

2022 Annual Report

Community Development



Message from the Director

On behalf of the Department of Community Development I am pleased to submit the department's Annual Report for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. After years of planning, work has begun on the expansion of the Manassas Museum and the renovation of City Hall. In order to facilitate this work, department staff successfully relocated to the Customer Service Center, Old Town Hall and moved Park, Culture and Recreation headquarters to the rail depot while maintaining core customer service and department operations. While these changes were underway, the work of the department did not stop. Among the many accomplishments this fiscal year:

- The Architectural Review Board adopted new design guidelines for the historic district.
- City Council approved the Van Metre rezoning in the downtown south neighborhood of Holmes Heights, which will add 247 new single family detached townhomes in the downtown over the next several years.
- Continued plan review, permitting, and inspections for the new Public Safety Facility, Jefferson Square, Didlake, and the Harris Building addition.
- Continued the Property Code Enforcement (PCE) goal of abating violations within 45 business days (90% success rate).
- Installed 43 bike racks in parks, schools, Downtown, and at City Buildings (total of 99 bike racks, 10 bike lockers and 1 repair station installed since 2017).
- Supported the installation of 3.9 miles of new bike lanes and paths (total of 13 miles in the last four years) and secured 12 million in transportation funding, including full NVTAF funding of the Liberia Avenue 3rd lane project.
- Successfully opened Stonewall Park Pool on-time and despite significant nationwide hiring issues for lifeguards.
- Completed park improvements at Lee Manor Park and Mayfield Intermediate School.
- Opened a new online store in March 2022 with e-commerce platform Shopify, giving the shop a modern and upgraded look to entice more online shopping.
- Continued work at Annaburg, including adoption of the master plan, archaeological exploration, and installation of a donated windmill.
- Completed installation of the first round of markers highlighting local African American history around the City.
- Offered two exhibitions in FY2022 - retrospective celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Christmas Parade and the Osbourn High School art exhibit.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without the hard work and dedication of the Community Development team. They are the true heart of this department and it is an honor and pleasure to serve alongside them each day as we strive to deliver exceptional customer service and beautiful places to live, work, and play in the City.



Matthew D. Arcieri, AICP

Director of Planning & Community Development

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Long-Range Planning

The Long-Range Planning Division is responsible for articulating the community's long-range vision for land use and implementing that vision through policies and ordinances, planning studies, capital project planning, and development review. The division is dedicated to improving the quality of life for City residents through appropriate land use policies and regulations while fostering a competitive business environment.

The focus of the Long Range Planning Division is to provide planning support for new development and redevelopment and to enhance neighborhoods and the supply of quality housing options through the implementation of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. In FY22 the division has continued a comprehensive review of City housing policies in support of improving the affordability and quality of the City's housing stock and has started community outreach to gauge support for future proposals. The adoption of the updated Historic District Guidelines provide property owners, residents and businesses with updated comprehensive standards in a user friendly format and the changes modernize the document and related supplements from the past 30 years.



Community Development got feedback from the community to determine housing needs.



The Architectural Review Board adopted new design guidelines for the historic district.

Land Use Cases

The Planning Commission met in seven regular meetings and one worksession to review and act on land use cases. The Planning Commission acted on eight (8) special use permit cases and three (3) rezoning cases recommending approval for:

Development Review:

- A rezoning and special use permit for the Sudley Road Wawa
- A Comprehensive Plan consistency review for Technology Drive
- A zoning text amendment for electronic signs
- A zoning text amendment for annual zoning ordinance updates
- A special use permit for Annaburg Historic Site and Park
- Two (2) rezoning cases for a proposed development to include 247 residential homes (Van Metre).
- A special use permit for a proposed electronic message sign at 9700 Wellington Road
- Four (4) special use permits for proposed places of assembly at Church of Pentecost USA, LLC., Clear River Community Church, Healing Hands Ministry, and Prince William Islamic Center.

