

CITY OF STAUNTON

ACTIVITY REPORT HIGHLIGHTS



By the Numbers

Crews began plowing at 8 p.m., Jan. 24

29 hours of precipitation

7 inches of snow, 1 inch of hard-packed ice

8,100 gallons brine solution

305 tons of salt used

“Snowcrete” Covers Staunton

Public Works and Parks & Recreation crews responded proactively to a significant late-January winter storm that brought nearly seven inches of snow capped with more than an inch of hard-packed ice over 29 hours. Crews treated primary, secondary, and select residential roads with approximately 8,100 gallons of brine before deploying 28 pieces of equipment throughout the city. Persistently low temperatures limited early salt effectiveness and the unusually thick ice created challenging conditions. Public Works strengthened its response by engaging eight private contractors with 26 additional pieces of equipment, and utilizing inmate labor to assist downtown. Despite slower progress due to the storm’s severity, crews remained dedicated, ensuring thorough snow and ice removal into February.



January 2026

Dispatched Calls for Service*

Police	2,237
Fire & Rescue	336

Average Response Time
month/year

Police	4'18"
Fire & Rescue	4'57"

New Faces in City Hall

For the new year, you may see some new faces around City Hall! From left to right: Alex Efird is interning with the City Manager's Office while completing his MPA program at Virginia Tech; Matt Sheaves joined Community Development; Anna Leavitt has started as the City's Economic Mobility Special Assistant; and Sheena Logan joined the tourism team.



Fun Fact!

Over 1,500 items were checked out on Jan. 24 (the day before the storm) from the Staunton Public Library. One of the busiest days in recent history.



From the City Manager

Budget Season Begins

The Fiscal Year 2027 budget process is underway for the City of Staunton. City Council held a joint work session with the Staunton City School Board on Jan. 22 to discuss the FY 2027 school budget and capital priorities. We will present the proposed budget on March 26. Upcoming budget meetings and public hearings include:

Thursday, Feb. 26, 7:00 p.m. – Draft Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). **Thursday, March 26, 7:00 p.m.** – FY 2027 Proposed Budget presentation. **Thursday, April 2, 5:00 p.m.** – Budget and CIP work session. **Thursday, April 9, 5:00 p.m.** – Budget work session (joint meeting with City Schools) and 7:00 p.m. – Public hearing on all budget ordinances. **Thursday, April 16, 7:00 p.m.** – Budget work session (if needed). **Thursday, April 23, 5:00 p.m.** – Budget work session and 7:00 p.m. – Adoption of the FY 2027 Budget and FY 2027–2031 Capital Improvement Plan



800 Deployments Earns a Pup Cup

Tuesday, Jan. 13 was retirement day for K-9 Wilson. Wilson has served with his handler, MPO Owens, since March 2019. Together, they spent countless hours training and had over 800 deployments across his career. Wilson has assisted with narcotics interdiction, suspect apprehensions, and assisted with locating missing juveniles and elderly persons.



January 2026 Activity Report

Community Development

Key Construction Project Updates

Barristers Row

With renovations at 5 Lawyers Row now complete, the Barristers Row complex in downtown offers 11 hotel-style suites. *Pictured below: Exterior of 5 Lawyers Row and one of the suites at 5 Lawyers Row.*



Arcadia Project

A new building permit has been issued for 123 E Beverly St. with construction expected to start in February.

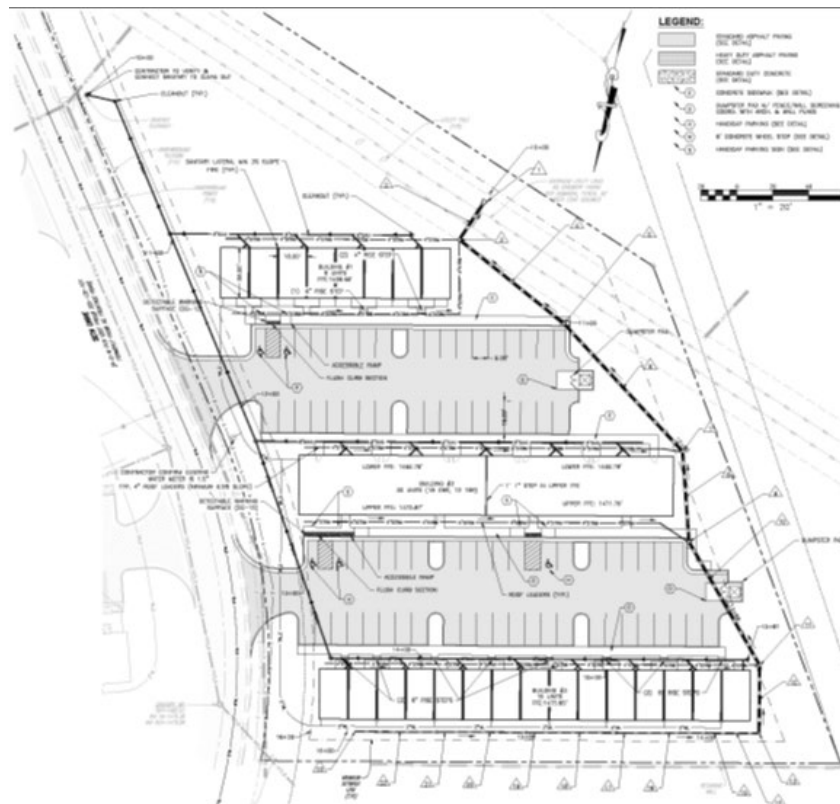
Gypsy Hill Park Pool House

Construction is moving forward at the Gypsy Hill Park pool house. Inspections are ongoing, and the facility is scheduled to open for the 2026 pool season.

