMAN



The ombudsman position was created to help residents, business owners, and developers obtain City of Fairfax building, site plan, zoning, business, and other development permits or licenses.

I have two main roles in my new position. Internally, I work with staff in various departments to help streamline and improve the development review process, identify what is and is not working, and facilitate fixing any issues. Externally, I simply help anyone who needs assistance with the development process. I'm the person you reach out to if you have questions about how to get something built on your property, how to get a new sign approved for your business, or how to navigate the city's online application portal.

We are placing more applications online through our City of Fairfax Permit Portal. This streamlines the various review processes and helps enhance review consistency and customer transparency. Customers with difficulty digitizing things or

navigating the portal can always reach out with any questions or concerns. We are here to help!

My roots and my family are here in Fairfax City. I grew up in Mosby Woods and attended Westmore Elementary School (now a dog park that I brought to City Council for a special use permit), then Providence Elementary, Katherine Johnson Middle School, and Fairfax High School.

I started with the city in 2012 as a college intern with the Community Development and Planning Department. I helped with a parking study in Old Town that summer, including looking at a parking lot that is now Old Town Square. In January 2016, after grad school, I started full-time with the city as a planner in CDP, where for about five years I served as staff liaison to the Board of Architectural Review and reviewed land use applications brought to City Council.

In late 2020, I relocated to New York City. For the first year, I worked at a permit expediting firm, assisting developers, property owners, architects, and engineers through the Department of Buildings permitting approval process. After that, I began as a planner in Montclair Township in New Jersey, where I worked for 18 months as the staff liaison for the Historic Preservation Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment. I moved back to Northern Virginia this past July and worked briefly at a land use and zoning law firm before being hired as the city's new development review ombudsman.







Across the region, municipalities are transitioning to cleaner and more sustainable means of transportation, and electric vehicles are quickly replacing traditional vehicles in our fleet. The demand for skilled and certified EV technicians is rising, and the city answered this call by hosting a regional training for EV technicians.

More than 23 fleet technicians from four municipalities, including Town of Leesburg, City of Alexandria, City of Manassas, and City of Fairfax, gathered at the city's fleet garage on Oct. 23 to be trained and certified in safety and level-one technician requirements. The training ensures fleet technicians working on EVs meet OSHA requirements.

Spearheaded by Fleet Superintendent Lee Hall, this working group of fleet technicians will help all the jurisdictions transition their fleet vehicles to EVs. The transportation sector makes up 28% of all greenhouse gas emissions entering the atmosphere. As our city fleet vehicles are replaced with electric or plug-in hybrids, and trained technicians are needed. The city plans to host a second event that covers requirements for ASE level 2 certification.

Volunteer's Crocheted Hats and Scarves Provide Warmth

In 2019, the city's cultural arts manager, Megan Dubois, launched a program called A Warm Gesture to provide

hats and scarves to people experiencing homelessness or having trouble heating their homes.

Each year, local makers are called upon to knit and crochet hats, scarves, and gloves for distribution in the D.C. metro area. Frank Taylor (pictured right), a city resident, has been active with the project since its inception. Every season he contributes a prolific number of handcrafted items that are marveled at by those

who receive them. In early December, two large bags of hats and scarves he crocheted were delivered to The Lamb Center.

"Every time I see homeless people, I feel terrible that there are people living on the streets and we're not doing anything about it," said Taylor. "So this is my small way of doing something about it."

"Frank is an artisan," said Debra Wright, City of Fairfax Arts Commissioner (pictured left). "His work is impeccably crafted and would retail at a high price if he chose to sell it, but he instead shares selflessly with others. The benefits go far beyond merely keeping someone warm. Frank's creations make others feel continued on page 7

ONEN OF INFLUENCE

Nominate Fairfax City Women of Influence

Recognize and celebrate outstanding women making a significant impact in Fairfax City by nominating them for the City of Fairfax Commission for Women's Women of Influence Award. Nominations will be accepted Jan. 3 through March 1.

