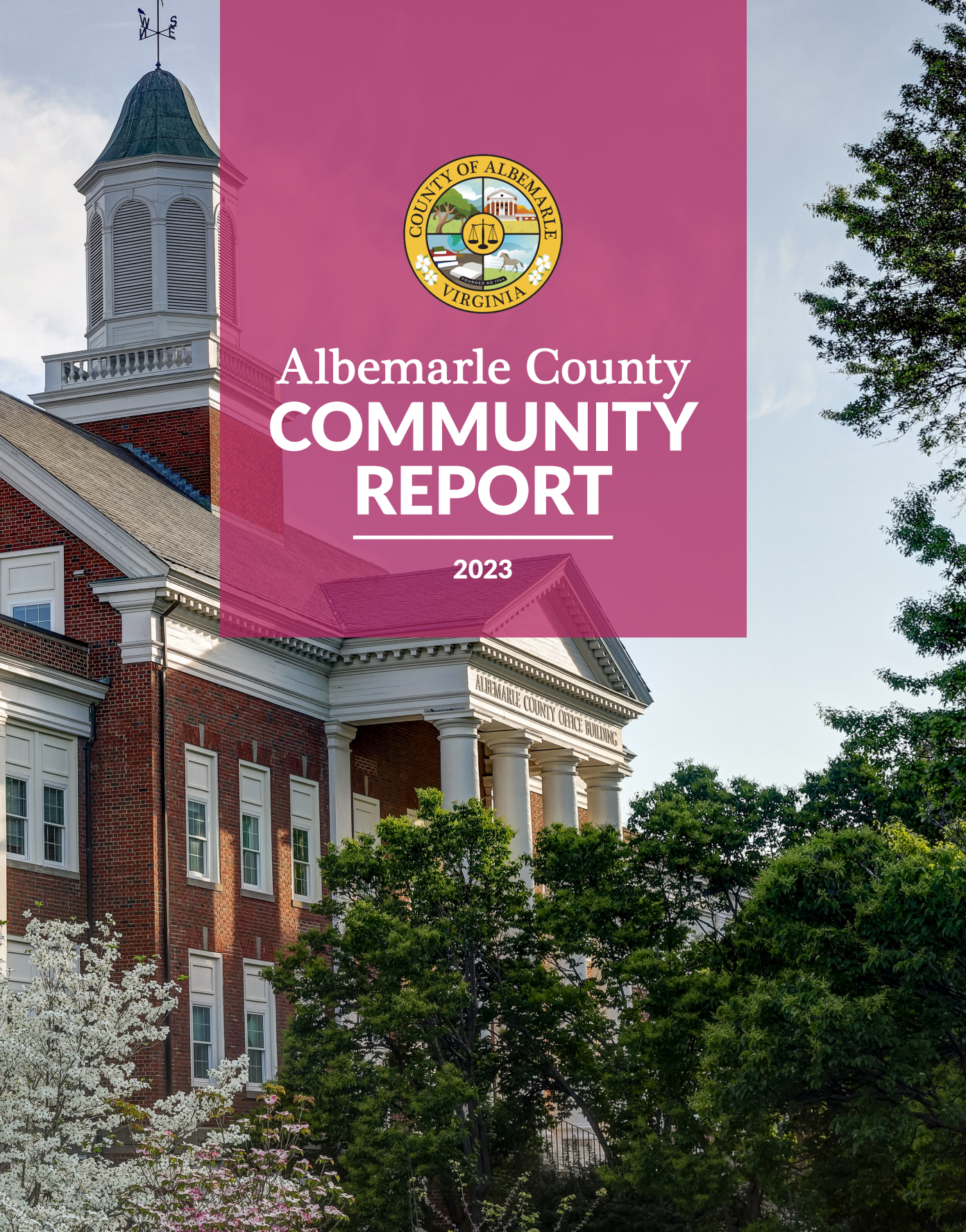




# Albemarle County **COMMUNITY REPORT**

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2023





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# A Message from the County Executive

2023 was a transition-year in many regards. With the restrictions of the pandemic in the rearview mirror, operations fully returned to normal. With it, the influx of federal relief dollars to local governments and to individual households that buoyed the economy ended. Albemarle County has operationalized some of the temporary programs initiated during the pandemic to support the community's most vulnerable households, creating a Human Services function to guide new programs, including the Human Services Alternative Response Team and an emergency financial assistance fund.

Albemarle County wrapped the Fiscal Year 2020-2023 Strategic Plan - celebrating milestones including the adoption of the County's first Climate Action Plan, the opening of new parks (Western Park, Brook Hill River Park) and trails (at Preddy Creek and Simpson Park), economic development partnerships that brought \$106 million in state funds to our community to stimulate and accelerate private investments, and funding awards to bring broadband infrastructure to serve every resident.

The Board of Supervisors began an ambitious new strategic plan and made investments through the annual budget process to support emerging opportunities - the results from which we look forward to sharing more of in next year's report - including progress on the Comprehensive Plan update (AC44), zoning ordinance modernization, full implementation of the affordable housing policy (Housing Albemarle), strengthening our public safety departments and emergency response preparedness, and substantial upgrades for the systems that power the County's core services.

One project that bridged the two strategic plans is Rivanna Futures, the County's acquisition of 462 acres of land along Route 29 North adjacent to Rivanna Station, a sub-installation of Fort Belvoir and home to several federal defense intelligence agencies. The vision for this acquisition is to solidify the long-term vibrancy of Rivanna Station in Albemarle. Particularly as it was noted in 2023, the defense sector as the second largest industry in Albemarle.

In local government, our people are our greatest resource - providing the critical services that support community vibrancy. Recognizing the challenges posed by turnover and extended vacancies, Albemarle County prioritized workforce stabilization to recruit and retain dedicated employees. Our commitment led to the implementation of measures aimed at enhancing employee satisfaction and fostering a more supportive work environment and a compensation strategy that is transparent and meeting our target for our competitive market.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to our strategic plan, which guides us in delivering impactful services to our community - and serves as a roadmap for 2024 through June of 2028. We are only 6 months into the plan and are eager to share in next year's report all the progress we have made.

