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City of Fairfax City Council Work Session and Regular Meeting, Tuesday, April 22, 2025

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[00:00:17] - Welcome to our work session for April 22nd, 2025. This is the first of our work sessions this evening. Welcome everybody here to our work session before the meeting, which will begin at 7:00 p.m. tonight. At this time, I will now recognize Ms. Clark for our first work session item.

[00:00:37] - Our first item is a discussion on the community survey process. I will recognize Matthew Kaiser, communications director for the staff report. - Good afternoon, Mayor Reed, city council. I'm joined today by Jason Morato.

[00:00:53] He is the vice president and director of community research for ETC Institute. They are the firm that will be running the community survey for us. He just flew in from Kansas City, just arrived, so we're ready to go. Yeah, thanks.

[00:01:10] Well, good afternoon. My name is Jason Morato. I'm the vice president and director of community research at ETC Institute, and we are a marketing research firm that specializes in conducting statistically valid community surveys with city and county governments, and soon will be, for the first time, conducting a community survey for the city of Fairfax.

[00:01:31] So today I'm just going to give an overview of the process for conducting a community survey, and then if there are any questions, I'll be happy to answer those. I just have a little background about ETC Institute. We're a national leader in providing market research for local governments.

[00:01:49] We've been doing this type of work for over 40 years and in the last 10 years alone We've conducted surveys more than a thousand communities across the country Some of our recent Virginia clients include Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Manassas, Alexandria Winchester, we're actually just getting ready to start a survey now for Fairfax County And we've also conducted surveys for cities about the same size as the city of Fairfax all across the country So this is really the type of work that we specialize in.

[00:02:22] So there are three main phases to conducting the community survey. The first step is to design the survey instrument and develop the sampling plan. The second phase is for us to administer the survey and get feedback from your residents. And then for the final phase, we'll process, analyze the data, and then provide a survey findings report.

[00:02:43] So the first step is designing the survey instrument. We work with city staff to design the survey questions. Most surveys include a combination of standard questions that we ask in other cities across the country combined with some more customized survey questions tailored specifically for Fairfax.

[00:03:01] It's really up to you to determine what ratio you want of standard versus customized questions. For the standard questions, for those questions, we'll be able to compare your results with other communities across the country, but then a lot of cities also like to have more tailored questions specifically for them.

[00:03:19] The typical ratio is about 60 to 70% standardized questions. The rest of them are customized, but we'll work with staff together in kind of designing the survey instrument. And usually it takes three to four drafts until we have a survey that we're ready to administer. And of course, we'll wait until we have city approval before we actually begin administering the survey.

[00:03:39] And when it comes to the sampling plan, we'll be surveying a random sample of city residents. And we want to make sure that the demographics of survey respondents reflect the actual population of the city that's always one of the most important things to ensure that the survey results are statistically valid when it comes to administering the survey the survey is administered by a combination of mail and online and that's our standard methodology for these community surveys we'll mail the survey to randomly selected households throughout the city and that mailed survey will also include a postage paid return reply envelope so there's no cost for residents

[00:04:18] who want to complete the survey by mail. The mailed survey will also have a link to an online version of the survey. And then the envelope that the survey's mailed in will have a QR code that links to the online survey. So there's multiple ways that residents can complete the survey. And the reason we like that hybrid approach is it allows us to reach a more diverse group of residents and get a better response rate by giving people different ways they can fill out the survey.

[00:04:43] And as we're administering the survey, we'll make sure that the demographics of survey respondents reflect the actual population of the city. There really are two things that have to happen in order for survey results to be considered statistically valid. One is that households are selected at random to participate in the survey.

[00:05:00] And then the other thing is that the demographics of survey respondents need to reflect the actual population of the city. So we'll be monitoring key demographic areas such as age, race, ethnicity, gender, and then geographic location across the city. And then for the final phase, we'll process, analyze the data, provide a survey findings report. The report will include a summary that gives an overview of the methodology that we use to administer the survey. It'll highlight key findings from the survey. We'll include charts and graphs for each question that was on the survey. The survey also will include some benchmarking

[00:05:37] comparisons. What we'll do is we'll compare your results to other communities across the country. I'll show an example of that in just a minute here. The report will also include what we call important satisfaction analysis and that's a tool that we use to help cities determine which areas should be the highest priorities for the city to focus on over the next couple of years. I'll explain that in more detail in just a minute as well. And then we'll also include what we call GIS maps. And what we'll do there is take the survey results and break them out geographically across the city. And then after we provide that report, one of our staff members will come out and give a presentation of

[00:06:15] our survey findings. This is just an example of the type of benchmarking data that we'll provide. This slide is from a survey we recently conducted for the city of Manassas. So here you can see the dark blue line are Manassas residents who are either very satisfied or satisfied with these services. The light blue line represents a regional average. Those are the satisfaction ratings for residents throughout Virginia as well as surrounding states. And then the gray bar are satisfaction ratings from residents from all across the country. So this really adds context to the data and helps you understand what these results mean. For example,

[00:06:54] if you look at the third row from the bottom effectiveness of communication with the community Manassas had a 53 percent satisfaction rating you might wonder is that good is that bad we can see that's above the regional average and it's far above the national average so that's actually a really good rating for communication so that's really the value of this benchmarking data that we'll provide this is something that we call the important satisfaction rating and this is something we use to really help communities determine what area should be the highest priorities to focus on this is based on two different types of

[00:07:31] data first we asked residents how satisfied they are with services then we asked which services residents feel should be the top priorities for city leaders to focus on and the idea behind this is that the items that have a combination of low satisfaction ratings but at the same time a rate as the most important are the ones we identify as the highest priorities the reason we like to factor in both satisfaction and importance when setting priorities is because you could have an area that has a low satisfaction rating but that doesn't necessarily mean that residents wanting to invest a lot of resources into that area so it's good to factor in both satisfaction and importance when you're

[00:08:08] trying to set priorities so this here is an example for survey we conducted recently for the city of Norfolk you can see for them public schools and traffic flow were the highest priorities and then this is something we called our GIS maps what we do here is we break the results out by census block group it's It's great to have the results overall for all response that fill out the survey, but what this does is let you take a look to see if there are certain areas within the city who have different perceptions or ratings of city services.

[00:08:41] This example is for a city we recently surveyed in Texas, and this shows the ratings for sidewalks in your neighborhood. The dark blue areas are the highest rated areas, so you can see there's one area where residents are very satisfied with sidewalks. The light blue are good ratings as well, and the yellow are some of the lower areas.

[00:09:01] So overall, the city received very good ratings for sidewalks, but then when you look at it broken out by census block group, you can really identify which areas have the lowest ratings. So that's just a fairly brief overview of the overall process for conducting the survey.

[00:09:19] Typically this process takes about four months, about a month to design the survey questions, two months to prepare this, prepare the survey for printing and mailing and then administer the survey. And then about a month for us to process and analyze the data and then provide that survey findings report. So with that, if anyone has any questions, I'd be happy to answer them.

[00:09:40] Questions from the dais? Councilmember Hall. How many surveys do you think, how many surveys do you think you would be sending out for about 24,000-ish residents?

[00:09:56] Our goal is to receive at least 400 completed surveys, which is a very typical response rate for a city of this size. Really for cities up to even 50 or 60,000 residents, 400 surveys is the common goal for a number of completed surveys. The typical response rate for a survey of this length, and this survey will be about five to six pages long, it'll have about 25 to 30 questions, so it's a pretty lengthy survey. The typical response rate is around 12 to 15 percent, so we mail surveys to about seven to eight times the number of households as completed surveys that we need. So in this case, we'll be mailing a survey to about 3,000 randomly selected households.

[00:10:36] Now we're guaranteeing a minimum of 400 completed surveys. If we have a really good response, we may end up with more than that. We might end up with 430 or 450, but guarantee a minimum 400 surveys. Okay. Excuse me. I think you answered about three questions in one, so that's great.

[00:10:53] What languages do you send them out in? We haven't talked about that too much with city staff. That's really customized based on each city but we definitely can make it available in multiple languages typically we mail the survey just in English but then we'll mail a cover letter along with the survey that describes the purpose of the survey and we can translate part of that cover letter into multiple languages then the online version of the survey is available in multiple languages as needed and a lot of times we'll also provide a phone number for residents who want to call in and take the survey over the phone in a different language or or just to have a question about the survey.

[00:11:29] Okay, so that service then is offered in whatever language they would need when they call? Yeah, that's exactly right. Okay, that's great. And then as far as the numbers for the residents across the U.S., is this just accumulation of all of the surveys that you've done across the country, or are you pulling from other sort of satisfaction survey data elsewhere?

[00:11:49] There's two different sources for that benchmarking data. One, there are cities that we've surveyed all across the country, But then also every one to two years ETC Institute conducts a national survey with about 10,000 randomly selected residents across the country So that's part of the benchmarking data. We'll compare your results with our national survey But then we also can compare your results with specific cities that we've surveyed We don't usually provide the results for specific

surveys, but we'll provide an average for say Cities in Virginia or it could be in cities of similar size to Fairfax from across the country Thank you very much.

[00:12:27] Sure. Other questions? Council Member Peterson. The non-respondents. Do you expect non-response bias of any significance? No, I don't.

[00:12:43] The typical response rate is 12 to 15%, which is a good response rate. If the response rate were 5% or lower than that, then I would be concerned with that. But I don't expect the response to be that low. It really never is in our surveys. I think offering in that hybrid approach where we give people different ways to fill out the survey helps us get a good response.

[00:13:06] Well, maybe to ask it a slightly different way, what is the experience in terms of the perspectives, the survey-based results from people who do and do not respond? In other words, for people who do not respond, are they likely to be more satisfied and people who do respond are less or vice versa?

[00:13:27] Do we have any sense around that? Well, these results should represent the entire city because they are statistically valid. So the non-people who don't respond, the results should be similar to this. Now, there is a margin of error. The results are not perfect even for a statistically valid survey.

[00:13:44] But the fact that households are selected at random and that the demographics of our survey respondents reflect the actual population of the city means that these results truly do represent the entire city within a small margin of error. And pardon me for not knowing the history, but has there been a survey like this done?

[00:14:06] Maybe this is a staff question previously for the city, or is this the first time? I believe this would be the first time. And just to follow up on that, would this survey then serve the function of and be designed to provide a baseline, if you will, to see what sort of changes occur in the future if we do come back at another point?

[00:14:30] Yeah, absolutely. Most cities we work with do conduct these surveys on a regular basis. The most frequent time frame is every other year. Some do it only every three to four years. Some actually do it every year. And a lot of the questions would remain the same for exactly that reason, so you can measure trends over time, but then also so you know what the current priorities are for residents.

[00:14:51] But then there's the option each time to change in a few questions as needed. So yeah, most cities do conduct these types of surveys on a regular basis. And then you mentioned roughly 60% to 70% standard questions, 30% to 40% customized.

[00:15:10] For the customized questions, what sorts of things do you customize versus using standard benchmarking questions in a case like this? Some cities might provide services that are a little more unique. And it's not that we've never asked that question before, but maybe something we just don't ask as frequently, something like that.

[00:15:31] there might be some i know we surveyed a city recently that had specific questions about related to growth that was unique to their city so those types of questions and that's 60 to 70 percent ratio of standard versus customized it's just an average ratio it can be whatever ratio you know we want and then i guess this this may be a staff question but it's a survey question as well. More generally, you're sending a mail survey out. I'm guessing that's because mail is the most

[00:16:05] effective way to get a response. But I am curious how that compares with digital, with electronic survey outreach. Because we have this standard question in the city of which tools to use for which audiences. Can you tell us a little bit about that? Yeah, it's a mail online combination.

[00:16:25] So we mail the survey to the randomly selected households, but then that mailed survey does have a link to an online survey. The URL will be printed on the survey, but then also there's a QR code on the envelope. I think one of the benefits of doing a mailed survey is that it makes a survey seem more legitimate.

[00:16:43] We'll include a cover letter that'll include city letterhead, usually signed by the mayor or city manager, briefly describes the purpose of the survey. So I think that helps the survey seem more legitimate. Typically, about 30% to 40% of surveys are completed by mail.

[00:17:00] The other is 60% to 70% online. That's a typical ratio. So we still get a pretty good response to the mailed survey, but it does, as time goes on, skew a little more towards online. I worked at the ETC Institute for 20 years, and when we first started, it was all mail and phone, sometimes even just phone.

[00:17:18] And then as time has gone on, we've graduated to now this current method, which seems to be the most effective way. Thanks. And my last question is for cities where either you or someone has repeated surveys on some regular basis, as a practical matter, how much change do you see and might we expect if we were to repeat this in the future? I mean, it definitely varies a lot from one community to the next. Usually over a span of a couple of years, it's not huge changes,

[00:17:56] but there could be, especially if there are significant road improvements or changes to way you're offering some type of city services those things can certainly affect changes i mean it really varies a lot from one seat to the next depending on just what all is taking place with the city thank you council member hardy-chandler so it's delighted to hear you know attempts to get a representative sample we sort of lean point information from across the city so if you're doing a random sample and you said you're monitoring incoming responses for demographic representation so how do you make adjustments to your approach

[00:18:35] in order to make sure that you're getting that diversity of age and and background and that sort of thing yeah so as we're administering this survey if we're not getting enough surveys from a certain demographic group whether it be younger residents or a certain geographic part of the city then we'll do more outreach to try to target that group and there's different ways we could do that we use whatever method it seems like would work best with that group one of the most common methods is we'll send out a postcard with the qr code and a link to the online survey we could even mail additional surveys if we think that would be best so those are some of the most common ways

[00:19:13] we use text messages but not not as often that's really kind of if we just need a small number of surveys so so that so we just determine which method really would be the best way to reach whatever group where we're missing is there any way um or what are the most effective ways that maybe council members or other elected officials can help support the survey process and get the word out make sure outreach is stronger yeah i think just raise awareness of the survey just mention it especially before people receive the survey in the mail so they're keeping an eye out

[00:19:51] for it and they're hopefully less likely to just throw it away thinking it's junk mail so yeah just mentioning it to people increasing awareness that that definitely could help the response rate and and

when are we launching i don't know if we've determined that yet we haven't started designing the survey yet but typically that process takes about a month and then it takes us from that point a couple weeks for us to prepare the survey for printing and mailing so it will still be a little while council member amos uh thank you for being here my pretty much my only question is this is also broken down by household type uh you know townhomes apartments things like

[00:20:30] that? Yeah it absolutely can be. We always want to include at least some basic demographic questions on a survey: age, race, ethnicity, gender. We can include other ones as well like type of house, household income, how residents have lived in the city. Those are really optional questions we can ask if needed if you want to see the results broken out that way. But they're pretty common questions. And this may be an unnecessary question but I figure I just ask real quick. So when you do your comparisons, when analyzing the data, do you also factor

[00:21:06] in variations in policies that exist between different localities and states? For example, we're in a Dillon Rule state. How do you compare that with data from locations that are in Home Rule states and what we're allowed to do and not allowed to do? It may not be important, but just wondering. Right. Yeah, I don't know that we factor that in too much. I mean, we could.

[00:21:28] There's really, we have a lot of flexibility in how we compare the results. Now, the more specific we get, the less cities we have to compare you with. So we have to keep that in mind. I don't know that we've done that before, but we could. But yeah, there's a lot of flexibility in how we can benchmark you with other communities.

[00:21:49] Council Member McQuillan. Understanding that we have some people out there that are illiterate, do you then go to phone calls if you find that you're not getting responses through the QR codes in the mail? You mentioned that you do text messages or you used to.

[00:22:09] We do use text messages really as one of our follow-up methods, just as needed. We don't do it for every survey. We typically include a phone number on the mailed survey for people who want to call us and take the survey over the phone. We don't place many outgoing phone calls anymore.

[00:22:27] We used to do that a lot, but now it's just very difficult to get a hold of people and most people don't want to take the survey over the phone. But it's an option for those who do want to do the survey that way. Wonderful. And then I had one more question about the detail in designing the questions. I recognize that some of those questions that you showed earlier said quality.

[00:22:50] So can you dive deeper into that kind of stuff then? I understand that we have some control over the design. Yeah, absolutely. So a lot of these questions I looked at or I showed at the beginning this survey there's typically a question that asks about major categories of city services we're asking residents to rate these areas at the big picture departmental level and that's really what a lot of this is but then later on in the survey we do ask about more specific areas within some of these categories so here for example it just says quality of police services then later on we might ask about visibility of police in neighborhoods how quickly police respond to

[00:23:29] to emergencies, enforcing traffic laws. So yeah, this is kind of the beginning of the survey, big picture, we get into more detail as residents get into the survey. - Thank you, I just didn't wanna assume, thank you. - Other questions? So if we are gonna support the survey, I guess my question is if everyone's

not receiving the survey and we're supporting the survey, what happens when people are like, I didn't get one?

[00:23:56] - Well, the reason we do a random sample is that so the results can't be skewed by non-responding-- Totally makes sense. So that's, you know, the reason why we do this. Now, one thing some cities do, in addition to this, we open the survey up for anyone to fill out.

[00:24:12] But we would separate out the random sample versus anyone else who fill out the survey. And we would provide both sets of data. But our main report, like you're seeing here, would be based on that random sample. It totally makes sense to do a randomized sampling. But it's just like if we're telling everybody, look for your survey, answer the survey.

[00:24:29] and people are like, but we have a very engaged community here. It's very engaged. And I can just, people going, I didn't get one. So I'm just trying to, in my head, figure out what our plan is for responding to, oh, so you didn't get a survey, and if we can collect and separate out that data, and you're telling me that we can do that.

[00:24:50] We can. Yeah, that's something, yeah, that's pretty common. We don't do it that way for every survey, but fairly often. So, yeah, we can definitely do that. Okay. The way that works is the printed survey has the address on the back so we know what address it came from. And then if someone takes a survey online, they provide their home address.

[00:25:09] And that's how we separate out the random sample versus anyone else who took the survey. Perfect. Any other questions? All right. Thank you very much. This was very informative, and we appreciate it. Thanks, everyone. Thank you. Ms. Clark.

[00:25:25] Our next item is a discussion and update on the fire station number three feasibility study.

[00:25:30] i will recognize john o'neill fire chief for the staff presentation good evening mayor and council

[00:26:15] little tech support we wanted to provide you with an update on the station three project and provide you with some background on how we got to where we are today and after the presentation solicit solicit feedback from you before i turn the floor over to mr mark manetti to discuss the feasibility study space needs analysis and initial concept designs i wanted to give a little background In the fall of 2021, we opened the new fire station 33.

