



City Manager's Report

City Departments

6-15-2026

City Manager – Sam Sanders (he/him)

- June 3
 - Chief Kochis and Chris Engel joined me for a meeting with Holiday Drive business owners regarding the one-stop homeless services center being planned for 2000 Holiday Drive. It was a good meeting where information was shared, and concerns were heard and responded to. All questions were acknowledged and answered with information that is currently available. A future meeting will be held once details become clearer regarding construction and use of the site.
- June 4
 - Attended an employee appreciation cookout at Charlottesville Area Transit (CAT). It was a great opportunity to thank our transit team for their service to the community.
 - Participated in a retreat for the Office of Budget and Grants Management. Director Hammill convened a session for her team to help with planning and coordination of work efforts surrounding the critical function the budget plays across the organization. I was able to share my vision for the organization and how the team fits into the picture.
- June 5
 - Joined Chris Engel for a business visit with Brian Ralston of General Atomics, a local operation in the intelligence and security industry. We discussed their plans for expansion locally and how they are climbing the list of top employers for the City. It was interesting and impressive to hear the amazing things happening right in our community.
 - Continued conversations with PACEM about offering overnight shelter year-round as an emergency project.
- June 8
 - The City hosts a New Employee Orientation bimonthly and I (or one of my backups) kickoff with a Welcome to the City. This week, we had a host of youth interns join and it was nice to see the interest in serving the community. Hopefully I planted a seed to recruit some future public administrators to serve the community.
 - City and Schools leadership met to review pupil transportation planning for the summer and upcoming school years we all agree we need to study the efficiencies and opportunities for ensuring safe and reliable service for schools.
 - Misty Graves and Assistant City Manager Roman joined me for a discussion about homeless services coordination with Shayla Washington, BRACH Executive Director. We have a series of items moving and will continue to work through Misty.

- June 9
 - Joined Jay James for my monthly WINA segment. We discussed homelessness interventions, homeless services planning, and Charlottesville City Schools' early learning center.
 - Monthly Albemarle County check-in with Jeff Richardson. We mostly reviewed our recent participation in the Chamber2Chamber visit to Chapel Hill. We discussed next step actions and coordinating further discussion in the upcoming October 6 joint meeting of City Council and Board of Supervisors.
 - Participated in a segment with Dan Schutte at CBS19 to highlight the Cville Spectacular Fireworks Show atop Carter Mountain on July 4 and the 50th Anniversary of the Downtown Mall which is a day-long party on July 3.

Deputy City Manager (DCM) – James Freas (he/him)

- From May 12 to 15, James attended the Congress for New Urbanism in northwest Arkansas. Notable sessions included those by Economist Raj Chetty on research-backed methods for achieving intergenerational prosperity and several sessions on housing and multi-modal transportation. The region itself provided an excellent example of commuter and recreational bike infrastructure at a regional scale.
- On May 19, James met with Friends of Charlottesville Downtown to discuss economic development initiatives related to the Downtown Mall.
- Also on the 19th, James met with a representative of the Virginia High Speed Rail Alliance and the National Rail Passengers Association to learn more about the potential future of passenger rail in Charlottesville.
- On May 27-29, James participated in the Chamber2Chamber event in Chapel Hill/Carrboro, NC. Notable sessions focused on regional collaboration, affordable housing development, and Main Street-focused economic development.
- On June 1, James attended a meeting with the Building Inspections division of Neighborhood Development Services to discuss the current challenges with plan review and inspection timelines as the City works through vacancies.
- On June 5, James participated in an introductory meeting hosted by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission with Maria Zimmerman, the new Director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. The meeting included discussion of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Regional Transit Authority and planning work being initiated by the state around rail development, public transportation, and transit-oriented development.

