



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Greenlaw and Members of City Council
FROM: Beverly R. Cameron, City Manager
DATE: February 5, 2013
SUBJECT: City Manager's Update

Highlights of major activities and other notable developments:

Downtown Arts and Cultural District Applications Up for 2013 – The number of arts and art host businesses applying this year for Downtown Arts and Cultural District incentives is up forty percent over 2012, a welcome development. Participating businesses get up to a \$250 reduction on the 2013 business license tax, and new and expanding businesses get full relief from BPOL for five years, plus waiver of any applicable permit fees up to \$2,000. The tax incentives for existing businesses run through 2015.

Downtown Arts and Cultural District – Approved Applications, 2011 – 2013

Business Type	2011	2012	2013
Existing Arts Businesses	16	19	27
Art Host Businesses	5	11	14
New or Expanding Arts Businesses	3	0	1 (to date)
Totals	24	30	42

EDA Annual Report for 2012 - The Economic Development Authority recently published its 2012 Annual Report, which summarizes 37 grants totaling \$230,931 resulting in direct investment by the applicants of \$2,315,600. In an effort to spur revitalization along the Princess Anne Street corridor, in December the EDA hired Frazier Associates to prepare an assessment of the building facades and sites from Fauquier Street to Jefferson Davis Highway (Route 1). The EDA expects the study to lead to several façade improvement matching grant projects in 2013. The report can be viewed [here](#).

Historicon Attendees Book Hotel Room Nights Early - The Department of Economic Development and Tourism staff is tracking hotel room nights for [Historicon](#), the annual convention of the miniature gaming society which is returning to the Fredericksburg

Expo Center July 18-21, 2013. Currently, Historicon attendees have already reserved 905 room nights in the city. A total of 1,015 rooms were sold for the 2012 event.

New Economic Development Website Traffic Increases - Since the Economic Development website was first launched in September, traffic to the site has more than doubled. Google Analytics reports 2,014 additional unique visits and a higher average visit duration time of 3:45 minutes, an increase of 2:08 minutes over a 90-day period. The Department of Economic Development and Tourism attributes this increase to the new design, quick navigation, functionality, resources and links.

The website is updated and refreshed on a weekly and sometimes daily basis to give businesses and the general public the most current news, meeting/seminar dates and economic development announcements. Check out the new site at www.fredericksburgva.com.

Traffic Control Training - On January 8 and 14, the Safety Office and Department of Public Works coordinated with the Virginia Department of Transportation to conduct Basic Work Zone Traffic Control Training. VDOT Instructor Allan Grady trained 24 Public Works and Parks Maintenance employees on the proper techniques to set up, dismantle, and work safely in a traffic work zone. It was a long day of interactive training and practical testing of knowledge learned. This required training not only increases employee safety and capability, it also enhances the safety of citizens who pass through active work zones in the City.

Weight Watchers at Work - As an adjunct to the [Lawfit](#) program promoting health and fitness in the workplace, the Police Department has also established a Weight Watchers at Work program. The group participants, made up of twenty-two employees and one spouse, are both male and female officers and civilians who will meet with a Weight Watchers counselor one evening per week during the seventeen weeks of the pilot program. At the first weigh-in just one week after the start of the program, the group had collectively lost over 50 pounds.

2013 Point-In-Time Count - On January 24, members of the Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care (CoC) conducted the Point-In-Time annual census of homeless residents located throughout Planning District 16. The PIT is an important tool in collecting data on the number, characteristics, and service needs of individuals, families, and unaccompanied children experiencing homelessness. The resulting data is a critical component of local homeless program development and the basis for grant funding requests. Over a 24-hour period, service providers and volunteers, including Councilor Matt Kelly, visited soup kitchens and outdoor locations to survey homeless residents. School Homeless Liaisons documented 801 school-aged and Head Start children who are defined as homeless by the Department of Education.

The CoC also sponsored the PIT Services Fair, which provided outreach and benefits for surveyed clients. New in 2013 was the participation of the [DMV2Go van](#), which provided services, including the issuance of identification cards, to over 50 individuals.

With identification, homeless residents qualify for benefits which can be the catalyst for stabilization and re-housing. The detailed 2013 PIT report, including breakdowns by jurisdiction, subpopulation, and need, will be published in April 2013 and forwarded to City Council. For questions regarding the 2013 PIT effort, please contact Marne Sherman, Community Development Planner at mesherman@fredericksburgva.gov.



DMV2Go van