[00:26:51] At that time, there were a lot of discussions with the council and city manager on their desire to improve the quality of life and address health and safety concerns at station three, thus providing the same quality work environment for both work groups. As you may know or heard me mention in the past, Station 33 has many cancer reduction features and technologies with gear, decontamination spaces, isolation zones, and separate storage areas for personal protective equipment, not exposing them to the diesel exhaust on the apparatus bay floor.

[00:27:27] 33 was also designed to help address sleep deprivation concerns with the individual bunk rooms, knowing sleep deprivation has a direct link to cancer and cardiac risk. Additionally, 33 provided adequate base space for modern equipment and helped to ensure safe apparatus movements along with adequate storage and work areas.

[00:27:49] So in mid-FY22, the funds were appropriated to start the feasibility study and the future replacement for Station 3. We put out an RFP for feasibility study and possible design options and

eventually awarded the contract to the BKV Architect Group in September of 22.

[00:28:05] The CIP project subsequently was endorsed by the Planning Commission each year during the CIP budget processes and funds were appropriated for the land acquisition and design. It was also at that time that we started the serious discussions with the Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department Board of Directors on the transfer of the land and the building of the current Station 3 to the city.

[00:28:28] And as you may know or remember, the design concept process was stalled for a period of time as we explored land acquisition options. And we started back with that process after we acquired the Mason Foundation property to the south of Station 3.

[00:28:47] So with that, I'll turn the floor over to Mr. McNetti for his presentation on the study and the process to date. Mark, yours. Familiar faces, and I see some new faces.

[00:29:03] So some of this may be recap, and then for others, it may be the first time you're hearing this. So the purpose of meeting with you today is to review the process to date with City Council and to give you a project progress update to the due diligence process that culminated in the acquisition of the adjacent parcel for the purpose of delivering the Fairfax City Fire Station No. 3 facility, to talk about next steps with respect to the program validation and concept design, and to gather further feedback from the City Council.

[00:29:33] So just in recap, we divided the process up into several different scopes. So scope A was the functional assessment of the existing facility. So we looked at your existing fire station number three from many different perspectives.

[00:29:50] We looked at it from just a systemic perspective to see what the available life cycle is for the building, how the building programmatically operates, how it supports the mission of fire and rescue. We looked at the site and utility assessment to determine whether or not the existing site would support a redevelopment.

[00:30:10] And, as I mentioned, a full systematic assessment determined which systems could facilitate a renewal, a renovation, or expansion of the existing building. The outcomes of that were very definitive.

[00:30:25] The existing building fabric, actually, you can go to the next slide. I think I have. Okay, so, well, we'll get to that. But scope B, while we were assessing the existing facility, we were also validating the program for the new facility. So we went through and developed room criteria sheets for each space that would occur within the fire station facility.

[00:30:46] And looking at best practices, as Fire Chief mentioned, that was really important to the city to make sure that the new fire station had the latest and greatest in terms of best practices. And so we developed the program based on the needs assessment, and then the next step of the process included, go ahead, we then took that program and we did some test fits of the existing site.

[00:31:13] So here we're looking at the existing fire station facility. We're looking at what can we preserve of the existing fabric of the building, what made sense, again, from an operational perspective, from a best practices perspective, from the current program as we developed it, as the needs have increased and the staffing has increased and the vehicle, the needs for the different crews have increased, that all needed to be considered.

[00:31:39] So the first part of that was to look at the existing building to see if there was potential to expand, replace, to expand the building first and renovate it, but also potentially to replace the building on the current site. And as I was getting ready to say, Related to the existing building, there really wasn't potential to salvage any portion of that building to support the development of a new state-of-the-art fire station.

[00:32:04] The existing building occurred on four stories. It was built in additions, different types of construction. The fabric, the structural fabric of the building was not conducive to expanding or renovating in place. So the option of reusing the existing facility and expanding and replacing was determined not not be in the city's interest let's go then so then we were looking at test fitting a replacement facility but on the current site so the current site as you know is a very narrow parcel typical state-of-the-art fire stations we like

[00:32:43] to have a drive-through bays in this case the program was set for five drive-through vehicle bays and we looked at different out-of-the-box options for how we might be able to facilitate the delivery of a new fire station on the existing site one of the things that needs to be understood is if we are building on the existing site that necessitates a temporary site or relocation of facilities to portions of the facilities to these to the existing fire station 3 so there's added cost when you do that so we did do our due diligence to figure out if there was viable ways that we could replace the

[00:33:22] building on the current site and while there were options they weren't great and that led us to come back to the City Council and seek seek kind of a thumbs up to begin to look for new site candidates for for for relocating the facility and so that takes us to the next scope so scope D finding the new site we looked at different characteristics GIS data call data from from the fire department and we developed a criteria for selecting the sites and scoring the sites and we looked at i can't remember how many candidates we looked at

[00:34:01] here it looks like there's nine of them we may have looked more looked at more but they didn't fall they fell out of the survey uh and we we mapped them and we we scored each one of the candidates uh related to the criteria and the locations um that um were highest we we evaluated and did test fits on those sites that included ultimately the site that was occupied by the George Mason Hope Foundation?

[00:34:28] Yeah, the George Mason Foundation. So the next step, again, this goes a little bit deeper into the location and response that was in the survey. So obviously your existing fire station 3 is where it is. Your existing fire station 33 is where it is.

[00:34:46] Your response times are predicated by that. So any movement is going to change the dynamic for response, right? And your city has kind of a, I guess, really an east-west and the north-south access in terms of the way the traffic patterns work. And so ultimately what we were finding was it was favored to be closer to fire station 3 in order to respond to the city.

[00:35:08] So ultimately what that was leading us to was either the parcel to the right or to the left of the existing fire station. And as part of that due diligence process, we did, as I mentioned, test fits on every one of the site candidates that we felt were substantial and valid to go through that process this is the the one that we did for the George Mason property to validate that that site would actually function and support the delivery of a new fire station so the next step of that process was then to acquire the site which the city I think we went on a little bit of

[00:35:48] a pause during that time while the city worked reached out to actually I think they were looking at both parcels and ultimately the George Mason University parcel became available it was acquired I may have my dates incorrect but there was a due diligence process in 2024 we conducted a site survey and also a phase one environmental site assessment of the site to capture data to make sure that we're mitigating risk on the city's behalf once that due diligence process

[00:36:21] was completed and the site okayed for purchase the city procured it and we are now in the again this is scope B the due diligence process this is the site survey that we delivered and I think the next next slide is the phase one survey that we did so the next step scope F was then to go into this the concept design for the facility and that's where we currently are right now we've been meeting with the fire department and with the public works group for the city through a series of workshops to develop the site plan the building floor plan

[00:36:58] and then the concept building elevations and so we just completed see workshop four and we had a great session and we have three different building concepts that we will be coming back to the City Council to present to you we couldn't get it in the docket in time for this meeting but we'll be coming back to you for that so you can see the schedule right now we're in scope F and so we're

[00:37:29] looking to complete that here in June. Thank you, Mark. So as far as next steps go, we would like to complete the preliminary concept designs, update the project cost estimates, and start the discussion processes with the BAR and Planning Commission on Design Elements, and of course meet with other community members and groups for their feedback. So with that, that concludes our formal presentation, and we'll gladly take your questions and feedback that you have on the project.

[00:38:01] Questions from the dais. Questions? Council Member Hardy-Chandler. Very quick curiosity question. What's an ALTA survey? The ALTA survey, that's a property type of survey.

[00:38:16] I'm not quite exactly sure what's done, but it has to do with titles and those types of things. Thank you. Did you have a question? Council Member Hall.

[00:38:34] So in the CIP, we have \$41 million estimated for this, 11.6, which was adopted in fiscal 2025, and then 18, 18, and 5 over the next three years. Do we have any idea if that is still a reasonable figure to complete this?

[00:38:52] That's what we hope to come from, away from this once we have a more definitive design concept, preliminary design concepts, to be able to update that. That was based probably on data from two years ago based on per-square-foot building costs from Loudon, Fairfax, and Henrico counties for similar-type facilities.

[00:39:13] That's how we came up with the figures that are there, is a rough order of magnitude. I'm not sure if Mr. Summers or Saeed has any additional. Yep. As Chief mentioned, that cost estimate is a rough order of magnitude cost estimate.

[00:39:30] We gathered data from similar fire stations around another county and other counties around the Fairfax and develop that estimate based on the space program that we had at that time.

[00:39:46] So as we move forward during the design, we will further refine that cost estimate and whether it goes up or down based on the space program and other factors. And one factor right now that I see the

tariffs are kind of impacting future construction and some contractors are looking at that as a potential to increase the cost for future projects.

[00:40:12] But we have not considered that yet, but we will see. Okay, so then based on where we are in the process, then is it reasonable that we would need \$18 million in the fiscal year 2020? I don't know who I'm looking at because I'm not sure I was going to ask it.

[00:40:29] But we have \$18 million in fiscal year 2026. Do we know what we spent to date of the 11.6 and do we know do we need all of this to come through the design phase so May defer to mark here in a minute as far as what time frame he believes it would take for the schematic designs But to date we've spent 5.7 million on property acquisition and with BKV We've spent just a hair over a hundred and thirty nine thousand for the feasibility study and concepts where we're at to date

[00:41:03] So we have not spent all of that \$11,000, and chances are by the time schematic design is completed and we go out to bid, I would probably believe we would not spend that \$18 million in FY26, that full \$18 million, but defer perhaps to the experts.

[00:41:23] So working with GAC, we have leveled the budget, so we don't want a \$50 million in one year. And also, before awarding the construction contract, we should have a fully funded project.

[00:41:40] So this is in preparation for a world of construction in future years, so we have leveled the budget. Okay. Fully funded means slightly different things to different people, too, though, because I think we'd have to go out and issue debt in order to cover some, all of this.

[00:41:58] correct? Yeah, that's correct. We would, so the way that CIP generally works is like they said was that you typically level funded you budget and appropriate, but the cash piece would be, in this case, would be the debt service, or excuse me, would be the bonds that would be sold to fund this project. So, but we can't, unless council has um budgeted and appropriated we can't actually go to bid and award it so there's it's always a timing issue but you're not actually you're you're you're basically in this process you're

[00:42:37] granting the authority but until we issued debt which still has to come back to you for approval um you actually have we're not actually spending the money or spending that that level of money until it's actually done but from a process standpoint we need to show that in the cip for you all to budget um and appropriate so we so the project can continue to move forward yes i i understand that thank you i just wanted to make sure that we were still thinking that these numbers were mostly accurate and if there was any sort of reason that we needed to go up or down for 2026 so to make sure that was since we're having this meeting that that was still an accurate figure so

[00:43:16] thank you any other questions council member peterson just to follow up on that if i understand it correctly, you're levelizing costs so that we can finance over term, and we'll pull debt to do that, and then we'll be into a regular debt service payment over some period of time. Is that the correct way to interpret what we're doing here? Can you repeat, I'm going to make sure I'm following, can you repeat that please? So we're taking these lumps, and we're going to put them together, and

[00:43:52] we're going to create a level, a whole lump, and we're going to create a level series of payments over a period of time through borrowing, through debt. And that period of time, I'm curious to know how many years that is.

[00:44:07] I'm also curious to know how big that annual payment will be that comes out of that and when we will know what that level is. So it's a couple of different things. First, so we're talking about two slightly different things.

[00:44:26] So what's in the CIP, what you're seeing in the numbers in the CIP, Ultimately, we're covering what we expect to be the total cost. That's not actually the debt or the amounts or schedule that the debt will be issued.

[00:44:44] So once we get closer to construction, we will issue debt as needed. But we also aggregate our debt. So for example, we'll be doing school projects presumably coming up.

[00:44:59] We might have other building projects or other projects. So we will issue debt for a multitude, potentially a multitude of projects, and this would just be one component of that debt. And because of the multi-year nature, we may issue some of, you know, we may issue part of the debt to get started and pay for construction.

[00:45:20] And then, you know, a year or two years later, we may issue the remainder of the debt because this will be a multi-year process. So the fire station construction is probably 18 months or longer would be my guess.

[00:45:35] So you're potentially spanning three fiscal years, depending on when you start. And so that's why we will finance it in such a way. But to your point, yes, the payments will be level once we start paying the debt service.

[00:45:52] So we will know what those payments are. But until we know the cost, I can't answer your question specifically about what the debt service payment will be specifically on this project. But that's generally how we don't typically do single project debt issuance.

[00:46:09] We would aggregate that for multiple projects. And then in terms of what shows up in the annual fiscal year budget that is attributable to this project or any other project, Is that going to be some share of or level of debt service, and that shows up as the cost burden for this individual project?

[00:46:34] Or is the cost burden going to be the actual invoice that comes in, recognizing that that invoice is actually going to be serviced out of a pool of debt that's been set aside for that? Are we looking at an annual budget that's just a series of debt payments, or are we looking an annual budget, that's the estimated very unlevel costs.

[00:46:57] No, from the budget perspective, you're going to be looking at the level debt payments. It's not going to go up and down. So what you'll see is you'll see there's somewhat of a delta between what's in the CIP and what you actually adopt over you.

[00:47:17] That's because you're not actually spending that money issuing that debt. But, yes, what you ultimately see in the budget, and then what I believe, and JC can correct me, I think the debt service is just a single line. It's not, you know, we show it as a single entry in the budget. It's not, we track it obviously in our accounting system, but from a budget perspective, the debt's just a single amount.

[00:47:37] But as a practical matter, can you share that debt out by project? We can. If this one's a \$56 million load? We can. Okay. Yeah, we can do that. And then from a timing perspective, I know we're playing with estimates now, but when is it that we get a better feel for what the costs actually look like here?

[00:48:02] So we will update the project costs along the way in a few milestones. First, after we complete the concept design, we will provide an update. And the actual bids that we received once the design is complete, will be the real number that we can expect this project would cost other than that end of concept design and along the design maybe um 85 percent of the design will provide i mean mark will provide another update updated cost estimate and we will base our we will update you um along the way would

[00:48:39] you like to have anything yeah that's typically we'll we'll do an estimate at the end of the concept phase, right, and that's typically what they would call a class, I might get this backwards, I think a class four order of magnitude. It's beyond an order of magnitude. You've got some definitives because you've got a plan. It's not just a square footage number. You've got some type of architectural intent. And then at DD, when you've got your major system selected, you get into a much more broken down estimate, so it becomes much more accurate.

[00:49:09] Then in the documents phase, we typically have one estimate that is commissioned at that point two and that one is is closer to what you would get on bid day so you typically during the design process you're going to hold a contingency within the estimate right because there's a design contingency because we haven't finished the design it's in process and then that contingency is diminished as the design is developed so you're looking at these in different milestones and then you know a design development is like when we want to say that you know the design direction is kind of where it needs to be we're meeting the budget goals and we can move

[00:49:47] forward into the documents phase so that's where we would have a course correction right if we saw that we're outside of where the budget goals are it may mean looking at systemically or looking at deferred program or scope or something like that in order to meet the budget goals and that typically needs to happen at the end of design development we don't want to go beyond that without we're on track and we monitor it during the documents phase as well yeah we you know it could be one or two different submissions that we do to get estimates in order to go through that phase and then you know one of them would be

[00:50:24] pretty close to prior to bid so probably when we submit the documents for permit we'll do the final estimate based on that beat me to the punch on the course Corrections what does the timing look like in terms of when potentially you would evaluate that need so we're moving pretty we've got a pretty good pace that we're going on with our workshops right now and again we're going to be coming back to you with a presentation of the design concepts and getting the City Council's kind of direction on which direction you want us to proceed and then we'll develop that for our BAR presentation

[00:51:01] and community outreach that ends the concept phase and then the design development phase can be completed in 8 to 10 weeks typically we're going to be at that point looking at major system selections this building will have a goal of sustainability and the city is determining what that goal is going to be there are state requirements for sustainability as well so there's minimum requirements for these types of facilities and so you know we've talked about that internally we will probably have a sustainable design workshop during the concept phase to

[00:51:36] determine our sustainable goals for the project and that's going to chart the course but for dd we figure probably eight to twelve weeks we can complete the dd phase and at that point the basis of design is identified we have a cost estimate that's supporting those system selections and we'll know where

we are if we need to make any course corrections thank you other questions from Dias. All right. Thank you gentlemen very much. Very informative. Thank you. Ms. Clark. Our next item is a discussion and update on the Willard Sherwood development. I'll recognize Brooke

[00:52:15] Harden, Community Development and Planning Director, for the staff presentation. Good afternoon

[00:52:50] Mayor and Council. Pleased to be with you today to present the Willard Sherwood Health and Community Center project. With me this afternoon are other city staff, Fairfax County staff, the project Architects with Grimm and Parker and the city's project management consultant with Blue Heron Leadership Group. There will be a few presenters who I will ask to introduce themselves as they begin speaking. We will go through each of the topics listed here on the agenda slide. We'll try

[00:53:27] to be brief in our presentation, leave time for questions if it's possible to save those to the end. To provide context to the project's location and how we arrived at a partnership with Fairfax County, we wanted to touch a bit on what led us there. The 2014 Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan recommended that the city study green acres. A committee was then formed and found that the existing facility was not conducive for a community center in terms of its layout and condition and

[00:54:02] identified a host of deficiencies. The committee recommended a new community center at a central location in the city that would be more accessible to all residents and served by transit. The committee considered 21 potential locations and narrowed those to six finalist sites, which the Willard Health Center site was one. The drawback at that time was that the county's feasibility study hadn't started, so future plans for the Willard site were unknown. So the city then proceeded with an alternatives analysis to evaluate three city-owned or partially city-owned

[00:54:39] sites. All of those sites presented significant impacts to open space, tree cover, and or current operations, and none other than Van Dyke was central. Transit served with a campus layout that provided a connection to other city facilities and parkland. There was support for being Van Dyke adjacent but there was no interest in building in the park. The county conducted its feasibility study around that time and moved up its redevelopment timeline for the Willard Center which aligned well with the city's desire to proceed. Joint interest in working together has now

[00:55:19] manifested itself into a number of agreements between the two jurisdictions that are summarized on this slide. The city county joint project team has worked closely together meeting weekly for a number of years. Fairfax County is handling procurement for the project, but city staff coordinates on scoping, participates on selection committees, works with the designer, and collaborates on the preparation of all documents. Since phase two is where we are now, and that agreement covers

[00:55:52] how our relationship is proceeding into the future, I'll cover that in a little bit more detail on another slide. The school facility condition assessment wasn't completed until September of 2023, so the Willard project was already underway, but I did want to mention just briefly that the findings from that assessment listed on this slide confirmed the earlier work of the Green Acres Committee on the condition of the building and the recommendation for a new facility. Back to

[00:56:30] a little more detail in the phase two agreement, which covers the project through completion of construction. Site and building costs are generally broken down by the pro rata share assigned to each jurisdiction according to program space. This is currently 58% county and 42% city. We will have a slide

toward the end that will cover current cost estimates. Parking costs are assigned based on the number of spaces required for each jurisdiction's use, which is 64% county and

[00:57:04] 36% city. But I will note here that this formula applies to how the cost of parking is assigned, but the spaces themselves will be shared in use. The agreement specified that at each stage of design, the jurisdictions will evaluate proceeding or terminating, and that is what has occurred to advance the project to the current final stage of design. The agreement also covers the construction manager at risk form of construction procurement and the guaranteed maximum price for the project.

