

News Release

For immediate release



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City of Fredericksburg committed to continued public safety

FREDERICKSBURG, VA – June 30, 2020: As organized protests continue to raise awareness about key issues in our community, the City of Fredericksburg remains committed to putting safety first while advancing important conversations and ensuring that all members of our community are respected.

As the beloved center of the community, the City of Fredericksburg recognizes the role it plays in ensuring the downtown area provides a welcoming atmosphere for everyone. While the overwhelming majority of demonstrations to date have been well-organized, safe, orderly and peaceful, the City also recognizes that standard processes must be established to assist organizers in their efforts to keep their supporters and the surrounding community safe at all times. The City will continue to support permitted protest activity and will continue expedited reviews of event permit applications to ensure proactive planning measures are consistently managed for any and all events.

The City, starting at 12:01 a.m. Monday, July 6, 2020, will be enforcing traffic-safety laws Citywide after three weeks of altered traffic management during a time that allowed spontaneous demonstrations to occur. For the safety of all, police will inform all demonstrators who are protesting without an approved permit in the streets that they are violating traffic-safety laws and thus could be subject to a citation. Those who continue to protest in the street without an approved permit could be issued a traffic citation.

After much discussion, including dialogue with protesters over the past 10 days, City Manager Tim Baroody issued an amendment to a previously signed executive order. The City of Fredericksburg will continue to support peaceful, organized and permitted demonstrations – while continuing to implement necessary changes in the community that will start taking effect over the coming months.

“It is unfortunate that we are being relegated to request access to exercise our First Amendment rights, but we understand the City’s intentions behind their decision,” The Melanin Cooperative stated. The Cooperative is focused on “combatting racial inequality based in Fredericksburg,” according to its Twitter page.

“We will continue to work with City officials to bring positive change to our community and reach the goals that we have outlined,” Melanin’s statement continued. “We will continue to protest

peacefully in hopes we can build a stronger, more-inclusive community for future generations, and it is our hope through these peaceful activities we can dispel rumors surrounding our actions.”

Those seeking to coordinate an expression-of-speech event within the City of Fredericksburg should apply in advance at EventPermit.Fxbg.com. For more information about event permits, please call Fredericksburg’s Parks, Recreation and Events Department at 540-372-1086 or email events@fredericksburgva.gov.

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