*- Jeff Richardson*

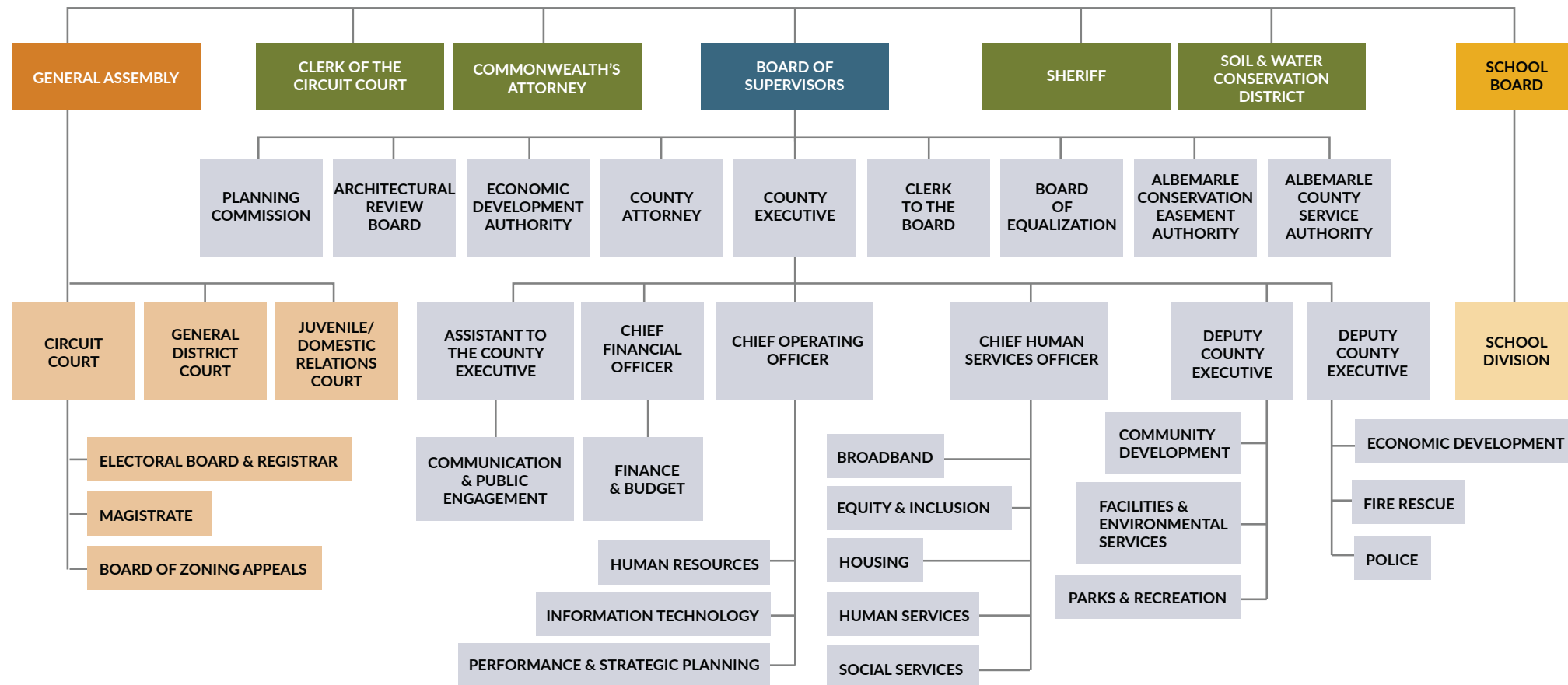


# YOUR GOVERNMENT



## County of Albemarle ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

VOTERS OF  
ALBEMARLE COUNTY



# BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The Code of Virginia provides that each county be governed by a board of supervisors, which is elected by qualified voters. The Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County is comprised of six members, one from each magisterial district. Supervisors are elected to four-year terms that are staggered at two-year intervals.

Board members are actively engaged with constituents through town hall meetings, Board meetings, and other formal and informal gatherings. Regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Supervisors are held on the first and third Wednesday of each month.

All meetings are open to the public. Residents may also view live and archived meetings online.

Stay involved with the Board by visiting [www.albemarle.org/bos](http://www.albemarle.org/bos) or by emailing [bos@albemarle.org](mailto:bos@albemarle.org).



**BEA LAPISTO-KIRTLEY**  
Rivanna



**NED GALLAWAY**  
Rio



**ANN MALLEK**  
White Hall



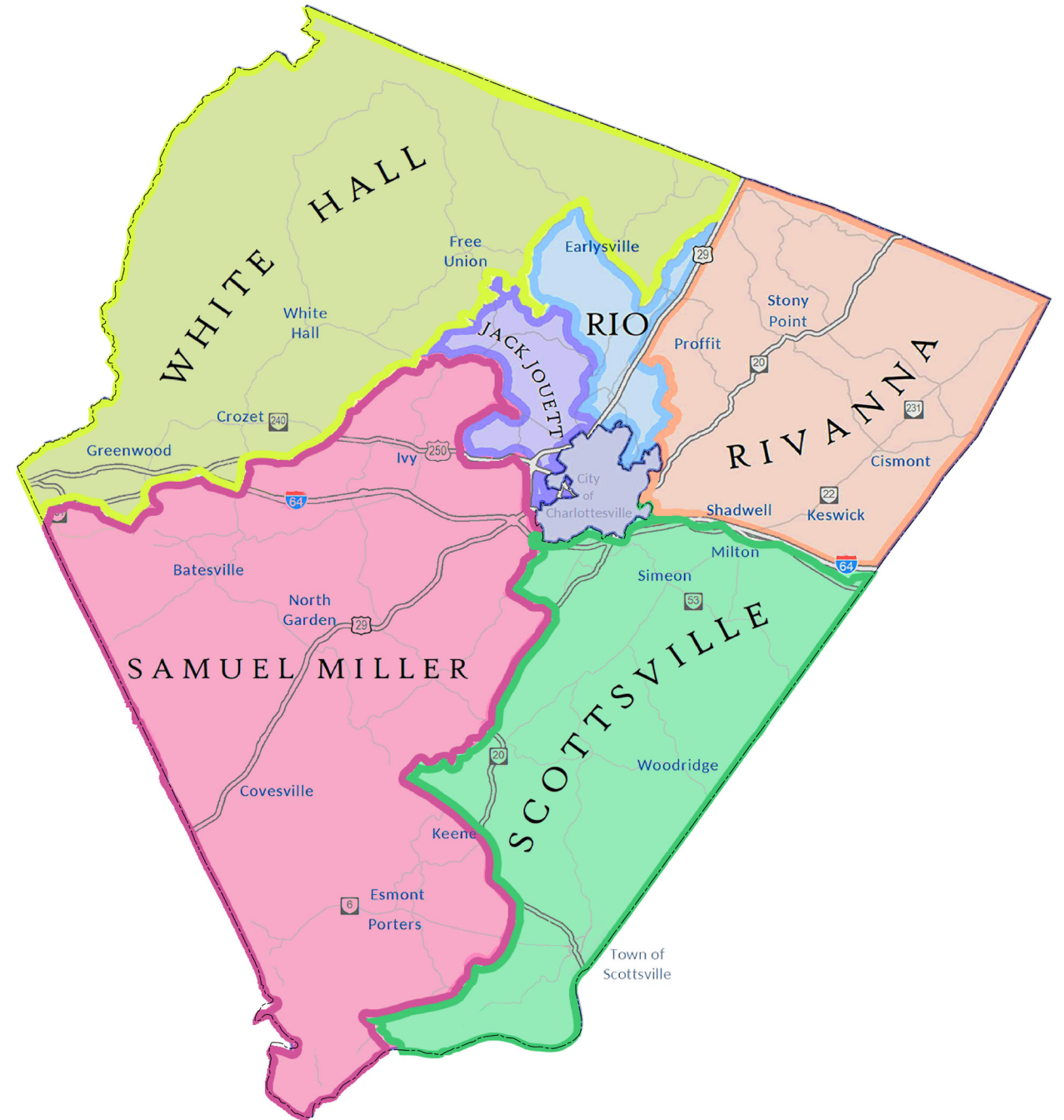
**DIANTHA MCKEEL**  
Jack Jouett



**JIM ANDREWS**  
Samuel Miller



**MIKE PRUITT**  
Scottsville



The day-to-day operations of local government are overseen by the County Executive. County Executive Jeff Richardson and Deputy County Executives Ann Wall and Trevor Henry work with departments to ensure that the County’s programs and services are fulfilling the organizational mission, vision, and core values, advancing the County’s strategic priorities, and meeting critical community needs, through work with the Board of Supervisors, regional partners, and staff.

The County Executive’s Office plays a key role in:

- *guiding and directing the operations of the County government*
- *implementing the Strategic Plan, technology, and other critical organizational initiatives*
- *directing the County’s community relations, public engagement, and communications efforts*
- *ensuring equity in service delivery, decision making, and community engagement*
- *supporting the Albemarle Broadband Authority along with community-facing customer service*

**MISSION**  
 To enhance the well-being and quality of life for all community members through the provision of the highest level of public service consistent with the prudent use of public funds.

**VISION**  
 Albemarle County envisions a community with...  
 Abundant natural, historic, and scenic resources  
 Healthy ecosystems  
 Active and vibrant development areas  
 A physical environment that supports healthy lifestyles  
 A thriving economy, and  
 Exceptional educational opportunities  
 ...for present and future generations.