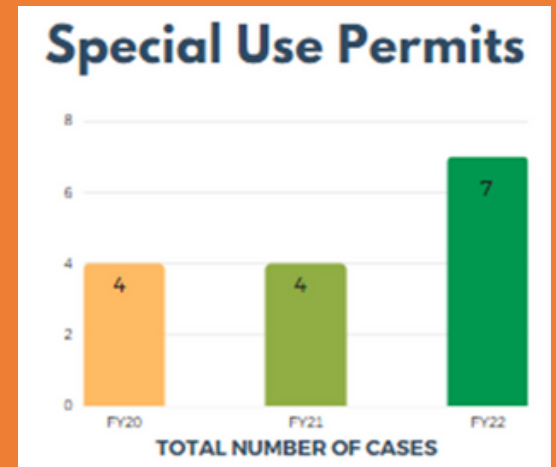
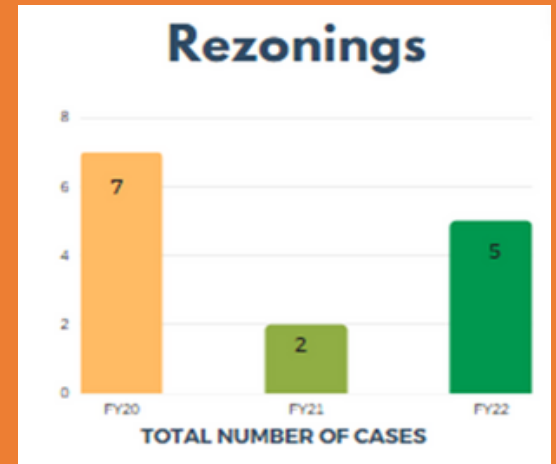
Long Range Planning:

- The Zoning Ordinance Review Committee discussed affordable home ownership over six meetings and provided guidance
- The draft 2022 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Code Updates:

- Annual updates to the zoning ordinance to make technical corrections and to implement the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
- Reviewed regulation and prohibition of electronic message signs.

In FY22, there were no cases before the Board of Zoning Appeals.



Transportation Planning

This year the department secured grants that are funding existing and planned CIP Projects to move those projects forward to completion. In FY22, a total of \$12 million in state and federal funding was awarded adding to an overall total of \$22 million in the last five years.

Projects:

Projects in the planning phase:

- Sudley Road Sidewalk: New 0.7 mile sidewalk on the east side of Sudley Road between Mathis Avenue and Grant Avenue
- Dumfries Road Bike Facilities: New 0.5 mile bike connection between Wellington Road and Donner Drive
- Godwin Trail (North): New 10-foot wide, 0.9 mile shared-use path on the east-side of Godwin Drive between Wellington Road and Sudley Road
- Redoubt Road Trail: New 8-10 foot wide, 600 ft shared-use path between Wakeman Court and Redoubt Road
- Liberia Avenue 3rd lane eastbound: Widening of Liberia to 3 through lanes in the eastbound direction between Route 28 and Euclid Ave



The bike rack at the Manassas Customer Service Center.



The Dumfries Trail



Scooters:

The City's shared mobility device permit was renewed in April 2022 with a fleet size increase from 50 to 100. Since April 2021, about 14,000 miles were ridden.

Events & Incentives:

- Car Free Day (Sept 2021)
- Bike Exploration Month (May 2022) including Bike to Work Day, Annual Bike/Ped Meeting, and Bicycle Rodeo held by PD Bike Team at the Boys and Girls Club.
- Creation of Request a bike rack/sidewalk & trail connection via the Manassas Connect App

Bike Facilities:

- Supported the installation of 3.9 miles of new bike facilities to include bike lanes, sharrows, and shared use paths for a total of 13 miles in the last four years.
- 43 bike racks were installed in FY22 in parks, schools, Downtown, and at City Buildings for a total of 99 bike racks - 10 bike lockers – 1 repair station installed since 2017.

Development Services

Development Services strives to provide thoughtful, knowledgeable, timely, and reliable plan review, permitting and inspections to the development community, property owners, other City departments, and other public agencies. They proactively monitor project progress and strive to resolve outstanding issues.

Greg Bokan

Land Development Manager/
Zoning Administrator

Eric Lowe

Building Development Manager/
Building Official

The division is tasked with providing technical expertise and services across a wide range of projects, from permits for residential decks and fences, to large scale commercial projects. Some of the more notable large-scale projects under construction this year include: the renovation of Chick-fil-a on Liberia Avenue, Didlake's new office and support services buildings, the new Public Safety Building and Museum Addition, along with new residential developments at Harris Building II on Battle Street and the new Jefferson Square Subdivision.



