

TOWN OF  
**Herndon**

# Annual Report FY 2024

**MAYOR**

Sheila A. Olem

**TOWN COUNCIL**

Clark A. Hedrick – Vice Mayor

Naila Alam

Cesar del Aguila

Pradip Dhakal

Keven J. LeBlanc, Jr.

Donielle M. Scherff

**LEADERSHIP TEAM**

William H. Ashton, II

Town Manager

Lesa J. Yeatts

Town Attorney

Maggie A. DeBoard Chief of Police

Judy Fry Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

Elizabeth M. Gilleran Director of Community Development

Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich Town Clerk

Page Kalapasev Director of Information Technology

Tanya J. Kendrick Director of Human Resources

Michael Mueller General Manager, Herndon Centennial Golf Course

Anne Papa Chief Communications Officer

Scott Robinson Director of Public Works

Marjorie Sloan Director of Finance

Marc G. Smith Director of Economic Development

Bob Williams Director of Parks and Recreation

Dear Mayor Olem, Members of the Herndon Town Council, residents and businesses:

It is my pleasure to present to you the town's Annual Report for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, which began on July 1, 2023 and concluded on June 30, 2024. A summary brochure of this report is being sent via US mail to all households and businesses in the town. Additionally, a version of this report has been translated into Spanish and is available on the town's website at [Herndon-va.gov/AnnualReport](https://Herndon-va.gov/AnnualReport).

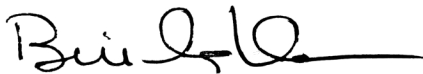
The work of the town staff this fiscal year was greatly informed by a newly-adopted Strategic Plan that supports the Town Council's Vision:

*Herndon is an integrated, sustainable, safe and equitable town built on accessible development and an engaged community.*

The Strategic Plan, developed in FY 2024 in a spirit of unprecedented collaboration between the Town Council and town staff leadership, provides a clear benchmark of where we are, where we would like to be, and how we plan to get there. The plan is divided into five focus areas: Strong Fiscal Stewardship; Secure and Interconnected Community; Environmental and Economic Sustainability; Good Governance; and Thriving Community. Each of these focus areas is supported by goals, objectives, strategies and success measurements. You may review the plan online at [Herndon-va.gov/StrategicPlan](https://Herndon-va.gov/StrategicPlan).

The activities included in this FY 2024 Annual Report directly align with the Strategic Plan and its focus areas. Through careful resource management, forward-thinking community planning, proactive outreach, inclusive services and more, the programs and initiatives undertaken by town staff in FY 2024 are a concrete manifestation of the Town Council's Vision. As always, it is my privilege to present this report and to commend to you the men and women whose work it represents.

With appreciation,



Bill Ashton  
Town Manager



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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In FY 2024, Community Development (CD) staff continued its work on the Transit-Related Growth Area (TRG) Plan, with community meetings, public sessions and surveys culminating in Town Council’s adoption of the plan in April 2024. The plan calls for the transformation of 94 acres near Metro into a walkable mixed-use neighborhood of residential, office, retail, and parks. The plan will guide town decision-makers when property owners submit redevelopment plans for properties within the TRG.

Preparation also continued for the rewrite of the town’s Comprehensive Plan. The new plan, with a horizon year 2050, will be built upon a platform of community outreach and inclusion, with emphasis on historically disadvantaged neighborhoods. Staff worked with the Federal Highway Administration to finalize the agreement for a previously awarded grant of \$720,000 to fund the plan; a consultant will be selected in FY 2025.

CD staff processed and reviewed several major legislative land use applications, ensuring that plans meet all applicable town regulations, policies, guidelines, and good planning practices:

- *13100 & 13150 Worldgate Drive* – A zoning map amendment application was submitted for redevelopment at the corner of Elden Street and Worldgate Drive. The application, which proposed demolition of two obsolete office buildings and part of an existing parking garage to allow the development of approximately 460 residential units, was approved by the Town Council in FY 2024.
- *Herndon Elementary School* – An application to build a permanent addition to the existing school was received from Fairfax County Public Schools in FY 2024. The proposal includes the removal of the existing trailers/modular classrooms and proposes the construction of a new 129,204 square foot addition. An increase in on-site parking, recreational facility upgrades, and improved on and off-site vehicle and pedestrian circulation are also proposed. Streetscape improvements will bring the school’s sidewalk into compliance with the town’s adopted streetscape policies. The special exception was approved by the Town Council in January 2024.
- *Hunters Creek Bridge Project* – A special exception to allow modifications in the flood plain due to the replacement of a bridge was reviewed and processed. The proposed bridge and its new foundation allow for a wider stream bed, and the associated stream restoration creates a natural condition that provides resistance to erosion. The project was approved by the Town Council in May 2024.

