

RELEASED MARCH 2025



CITY OF STAUNTON

ACTIVITY REPORT HIGHLIGHTS



By the Numbers

95-gallon and 45-gallon cans available

9,500 residential trash customers

12 yard waste collections per year

2 heavy trash collections - one in spring, one in fall

New Cans Roll Out to Residents

Starting in early March, each Staunton household received a new city-owned bin. This upgrade is more than just a new bin. It's a step toward cleaner streets, more efficiency, and long-term environmental and financial stability that benefits the entire community. Knowing that this change may be difficult for some households, the city offers bag tags for trash bags that won't fit in the bin; the option of purchasing a second bin; yard waste collection will now occur monthly with a specific bin for that purpose only; and there will be expanded heavy trash collection. Questions can be directed to Public Works, 540.332.3892.



STAUNTON POLICE DEPARTMENT



STAUNTON FIRE & RESCUE

February 2025

Dispatched Calls for Service*

Police 2,140 ↓

Fire & Rescue 346 ↓

Average Response Time month/year

Police 4'35"/4'07"

Fire & Rescue 4'55"/5'07"

*arrows indicate if calls are up or down compared to the previous month

Emergency Management Training

Many city department heads and a few City Council members participated in emergency preparedness classes sponsored by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and taught by the VCU L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs professors.



Looking for a Few Good People

The city has nearly 20 job openings this spring, and the list doesn't include seasonal positions. Those interested in a variety of fields can find the right opportunity here in the City of Staunton. See what jobs are online by visiting www.staunton.va.us/jobs.



Budget Public Hearings

The FY 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026) budget process has begun. City staff have been working together to come up with the proposed budget that will be presented to City Council by City Manager Leslie Beauregard on March 27. Along the way there will be multiple work sessions and public hearings. Staunton residents are able to listen in, both in-person, and virtually throughout the process, but there are two public hearings where City Council will want to hear from citizens.

- 7 p.m., 3/27 - public hearing, proposed tax rate
- 7 p.m., 4/10 - public hearing on all budget ordinances

More detail about the process can be found online at www.staunton.va.us/budget, recordings of each City Council meeting can be found on the city's YouTube channel, and questions can be sent to budget@ci.staunton.va.us.



New Traffic Pattern at the Wharf

At the recommendation of structural engineers so that a more in-depth investigation of the tunnels under the Wharf Parking Lot can be completed, and out of an abundance of caution, the city has limited traffic on Byers Street and portions of parking lot. The western half of the lot is open with access from Byers Street via Lewis Street (as pictured above); the eastern side of the lot remains closed; Byers Street is closed to through traffic; the Johnson Street entrance to the Wharf is closed; and there is an eastbound traffic lane shift on Johnson Street in front of the Johnson Street Parking Garage.

February 2025 Activity Report

Community Development

Key Construction Project Updates

10 Morris Mill Rd

Construction to convert the former Staunton Foods Building located at 10 Morris Mill Rd into a 250-unit interior storage space is almost complete. Total square footage is 22,720 square feet. Final inspections are being scheduled.



Pictured above: The new indoor storage facility at 10 Morris Mill Rd.

Reports

Staff Attends Data Center Training

Zoning Administrator Linda Nesselrodt attended the Region III Virginia Association of Zoning Officials training on data centers. As of 2024, Virginia is the largest market in the world for data centers.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Staff and consultants have completed 10 stakeholder meetings and the online mapping survey closed with 258 responses. The next phase involves data analysis and research, while the Steering Committee plans public intercept events to keep the community informed and involved.

Stay in Touch! Community Development will be hosting another open house style event later this spring. Sign up for email updates through the [Comprehensive Plan website](#). You can also leave feedback for the Comprehensive Plan.

Environmental 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 – 21 active sites, with 41 inspections in February
- Commercial Construction – 8 active sites, with 16 inspections in February

Environmental Staff Changes

Environmental Programs Specialist Willow Hughes has been promoted to Environmental Programs Administrator once the current administrator, Pete Kesecker, retires March 28. A new environmental programs specialist has been hired and will start in mid-March.

Planning Commission

At the Feb. 20 meeting, the Commission recommended approval of a zoning text amendment to update references to the recently revised Title 13, Environmental, ensuring consistency in city codes.

