

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA



Agenda Date:	August 16, 2021
Action Required:	<b>Adoption of Ordinance (1<sup>st</sup> of 2 readings; no public hearing required)</b>
Presenter:	Lisa Robertson, City Attorney
City Manager Office Contact:	Ashley Marshall, Deputy City Manager
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Amend the City Code to make it gender neutral</b>

**Background:** City Council has expressed its desire that ordinances proposed for adoption within the City Code should be written using gender neutral pronouns. Attached is a proposed Ordinance to establish a set of “protocols” to be applied uniformly in order to accomplish gender neutral ordinances, not only within the current provisions of the published City Code but also in future ordinances.

**Discussion:** Should City Council adopt the attached proposed ordinance, protocols will be established to effect gender neutral provisions within all published City Code provisions, including not only all of the currently-published ordinances, but also within any ordinance to be included among the City’s codified ordinances in the future. The Municipal Code Corporation (MCC), as the City’s publisher, will review each ordinance and make edits in accordance with the protocols.

Please note that the ordinance calls for substituting “individual” in place of “man” or “woman”. It is also possible to substitute the word “person”; however, relative to statutory interpretation, the word “person” usually includes legal entities (such as corporations, LLCs, etc.) and may have inadvertent consequences. See Va. Code §1-230 and 1-231.

**Budgetary Impact:** None.

**Alternatives:** None, if gender neutrality is desired in all existing published City Code provisions.

**Alignment with Council Vision Areas and Strategic Plan:** Yes.

**City Manager Recommendation:** Adoption of the proposed ordinance

**Community Engagement:** N/A

**Attachment:**

- Proposed Ordinance

**ORDINANCE**  
**TO AMEND AND RE-ENACT THE CODE OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, 1990, AS**  
**AMENDED, IN ORDER TO REMOVE MASCULINE AND/OR FEMININE**  
**LANGUAGE AND TO SUBSTITUTE GENDER NEUTRAL PRONOUNS**

**WHEREAS** the Charlottesville City Code contains mostly masculine pronouns; and

**WHEREAS** current social awareness of transgender and gender nonconforming identities has brought to light the importance of non-binary gender inclusivity; and

**WHEREAS** amending the Charlottesville City Code to include gender-neutral pronouns by eliminating any gender preference language within the Code of Charlottesville will reflect gender equality and gender inclusivity; now, therefore,

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the Council for the City of Charlottesville:

1. ***The recitals and findings contained in the preamble to this ordinance are adopted by reference and incorporated as if fully set forth in this section.***

2. ***The Municipal Code Corporation is hereby authorized to degenderize and update pronouns throughout the Code of Charlottesville (1990), as amended, subject to approval by the City Attorney, which authorization shall include review and editing of future proposed ordinances. In exercising this authorization the Municipal Code Corporation shall be guided by the following protocols:***

Change the term "he" to "they"

Change the term "she" to "they"

Change the term "his" to "their"

Change the term "hers" to "their"

**Change the phrase "his or hers" to "their"**

Change the term "her" to "them"

Change the term "him" to "them"

Change the term "himself" to "themselves"

Change the term "herself" to "themselves"

Change the term "man" or "woman" to "individual"

**Change the phrase "man made" to "human caused"**

Change the term "men" or "women" to "individuals"

**Change the term "chairman" to "chair"**

Change the term "policeman" to "police officer" (not found in current Code)

Change the term "policewoman" to "police officer" (not found in current Code)

Change the term "policemen" to "police officers" (not found in current Code)

Change the term "policewomen" to "police officers" (not in current Code)

Change the term "workman" to "worker" (not found in current Code)

Change the term "workmen" to "workers" (not found in current Code)

Change the term "fireman" to "firefighter" (not found in current Code)

Change the term "firemen" to "firefighters" (not found in current Code)

Provided, however, that, where a particular term, such as “women”, is part of a reference to or the title of a federal, state or local program, the term shall not be changed within that title (e.g., City Code §§22-32(a)(7) and 30-284(b)(4)).

**3. Throughout the Code of Charlottesville (1990), as amended, in effect on the date on which this ordinance is adopted, said Code shall be amended with gender neutral terminology in accordance with the above-referenced protocols, and such amended Code is hereby re-enacted, in its entirety, to include the above-referenced gender neutral terminology.**