Major site plans related to legislative approvals reviewed by CD, in conjunction with other departments during FY 2024, included 555 Herndon Parkway, 13100 & 13150 Worldgate Drive, and 331 Victory Drive (Self Storage Facility); site plans for Herndon Centennial Golf Course tee box re-construction project; and the expansion of the Chestnut Grove Cemetery, to include landscape design solutions that addressed neighboring residents’ screening concerns.

Two minor site plans of note were reviewed in FY 2024; in one case, staff worked with the applicant to facilitate the continued conversion of an under-performing hotel to rental apartments with workforce housing rental rates. Also in FY 2024, two development plans were submitted for redevelopment projects in the vicinity of the Herndon Metro Station, each of which propose residential mixed-use development to replace aging vacant or under-utilized office buildings.

In FY 2024, funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) became available to repair and refresh the historic Town Hall Square. A three-phase plan was developed by staff to repair and redesign the brick surface of the square and to add decorative lighting, new tables with sunshades, game board tables, new benches, and

### Environmental and Economic Sustainability



Redevelopment projects near Metro are proposing mixed-use development to replace underused office buildings, underscoring a commitment toward reuse of aging buildings rather than their demolition.

a raised platform with pergola and decking. The plan repairs the ADA ramp for the depot and relocates the WWII memorial to a more visible location. A colorful sculptural seating feature will be located on the lawn. In FY 2024 the plan was approved by the Historic District Review Board (HDRB), making way for renovations to begin in FY 2025.

The department continued to employ Fairfax County's Community Development Block Grant Funds to cover the cost of home improvements for qualifying Herndon residents. The program provided direct financial assistance for the repair of six homes in FY 2024, totaling over \$120,000 in housing rehabilitation. In addition, staff advised over a dozen additional homeowners regarding home repair and property maintenance projects.

Grant funding secured by town staff in FY 2024 included \$16 million in funds for roadway design, intersection, and multimodal ADA compliant improvements.

CD staff also sought and received a Virginia Trees for Clean Water grant, to be allocated toward the purchase and planting of trees on town property. During FY 2024, 49 new trees were planted on town property; additionally, a tree inventory was conducted, which provides a database of town owned trees including species, size, and health.

Staff continued to provide support to the Planning Commission, review boards, Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA), and Town Council appointed ad hoc committees. Staff provided reports, research, presentations, draft ordinances, and revised language, analysis and recommendations for discussion items, general items, and public hearing items.

### **Planning Commission**

In addition to their review and recommendations to the Town Council of the applications and text amendments described above, the Planning Commission participated in a joint work session with the TRG advisory committee to provide feedback in the finalization of the TRG Plan. Items discussed by commissioners during work sessions in FY 2024 included progress reports on the TRG small area plan, an update on the process, plan, and scope for the Herndon 2050 Comprehensive Plan project, and a discussion on the disbursement of remaining ARPA funding in coordination with Capital Improvement Program funding.

### **Board of Zoning Appeals**

The BZA heard and approved one case for a variance request in FY 2024. The board's three newest members all completed Board of Zoning Appeal training in Richmond during FY 2024, and the staff and the Town Attorney's Office presented the BZA with an administrative update to their bylaws that will be revisited in calendar year 2025.

### **Architectural and Historic District Review Boards**

The ARB reviewed one formal application during FY 2024 and provided preliminary review and feedback for the Herndon Elementary School renovation project and the 13100 & 13150 Worldgate Drive project, to ensure that the final products met Town Code standards. The ARB also participated in a training session on architectural design.

#### **Secure and Interconnected Community**



Grant funding secured by staff totaled more than \$16 million for roadway design, intersection and multimodal ADA-compliant improvements.