[00:57:40] Ownership and use is covered in the agreement. The city does not pay for the property and will have a 99-year lease with automatic renewals. The county retains ownership of the property, but the city will have indefinite use without acquisition costs. The agreement specifies that an additional agreement that covers ongoing operations and maintenance is to be prepared, and an administrative committee to provide building governance is to be formed. As I mentioned, we'll go in greater detail

[00:58:16] on design as well as the program, but the basics are that the existing Willard Health Center will be demolished and replaced with a new facility connected to the existing Sherwood Center. That includes existing programs and services offered by the county at the site currently adding in a child care center and moving the city programs currently at Green Acres to the new facility this will be a green building with a lead gold certification and we are working our way as close to net zero energy as is feasible meeting state requirements for new public buildings with that I'll turn

[00:58:54] it over to James Patterson to review the project schedule and community engagement thank you brooke and thank you for the opportunity to present to you all i'm helping with the project management for the city's project also live in the city so i'm looking forward to hopefully working out in this building in the not too distant future i'll touch on the project schedule and talk a little bit about the community engagement elements this project started as brooke said with green acres in 2015 but the project formally with this design the due diligence site evaluation started in December 2021 we went through a concept about design phase through 2022

[00:59:33] and into 2023 we've been going through the design permitting and entitlement the entitlement is in for its third review currently the permits the site permit was submitted roughly a month ago and the building plans are supposed to be submitted this Friday so we're at the end of the design going through the permitting the plan is to award construction and we're using a cmar construction manager at risk procurement method which you bring the contractor the general contractor on during at the end of schematic design and they work with us hand in glove to kind of build in constructability

[01:00:11] and value engineering as we go through the process it's been a very successful partnership up to this point they actually bid out the project to the hvac the plumbing the site the earthwork folks. And that will happen towards the end of this year, this calendar year. And that's when we come back with a guaranteed maximum price. When the project's fully bid, we know the total price.

[01:00:35] They guarantee that price throughout. And then the construction would start the first quarter of 2026 and go through the fourth quarter of 2028. Next slide, Brooke. This slide really just shows one of the things the city council made very clear to us back in 2021, 2022, is they wanted a very thorough and robust community engagement process and what this shows is we went through each phase the pre-design the due diligence to the concept looking at different alternation alternatives to the schematic design design development

[01:01:10] and now in the construction document phase is each of those phases we met with the folks listed the Board of Architectural Review PRAB Commission on the Arts the community and the mayor and the City Council through each phase with the mayor and the city council the city council having approve us going to the follow fit following phase the pre-design was in January of 2022 and what was as part of that robust engagement we met with the community we met with all these groups before the architect put pen to paper you know came out with a question of what do you want in a community center what should this

[01:01:48] design how does it fit within the context of the community so we wanted that input to inform the design throughout. And then we'd come back to the community and all the stakeholders at each phase is, hey, did we meet your expectations? You know, what are you looking for in the next phase? What's shown on the, oh, I wanted to highlight just a couple numbers from our engagement. The very first community meeting in January, 2022, we had, this was in COVID, so we had two virtual, one in person, fully masked up. We had 150 people participate at the three

[01:02:22] events. We did an online survey through Engage Fairfax. We had almost 1,500 hits or visitors and 465 comments that we received through Engage Fairfax. What this slide also shows on the right is just the different stakeholders that were engaged, kind of the usual folks that would be engaged in a project like this, but then all the different community associations and HOAs. We did, we went to a senior center lunch and learn. We went to the senior center committee we went to the churches that are kind of dotted around that site

[01:02:58] went to Daniel's run elementary Fairfax High School we went to the Leighton Hall apartments so we did a lot of outreach to get a lot of good input and at the bottom of this slide which you all have is the project website you can go and engage Fairfax and kind of pull up the history and the different presentations so you can go to the county website and all of the community meetings the virtual ones were recorded so you actually can go on there and listen to the recordings of the feedback we receive next slide this slide I'm not going to read all these comments but this slides just demonstrate we got we

[01:03:38] got a lot of good feedback and in general the community is very excited about the project they love the rooftop amenity space they like the site being close to Van Dyke Park they asked for things like making sure there's accessibility you know like a tree cover and those are all things that we built into the design as we went forward and Antonio will present the design but they kind of love the look one thing we heard on early on is don't build an institutional looking building we want something iconic this is the one community center in the city Fairfax you know make it special especially at the

[01:04:14] corner of Blenheim and Leighton Hall and with that I'll turn it over to brishali thank you James I'm brishali oak with Fairfax County's Department of Public Works. I'm going to give you a very quick overview of the county and city programs that we are including in this facility. I also wanted to point out that today we do have with us from the Health Department, Dr. Gloria Ado Ayensu.

[01:04:42] She's here. She's the director of the Health Department. Also we have Dr. Parham Jabari and he's the Deputy Director for Medical Services. So both of them are here to answer any questions that you might have specific to the Health department so we've worked very closely with the health department as we develop their space needs and also understood their operational needs and at this point where we landed is a total of about 58,000 square feet for the county programs and that includes all of the programs and services that you see

[01:05:17] listed here most of them currently do exist at the Joseph Willard Health Center location and they will be continuing to be offered in the new facility as well and again all of these services are available to both the county and city residents with the exception of a couple as I mentioned the district office of the Health Department is a new space that we are incorporating in this new facility and then a couple of the clinical programs related to testing is also new but all the others are existing at Joseph Willard Health center the last couple bullet points infant toddler connection and the early

[01:05:56] childhood education programs are offered by the neighborhood and community services the infant toddler connection does exist at Willard they have currently moved out of the space and they have moved into a temporary facility elsewhere in their locations in the county the early childhood education is a new program that we will be bringing to this facility based on the needs that were identified by NCS in this area so that's a new program approximately approximately about 50,000 square feet I'd also like to point out that there's a temporary facility for the Health Department to move into that's currently

[01:06:32] in the works lease is already in place and improvements are currently proceeding and the Health Department would be moving out of the existing Willard Center by October of 2025 so moving on to the next slide with regards to the city programs and we have Stacy Summerfield I'm sure you all know her director of parks and recreation with the city again we've worked with her and our group intensely in terms of develop developing their program needs and operational efficiencies that they would like to bring about in this facility as well as continuing to maintain that connection to the existing Sherwood

[01:07:10] Center and also identifying any adjacencies that makes sense based on the compatibility of the uses so at this point I think we've landed on about 50 45,000 square feet total for city programs and that include all of the ones that have been included on the slide again includes the senior center that will also have associated outdoor recreational areas classrooms and preschool youth program related areas and spaces for camps and such activities then also a new gymnasium with a track on the upper level a fitness center with

[01:07:49] equipment classrooms for fitness classes as well as administrative offices so we do recognize that there are a variety of programs clearly in this facility that will be used by patrons of different age groups and all the differing needs so recognizing that we have tried to design the building in a manner that will allow separation of uses but will also incorporate certain control points as well as security elements that will help make this facility safe and secure for all users.

[01:08:24] So that's our goal, and then I know that our design team will be going into some more specifics of that in some of the upcoming slides. So with that, I'll hand it over to Antonio from Grimm & Parker Architects, and he can go over where the design started and where we are today.

[01:08:44] Thank you. Hi, everyone. Good afternoon. Do I have the click? Thank you. All right. So I'm Antonio Ribello with Glen Parker Architects, the lead designer for the project.

[01:09:01] With me is Rick Morrison, senior project manager for the company and the project manager for this project as well. You've heard how exciting this building is with so many programs, and we had the fortune to design it and put it all together.

[01:09:17] And oh boy, it's quite interesting because that site, it's kind of compact for so many things that need to go on that site. So I just have two slides showing a little bit of the process that got us where we are right now. We looked at many options to fit all this program in there.

[01:09:38] So there's a lot of competition for the first floor. Elements like the ELF center that need to be right at the first floor to have its own entrance. The child programs that need to be right on the first floor. The gym wants to be on the first floor.

[01:09:54] Everybody wants to be on the first floor. so we had to look at what what how can we put this together and last but not least we have to park over 200 cars on that site and we're like 200 cars um really leads the charge in how volumetrically we're going to look at the site and so we looked at options where we option one we said we're going to bury the parking under the building and put the building right on top of it Option two and option three were options where we were building parking garages around the building and kind of pushing all the program and stacking it where it becomes so high.

[01:10:33] Option one became the preferred option because it really was the most sensible way to use that site to its best advantage and reduce things like the heat island effect and other things and maximize how we could do the site.

[01:10:53] So we did volumetric studies of what those options could be on that site, and clearly option one came ahead because it really gave us a building that looked like a two-story building, a friendly building, rather than a ginormous building with a four- or five-story parking garage around it.

[01:11:15] So that was the option that was selected. And so as we moved forward, the design, one desire was to incorporate civic presence on Blenheim and also have another entrance for vehicular traffic coming in.

[01:11:35] So we have a pedestrian entrance that is connected to a multimodal transportation hub that the city is developing right at the intersection of Blenheim and Leighton Hall. and then we have the other entrance that faces the Jurgensen lab on that site.

[01:11:51] If you know the site, there is a great difference there. The existing Sherwood Center is a little higher than that site, so we took that to our advantage and we designed a building that connects on the second level directly onto the Sherwood Center.

[01:12:08] So, going through the floor plans very quickly, the parking garage occupies the full footprint of that site, we maximize that. We park about 235 cars in these two levels. You come in from the back in a ramp and you park and then there's centrally located elevators that brings folks up. And also there's a convenient stair at a corner that for folks that want to go one level up, they can do as well.

[01:12:38] The plan was designed with the idea of being simple to understand that you would need a map to go into a building a building that has a lot of uses so one thing that we did was we created a spine in a main spine in that building that connects the two main entrances and by which all the program was associated to that spine on both levels and so there's a pedestrian entrance that is connected to a stair and it's connected to a ramp for accessibility for folks with disabilities. And on the other side, it's at grade. There is also the main entrance. And then attached

[01:13:18] to that spine, there is a secondary corridor that is also replicated on the second floor that goes north-south and connects to the Sherwood Center. On this first floor, the health department. So the health department is such a large program that we put it in two levels. And we divided it according to the functions of the health department so on the first level here we are providing where that arrow is that says health department there's a door that directly goes from the outside to the health department one does not even need to go through the building if the one doesn't want to

[01:13:58] so it goes right there there's a reception desk and then the other functions like the nursing stations and all those things are right there at that level on the opposite side of the corridor in pink is a child it's a child with program that kind of hugs a playground and on on a very prominent side along blancham we put the gymnasium and right behind it the city childcare with the four classrooms for after after daycare and with its own playground as well we also provide stairs beautiful stairs to

[01:14:36] encourage healthy habits of going up for people who are able to but of course the elevators are located centrally that can take folks up as well so as we go up to the second level again the same idea of the of the circulation going east to west and north-south and we have the second floor of the health department with another welcoming desk and and for the functions that are exclusively offered on the second level and then you have the infant toddler connection and And right adjacent to it, the administration area for the parks and recreation.

[01:15:12] And then right along Blancham, the most spectacular area of the building, are the city's fitness center, exercise room, and the walking track. So it's really a building that kind of talks to the community as one would walk or drive by or ride a bike and see this building and see all the activity. It's right there.

[01:15:33] Of course, like I said, this level connects back to the existing building, the Sherwood Center. On the third level of the building, there is the Senior Center. And in essence, if you come from the Sherwood side, it's going to feel like you're only going up one level, not two, because it's in the middle floor.

[01:15:54] The Senior Center has its own outdoor roof terrace, a wonderful amenity there. And it also has multi-purpose classrooms. There's a stair also offered to come up here, but one can also take elevators and land right in front of the door of the senior center without having to walk anywhere.

[01:16:14] So, just very quickly here, the existing Sherwood Center is also going through a refresh and the renovation and a small addition. We're renovating some of the rooms.

[01:16:30] We are opening a corridor to connect to that connector bridge. We're adding a small addition for changing rooms and storage, and we're moving the front desk to face the door.

[01:16:46] Because currently, if you know that center, you come in, kind of the front desk is stuck to the side and doesn't work so well. And the multipurpose room that's there now is going to be renovated for the performance arts. Now I'm going to take you quickly on the exterior.

[01:17:05] So this is a building that is designed to maintain harmony with its context. In the city of Fairfax, we want the building to be not too big, so it reads like a two-story building. We want the building to have red brick to talk to the other red brick buildings of the city.

[01:17:25] It is a building of its time. It's a contemporary building, but it's soft. It's calm. But yet, we also introduced elements that not only work for solar shading and all that, but also give a little bit of excitement to the building, making it into not a stuffy government building, but rather a civic building that everybody can be proud of.

[01:17:52] This is an aerial view that kind of better shows the solar arrays on that roof. We estimate that at least 50% of the energy can be reduced on this building by using all the solar arrays there. You see the roof terrace for the seniors.

[01:18:11] You see how we manage the grading going down to that intersection where the transportation hub, which is not part of our project, but we're working with the city to kind of mold it together so it's

seamless, which is, you know, buses, bicycles, and walking trail and the whole thing at the corner.

[01:18:30] And we're softening those retaining walls with planters and plantings and all of those things there. As we, this view just shows how interesting you could walk all the way from the park on the right through the existing Sherwood building, right through it, right through that bridge and into the new building.

[01:18:49] It's all connected. It's all one big facility. As you go on Leighton Hall, because it's a long facade, it's a big building, one of our things that we wanted to do was to reduce the massing of that building.

[01:19:05] So we did that by breaking down the volumes, as you see, and by using different color and different material like that wood-looking panel that you see there to accent some areas. So now let's take a quick visual tour inside the building.

[01:19:22] If you come in from the Jurgensen side of the building, you're greeted by this double-height space. And the first thing you see is a little bit of tone and color. That's not there just for aesthetics. That's also for wayfinding.

[01:19:37] We are making sure that each department has its own color so that you will remember that, oh, the child care would be the yellow area or the health department will be the blue. the exercise will be the TO and so forth. As we move in from the other side we also celebrating the history of the City of Fairfax with a mural as you come in and as you see the welcome desk. The info desk is strategically located on the main artery of the corridor at the intersection of that other secondary

[01:20:16] corridor for um great visibility to to all entrances and all places of the of the building the gymnasium is a good example of a space that is purpose designed for its purpose uh it's a state-of-the-art facility it will have four pickleball courts it's going to have a walking track um this is this is uh uh not even in the same planet as the current facility at green acres which they're using an old cafeteria of a school.

[01:20:49] So this has been really welcomed by everyone. And then there's state-of-the-art exercise rooms like this one here with all the modern equipment. And at the best location, the best real estate part of this building, there's going to be the fitness area where you can exercise, and there's views from that to the intersection below.

[01:21:17] The roof is going to have a multipurpose deck for the senior center to use. Here is illustrated bocce courts, but those things are in flux. This is just to prove that we can fit those bocce courts there, but they can use other things there too.

[01:21:35] And the senior center itself, it's an inviting, welcoming, warm place that has a kitchen and is designed with different little spaces for seniors to use and do what they do in a daily basis. The connecting bridge accentuates how much we looked into natural light coming into this building. And another aspect of the building is a request from the community to celebrate art and to exhibit art, public art. And so we created a bunch of spaces

[01:22:09] along the walls, purposely designed to welcome art of all types including other niches for sculpture and other media that's not just paintings. So with that, these are some views of some of the other programs that might be run by the county, but that doesn't matter if you're a citizen and you're a Fairfax, you're going to be using these things.

[01:22:36] This is the first floor of the Health Department, the second floor of the Childhood Program, Infant-Toddler Connection. So now, just to wrap up, this is the new lobby area for the Sherwood.

[01:22:53] We moved the welcome desk and a view to the renovated multipurpose room with acoustic panels for performance arts. so thank you go through the dollars and cents if you look at the spreadsheet to the right the base building the total cost estimated cost is 129 650 and that's million 129 million 650,000 and those costs are split as Brooke talked

[01:23:33] about earlier it's 58 42 between the city and the county and that's based on square footage a pro rata share so the city share is 51 million 930 then the next row down is additional commitment so when Antonio was talking about the different alternatives alternative one two and three alternative one was the underground parking that everybody liked alternatives two and three actually worked for the county the city very much wanted to do alternative one so an additional commitment was agreed to between the city and the county that the city would contribute three million dollars to go forward with alternative

[01:24:13] one then you drop down to total base building cost is fifty four nine thirty fifty four million nine hundred and thirty thousand and I'm gonna drop down to the lower and then I'll come back to the performing arts but if you look at the current what's in the county CIP going down the columns is Brian was talking about different years you committed different levels of CIP funding so the total funding proposed is fixed 56 million dollars that we are within. The fiscal year 26 is before you all now. The \$9,025,000 is proposed that the City Council

[01:24:52] will act on this year. Going back up to the spreadsheet, the Performing Arts is an alternative. So that was designed, and it's designed so it can be plugged in or plugged out of the building. And when Antonio was going through that slide, there's a piece of that renovation that will happen to the Sherwood Center that's base building. So the corridor that connects, the bridge that connects the buildings, the renovation to the front desk, that's all part of base building costs that is part of that \$54,930. The optional piece is the renovation to the performing arts. So doing

[01:25:30] some improvements to improve the lighting, the acoustical, replacing the ceiling from concave to convex so it's more conducive for performances, creating a sound room and a light room and creating the dressing rooms and the prop storage is part of that four million dollars at each phase as we've gone through the process the city is asked to act on one do you approve moving forward with a project base building and two do you want to move forward or not move forward with the performing arts options and brooke will talk about this in the final slide in terms of when that option will

[01:26:05] come back before the the city council in the next line so this slide gets into the operating budget so the previous slide is looking at capital budget this is look at operating and you see at the top of the spreadsheet and this is broken into the green is the Willard Sherwood Health and Community Center and then the reddish color is a performing arts option just to separate the cost out since that is an alternative so at the very top is a fifty four nine thirty capital cost and then everything below that is the operating costs so the first number is that fixtures furniture and equipment and the best way to explain

[01:26:42] that is if you turn a building upside down and shake it it's everything that falls out of the building it's furniture it's equipment it's gym equipment those kind of things and that's estimated at one point I need better glasses one point whatever then the capital repairs the capital repairs security custodial and utilities are based upon building owners and managers association benchmarks for those

costs so it's based on either a percentage of total value or square footage cost. So those as you run down for the annual maintenance, which would start in fiscal

[01:27:18] year 29, would be a partial year when the building opens, is \$823,000 or \$824,000. The security, \$75,000. And that doesn't include physical security. The physical security, cameras, intrusion alerts, panic buttons, those are all part of base building. But the operating cost of having a security guard, or paying for those operations is at \$75,000.

