



City Manager's Report

*Offices of the City Manager
Elected & Appointed Officials*

11-3-2025

City Manager – Sam Sanders (he/him)

- Received a presentation from the Fire Department regarding our use of drones in public safety. We are working to develop a full program that covers all usage of drones by the local government.
- Served as a guest speaker to Eric Scorsone's public policy class. I was joined by Ann Wall, Deputy County Executive for Albemarle County.
- Participated in a VA250/DTM50 planning meeting for events to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the 50th anniversary of the Downtown Mall, both to occur during the 4th of July weekend next year.
- October 12-13: Attended the Virginia Municipal League (VML) Annual Conference in Roanoke. The VML is an association focused on helping strengthen communities by supporting good local governments.
 - One key takeaway from the conference: healthcare and education are expected to be the top two issues for the upcoming session in Richmond; SOL score changes are likely to cause a high number of students losing eligibility for graduation, but it's a priority to increase rigor and competitiveness (e.g. 400 passing score cutoff increase to 465).

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

- CAPE has launched a weekly On-the-Spot segment with City Manager Sanders featuring highlights from different departments throughout the City and from local leaders. These updates are meant to provide in-time updates for the community and allow opportunities for everyone to be more engaged. Catch it every Tuesday on the City's [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and recently launched [TikTok](#). Do you have a TikTok account? Give us a follow!
- Recent filming and editing include Downtown Safe Halloween, the Minority Business Association Gala, and E-bike Demo Day. We highlight all events on our monthly local public affairs tv program, Inside Charlottesville. Catch new episodes on-air on the first Friday of every month on Charlottesville TV10 and previous episodes every Friday and Sunday at 7:00 PM and Saturday and Monday at 9:00 AM, or stream online on [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Vimeo](#), or CAPE's [webpage](#).
- Planning is underway for Charlottesville's Grand Illumination this year on Friday, December 5, from 5:00 - 8:00 PM at Ting Pavilion. The Planning Committee is looking forward to putting on another great event for the community!

Budget & Grants Management – Director Krisy Hammill (she/her)

- The FY 2027 [Budget Development Calendar](#) of public meetings has been posted on the budget webpage. More information regarding several City Manager Budget forums is coming soon!

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

- Charlottesville Area Technical Education Center (CATEC) and the City were recognized at the Community Climate Collaborative's recent Party for the Planet with the 2025 Carbon Crackdown Award for the recently installed 260kW solar array that will offset the power usage of the by building by over 60%.
- The City of Charlottesville has officially been accepted into the [Biophilic Cities Network](#), a global community of cities whose leaders and residents recognize the importance of the connection between humans and the natural world.
- Two energy improvement projects hit notable milestones over the past month. The solar system at CATEC was completed and activated, producing clean energy for the facility. LED lighting and efficient plumbing installations began in early September at City Hall Annex and will continue to include City Hall and Herman Key Jr. Recreation Center over the next few months.
- The Office of Sustainability co-hosted the last Climate Cafe of 2025, focused on energy burden and helping community members access energy-savings programs. The featured partner for October was the Energy Resource Hub.
- In coordination with neighborhood leaders from Kellytown, the Charlottesville Invasive Plant Partnership (CHIPP) shared the results of the neighborhood's tree survey and recruited neighborhood volunteers for upcoming trainings and vine removal efforts.
- Little High and CHIPP volunteers co-hosted a second workday in which specific residential properties were serviced for invasive vine removal. The total number of residential trees liberated from harmful vines in Little High is now up to 120.
- The Office of Sustainability Director and Climate Program Manager attended the Urban Sustainability Director's Network Eastern Regional meeting in Philadelphia, PA. They both delivered presentations sharing Charlottesville's sustainability work with other practitioners from across the region.
- The Office of Sustainability supported the internal Fire Prevention Week lunch and learn.
- All Imagine a Day without Water Art Contest entries have been received and now you can help select the Fan Favorite Winner! The art contest challenged youth to show how "Water Works" through artistic creations. Fan Favorite voting is open now through December 3. All art contest winners will be announced on December 10. To vote for your favorite art entry, visit Charlottesville.gov/ArtContest.

- The City's LED Streetlight Upgrade project is underway with the initial work requests to Dominion focused on upgrading the streetlights along the 250 Bypass from Barracks Road to River Road. The next area of focus will be along Route 29 to JPA.
- City sustainability staff supported Albemarle County colleagues at their first Youth Climate Summit where participating high school students could ask questions and receive guidance from local sustainability advocates and professionals as they work through their assigned environmental challenge.