#### **Environmental and Economic Sustainability**



An inventory of town trees was conducted, which provides a database of town owned trees including species, size, and health. This allows for better management of the town's urban forest and promotes plant diversity.

Staff processed 35 applications related to properties in the Historic District Overlay in FY 2024. The HDRB heard nine cases and held discussions with future applicants on their plans for development and alterations, to provide timely input prior to a formal application submittal. CD staff administratively approved the remaining 26 applications received in FY 2024. The board also participated in staff-led training on the application of the Historic District Guidelines as they relate to window and roof preservation. Both ARB and HDRB were present with preliminary administrative updates to their bylaws that will be revisited in FY 2025.

### **Pedestrian/Bicycle Advisory (PBAC) and Herndon Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (HDEIC) committees**

During FY 2024, PBAC held four meetings focused on safety concerns and potential solutions, and received updates on the TRG area plan, Central Elden Walkability improvement projects, Roadway Safety Plan, and the Town's Traffic Calming Guide.

The HDEIC held three meetings in FY 2024. The committee discussed several initiatives, including the adoption of a diversity policy, a recommendation for which was forwarded to the Town Council.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

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In FY 2024, the Public Works Department continued to focus on sustaining and improving town infrastructure. The department made several significant improvements in the effort to provide town residents with quality facilities, infrastructure, and services:

### **Herndon Community Center and Town Parks:**

The department made significant progress on replacing the aquatic center environmental control system. Construction is nearly complete, with commissioning planned for early FY 2025. Refurbishment of the Bready Park tennis complex is complete, with a new bubble to be delivered and installed in FY 2025. Four new pickleball courts were added to the tennis complex in FY 2024, two little league ball fields were refurbished, and construction of the new Haley Smith Park pavilion was completed. The pedestrian bridge in Runnymede Park behind Hunter's Creek pool, deemed unsafe, was evaluated and a replacement bridge was ordered. Construction of the new bridge will be completed in early FY 2025.

### **Roads, Sidewalks and Parking Lots:**

The department completed an assessment of all town public streets in FY 2024. Projects included sidewalk repairs and repaving of Herndon Parkway from Elden Street to Spring Street, Worcester Street, and Leona and Marjorie Lanes. Design concepts for two key road safety improvement projects, Monroe Street and Park Avenue intersection and Ferndale Avenue, were completed and presented to neighbors adjacent to the projects. Traffic Patterns were modified on Elden Street between the Fairfax County Parkway and just west of Laurel Way, to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion. The secure parking expansion at the Herndon Police Department was completed in FY 2024.

### **Thriving Community**



Staff completed an assessment of all town public streets, with an objective to minimize barriers and make them more accessible.

### **Water, Sewer, and Stormwater:**

The Center Street watermain project was completed in FY 2024. A contract was awarded to replace the watermain along Dranesville Road from Park Ave to Fillmore Street. The design was completed to replace the sewer line along Folly Lick. The department completed a project to improve security at the town water tanks. In coordination with a consultant, completion of the initial approved water service line inventory plan was completed, in adherence to an EPA requirement to identify service line material to all customers by October 2024. The town has been approved for a \$250,000 EPA grant to complete the next phase of the service line inventory.

## Cemetery:

Preliminary designs were completed for the Chestnut Grove Cemetery expansion project in FY 2024, which is designed to expand inventory for the cemetery. Town staff met with neighbors adjoining the cemetery to get their input and the design is being modified to address their concerns. Additionally, design was completed on a project to refurbish the exterior of the cemetery building.

## American Rescue Plan Act Funds:

The department has continued to utilize federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to make infrastructure improvements. There are currently 28 active projects funded by ARPA. These projects are making needed repairs to buildings, improving parks, expanding the paving program, making repairs and improvements to water and sewer systems, and replacing end of life equipment. In FY 2024, four trash trucks and 19 additional ARPA-funded vehicles were delivered and put into service.

### Good Governance



Staff capitalized on the availability of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to make key infrastructure improvements.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

In FY 2024, the Parks and Recreation Department, along with the town, made the difficult decision to cancel the Herndon Festival after over 40 years. The decision considered many factors including logistics, security, safety, staffing, and volunteers. In its wake, the department has focused on finding new ways to bring the community together. Pumpkin Plunge, Play in a Day, Puzzle Palooza, Taylor Swift Trivia Night, Play All Day and lighting of the Herndon Torch were all new events in FY 2024, and all were well attended. Established events such as the July 4th celebration, Homecoming Parade, Turkey Trot 5K, Holiday Arts and Crafts Show, and the town-supported WinterMarkt were successfully held with increases in attendance for each.