[01:27:44] The custodial cost, about a penny, a square foot, \$105,000. Utilities, \$84,000. And all those costs are split, the same provider share, \$58,000, \$42,000. So the total operating cost is \$2.7, a little more than \$2.7 million.

[01:28:03] And then Stacy's going to talk in a minute about some of the staff. I will note as we're looking at staff, you're looking at park and rec staff, and we still have to determine who's going to maintain the building. Either the county can maintain it or the city can maintain it or you contract the whole thing out.

[01:28:19] So we have the overall cost for maintenance. If the city maintains it, it would also fund within that \$1.6 million three positions that would be on site to address urgent calls, take care of preventive maintenance types of activities. And the performing arts, same kind of analysis, \$4 million, base building, \$300K, maintenance, \$120,000, \$60,000 for capital repairs.

[01:28:46] I will note that capital repairs, those costs don't start until the building's about five years in operation. Security is included in the number above, custodial and utilities for a total operating cost of close to \$200,000. And with that, I'm going to turn it over to Stacey to talk about some of the other operating costs.

[01:29:09] Thank you, James. So looking at the operating costs for the building, just comparing it to Green Acres, now it's a significant expansion in services from our Green Acres facility, but in this proposal, Green Acres would close when the senior center and that programming moved over to the Willard Sherwood.

[01:29:25] So currently, Green Acres, we have 62 operating hours per week. Our staffing over there is \$567,500 a year. That includes our senior center staffing, a percentage of our operations staffing, and our front desk staff. Now those 62 hours don't include rental hours, so we sometimes go over that 62 for rental, and that is covered by temp staffing. At the Willard Sherwood, we are looking at a potential 96 operating hours per week, so a significant expansion, especially with a fitness center to open early, close late, different events with the gym as well. The

[01:30:05] staffing now the 2.1 million number that you've seen that is a hundred percent staffing and so if we are using the building a hundred percent of those 96 hours and we're using all floors that is that 2.1 million so we did also generate a potential 1.2 million number which would be at 60 capacity so if we were to close different floors at certain times like say we finish on the third floor the senior center's closed we close that floor off for the evening we're also looking at different options of utilizing AI enabled security cameras, automatic door locks, and different other measures which will help us keep an eye on this large facility. And so there

[01:30:45] is a range there of potential staffing. Now that number is on top of our current staffing. It is in addition to the staffing that we already have now. It does include a full-time opening and closing manager and a mix of about 30 part-time benefited and some unbenefited customer service reps to run the facility.

We are also looking at revenue potential. So when we look at FY24, our revenue, rental revenue for Green Acres was \$73,721, primarily rentals. That does not include

[01:31:20] our program revenue for the senior center, and that is because most of that revenue is cost recovery. So we are, for things like senior trips and things like that, we're just doing a cost recovery model to cover the cost of those programs. When you look at that number, it does appear as though we're bringing in about half a million dollars in senior programming, but a lot of that is going out as well with the programming. Over at the Willard-Sherwood, we see the biggest revenue driver potentials as different memberships that we would offer, the senior center, the fitness center, program revenue for fitness classes, youth programs, adult and senior programs, different programming that we have in the gym, as well as some rental

[01:31:59] revenue so potential gym rentals now we do have a lot of interest in the gym so that would be around the city programming the third floor classrooms because once the senior center programming ends for the day those classrooms would open up for rentals and then the third floor patio which is weather dependent so a conservative annual revenue number we're looking at is around six hundred thousand dollars okay and to wrap up next steps for city council's consideration are approval of the proposed FY 26 capital improvement

[01:32:36] program this will be the final allocation for this project moving forward into this summer and this fall will be a work session and a public hearing on the land use applications that have been filed and that would be typical to what the council is used to seeing with any type of land use application there'll be a staff planner that has reviewed the project and talk about traffic and site design and impacts on all of those sorts of things with a public hearing following

[01:33:11] thereafter as was mentioned earlier the project is proceeding under the construction manager at risk approach and so as part of finalization of the budget and costs as well as the construction documents a guaranteed maximum price would be presented for council's consideration along with those final construction documents at that time if there were any adjustments that need to be made to the development agreement related to schedule or

[01:33:46] budgeting we would bring those potential amendments forward at that time that's it for us happy to answer any questions all right questions from the dais Councilmember Amos thank you all so a few questions one in terms of if we wanted to look at for example undergrounding parking can be extremely expensive we have some high recurring costs coming is that set in stone or still there is there's still the possibility of having above ground

[01:34:18] parking instead okay you can look at the footprint we almost built a footprint site so you can double the footprint I'm sorry you can double the footprint and try to spread it out there's just like park there's no room for parking surface parking at that site second question since this is poised for construction to start in 2026 this is an election site location do we have a backup plan for where that would be relocated we have been working with the

[01:34:55] elections office to talk to them about there are we have a larger number of election sites in the city than required so we are talking about that and it is on the horizon. Okay, and last question. I, so I love the design of this project. I am extremely concerned about the recurring costs in terms of advertising opportunities or event programming.

[01:35:18] What options do we have on the table to make up that difference? Because \$600K versus \$4.7 to \$5 million annually doesn't add up. I think we could definitely look, we are continuing to look at different ways to potentially in small ways lock some of the doors to reduce the staffing costs I think we could certainly partner with the potential future parks foundation to look at different options there but I don't have any concrete numbers other questions councilmember

[01:35:58] McQuillan thank you Mary on the project context this is a question I have regarding the it might just be the way it's written but it says the partnership the city community center alternative analysis 2016-2017 partnership with county at existing willard health center property noted as option to consider if feasible can you explain that a little bit more sure so as part of that study there were three sites that were that were evaluated one being the existing sherwood site and

[01:36:33] van dyke park as part of that analysis the consultants suggested that an alternative to trying to to keep the project completely on city property would be to look at a potential partnership with the county at the Willard site part of that was based upon as councilmember Amos had the question a moment ago was so much of the parking to serve that design was going to end up being in Van Dyke Park even with some structured parking in that in that in that concept was just very

[01:37:11] impactful. And so the consultants have said an alternative may be to pursue what we've since pursued as a city. Okay. Thank you for providing some background on that. And then going into the school's facility condition assessment recommended for Green Acres, it says here more appropriate to build replacement. Replacement is less expensive than renovation or maintenance. So that is essentially where we would be moving everyone out, doing what we're doing now, but with the willard health center right is that correct my understanding okay and then um sorry i started

[01:37:47] to write on here instead of to the side could you explain um it says here on the stakeholder and community engagement this engagement involved a feedback or did was pricing was pricing ever discussed in the community feedback stuff regarding you know the senior fees and um the services offered in the building? When we presented to the mayor and city council, one of the things that

[01:38:20] was important is that we disclosed all the costs. So the most recent outreach, which was November of 2024, included operating costs. The earlier engagements, I'll tell you the truth, I don't remember. I don't think it did. Okay. And what was the primary feedback that, or what did you hear from that that they liked the rooftop terrace and they wanted to make sure the building was accessible and they put they put art into the facility so we didn't hear in presenting the the cost information we didn't get a lot of

[01:38:56] feedback on the cost okay thank you actually I don't think we got any they wanted it to stay free is that what you just said they wanted that I don't the seniors that attended in terms of you know what Stacy's talking about in terms of membership fee is they kind of like the current structure yes okay and then question regarding under the stakeholder community feedback stuff again the November date that you just mentioned there was concern about the availability of fitness equipment could you learn a little bit more about that

[01:39:30] was this the question regarding just the fitness equipment in the fitness center I actually remember that discussion okay on the 24th and what it was is that city residents were concerned about county residents taking up the equipment, and their concern was what can we do to make sure city residents have first access to the equipment so it's not county residents there.

[01:39:59] I remember that discussion clearly. I'm getting it confused with a long discussion about the type of rowing machine we might want. Okay, yeah, I know there's been a lot of back and forth. Thank you for explaining that. And then the health center, other county programs and operations, how many city residents are currently served at the health center and I apologize if we've asked that and been received that information before but good afternoon again uh Mary Council members I'm Dr. Jaber with the

[01:40:35] health department so looking at our last full fiscal year was about 5,000 unduplicated patients we were up to around seven to eight before the pandemic and have had a little bit of a drop off as we've been able to establish partnerships with our federally qualified health centers find individuals medical homes and try to deliver our services more efficiently in addition to clients we also have a vital records office there which is where we provide death certificates marriage certificates and so forth and so roughly we get about 20,000 of those a year that's a very active site for the entire

[01:41:11] county and city that will also be moved to another you know temporary location while the Willard is being built okay and does so the 5,000 do you know how many of our city residents currently go to that health center I haven't looked at it as a breakup of whether they're a county or city so I want to be able to answer that today okay we are open generally to everyone so it could be you know depending on the services are in need if someone is looking let's say for an exam that might require a physician such as an STI visit and if it's not offered at City of Fairfax we may point them towards Annandale

[01:41:47] Herndon so we really look at all five as available resources to everyone in the county in the city and there's a good bit of crossover so I wouldn't be surprised if we see some of that in our Springfield office or Annandale where city residents are going there because the appointment is available that day that makes sense I was thinking from a standpoint of parking and the fact that our city residents live closer and have a free Q bus to use to get to them from so it's kind of thinking in that generalization for the community center programs and operations I know that the county is able to add an early childhood child education

[01:42:22] class to theirs to their part of the building are we adding any new programs to ours so our little school the preschool program which we operate out of Sherwood would move into that space into one of those four classrooms we'd utilize the remaining four classrooms for our Daniels run before and after school program allowing an expansion of kids to participate in that and then also different youth programming throughout the day we do a lot of preschool music programs and things like that during the school day lots of different youth programs in the summer and then some of our summer camps would also be able to use that space okay so programs that we currently have

[01:43:00] but we're kind of using in other places right now so we bring them into this building under one roof and also be able to expand it yes and the county space will be contracted out and I know that Main Street who's currently with us at Green Acres will be going out for that contract okay is this building designed for potential future expansion or renovation yeah sorry I was

[01:43:40] looking for you I couldn't sorry I know I'm just going through my pages now to To my understanding, no. It is not designed for future expansion. Okay. We had to go down another level.

[01:44:01] That way we could get within the footprint. So it would be hard to fit anything else on this site unless you're in Van Dyke. Excellent. Thank you. This is also a design question. I see that we have the two playgrounds. This is just a – I was just curious. Why are these separate?

[01:44:17] Why wouldn't you combine them? I can answer that one. So the one is attached to the county's child care space. So there's no going out into the facility. You're at a direct, those rooms are a direct connection to their playground. And then the same with the city site. So all of our classrooms have a direct connection in a secured fenced area to go out to the playground and come back in.

[01:44:39] Okay, so there was no way to design that where they could share some playground space or make the playground space larger and more open by sharing? It was not a design issue. we could have at the time done that but there was a preference for that problematic separation so that makes sense thank you for explaining that how many elevators will this building have three three and where are they are they

[01:45:16] just all central in that one spot no so there are two right in the middle and And there's one at the northeast corner of the building that serves all the way to also for loading if need be.

[01:45:32] But it will be a passenger elevator. Okay, excellent. And then do I understand the design correctly that if they're entering Sherwood Center from the back, there's no desk or greeter right there? They'd have to go closer to the front of the building. Is that correct? We have added a control desk there.

[01:45:50] So, Brooke, if you go to the next floor. sorry, you'll see the small L-shaped rectangle in the upper left corner of the track there is a control desk. Right here. Yes, thank you. Oh, excellent. So you come in, it's right there on the left. Thank you.

[01:46:07] I think that might be it. That's all the questions I have. Thank you so much. Thank you. Council Member Hardy-Chandler. Well, I definitely appreciate programming being in one space.

[01:46:23] We know this adds to the health of a community, and I really appreciate this model in us sort of taking the lead here i'm curious if uh there are in collaboration with the county other ways to diversify the revenue you said the uh projected annual revenue um conservatively would be um 600 000 are there thoughts about how that might be expanded what might be other ways that uh other than fees, other than fees, let me be specific, other than fees to seniors especially, are

[01:47:01] there other more creative ways to expand or diversify revenue for this facility? Yeah, there are certainly things we can look at and we can come back with an expanded revenue plan for some potential ideas. I mean, a lot of this current revenue model, all of it actually is fees for program use, membership fees, and rental fees.

[01:47:24] just not seniors yeah are there other things that the county has considered in other places or in other locations that have generated different forms of revenue we have we we did base our membership fees and that on county facilities as far as what other facilities in the area are charging and we can certainly look to see if there's other creative revenue streams that they've found um we also i don't no one wants to pay more fees um but we do a lot of free um we have a you know free agreement with our community partner youth sports organizations so we don't

[01:48:04] charge any of those hours um so there is um we do have a lot of free we are we give a lot of space away so and just to follow up from that you talked about uh some of the staffing costs being potentially reduced if some of the floors are closed down during certain parts of the day.

[01:48:29] Does the programming model align with that? Yes. So this, the conservative, um, revenue would be, um, of course not programming every single space every, every hour of the day. So looking at that 96 hours and thinking, well, certainly the fitness center has to be open and ideally we're maximizing

the fitness classroom, but maybe the third floor doesn't open as early. Um, if we're going to be open it late at night for gym programming maybe just the first two floors of the building are open we've also looked at different ways to lock and unlock the stairwell doors to ensure that their fire egress but people are not

[01:49:07] able to kind of move throughout the building without being seen by our control desk so that was considered in the in the location of the various programs yep okay thank you councilmember hall thank you I do have a number of questions I'll try to direct them to same people at the same time so So looking at this versus Sherwood, what exactly is different?

[01:49:34] We're going to have the same preschool, still going to be, and I work from the city side, not from the county side. We're still going to have the preschool. We're still going to have the senior center. We're going to have the Daniels on before and after school care, which we currently have at Sherwood.

[01:49:51] Now it'll just be in one building. Yes, it will give us more room to expand that program, too. were currently sold out for after school, the before and after. And we do have some, as of last week, we had some before school spaces. So how many extra students, kids are we talking, roughly?

[01:50:09] I can get you that number and have Katie look at both classroom spaces to see. Right now we only have one classroom space, so we would be looking at having potentially, we would have two, potentially three. Okay, and sorry to interrupt, but the \$600,000 of projected annual revenue, does that include only adding new students, or is that including what we're already getting from the programming that exists with the before and after school care and stuff, or is this totally new

[01:50:42] revenue? That it would be new revenue. Okay, and of that \$600,000, does that include roughly \$95,000 that had been discussed for senior fees yes so that includes a senior fee fitness center membership fee programming and then rental revenue okay so if we took out the we'll call it a hundred thousand make numbers even because i know that was been a topic of conversations now we're looking at projected annual revenue maybe a five hundred thousand instead yep okay um okay and so what else is new uh the gym space uh it's an expanded fitness center so a fitness center does exist at

[01:51:21] Green Acres, but it's very small. It's really only utilized by our seniors, so this would be an expanded fitness center, and the fitness classroom would be much improved from what exists at Green Acres as far as being able to additional people. The estimated capacity of the fitness classroom is 20 people. Okay, so 20 people for a class? Class, yep, per class. Okay, and this would piggyback to the classes that are already being offered at Sherwood that would move over

[01:51:56] from there to here plus the potential to add another class or classes yep okay um and what sort of square footage are we talking for the fitness area like the gym part sorry not the gym the exercise equipment yes is 2000 for the fitness center yeah it's 2004 the fitness center And then \$1,000, you said, for the classroom?

[01:52:28] For the classroom. Okay. Do we have any idea what Oak Mar is? I'm just trying to visualize what \$2,000 is in my head compared to another location. I do not know what Oak Mar is, but I can certainly find out.

[01:52:45] I'll ask another question in the meantime. Who would you say this building serves specifically? Again, city-side only. I'm hearing seniors, child care.

[01:52:59] Adults, yeah. So I think we would hit all kind of three big chunks because we've got youth programming on the first floor with the classroom space, of course the gym as well, senior center, the expansion of our current pickleball program over at Green Acres, which is probably one of the most popular things we have indoors right now, and then looking at having open gym in the evening for adults and families and different gym programs, the track as well, and then the fitness center.

[01:53:28] Okay, and we currently have two indoor pickleball courts at Green Acres? There are three total because there's two in the gym and one in the cafeteria. The gym, if it rains really hard, is unavailable, so we're down to one. Okay, so we'd be going on a good day when it doesn't rain or monsoon.

[01:53:48] We have three and we're going to four. Yep. Okay. Also with the ability to drop a curtain in the gym so that we could do like half pickleball and half youth programming in the summer when we're running summer camp. Okay. And I think, sorry, I'm trying not to skip around here. The gym rental, I thought you previously said before that because of the agreement with FPYC, there was going to be very limited options for community use and or rental of the gym.