Housing and Grants Coordination

On Feb. 28, city staff attended the Valley Homeless Connection (VHC)'s Strategic Planning Retreat. The City of Staunton is an active member of the VHC, which is one of 12 Local Planning Groups that comprise the Balance of State Continuum of Care which is led by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. The VHC is a collaborative and inclusive community-based organization for planning and managing

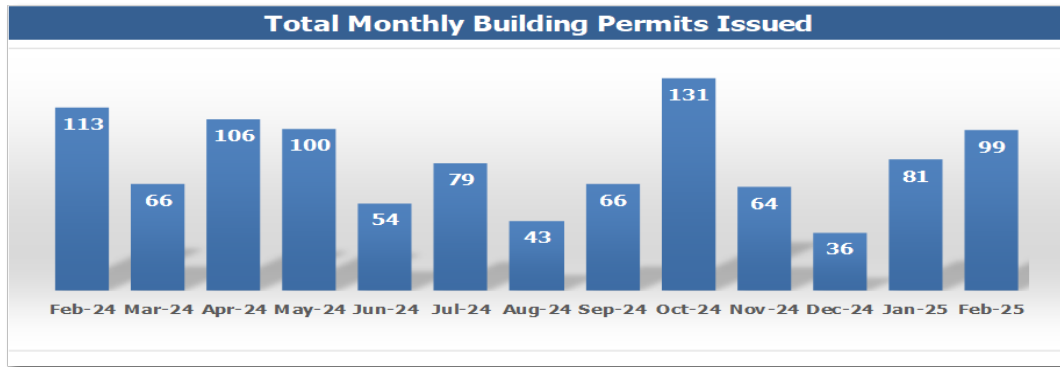


Pictured: Participants share ideas for the VHC Strategic Plan.

homeless assistance resources and services effectively. The Strategic Planning Retreat allowed the opportunity for individual input and group discussions that will be incorporated into the Strategic Plan that is being developed to further collaboration and service provision for those who are un-housed or at-risk of homelessness.

Building Construction and Related Activity

Permits Issued	Feb-25	Feb-24	# Chg	% Chg
New Residential	11	11	0	0.0%
Residential Renovations	12	15	-3	-20.0%
Electrical Permits	24	29	-5	-17.2%
Mechanical Permits	17	13	4	30.8%
Plumbing Permits	19	24	-5	-20.8%
Commercial New-Renovations	5	9	-4	-44.4%
Miscellaneous	11	12	-1	-8.3%
Total	99	113	-14	-12.4%



Economic Development

Shenandoah Community Capital Fund

On Feb. 3 staff attended the inaugural Small Business Intensive Session at the Staunton Innovation Hub. The program helped eight Staunton small businesses take the next steps in scaling their businesses.

Business Retention and Expansion Efforts

The Business Retention Survey was launched in February. This effort includes a multi-faceted campaign targeting all business license holders throughout the city. To reach as many businesses as possible, the city distributed postcards with a survey link, launched a digital marketing campaign with direct emails, and partnered with community organizations to help spread the word. This survey will remain open for businesses to complete until the end of March.

Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce

Three Staunton businesses were recognized for their excellence at the Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce's Business Excellence Awards;

Woman Owned Business of the Year: Bears and Blankets

Non-Profit of the Year: Frontier Culture Foundation

Leadership Excellence Award: Susan Richardson, Valley Mission

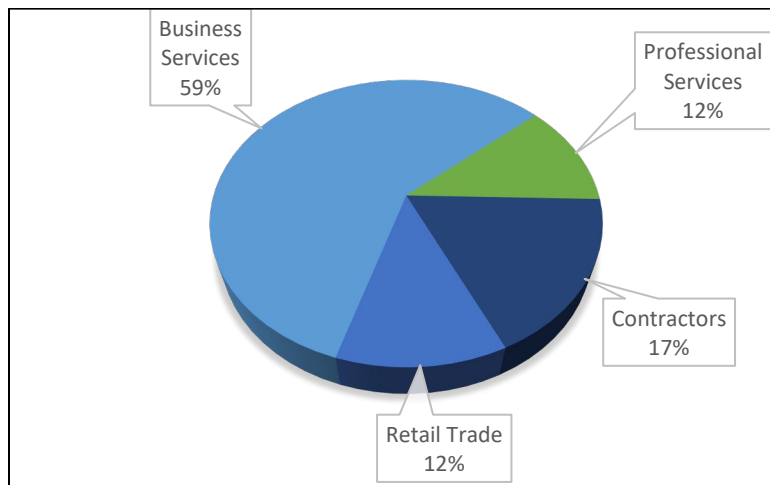
Economic Development Authority

The Economic Development Authority met in February to learn more about possible amendments to the Enterprise Zone. A timeline was set for revisions and additional information will be presented at the April meeting.