Through advocacy of Herndon Opportunities Neighborhood Ambassadors and Community Connectors to the Town Council in FY 2024, the Neighbors in Action (NIA) pricing program was established for discounted admissions to the Herndon Community Center for those living in identified zones. A working group was established to develop and implement the details, pricing and logistics. Efforts continue to spread the information, awareness and use of the NIA pricing. A postcard targeted to these neighborhoods was mailed late in FY 2024; to date, more than 1,000 people, primarily youth, have used the NIA discounts.

For the second year in a row, Parks & Recreation summer camps were named Best Camps by Northern Virginia Magazine. Through the reduced-fee policy for programs and tight coordination with staff, the local non-profit She Believes in Me obtained grants for transportation, meals and reduced enrollment fees for children who otherwise would not be able to access summer camp and their experiences.

The natatorium received upgrades during FY 2024, including the installation of two HVAC/Dehumidification systems which manage the heating, cooling and humidity in the pool area. A new white coat was installed in the pool, a project that took longer than expected and resulted in the pool being closed for four weeks. While this impacted the availability of the pool, enrollment in swimming programs did increase in FY 2024. Also in FY 2024, the Bready Park Tennis Complex added a new ProBounce surface to all courts, and one of the tennis courts was converted into four new pickleball courts.

### Thriving Community



New events such as the Pumpkin Plunge, Puzzle Palooza, Taylor Swift Trivia Night and lighting of the Herndon Torch brought the community together.

### Thriving Community



A community-led program, Neighbors in Action, led to a new reduced admissions fee to the Herndon Community Center for identified residents.



The department experienced a leadership change in FY 2024, with the retirement of longtime director Cindy Roeder and the recruitment and hiring of a new director, Bob Williams. Williams is only the third director the Parks & Recreation Department has had since its inception in 1976.

## HERNDON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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In FY 2024, the Herndon Police Department (HPD) focused on priorities to provide effective and efficient police services, promote partnerships and opportunities to engage with the community, and support a positive work culture for law enforcement personnel.

Communications received a total of 28,590 calls for service categorized by traffic, service, criminal, and administrative types:

- 9,309 - Traffic
- 8,561 - Service
- 2,123 – Criminal

3,179 calls were prioritized as an emergency

The department conducted proactive DUI patrols throughout the year and performed routine enforcement efforts with quantifiable results. Officers also handled 353 reportable accidents in the town, none of which were fatal:

- 895 distracted driving charges
- 1,110 speeding violations
- 63 impaired driving arrests
- 64 seatbelt violations

The department was assigned 219 new criminal investigation cases in FY 2024. Of those, 172 were successfully closed or inactivated. Criminal investigators also worked together with specialized task forces in cyber fraud, violent crime, and child exploitation, and coordinated with local and federal resources to increase investigative effectiveness. Participation with specialized task forces allows the department to bring specialized resources to complex investigations.

The department maintained valuable community partnerships with schools in the town, promoted engagement opportunities and activities through National Night Out, Back to School Events, and the Annual Herndon High School Homecoming Parade, as well as with various other community-specific outreach activities. The department's social media following increased 18 percent in FY 2024, with more than 18,000 followers over its Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts.

Four recruits graduated from the basic police academy; a nine-month program followed by approximately three months of patrol field training. One lateral police recruit joined the department and graduated with Virginia certification. Hires in FY 2024 included five experienced lateral officers, four new police recruits and three new dispatchers. Additionally, four sworn officers were promoted in FY 2024.

The department continued to prioritize health and wellness for police personnel in FY 2024 through various resources, including enhanced wellness initiatives by the mandatory physical fitness program and scheduled squad workouts for sworn personnel. All police personnel participate in mental wellness checks and have access to certified peer support, a nap/meditation room, and other critical resources and programs.



### Secure and Interconnected Community

The Herndon Police Department conducted proactive DUI patrols throughout the year and performed routine enforcement efforts, with quantifiable results.



