

News Release
For immediate release



For more information, contact:
Sonja Cantu, Public Information Officer
540-372-1010
spcantu@fredericksburgva.gov

Riverfront Park Set for Partial Opening on October 9th

(Fredericksburg, VA) September 23, 2021 – Riverfront Park, located along Sophia Street in Historic Downtown Fredericksburg, is preparing for a partial opening to the public on Saturday, October 9 -- the same day a ceremony will be held to mark the completion of the nearby Chatham Bridge.

This nearly 4-acre public space will feature Rappahannock River views with open space, event space, an interactive water feature, a meadow area, and a children’s play area. Limited river access will also be a feature, complemented by upgraded dock infrastructure. (Motorized boat launch and fishing opportunities remain available at City Dock.)

Originally anticipated to open in the spring of this year – construction was delayed due to supply chain issues and playground equipment safety inspections. Some fencing will remain around the riverfront meadow and the open event space so that the vegetation can properly establish. (More than 100 trees are being planted now, and the event space is being over seeded.)

Solar-powered lighting has been installed and smart-technology infrastructure will provide free public Wi-Fi and security cameras once the park opens. Abundant parking is available across the street in the Sophia Street Parking Garage, with free parking available for the first 4 hours (and then \$1 each additional hour).

Riverfront Park is prepared for future improvements as well. The park is fully plumbed and pad ready for future restrooms, pending the new FEMA map updates expected next year. The stage area is prepped with all electrical work, and City staff is already working to attract private donations for a potential stage. The park will also be a central hub for pedestrian activity as Fredericksburg continues to pursue trail development, with efforts that will eventually link Motts Run Reservoir to Dixon Park. The park’s signage will also work to interpret and share the City’s rich history with new audiences who visit.

The City investment in this park is a fraction of the \$40+ million in public investments (more than half is the Commonwealth’s Chatham bridge project) in the past decade or so in Downtown with trails, colonial lights, brick pavers, Small Area Plans, the public parking garage, etc. These investments are meant, in part, to create sustainability for our business community as they increasingly upgrade properties and create jobs in our Downtown Fredericksburg.

These investments (public and private) are creating the next level of positive evolution in the region's only authentic and historic downtown - with long established heritage assets, a thriving foodie scene, an enviable arts scene, and now a more robust entertainment and gathering space. With these projects, the City is reconnecting and better activating our riverfront while supporting the revitalization of the Sophia Street corridor. With the addition of the Bankside Trail project, the City is pushing better connectivity to Stafford County trails and the East Coast Greenway. This connectivity strategy brings more focus and future opportunity to the Old Stone Warehouse and other important properties. With continued vegetation management, increased vistas, and many of the other opportunities identified by the City sponsored *Streetsense* study, the City is poised to bring significant energy to long envisioned *Face the River* initiatives. In the heart of the city, this new park is where it all comes together.

For more information on the Riverfront Park project, please visit <https://www.fredericksburgva.gov/982/Riverfront-Park-Project>

###