New Apartment Complex Planned for Middlebrook Park

The city is currently reviewing the first site plan submittal for a new residential development at 1007 Seth Dr. The proposed Middlebrook Park Apartments will feature 53 total units, offering a mix of 23 townhome-style apartments and 30 traditional-style apartments. The complex is planned to include 41 two-bedroom units and 12 one-

bedroom units. This project is undergoing administrative review. The next steps include site plan approval and building permit. *Pictured below is a draft of the site plan.*



Reports

Environmental Division Inspections Report

The Environmental Programs Division of Community Development completed erosion and sediment control inspections on residential and commercial construction sites throughout the city as follows:

- Residential Construction – 40 active sites with 97 inspections in January
- Commercial Construction – 13 active sites with 26 inspections in January

Housing Division

Housing Commission Seats Filled; First Meeting Scheduled for March 5

At its Jan. 22 meeting, City Council approved the last three nominations for the city's newly formed Housing Commission. The responsibilities of the nine-member commission include helping to move the goals of the city's Housing Strategy forward, providing expertise and guidance to City Council and leadership to increase the amount and quality of affordable housing, and reviewing the Housing Strategy periodically. The Housing Commission will provide a written report to City Council annually. The

members of the Housing Commission are Philippe Bone, Lydia Campbell, Isaac Izzillo, Hans Kettering, Chris Lassiter, Robin Miller, Lou Siegel, Nehemias Velez, and Susan Venable. Vice Mayor Brad Arrowood will serve as City Council's liaison. The commission will meet quarterly, with their first meeting scheduled for March 5 at 5:30 p.m.

Planning & Zoning Division

Planning Commission

At the Jan. 15 meeting, the Planning Commission reviewed several key items, beginning with the annual update to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which is set for City Council presentation in February and final adoption in April. The Commission recommended approval to rezone the former Dunsmore Business College property at 912 W Beverley St. from High Density Residential (R-4) to Mixed Use Business Conditional (B-5C). This recommendation was made with specific proffers offered by the applicant.

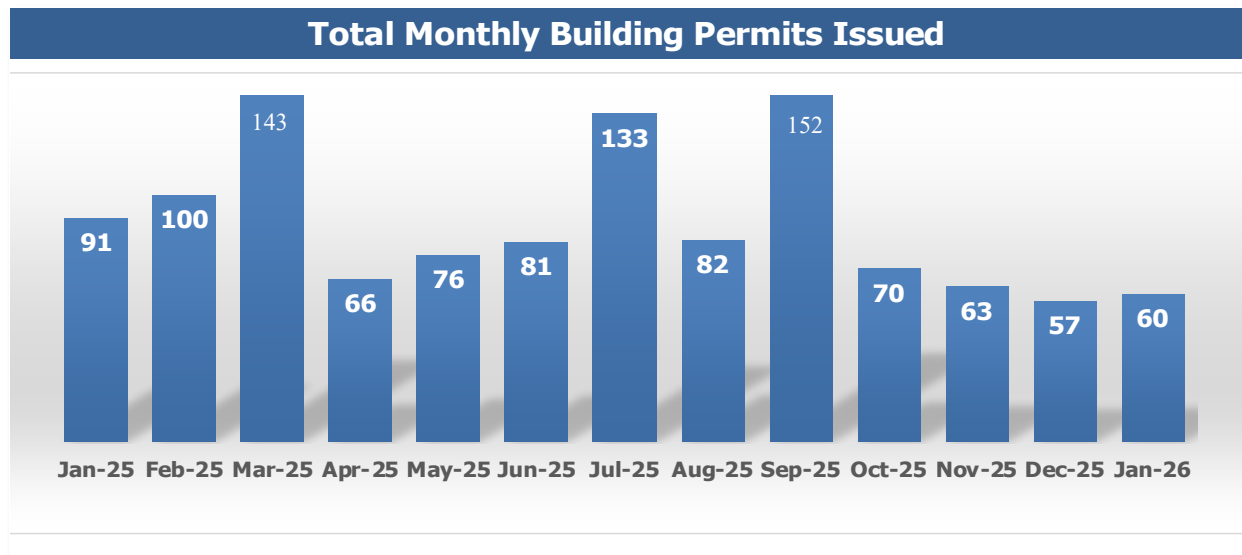
Building Division

Welcome to our new Property Maintenance Inspector

Matt Sheaves joins the Building Division as Property Maintenance Inspector. In this role, Matt will be instrumental in ensuring that buildings and properties throughout the city meet safety and maintenance standards. His work will involve conducting inspections, addressing code violations, and collaborating with property owners to help maintain the safety, appearance, and quality of our neighborhoods.