### Thriving Community

The department partnered with the community through involvement in activities such as National Night Out, Back to School Events and the annual Herndon High School Homecoming Parade, among other events.



The department received notable awards in FY 2024 that positively demonstrated its mission to service:

- WRAP (Washington Regional Alcohol Program) and MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) awards for efforts to continue to combat impaired driving.
- Awarded grants of more than \$168,000 to provide funding for law enforcement equipment and training needs.
- Named a national finalist in four separate award categories for officer safety and wellness by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial's Destination Zero Program
- Awarded Excellence in Culture following an employee survey on the department's internal culture, environment, and employee work experience.
- A detective obtained an additional certification as a cyber-forensic examiner by the International Association of Computer Investigative Specialists.

The department fully upgraded and integrated body-worn, in-car, and interview room camera systems in FY 2024 to promote efficiency and increase operational effectiveness.

Lethal shotguns were transitioned into less lethal weapons in FY 2024, to provide an additional less lethal force option in all patrol vehicles. Additionally, officers will be changing to new handguns equipped with micro red dot optics, making it easier for them to safely acquire a target in low-light conditions or at a distance. This enhances both officer safety and operational effectiveness.

For the first time in 18 years, the department launched a new CAD/RMS system for dispatching calls for service and department records management in FY 2024. All personnel use the system and were provided comprehensive training. In conjunction with the CAD/RMS project, the Records Section has been transitioning to a paperless system by converting older paper records into a searchable digital database.

## FINANCE

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The Finance Department successfully completed implementation of critical financial processing and reporting tools in FY 2024, including Tyler Payments, a payment processing module integrated with the existing MUNIS General Ledger. Tyler Payments provides a streamlined reliable online payment portal, improves the customer experience and enables online payments for additional services.

Also in FY 2024, the department fully automated the competitive purchasing process for the town with the implementation of Open.Gov, an online procurement software. Leveraging this tool provides efficient and modernized tracking of multiple bids in various stages of evaluation and contract award.

The department completed successful preparation of the town's annual budget that included a complete update to the Water-Sewer rate model, resulting in proposed rates that capture both commodity and capital cost requirements. Analytical work also included development of a forecast model for the multi-year Cemetery expansion project.

The department continues to strive for process improvement. With focused outreach and improved analytics, staff significantly reduced delinquent accounts across all major revenue streams in FY 2024, including timely reimbursements from intergovernmental agencies providing funding for major transportation projects. In addition, Finance collaborated across departments to complete research and process improvement relating to development escrow deposits and surety bonds.

### Strong Fiscal Stewardship

Finance staff launched a new payment processing portal that allowed for more payments to the town to be made online.



During FY 2024, staff continued to cross-train and complete professional development. The department has begun the analysis necessary to implement required major updates to financial reporting. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) awarded the town with the prestigious Distinguished Budget Presentation Award and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 33rd and 48th consecutive year, respectively.

### **Strong Fiscal Stewardship**



The Government Finance Officers Association awarded the town its prestigious Distinguished Budget Presentation Award and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 33rd and 48th consecutive year, respectively.

## **CHESTNUT GROVE CEMETERY**

Purchases of pre-need and at need sites for both cremation and traditional burial at Chestnut Grove Cemetery continued to experience moderate growth in FY 2024. With remaining inventory at less than five percent, design of the northwest corner of the property got underway in FY 2024; local resident opinions were solicited at community meetings, and input was incorporated into planning by the town's engineers. Once completed, the new space will provide an additional 15-20 years of available sites. Community programs traditionally held at the cemetery continued in FY 2024, including the Herndon/Reston American Legion Post 184 Avenue of Flags displays for Veterans and Memorial days, and the Wreaths Across America program sponsored by the Herndon Woman's Club.

### **Good Governance**



Concerns of adjacent residents to an expansion plan for Chestnut Grove resulted in community meetings and incorporation of their input into planning by the town's engineers.

## **HERNDON CENTENNIAL GOLF COURSE**

Herndon Centennial Golf Course continued to yield increases in rounds played, revenues and golf shop sales in FY 2024. The facility continues to set the pace for area public facilities for course conditioning, customer service and affordability.