The award, now in its fifth year, acknowledges and celebrates women who live in the city, are leaders who positively impact the lives of city residents, and who model what it means to "Live Life Connected."

Past recipients of the Women of Influence Award include Janice Miller, Katy Malesky, Hildie Carney, Carolyn Sutterfield, Jennifer Passey, Susan Barborek, and Janet Jaworski.

Submit nominations online at fairfaxva.gov (search "Women of Influence"). An awards ceremony will be held at 6 p.m. April 2 at Fairfax City Hall, followed by a reception. For more information or to request a paper nomination, email Lesley.Abashian@fairfaxva. gov or call 703-385-7894.





Bonita Lestina Old Town Hall Performance Series -Baltimore Composers Forum Modern Classical Music: Let It Be Said 8 p.m. Jan. 5

Bonita Lestina Old Town Hall Performance Series: U.S. Navy Band Wind Quintet 8 p.m. Jan. 19



ArtScreen: 20 FEET **FROM STARDOM** 7:30 p.m. Jan. 26, Sherwood Center

(2013) PG-13. Backup singers live in a world that lies just beyond the spotlight. Their voices bring harmony to the biggest bands in popular music, but we've had no idea who these singers are or what lives they lead, until now.



Subscribe to see what you're missing! youtube.com/ user/cityoffairfaxva

BEHIND THE BADGE

Crime Trends and Public Safety Meeting



On Nov. 16, 2023, the Fairfax City Police Department held a community meeting on crime trends and public safety. At the meeting held at the Sherwood Center, police officers

addressed issues and observations by the public, as well as trends observed by the police.

Chief Erin Schaible said the department is embracing technology and offering a plethora of programs for the public, including tools residents and business owners can use to keep themselves safe.

"We want to make sure they know their police department is engaged and problem-solving in their community," Chief Schaible said. "We are listening to their needs, and they can be assured we're taking appropriate action."

What Goes Where?

Waste Wizard & Sorting Game



www.fairfaxva.gov/recycling

Scan the QR code and use the NEW What Goes Where? Waste Wizard & Sorting Game to discover how and where to properly dispose of numerous household items (in recycling, trash, or other resources) and any special instructions as necessary.



Police presented Fairfax City crime statistics, and attendees broke into small groups to discuss concerns with police officers. The presentation is available online at fairfaxva.gov/police. The police advised residents to call 911 immediately if they feel threatened.



Steve Gurney

publisher of the Positive Aging Sourcebook February 23, 2024

HomeFit by **AARP**

June 14, 2024

VICAP Medicare 101 Workshop

November 1, 2024

at the Sherwood Center 9:30am coffee 9:45am presentation

Register by contacting the Village at 703-352-8775 or email village@fairfaxva.gov

Crocheted Hats and Scarves

continued from page 5

appreciated, respected, valued."

Taylor's sister taught him basic crochet stitches. He practiced them and watched YouTube videos before starting his first scarf. It didn't turn out well, according to him. Taylor kept at it, though, focusing on scarves for a year before moving on to hats.

Taylor considers summer his production time. He enjoys crocheting on the couch, especially in the morning. "It's a good way to relax and unwind," he said.

Wright said the program provides 300-400 hats and scarves each year, and Taylor's work accounts for much of it. "I've had people come up and say, 'Wow! This is the most beautiful thing I've ever owned.' And that's a bright spot in their day," said Wright. "You can't put a price tag on that, and I think that's why we keep doing what we're doing."

Participate in A Warm Gesture by dropping off your homemade hats and scarves at City Hall through Jan. 31.

BOY SCOUTS TROUP 1113 COLLECTS MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND POUNDS OF GROCERIES



Boy Scout Troop 1113 collected more than 1,000 pounds of groceries for St. Leo the Great's annual food drive.

Scouts gathered and sorted the nonperishable food on Nov. 4, 2023.

Troop 1113 has been serving the Fairfax community since the troop was established and meets every Wednesday.

Details about the troop can be found at troop1113.net.