**CORE VALUES**  
 Community, Integrity, Innovation, Stewardship, Learning

**EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM**



**JEFF RICHARDSON**  
 County Executive



**ANN WALL**  
 Deputy County Executive



**TREVOR HENRY**  
 Deputy County Executive



**EMILY KILROY**  
 Assistant to the County Executive



**KRISTY SHIFFLETT**  
 Chief Operating Officer



**KAKI DIMOCK**  
 Chief Human Services Officer



**JACOB SUMNER**  
 Chief Financial Officer



## SUCCESSSES IN 2023 FROM AROUND THE ORGANIZATION

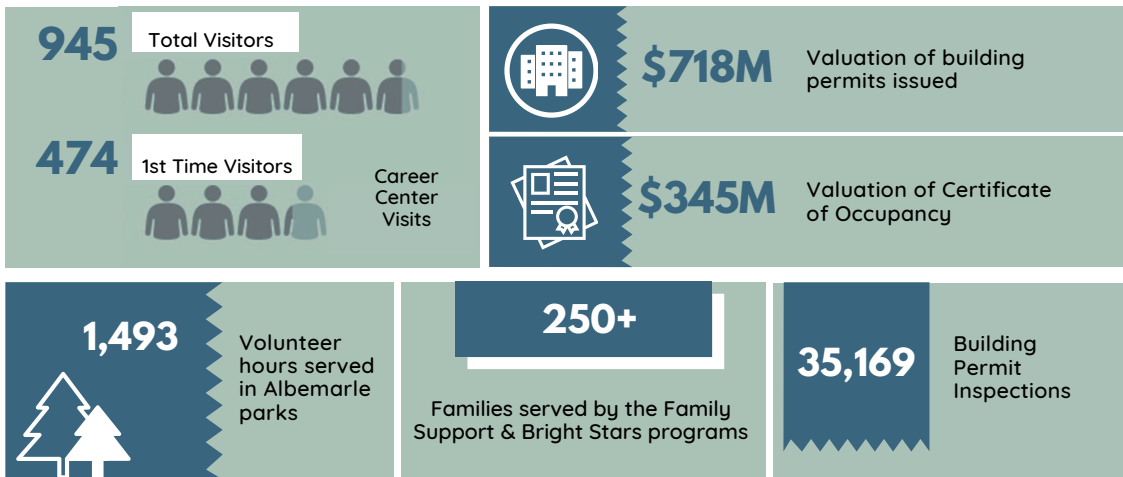
Here are a few things we're proud to have performed in service to you, our community:

- *In 2018, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors adopted the FY 2020-2022 Strategic Plan. It was then extended through 2023 to account for the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The final report was completed to show how our mission statement directed the prioritization and success of implementing strategic goals.*
- *The County launched a revamped New Employee Orientation for local government employees in January 2023 and provided 159 new employees with the resources, processes, and procedures necessary for success.*
- *In February, Finance & Budget launched Albemarle County's Fraud, Waste, and Abuse reporting system. This system is considered best practice to allow employees and the public to anonymously report concerns of suspected misuse of public funds within County departments and at schools. Reports can be made at [www.albemarle.ethicaladvocate.com](http://www.albemarle.ethicaladvocate.com) or via phone at 434-243-7944.*
- *The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report was presented to the Board of Supervisors with a detailed account of the County's financial operations for the fiscal year. The report presents the County's audited financial statements with an overview of statistics and is designed to represent the County's financial structure and health. The presentation to the Board included the auditor's opinion of the County's financial position. The audit determined the County's FY23 financial practices to be in compliance with the County's financial policies and state laws and regulations.*
- *In July, Albemarle County created the Health and Human Services Department. This department includes Social Services and the Offices of Housing, Broadband, and Equity and Inclusion. Combining these service areas creates a unified and easier-to-navigate system for the community.*
- *The Information Technology Department leads the County in its layered approach to cybersecurity defense to protect our external infrastructure from vulnerabilities and strives to maintain proactive vigilance in monitoring and enhancing our information security measures. In 2023, our firewall and VPN blocked over 1.7 million attack attempts and 24.3 million connection attempts from outside of the United States.*