Herndon Centennial hosted 82 tournaments during FY 2024; staff continued to work with Herndon Golfer's Club, Herndon Ladies Golfer's Club, Senior Duffers and other groups to provide a quality venue for tournaments. The golf instruction program offers options for all skill levels and ages to include junior camps, group classes and private lessons.

### **Environmental and Economic Sustainability**



Herndon Centennial's Nutrient Management Plan was approved by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Herndon Centennial continues to partner with GolfNow for updated G-1 technology point-of-sale system and online reservation system. The total number of rounds booked through the point-of-sale system was 52,378 in FY 2024.

Forty-eight new golf carts, on order for almost a year, arrived in FY 2024. A new driving range ball dispensing machine, ball washer and range ball picker were also added; staff updated the fleet of equipment by adding a new fairway mower, tractor, and greens mower; and a new roof was installed at the clubhouse.

Herndon Centennial continued its focus on environmental planning in FY 2024 by partnering with Audubon International. Herndon Centennial's Nutrient Management Plan was approved by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation in FY2024, and the course continued to partner with the Virginia Bluebird Society and their volunteers, who monitor ten bluebird boxes located throughout the property.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

In FY 2024, the Information Technology department continued to build on the achievements of the previous year and successfully completed all projects on time. The department remained focused on three strategic areas: modernization, digital transformation, and information security. Key initiatives and achievements in FY 2024 included:

**Enhanced Security Infrastructure:** A significant upgrade to the town's firewall device was completed, further improving the town's security posture by blocking unauthorized access and facilitating secure outward communication.

**CrowdStrike Implementation:** The department successfully deployed CrowdStrike, an advanced cybersecurity solution, across all town systems.

This enhanced the town's ability to detect, prevent, and respond to security threats in real-time, significantly bolstering our cybersecurity defenses.

**Strengthened Partnerships for Security:** The department continued its collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain a 24x7 live, monitored security operations center. This center utilizes specialized tools to maintain a continuous watch on security systems, protecting valuable information from potential threats.

**System Modernization and Implementation:** The multi-year plan to improve business processes across departments continued with a focus on Cityworks implementation for asset management, work order management, and permitting. This integration has streamlined processes and improved efficiency across the board.

**Cityworks for Help Desk Issues:** The adoption and expansion of Cityworks for internal "help desk" issues further streamlined internal IT operations, leading to improved customer satisfaction and more effective issue resolution.

**Upgraded Virtualization and Telework Support:** The department upgraded its virtualization infrastructure to support a more flexible and efficient work environment, catering to the growing need for telework capabilities.

**Cloud Migration for LaserFiche:** The town's digital records management and archive system, LaserFiche, was successfully migrated to the cloud, ensuring easier access, scalability, and enhanced data security.

**Efficient Onboarding and Offboarding:** The department ensured timely onboarding and offboarding of accounts and workstation setups for new hires, separations, and new positions, maintaining operational efficiency and security.

**Physical Security Enhancements:** Management of physical security enhancements at town-owned buildings continued, resulting in improved safety measures. Additional cameras were installed to monitor the Herndon Community Center and the Herndon Municipal Center garage, enhancing overall security.

### Good Governance



The IT Department continued its collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain a 24x7 live, monitored security operations center, protecting valuable information from potential threats.

## COMMUNICATIONS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In FY 2024, staff worked with an outside consultant on a comprehensive survey of town businesses, gauging opinions on a range of topics. Town business owners are generally satisfied with the services they receive from the town as well as Herndon as a location in which to do business. The areas in which businesses gave the town high marks included access to the airport, overall quality of life and the overall image of the Town. Areas needing improvement include level of taxation, town special events and licensing and regulations. Business owners also recommended the town focus on creating attractions/events, supporting growth and attracting new businesses. A total of 155 businesses responded to the survey.

Staff conducted a series of focus groups with town residents of differing demographics in FY 2024, to determine the degree to which they felt informed about town news, services and initiatives, and the ways the town could improve its outreach efforts. As a result of the focus groups as well as related empirical data, staff began translating most of its documents, including its bi-weekly e-newsletters, into Spanish, and hand-delivering print copies to key touchpoints around town. Staff also engaged with an interpreter who is present at all Town Council meetings, as well as at other community meetings hosted by the town. The town's website, which is the primary way that residents prefer to get information from the town, uses a module that translates content into 19 languages.