Building Construction and Related Activity

Permits Issued	Jan-26	Jan-25	# Chg	% Chg
New Residential	6	6	0	0.0%
Residential Renovations	9	16	-7	-43.8%
Electrical Permits	15	27	-12	-44.4%
Mechanical Permits	8	18	-10	-55.6%
Plumbing Permits	9	17	-8	-47.1%
Commercial New-Renovations	5	2	3	150.0%
Miscellaneous	8	5	3	60.0%
Total	60	91	-31	-34.1%



Economic Development

Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Efforts

Staff held a BRE strategy meeting with our partners at Virginia Economic Development Partnership on Jan. 15 to develop a deliberate approach for relationship building with Staunton's large employers in 2026. This proactive planning ensures that the city maintains strong connections with its major job providers and is well-positioned to support any expansion opportunities that arise throughout the year. The ribbon cutting at Joint Chiropractic on Jan. 9 celebrated a new business opening and demonstrated the city's continued growth in the health and wellness sector.

Enterprise Zone

A Department of Housing and Community Development facilitated Enterprise Zone Training on Jan. 14 was open to the public and other localities. This training provided business owners, developers, and neighboring jurisdictions with a comprehensive overview of the state incentives available to businesses in the Enterprise Zone.

Regional Partnerships

Staff engaged with the Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce (GARCC) on Jan. 6 to discuss participation in the Wharf District Marketing Support Program, and on Jan. 8 delivered a presentation to Leadership Greater Augusta alongside Augusta County and Waynesboro partners through GARCC.

Staff participated in a Virginia Economic Developers Association (VEDA) impactED professional development session on Jan. 12 and attended the VEDA Downtown Special Interest Group meeting on Jan. 13, where Assistant Director of Economic Development Jessica Blythe was named co-chair.

Special Initiatives

The Marketing Support Program for the Wharf-area business owners received formal City Council approval following Ms. Blythe's presentation of the proposal on Jan. 8.

The Economic Mobility and Opportunity Special Assistant (EMOSA), Anna Leavitt, started on Jan. 5. Staff participated in an ICMA webinar on Jan. 21 to review grant expectations, followed by a check-in on Jan. 22 to assess early progress and direction. Meetings on Jan. 30 focused on reviewing the equity tools Ms. Leavitt developed and orienting her to the roles and responsibilities of the Economic Development department — laying a strong foundation for the work ahead.

Community Engagement and Professional Development

Ms. Blythe participated in a panel discussion at the Chamber Women in Business event on Jan. 23, sharing her career switcher journey to a regional audience of business leaders and entrepreneurs.

Staff engaged with the Staunton Augusta Arts Center on Jan. 15 to discuss the process for reviewing and approving public art requests — an initiative that supports vibrancy and placemaking efforts that benefit the business community.

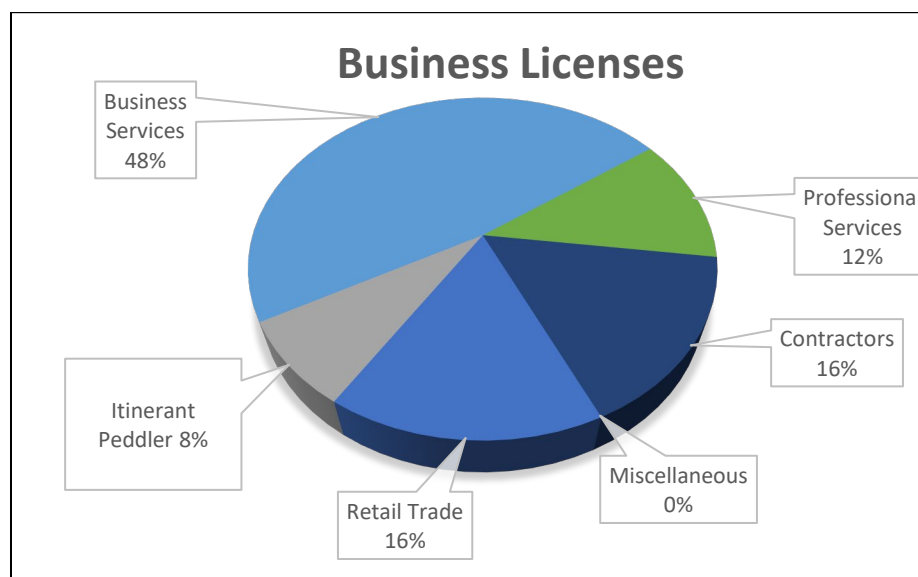
Business License Activity

During the month of January, the Commissioner of Revenue's office issued 25 new business licenses, compared to 15 the previous month, representing a 66.7% increase. This month a year ago, 24 new business licenses were issued.

The Business Services sector accounted for 48% of the of the total licenses issued in January, and the Retail Trade sector accounted for 16%, Contractors accounted for 16%. Professional Services accounted for 12% and 8% were Itinerant Peddlers. There weren't any Miscellaneous business licenses issued for the month.