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

- More than 300 attendees participated in the first-ever NextGen Skilled Trades Day, celebrating hands-on learning and the many rewarding career opportunities in the trades. Over 30 exhibitor stations came together to showcase in-demand professions—from construction and automotive to renewable energy and welding. Students, parents, and career seekers engaged in live demonstrations, tried tools of the trade, and connected directly with employers, educators, and training providers.
- One parent shared, “Thank you for doing this! It was really great to be able to speak with people and get a feel for the different trades. Anne from Alloy impressed me because she found a way to connect with my son who doesn't necessarily fit the tradesman stereotype. She immediately zeroed in on his strengths!” A local career counselor added, “Students and parents need to be educated about alternative paths to college. I appreciate you highlighting this awesome career path.”
- The enthusiasm extended to schools and employers alike. Piedmont Virginia Community College's (PVCC) Skilled Trades Program Manager Scott Ishler noted, “We were busy the whole time and that means a lot of people know about our programs that didn't before.” Exhibitor Beth Lucchesi from Carter Myers Automotive shared, “What a great event! I participate in so many events during the school year, but this was exceptionally well done! We are already looking forward to next year!”
- NextGen Skilled Trades Day was truly a team effort and the City's Office of Economic Development was pleased to partner with a number of local organizations and businesses for the event including PVCC, Martin Horn, Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce, Blue Ridge Home Builders Association, Dominion Custom Homes, Charlottesville Remodeling Company, Arrowhead Excavating, and CATEC. Together we are already laying the groundwork for the 2026 edition of NextGen Skilled Trades Day!

**Office of Emergency Management (OEM) – Emergency Management Coordinator
John Oprandy (he/him)**

- OEM continues to strengthen the City’s preparedness, response, and continuity capabilities through interagency coordination, planning, and public safety initiatives.
- Continuity and Emergency Planning:
 - OEM finalized updates to the City’s Continuity Plan (COOP), including departmental worksheets and succession planning. These updates ensure that essential functions can be maintained during disruptions and reflect coordination with departments citywide.
- Public Safety and Event Readiness:
 - OEM supported planning and preparedness for the No Kings demonstrations held along the City/County border at Stonefield and is currently supporting planning efforts for the upcoming 2025 Grand Illumination event, including coordination with public safety services.
- Training and Engagement:
 - Staff participated in multiple training and coordination meetings, including the National Weather Service’s hazardous weather briefings. OEM also conducted a ride-along with Charlottesville Police to strengthen interagency understanding and response coordination.
 - Last week, OEM joined Department of Social Services staff in Farmville to attend a two-day Mass Care Course to enhance the City’s readiness to open and staff an emergency shelter.
- Regional Collaboration:
 - OEM participated in two key Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) regional events:
 - Region 3 Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop (IPPW): This workshop brought together regional partners to align training and exercise priorities for the upcoming year.
 - VDEM Fall Forum: This in-person session in Lynchburg focused on regional coordination, resource sharing, and lessons learned from recent emergency responses.

Department of Finance – Director Chris Cullinan (he/him)

- The City's auditors recently completed their on-site field work for the FY25 audit. The audit is on-track to be completed by December with the auditors making their presentation to City Council on December 15.

City Treasurer – Jason Vandever (he/him)

- The Treasurer's Office has been focused on the production and distribution of second half 2025 real estate and personal property tax bills, which are due

December 5. Electronic notices were sent on October 24, and mailed notices should be in the mail by November 3. The Treasurer's Office can be reached by phone at 434-970-3146 or by email at citytreas@charlottesville.gov with any questions.

ADA Coordinator – Paul Rudacille (he/him)

- The City continues to make progress in implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan. This plan outlines how the City will remove accessibility barriers in public spaces and facilities over time. Major progress this period includes preparation for construction contracts, allocation of funds for barrier removal, and enhanced staff training to ensure all City programs, facilities, and communications are accessible to everyone.
- Repairs to correct vertical height displacements (uneven sidewalk surfaces) will take place in the same areas as the curb ramp work. Funding for this project includes both ADA Transition Plan funds and Public Works funds, totaling approximately \$350,000 from the ADA program.
- City Council approved the movement of funds on October 21, allowing Public Works to proceed with contract signing. Work began according to schedule November 1.
- City staff training has begun to improve accessibility for digital content such as PDFs, Excel spreadsheets, and PowerPoint presentations. The City is tracking completion of this course to ensure compliance.
- Nathan Newell in the Information Technology (IT) department continues to coordinate efforts with the City's website developer to ensure that the City's online content meets accessibility standards.

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

- In their next meeting on November 6, Human Rights Commissioners will discuss City policy recommendations for presentation to City Council. As with the legislative agenda recommendations, the Commission will focus its City policy recommendations on housing access and stability across protected classes and economic status. Following adoption of recommendations by vote on November 6, the Commission will present their written recommendations to Council on or before November 30.
- Office of Human Rights staff attended the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA) annual conference during the week of October 6. At this conference, staff met with representatives from human rights agencies from across the United States, Canada, and Europe. Staff learned about current trends in human rights protection and will be considering how to apply this knowledge to our local work.

- The Office of Human Rights currently has 21 open discrimination complaint cases; one is awaiting response to offers of alternative dispute resolution, 10 are in the process of alternative dispute resolution, six are under investigation, and two are under review for determination after investigation.