A rebranding initiative for the town got underway in FY 2024, with the ultimate goal of a refreshed brand that accurately reflects the town's attributes and may be used to attract residents, businesses and visitors to Herndon. Following an RFP process that netted 32 bids by brand/marketing consultants, the town selected a consultant and, by the end of FY 2024, had conducted focus groups, one-on-one interviews, town tours and more to get insights into the town's authentic and aspirational character. Additional research and a brand recommendation will take place in FY 2025.

Staff continued to work with town departments in managing media relations and promoting initiative and programs in FY 2024, to include national media relations focus on a residential case involving the town's building official; community engagement related to the proposed expansion of Chestnut Grove Cemetery; customer-facing technology enhancements in Finance and other departments; and more.

The George Mason Enterprise Center – Herndon completed its first full year of operations in FY 2024, with support from town staff including budget, promotion of events and administrative support. In its inaugural year, the center counseled and trained just under 270 small businesses, the majority of which were minority-owned; conducted five workshops including a three-week cohort for startups; and represented the center at 12 events throughout Herndon.

In FY 2024 and following the departure of the town's Economic Development manager, the position was elevated to director status and a new director, Marc Smith, was hired.

### Thriving Community



Translation of town materials into Spanish and interpretation at government meetings were established as protocol, and the town's website is translatable into 19 languages.

### Environmental and Economic Sustainability



The George Mason Enterprise Center – Herndon completed its first full year, during which 270 small business owners received counseling and five workshops were held.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

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Turnover, hiring and inflationary pressures lessened in FY 2024, but still presented challenges to recruitment and maintenance of personnel. HR staff worked to fill 43 regular status positions in FY 2024, marginally down from 45 in the year prior, which had been the second highest ever in the town. The town's sworn workforce reached full staffing in FY 2024, as did dispatchers; overall, the town experienced fewer vacancies than in the year prior. Seventy-one temporary/part-time flexible positions were filled, down from 86 the year before. Overall, 114 employees were hired. Two notable hires included the directors of Parks and Recreation and Economic Development.

HR staff reviewed 1,162 employment applications, down from 1,300 in FY 2023, a downward trend of applicants consistent across the country. The employee referral program continues to be a source for quality candidates, engaging and rewarding current employees for recruitment. Town employees referred 81 applicants of whom 25 were hired, or 22 percent of hires.

Four retirements took place in FY2024, and total turnover of regular status employees decreased by approximately four percent. It is notable that changes in the Virginia Retirement System plan, as well as younger employees entering the town's workforce, have resulted in a lessened focus on retirement benefits, traditionally a competitive advantage for local government recruitment and retention.

One measure of success in recruiting is the percentage of new hires that successfully complete their initial probationary period. Of the regular status new hires in FY 2023, 64 percent successfully completed their initial probationary period in FY2024, a slight increase over the year prior. Recruitment training skills as well as multiple interviewing and screening tools were put in place during FY 2024 to improve in this area.

Developmental training is offered in many ways in the town. The town fully funds the George Mason University cohort Master of Public Administration (MPA) program; one employee is currently enrolled and one graduated in FY 2024. Ten employees were actively participating in the town's tuition reimbursement program in FY2024; the education reimbursement program was improved to reimburse more to eligible employees and also expanded to include leadership programs such as the Cooper Weldon LEAD program, Leadership Fairfax, and others.

HR hosted more than ten trainings throughout the year, covering a wide range of topics, including conflict resolution, management skills for new managers, wellness and more. Additionally, the town continues the Certification and Licensure program to assist with attracting, training and retaining skilled professionals.

Projects and initiatives that streamline work processes throughout the town in FY 2024 included the cross-departmental Enterprise Resource Program (ERP), which is on an agile upgrade schedule with new functionality to onboard the town's part-time flexible workforce; and budget software that allows for more efficient management of the town's personnel budget, which accounts for more than 70 percent of the town's overall budget.

Continuous legal updates affecting employment law continue to impact the town, to include increasing minimum wage rates and sweeping retirement program reforms. Staff continually updates policies and plan documents in accordance with legal changes, while benchmarking regional market data to maintain a competitive stance.