Projects Under Development



- The Harris II Building Addition at 9117 Center Street (*pictured above*) received approval from the Architectural Review Board in March 2021. This project is under construction and will include a 4-story addition onto the existing buildings at 9117 Center Street and 9414 Battle Street.



- The Jefferson Square project at Prince William Street and Jefferson Street (*pictured above*) is a new residential development that includes 85 townhomes and 20 single family homes. The project is under construction.



- The Learning Experience Academy is a two-story child daycare. The permit was issued in January 2022 and is currently under construction.



- Quarry Station Senior Apartments are making renovations to 80 units and is currently under construction.



- Didlake Office and Warehouse at 8651 - 8661 Breeden Avenue is progressing towards final and occupancy.



City Projects

Four (4) City projects were under construction in 2022 and some are nearing completion:



- The renovations to City Hall have begun. Interior and façade renovations to the existing four story building along with a complete modernization of the building with new windows, mechanical, electrical and plumbing.



- The new Public Safety Facility is under construction and almost complete at 9608 Grant Avenue.



- The renovations and addition for the Manassas Museum have begun.



- Exterior renovations are happening and a new windmill has been installed at Annaburg Historic Site.

Property Code Enforcement

Property Code Enforcement (PCE) staff is responsible for enforcing the City's nuisance codes, including tall grass and trash ordinances, the Virginia Property Maintenance Code, the Building Code for work without permits, and the Zoning Ordinance. This type of complaint-based and proactive code enforcement is critical to our city's neighborhood preservation and revitalization efforts.

Carlos Perez

Property Code Enforcement Supervisor

PCE maintains an aggressive goal that within 45-business days a case:

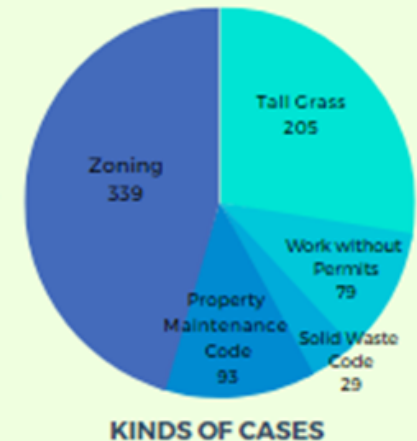
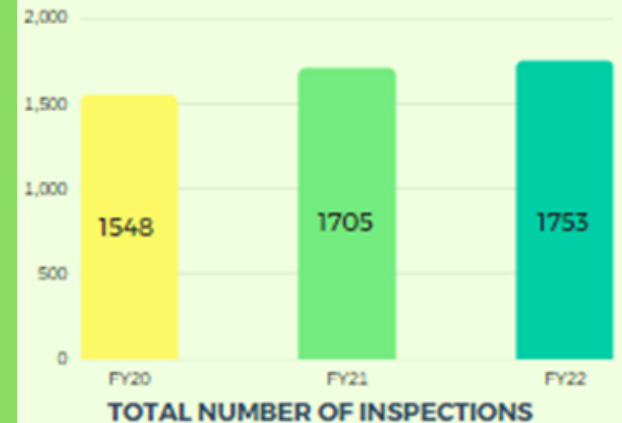
- Should be abated;
- Should be under an abatement plan; or
- Transferred to the City Attorney or Public Works for court action or clean-up.

In FY22, 90% of cases were abated within the 45-day goal. PCE focused its efforts on neighborhood maintenance issues, including tall grass and inoperable vehicles. Additionally, the division focused on abating blighted properties and properties with significant maintenance issues.



Pictured above is a vacant property on Nokesville Road during and after repairs.

Property Code Inspections





Historic Trail Signs



Echoes



OHS Art Exhibit



Programs

PARKS, CULTURE & RECREATION

FY2022



Parks

This year the parks continued to play an essential role in maintaining a healthy and thriving community. From person, to pet and to wildlife the parks have much to offer. Helping to protect pollinators as part of the Bee City USA initiative, areas at Liberia House and Dean Park were identified as No Mow Zones.