[01:54:17] But it sounds like what you're saying now is different than that? No, we still wouldn't be a ton of rental revenue from the gym. We would add in available rentals around what's not utilized by FPYC and our programming. okay so minimal options it's smaller i would say so when i looked at our potential revenue the rental revenue is lower than the program revenue because we have so many spaces available to program and so much interest from the community for community programming and then we would

[01:54:52] simply have to release rentals around that availability okay but looking at like an open gym on a Tuesday or a Tuesday and a Friday those are probably minimal opportunities well that's that would be kind of that would be programming because we would do a registration for the open gym okay I'm yeah okay and I did just hear from Katie so we're looking at going from 26 kids to 40 kids in the after-school program with two classrooms and so do you any idea what

[01:55:23] that revenue is roughly I can certainly pull that for you okay so the outdoor a space for bocce that was shown on the roof recognizing that's a flex space once set up for bocce though it needs to be set up for bocce right trying to pick my parents place like they nothing else goes on there besides bocce well we've looked at so we've been meeting with the bocce group we've looked at a lot of temporary bocce courts they actually would prefer that in the redesign of van dyke park bocce be included so that they could play there and then walk over

[01:55:58] to the senior center. They don't really love any of the temporary bocce options that are available on the market right now. Because we're looking for something to be put down and then picked up for events. Yeah. Okay. Or like covered over like if you go to like D.C. Yeah. They play very seriously, so they want that gravel layer. I understand. Are the current ones at Greenacres, are they smaller than like regulation size or am I just seeing them different because they're in a bigger space compared to where my parents are? They are regulation size. We host the Northern Virginia Senior Olympics. Okay. And they want a third one

[01:56:35] so we can host more people to play bachy. Okay. The seniors on the second floor would then have seniors on the third floor, correct? Like if they come in from Sherwood. Yep. But if they come in from the basement, they're just coming up the elevator feasibly or conceivably. The picture that you showed before about the entrance, it was a couple back, like where you can come right into the health center from

that side door does that side door does that just go to outside like that's a flat like would you park and then come up that outside door or that's if you arrived by bus or

[01:57:14] something like that so let me show you uh I was trying to acclimate myself yeah oh that's a good question so you see there is a small lay by there's also some surface parking spaces right outside that um one can stop here walk and go through the door which is right there okay outside and you can drop someone off let's say you uber in or or you have a family member drop you off and all that to get a medication or whatnot they can drop you off right here and you can walk right in okay outside from from the street yeah okay but then if you go to the next slide and if you park

[01:57:53] right i was having difficulty trying to figure out where the elevators are they're right in the middle there this this bank of two squares here those are the elevators okay so then can you go to the next level and show me where those end up in the building sure they're right here in the middle here you come in near the the desk okay and then um you go from what from here whatever you want to go okay okay thank you sure um and the health services that are provided that's kind

[01:58:26] of a catch-all for anything and everything infectious disease birth control medical appointments all of the things at the county I'm gonna let the doctors okay thank you sure so so our basic services are mostly preventive and services like WIC women infant children will be provide supplemental nutrition for pregnant moms young children we do a lot of immunization so they're well visits the health department you know used to generations ago serve as a primary care site for the underserved but that's not what we do really anymore we have very

[01:59:06] specific programs. When it comes to things like STIs, again, those are specific visits that you set up in the room, and like every other clinic, we follow the regular infection control procedures. You know, one of the programs you hear about is tuberculosis. Oftentimes, those individuals are diagnosed in the ED. They're referred to us. They're started on therapy, and after two weeks of antibiotic therapy, they continue to see us to make sure that the long-term regimens that we provide over six months, nine months, isn't having any side effects. So they're no longer infectious after those initial two weeks. Should they have to come in in those initial two weeks, we have

[01:59:44] set up in the site where you actually see the health department arrow. There's a side arrow that brings you right into the lobby. If I can use the mouse, once you go through the secure access, we have rooms here that are called negative pressure rooms. So just like in the hospital system where they blow out the air. So we're equipped to take care of individuals that might have an infectious disease.

[02:00:06] In those situations, even though I want to let you know, you may be running into these folks in the community, at the bus stop, at the grocery store. - In the elevator in the building here. - So you don't necessarily get, even if you're in the elevator for a few minutes, the risk of catching these sorts of illnesses is very little, but we usually give you a standard of if someone with tuberculosis came into the room, they would want an eight hour exposure with people around us, unless someone is immunocompromised or has other situations.

[02:00:32] So minutes walking past by the types of patients we see don't pose a risk to the public or to others. Okay, that's good news. Thank you. Yeah, especially with seniors and kids and just normal life. No.

[02:00:50] So the health department has the Joseph Willard Center is one of five health centers that we operate. And the other four are other multi-purpose used buildings. And as Dr. Jabari was saying, our

clinics are really well clinics.

[02:01:13] It's not primary care where people are ill and you're not really sure what's going on. We have public health-specific clinics, STDs are not respiratory, immunizations, these are kids getting their shots or people traveling, international travel, the WIC program, these are infants and children, food supplemental program, and then the TB program, where we

[02:01:49] are treating individuals who have inactive illness. So when you are exposed to TB, you have what we call latent infection, and you're not sick. A third of the world is infected with latent TB.

[02:02:07] you're not coughing you're just doing your daily business because your immune system has taken care of it but for some people that immunity breaks down like when you are immunosuppressed you have HIV you want chemotherapy those kinds of things and then the infection can become active that's when you start coughing and can pass it on when you're not coughing with from TB you just can't pass it on. And when that happens, people are very sick. They've been coughing around for

[02:02:45] months and eventually after multiple ropertussins and whatever, they seek care because they're really sick and they are hospitalized. And as Dr. Jabari was saying, the TB treatments are very powerful. Within two weeks, they are no longer infectious. But because they have to take these medications for many, many months, we all know that even when we have to take antibiotics for five days, after the third day when you start feeling better, you know, some people just don't

[02:03:23] continue. Can you imagine having to take TB meds for nine months, sometimes small if you have multi-drug resistance, and you're already feeling better about after two to three weeks? So that's an opportunity for us to check on them. Besides coming to the clinic, we have nurses who go into their homes of these individuals and, you know, address their needs. We have what we call direct observe therapy. Every day, somebody watches them take their medicines so that they continue on that right path. So when they are coming to the clinic, it's mainly, you know, for the physician to lay

[02:04:02] eyes on them and make sure that they're you know if they had weight loss in the beginning that they are progressing we do x-rays to make sure the x-rays cleaning is clearing up and so on and they always come to the up to the clinics with a mask um even though they are no longer infectious and they just don't show up we know when i mean there's a specific time where we see our tv patients, and we do have N95, what do you call the rooms? Negative pressure rooms.

[02:04:34] Okay, thank you very much. I appreciate that. Just to jump around a little bit, the November 2024 meeting that was held, you mentioned that that talked about the costs and people didn't love the senior fees or the other fees, where the actual ongoing maintenance costs and personnel like the 4.8 million was that discussed at length with people was there any feedback on that sorry uh that was presented we actually had the exact same slide okay and i went through it

[02:05:14] exactly the way i went through it today at a community meeting or at the council meeting at a community meeting okay and that was attended you said by how many people uh or maybe 150 that was the very first concept okay to tell you truth i don't know um i think anthony was there i i was there as well it was in the smaller room and there was a very good crowd of people there yeah and it was a very lively discussion people asked a lot of questions thank you and that brings it to the 4.8 and I only asked this because you made a comment about how it was split 42 58 the costs that are reflected

[02:05:54] on page 39 for the Willard Sherwood Health Center the 2.8 and the 2.1 those are the city portions of the cost correct okay so all the utility costs I it and included in the in the chart this just shows the city's cost so that the split is still 58 42 for utilities custodial security but I only showed okay I think I just have one more question let me just run through the rest of my notes here and just make sure yeah so my final question is about the

[02:06:28] city's childcare portion if you can just show it on the slide for me you want to see the plan or yes the one where just I can get a good visual of it so it just it looks like the exterior one I'm sorry the maybe we don't have a view page 22 sorry oh okay slide 22 so granted I don't know how the sun comes and goes but I'm just trying to visualize it looks like the the side that faces Leighton Hall is a bit more open has potentially the opportunity for more sun it looks

[02:07:05] like the city side is kind of tucked back there behind the building we don't have a view but the good news is the building is not too tall. Can you go to the next slide for me? The next slide. There you go. Yeah, but as you can see, it's in the sun. The sun actually does shine in that space because you don't have a lot of shadow.

[02:07:26] The building isn't too tall. It's two stories only at that level. Okay. And when you're looking out, the sun moves in the sky around noon. It's almost vertical. Okay. So you do actually have sun. Okay. I'm just worried about them in the winter if it's like frigid. So are we. Working with our playground supplier, we've actually talked to them about building in some shading because there's quite a bit of sun.

[02:07:49] And so we've built in some additional shading into that area over some seating and over the primary playground equipment. That's great, because that is certainly easier to add shading than it is to add sun. Yes, and it's all fabric shade, so some of that can come down in the winter, which a lot of it we do remove for snow weight and things like that.

[02:08:05] So it helps us cool it in the summer, and then also it looks like we'll have plenty of sun in the winter. Okay. Oh, sorry. One thing I did just want to point out, you brought up the FCA in here, which I think is really helpful information, but I do want to point out that the purpose of the FCA was intended for school use. It was not a conversation about an early childhood, about preschool, or about a senior center. So when the city school board paid for the FCA, It was looking at Green Acres as an educational institution, as a school.

[02:08:42] So comments, concerns slightly vary, I think, based upon the usage of the building overall. Correct. And we just looked at that in terms of the analysis on systems, roof, windows, those sorts of things that would have to be addressed, seemingly regardless of what that usage is.

[02:09:02] Agreed. I just want to make sure that that conversation, that that point is out there as far as the actual purpose of it. Thank you. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. I have heard back from Katie. We are looking at around \$100,000 gross for the additional before and after school care spaces.

[02:09:19] Now that doesn't take into account program costs and staffing. Okay. So then back to the, we'll call it 500 after taking out seniors, the 2.1 for staff, sorry, 2.8 for staffing, 2.1 for staffing. So the 2.1 would increase then based upon additional students here that are enrolled?

[02:09:39] I just want to make sure we're comparing apples and apples with what's presented. Yes. When we look at our programming revenue, we have to remove, for programs, we do remove out our staffing and program costs, and so we just look at the true net revenue. And so a lot of the employees are contract

employees for classes or temp employees that we have for different programs, and so those are in a different pool from the 2.1, which is just our control desk staffing.

[02:10:09] So our program revenue has to cover the cost of any staffing that we add in. Okay, so we're looking at then 600 potentially minus seniors, which includes a new \$100,000 of gross of the additional classroom opportunities, but the 2.1 number would potentially go up in order to cover the additional for those students.

[02:10:34] Did I understand that correctly? Did I say that right? The 2.1, we don't include any of our program staffing because we take that programming out of the cost of the revenue of the programming. So any time we design a new program, for example, just to use an easy one like an open gym, whatever we're bringing in for revenue has to cover any additional staffing or any additional costs we're going to incur for that program.

[02:10:56] And so then our revenue is really just the remainder. Okay, so the \$500 or \$600 of revenue is essentially the net. Yes. Okay, thank you for clarifying that. Yeah. Council Member Peterson.

[02:11:13] Thanks. Just a financial question or two. So the construction cost, as I understand it, on the city portion of this is \$55 million. Is that to be debt financed?

[02:11:33] Yes. And the annual debt service payment that we anticipate? Well, it depends on the rate, obviously, of when we issue the debt. But I don't have that information right yet.

[02:11:48] But we can certainly calculate an estimate. Okay. But that would be added to the \$5 million annually for operations. Until the debt's paid off, that's correct.

[02:12:05] Right. Okay, so it would be \$6 million or something like that. And that translates into just, I don't know whether this came up in the outreach session over cost, but the translation back to real estate taxes is we're talking \$0.05, \$0.06. Currently, one cent is \$8.35, so say \$1.2 per million.

[02:12:30] So \$5 million would be about \$0.06 or so. On an annual basis. Correct. Yeah. Okay. When the county made the decision to move forward with this project, was that contingent on the city also deciding to join, Or was it a contingency or was it not a contingency?

[02:12:55] It was just an evolution. Do you want to take that one, Brooke? I can. I mean, the agreements that the city and county have had have moved forward as a joint facility.

[02:13:13] And so those agreements have been in place since the county completed its feasibility study looking at the condition of the existing Willard and made the decision that that facility needed to be replaced. They were evaluating whether that could be renovated partially, so on and so forth.

[02:13:31] Once they decided that it needed to be replaced, the city and county have been working together jointly. And the agreement anticipates that at the end of each phase, both the county and the city have to, there's exit ramps for both.

[02:13:47] The building, in reality, doesn't stand one without the other. So it would be a significant major redesign if either party dropped out. can you say that last part one more time so the building as designed with two levels underground parking the the gym and the exercise facility along blenheim if the city elected to exit which which will be the next decision before the city council when we get the gmp it's not like the county can then move forward with their part of the building they'll have to redesign the

[02:14:22] the whole building to fit just the Willard Center, or the Joseph Willard Center. So if I understand it correctly, back 2016, 17, something like that, roughly this time period, there was an identification of potential sites and some level of analysis or feasibility determination about those sites.

[02:14:50] Is that the right? That's correct. Yeah. And there were a couple of different ones. think green acres was one of them green acres was not one of those because because the committee had recommended that the city not pursue green acres because of its location because of because of physical issues there so the three sites that were evaluated in 16 and 17 are shown on this slide City Hall Van Dyke Park and Sherwood and Providence Park and the West Drive property yard where

[02:15:26] the three sites that were evaluated at that point. Okay. Well, part of the reason I ask is just, I think there's been an acknowledgement a couple times that we're squeezing a lot into a relatively small space here. And some of the other options may have a little bit more elbow room. How much of an issue was the elbow room issue here? Was it determined that it really wasn't so terribly importance it was okay to work with this very very uh tight uh footprint preferable to the alternatives and and i don't i don't have the images they are on the city's web page and i can

[02:16:05] certainly share them with you but looking at the providence park option city hall for example trying to park a facility here basically all the the veterans amphitheater and the whole front yard would have been covered in parking providence park there's significant amount of the existing tree canopy along West Drive that would be removed to try to handle that as well with the Van Dyke option and so what was looked at as part of that city feasibility was is there an opportunity to build off the front of the existing

[02:16:39] Sherwood Center again keeping everything on on city property what that did is is encroached into the existing Van Dyke and so looking at those options there just wasn't an interest from the council at the time to pursue any of those. It was much too impactful to city properties in terms of trees, open space, or operations, or all three of those.

[02:17:06] And just as I understand it, Green Acres had been taken off the table by that time, so it wasn't a part of that assessment. Is that right? It was not, no. Okay. All right. Okay. I think that's it for the time being. Thanks, you. any other questions on this project council member hall i'm sorry it's very quick i promise the outdoor space the the rooftop area is that included in our square footage or is that over and above what is stated in the numbers thanks square footage thank you okay um we've got 10

[02:17:40] minutes until our regular city council meeting starts so i think the next two work session items will wait until the work session after we wrap up our regularly scheduled council meeting that is absolutely fine I just wanted to point so I know that believe there's a desire to add some trails emotions to the regular agenda I believe we can get our trails presentation done within 10 minutes if that would be helpful so you can have that knocked out prior to your meeting but if not I perfectly understand

[02:18:18] just wanted to let you know that you council might prefer that well given the amount of time we've spent on the first three items, I think you're suggesting that we can do this in 10 minutes. Is optimistic? I think the presentation can be done in 10 minutes.

[02:18:35] I did not, if there are tons of questions that would be correct, you would go longer than that time frame. Council Member Hardy Chandler. I would be in favor of just hearing the presentation and stopping there.

[02:18:55] Yeah, I think the key thing is just that we do need to be in a position to add these motions to the agenda later so so so and then that would just be one less thing for afterwards if you're if everyone's amenable all right it seems like everyone's amenable we will do the trails presentation discussion and updates on trail projects i'll recognize wendy sanford transportation

[02:19:22] director for the staff presentation all right good evening um i have a very brief presentation to to um go over the status of the various trails that are in the cip currently um there are three the Pickett Road Connector Trail, the Country Club Commons Trail, and the George Snyder Trail.

[02:19:56] Just briefly by way of trail planning background, in the city trails historically have been planned by the Parks and Recreation Department. And so all of the trails that we have in front of us today were initially part of the park strategic plan. However, they then moved from the park strategic plan into the city's comprehensive plan. And the importance of the trail network and trail connectivity is cited throughout the comprehensive plan in numerous locations. And then starting about six years ago, transportation funding was used to implement these trails. And so there was the

[02:20:34] partnership between the parks department and the transportation department. So first to get into the Pickett Trail, what you see on the screen is shown in yellow is the existing or planned trail network. And so you see, going even into Arlington, the Arlington Boulevard bike route, you see the Cross County Trail, which picks up at Vice Park and heads east and connects to the Wilcoxon Trail.

[02:20:58] So the Pickett Trail is what's shown in red, which is a missing off-road link connection between the Cross County Trail and then the connector trail that runs through Circle Towers north to the metro station. So it is a short piece of a trail. This was originally, as I mentioned, identified through the Parks Department.

[02:21:21] PRAB had identified this trail as both a safety issue and an opportunity to improve connection between city and county facilities. As I mentioned previously, this completes an off-road missing link of trail. Currently, users are forced up onto Pickett Road, which has heavy vehicular volume, including a large number of trucks. And then what is shown in that left graphic is the accident volume on this road. There happens to be a number of accidents. This is sort of the downhill part. It is a very narrow sidewalk on the bridge on Pickett Road there. An important

[02:21:59] piece of information to mention here is that the alignment of this project closely mirrors an alignment of the Fairfax County water main and Fairfax County has been planning a rehabilitation of their water main in this location we have been coordinating with them from the very beginning when this project was simply an idea and as part of the two-year program we were working with Fairfax water what you can see in green is the water main alignment and then what you can see is the trail alignment with the pink sort of overlaid on that so what you see is that about

[02:22:34] half of the alignment of the project overlaps with the trail. So this area is going to be disturbed either by our project or by the Fairfax Water Project. And so this is something that has been in coordination for some time. In terms of the status, we are currently at right-of-way acquisition, which is simply an easement from Fairfax Water. Most of the property is city property. There's a very small portion, if I go back to this map, closer to Arlington Boulevard, That is actually Fairfax water property. So the project itself is construction of approximately 1,200 linear feet of trail

[02:23:12] This was funded by FY 18 smart scale funding. We are Mostly complete with the plans and again, we are in right-of-way acquisition again an easement. We have Approximately six million dollars of funding. We don't expect to spend anywhere near that Approximately seven hundred thousand has been spent to date in terms of the forest impact. I will have Anna present So like I've discussed in previous presentations, when looking at forest impact and trails, looking at both forest factors as well as site conditions and then how that interacts with the project design.

