

Mount Vernon Civic Association

SUMMER 2025

www.MountVernonCivicAssociation.org

Belle Rive • Ferry Landing Estates • Ferry Landing Villa • Ferry Point Estates • Mount Vernon Forest
Mount Vernon Grove • Mount Vernon Park • Oxford • Riverbend • Riverwood • Vernon Square • Washington Woods
Westgate • Wycliffe on the Potomac • Yacht Haven Estates

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL PICNIC!

Saturday, May 31, 2025 • 1:00-4:00 pm

Mission BBQ, Bounce House and Family Games

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Directory Distribution

Our biennial update of the community directory is complete! Directories will be supplied to the block captains and given to dues-paying MVCA members. They will also be distributed at the community picnic on May 31. Please reach out to Hannah Wolf if you don't receive your copy. You're always welcome to join the MVCA and we will provide you with the community directory.

Public Safety

Chair, John Hurley

County news: The Board of Supervisors is reportedly considering closing some firehouses. This step has serious implications and may impact safety, insurance, and finances of the county and community. Read more at The Fairfax County Times (www.fairfaxtimes.com/articles/fairfax-county-faces-potential-budget-cuts-to-fire-and-rescue-services/article_f27d17fc-d43d-11ef-b609-8b6962c0cd2d.html). The police department continues to recruit and retain members of the police force - this is a high priority need for Fairfax.

Community News: There have been continued speed surveys around the neighborhood to assist in development of speed mitigation devices around Mount Vernon. There has been a need for more crosswalks and signage of pedestrians across the neighborhood. Please drive slowly and remember our roads are often our sidewalks. As the days get longer, be careful driving at sunrise and sunset as it may be challenging for vision and identifying pedestrians. Please remember to keep your parked cars and garages locked for safety!
Best wishes for a safe and fun Summer.

W⁹ CHRIS WHITE

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Spring Rains and Storm Drains: Keeping Our Yards and Waterways Clean

With all the rain we get in May, it's time to think about ways we can keep our waterways clean. Most of our yards drain directly into the Potomac River or Douge Creek, bringing with it fertilizers, plastic debris, and insecticide. Here are some ways we can keep our water sources safe.

Eco-Friendly Lawn Care Tips:

- Choose Slow-Release Fertilizers: Opt for nitrogen fertilizers that are at least 50% slow-release to minimize nutrient runoff.
- Avoid Fertilizing Before Rain: Do not use chemicals on your lawn before it is expected to rain, as rains can wash away your fertilizers and pesticides, leading to pollution.
- Leave Grass Clippings: Leaving grass clippings on the lawn can reduce the need for artificial nitrogen by 20 to 30 percent.

Create Rain Gardens:

Rain gardens— little gardens where rain runs or pools in your yard —are a beautiful way to manage stormwater and support pollinators. They can ease the load on storm drains while helping you keep your yard green during dry spells. All it takes is noticing where you get a lot of runoff and mulching and planting the area.

Join Local Cleanup Efforts:

There are many opportunities to help the Friends of Mt Vernon Trail with clean up this month:

- Vegetation Removal Near Daingerfield Island: May 10, 2025, at 9:00 am.
- Rosslyn Trail Tuesday-Vegetation Cleanup: May 13, 2025, at 5:00 pm.
- Invasive Vegetation Removal Near Old Stone Bridge: May 17, 2025, at 9:00 am.
- Trash and Vegetation Removal North of Four Mile Run: May 31, 2025, at 9:00am.

You can see the list at: mountvernontrail.org/events. This is a great way to get kids involved in our neighborhood!



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This is a difficult and unsettled time for education due to sweeping changes at the U.S. and Commonwealth levels—from education policy to immigration to tariffs to charter schools. One of the largest concerns facing FCPS is teacher hiring and retention. The current County budget, which supplies the greatest part of school funding, will cover a minimal raise. Surrounding jurisdictions already have higher pay and are planning significant raises. Additionally, teachers have had “Steps” frozen multiple times over the past decade. Steps are a longevity measure and how seniority is measured; freezes create a serious problem when teachers are hired from other systems. For example, an FCPS teacher of 14 years experience may be only on Step 10; if FCPS hires a new teacher with 14 years experience from another system, that teacher enters at Step 14 creating a significant pay differential. Besides the negative effect on morale issues, this discrepancy could motivate an FCPS teacher to move to another school system, enter at Step 14 (or equivalent) and get a significant pay raise.

The current County budget also cuts funding for middle school afterschool programs, which is significant for schools like Whitman with many low income children who particularly benefit from these enriching, safe activities. The County adopted budget has not yet been finalized, so there is some hope these funds will be restored.

The on-going boundary adjustment process will be the subject of the next MVCAA Education meeting. One of the stated goals is the elimination of “island” schools, of which Whitman is a prime example since it is physically located in the Sandburg attendance zone away from its own attendance zone so that all Whitman students must be bused.

The School Board has floated moving 6th grade to middle school (as is more common) as opposed to its current position in elementary school. While most agree the change would be desirable for academic and other reasons, there is not capacity in our middle schools to absorb those students. There is also a growing movement to move middle school start times later, as was done a few years ago to high schools to better match adolescent development. The main holdup is busing and whether the change can be made with an acceptable cost.

The use of AI, computers, and cellphone restrictions will be ongoing discussions.

SAVE THE DATE!