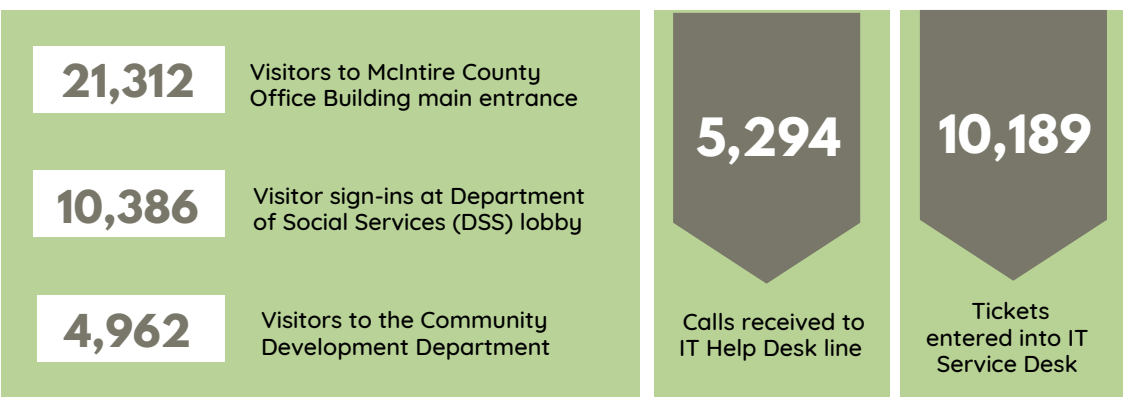


# 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

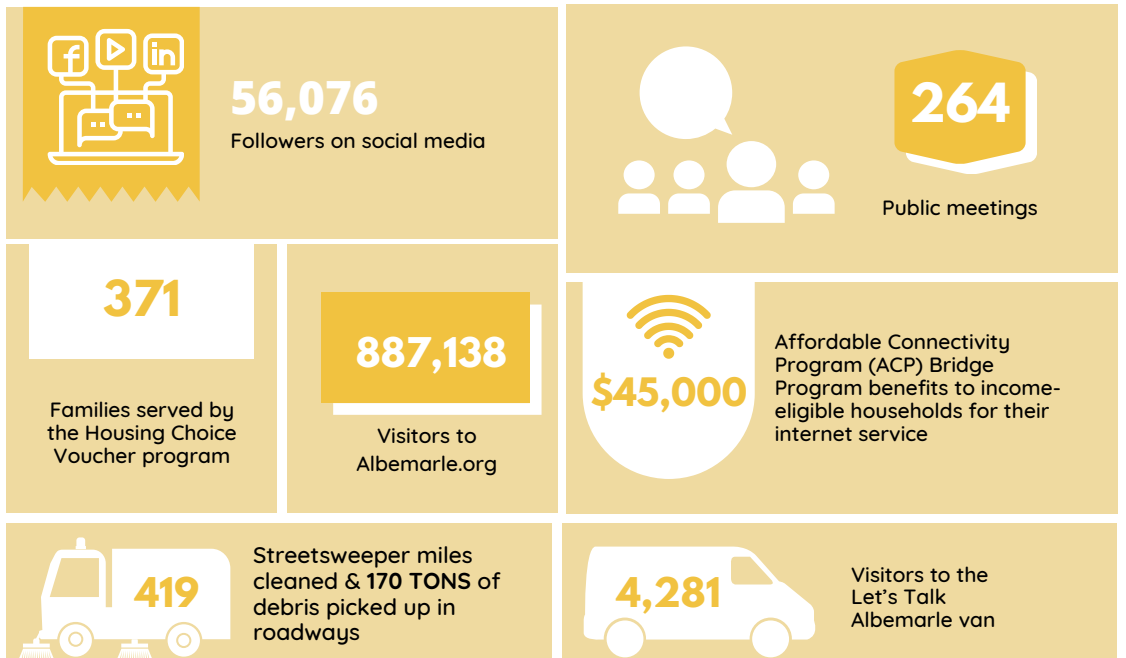
## ENCOURAGING A VIBRANT COMMUNITY



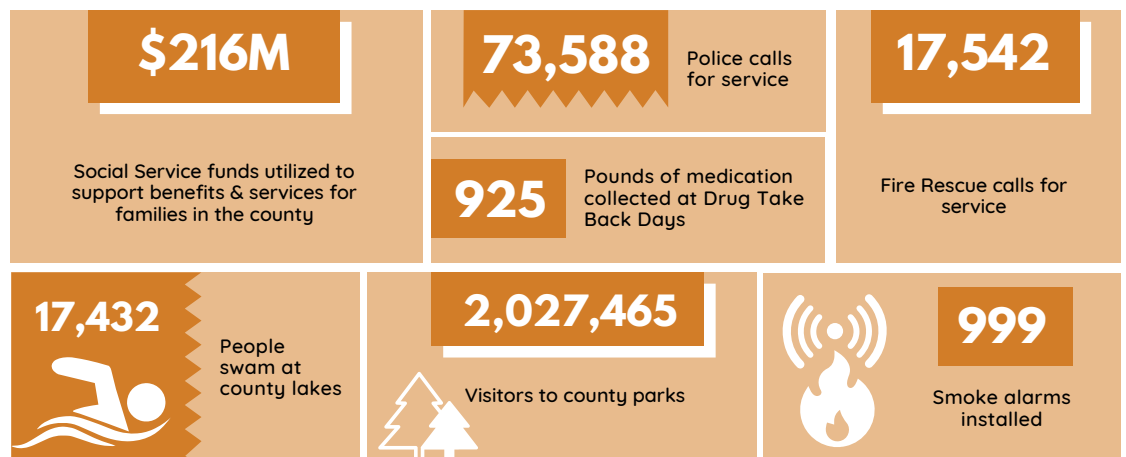
## KEEPING THE COUNTY GOING



## SUPPORTING A RESILIENT, EQUITABLE, AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY



## NURTURING A SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY





# SUSTAINING & PROTECTING OUR CLIMATE

## Sustaining & Protecting Our Climate

Since the Board of Supervisors 2020 adoption of the Climate Action Plan, Albemarle County has been working to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the community, and advancing the County's vision of a thriving, vibrant community for every resident.

### Street Sweeper Launch

Sweeping Beauty, Albemarle County's first street sweeper, began cleaning primary roadways and entrance corridors in Albemarle County to supplement the Virginia Department of Transportation's road maintenance program. During the first eight months in operation, it removed 170.76 tons of debris from 419.02 miles of roadway.

Sweeping Beauty was named by the community following a voting process that had more than 1,200 ballots cast.

Street sweeping offers numerous advantages. By removing debris and litter from the streets, the apparatus contributes to minimizing runoff pollution during rain events, as pollutants on the road can wash into local waterways. It helps to protect wildlife by maintaining cleaner habitats and decreasing the risk of ingestion or harm to animals.

The removal of roadside debris makes roads safer for all users. It reduces the rate of vehicle accidents and improves driver safety by sweeping up construction and debris. In addition to causing unsightly conditions, these items can spread into streets or paved paths. Swept roads keep shoulders, bike lanes, and paths accessible for pedestrians, runners, and cyclists.



## Southern Albemarle Convenience Center

2023 saw the opening of the Southern Albemarle Convenience Center, a new facility located in Keene. This center, owned and operated by the Rivanna Solid Waste Authority (RSWA) and funded by the County, was established to address the need for accessible and affordable recycling and waste disposal in southern Albemarle.

The center offers source-separated recycling and a "Tag-A-Bag" household trash disposal that allows residents to dispose of their household trash cost-effectively.

The Southern Albemarle Convenience Center is a significant environmental service, as such facilities deter illegal dumping and open burning. It also serves an underserved portion of the county that has limited access to private haulers.



## Climate Action Grants

In August, the Albemarle County Climate Protection Program awarded the County's first Community Climate Action grants. The grant program's purpose was to leverage community resources to help implement the County's Climate Action Plan.

Local community groups and organizations were invited to apply through a competitive process to receive a grant to support a project that tangibly advances the goals, strategies, and actions of the County's Climate Action Plan. Projects were required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or contribute to increasing carbon sequestration.

Five community-driven projects were selected to receive the grants:

- Autism Sanctuary, for a worm composting initiative.
- Community Bikes, to expand its bike recycling, refurbishment, and redistribution program.
- International Rescue Committee's New Roots Farm, for equipment electrification and designing its largest community garden.
- FLIPP Inc, to fund Installing and Designing PhotoVoltaic (PV) Systems credentialing training.
- The Peabody School, for a grassland restoration project at Darden Towe Park.

# PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

## AC44: Phase Two

Albemarle County is planning for an equitable and resilient future for our community. One of the main ways we plan for the future is through periodic updates to the Comprehensive Plan, the guiding document that presents the 20-year vision for land use, transportation, parks, economic development, and more (AC44 is shorthand for Albemarle County 2044, the final year in this plan update). In 2023, the project began Phase 2, centering on formulating goals, objectives, and planning toolkits, which will be used as the foundation for Phase 3: developing strategies and actions. This work focused on identifying primary themes for the Plan, a review of existing conditions and recent trends, and the refinement of the plan's goals and objectives.



Throughout Phase 2, a wide array of community engagement initiatives were offered, including pop-up events, online questionnaires, open houses, community chat kits, and the "Think Like a Planner" field notes activity. Work sessions were also conducted to gather feedback and insights from the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission.

At the conclusion of Phase 2, Goals and Objectives for the following Plan chapters will be finalized:

- Community Facilities
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Rural Area Land Use and Transportation
- Development Area Land Use and Transportation
- Environmental Stewardship, Historic, Scenic, and Cultural Resources
- Parks and Recreation

The project team looks forward to continued collaboration with the community, staff, partner agencies, the Planning Commission, and the Board as we progress in building and finalizing the updated plan. To learn more about important process please visit

[www.engage.albemarle.org/ac44](http://www.engage.albemarle.org/ac44).

# COURTS RENOVATION & EXPANSION

## Breaking Ground on the Courts Complex Project

Albemarle County's Courts Renovation & Expansion, a \$45.2 million project that will renovate and expand the Courts Complex at Court Square in downtown Charlottesville, broke ground in the spring of 2023. This project will create a court experience that is safe, secure, and accessible for all users, including a modern IT infrastructure and technology to support operations and also a secured underground parking with a sallyport for prisoner transport.

The first phase of work, which is scheduled to be completed in mid-2025, made substantial headway during the summer and fall of 2023. This phase included preserving and renovating the historic Levy Opera House and demolishing the current Levy Annex to construct the new General District Courthouse. Foundation and utility work for the new building began in November to lay the groundwork for continued construction in 2024.

Also in 2023, the County launched [www.AlbemarleCountyCourtsComplex.com](http://www.AlbemarleCountyCourtsComplex.com) a website where Court Complex Project updates are posted monthly, along with project milestones, current road closures updates, and a 4-week look ahead on future steps.

The second phase of work will include the renovation of and small addition to the Circuit Court at the current historic courthouse, which is scheduled to be completed in early 2027.



Prior to breaking ground, the County completed an archeological study of an asphalt-covered parking area south of the Levy Opera House and surrounding annex. In 1773, the parking lot was the former location of the Swan Tavern, an inn and pub owned by John Jouett Sr. Some of the artifact samples unearthed by archaeological representatives during the study included Moravian pressed pipe bowls and antique glass bottles.

# RIVANNA FUTURES

## Rivanna Futures

In May, Albemarle County announced the largest economic development project for our community – a generational investment to acquire 462 acres of property adjacent to Rivanna Station, a sub-installation of Fort Belvoir and home to several defense intelligence agencies of the federal government – National Ground Intelligence Center, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. Rivanna Station is the anchor of Albemarle County's second largest economic sector, defense intelligence, which has an annual economic impact of \$1.2 billion. The project is referred to as Rivanna Futures.

# RIVANNA FUTURES

The vision for this acquisition is to solidify the long-term resiliency and vibrancy of Rivanna Station in Albemarle. This project allows the County to remain attractive to Rivanna Station by providing a buffer around the existing mission and providing land for future expansion for agencies and for

compatible public and private sector partners to support the nation's intelligence and national security functions – an area of federal spending that is projected to continue to grow as the challenges facing the nation are increasingly complex. In 2017, key federal and state defense stakeholders initiated a study to plan for Rivanna Station's future, which included an expansion beyond the existing landholdings of the US Department of Defense. The County identified the opportunity to provide business retention and expansion services, aligned with Project ENABLE, Albemarle County's economic development strategic plan, which led to the County pursuing site control through this property acquisition.