Year to date licenses issued: 25

Licenses issued previous year for same period: 24



Finance

- The department issued 7,647 utility bills and general bills totaling \$1,123,017 during January.
- Collection activities in January resulted in the recovery of \$3,901 in delinquent utility invoices.
- The Utility Payment Office processed 2,718 receipts in the amount of \$642,711 during January.
- The department processed 379 City and 188 School accounts payable checks totaling \$4,592,450. 857 City and 576 Schools payroll-related advices totaling \$2,954,290 and 31 ACH debit/wire transactions totaling \$2,508,431 during January.
- The FY2027-FY2031 five-year capital improvement plan was presented to the Planning Commission in January. A public hearing will take place at the Planning Commission meeting on Feb. 19 and the updated plan will be introduced to City Council on Feb. 26.
- The FY2027 Budget development is well underway. In-person budget meetings continued through January and will wrap up in February. The deadline for outside agency requests for FY2027 budget funds was Jan. 23. The FY2027 budget will be presented to City Council on March 26.
- The banking transition to First Bank & Trust is nearly complete. Over the next several months Finance will continue to reach out to vendors who have uncashed checks on the old Truist accounts.
- The department submitted data and other pertinent information to Maguire Associates of Virginia, Inc. for preparation of the FY2025 Cost Allocation Plan. The cost allocation plan distributes central service overhead costs such as finance, city manager, engineering, and legal to operating departments such as public works, parks and recreation, and public safety.
- The department assisted the Public Works Department in completing an emergency procurement for snow and ice removal services; eight contractors assisted.
- The department assisted the Engineering Department publish bid A00126 for the Water Treatment Plant Clearwell Cover Replacement.

Fire & Rescue

- Staunton Fire and Rescue responded to 336 incidents in January, with an average response time of 4 minutes and 57 seconds.

- Staff received over 458 hours of training for the month.
- Staff conducted 50 business fire safety inspections and 19 re-inspections in January.
- Captain Siron began the planning process for the state-sponsored Rescue Challenge, to be hosted by the region in May.
- During the storm and subfreezing temperatures, crews responded to a warehouse fire off of Hayes Avenue. The fire was caused by ice dislodging from the roof and sliding into a boiler ventilation pipe.
- Staff attended the annual Staunton Augusta Rescue Squad's banquet. Both the Fire Department and the Police Department were recognized for the assistance they provided during the Rescue Squad's call of the year.
- Received the first pictures of our two new pumpers that were ordered in June of 2023, now in production.
- Station 2 personnel attended the Swoope Volunteer Fire Department's banquet.
- The updated Basic Plan of the Staunton, Augusta, and Waynesboro Emergency Operations Plan was adopted by City Council.
- The Fire Marshal's Office issued three hazmat storage permits; conducted one fire alarm inspection, one final sprinkler inspection; reviewed three site plans and one fire alarm plan, in addition to teaching numerous CPR courses to the Police Department and 14 other city employees.

Human Resources

Employee Actions

The following employee actions were processed:

Terminated:

Full Time—4

Part Time/Seasonal—1

Hired:

Full Time—8

Part Time—9

Retired—0

Activities

Human Resources staff members took part in the following activities in January:

Recruitment:

- Initiated recruitment for the following positions:
 - Sanitation Worker – Public Works
 - Probation Officer – Blue Ridge Court Services
 - Police Officer
- Continued recruitment for the following positions:
 - Executive Director – Staunton Downtown Development Association
 - File Clerk, part-time – Commonwealth's Attorney's Office
 - Library Page
 - Utility Electrical/Pump Technician – Public Works
 - Utility Service Worker/Utility Locate Technician (Utility Locator) – Public Works
 - Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney I
 - Part-time Bus Driver, Recreational Day Trips/Summer Camp – Parks & Rec
 - Recreational Program Aide Substitutes for 2025-26 – Parks & Rec
 - Library Assistant I, Circulation Substitute
 - Water Treatment Plant Operator
 - Police Officer, Certified Only

Orientations:

Conducted orientations for six new, full-time employees.



At the quarterly service pinning luncheon on Jan. 15, 13 employees were celebrated. This past quarter's honorees represented 160 years of combined service to the City of Staunton, including 85 years pictured above, along with three Employees of the Quarter. Mary Tyler

(Community Development -> Public Works), Melody Long (Human Resources), Leslie Beauregard (City Manager), Matt Sensabaugh (Horticulturist), Cindy Fitzgerald (Finance), Zach Henry (IT), Linda Nesselrodt (Community Development), Darren Massey (Public Works), Megan Mawyer (Commissioner of Revenue's Office), Sgt. Ammons (Police), Officer Spence (Police), Investigator Hoover (Police).

Information Technology

Information Technology staff took part in the following activities in January:

- IT completed additional work on phone lines and vendor network interfaces at the new J&DR Courthouse.
- SAW Regional Radio team continues debugging interference issues at a tower site and a coverage concerns in a few locations. Go-live date has been delayed until these issues are resolved.
- Involved with designing networks for the new Gypsy Hill Park Pool House and a potential site for the relocation of Blue Ridge Court Services.
- Completed a variety of tasks including updates to the NG911 call handling system, additional Gatekeeper MFA deployment, printer and workstation updates, and security audits.
- Continued work on the Tyler EPL (electronic permitting) project. Evaluation of Tyler Resident Access and Cloud SAS migration are also underway.