YACHT HAVEN GARDEN CLUB

Invites you to celebrate

FRIENDSHIP, FLOWERS & FASHION

Fashion Show,
Luncheon,
Silent Auction & Raffle
Cash Wine Bar



THURSDAY,
OCTOBER 23, 2025



Hi, I'm Hannah Wolf

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Equal Housing Opportunity

This MVCA Transportation Chair joined the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations (MVCCA) for preparation of comments on the proposed I-495 SouthSide Express Lanes Study. This is only an initial comment as VDOT continues to share information and schedule public hearings on this environmental study. The study seeks to evaluate the potential extension of the express lanes system on the southern section of the Capital Beltway (I-495) by 11 miles from the Springfield Interchange (I-95/I-395/I-495) in Fairfax County, Virginia, across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, to the MD 210 Interchange in Prince George's County, Maryland. On April 14, 2025, MVCCA Transportation and Public Safety (PS&T) Committee commented on this VDOT project affecting residents of the Mount Vernon District.

The materials shared in the public meetings reported that funding for Metrorail will be years off and that express lanes would support road improvements and provide some additional revenue. The dedicated lanes on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge were initially reserved for rail, and rail transit is essential for reducing road congestion. While the analysis presented generally showed that the express lanes with bus service would improve traffic flow, the analysis also showed situations where the express lanes would not improve traffic flow. Traffic already regularly backs up along Fort Hunt Road and Route 1 approaching Interstate 495, especially during the evening rush hour.

Should express lanes be pursued, no option should be considered or built that will aggravate congestion, such as crossing local lanes over a short distance to reach express lanes and VDOT should provide an analysis of the impact of added express lanes on local roads, including U.S. 1, Telegraph Road and Van Dorn Street. The next public hearing will be June 2nd, 2025, 6-8pm at Thomas Edison HS, Franconia Road.

This MVCA Transportation Chair along with other residents continue to follow the FFXCo response to increasing concerns for FAA management of airspace and aircraft safety in the airspace over Mount Vernon and Alexandria. FFXCo joined other county authorities in VA and MD since 2015 for contracted study of noise caused by an increasing density of aircraft operating overhead Mount Vernon and Alexandria. The DCA South of Airport Study (Contractor VIANAIR Inc) provided input to FFXCo representatives attending the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) Community Noise Working Group (CWG) on April 24, 2025. Recall that the above study only addressed noise related and reported documentation with recommendations for reducing the impact on residents. County representatives provided CWG with the following for approval on April 29th:

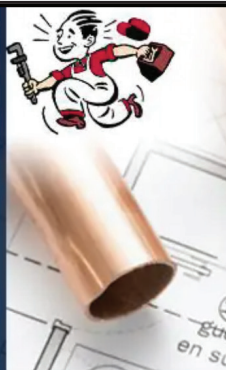
- [CWG] recommends that the FAA engage with the CWG before implementing any changes to helicopter operations and routes in Class B airspace within 10 DME of DCA.

While this is a welcomed recommendation in light of the January 29th collision between an Army Helicopter and a commercial aircraft landing at DCA, there have yet to be delivery of any recommendations to address the noise, increasing aircraft density, and varying altitudes of commercial aircraft operations. This MVCA Transportation Chair will continue to pursue opportunities for the County to relay air transportation safety concerns to the FAA. The next meeting with FFXCo authorities to address this will be July 17th, 2025, 7pm, where a working group will strive to develop recommended modifications to existing airspace and flight procedures in an effort to reduce aircraft noise impacts on our community.

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Fairfax Budget Updates

On May 13, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will meet to approve the proposed 1.5 cent increase in real estate tax, to be set at \$1.14 per \$100 assessed value (average tax bill of \$638). Additionally a 2% increase in Transient Occupancy Tax (primarily for hotel stays) is proposed, with half the proceeds going to the county general fund and half to tourism promotion, in line with the permitted uses of the funds. The City of Alexandria opted not to increase the real estate tax for the coming fiscal year.

The Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) budget proposes \$118M towards the FCPS transfer request for operations, 44% of the superintendent's requested increase. Notable adjustments in the budget include \$16M for inflationary increases in contracts and \$10M for IT infrastructure and projects. The County also identified \$59.5M in net savings, including a reduction of 208 positions. The County continues to monitor impacts on the federal workforce, of which 50,000 employees reside in the County.

The County continues to consider a meals tax of 4%, which would go into effect January of 2026. The tax, permitted by state law, has taken on new urgency as the County works to close the budget gap. A proposal equal to this was put to referendum in 2016 where it was rejected by a margin of 56-44%. The County estimates it will raise \$65M in the first six months of 2026, if implemented.

Budget town halls have been underway this Spring, and following Board of Supervisors adoption on May 13, the School Board will approve their budget on May 22, with the new fiscal year beginning July 1.



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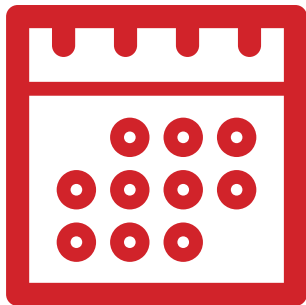
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Mark Your Calendar!

Join Us For Association Meetings

All meetings will take place at Washington Mill Elementary School
7:30 pm • Pizza and drinks served.
May 15: Discussion with Julie Coleman Almacy,
VP of Media and Communications, George Washington's Mount Vernon
October 8: Mark and Michael White, Redevelopment of Grist Mill Barn

Mount Vernon Civic Association, Inc.

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