A key element of Rivanna Futures is the establishment of an Intelligence and National Security Innovation Acceleration Campus (INSIAC), a place for public sector organizations, private sector businesses, and academic institutions to work together to co-create solutions to the biggest challenges facing our nation and the world.

In 2024, Albemarle County will focus on three key areas.

1. Initiating Phase 2, site readiness, or preparing a portion of the purchased land for future development. This includes zoning, master planning, and stakeholder engagement.
2. Developing durable partners that will help with site readiness – including state and federal agencies, elected officials, and academic and private sector partners.
3. Applying for grants to support infrastructure and utility development to serve the future site.



Albemarle County is home to an entrepreneurial ecosystem that offers research and development acumen in biotechnology, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, energy, aerospace, materials science and more; Rivanna Futures will align and supercharge this ecosystem to deliver technological advances at dominant scale and velocity. Rivanna Futures presents an opportunity to maximize these synergies to deliver the next generation of both talent and solutions.

Albemarle County is widely recognized as a top community in which to live, work, and play. The region is home to nearly 4,000 defense sector jobs that generate an annual economic impact of \$1.2 billion, anchored by Rivanna Station (more than 50% of impact). This site will defend and extend the existing defense sector and strengthen others, creating opportunities for research and development and commercialization of emerging technologies in partnership with federal agencies to support national security needs.

# NEW ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE TEAM

## The Human Services Alternative Response Team

Albemarle County launched the Human Services Alternative Response Team (HART), an innovative collaboration among the Fire Rescue, Police, and Social Services Departments to respond to mental health and substance use-related emergency calls with a trauma-informed, human-centered approach and signifies Albemarle County's commitment to early intervention in mental health crises.

HART's four primary goals include:

- De-escalating crises
- Reducing the need for force through alternative methods by using crisis stabilization services when necessary
- Connecting individuals to community resources
- Contributing to education on alternative response approaches

The first phase of funding and development included hiring and training the three core members in the spring, with the team launching into the field in July. Nearly 150 individuals were served by HART in the first six months of operations. The team addressed mental health crises and substance use-related issues, with a significant number of calls requiring follow-ups.

HART begins each day with a team meeting to plan responses to emergency calls and follow up on earlier calls for service. Partnering with staff from Partner for Mental Health, the team ensures comprehensive support and ongoing care for individuals in crisis.

As a valuable new program model, HART shows the County's dedication to evolving and growing its emergency response capabilities through practical application and experience to meet the changing needs of our community.



**HUMAN  
SERVICES  
ALTERNATIVE  
RESPONSE  
TEAM**

A joint venture of Albemarle County's Social Services Department, Police Department, and Fire Rescue.

# A LIVABLE & CONNECTED COMMUNITY

## MicroCAT

Albemarle County has made significant strides in improving the quality of life for its residents in 2023. The launch of MicroCAT was one notable success. This innovative microtransit service provides a free on-demand rideshare system within and between the 29 North Corridor and Pantops areas. This pilot service, operated by Charlottesville Area Transit, has extended its reach to parts of the development Area that cannot support fixed-route bus services, enhancing mobility and connectivity for the community. The system launched in October and within the first two months of service received 3,027 ride requests.



## Housing Albemarle

Albemarle County works to ensure all current and future residents can secure safe, decent, and affordable housing. We prioritize housing in development areas while also addressing the needs in rural areas, respecting the County's development area policy.

The Office of Housing three tools-implementation of Housing Albemarle policy that guides affordable housing activities in the county, funding the creation and/or subsidy of new affordable housing units built by private and non-profit developers, and administering the federal Housing Choice Voucher program, which provides rental subsidies for households making 50% or less of area median income. Since 2019, the County allocated over \$20 million in funding, supporting affordable rental and owner-occupied units, shelters for domestic violence victims, and more. This multifaceted approach targets households with moderate to low incomes, striving to keep housing costs within 30% of household income.

In 2023, Albemarle County began to see investments in affordable housing bring positive change to our community. Since 2019, the County has partnered with Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville on the redevelopment of the Southwood neighborhood from an aging mobile home park to a thriving mixed-income community. With more than \$4 million in County and federal grant funding support, Habitat, in partnership with long-time Southwood residents, planned and began constructing Phase 1 of the project. In August 2023, members of the Board of Supervisors, as well as County staff took part in a ceremony celebrating the completion of the first 49 affordable homes in Village 1.

Together, the County strives to foster a community where housing is a reality for all residents.

# PREPARING TO RESPOND

## Preparing to Respond

In 2023, Albemarle County undertook several critical emergency management tasks. This included inspections, updating operation and maintenance plans, and refining emergency action plans.

### Active Threat Training Initiative

Led by Albemarle County's Office of Emergency Management, a full-scale exercise in July, brought together nearly 200 individuals from local government and schools to demonstrate and test response to an active threat incident at a school. To give us the best chance at saving as many lives as possible, the exercise was intended to improve the education, experience level, and ability of police, firefighters/paramedics, emergency communicators, school staff, and others to respond to active threat emergencies.

The full-scale exercise in July was a culmination of work that included a dedicated review, update, and implementation of policies and procedures. In January, 80 leaders from local government and the School Division attended a seminar and workshop in which subject matter experts from across the country shared best practices to prepare for and respond to active threat incidents. The following months included a comprehensive training program for front-line police officers and Fire/EMS personnel, blending virtual sessions and hands-on exercises to refine response tactics.

In April, 80 local government and school personnel engaged in a tabletop exercise to foster cohesion across departments and pinpoint areas for improvement. The full-scale exercise in July served to assess readiness and identify enhancements to navigate similar scenarios effectively. Ongoing annual training and continuous process and policy improvements have been operationalized moving forward.

While we hope to never have to implement these tactics, it's important for the community to know our staff are preparing and training to respond.



## Dam Safety Program

Albemarle County participated in the FEMA-led Collaborative Technical Assistance Program throughout the spring and summer, collaborating closely with various state and federal agencies on a series of trainings and work sessions to plan and prepare for dam-related emergencies.

The series culminated in a tabletop exercise simulating a dam-related emergency. This event brought together emergency managers, staff, and local partners, fostering a collaborative and comprehensive approach to handling potential crises. Resulting from this exercise, Albemarle County initiated a program aimed at assisting owners of private dams within the county. The objective is to equip them with the knowledge and tools necessary to assess and maintain their dams while also navigating Virginia compliance responsibilities.

Albemarle County's commitment to dam-related improvements is rooted not only in the outreach and support of private dam owners, but also the maintenance and improvement of our dams. This work is exemplified by the completion of field work and engineering analysis on County-owned dams, beginning with the dam at Mint Springs Valley Park. With this phase successfully accomplished, the County is now poised to enter the design stage, anticipating construction work to start in the fall of 2024 and extend into the winter of 2025.

In a proactive move towards enhanced monitoring, the organization installed sensors at County-owned dams to provide real-time water level data. This technological upgrade not only contributes to improved dam management but also aligns with Albemarle's broader commitment to ensuring the safety and resilience of infrastructure.



Did you know? There are approximately 239 dams in Albemarle County.

# EXPANDING & ENHANCING PARKS

## Expanding & Enhancing Parks

Albemarle County has long been dedicated to expanding and enhancing our outdoor recreational parks and amenities for the residents and visitors of our community. We have increased land holdings and easements to improve public access, while enhancing park facilities, fostering community engagement, and embracing volunteer contributions.

### Expanded Park Spaces and Amenities

In the spring, improvements were made to parks and recreation spaces throughout the county. The addition of a shelter and trail at Western Park created new amenities to enjoy such as additional shade and picnic areas and more biking and walking areas. Upgrades at the Woodlands Boat Launch provided additional safety during water recreation activities with measures added to prevent shoreline erosion. Additionally, improvements to the parking area created a larger and safer loading zone at the entrance of the ramp, which can also be utilized as a sitting area for shoreline fishing. Upgrades and a resurface installation were completed at the QuickStart Tennis Court at Crozet Elementary School to provide a more enjoyable experience for users of all ages.