### Good Governance

Ten employees actively participated in the town's tuition reimbursement program, learning skills and strategies that enhance their knowledge and effectiveness.





## TOWN ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

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The Town Attorney's office provides comprehensive legal services to the Mayor and Town Council and all town departments in support of core governmental and administrative functions including public finance, public safety and police, zoning, procurement, human resources, risk management, administrative compliance and implementation of legislation.

Notable projects in FY 2024 included:

Drafting of the town's the 2024 Legislative Program to the Virginia General Assembly, which included a bill that allows a locality that establishes a local historic district to provide tax incentives for the conservation and renovation of historic structures in such district. The bill was signed into law by Governor Youngkin in April 2024.

Drafting of 44 ordinances and 87 resolutions for Town Council consideration, to include establishment of the town's Community Cultural Festival Donation program, and a "Streeterly" pilot program allowing for outdoor dining; multiple franchise and/or lease agreements;

Legal work on significant land use projects, to include work with Community Development on issues related to the TRG Small Area Plan; work with relevant staff on rezoning applications; work with relevant staff on special exception applications; and

Legal work on transportation and capital improvement projects, to include the town's lead/copper rules revisions compliance; watermain replacements; Sugarland Run North restoration; and Elden/Monroe streets intersection replacement; and Town Hall Square improvements.

The town's risk manager's focus in FY 2024 was on training and compliance with regulations to prevent accidents, injuries, and other losses to the ultimate benefit of the town. This included the town-wide abatement and mitigation of items noted on the most recent OSHA/VOSH focused facility inspections. The town met 100 percent compliance with the Virginia Municipal League (VML) Risk Management Guidelines for the 19th consecutive year, and in FY 2024, hosted VRSA training for 65 employees from the town and seven other surrounding municipalities.

## TOWN CLERK

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In FY 2024, the Town Clerk's Office continued to provide support to the Mayor and Town Council; its boards, commissions, and committees; other town departments; and the public.

The office processed over 200 community comments and inquiries in FY 2024 and prepared a variety of documents and correspondence including mayoral proclamations, resolutions, ordinances, policies, and reports, as well as recognition, congratulatory, recommendation and welcome letters. The Town Code continues to be properly maintained and updated, with the Town Clerk's Office processing 27 ordinances in FY 2024, nine of which were codified. The office continued to provide support to town departments in developing legal advertisements and public notices in compliance with the Code of Virginia. Also continuing from last year, the office is working to convert to electronic records storage and processes, including maintaining permanent records electronically and improving electronic public access to meeting documents.

### Thriving Community



The Town Attorney's Office drafted significant ordinances and resolutions that support the Town Council's vision, such as the establishment of the Community Cultural Festival Donation Program and an expanded outdoor dining program.



The Town Clerk's Office provided significant support to The Town Council in development of many of its strategic initiatives, to include staff oversight of the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan process. This process included coordinating elected officials, staff, and community input, and overseeing the development, preparation, presentation, and implementation of the plan. Additionally, the Town Clerk spearheaded staff development of the council's Community Cultural Festivals Policy; reestablishment of the Herndon Youth Advisory Committee; and implementation of departmental Standard Operating Procedures, including a process for managing Town Council ad hoc committees.

In support of the town's boards and commissions, the Town Clerk's Office aided in the appointment or reappointment of 12 community members to the Town Council's boards, commissions, and committees in FY 2024.

A notable development in FY 2024 was the launch of new agenda and meeting management software, CivicPlus, which streamlined the agenda development and meeting management processes. CivicPlus is also used to organize and improve the boards and commissions appointment tracking processes. Through this new agenda management platform, the Town Clerk's office also began livestreaming the Town Council work sessions.

The Town Clerk's Office assisted several town departments with various events involving the Town Council including the annual Virginia Municipal League Conference, National Night Out, Herndon Elementary School's Career Day, Arbor Day Celebration and Tree Planting ceremony, Herndon Olympics, Haley Smith Park Pavilion Ribbon Cutting, and other dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremonies. Overall, the Town Clerk's Office assisted in coordinating Town Council members' participation in 168 events and other agency meetings representing the town.

### Thriving Community



A new agenda and meetings management software program, CivicPlus, made government materials and processes more accessible and enabled livestreaming of Town Council work sessions, in addition to the public meetings.