Reflections on 2023

continued from page 1

increases employment opportunities and promotes economic development by training and certifying organizations in veterans workforce best practices. Fairfax City now proudly displays its V3 Certified Seal, indicating its desire to grow and improve the organization by tapping into an extremely valuable talent pool of veterans and military spouses.

- More than 50 volunteers removed nonnative invasive plants from Kutner Park in February.
- More than 250 volunteers removed 2,000+ pounds of litter from our parks, trails, and streams in March.
- We hosted workshops on how to build worm composters and rain barrels.

- We purchased three electric vehicles to begin transitioning to a zero-emission fleet, and city staff continue to test battery-powered landscaping equipment.
- We adopted a formal Title VI plan. By enforcing Title VI, we ensure individuals from diverse backgrounds have equal access to educational, healthcare, and other services supported by federal funds. The plan plays a vital role in fostering inclusivity, breaking down barriers, and promoting a society where everyone has a fair chance to thrive.
- Fairfax Village in the City, a support network for older adults who want to age in place, has grown to 78 members and 40 volunteers.

Fairfax City is distinguished by our geography as the epicenter of Northern Virginia. We are a

small gem of a community where people value the feeling of being connected and belonging. Our proximity to Virginia's most diverse university provides opportunities for us as a city, and our free CUE Bus service offers an important connection for the students at George Mason University and for our residents. What our city offers in abundance is opportunities.

As we celebrate the holidays and welcome the New Year, take a moment to reflect on how fortunate we are to call Fairfax City our home. We will face challenges in 2024 for which there may not be clear or easy answers. It's my hope that we all show up for each other in good faith to work toward the best solutions possible.

Wishing you and your family all the joys of the season! - MAYOR READ



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

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

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Large Print

Cityscene is mailed to city residents and businesses by the first of the month and published on the city website. It is published by the Communications and Marketing Office to inform the public of government actions and events Recorded of interest in the city. Information is subject to change after publication. **Braille**

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 (TTY: 711).

본 간행물과 관련하여 문의 사항이 있으시면

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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.

Voter Sticker Design Contest



All K-12 students in Fairfax City schools are invited to enter the voter sticker design contest. The entry must include "I Voted" or "Future Voter" and mention the City of Fairfax. The winning entry for the "I Voted" sticker contest will be used by the City of Fairfax Office of Elections as the official sticker for the Nov. 5, 2024, Presidential Election. The winning entry for the "Future Voter" sticker contest will be distributed to

minors during the November election and subsequent elections.

Entries will be evaluated by members of the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts, Election Board, and City of Fairfax School Board. The top three in both "I Voted" and "Future Voter" sticker categories will go on to the public voting phase.

The public voting period will run May 1-28. The design that receives the most votes in each contest during the voting period will win the contest.

Entry forms and artwork can be submitted via the city website, by mail, or in person at:

Election Sticker Project 10455 Armstrong St., Suite 123 Fairfax VA 22030

Info: fairfaxva.gov (search "election sticker")

ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED JAN. 15 THROUGH APRIL 12

HELPING HANDS

PEOPLE LIKE YOU **SERVE ON CITY BOARDS** AND COMMISSIONS

THE CITY NEEDS

Board of Building Code Appeals (two vacancies; one mechanical or plumbing vacancy and one city resident); **Board** of Zoning Appeals (two vacancies for city residents); Commission on the **Arts** (three vacancies for city residents); **Environmental Sustainability** Committee (one vacancy for city resident); Fairfax County Juvenile and **Domestic Relations District Court** Citizens Advisory Board (one vacancy for city resident); Fairfax Village in the City Advisory Board (one vacancy for at-large member); **George Mason** University Fairfax Campus Advisory Board (one vacancy); Health Systems **Agency** representative (one vacancy); Historic Fairfax City, Inc. (one vacancy); Human Services Committee (one vacancy); Personnel Advisory Board (one vacancy); Planning Commission (one vacancy for city residents).

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