In May, a new 18-hole disc golf course opened for free play in Chris Greene Lake Park. The development of this new amenity in the northern part of the county was a successful partnership with the Blue Ridge Disc Golf Club, whose members raised funds for materials and devoted 1,100 volunteer hours to construct the course.

### Park Planning and Maintenance

To prepare for public access to the future Biscuit Run Park in fall 2024, 4.5 miles of new multi-use trails were constructed in 2023, along with preparations for the construction of an entrance from Route 20 that will include parking and restrooms. Thoughtful park planning and development has occurred in other projects throughout the county as new and improved park access is brought into the park system.

To continue preserving open spaces and natural areas, the County established a Natural Resource Management Program to restore native plants, proactively manage invasive

plants, and perform data-driven site analysis. In 2023, the work was focused at Chris Greene, Walnut Creek, Biscuit Run, and Darden Towe parks and the Old Mills Trail corridor. Over the course of 24 volunteer events, 512 volunteer hours were dedicated to removing invasive species, including Autumn Olive, Wavyleaf Basket Grass, and Bittersweet.

A Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) was launched in spring 2023 to improve the quality of four multi-use fields located at Darden Towe. The NMP is a year-round maintenance program for each field with an emphasis on nutrient management to improve field quality and provide a safe, consistent, and aesthetically pleasing experience for all. Since initiating the NMP, along with a new Athletic Field Use Policy that schedules resting periods for fields, conditions have already shown improvement.



### WANT TO HELP OUT IN OUR PARKS?

If you're interested in volunteering in our parks for a company or group work day, please contact Tucker Rollins, Trails Planning Manager at [trollins@albemarle.org](mailto:trollins@albemarle.org).

# A CONNECTED & INFORMED COMMUNITY

## Fostering a Connected & Informed Community

Albemarle County recognizes the pivotal role of public engagement and outreach in fostering a connected and empowered community. In 2023, Albemarle County continued to create and support an engaged community through programs and services that met people where they are – at community events, in their neighborhoods, and online – creating effective and inclusive opportunities to advance strategic priorities alongside the community.

### 21-Day Equity Challenge

Albemarle County's Office of Equity & Inclusion organized the 21-Day Equity Challenge, a self-paced opportunity for individuals to foster continuous self-reflection and community learning. The challenge, rooted in redefining equity beyond equality, unfolded over 21 days, empowering participants to contribute to a more inclusive world. The challenge includes resources to learn about local history and equity topics using a range of resources, including in-person visits to exhibits, books and articles, and videos. Did you miss the challenge? Start anytime by visiting [Engage.Albemarle.org](http://Engage.Albemarle.org) to start your own 21-day challenge.

### Community Connectors

In January, two Community Connectors in the Communications and Public Engagement Office began serving as liaisons for Community Advisory Committees, actively building relationships and positively affecting engagement initiatives. Their commitment to fostering an informed and engaged community is evident in the materials they developed (e.g. community meeting guidelines, monthly announcements, and the Let's Talk Albemarle training series) and the strengthened connections within the community. These two new positions also increased our capacity to host pop-ups in the community, support additional engagement work, and build more relationships inside and outside of our organization.

The Community Connectors have worked closely with Community Development, Albemarle County Public Schools, and the Broadband Office on projects such as AC44 engagement

opportunities at Albemarle High School, civic engagement opportunities at Monticello High School, and regular planning meetings with schools on joint engagement efforts. Additionally, trunk or treat events, One Stop Shop, and pop-ups at local lakes during the summer provided opportunities for the Community Connectors to engage with community members in a “meet them where they are” approach.

### Let's Talk Albemarle

The County's “Let's Talk Albemarle” van actively engaged with thousands of residents at various events throughout the county. From park events to high school football games, the van's presence created space for open dialogue and community cohesion and inclusivity. In parallel, the [www.Engage.Albemarle.org](http://www.Engage.Albemarle.org) website stood as an online hub for active civic engagement. As a catalyst for community-driven initiatives, it empowered residents to take meaningful action and created opportunity for people to speak up and give their input. Visit [www.Engage.Albemarle.org](http://www.Engage.Albemarle.org) to find all the opportunities to add your voice to open County projects.



# DESIGNING A RESILIENT COMMUNITY

## Designing a Resilient Community

Launched this year, Resilient Together is a County, City, and UVA collaborative planning and implementation process designed to ensure our community is strong, safe, and healthy in the face of a changing climate that is experiencing longer, hotter heat waves, more destructive storms, wildfire smoke, and invasive pests.

Natural hazards do not stop and start at the jurisdictional boundaries between Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Studies have shown that we have similar vulnerabilities and challenges.

Staff from across the region worked together to design a process that offers welcoming participation opportunities for all members of our entire community. This consists of inclusive community engagement, consultation with partner organizations and subject-matter experts, and guidance from staff across both organizations. The first phase of the project is “Discover” and offers many opportunities for community members to learn about the risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change. This phase also includes opportunities for community members to share their experiences with the project team so that we build a shared understanding and can design responsive strategies to include in the plan.

Creating effective climate adaptation and resilience plans for the City and County that serve our community requires meaningful collaboration among local government, partner organizations, and you.

Visit [resilient-together.info](https://resilient-together.info) to learn more about a variety of topics and share your feedback.



## The Resilient Together Team

The Resilient Together team partnered with architects in the Emerging Leaders in Architecture (ELA) program to develop a creative strategy for building community resilience - Climate Resilience Hubs. The group of 15 young professionals from across Virginia participated in a program designed to develop leadership and community-building skills in the field of architecture. This project examined Climate Resilience Hubs and how they can support communities within Albemarle County. The class spent 10 months studying how to enrich existing community gathering facilities in Albemarle County and equip them to strengthen climate resilience on a local level. The group partnered with staff from the County at the Soul of C-Ville and Simpson Park Community Day events to share information and learn from community members about their experiences. The final presentation included a conceptual toolkit for Resilience Hubs that will be included in the Resilient Together Plan and is a first step to creating the future hubs.





# A WORKFORCE DEDICATED TO PUBLIC SERVICE

## A Workforce Dedicated to Public Service

Albemarle County staff are committed to public service. Public service is providing programs, services, and other supports to address the needs of the community.

Employers across the world saw higher turnover and extended vacancies during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Albemarle County was no different.

Workforce stabilization is a critical aspect of organizational management and necessary to recruit and retain employees who are dedicated to public service. As a key strategic goal, several measures to enhance employee satisfaction, reduce turnover, and create a more supportive and stable work environment were implemented in 2023. By prioritizing workforce stabilization, Albemarle is creating an environment where employees feel supported, leading to increased engagement, higher job satisfaction, and ultimately, improved retention.

## Compensation and Classification Update

In December, the Board of Supervisors approved the implementation of the final phase of the 2023 Compensation and Classification Study. All permanent part- and full-time staff, who are on the general classified pay scale, are now aligned with our competitive market average. This strategy was developed with an external consultant that reviewed and analyzed our compensation strategy by comparing wages with comparable employers (e.g., the competitive market), assessing internal equity and compression, assessing the current job classification process, and benchmarking incentive pay, leave, retirement contributions, and life and health benefits.

## Public Service Recognition Week

Albemarle County launched Public Service Recognition Week to thank employees for the quality public services they deliver to the community each day. A team of employees from across the organization planned and executed a week-long recognition. Activities included an awards ceremony and an employee picnic.



## Supervisor Training

In an effort to grow our 175 supervisors' knowledge and skills, a quarterly full-day training was implemented. These trainings have included information on psychological safety, goal setting and performance management expectations, and conflict resolution strategies.



Each session focuses on building knowledge on a particular topic, as well as developing cross-departmental relationships through interactive connection times.

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR OPEN DIALOGUE

## Opportunities for Open Dialogue

Town halls are an important opportunity for the community to stay informed and engaged on important issues and topics in our community.

### Traffic Townhalls

In February, Albemarle County hosted three traffic-focused town halls to discuss traffic issues in our area. These events provided an opportunity for residents to learn more about current traffic concerns, ask questions, and provide feedback.

