

CITY CONNECTION



A Walking Path to Wellness in 2021

New trail connections will make it easier to safely walk or bike to three City schools and two City parks. The trail connections amount to about a half-mile, but they make a big difference in being able to get around safely by avoiding busy roads. The new paved trails include: an upgrade to the existing Bartow Street trail, which helps connect Grant Avenue to Baldwin School; Kinsley Mill, which connects Kinsley Mill Park to an adjacent neighborhood; Oakenshaw, which connects the existing park and neighborhood trails to Metz Middle School; and the Tudor Lane section that connects to the Tudor Oaks neighborhood and Mayfield Intermediate School.

Although the need for additional trail connections was identified as a priority in citizen surveys and in the pedestrian plan as part of the school walk-shed study, the pandemic put the project on the fast track. "The pandemic accelerated the need to provide options for safe access to schools," Transportation Planner Chloe Delhomme explains. "Early on we didn't know how many students could ride buses safely, or if parents would feel safer walking their children to school, so we tried to be proactive in enhancing access to schools."

Planners, engineers, site plan reviewers, public works staff and Manassas City Public Schools staff have teamed up on construction of the trail connections, which should be completed in early spring depending on the weather. The trails were constructed on City or School-owned land, and Public Works Director Scott Horan says that the project required removing some fencing, paving trails, routing around athletic fields and thoughtfully planning the path.

City staff have been listening and responding to citizens who have expressed a desire for more pathways and trails. Many of the more than 1,300 citizens who participated in Community Conversations that were part of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update,

expressed a strong desire for a more connected trail system. Respondents in the most recent 2020 Citizen Satisfaction Survey said the availability of walking and biking trails in the City is one of the items that should receive the most emphasis over the next two years.

Manassas adopted the Healthy Eating, Active Living (HEAL) initiative in response to community enthusiasm for outdoor recreation and healthy living habits, and in the last fiscal year that ended in June 2020, 7.1 miles of bike facilities—which include bike lanes and shared-use paths—were added to City streets. In the last year a new bike shelter outside the Historic Railway Depot and new bike lockers inside the parking garage were added to make biking easier in Historic Downtown. Horan, who is managing the project's construction, sees the immediate benefits for residents.

"It increases the connectivity not only for students, but for residents



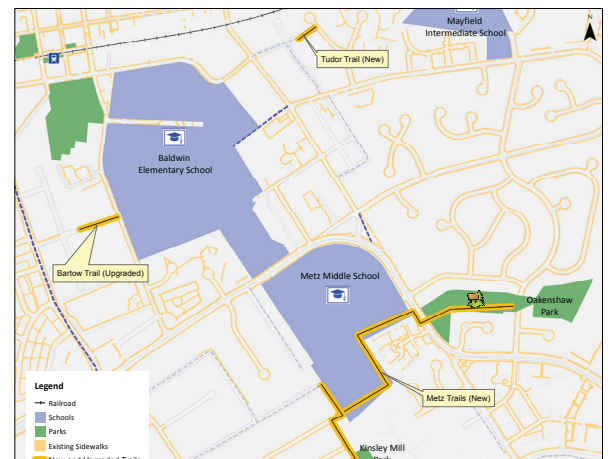
Transportation Planner Chloe Delhomme shows the Oakenshaw Path

to walk or bike more safely through the City, and it opens up several large neighborhoods that will make it easier and safer for children to walk to school," said Horan.

Delhomme says that the newest trail connections are just one of many on-going efforts to complete the City-wide trail system.

"We will continue building the City's trail network to improve residents' quality of life."

Visit www.manassasva.gov/transportation for more information on trails and transportation planning.



A Message from the City Manager



City Manager
W. Patrick Pate

I will admit that I am hoping and praying that 2021 will provide more of a “normal” year than we have experienced in 2020. My resolutions will be to enjoy all of the things that I have been missing during the past year and to celebrate all the blessings that come my way.

One of those professional blessings this year has come from the results of the 2020 community survey. Some questioned why we would conduct a satisfaction survey in the midst of a pandemic. I believe it is important, particularly just after an election of Councilmembers to serve the community, for the City leadership to understand how the community feels about the services that are being delivered, even while we are in a pandemic. Since the first survey in 2014, about 10,000 households have been given an opportunity to fill out a survey. This allows us to get invaluable information on community priorities that will help maintain Manassas as a great place to live, work and play.