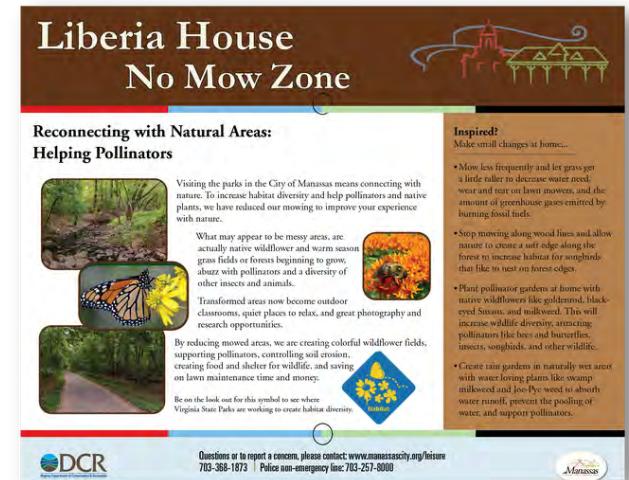


Mayfield Fort (above)



Newly renovated tennis courts at Lee Manor Park. (right)

Tennis players showed excitement for the reopening of the newly renovated tennis courts at Lee Manor Park. Lastly, park maintenance improvements included annual athletic field grooming and bi-annual playground safety surfacing replenishment to maintain a safe and playable surface.



Now Mow Zone signs were installed at Liberia House and Dean Park.



Tulips blooming in the spring at Jennie Dean Memorial,

Park Volunteers:



- \$35,872.61 = the value of volunteers serving 1,197.75 hours in the parks (Independent Sector rates the value of each volunteer hour at \$29.95)
- Eagle Scout projects included a trail extension and stairs along the walking trail at Liberia House; refurbished fire baskets for winter programs; trail maintenance and newly painted benches at Cannon Branch
- 128 bags of trash collected during park cleanups
- A total of 221 volunteer service projects consisted of trail maintenance, historic house preservation, landscaping, athletic field maintenance, and park inspections
- Received a volunteer donor to design the site plans for the lighting and sound improvements at the Harris Pavilion in preparation for the 150th celebration



Volunteers from Micron completed mulching at Stonewall Park and Kinsley Mill Park.



Improved surfacing at Lucky's Dog Park

Other Notable Highlights:

- Lee Manor Park improvements included new benches, site amenities and an entrance sign.
- Stonewall Park Pool safety improvements continued with safety and sanitation improvements.
- Implemented a bi-annual playground safety surfacing replenishment schedule.
- Athletic fields were groomed and prepped to maintain a safe playing surface for the season.
- Lucky's Dog Park surface was changed to stonedust to create a cleaner, safer play area for dogs.
- Athletic Field Subcommittee began their work on evaluating the reservation process.
- Perks for Parks program continues to be successful with the donation of trees and park benches.
- Created and published a robust Parks, Culture & Recreation map.
- In an effort to help pollinators "No Mow Zones" were identified at Liberia House and Dean Park.

Recreation

Harris Pavilion:

The Harris Pavilion was once again a hub for activity in the City! Along with hosting many of the City's events, there were also many great private events and performances small and large.

After gaining popularity in the previous season, the Acoustic Tuesday summer concert series continued to entertain and grow a dedicated audience. The series brought in 17 acoustic performances of varied styles and backgrounds, all of which were talented and showcased their skills to the audiences.



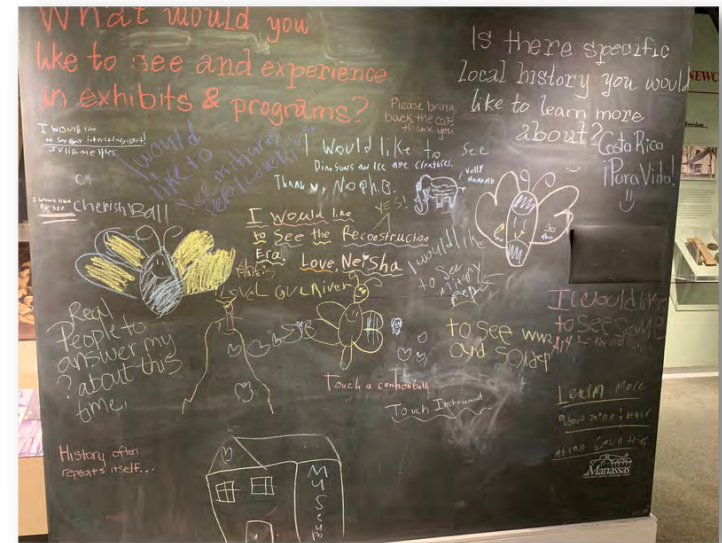
The Sunday Funday concert series was as the name suggests, a lot of fun! Large audiences were able to witness acts such as 12-year-old Carleigh Jane, Prince William Community Band, King Park Concert Band and more. The City was also honored once again to host excellent military bands such as; U.S. Navy Band Country Current, U.S. Navy Band Sea Chanters and 257th U.S. Army Band.