Library

A combination of maintenance and inclement weather conditions interrupted the library schedule significantly:

- total closure Jan. 6 for transformer installation to address in-building power issues
- total closure Jan. 25–27 and modified schedule for the rest of that week due to snow and ice

Despite in-building access to materials being much more limited, physical check-outs only decreased by about 750 items overall compared to January 2025. Saturday, Jan. 24 before the storm was one of the busiest days in recent history, with over 1,500 items moving out the door.

Artist Glen Marshall installed a display of his watercolor and acrylic paintings.

Special programs and outreach included

- Art & Craft Supply Swap
- Aviva Baldwin Park Pop-Up Library
- A special martial arts demo from Staunton Kendo
- Stuart Hall 6th Graders field trip
- Winter Indoor Games theme for Homeschool Hour



Library Statistical Report: January 2026 (YTD is fiscal year, 7/1-6/31)

CIRCULATION	Month	YTD	PROGRAMS	Month	YTD
Adult	16,831	117,982	Adult	10	92
Young Adult (YA)	1,225	10,017	Attendance	211	1,529
Juvenile	12,997	93,844	YA	5	36
Digital	7,155	44,713	Attendance	1,645	7,457
			Juvenile	28	230
Total Circulation	38,208	266,556	Attendance	1,485	11,158
Talking Book Center Circulation	1,578	11,480	General	1	4
			Attendance	52	386
Items Checked In	18,499	137,368			
			PEOPLE		
Outgoing to VLC Libraries	1,757	11,624	Library Visits	12,032	90,002
Incoming from VLC Libraries	1,389	10,718	Curbside Visits	13	73
Total Holds Filled	4,887	33,602	Computer Users	504	4,585
			Juvenile Computer Users	1,864	11,753
Added to Collection	717	6,017	Meetings Held	23	100
Withdrawn from Collection	41	5,243	Volunteer Hours	82	1,038
			New Card Registrations	158	1,129
Database Use/Sessions	3,686	25,556	Total Registered Cards		15,860
SERVICES					
ILLs Borrowed	11	91			
ILLs Lent	0	0			
Proctoring/Book-a-Librarians	4	31			

Parks & Recreation

Horticulture

Horticulture completed the following tasks:

- Removed Christmas decorations in Gypsy Hill Park including Duck Pond Island, Bear Cage, East end bed, Charlie Brown and large City Christmas Tree.
- Prepared sketches and plant lists for the summer flower display. Placed order to reserve plants with local greenhouse and tropical bulbs from various vendors.
- General maintenance included cutting back grasses and pruning shrub and perennials across city-owned properties.
- Prepped trucks and equipment for the January winter storm and assisted with snow removal, cleaning downtown parking lots.

Maintenance

Park Maintenance completed the following:

- Completed leaf removal and general maintenance in Gypsy Hill and Montgomery Hall Parks.
- Assisted Public Works with snow removal, and several P&R employees operated plow trucks during the storms.
- Crews worked removing snow/ice on city owned sidewalks, parking lots and buildings.
- Cleared underbrush and small saplings from the crosses on Betsy Bell.

Community Outreach

Staff engaged in the following community outreach activities:

- Scheduled Programs for January:
 - Japanese Swordsmanship
 - Living off the grid
 - ASC drama club
 - Advanced and Intermediate Pickleball Open Gym
 - Indoor Futsal League
 - Toddler Open Gym
 - Morning Warm ups
 - Cards and Coffee
 - Handprints
 - Artventures
 - Adapted Open Gym
 - Indoor walking
 - Winter Sowing

Police

- All personnel completed CPR training during the month.
- All sworn personnel completed annual ethics and mental health training during the month.
- The Police department celebrated the retirement of K9 Wilson on January 13.
- The E-911 Center received 4,306 calls during the month, including 1,283 9-1-1 calls and 14 text-to 9-1-1.
- Police personnel responded to 2,237 incidents during the month, including 1,378 citizen calls for service, 478 officer-initiated activities, 155 administrative calls, and 226 directed patrols.
- The average response time for police emergency calls for service during the month was 4 minutes and 18 seconds.

Public Works

Employee Spotlight – Michele Powell



This month's spotlight features Michele Powell, Sanitation Worker in our Refuse and Facilities Division. Michele has been with Public Works since August 2024 and is perhaps better known as "the recycle lady." She regularly oversees the constant activity at the city's recycle center here at Public Works. Not only does Michele operate the center with a high degree of professionalism, but she can often be seen helping the elderly and befriending most everyone she meets to the extent that children regularly seek out "Ms. Michele" with hugs and smiles all around.

Hardly a week passes without receiving a complimentary note or email thanking Michele for her exemplary service to our community.

Administration Division

The utility office established 20 new owner accounts, 21 new residential rental accounts, and six new commercial accounts. The office collected \$39,393 in payments. A total of 22 accounts were cut off for non-payment. Of those cut off, 20 were reconnected after payments were made or a payment plan established.