In looking in general at the results, the independent surveying group noted that 1) Residents have a positive perception of the City; 2) Residents believe that the City is moving in the right direction; and 3) Satisfaction with City services is much higher in Manassas than in other communities. More than four out of five residents ranked Manassas as an excellent or good place to live. Satisfaction with City services since 2018 increased by 75% and were

above the national averages in almost 84% of the areas that were available for comparison. Two particular areas noted in the survey were, satisfaction with the “Overall Quality of City Services,” which rated 31% above the national average and satisfaction with “Customer Service from City Employees,” which rated 37% above the national average. This is a direct reflection of the quality of City staff who have worked throughout the pandemic to continue to provide quality services to the community.

The survey asks respondents to rank the importance of each service along with the satisfaction with each particular service. Since 2014, the top two general priority areas have been “Quality of Public Education” and “Flow of traffic & ease of getting around the City.” Both of these areas have received emphasis in funding from City Council over the past several years. While quality of public education is the responsibility of the MCPS Board and staff, City Council has increased funding from \$49.9 million to \$58.8 million or about 3% per year from 2014 to 2020. Council has also adopted the strategic priority of “Educational Attainment” to partner with the education and business community to create an innovative, engaging, inspiring and challenging learning environment to fuel the workforce of tomorrow.

Resident satisfaction with transportation and mobility actually went up from 2018 in all twelve areas surveyed with significant increases in availability of bike lanes and amenities, availability of pathways for walking or biking and availability of sidewalks. Over the past several years an emphasis has been placed on these non-vehicular forms of mobility and improving these amenities as we work on improving our street system. We have also completed the Prince William Street improvements; the Centreville turn lane project and a city-wide traffic signal optimization system. Resident satisfaction is also 30% higher than the national average in condition of sidewalks, 26% higher in maintenance of streets, sidewalks and infrastructure and 25% higher in maintenance of streets

in your neighborhood. City Council has also adopted as a strategic priority “Transformative Mobility” to sustain a safe, environmentally responsible, integrated and well-functioning transportation system.

Other general areas where satisfaction was rated substantially higher than national averages included quality of fire and rescue services; quality of police services; quality of trash, recycling & yard waste services; quality of water and sewer utilities; and effectiveness of communication with the community. Quality of public libraries rated below the national averages and we hope to see that improve with the new Manassas Library Branch of the Prince William Library System opening in February. The top three reasons for living in the City that you said should receive the most emphasis over the next two years are the quality of the public-school system, safety and security, and the affordability of housing.

City Council will be looking closely at the community survey as they set budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. With the recent election we will be welcoming our newly elected Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger and Councilmember Tom Osina. Council has also selected David Farajollahi to fill the vacant seat, due to the election of Ms. Davis-Younger as Mayor, until the position can be filled during the November 2021 election. When you see them, please welcome these individuals to their new leadership roles serving the City of Manassas.

Finally, if you are interested in more details regarding the City of Manassas 2020 Citizen Satisfaction Survey results, they are posted on the City website at www.manassasva.gov/CSS. Thank you to everyone who has participated in this survey to help the City understand your priorities. This information is a major help to the City in setting 2021 “New Year’s Resolutions!”

Stay safe and healthy,
W. Patrick Pate

A Moment with the Mayor

Mayor Davis-Younger...has a nice ring to it! As I settle into this new and exciting role, I am looking forward to staying connected with you. It is an honor to serve and lead the City of Manassas forward to accomplish many new and exciting things together! This "corner" of our monthly newsletter is where you will hear from me...

an inspirational message, maybe something I am working on that is exciting, highlighting a staff member or citizen or even a student... you name it! We are in for a great and exciting time in our City's history and I don't know about you, but I CAN'T WAIT TO GET STARTED!

Michelle Davis-Younger



To mark the upcoming 150th anniversary of the City of Manassas in 2023, the City Council endorsed the creation of a special Virginia license plate. A minimum of 350 pre-paid applications must be collected by the City before the Virginia DMV will issue the special plate, which will cost between \$25 or \$35 for a personalized plate. Watch for more information when the plate applications are available.

When snow falls, do you know what to do?