Business License Activity

During the month of February, the Commissioner of Revenue's office issued 18 new business licenses, compared to 24 the previous month, representing a 25% decrease. This month a year ago, 31 new business licenses were issued.

As seen in the following pie chart, the Business Services sector accounted for 59% of the of the total licenses issued in February, and the Retail Trade and Professional Services sectors accounted for 12% each with a remaining 17% represented by Contractors.



Finance

- The department issued 7,024 utility bills and general bills totaling \$1,315,843 during February.
- Collection activities in February resulted in the recovery of \$2,372 in delinquent utility invoices.
- The Utility Payment Office processed 3,287 receipts in the amount of \$826,136 during February.
- The department processed 401 City and 212 School accounts payable checks totaling \$3,687,466, 845 City and 579 Schools payroll-related advices totaling \$4,082,090 and 102 ACH debit/wire transactions totaling \$2,800,508 during February.
- A draft of the FY24 Cost Allocation Plan has been received from Maguire Associates. The department has reviewed and approved the draft for finalization. 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 Planning Commission held a public hearing on the FY2026-2030 Capital Improvement Plan at their Feb. 20 meeting. The CIP was approved by the Planning Commission at that same meeting. The updated five-year plan was then introduced to City Council at their Feb. 27 meeting.

- Finance staff completed the semi-annual physical inventory at the Public Works utility inventory building.
- Staff attended the Brown, Edwards & Co 2025 online government forum.

Fire & Rescue

- Staunton Fire and Rescue responded to 346 incidents in February, with an average response time of 4 minutes and 55 seconds. The average response time for the year is 5 minutes and 7 seconds.
- Staff received over 591 hours of training for the month.
- Staff conducted 42 business fire safety inspections and 11 re-inspections in February.
- Attended a ceremony hosted by the preschool class at Dixon Learning Center as a thank you to the first responders that assisted with an incident involving a bus.
- Held the second-semester kickoff meeting at Bessie Weller Elementary for the Firefighters for Literacy Program.
- Deputy Chief Brian Butler, Captain Adam Dolan, and Lieutenant Alex Foresman were sworn in to their new positions at the City Council meeting. *(Pictured right)*



- Staff attended emergency management training hosted by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and Virginia Commonwealth University at the Blackburn Inn.
- The Fire Marshal's Office issued one Ag-forestal open burning permit; conducted one fire alarm final acceptance inspection and one sprinkler final acceptance inspection; one WARM shelter location re-inspection; reviewed two special event applications; and reviewed 16 semi-annual fire suppression inspection reports; investigated four structure fires (three under investigation and one accidental) and one outside fire (youth fire-setting event).

Human Resources

Employee Actions

The following employee actions were processed:

Terminated:

Full Time— 4

Part Time/Seasonal— 1

Hired:

Full Time— 7

Part Time— 2

Retired— 1

Activities

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

Recruitment:

Initiated recruitment for the following positions:

- Transportation Planner
 - Deputy City Engineer
 - Recovery Court Coordinator (Maury River) – Blue Ridge Court Services
 - Probation Officer – Blue Ridge Court Services
 - Water Treatment Plant Operator
 - Library Assistant 1 – Circulation
 - Custodian – Part-Time
 - Pretrial Officer – Blue Ridge Court Services
 - Probation Officer/Pre-Trial Officer – Blue Ridge Court Services
 - Regional Firefighter Testing
 - Deputy Treasurer I
 - Maintenance Worker – Traffic Control
 - Equipment Operator 1 – Utilities
 - Sanitation Worker
-
- Continued recruitment for the following positions:
 - Equipment Operator I – Streets
 - Equipment Operator II – Streets
 - Equipment Operator II – Utilities
 - Police Officer – Certified Only
 - Equipment Operator I – Park Maintenance

Orientations:

- Conducted orientations for six full-time employees.