Engineering Division

The Engineering Division of Public Works offers the following project updates:

Johnson, Byers, & New Street Tunnel Repairs Project

The construction contract for repairs to the tunnel under three downtown streets was finalized with the project contractor, Virginia Infrastructure, Inc., for \$4,622,000. A preconstruction conference was conducted on Jan. 27, and mobilization at the Byers Street work area is anticipated for Feb. 17. Work on that section is expected to last into August 2026, and then move to the Johnson Street work area.

Water Treatment Plant Clearwell Cover Replacement

A virtual pre-bid meeting was held on Jan. 28 for the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) clearwell project. The project will include the replacement of the clearwell cover and the installation of a liner inside of the 4.3 million-gallon finished water clearwell. Due to the inclement weather, the optional site visit was rescheduled for Feb. 6. Bidding on the project closes on Feb. 26.

Richmond Avenue / Crossing Way Shared Use Path (SUP)

Engineering staff participated in a PAC (Pre-Advertisement Conference) plan review meeting hosted by VDOT. This is the final design review meeting with the locality in VDOT's process for projects they administer. Advertisement for bids for construction of the SUP is anticipated for May 2026.

Grant Award

Transportation Planner Susan Wilson successfully applied for a \$6,000 grant that was awarded to the city by the Virginia Department of Health for the Virginia Walkability Action Institute's (VWAI) 2026 Cohort. Directly related to the HSIP improvements along Beverley Street, participating in this cohort will allow the city to receive technical assistance between now and September on various topics such as successful community engagement and using demonstration projects to generate feedback and test out ideas for permanent solutions. The city will also receive a small amount of funding (\$6,000) through VWAI to install a demonstration project along a block or two of Beverley Street for a month this summer to demonstrate what the HSIP improvements will look like and provide a temporary, expanded sidewalk area with benches and some landscaping.

Streets and Traffic Division

Public Works responded to one winter storm event in January. The storm began as snow but evolved throughout its duration ending with approximately seven inches of snow capped with more than an inch of hard-packed ice. Precipitation began at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 24 and ended at approximately 11:00 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 25 for a total precipitation duration of 29 hours.

Prior to the storm, two crews pretreated all primary roads, most secondary roads, and some residential streets with approximately 8,100 gallons of brine solution. Once the storm began, combined crews, consisting of staff and equipment from the Street, Utilities, and Refuse Divisions, began plowing operations at 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24. A total of 28 pieces of equipment were deployed.

Due to the extraordinary and persistent low temperatures, salt applications were rendered ineffective. As a result, salt was not widely used until the latter stages of snow removal operations. A total of approximately 305 tons of salt were used by storm's end.

As the hard-packed ice continued its expansion into the underlying snow, crews encountered more difficulty which rendered snow plows ineffective and inefficient. In response, Public Works, with the help of many other departments, pivoted towards assembling additional personnel and equipment to re-engage with a stronger, more robust removal process.

A total of eight private contractors with some 26 additional pieces of equipment, including motor graders, tractor plows, front end loaders, backhoes, and skid steers, were contracted to assist. Additionally, inmate labor was engaged to help clear downtown areas. Unfortunately, even with the added contractor help, progress on snow removal slowed dramatically while crews worked foot by foot instead of the normal block by block process resulting in operations that continued for the remainder of the month and into February.

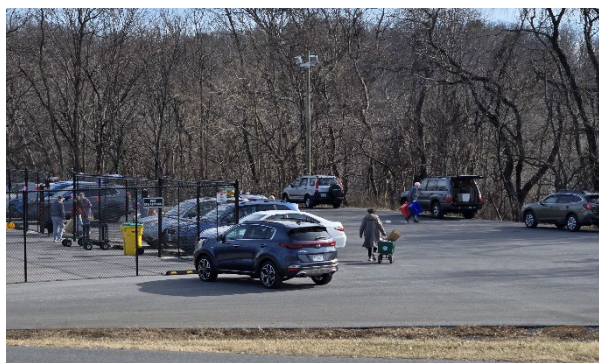
Refuse and Facilities Division

The facilities maintenance crew cleared a blockage in the boiler at the District Court House as well as resolved a handful of similar heating issues among other city buildings.

Custodial staff completed routine cleaning of city buildings although the last week of January was a bit challenging with ice, snow, salt, and mud tracked in from building patrons and users.

The Refuse and Facilities Division welcomes two new employees: Barbara Brooks and Michael Cusson, both part-time custodial workers.