Each event began with a 30-minute presentation, with officers from the Albemarle County Police Department sharing information about current traffic safety initiatives, recent crash data, and other relevant topics. Following the presentation, residents asked questions, voiced their concerns, and provided feedback on potential solutions to staff from the County, the Board of Supervisors and the Virginia Department of Transportation. Over 100 community members attended the three events.

### Budget Townhalls

A series of town halls were held throughout the county, offering residents a platform to engage with the Board of Supervisors and County staff leading up to the approval and adoption of the budget for the 2024 Fiscal Year. These events fostered transparency and community involvement in the budget development process, allowing residents to gain insights into funding allocations and the proposed tax rate. Residents participated by sharing concerns, proposing ideas, and exploring potential details to address the community's needs within budget constraints.



# ADVANCING FIRE RESCUE RESPONSE

## Albemarle County Fire Rescue: FEMA Grant

In September, Albemarle County Fire Rescue (ACFR) was awarded a \$7.1 million Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant to hire, train, and deploy 30 full-time firefighters.

This grant allows Albemarle County to take a noteworthy step forward in advancing the safety and well-being of our community, using federal dollars to fund the first three years of enhanced staffing.

Of the 30 grant-funded positions, 14 will be used to implement 24/7 coverage in the southern part of the county. The other 16 positions will staff a ladder truck based at the Monticello Station. This unit will be staffed with specially trained personnel to address more complex incidents that arise in our community, including water and technical rescues. By basing this unit at a centrally located station, it allows for this company to respond quickly to intricate incidents across the county.

To fill these newly added positions, ACFR actively recruited throughout August. Beginning in January 2024, the new hires started a recruit school to receive the skills and knowledge needed for the job. Training includes emergency medical technician skills, firefighter survival, car seat installation, emergency vehicle operation, and various other essential knowledge for success.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) created the SAFER grant to provide funding directly to fire departments to help increase or maintain the number of trained, front-line firefighters available in their communities. The goal of SAFER is to enhance local fire departments' abilities to comply with staffing, response, and operational standards established by the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA).



# FISCAL STEWARDSHIP AT WORK

## Triple AAA Credit Rating

In the fall of 2023, the world's top three independent credit ratings agencies – Moody's Investors Service, S&P Global, and Fitch Ratings – affirmed Albemarle County's Aaa/AAA/AAA issuer credit ratings. In their ratings, the agencies cited the County's prudent financial policies and management, comprehensive capital planning and budgeting, and the stable local economy.

Diligent fiscal management and prudent financial policies are key components to maintaining a AAA rating, which benefits the community by providing competitive financing at a lower interest rate for projects that sustain our quality of life. Having access to more affordable debt means the County is able to build capital projects at a lower cost – saving the taxpayers money.

In October, Albemarle County issued \$109.3 million in public facility revenue bonds to finance our capital program as well as approximately \$58.9 million of taxable bonds to finance the Rivanna Futures land acquisition. The public facility revenue bonds will finance approved capital projects, including reimbursements for the recent Mountain View and Crozet Elementary Schools additions, School division-wide maintenance and improvement projects, fire rescue apparatus replacements, and the ongoing Courts facility construction.

ALBEMARLE COUNTY



## TRIPLE AAA CREDIT RATING Fiscal Stewardship in Action

This credit rating demonstrates the County's ability to repay borrowed funds, resulting in lower borrowing costs and showcasing prudent fiscal stewardship.

Albemarle County is one of less than 50 counties in the United States to achieve this designation and one of only 11 in Virginia.

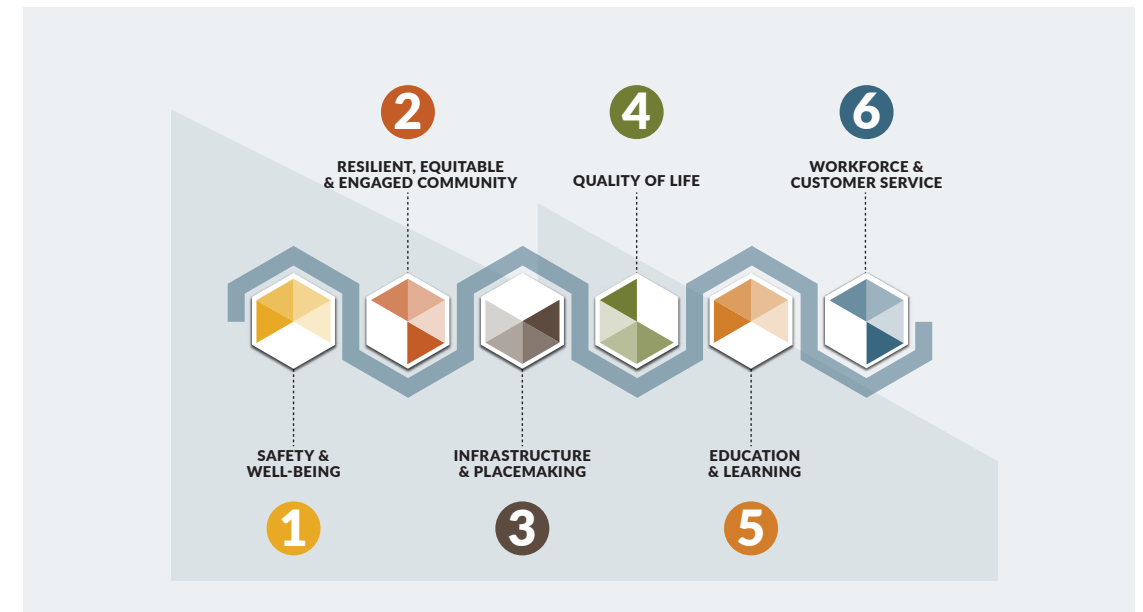
# FY 24-28 STRATEGIC PLAN

## Implementing the FY 24-28 Strategic Plan

Albemarle County uses strategic planning to set priorities and focus energy and resources to move toward our vision. We have used strategic planning for many years to inform policy development and financial decision-making and to achieve the community desires and values articulated in the County's Comprehensive Plan. Staff use this document as guidance so that projects, initiatives, and work plans are aligned and deliver progress on these goals.

The following are the strategic goals and objectives for 2024 – 2028:

- Goal 1: Safety & Well-Being, to nurture a safe, healthy community
- Goal 2: Resilient, Equitable & Engaged Community, to design programs and services that promote these features
- Goal 3: Infrastructure & Placemaking
- Goal 4: Quality of Life, encouraging a vibrant community
- Goal 5: Education & Learning, supporting exceptional educational opportunities
- Goal 6: Workforce & Customer Service, recruiting and retaining engaged public servants who provide quality government services to support the County mission





**58¢ funds Education**  
 School operations & capital projects  
 Debt Service

**14¢ funds Public Safety**  
 Police patrol & investigations  
 Career fire & EMS service  
 Basic operating expenses for all volunteer fire rescue stations



**3¢ funds Parks, Recreation & Culture**  
 Jefferson Madison Regional Library  
 County parks & boat launches/river access  
 Trail development & maintenance  
 Athletic programs & classes  
 Festivals & cultural agencies, such as Convention & Visitor's Bureau



# FY 24: Your Tax Dollar Funds Critical Services

**8¢ funds Health & Welfare**  
 34 community human service agencies, such as JABA  
 Eligibility & protective services  
 Tax Relief for the Elderly & Disabled



**11¢ funds Operations**  
 Facility management  
 County leadership & support to Board of Supervisors  
 Financial management  
 Water Resources  
 General government debt service

**3¢ funds City Revenue Sharing**  
 \$15.7M paid to Charlottesville, an increase of 1.1% from last year



**3¢ funds Community Development**  
 Planning, Zoning & Inspection services  
 Rural area protection  
 Neighborhood improvements  
 Transit agency contributions  
 Economic Development

# FY 24 BUDGET SUMMARY

The County's Adopted Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024) combined capital and operating budget totals \$554,790,036. The Total Budget includes the General Fund, School Division Fund, and the Capital Fund as well as special revenue funds, the debt service fund, and other special funds. The Total Budget is balanced on the current tax rate of 85.4 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

Development of the FY 24 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024) Operating and Capital Budget is currently underway. Albemarle County residents are encouraged to weigh in by emailing the Board directly at [bos@albemarle.org](mailto:bos@albemarle.org), or at one of the Public Hearings listed below.