Miscellaneous:

- City Council approved the updates to the City of Staunton Personnel Policy Manual at their Feb. 27 meeting.

Information Technology

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

- Installation is complete on the new fiber-based network connection to the Gardner Springs Pump Station. The new connection will provide significantly more bandwidth for connectivity to the site.
- Installation of a 30kW UPS has started in Dispatch. The UPS will replace several smaller devices, providing improved coverage and reliability and provide additional capacity to accommodate the new radio system.
- Replaced four workstations, several laptops and several document scanners.

Library

In order to bring increasing costs under control while maintaining the service, the library implemented changes to its Hoopla access:

- Lowered the cost threshold per check-out: items on Hoopla range from under a dollar to several dollars per circulation; SPL has lowered its maximum price to \$1.99 from \$2.99. This means that some titles across all genres and audiences are no longer available.
- Reduced each patron's monthly check-outs: Starting in March, patrons will be allowed a maximum of three borrows each month (previously four).
- Limited Hoopla access to residents of the Staunton, Augusta, and Waynesboro areas: SPL's borrower policy has long allowed neighbors in nearby counties to receive a library card. Non-residents within the broader service area may still sign up for a card, but will no longer be able to access Hoopla so that SPL can prioritize those allocated funds for local residents.

Nature programs were a big hit with adult attendees in February with a Backyard Bird Count and a city horticulture event bringing in good crowds.

For February, the Staunton Augusta African American Research Society coordinated a display featuring the History of Black Banks, providing a look into Staunton's financial past.



Library Statistical Report: February 2025

CIRCULATION	Month	YTD	SERVICES	Month	YTD
Adult	9,574	78,654	ILLs Borrowed	13	105
Young Adult (YA)	860	5,887	ILLs Lent	0	0
Juvenile	6,418	55,589	Proctoring/Book-a-Librarians	1	14
Digital	5,646	46,947			
			PROGRAMS		
Total Circulation	22,498	187,077	Adult	12	111
Talking Book Center Circulation	2,120	13,234	Attendance	205	2,129
			YA	7	41
Items Checked In	18,426	156,281	Attendance	537	3,738
			Juvenile	26	271
Outgoing to VLC Libraries	1,514	13,510	Attendance	1,328	11,528
Incoming from VLC Libraries	1,622	12,623			
Total Holds Filled	4,428	39,458	PEOPLE		
			Library Visits	11,584	100,250
Added to Collection	692	7,051	Curbside Visits	22	323
Withdrawn from Collection	33	13,066	Computer Users	503	4,923
			Juvenile Computer Users	1,279	11,435
Database Use/Sessions	2575	16,778	Meetings Held	13	57
			Volunteer Hours	59	1,021
			New Card Registrations	156	1,390
			Total Registered Cards		15,540

Parks & Recreation***Horticulture***

Horticulture completed the following tasks:

- Leah Roadcap joined Parks & Recreation staff as assistant horticulturist on Feb. 5.
- Horticulture staff attended the Virginia Association of Forestry Health Professionals meeting, learning more about tree care, forest health, pesticide safety, and new and emerging pest threats.
- City Horticulturist Matt Sensabaugh presented “Staunton Horticulture through the Season” at the Staunton Public Library with approximately 30 attendees.

Community Outreach

Staff engaged in the following community outreach activities

- Staff attended Emergency Management Training at the Blackburn Inn.
- Began Mentorship program with a Staunton High School student.
- Senior “Snow Ball” dance was held at the Gypsy Hill Gymnasium.

- American Red Cross Blood Drive was held in the Gypsy Hill Gymnasium.
- Programs offered
 - Morning Warm Ups, 19 participants
 - Toddler Open Gym, 50 participants
 - Chess Club, 11 participants
 - Indoor Walk, 9 participants
 - Indoor Futsal League, 23 teams
 - Kendo, 5 participants
 - Kung Fu, 12 participants
 - Pickleball, open gym
 - Intermediate pickleball, open gym
 - Explorers Club, 8 participants
 - Dancing through the decades, 28 participants
 - Little Movers, 16 participants
 - Indoor walk, 10 participants