Featured Photos of the Month: PW Recycle Center – In Action (Pre and Post Storm)

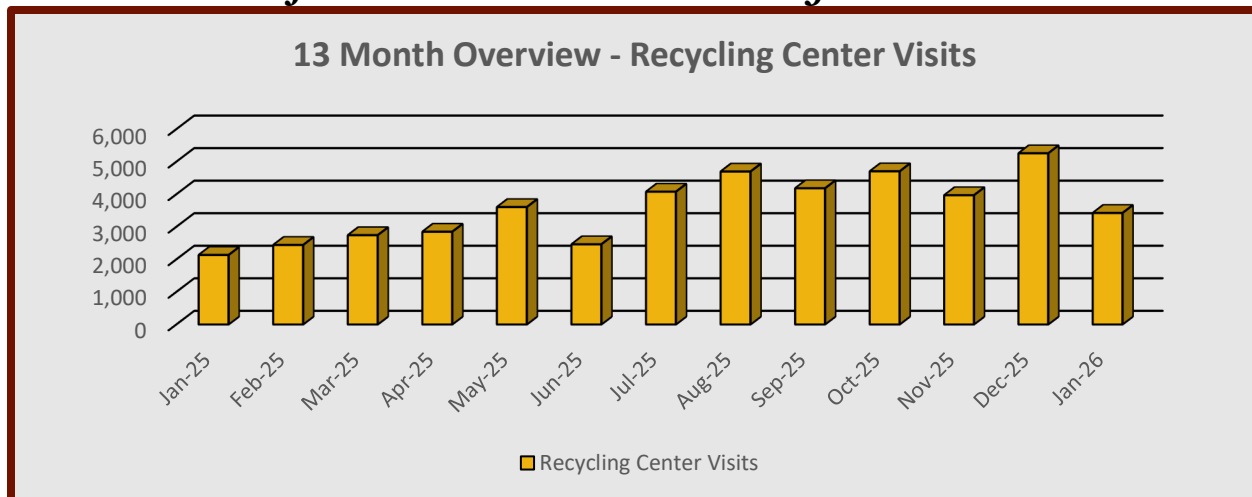


The left photo above features the recycle center on a busy day just before the onset of the winter storm. Although the center was closed during the week of the storm, the center reopened for business as usual on February 2 as shown in the right photo above.

Following a record month of visitors (5,258) to the center in December 2025, the center remained busy for the first three weeks in January 2026 with 3,425 visitors prior to being

closed the last week in January for safety reasons during the winter storm. However, in spite of the one-week closure, the center experienced a 60% increase in visitors over the same month last year as indicated in the chart below.

Featured Chart of the Month: Public Works Recycle Center Visitors



Utilities Division

Utility field crews repaired 12 water main breaks, five water meters, one air release valve, and two sewer laterals. Crews responded to three sewer main blockages and four sewer lateral blockages, and completed routine cleaning of numerous problematic sewer lines. Utilities staff responded to 317 VA811 locate tickets.

Water Treatment Plant staff disassembled Blower #2 used for air scouring plant filters and sent it to a vendor for repairs.

Tourism

Activities:

Visit Staunton staff took part in the following promotional, networking, or administrative activities in January:

- Staunton blog promotions featured [2026 Staunton-Area Bucket List](#) and [Top 6-7 Kid-Friendly Winter Activities, Curated by Kids](#)
- Sales & Marketing Manager Sheena Logan met with over 20 motorcoach tour operators at the American Bus Association Marketplace
- Tourism Director Samantha Johnson is serving as Program Chair for the Virginia Association of Destination Marketing Organization's spring & fall symposiums
- Ms. Johnson completed the Virginia Tourism Leadership Institute

Public Relations

The Following is a list of newspapers, websites, magazines, and television stations that published articles about Staunton:

Date	Headline	Source	Reach	AVE
30-Jan	<u>How Restaurants Get Crispy Salmon Skin — and Why High Heat Isn't the Answer</u>	AOL	24,144,377	\$223,335.49
29-Jan	<u>We Asked Southern Chefs Their Favorite Frozen Vegetables—And Their Answers Prove Fresh Isn't Always Better</u>	AOL	24,144,377	\$223,335.49
14-Jan	<u>13 Quaint Southern Cities Where You Can Retire on \$1,850 a Month (Or Less)</u>	AOL	24,144,377	\$223,335.49
13-Jan	<u>Small Town Beauty in Virginia</u>	VOCAL	2,902,392	\$26,847.13
09-Jan	<u>11 Cities In Virginia That Are Shockingly Affordable, And Still Under The Radar</u>	Family Destinations Guide	1,724,883	\$15,955.17
06-Jan	<u>What Flavors Will Dominate the Cocktail Scene in 2026? 30 Bartenders Weigh In.</u>	VinePair	571,017	\$5,281.91
12-Jan	<u>Staunton local brings Penny Press to city gift shop</u>	WVIR	314,974	\$2,913.51
12-Jan	<u>Staunton woman advocates to preserve historic landmark in the Queen City</u>	WHSV-TV	311,018	\$2,876.92
09-Jan	<u>Staunton's Happy Birthday America named commemorative partner of VA250</u>	WHSV-TV	311,018	\$2,876.92
27-Jan	<u>This Classic Virginia Drive-In Keeps The Burger-And-Shake Tradition Alive</u>	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
26-Jan	<u>11 Virginia Towns Every Southern Culture Lover Must Visit</u>	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
26-Jan	<u>11 Places in Virginia Where History And Modern Life Collide</u>	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
24-Jan	<u>This Restaurant In Virginia Is Hidden Inside A Historic Train Station</u>	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
20-Jan	<u>Locals Recommend These 10 Virginia Small Cities With Big Personality</u>	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
17-Jan	<u>Locals Support These 10 Family-Owned Restaurants In Virginia Year After Year</u>	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15