Quickly becoming the staple of the summer concert series is the Saturday Night Concert Series. To get a good seat at one of these events, you had to get there early! Starting off the series with a fantastic show was the great

Beatlegacy, who do a great tribute to the Beatles. With two swing bands to get the crowds dancing in the middle, the series ended with the ever-popular local band, Special Occasions.

Manassas Museum Renovation

In FY21, work began to prepare the Manassas Museum for the upcoming renovation and expansion. Echoes, the Manassas Museum Store, opened a temporary location at the Southern Railway Depot. Collections were packed and moved to offsite storage, and offices relocated to the second floor of Old Town Hall. Staff are working out of these temporary locations during the renovation work to continue to provide programs and other services to the public. Finally, several Community Conversations were held around exhibitions and programs to discern what the public wants to see in their new museum. This information will be incorporated into the new displays being planned for the renovated gallery spaces.



Blackboard with feedback from the community.



Move out of
Museum
location prior
to the start of
renovation.



Programs

Staff was eager to activate the City's historic sites and bring programs out into the community while the museum was closed for renovation during FY22! We experimented with offering some new programs like History Hikes at Cannon Branch Fort and Liberia House and family workshops, while also offering more traditional programming such as basement to attic tours of Liberia House and Stories of Preservation and Progress talks. Museum at the Market also continued to be extremely successful--we gave away 300 take-and-make craft kits related to objects in the Museum's collection.

Program staff was also busy with private programs during FY22. We wrapped up our work with the Prince William County Public Defender's office, offered private tours of Liberia house to homeschool groups and descendants of the Weir family who once owned the house, and started piloting a new multiple-visit partnership with Caton Merchant house, and assisted living facility in Manassas.



School groups enjoyed private tours of Liberia House and grounds led by Museum staff



On Juneteenth, descendants of the Naylor family who were once enslaved at Liberia house spoke about how the Naylor family helped to build the house and save it from destruction during the Civil War.



- 1) For the second year in a row, we partnered with the Slave Dwelling Project for a day of living history focused on the experiences of African Americans prior to the Civil War.
- 2) Spirits of Liberia continued to be a well attended and fun evening in October.
- 3) Program Attendant, Victoria Liantonio engaged the public with objects from the Museum's collection at Museum at the Market on the third Thursday of each month from April through October.
- 4 & 5) At the Manassas Industrial School site, families learned about Jennie Dean and the school on a walking tour, and then made sewing samplers like the ones female students at MIS would have made.
- 6) Liberia Basement to Attic tours were led by staff and other guest speakers.
- 7) Rosie the red-tailed hawk was the star of History Hikes on the trails at Liberia House.

Other program highlights:

In March, Programs and Events Coordinator, Rachel Goldberg and Public Defender Tracey Lenox presented the work we did together at the Virginia Association of Museums statewide conference in Richmond. The session was very well received and participants commented that they appreciated learning about our work and brainstorming potential “unconventional” partners in their own communities.



Exhibitions



- 1) Pictured above from the exhibition celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Christmas Parade.
- 2) Picture below memorabilia and photos in the Christmas Parade exhibition.
- 3) Virginia Museum of History & Culture logo.

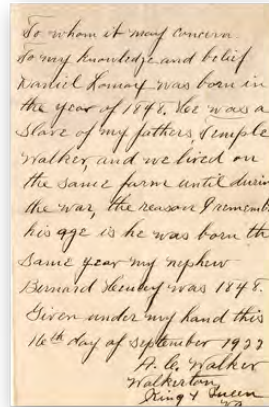


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**VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF
HISTORY & CULTURE**

Collections

FY22 was an outstanding year for the museum's collections. Seven individuals made a wide range of donations covering everything from the Manassas Christmas parade to the City's Centennial. One gift stands out from among the rest – a large collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth century documents related to the Lomax family, donated by James and Cheryl Doherty. The Lomaxes were leading members of the African American community in the years following the Civil War. Their papers include numerous deeds documenting land sales in Manassas, letters, and receipts. The highlight of this collection is a document attesting to the birth of Daniel as an enslaved person. Pieces like this are extremely rare and we are pleased to be able to add this to our holdings on African American history.