[02:23:47] So for this project, it's almost fully in the resource protection area, a little less than an acre. The forest condition is fair to good. It's fair on the edge of the forest along Pickett Road and moves into a healthier condition as you get further in.

[02:24:02] There's fairly high invasives along the edge. There's utility easements along Pickett Road where the invasives have overgrown that area, but then as you move into the forest, significantly less so. 84 trees are proposed for removal, and like Wendy said, there is overlap with the water main replacement, and so some of those would be getting removed.

[02:24:24] Of course, there would be additional trees from the water replacement project itself. The site is fairly flat in comparison to other projects we've talked about, and so the grading is significantly less. There is some grade towards as you approach Fairfax Boulevard, and that's probably when you see more tree removal in those areas.

[02:24:44] And so I'd look at this impact as probably low to moderate, with it being on the more low end. And I would say also, unlike a lot of projects, this does provide access for invasive control. That's not always the case. Some of the invasive control is very difficult in this site, And so the trail would provide better access, and, of course, management needs would be additional planting.

[02:25:12] Okay, moving on to the next trail, Country Club's Commons background. This was originally envisioned as part of the Metro to Mason route, and it was in a slightly different location, but later it was identified that this location could provide the same level of connectivity.

[02:25:30] So what this project does is improve access to Old Town and Fairfax Boulevard for both residents north and south of Fairfax Boulevard. What you see at the bottom are two graphics from the multimodal transportation plan. The graphic on the left shows the street grid.

[02:25:45] So all of the white lines are streets that exist in the city. What shows on the right is what we call the functional street grid, meaning streets that connect elsewhere. So what you see is all of the streets in this area, around Blenheim in this area, do not connect out to Fairfax Boulevard.

[02:26:02] In order for residents to get out of this neighborhood by vehicle, the access is on Blenheim Boulevard. And so what this connection does is provide a non-vehicular connection across Fairfax Boulevard. Otherwise, it's about almost a mile and a half to get from the same point sort of in Country Club Hills out to Fairfax Boulevard using Lion Run or going around closer to Old Town.

[02:26:33] So what this does is it provides access to bicycle facilities on Fairwoods Parkway to the George Snyder Trail. And it's located right behind the fire station, giving it sort of eyes on the trail, which provides a level of security and safety. This shows the concept planning for this project.

[02:26:53] It would be mostly boardwalk. The photo on the right is just an example. That is the Navy Federal Credit Union trail in Vienna, if you're familiar with that. But that is sort of an example photo of

what this trail would look like.

[02:27:10] In terms of the status, this project has not started. We have received the funding. This was included in the FY19 two-year program, and we received FY20 smart scale funding. We have \$5 million to do this project, and again, has not started. And then in terms of the forest impact, again, I will have Anna speak to this.

[02:27:29] Again, this project is fully within the, or almost fully within the resource protection area. When considering passive recreation trails, thinking about what alternative options might exist and what the project design is, we don't have a project design yet, so some of the information is hard to say.

[02:27:46] We don't have a tree inventory for the number of trees to be removed. When it comes to invasives or other disturbance on the site, there is some at the edges. As you go into the forest, there's less, but access for invasives, unlike what I was saying for Pickett Trail, access for invasive removal is not necessary for this area, and there is a concern that more invasives would be introduced through inserting a trail into the area.

[02:28:12] The terrain is variable. It's flat towards the country club's neighborhood, and then as you approach the fire station, it has a significant grade to it. And so grading and the impact of trees would be a concern in that area.

[02:28:29] And like most projects, planting and invasive management, and I would think overall impact would probably lean towards more of the moderate end because of that grade, as well as the invasive concern. And then lastly, the George Snyder Trail, I have one slide on this.

[02:28:44] We're very familiar with this project funded by concession air payment. We have we are in final plans We the status is that the advertisement has been paused awaiting direction from City Council VDOT has given the city a deadline of December 31st to have updated 100% plans That concludes my presentation and again, these are just trails there are I would do want to mention We have numerous shared use path projects shared use paths in progress as well but the ask of us was to discuss the trails thank you councilmember Peterson just for clarification and maybe mr. Foster can help here there is a map of

[02:29:21] the sketch map of the alternative at what I had expected it would be in the presentation but when might that be available for people to review well I have paper copies but but Casey can pull it up because it's been we we we just got it yesterday there you go well if I might just this is the product of quite a bit of community input and consideration from council members but this is a

[02:29:59] sketch of an alternative route that is outlined in green in this map and can't probably see the kind of color coding real well but essentially there's a set are red dots which is a route 66 bike path coming off 66 it connects with blue dots which are existing or approved segments of bike ways the green dots are proposed connector segments that would connect the dots between the blue so

[02:30:37] that we have a continuous connection that comes down Eaton Place University Drive into Fairfax Boulevard and then from Fairfax Boulevard goes all the way down in this case to past Fairfax High School just to note that when we visited with VDOT the conversation was around looking at an alternative that would focus on the West only that would terminate at Fairwoods Parkway but when we had internal discussion it was suggested that for purposes of presentation to VDOT we stretched that the full distance just show that it could be possible pending resources available so in this map it runs the

[02:31:14] entire duration of Fairfax Boulevard. And I think the context for this is that VDOT had asked to have us return with a sketch for initial consideration as soon as possible to make sure that this is directionally correct so that we could take next steps if they're in agreement. So who exactly on the dais was involved as far as input? Could I just ask? Could I? Okay, I'm just trying to

[02:31:50] determine when you say who was involved in designing this with a lot of input. This looks like that it is not a shared use path or trail to me. It looks like it is a bike path that is using existing sidewalks and existing sidewalks and already pay pass.

[02:32:13] Would that be correct? Is that what this is showing? The design details remain to be determined but this is following in the case of the green dots an existing sidewalk that's seven feet wide that would be a candidate for for widening and a candidate for the installation of a protective barrier so that it could serve as a shared bike path and that would

[02:32:46] be consistent with similar designs that have been used in these kinds of circumstances it also connects to work that's currently approved or in place to do the same in terms of a shared bike path that comes out of the intersection up by the Moose Lodge and down to Eaton.

[02:33:08] If I may, I think some other benefits of this over a trail in the woods is that this would truly be accessible in the evening hours. It would be well lit. It would be available to be used at all hours of the day and would not be essentially closed from dawn to dusk, like the trail through the woods would be. It also does not have a lot of the devastation to our forests that I think

[02:33:41] every other version of this proposed plan does. I think it still provides the connection points. What I really actually like about this is that we talk about connectivity, we talk about bringing people into our city. Having a path that goes right through the woods and doesn't put them at all into our major arteries does not encourage them to stop and shop, does not encourage them to check out a new restaurant or business. I mean, I think this provides that connection point. I'd feel much safer with my child riding, they're my kids now, riding their bikes from our house to

[02:34:18] Fairfax High School on something like this rather than what currently exists. And I certainly wouldn't put them on a path through the woods to then turn around and go to the high school. I mean, it's dark at night when they get out. It's dark in the morning when they go to school. To me, this is great. I don't think this precludes a conversation about a footpath that could run through these same spots or something along the stream restoration project. I think those are separate conversations to have, and I don't mean to muddy the waters here, but if our goal is

[02:34:53] connectivity. This is connecting businesses, residents, people. This is bringing people where we want them to be. So that's my take on this. Ms. Sanford, is this an entirely different project? I'm not really in a position to answer that question. I think the question is whether it meets the scope and the intent of what we submitted. And I do think that that's an interpretation that VDOT would need to provide. I don't, my hesitation is that given the time limit that they have given us. The exploration and public engagement that would be required to

[02:35:31] get this project to 100% plans is what concerns me. This is a significant amount of right-of-way acquisition and evaluation that has not occurred. Which makes me feel like this is an entirely different project. What I have said in the past is that we are not precluded from doing this.

[02:35:55] This and the trail, they are two separate types of projects. They're for different types of users. They're different in nature. Council Member Amos. I think it's okay, just worth at least asking VDOT, and if they come back to us and say no, then clearly we need to reevaluate.

[02:36:13] We don't even know if this is a feasible option. I would like to hear from them first before we just, we don't need to spend all night talking about this. Let's move on. Anyone else? Council Member Hardy-Chandler. I apologize.

[02:36:28] I did not see who had input on this. Councilmember Hall and Councilmember Peterson. Okay, and a number of members from the community just as a reference point This wasn't just Councilmember Peterson and I sat down and did any of this I was much more advisory, but there was a lot of community input from people that are Vested in seeing a difference a different option. Well, I would add also Councilmember Bates kind of correct me here. This is actually somewhat consistent with a proposal that

[02:37:03] You made over a year ago, and we chatted a bit about this in relation to that Somewhat there there have been a couple changes. So Further discussion on this and councilmember Amos feels like we should submit this to VDOT as a preliminary design Ms. Sanford should you know, I guess there's a consensus. We have not voted There is a consensus to present this to VDOT as a alternate design. Okay, okay

[02:37:42] So it sounds like we have a consensus. Yes, Councilmember Bates. One question. Just in case there might be feasibility issues with this route due to the, you know, the constraint of the drainage ditch at the corner of Eden and Fairfax Boulevard, could we maybe add just another green dotted line the rest of the way down Eden Place as an alternative just in case they say that, or it comes back, that we might not be able to do this?

[02:38:18] Council Member Bates, what VDOT is going to be looking at is just the concept of an on-road versus an off-road facility at this point. There is a lot of engineering that would need to be done. That is one of many issues that would come up. The sidewalk falls off.

[02:38:34] There's a steep grade in many places. So there are retaining walls. There is drainage. There is grading. There are numerous engineering issues. So I hear what you're saying, but that the question right now to VDOT is, is an on-road option, a completely on-road option, an alternative that is feasible under our current project.

[02:38:56] I mean, that's how I understand, that is what I understand as the question. The feasibility, I think, is a whole separate question in terms of the engineering, the technical feasibility. Right now, the question is, is this project allowable, I think is maybe the right word to use, under the current project scope and definition?

[02:39:16] And then, if yes, then we move through the feasibility. Yeah, okay, I think that makes sense. I think it's certainly worthwhile to send this off to VDOT and see what they come back with. And just to clarify, I think when we chatted earlier, the green segment at the very beginning of Eaton is on the south side.

[02:39:40] It's on the south side as designed. The north side is possible, but that would get to getting in the weeds a little bit. That's not here, but that's certainly something that could be added as an alternative. But the larger, so for the time being, this is just south side and it connects to the blue dots, which are the already in place connection down University Drive.

[02:40:03] All right. Are we ready to conclude this presentation on the trails and adjourn into our meeting? It seems like we have consensus. I am now. No. May I ask a question first? Councilmember Hall thank you so when it comes to the Country Club Hills connector you that slide I think it's nine the functional street grid just to point out there that that doesn't include the footpaths that currently exist my husband and our dog and I went out and walked those over the weekend we

[02:40:40] did the entire George Snyder's trail we did the footpath that goes from Pinehurst to the high school and we did the footpath that goes from the Commons down And I don't know if we took a wrong turn, but we dumped out on the not police or fire station side of the M&T Bank, the Main Street Bank there.

[02:40:57] The functional street grid refers, again, to the streets that are for vehicular use. Footpaths are certainly there. They exist all over. What we're talking about is an accessible path, which is different than sort of a footpath or a goat path type of a thing.

[02:41:14] Okay. It just seems like an odd term to you, and maybe it's just a transportation term, but functional street grid would mean to me you can drive a car through it and if we're not driving a car through it Then I don't know that we really care that it is a street grid because it's for a non-vehicular traffic as you said, right? Correct. Okay, maybe just a transportation quirk. Okay Thank you. Councilmember Bates to follow up on that. I think something else it might be helpful for us to see Is and I think I might know where it is in the comprehensive plan, but I'll try and find it

[02:41:51] but if we maybe when we have the vote later on if we could maybe pull up the Diagram that shows the 15-minute walk sheds with regard to the activity centers You know in this area I recall seeing that in the comprehensive plan that might be it. I think maybe a bit more you know relevant to pass specifically anything further well just to add I'm I'm in support of that but

[02:42:26] hope that we would pull up the most recent version of the comprehensive plan that includes all of the updates that were provided by the Environmental Sustainability Committee last year that I think help us show the consistency of what we're doing here against those updates.

[02:42:49] Anything else? No? Okay, great. We'll take a five-minute recess before we start the regular

[02:42:56] council meeting in the chambers. Good evening. I'd like to call the regular meeting of April 22nd,

[02:49:54] 2025 to order. Welcome everyone to the chamber. If you are able and so choose, please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. Justice for all. I'd like to ask Anna Sanford, Sophia Chapin, Stephanie Kupka, Melissa Pennant, and the Environmental Sustainability Committee to come down for

[02:50:29] the Earth Day and Arbor Day Proclamation. Yes. Are we all gathered for the proclamation?

[02:51:00] Whereas the city of Fairfax recognizes the natural environment as the foundation of a healthy society, and a robust economy, providing essential resources that sustain life and contribute to the well-being of all. And whereas the global community faces extraordinary environmental challenges, including environmental degradation, global health issues, loss of habitat, climate change, food and water shortages.

[02:51:26] And whereas Earth Day and Arbor Day serve as annual reminders that we are all caretakers of our planet and have an obligation to engage in environmental activism stewardship commitments and

sustainability efforts to preserve the earth's beauty and resources for current and future generations and whereas the first earth day was celebrated in 1970 calling upon millions of americans to act for a cleaner safer and healthier environment and whereas the city of fairfax has been recognized as a Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation for over three decades.

[02:52:03] Setting aside a special day each year for the planting and celebration of trees is vital to our quality of life and environmental health. And whereas Earth Day and Arbor Day provide opportunities for the community to come together and participate in activities that promote a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable environment, now therefore I, Catherine S. Reed, Mayor of the City of Fairfax do hereby proclaim April 22, 2025 as Earth Day and April 25, 2025 as Arbor Day in the City of Fairfax and hereby encourage our community and businesses to observe

[02:52:39] these days by taking action to protect and enhance our environment. This includes participating in activities such as planting trees, reducing waste, recycling, picking up litter, conserving energy and water resources and otherwise engaging in actions big and small to preserve our natural resources for the benefit of all living things and with that i will invite melissa pennant to say a few words thank you may read and city council members we will like to celebrate this earth day later this spring at draper drive park we will have a mural that's painted by

[02:53:15] the wonderful jessica pidcock entitled mother's helpers that will be on display at draper drive park in our lobby we have a sculpture that was created by nadia starey entitled city trails urban tales also a commemoration of earth day and all the environmental activities we have going on we also have history day which is this saturday from 10 to 4 at historic blenheim and i encourage all of you guys to come out and celebrate history day with this city and we also have arbor day festivities going on including a tree tree photo contest which is taking place right now and we And we have a very special treat tonight.

[02:53:50] Faiza. Good evening, everyone. I'm Faiza Alam. I'm one of the science teachers at Katherine Johnson and also the ESC member here. I have the privilege to bring one of my students, Vivian Lee, who was one of the poetry contest winner for the Arbor Day.

[02:54:06] And it's a delight. And I would also like to invite you for one more event tomorrow. We are planting trees at Katherine Johnson Middle School at 11 a.m. You're most welcome to join us on the Bevan side of the school. And I would invite Vivian to recite her poetry now. The weight of what we have lost.

[02:54:33] Today, I woke with no answers. But the sky felt heavier, as if it knew. As if it, too, could sense the weight of what we have lost. I miss the days when seasons knew their place. When summer gracefully gave way into fall, like clockwork, not this climatic chaos.

[02:54:52] Once, oceans sparkled with vibrant blues. Now they rise to reclaim what we have taken. Landscapes unfolded like paintings, harmoniously blending in waves of color, where flora and fauna danced as one, hand in hand, the rhythm unbroken and the now fractured earth we have scarred.

[02:55:10] At the other end of the spyglass, I see a world unraveling, spiraling in vain repetition, fires that rage as if anger is the air they breathe, floods that swallow land-like memories we can't quite hold. The balance we once knew now hangs by a thread, contradicting what we crave, a return to what was steady, safe.

[02:55:33] Yet, here we stand, absorbed, enraptured by the immediate, closing our hearts to the planet's future, thinking it distant, a problem for another generation. But for how long can we look away? How

long can we ignore the truth that hums beneath the heat, deny the trembling ground beneath our feet, the flames looking at our heels, the pleas of warning that ripple through soil and sky, as the atmosphere thickens, choking on our refusal to try?

[02:56:02] Global warming, this is our final warning. We cannot ignore this insolence toward our planet. This place where we once loved and laughed, where we grieved and fought, this is our home. It is by no means beyond repair, but we must lay the groundwork, not for what we remember, but for what we might still save.

[02:56:25] In unity by shared stewards of humanity, we stand. We must rise to this mountain, not in defeat, but in equilibrium between urgency and resolve. So what will we choose? Will we stand by letting the earth, once green now gasping for air, slip through our fingers like sand trickling into hourglass?

[02:56:47] Or will we grasp the moments that remain, using each second to craft a future where the earth sings once again, vibrant and new, where today's scars heal into the blooming beauty of tomorrow? The blank slate of our planet's future is laid out before us, and it is ours to write.

[02:57:07] Thank you. That was beautiful. Thank you, Vivian. Anyone else, or are we ready for a photo? Okay, we're ready for a photo.

[02:57:39] Okay, Chloe Ritter, multimodal transportation, this is a great one.

[02:58:03] All right, what month is it? What month is it? It's bike month. It's bike month. Okay, stand with me. Whereas, bicycling is an effective way to encourage health and fitness, reduce traffic congestion, and support the city's sustainability goals, such as air quality improvements and energy conservation.

[02:58:25] And, whereas, the city is investing in bicycling infrastructure to expand transportation options and improve connections between neighborhoods, activity centers, transit, and the region. And whereas the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, through its Commuter Connections Program, promotes bicycling as a sustainable commuting option and is celebrating Bike to Work Day on Thursday, May 15th, with events throughout the region.