17-Jan	Locals Say This Virginia Town Has The Most Charming Main Street	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
15-Jan	A Farm-To-Table Restaurant In Virginia Locals Say Highlights Local Flavors	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
14-Jan	9 Museums In Virginia That Make Learning History Surprisingly Fun	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
14-Jan	Locals Escape To These 10 Quiet Virginia Towns Away From Tourists	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
12-Jan	These 10 Virginia Towns Are Every Photographer's Dream	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
12-Jan	These 10 Charming Old Towns In Virginia Are Perfect For History Walks	Family Travel Forum	167,151	\$1,546.15
16-Jan	Local tourism receives a financial boost from Virginia	The River 95.3	14,361	\$132.84
		TOTAL	80,588,606	\$745,444.67

Website Visitation

Website Traffic		
January 2025	January 2026	% Change
28,501 users	30,347 users	+6.48%
104 guide requests	91 visitor's guide requests	-12.5%

Top 10 Origin Markets and Visitor Spending
-December 2025-

Top Visitor Markets - Table

Visitor Origin Market	% of Visitors	Same time previous year
Washington DC-Hagerstown MD	20%	16%
Roanoke-Lynchburg VA	11%	13%
Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News VA	8%	8%
Baltimore MD	8%	3%
New York NY	6%	5%
Richmond-Petersburg VA	5%	11%
Harrisburg-Lancaster-Lebanon-York PA	4%	2%
Philadelphia PA	3%	3%
Los Angeles CA	2%	1%
Charlotte NC	2%	2%

Top Spend Markets - Table

Visitor Origin Market	% of Visitor Spend	Same time previous year
Washington DC-Hagerstown MD	15%	15%
Richmond-Petersburg VA	11%	12%
Roanoke-Lynchburg VA	9%	10%
Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News VA	7%	9%
New York NY	4%	4%
Clarksburg-Weston WV	3%	0.2%
Baltimore MD	3%	2%
Bluefield-Beckley-Oak Hill WV	3%	2%
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Sarasota FL	2%	1%
West Palm Beach-Fort Pierce FL	2%	0.1%

Key Insights:

December 2025 brought notable shifts in Staunton's visitor landscape:

1. **Out-of-State Visitor Growth:** Out-of-state visitors increased from 56% to 70% of total visitation, representing a 14-point increase. This expansion of geographic reach demonstrates growing appeal beyond our traditional visitor base.
2. **Origin Market Shifts:** Washington DC-Hagerstown maintained its position as our top market, growing from 16% to 20% of visitors. Baltimore emerged as a new top-four market at 8% of visitors, while Roanoke-Lynchburg was down at 11%. Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News reached 8% of visitors.
3. **Spending Pattern Changes:** While overall visitor spending increased by 2 percentage points (from 10% to 12%), average daily visitor spend decreased from \$49 to \$46. However, Food & Beverage captured a larger share of visitor spending, rising from 43% to 53% of total spend.
4. **Accommodations Market Performance:** Washington DC-Hagerstown increased its share of accommodation visitors dramatically from 11% to 27%. New York grew from 7% to 9% of accommodation stays, while Baltimore entered the top markets at 6%.

What Does This Mean?

Staunton experienced an interesting dynamic in December: attracting more out-of-state visitors and increasing the percentage of overall spending from visitors, but individual visitor spending decreased slightly. The significant increase in Food & Beverage spending (both as a visitor activity at 49% and spending category at 53%) suggests visitors are prioritizing dining experiences during their trips. The emergence of Baltimore as a key market and the substantial growth from Washington DC-Hagerstown in accommodation stays indicates strong appeal among Mid-Atlantic travelers seeking overnight experiences.

Office on Youth

Crime Control Programs

- Fifteen youth received detention alternative services.
- Six youth completed *Youth Empowerment Sessions (Y.E.S.)* class Jan. 6.

Family Services

- Six adults participated in Active Parenting - First 5 Years.
- One adult participated in 24/7 Dads/ Fathering in 15.

Personal Responsibility Education Programs (PREP)

- A Human Trafficking Prevention Project program was presented to 98 Staunton High School sophomores Jan. 20–23.

Truancy Prevention - Check and Connect

- Participant count: 95 students from 14 schools.
 - Thirteen Staunton High School
 - Eleven Shelburne Middle School

Staunton Downtown Development Association¹

- January for the Staunton Downtown Development Association was promoting businesses at the Wharf and planning for upcoming events.
- Save the date for Taste the Town, held the first week in March, offering participants to experience the different restaurants and eateries in downtown Staunton.

¹ The Staunton Downtown Development Association (SDDA) is an independent, non-profit corporation, separate from the City of Staunton. Pursuant to the Staunton City Code and a contract with the city, SDDA provides facilities and services funded by the City in the City's downtown service district. SDDA furnishes information to the City Manager's Office for inclusion in this Activity Report to update the city in the performance of its obligations.