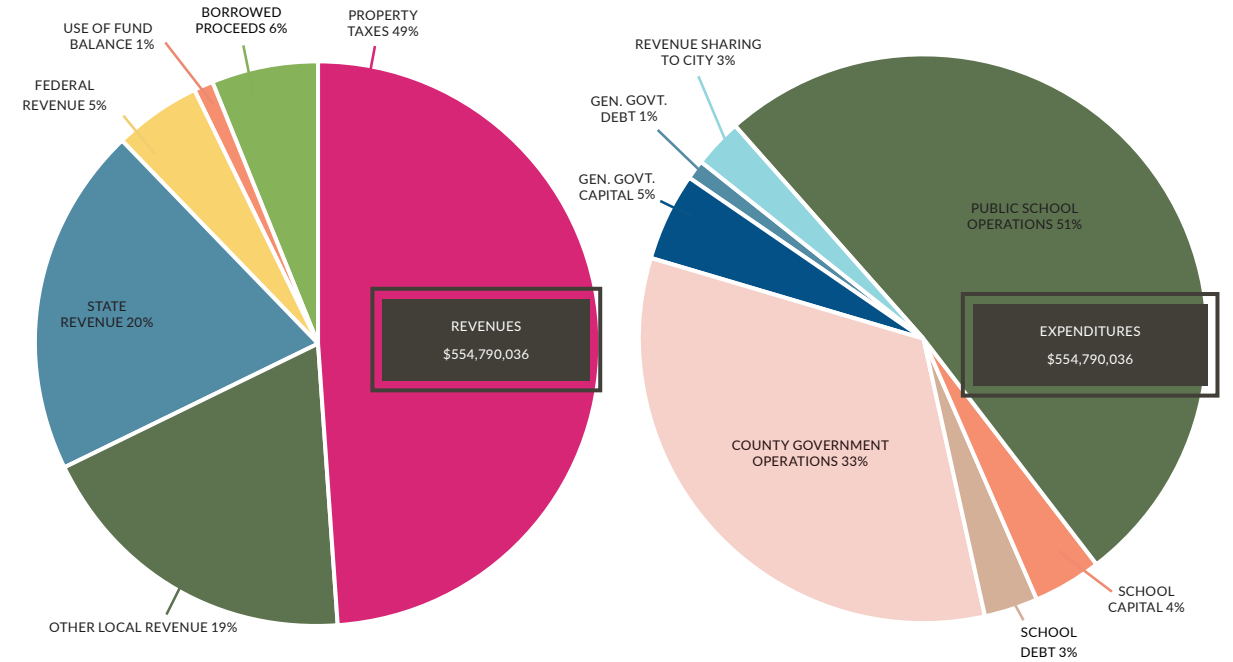
Visit [www.albemarle.org/finance](http://www.albemarle.org/finance) to learn more about the budget process, including complete schedule, FAQs, and links to the County's Operating and Capital Budget and Albemarle County Public Schools budget webpages.

## FY 25 Budget Public Hearings

Wednesday, February 28 | 6 pm  
County Executive's Recommended Budget

Wednesday, April 17 | 6 pm  
Board's Proposed Budget

Wednesday, April 24 | 6 pm  
Calendar Year 2024 tax rate



### Where the Money Comes From

**BORROWED PROCEEDS: \$33M**  
Includes revenues from bond issues to be used to finance designated capital improvements.

**PROPERTY TAXES: \$271M**  
Includes revenues from taxes based on the assessed value of real and personal property owned by businesses, individuals, and public service corporations.

**OTHER LOCAL REVENUE: \$105M**  
Includes revenues from such sources as other taxes, permits, fees, fines, and charges for services.

**STATE REVENUE: \$114M**  
Includes revenues received and designated by the Commonwealth for a specific use by the County.

**FEDERAL REVENUE: \$28M**  
Includes revenues received and designated by the Federal Government for a specific use by the County.

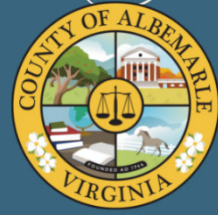
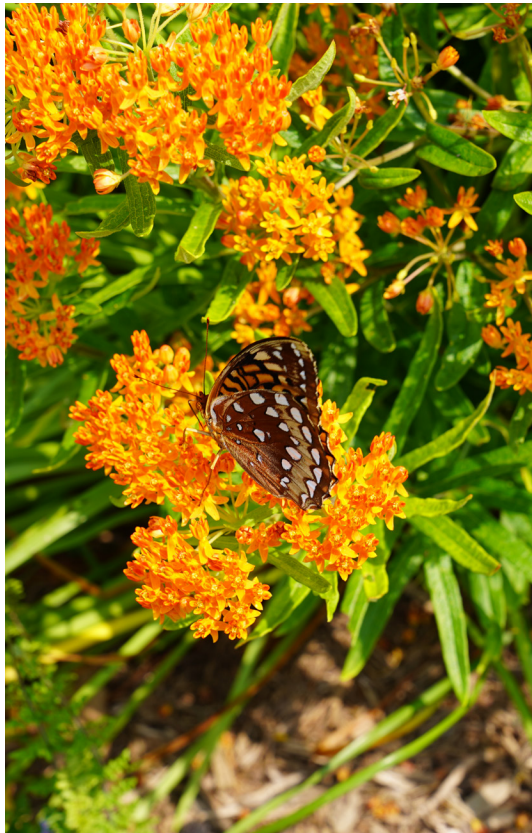
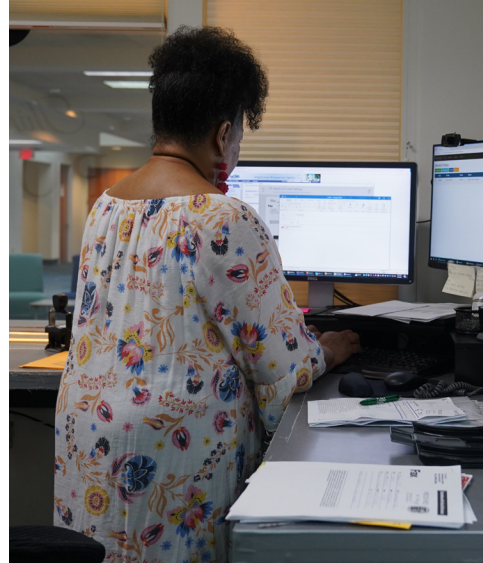
**USE OF FUND BALANCE: \$4M**  
Reflects the use of County savings for one-time expenditures or emergency needs.

### How the Money is Spent

**CITY REVENUE SHARING: \$16M**  
Payment to the City of Charlottesville based on the 1982 Revenue Sharing Agreement

**SCHOOL OPERATIONS: \$281M**  
**SCHOOL CAPITAL: \$23M**  
**SCHOOL DEBT: \$17M**  
Includes expenditures for School operations, capital improvements, and debt service payments

**COUNTY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS: \$186M**  
**COUNTY GOVERNMENT DEBT: \$8M**  
**COUNTY GOVERNMENT CAPITAL: \$26M**  
Includes expenditures for General Government operations, capital improvements and debt service payments



# STAY INFORMED AND JOIN THE CONVERSATION

## EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Albemarle County News (ACN) is an email service to share information about the services, programs, and events important to our community.



## WEBSITE

Our online home for community news, calendar, resources, staff contacts, programs, and policies.  
[www.albemarle.org](http://www.albemarle.org)



## SOCIAL MEDIA

 @Albemarle.County   
  @albemarlecounityva  
 @AlbemarleCounty   
  @coalbemarle

## ENGAGEMENT HUB

The online home for outreach and listening efforts to shape the future of our community. Find opportunities to share your input on key topics.  
[engage.albemarle.org](http://engage.albemarle.org)



## LET'S TALK PODCAST

Listen in, suggest topics, and ask questions as we explore a variety of important topics in Albemarle County.  
[www.albemarle.org/lets-talk](http://www.albemarle.org/lets-talk)



WE HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU!





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