[02:58:52] and whereas the month of may is national bike month established to increase awareness of bicycle safety and the benefits of bicycling and whereas the city is proud to support the old town fairfax bike to work day pit stop and other fairfax city bike month activities now therefore i katherine s reed mayor of the city of fairfax do hereby proclaim may 2025 as bike month in the city of Fairfax and encourage the community to enjoy the benefits of bicycling and to practice bicycle safety. I turn it over to you Chloe. Thank you Mayor Reed and thank you City Council for your

[02:59:31] support for bicycling in the city. So I just want to mention a few of the activities that we have planned for bike month and there's a flyer out in the lobby if you see one you can pick one up with all of this information. So we have promotions from Capital Bike Share for new rides for a free ride for new riders or a \$20 off a membership so that's lasting all throughout the bike month we have a community ride on May 10th that's in the Fairfax circle area we can explore some some of where the bike share stations are and commuting routes to the Vienna metro station we will of course have biked bike to work day this year it is on a Thursday so if you're used to it being on

[03:00:07] a Friday don't show up a day late and you can get your free t-shirts and snacks and just come enjoy bicycling with the rest of the community. And then we'll have a traffic garden for young ones to

practice traffic safety and bicycle and pedestrian safety at the Kids Safety Day activities that's coinciding with the Antique Car Show. I hope everybody will come out and enjoy our activities.

[03:00:28] All right. A photo. A photo. Ask Susan Gray of the Historic Resources, Megan Leining, and the Historic

[03:01:01] Resources staff. Come on down, Historic Resources staff. Gather around. So we are here to proclaim about National Preservation Month, and when I say preservation month, I of course mean historic preservation. Whereas, National Preservation Week started in 1973 to raise awareness about

[03:01:40] the importance of preserving our past for future generations. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first presidential proclamation recognizing National Preservation Week, which expanded to month-long celebrations in 1985. And whereas historic preservation is an effective tool for economic vitality, tourism, planning, growth management, and neighborhood revitalization, helping to foster local pride and enhancing community character and pride.

[03:02:09] And whereas preservation is celebrated every day with stewardship of the City of Fairfax's three public historic sites, Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim, and Ratcliffe Allison Poser House, which welcomes visitors with exhibitions, programs, and information.

[03:02:27] And whereas Preserve the Past, Protect the Future is the theme of National Preservation Month 2025 and will be observed in the City of Fairfax with a cemetery preservation program on May 17, 2025 at Historic Blenheim and with a walking tour of the Old Town Fairfax National Register Historic District led by Historic Fairfax City, Inc., HFCI, on May 31, 2025.

[03:02:53] Now, therefore, I, Catherine S. Reed, Mayor of the City of Fairfax, do hereby proclaim May 2025 as National Preservation Month in the City of Fairfax and encourage the community to participate in activities that foster awareness and appreciation of historic structures and historic contributions to Shaping the History of the City of Fairfax, Virginia.

[03:03:14] And with that, I will turn it over to Ms. Susan Gray. Thank you. Thank you, Mayor Reed, and thank you, members of the City Council. And I'd also just like to thank and recognize our staff members here today. Megan Leining, Cammie St. Germain, and Andrea Lowenwater were able to join us.

[03:03:36] And while it's really nice and appropriate to have Historic Preservation Month and to be recognized by the city, I'd like for everybody to know that that's our goal throughout the year. That's our charge, is to preserve the city's public historic sites and do everything that we can toward preservation of other important sites in the city.

[03:04:02] And so we take that job very seriously, but we have fun doing it. And we get a lot of pleasure out of introducing stories that are connected with the historic sites and introducing you all as the community to the history here in the city of Fairfax.

[03:04:26] And I would also like to say that it seems very appropriate that we fit in right with the other two proclamations that you've heard tonight because not only are we preserving historic sites but we're preserving that environment around the historic sites and then also this will be the third year that we've partnered with other city departments for history day and that's t-r-e-e day so it's a combination of Earth Day activities, environmental awareness activities, and also historical activities

[03:05:04] that will be a part of the History Day at Historic Blenheim on Saturday. It's also nice that May is also bike month because you can take any type of transportation to our historic sites and certainly to History Day.

[03:05:23] We will have two QBUSs running to bring people to the site on Saturday. And then certainly we're accessible every day by bike and other means of transportation. So come out and enjoy the city's historic sites and certainly join us on Saturday at Historic Glen.

[03:05:43] Thank you. So I just want to acknowledge Ms. Susan Gray. Come over here. Don't run away. because May is also the last history day not forever but Susan is retiring after many many many years and many of the the historic sites you see so so many of the advances so many of the things that have been investments in this city is because of Susan Gray and I did not want her to get away today without everyone acknowledging that it is it is staff like this who do it because of

[03:06:18] a passion. It's not just a job. It is a passion. And what Susan has invested in this city is priceless, absolutely priceless. And so I want everyone to give her a rousing round of applause as she says goodbye to us. She won't be a stranger. She won't be a stranger, but her time with us is

[03:06:40] ending. So thank you. Okay, I'm going to ask Eileen Craigie, founder of Dark Sky Friends, Dark Sky

[03:07:27] nova chapter leader and dark sky international advocate and her posse her crew come on down because when it comes to the environment we just cannot say enough about it come on come on come on come on all right whereas the aesthetic beauty and wonder of a natural night sky is a shared heritage of all humankind and whereas the experience of standing under a starry night sky

[03:08:07] inspires feelings of wonder and awe, encouraging a growing interest in science and nature, particularly among young people and visitors from outside the local communities. And whereas light pollution has scientifically established economic and environmental consequences which result in significant impacts on the ecology and human health of all communities.

[03:08:31] And whereas 80% of the world's population, including many people in the city of Fairfax, live under a dome of light pollution, excessive artificial lighting at night that disrupts natural darkness and may never experience the visual wonder or ecological and health benefits of living under a dark sky.

[03:08:50] And whereas light pollution represents a waste of natural resources amounting to roughly three billion dollars per year of wasted energy in the United States and contributes to diminished energy security. And whereas Virginia has the most dark sky parks on the East Coast, the parks achieve the designation by establishing an outdoor lighting policy that minimized light pollution, outreach to the local community, and hosting and promoting programs for guests to enjoy stargazing.

[03:09:21] Whereas the Dark Sky International is the globally recognized authority on light pollution, recognizes International Dark Sky Week to raise awareness of the effects of light pollution, provide free education, resources, and solutions to the public to encourage the protection of and enjoyment of dark skies and responsible outdoor lighting.

[03:09:41] Now, therefore, I, Catherine S. Reed, Mayor of the City of Fairfax, do hereby declare April 21st through 28th, 2025, is International Dark Sky Week in the City of Fairfax and ask the community to join me

in observing and pondering upon this important week and in raising awareness and support for protecting our precious Dark Skies resources.

[03:10:05] And with that, I will turn it over to Eileen. Thank you, Mayor Reed and Council. I want to introduce Tom Reiner. He's also with our chapter, and Dr. Peter Plapton. He's the most immediate president of Dark Sky International, and he'll say a few words.

[03:10:21] So thank you. Thank you. I'm Tom Reiner. I just completed two years as president of Dark Sky International, the international organization, and I'm on the board, and I happen to be a resident of the city of Fairfax. Who knew? Right. And Eileen is the head of our Northern Virginia chapter, which is one of the more busy chapters in the United States.

[03:10:45] She's obtained more dark sky proclamations than any person on the planet, okay? Last year, I think she had 20 of the 100 that were worldwide. And Peter is George Mason University, a professor of physics, And many people don't know, we have an observatory at George Mason University doing NASA-funded research, headed by Peter, and that's why dark skies are important.

[03:11:10] We're latecomers to the environmental movement. We started as an astronomical organization, but we've learned the adverse impacts of excessive light at night on the environment and on human health. So what we're for is responsible lighting.

[03:11:27] You can have very good, responsible, well-designed lighting that doesn't interfere with the environment the way it does. So we have to change our infrastructure throughout the United States, throughout the world, and that's our mission. And Virginia is a hotbed of activism.

[03:11:44] We have more dark sky parks. We have people here who have seen the sky disappear because of development, particularly in northern Virginia. And we need to fight to bring it back, and that's our mission. Thank you very much, Mayor Reed. Thank you.

[03:12:00] Do you want anything else? Okay, we're going to do a picture.

[03:12:17] Now I'm going to ask Larry Larson to come down and give out the chocolate lovers grants.

[03:12:48] Come on down, Larry. Oh, it's Jennifer Rose? Okay, this is what they do to me all the time. I like to keep you on your toes. I was like, yeah, Larry, you're not Larry. No. You are so not Larry.

[03:13:05] But, you know, to be compared to Larry is pretty cool. Well, that would be okay. Larry is here. All right. So I'm Jennifer Rose, not Larry Larson.

[03:13:23] I am the chair of the Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee. Fun fact about Chocolate Lovers Festival, it has been in existence since the first festival in 1993. And it was started by the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, which I am currently executive director, the Downtown Fairfax Coalition, at that point in time, the Downtown Fairfax Merchants Association, George Mason, and of course the City of Fairfax.

[03:13:51] Fast forward to today, and pretty much all those groups are still involved, plus many, many more. I don't know how many of you have attended the Chocolate Lovers Festival. It is a much beloved tradition in the city of Fairfax. It is the first weekend in February.

[03:14:06] And this year, like most years, a part of our mission of bringing people into the city of Fairfax and showing off all the great things we have to offer, we also have a grant program. We provide grants to

different charities. I don't know the answer.

[03:14:22] Larry, I know you know. How many grant applications do we have this year? We had nine. We had nine. Okay, nine's a good number. We chose three recipients. Each grant recipient is receiving \$1,500 for the work of their respective organizations.

[03:14:39] The bulk of the funding from that comes from our signature event, Taste of Chocolate, our Golden Ticket, Chocolate Bar, the musical cakes, and all the other fun things that we do as a part of the festival so our first grant recipient is who we have first drum roll Vanna the Lamb Center don't put this one in the bank but I think we have a proper check to give you to put into the bank

[03:15:10] Thank you for all the good work you do in the community.

[03:15:34] Next up, we have the Shelter House. Come on down. Thank you.

[03:15:42] Plans for next year, February, the first weekend of February.

[03:16:56] It's going to look a little different next year because Old Town Hall is going to be closed for renovation, but the Sherwood Center is going to be a great home for our taste of Fairfax. Put it on your calendars now. We hope to see everybody next year supporting the Chocolate Lovers Festival. Thank you.

[03:17:15] You move to the adoption of the agenda. Is there a motion to approve the agenda? Councilmember Hardy-Chandler? I move to adopt the agenda as presented. Is there a second? There is a second, and I

[03:17:51] would also like to move to amend the agenda for tonight's meeting to add a new item relating to consideration of actions arising out of work session pertaining to various city trails projects I further move that this item be added immediately after adoption of the agenda as item number four point B do I have a second to the amended motion is that how we do this second second okay so we have an amended motion moved by councilmember Peterson seconded by

[03:18:26] councilmember Hall a roll call vote councilmember Amos aye councilmember Hall aye councilmember Hardy Chandler aye councilmember Peterson aye councilmember McQuillan aye okay motion passed five to zero okay public hearing so this new microphone sorry that was on the amendment right so now just a roll call on the main motion okay so so now we have a roll call on the

[03:19:04] motion to approve the agenda with its amended amendment councilmember Amos aye councilmember Hall aye councilmember Hardy Chandler aye council member Peterson aye councilmember McQuillan aye motion passed 5-0 now we moved to the 4b 4b hey hey sorry or a I do not have a 4a so right okay so that was just added and I believe mr. Peterson okay so this is emotions so

[03:19:43] councilmember Peterson so I will have a series of three motions for consideration the first I move that the city submit the concept sketch discussed in the work session this evening revising the proposed alignment for the George Snyder Trail to be not for its review second motion has been made by councilmember member Peterson and a seconded by councilmember Hall a roll call vote councilmember McQuillan aye councilmember Bates aye councilmember Peterson aye councilmember Hardy Chandler aye councilmember Hall aye

[03:20:22] councilmember Amos motion passed unanimously councilmember Peterson I move that the city pause all action with respect to the picket trail in order to examine alternatives. Is there a second? Yes.

Second. A motion has been made by Councilmember Peterson and seconded by Councilmember Hall. A roll call vote.

[03:20:51] Councilmember Amos? Nay. Councilmember Hall? Aye. Councilmember Hardy- Chandler? Nay. Councilmember Peterson? Aye. Councilmember Bates? Aye. Councilmember McQuillan? Aye. Motion passed 4 to 2. I move that the city terminate all action with respect to the Country Club Hills Connector Trail. Is there a second?

[03:21:14] Second. A motion has been made by Councilmember Peterson and seconded by Councilmember McQuillan. A roll call vote. Councilmember McQuillan? Aye. Councilmember Bates? Aye. Councilmember Peterson? Aye. Councilmember Hardy-Chandler?

[03:21:30] Aye. Councilmember Hall? Aye. Councilmember Amos? Motion passed unanimously. We can move on to the public hearings. Our first public hearing is on the Maximum real estate tax of \$1.150 per \$100 of assessed value based upon an assessment ratio of 100% of fair market value and a personal property and machinery and tools tax rate of \$4.13 per \$100 of assessed value based upon an assessment ratio of 100% trade-in value.

[03:22:09] I'll recognize J.C. Martinez, Chief Financial Officer, to provide the staff presentation. Thank you. Mayor, council, the city manager's proposed budget recommends a real estate tax rate of \$1.12 and a half per 100 of assessed value. That's a nine and a half cent rate increase effective January 1, 2025.

[03:22:29] On March 11th, 2025, the city council advertised a real estate tax rate of \$1.15 per \$100 of assessed value, which was two and a half cents more than the city manager's fiscal year 2026 proposed budget real estate tax rate.

[03:22:46] The real estate tax rate is necessary to provide combined residential and commercial properties equalization, whereby the average property owner would pay no more in taxes than in the prior year equates to 98.43 cents.

[03:23:02] The personal property and machinery and tools rate is recommended at \$4.13 per \$100 of assessed valuation based on the assessment ratio of 100% of term market value. The recommended personal property tax rate for qualifying members of the Volunteer Fire Department or the Volunteer Rescue Quad is one cent per \$100 of assessed valuation.

[03:23:26] The proposed personal property tax rate of \$4.13 remains unchanged from the current year's rate. The City of Fairfax City Council adopted a personal property assessment ratio for vehicles of 100% for fiscal year 2024, and the proposed budget maintains this level.

[03:23:44] one cent on the real estate tax rate is equivalent to eight hundred and thirty four thousand nine hundred and fifty eight dollars happy to answer any questions are there questions from the dais questions of staff okay I will open the public hearing the Shinneberry's is public hearing been advertised yes it has I had one person sign up prior to the start of the meeting to sign up to speak I'm gonna call Rob Yingling to the front of the podium please state your name and street address and your comment thanks my name is Rob Yingling

[03:24:24] and reside at 3708 Mason Street. I've been a proud resident of the city for 21 years. I appreciate the hard work of the mayor and city council to make this city a pleasant and livable place. However, I was stunned to receive in the mail my real estate tax assessment for this year because it represents a double

whammy increase of both the assessed value of the home plus a very significant tax increase, combining to equate to 16% increase for me personally at my residence versus last year.

[03:24:59] This comes just three years after an assessment in 2022 that raised my tax by 18%. Only difference was that year you held the rate steady. It was just literally the assessment that shot through the roof. I implore the mayor and the city council to exercise fiscal vigilance and take proactive steps to avoid hikes of this magnitude, especially in the climate of doge cuts, layoffs, and economic uncertainty on a national scale.

[03:25:32] I also want to thank you for holding the public workshop over at the Sherwood Center. We could learn more about the reasoning behind this proposed tax hike. Also, understanding, after attending, I do understand it is in many ways tied to the school and the public safety budget.

[03:25:54] Arguably, those folks deserve a raise, but I think the burden is being placed on city residents out of balance with that proposal. Thank you. Is there anybody else in this room that would like to speak on this agenda item?

[03:26:14] You may come forward. Good evening. My name is Nicholas Lawrence. I live at 3579 University Drive.

[03:26:31] Like the gentleman who just spoke, I was astonished to receive a letter from the Commissioner of the Revenue regarding the proposed tax rates. We just had an election. I received mail from almost all of you, and I don't remember anybody suggesting that you intended to raise my taxes on an order of this magnitude.

[03:26:54] All of the information about assessments and rates, all of that can be very confusing. I went back and looked at the budget. When my wife and I purchased our home in 2017, the city budget was \$166 million. What I understand has been proposed is \$360 million.

[03:27:14] That is a 216% increase in eight years. Now, I look to see what the explanation for that was, and frankly, I can't understand it. In 2017, the city had 400 full-time employees.

[03:27:31] The city now has 464, or will have if the proposed budget is adopted. That's an increase of only 14%. I thought perhaps the significant inflation that I see every time I buy anything might explain it.

[03:27:47] No, that's only 30%. So for reasons that are not clear to me at all, the city budget is increasing at seven times, seven plus times the rate of inflation. And I would submit to you that in the election that we just had, that might have been a time to let residents know what the choices are that they might have to make regarding these financial burdens and the fact that nothing at all was said by any of you is pretty appalling thank you is

[03:28:26] there anybody else in this room yep you can come forward sir hello i'm david keller at 10305 darby street and i've third time i've been here about the very same issue um i just went to you know your working meeting about the Sherwood and the Willard Center, and it's, you know, really interesting, and it's really fun, and you see these beautiful drawings and this beautiful thing.