Utilities – Director Lauren Hildebrand (she/her)

- The Charlottesville Department of Utilities continues its ongoing replacement of outdated infrastructure throughout the City's water and gas distribution systems with the West Main Street Utilities Replacement Project. Scheduled to break ground later this month, this project will replace aging water and gas infrastructure and improve service by bringing the water and gas systems in the area up to current industry standards, significantly enhance reliability, reduce the risk of future service disruptions, and lower routine maintenance costs.
- Utilities held an open house for the project on June 11, inviting the community to come learn about Phase One of the project, to understand what to expect during construction, and to ask questions. Attendees were able to speak with representatives from the Department of Utilities, the City's traffic engineer, engineering firm AH Engineering Consultants, and the contracting company Miller Pipeline. Utilities communicated the upcoming work and open house with social media posts, a community press release, via a news story on NBC29, and by sending over 100 letters to those who may be directly impacted by Phase One.
- The Department of Utilities is committed to providing first-rate utility services, and the West Main Street Utilities Replacement Project will contribute to strengthening the long-term sustainability, resilience, and efficiency of the gas and water distribution systems for all of Charlottesville and will help ensure the community continues to receive reliable, high-quality utility services.
- Updates on Phase One, as well as other pertinent information surrounding the project's progress are available at www.connect.charlottesville.gov/WestMainUtilitiesPr.

Parks & Recreation – Director Riaan Anthony (he/him)

- Outdoor Pools and Spray Grounds have opened for the 2026 season. More information can be found at: [Outdoor Pools & Spray Grounds | Charlottesville, VA](#).
- Registration is open for summer recreational programs. Customers can view and sign-up for programs online at: [Summer Recreation Programs](#).
- Summer youth golf programs are available at Meadowcreek Golf Course through First Tee Virginia Blue Ridge and the PGA. For more information and to sign-up, visit: Golf Lessons in [Charlottesville, VA | Meadowcreek Golf Course](#).
- Summer camps begin Monday, June 15 and run through Friday, July 24. Registration is 98% full, and limited spots remain. If you are interested in enrolling, please register online at [Summer Camps](#).
- Recreation centers will have modified operating schedules from June 15 – July 31 due to summer camps. Key and Tonsler Recreation Centers will be open to

the public beginning at 5:00 PM Monday-Friday. Carver Recreation Center's gymnasium will have reduced availability Monday-Friday. Please refer to the [Carver Open Gym Calendar](#) for the most up-to-date information.

- Registration is currently open for a Pickleball Ladder League that will begin at the end of June/Beginning of July. We have 60 player slots available for the program: [Pickleball League Registration](#).
- We had a great turnout for our first Splash Sunday of the year! Attendees especially enjoyed the water inflatables. Please join us for our next Splash Sunday on July 26 from 5:00-7:00 PM at Washington Park Pool. It will include free swimming, kids' inflatables, a live DJ, and hands-on activities and games.
- The new playground equipment for 5-12-year-olds has been installed at Meade Park. Voted on by the community, this playground design features ramping throughout, making it a more inclusive play space for people with mobility challenges.
- Saturdays at City Market will focus on fun and creativity this summer! Kids can join us for the return of the Two Bite Challenge. Each week we will feature a fruit or vegetable sample; take two bites and earn \$5 in POP Bucks to use on any fresh produce. We will also have local artist Joe Vena there to lead creative and interactive art activities for all.
- The irrigation replacement project at Meadowcreek Golf Course is complete. The course replaced its 50+ year old irrigation system due to it out-living its useful life and will now deliver more consistent and efficient water supply to the golf course.
- The Adaptive Program had a successful overnight trip to Great Wolf Lodge. Eight participants attended, and each participant shared at least one new experience along with many laughs and opportunities to build new friendships.
- The Senior Program went on a successful field trip to the Science Museum of Virginia that sparked interest from new participants and encouraged community engagement.
- Prep work for the native grass and wildflower meadow installation has begun at McIntire Park. This will convert one acre of former golf course land to a native meadow, which will be beneficial for insects, birds, and the overall biodiversity of the site. Seeds will be planted in September.
- Play All Day VA takes place on June 21, the longest day of the year. We invite residents to explore our community, try new activities, enjoy the outdoors, and connect with neighbors at no cost. From early morning forest bathing to afternoon roller skating to evening pet-friendly gatherings, Play All Day VA aims to demonstrate that recreation is accessible, welcoming, and meant for everyone. Daily entrance fees will be waived at all recreation centers for the day. More information and a link to reserve tickets for many of the activities can be found at [Play All Day VA](#).