Historical Markers

As part of our ongoing efforts to tell more diverse stories, the first round of markers highlighting local African American history were installed in locations around the city. The history of an early African American burying ground was installed at Rose Hill Cemetery; the story of World War I soldiers is now being

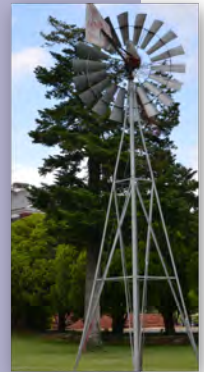
told at the historic Courthouse on Lee Street; and the stories of First Baptist Church and early African American entrepreneurs can be found at First Baptist Church. Staff participated in dedicating the two markers at First Baptist Church in the fall.



Above: One of the documents donated.
Left: Rose Hill Cemetery marker.

Annaburg

Work continued on our newest historic property following the Master Plan approved by Council in December. An emergency stabilization of the structure was completed allowing staff to begin the work of planning for interior repairs.



An archaeological investigation in the spring uncovered the foundations of the original Portner Tower and yielded artifacts from the time the property was used as a nursing home.

Finally, a windmill generously donated by Jim and Carol Robeson was installed on the west lawn of the property.



Above:
Windmill
donation by
the Robesons.
Below:
Foundation of
Portner Tower.

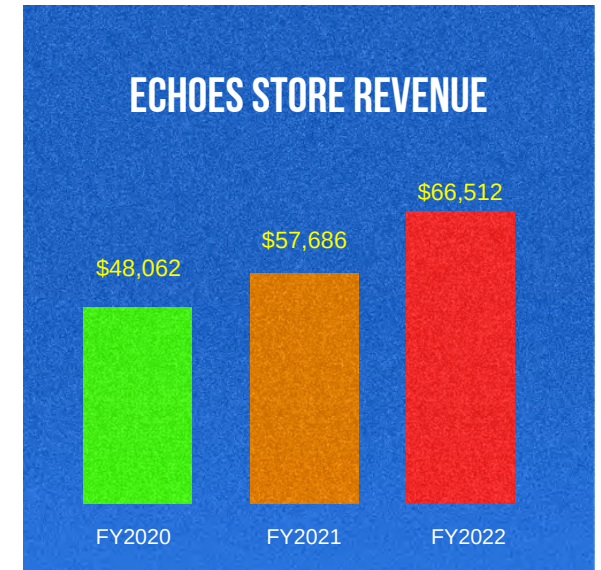
Echoes

Echoes' revenue increased 15% in FY22 from FY21 due to several factors:

- Maintaining compliance of COVID-19 guidelines, specifically in accordance to federal transportation orders
- Holding two successful sidewalk sales in September 2021, all in efforts to reduce inventory in preparation of the museum's renovation
- Effectively relocating the museum shop from the museum to the train depot/Visitor Center in December 2021, increasing foot traffic amongst Amtrak passengers and VRE commuters
- Opening a new online store in March 2022 with e-commerce platform Shopify, giving the shop a modern and upgraded look to entice more online shopping



Screenshot of Echoes' new online store with Shopify



Before

After

Echoes relocation to Depot Gallery Space

Other Echoes Highlighths:

- Continuing participation in Thursday Farmers Markets at the Harris Pavilion and the Holiday Farmers Market in December 2021, encouraging repeat business from residents
- 2021 was the first year Echoes set up a tent and tables to sell items at the Fall Jubilee and the 1st Annual Bee Festival, further increasing visibility amongst visitors to the city
- Having a better Black Friday/Small Business Saturday/Museum Store Sunday sales weekend than 2021, increasing sales by \$1K from 2022
- Installing a display at the Customer Service Center to increase visibility with city residents



Echoes' Display at Customer Service Center



Echoes at Fall Jubilee 2021



Table setup at the Manassas Bee Festival - June 2022

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