Police

- The Department currently has six vacant police officer positions and 37 applications were received. Of those, 19 took the written test, and 13 passed. Interviews are scheduled for the second week in March.
- The Department has started the process of planning for upgrading the Records Management System and Computer-aided Dispatch software with an estimated timeline of 24–30 months. It is anticipated that a needs assessment and RFP development will be completed during the 2025 calendar year.
- All sworn personnel completed less-lethal weapons training during the month.
- The E-911 Center received 3,964 calls during the month, including 1,096 911 calls.
- Police personnel responded to 2,140 incidents during the month, including 1,184 citizen calls for service, 478 officer initiated activities, 137 administrative calls, and 341 directed patrols.
- The average response time for police emergency calls for service during the month was 4 minutes and 35 seconds; it is 4 minutes and 7 seconds for the year.

Public Works

- The Utility Office established 24 new owner accounts, 18 new rental residential accounts, and 3 commercial accounts.
- The Public Works Utility Office collected \$46,954 in payments.

- 36 accounts were cut off for non-payment during 2 cut off weeks. Of those cut off, 30 were reconnected after payments were made or a payment plan established.
- Utility crews repaired 4 water main breaks, and 19 water meters. The crew responded to 8 sewer main blockage and 20 sewer lateral blockages.

Tourism

Activities:

Visit Staunton staff took part in the following activities in February:

- Staunton blog promotions featured [A Slice of Staunton: Where to Celebrate National Pizza Day](#), [Presidential Road Trips: Historic Sites You Can Visit](#), [Where To Get Your Staunton Margarita on National Margarita Day](#), [Tying the Knot in Staunton – National Wedding Planning Day](#)
- Launched a new podcast, [The U is Silent; We Aren't](#)
- Sales and Marketing Manager Jessica Williams attended the American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace to sell motorcoach travel in Staunton.

Public Relations

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

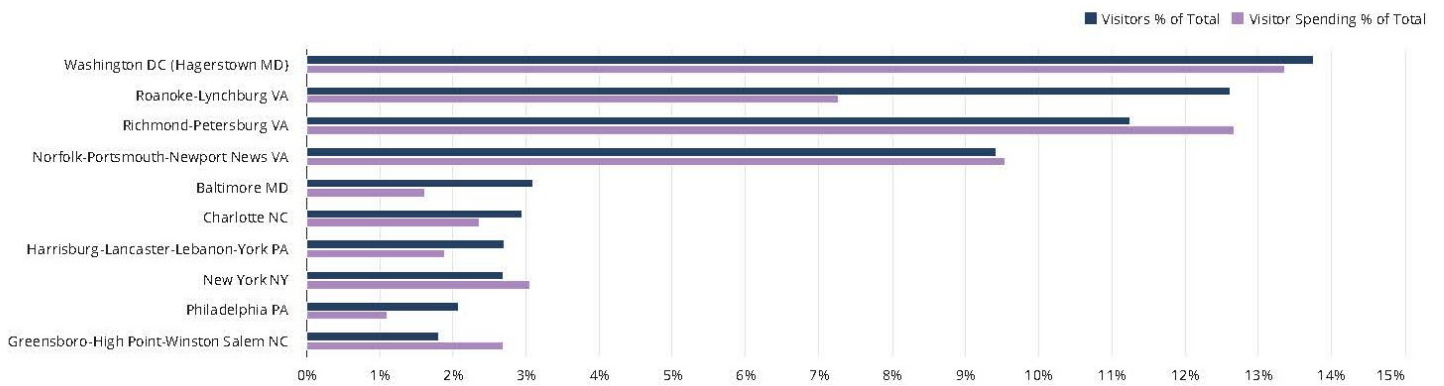
Date	Headline	Source	Reach
Feb. 15	This Small Virginia Town Has a Scenic Train Ride, 6 Historic Districts, and Easy Access to Shenandoah National Park	Travel + Leisure	9,876,963
Feb. 28	6 Virginia Towns That Rival Europe's Best	World Atlas	5,704,883
Feb. 16	Top 8 Virginia Towns to Visit In 2025	World Atlas	5,704,883
Feb. 19	Photos: Louisa May Alcott's LITTLE WOMEN Opens at The American Shakespeare Center	BroadwayWorld.com	1,308,615
Feb. 11	8 Unassuming Restaurants in Virginia with Outrageously Delicious Steaks	Family Destinations Guide	757,262
Feb. 21	Ultimate Virginia Bucket List: 100 Things to Do with Kids in VA	Mommy Poppins	532,555
Feb. 25	Historic Staunton Foundation to Stabilize Civil War-era Cabell Log House	WHSV-TV	372,200
Feb. 28	Secrets Of Virginia's Ancient Natural Villages	TouristSecrets	45,553
Feb. 5	Destination Downtown: The Main Street Adventure Guide	Blue Ridge Outdoors	35,436
		TOTAL	24,354,408