- ✓ Monitor the weather closely, as forecasts can improve or worsen quickly. Stay weather aware!
- ✓ Adjust commutes, telework or avoid driving during a storm and after until road conditions improve.
- ✓ Park in driveways where possible.
- ✓ Stay safe and healthy.
- ✓ Wait to shovel driveways until plows come as they will push some snow back. Driveways and sidewalks are the responsibility of the homeowner.
- ✓ Have enough gas, wiper fluid, proper tire pressure, medication and an emergency car kit.
- ✓ Mark your mailbox with brightly colored reflectors or tape to make it easier to spot and avoid.
- ✓ Remember, if you are parked in a snow emergency route and a snow emergency is declared, you need to move your car within 4 hours so plows will have safe access.
- ✓ Use sand as an alternative to salt to pretreat your drive and walkways. #WinterSaltSmart
- ✓ Be patient: crews need time and room to work.



@CityofManassas
Follow the City of Manassas on our social media outlets and on www.manassascity.org.



Snow questions that can't be answered online? (703) 257-8378 M-F, 7a-3:30 p
* During winter weather events and after hours, call (703) 257-8353.



To view a map of snow routes, snow emergency routes, and primary, secondary and tertiary routes visit manassascity.org/snowmap



Check the roads before you go. Virginia 511 is a great way to see the traffic before you get on the road; 511virginia.gov.

The City of Manassas Happenings

Find these events and more in the City of Manassas, Virginia. For more information go to www.visitmanassas.org.

Winter Farmer's Market - The Winter Farmer's Market will be held under the Harris Pavilion this year.



Now - May 23, 2021 - Manassas Museum **Exhibit: The Power of Play** - The toys in this exhibit may be familiar or foreign, but the joy of time spent playing is something we can all remember fondly. The vintage toys on display are from the Museum's collection and from private collectors. The exhibit is free during the Museum's open hours.



Jan. 5 - 8 at 7 p.m. - **Art Journaling 2021** Online Workshop at the ARTfactory



Jan. 11, 13, 15 at 7:30 p.m. - **What's the Next Move: Line Dances!** at the ARTfactory



Jan. 18 - 27 at 6:30 p.m. - **Studio Art** at the ARTfactory



Now - Jan. 23 at 7:30 p.m. - **The Nutcracker** Live Streaming from the Hylton Performing Arts Center.



Jan. 26, 27, 28 & 29 at 7 p.m. - **Impressionistic Oils** Online Class at the ARTfactory



2021

Household Hazardous Waste, Electronic Waste and Shredding

March 6

April 3

May 1 + Shredding

June 5

July 10

August 7 + Shredding

September 4

October 2

November 6 + Shredding

All drop off days are held on Saturdays from 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. at the Manassas Transfer Station located at 8305 Quarry Road, Manassas, VA 20110.

This is a free service provided for City of Manassas residents in partnership with Waste Management. www.manassascity.org/trash



Jan. 27 at 3 p.m. - Stories of Preservation & Progress **Talk on the Electoral College** -

This year the Electoral College was at the forefront of election news. Learn about the history and relevance of the Electoral College with Stephen Farnsworth, Professor and Director at the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington. Visit manassasechoes.com for limited tickets or facebook.com/cityofmanassasleisure to watch a livestream of the talk.



Feb. 8, 10, 12 at 7:30 p.m. - **What's the Next Move: Line Dances!** at the ARTfactory

March 5-31 - Manassas Museum Exhibit: **Artistic Expression** - The eighth annual Osbourn High School art exhibit will feature the works of students at Osbourn High School. A variety of mediums including painting, drawing, photos and sculpture are included in this student show.



Mar. 6 at 7:30 p.m. - **Manassas Symphony Orchestra: Amadeus!**



March 12 - 14 - Manassas Ballet - **Peter and the Wolf and More**

City of Manassas and Manassas Public Schools

City of Manassas Council
Mayor Michelle Davis-Younger

571-206-8433

Vice Mayor

Pamela J. Sebesky

571-330-5514

Theresa Coates Ellis

571-247-6729

David Farajollahi

703-209-6320

Tom Osina

703-304-3984

Ralph J. Smith

703-303-8530

Mark D. Wolfe

703-257-1702

City of Manassas School Board

Chairman Sanford S. Williams 571-535-6364

Christina S. Brooks

703-241-0918

Tim Demeria

703-895-4856

Carl Hollingsworth Jr.

703-789-2224

Suzanne W. Seaberg

703-869-1171

Lisa A. Stevens

571-535-0652

Robyn Williams

571-535-7510

Get Social!

Visit the City at www.manassascity.org.



www.facebook.com/cityofmanassas



www.twitter.com/cityofmanassas



www.flickr.com/photos/cityofmanassas



www.instagram.com/cityofmanassas



www.youtube.com/user/manassascityva

To contact the City of Manassas Connection newsletter, email prrince@manassasva.gov