Information Technology (IT) – Director Steve Hawkes (he/him)

- The IT Department is pleased to share several accomplishments and updates from May.
 - Helpdesk & Support Services
 - The IT team completed 299 Helpdesk support tickets in May, with 98% of customer survey responses rating service as “very good” or “outstanding.” The Helpdesk team also deployed seven new PCs to employees as part of our ongoing device refresh program.
 - Departmental Initiatives
 - The IT Department held its annual cleanup day and luncheon in early May. The event provides an opportunity to dispose of outdated equipment, refresh workspaces, and review departmental file retention practices. The Department’s leadership team also finalized the draft of the IT Strategic Plan, which will guide initiatives for the coming years.
- Citywide Initiatives
 - AI User Group
 - The City’s AI User Group met in May for a presentation from a group member demonstrating practical applications of AI in their workflow, followed by member check-ins.
 - Annual Website Meeting
 - IT facilitated the City’s annual website meeting for all website editors. The meeting included presentations on website analytics, new platform features, and ADA compliance best practices.
 - GIS User Group
 - The quarterly GIS User Group meeting was held in May and facilitated by the City’s GIS Coordinator, focusing on updates to mapping tools and data resources.
- Applications & Systems Enhancements
 - The Applications team completed updates to several City systems during May, including:
 - Updates to the City’s Leave Request System
 - Upgrades to database servers
 - New reports created for the Helpdesk System
 - Professional Development
- The City’s SAP Engineers attended an annual industry user conference.
 - Participation in these events ensures staff remain informed about national best practices and emerging technologies.

Public Works – Director Steven Hicks (he/him)

- Summer 2026 Paving Program
 - Public Works plans to complete pavement resurfacing on the following streets during the remainder of the summer:
 - Grove Avenue (Hazel Street to High Street)
 - 12th Street NE (Market Street to Meriwether Street)
 - Rialto Street (Elliott Avenue to End)
 - 10th Street NW (Grady Avenue to Wertland Avenue)
 - Cabell Avenue (Preston Avenue to Grady Avenue)
 - St. George Avenue (St. Clair Avenue to Coleman Street)
 - Sheridan Avenue (Calhoun Street to Dead End)
- Charlottesville Area Transit (CAT) – Transit Bus Charger Installation
 - Construction of the CAT electric bus charging infrastructure has been completed. Delivery of the new Gillig battery electric bus is anticipated in the coming weeks, marking another milestone in the City’s transition toward a more sustainable transit fleet.
- Downtown Mall Crossings Project
 - Pedestrian access at the 4th Street crossing has been shifted from the center of the Mall to the south side onto newly installed brick pavers. A similar traffic shift is planned at the 2nd Street crossing as construction progresses. Brick removal and replacement activities will continue within the center and north portions of both crossings, along with concrete placement for sidewalk tie-ins at 2nd and 4th Streets. Construction is being phased to maintain at least one pedestrian access route on each side of the Mall whenever possible. Areas affected by construction will be reopened as work is completed.
- Park Street Improvements Completed
 - Public Works has completed pavement resurfacing, striping, and targeted ADA curb ramp upgrades along Park Street. As part of this project, the City incorporated mobility improvements within the existing roadway footprint by adding bicycle accommodations in both directions. The improvements include a climbing lane on the east side of Park Street from Route 250 bridge to the crest of the hill and a climbing lane on the west side from Melbourne Avenue south to the crest of the hill. These improvements, combined with updated pavement markings, enhance multimodal travel options and improve bicycle safety throughout the corridor.