Website Visitation

Website Traffic		
February 2024	February 2025	% Change
30,615 visitors	27,724 visitors	-9.9 %
169 guide requests	138 visitor's guide requests	-18.3%

Top 10 Origin Markets and Visitor Spending

Top 10 Origin Markets by Visitation with their Spend



8,869 Sample Size



17% of Overall Restaurant Spend - \$82



Increase in spending/visitation by Baltimore, Charlotte, Harrisburg



17.9% of Overall Retail Spend - \$157



31% of Attraction Spend - \$58



55% Ages 25-54
48% Household \$100k+
36% Have Children

Office on Youth

Crime Control Programs

- Nine youth received detention alternative services.

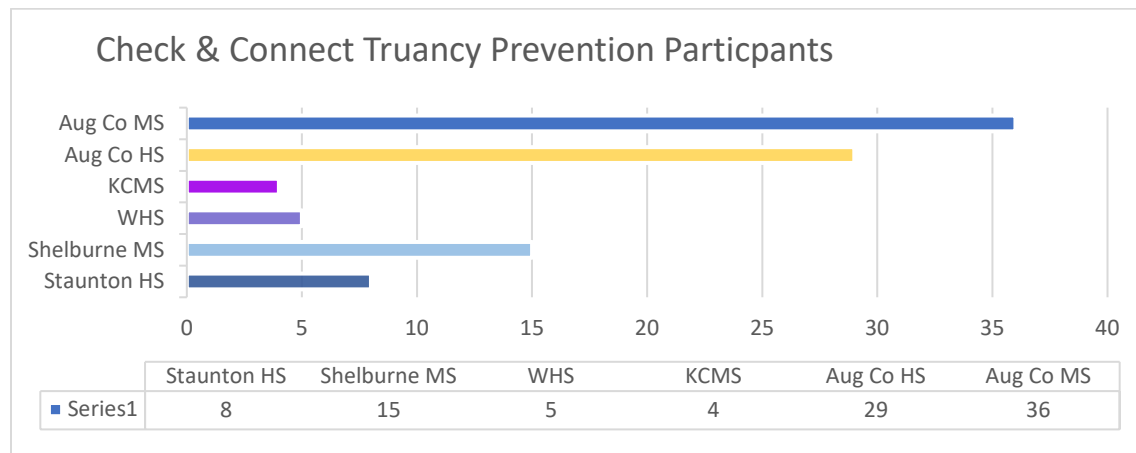
Family Service Programs

Area adults participated in the following programs:

- *First 5 Years*, 7 participants
- *Active Parents*, 14 participants
- *Parenting and Divorce* co-parenting program, 16 participants
- WARM Shelter, 4 participants

Check and Connect - Truancy Prevention Program

- Participants include 97 students from 14 schools



- Four students with Staunton City Public Schools participated with the Regional Truancy Board Feb. 25.

Personal Responsibility Education Programs (PREP)

- 146 elementary students participated in Family Life Education program. There were 109 4th & 5th-grade students from Bessie Weller Elementary School February 11–14.

Community/Etc.

- Division Supervisor attended the *Agents of Change Summit* hosted through Rescue Agency in San Diego, CA, Feb. 23–25.

Staunton Downtown Development Association¹

In February the current SDDA Executive Director Darren Smith (left) along with former executive directors Julie Markowitz and Greg Beam attended the 40th Anniversary Celebration of the Virginia Main Street Program at Main Street Station in Richmond, Mr. Smith attended the annual VMS Directors' Retreat as well.

Also in February, SDDA hosted a group of design students from James Madison University who will be completing a project involving a reimagining of the Wharf Parking Lot this semester.



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.