[03:29:00] I have a lot of problems with the actual proposal, which, you know, we can talk about at some point. I mean, one of them is just expansion. I mean, how, why would you ever want to build a building that costs that much and have no way of expanding, and they just said, no, there's no expansion built in but while I can understand why you would want something like that and I like these things I like we talked

about last time I was here about a lot of the arts and this sort of thing to add to our tax burden of all the people who live in this city all of them the renters the people who

[03:29:38] own houses the people who I guess who live in hotels to add this much money in one year I mean my bill went up 20%. I know everybody's didn't. Mine went up 20%. And I'm just completely, I mean, I understand it's a tough job to have to say no to things. But this particular, as an example, this plan to build this multi-million, you know, yeah, it's going to be shared with Fairfax County, but Fairfax City, believe me, is going to have a lot of the burden of maintaining it and keeping

[03:30:13] it going, having staffing. I just think it's just beyond, we can't afford it. And, you know, have to borrow, borrow, borrow, and then have to keep paying, paying, paying, and raising taxes on everybody who lives here, I just think it's wrong. It's just morally wrong, and it's just wrong for the people who live here and really can't afford it. So I thank you for listening to me, and I appreciate your time, and I know it's hard. I certainly understand how hard it is. So thanks a

[03:30:46] lot. Is there anybody else? Hello, my name is Zach Burroughs. I'm at 3574 Sutton Heights Circle, community on Pickett's Road. I'm actually here in my personal capacity, but also as the HOA president on behalf of the majority of the members of the community. I sent out a notice beforehand to ask if they wanted me to stand as a proxy, and the majority of folks asked me to and voiced my opinion here, which is that, again, I agree with the folks that have just spoken. We need to

[03:31:21] take a look at expenditures before we look at a tax raise of this magnitude. I think there's three different ways we can look at it. There's the special projects, the community center we just talked about, which is an astronomical price that we're going to have to carry for many, many years, the debt service on that is extremely high. In addition to that, we have some increases on just general cost centers that are magnitudes ahead of inflation. So again, we have to look at why are we spending that amount of money? Are we seeing the same increase in population coming into the community that justifies that spend? And then third, there's just some areas where

[03:31:58] we need to look at, do we need these expenditures? Zero-based budgeting. Go back and look and say, Is this something we actually need, or do we just need to keep tacking on 6% to 7% increase every single year? It's not sustainable, and frankly, the members of the community can't sustain a 15% increase.

[03:32:17] I know there's other tax rates that are on the agenda tonight. The meals tax, again, is another tax on top of this that, again, hits everybody in the community. So, again, I'd ask for the council to really think about whether we need this tax increase. The assessments are increasing, so you're already seeing your base expand.

[03:32:36] But to then add a tax rate increase on top of that, that's why you're getting people that are coming up here and saying 15%, 16%, 20% increase. And that's, again, that's in one year. And folks around here are having to watch their pockets. So when you're having to factor another 20% unexpectedly, that is something that cannot, you know, is difficult to swallow.

[03:33:00] So, again, I'd like to implore the council to look at expenditures before tax increases. Thank you. Is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on this agenda item? Hello, my name is Doug Cox.

[03:33:22] I hate speaking in public. I'm at 3916 Fairview Drive, Fairfax, Virginia. I'm going to reiterate what these guys said just to drive it home. Sometimes you've got to say no. I don't know why we need a

health center. I've lived here over 30 years.

[03:33:39] Got a long fine without it. We have so much debt already. We don't need to keep adding to it. Now I hear 27 years after we refurbished Fire Station 3, are we really going to get rid of that one and decide, I think I see in the capital budget, \$40 million for a fire station.

[03:34:01] We're not Fairfax County, and yet Fairfax County can still build one fire station out of Tyson's with a transit facility for \$20 million. Why is ours \$40 million? \$5 million for land, the rest, I don't know.

[03:34:20] I don't know where these numbers come from. Can't keep paying it. What these other folks are saying, I feel like I've got a deal. Mine only went up 14%, folks. Yay me. But I got divorced this past year, so I had to go through all this stuff before.

[03:34:36] So I had it handy. 2016 to 2022, year over year, add up. 22 rate to 20 or 16 rate went up a total of 20% for me over those seven years.

[03:34:52] If you get what you want, what's being asked of the taxpayers next year, high 39% in four years. That's a lot of money. I'm an old dude.

[03:35:07] If I retired at 62, two and a half months of my retirement, Social Security, would go to just keep paying this bill. And if it's gone up 40% in the last four years, what's it going to be in the next two, three, four? It's just not stopping. It's not like it's a one-time oopsie.

[03:35:24] This is becoming the new drumbeat. Expensive infrastructure, vanity projects, I would call them. Thank you for canceling the trail. 600 feet of elevated trail in the woods. Guys, you got to start thinking. Every one of these projects comes with a tail.

[03:35:41] It comes with a financial burden, whether it's staffing, maintenance, like the other person said. We have increased staffing tremendously. Someone else pointed out what a hiring spree looked like from 2022 to this point.

[03:35:59] What are we, 11% increase in staffing, 48, 50 FTEs below the line but are being requested in future years between now and 30, 30, 30. Can't afford it. Time to get the fiscal house in order.

[03:36:17] Thank you very much. Next person. Katie Johnson, 101, 32 Spring Lake Terrace. This is the first time in the work session. I love going to work sessions and retreats that I've heard of an exit ramp at each phase of the Willard-Sherwood agreement.

[03:36:39] and I'd ask that you guys explore the exit ramp at this phase. It's too much. It's too big. It's just too much. Thank you. Is there anybody else in the room that wants to speak on only the real estate tax rate? I will close the public hearing.

[03:37:00] No council action will be taken tonight, and the tax rate will be set on May 6, 2025. You're on general public comment, sir. There's just public hearings right now on the budget.

[03:37:16] So the second public hearing is on ordinance amending and readopting chapter 90, article 2, division 1, section 90-33 of the code of the city of Fairfax, Virginia, pertaining to classification and taxation of certain real property in the city of Fairfax used for zone for commercial and industrial purposes and to establish a separate tax rate on such real property effective as of January 1st, 2025, revenue from which would be used exclusively for transportation purposes that benefit the city of Fairfax.

[03:37:46] Fairfax. I'll recognize J.C. Martinez, Chief Financial Officer, to provide a staff presentation. Mayor, Council, Section 58.1, DAC, 3221.3, the Code of Virginia was adopted as part of the transportation bill enacted during the 2007 session of the General Assembly. The enacted legislation granted local authority to the city and other eligible jurisdictions to impose a separate real estate tax on commercial and industrial property, revenue from which it be used exclusively for transportation purposes to benefit the city city council can adopt a rate

[03:38:24] between zero cents to twelve and a half cents however no formal action on this item would result in the rate reverting back to zero the attached ordinance would set the 2025 tax years rate at a dollar twelve and a half for one hundred dollars of assessed valuation this would be no change from the 2024 tax year and would be applicable to all affected real property as of of January 1, 2025. The proposed 2025 rate of \$1.12.5 per 100 of assessed value is the maximum rate

[03:39:00] allowable by the Code of Virginia. Approximately \$201,132 per each one cent of tax rate is imposed for about \$2.5 million at the proposed rate of \$0.12.5 per \$100 of assessed valuation.

[03:39:17] In a very simplistic example of how the city leverages this funding, for every \$1 the city levies in the C&I tax, the city receives another \$1 in NVTA 30 funding. We can then use that \$2 as local match to \$2 in revenue sharing funding. So the city starts with \$1 in C&I and ends up with \$4 for transportation funding. Happy to answer any questions. Are there any questions for Mr. Martinez from the dais? All right. I will open the public hearing. Ms. Shinneberry,

[03:39:54] has this public hearing been advertised? Yes, it has. No one signed up prior to the meeting. speak on this general or this public hearing item is there anybody on that is in the audience would like to speak on this certain public hearing item all right seeing none I will close the public hearing no council action will be taken tonight council will will consider on May 6 2025 our next public hearing is on ordinance amending chapter 102 article 2 section 102 - 3 1 imprints B of of the Code of the City of Fairfax, Virginia

[03:40:30] to increase the wastewater utility rate by 6.0% for FY26. I'll recognize JC Martinez, Chief Financial Officer, to provide the staff presentation. - Thank you, Mayor, Council, once again, in conjunction with the city's financial advisors and consulting engineers, a wastewater utility multi-year financial and capital planning analysis has been developed.

[03:40:54] Primary goal of the analysis is to create a comprehensive cash flow planning model, taking into account existing and projected operating and capital needs while minimizing rate increases for existing customers. Based on the analysis, staff recommends a user rate increase of 6% in the city's wastewater utility.

[03:41:14] The city raised rates 10% in FY 2014 through FY 2020, 8% in FY 21, and 6% from FY 22 through FY 25. Increased residential and commercial wastewater user rates REQUIRED TO FUND THE CITY'S INCREASING COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH ITS AGING INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN THE CITY AND TO COVER ITS SHARE OF EXPENDITURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE OPERATION OF AND THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AT THE NOMINCOL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT. THE CITY CONTRACTED FOR 6.27 PERCENT CAPACITY IN THE PLANT WHICH IS OWNED AND OPERATED BY FAIRFIX COUNTY. MAJOR PLANT UPGRADES ARE

[03:41:54] NECESSITATED BY STRINGENT FEDERAL REGULATIONS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE WASTEWATER TREATMENT AND quality the critical plant construction and renovation projects needed to replace an improving aging infrastructure the proposed 6% rate increase would you impact user fees as follows as listed in the staff report the increased user fees are expected to increase wastewater utility revenues by almost \$600,000 the quarterly financial impact to residents customers consuming a typical volume equal about 14,000 gallons is about \$10 and 53 cents per

[03:42:31] quarter happy to answer any questions are there any questions for mr. Martinez from the dice seeing none I will open the public hearing machine of areas this public hearing been advertised yes it has no one has signed up for this public hearing I am to speak on is there anybody that would like to speak on this public hearing item okay seeing none I will close the public hearing no counsel action will be taken tonight council consideration on May 6 2025 our next public hearing is on an ordinance admitting a chapter 1 0 2 article 5

[03:43:05] section 102-203 in parens B of the Code of the City of Fairfax, Virginia to set the rate for stormwater utility service furnished by the city at \$34.30 per BU in parens billing unit, a 6.0% increase. I'll recognize JC Martinez, Chief Financial Officer, to provide the staff presentation. Thank you, Mayor, Council. The city's stormwater utility fund initial rate was \$28.80 per billable unit, also known as BU, and was set at a time when the stormwater utility was created

[03:43:40] on December 14, 2021. This action is to set the rate at \$34.30 per BU, or a 6% rate increase, for calendar year beginning January 1, 2025. User fees are expected to generate stormwater utility revenue of approximately \$3.2 million, or an increase of about \$183,000. Of note, we do issue stormwater credit credits and on average that's about \$130,000 per year happy to answer any questions are there any questions of mr. Martinez from the dais seeing none I will open

[03:44:18] the public hearing the Shinneberry is this public hearing been advertised yes it has no one has signed up prior to the meeting is there anybody that would like to speak on this agenda item seeing none I will close the public hearing no council action will be taken tonight council consideration on May 6 2025 our last public hearing item is on an ordinance amending chapter 90 in parens taxation article 6 in parens tax on meals section 90-262 of the code of the city of fairfax pertaining to the levy and the amount of tax on meals i'll recognize jc martinez chief

[03:44:53] financial officer to provide the staff presentation thank you mayor council once more once section 90 dash 262 of the city code currently provides a four percent meals tax the proposed ordinance would increase the amount of the meals tax to six percent as set forth in the city manager's recommended fy 2026 budget the effective date of this change would be july 1 2025. the previous meals tax change was from two percent to four percent in 2004 or 21 years ago an increase to the meals tax reduces the financial burden on residents as the meals tax can offset the need

[03:45:31] for higher real estate tax real estate taxes due to visitors and non-residents paying this tax Deletions to the current language are shown as strikethroughs, and additions are double underlined as text in the staff report. The 2% proposed increase would generate about an additional \$4.4 million in meals tax revenues.

[03:45:51] Each 1% generates about \$2.2 million. This change would result in a tax increase of approximately \$1 to a \$50 meal. Happy to answer any questions. Are there questions for Mr. Martinez on this item? Seeing none, I will open the public hearing.

[03:46:09] Ms. Shinaberry, has this public hearing been advertised? Yes, it has, and I had people sign up prior to the meeting to speak. I'm going to call the first speaker, Sabrina Henderson, come forward. Good evening, Mayor, City Council, and fellow community members.

[03:46:29] My name is Sabrina Henderson. My family has owned P.J. Skidoo's Restaurant here in Fairfax City. My father, Cosmos Bells, has been a business owner in Fairfax City since 1970. He originally owned the Black Baron Restaurant and converted it to P.J. Skidoo's in 1978. This restaurant is my father's other child.

[03:46:47] He loves this business more than me at times. He is 86 years old and still comes in six days a week. He's an immigrant from Greece traveling alone to the U.S. at the age of 11 to escape poverty and find a better life. Over the years, he has owned grocery stores and restaurants. He's seen it all.

[03:47:03] I'm here today to express my strong opposition to the opposed 2% meals tax increase. PJ Skidoo's is a generational family business. My cousin Dimitri, who's here tonight, some of you may know him as Taki, also owns part of the business with my dad. And I left my corporate job over 12 years ago to come help my family restaurant.

[03:47:23] This is our livelihood. PJ Skidoo's has been a part of this community for over 45 years, currently employing 72 employees. We want to continue to be a part of this community for years to come. The restaurant industry has faced wave after wave of challenges, rising food costs.

[03:47:40] The last three years, food costs have increased 30 to 40 percent. You see it for yourselves in the grocery stores. Labor shortages, higher wages, supply chain issues, and a customer base that's become more cautious where they're spending. A 2% increase may not sound like much, but for us, it's another obstacle that will push customers away and tighten our already thin margins.

[03:48:00] Yes, the tax is paid for by the customer, but make no mistakes, it's small businesses like ours that feel the consequences. We're the ones who deal with the fallout, the slower nights, the empty tables, the difficult decisions about staffing and hours. This proposed tax increase is a death sentence to restaurants.

[03:48:16] Business is already drastically down. You will see more and more restaurants closing, and how much revenue loss will that be for the city? This is not the time to stress the restaurant industry even more with this excessive and exclusive tax. We have always prided ourselves on being an affordable meal option for our community, but that isn't the case anymore.

[03:48:35] We've been forced to raise our prices in order to cover our growing expenses. When customers see higher prices on their checks, whether it's from increased cost or higher tax, it does affect their behavior. They dine out less, they order less, they tip less, and they choose cheaper options.

[03:48:51] Sometimes they may even go somewhere else entirely, maybe even a neighboring town where the meals tax is lower or non-existent. That drop in spending directly impacts our sales, our staff's earnings, and our ability to stay afloat. We're not asking for special treatment. We're simply asking that you truly consider the effects of this decision.

[03:49:09] A 2% meals tax increase will chip away at the trust and affordability we have worked so hard to build with our community. It puts us at a competitive disadvantage. Please don't put another burden on small restaurants trying to make it in the city. We're not just any local business.

[03:49:25] We're a part of the heart and culture that makes Fairfax City unique. Please don't make it harder for restaurants to survive. Support us if we have supported you in the city for so many years. Thank you for your time. And we have quite a few signatures petitioning against this.

[03:49:40] Do I hand them in to you? Our next speaker is Bill Hamrock. I appreciate your enthusiasm. really, I do. But if we just maintain some decorum in the chamber, I would appreciate it.

[03:50:04] Hello, thank you for having me. My name is Bill Hamrock, and I'm the owner of Hamrock's restaurant in Kelly's Oyster House, right in the city. I'm going to start with two reference points. I was leaving Hamrock's tonight, just earlier this afternoon. I told my server, Beatrix, where I was going. Told her what it was about. Initial response immediate was, oh my God, people ask us all the time how much our taxes are. Second, when I opened Hamrock's in 2016, speaking with the city, it was no, no, no. No, you can't have a sign. No, that sign is too

[03:50:38] big. No, you can't put a sign there. The sign where we're actually facing the street, 2016. Since that time, I have found the city to be extremely helpful, improved, and supporting. Thank you for that. It is much appreciated. Chris Bruno and his staff are great. It was a huge addition with the staff and everything they are doing. Police, fire, city offices, treasurer's office. I found it to be helpful. I can call them. I can approach them. When I go, I can talk to

[03:51:13] someone. I get answers. They listen. I'm wrong. They tell me I'm wrong, and they let me know how it can be fixed. I found it to be very helpful. Okay, meals tax. Please don't do this. With this increase, tax is going to be viewed as 12%. It's not a 2% increase. Customer gets the check. They see an additional 12%. They don't notice the 2%. They see 12%. Customers don't give us a break on

[03:51:46] that. We become more expensive. As of now, Fairfax County does not have a meal tax. With Fairfax County not having a meal tax, we shouldn't be here talking about it. This is a drastic increase on us. 6% more than our competitors a mile and a half away. 75% of our business comes from outside the business. You guys already said that. What if they stop coming? We will be known as most expensive. This will hurt. Some will not come. That will definitely happen. 12% onto the total

[03:52:25] check, 6% more than Fairfax County. It's drastic. It's not fared. We're not competitive. That shouldn't be considered. However, part two, it sounds like Fairfax City, the Fairfax County will have the meals tax. It's not done yet, but they are working on it. It may happen. Chances are it's going to happen. Even with Fairfax County getting the meal stacks, their meal stacks will be three or four percent probably, okay? If it's four percent, they're even with us. If we go up an additional two percent, we are still most expensive. Is it just two percent more? No, we are most

[03:53:02] expensive. People will see the increase. It will hurt us. Most expensive is not good. It will scare people away when restaurants lose business they go out of business please don't do this please don't hurt our businesses appreciate your time thank you our next speaker is randy barnett good

[03:53:42] evening everybody i want to thank you for everything you do for the city um i won't be as eloquent that's the brina that was amazing i do have some talking points i'm not a great public speaker um but it really is a lot of the same you've already heard um we are in an industry that is getting really pinched right now. Everything you go out to is more expensive. Everything you hear about inflation is about food, whether it's grocery stores or restaurants. Sales are already down. If they're up or even, it's because price is increasing. We're having to increase our prices

[03:54:17] to meet those demands. As was just mentioned, somebody wants to go down a mile out to Fairfax Corner, they're already 4% cheaper. Don't make them 6% cheaper. If they want to go to Mosaic, you know, they're cheaper. It's already a challenge to get people to come to the city, right? Traffic, traffic lights, parking, even though the parking's so much better than everybody believes. All those reasons, right? We have to get people in the city. We need incentives to bring them here. Over the last few years, inflation, inflation, all our prices

[03:54:56] have gone up. What my burger used to be is not what my burger is now. So the meals tax revenue has to already be going up significantly. I don't envy the position you all are in, but there seems to be an ability to look harder at expenditures instead of taking the easy route out to higher taxes, please.

[03:55:19] You know, I looked up some of the other regions, other towns, because that's where the pinch is, right, on the towns, what their other meals tax are. Vienna, go down the street to Vienna, 3%. Go to Herndon, 3.75%. Manassas, 4%. Haymarket, 4%. Prince William County, one of the ones with the county tax, 4%.

[03:55:40] We will be the highest meals tax in Northern Virginia, and I believe by statute the highest it can be at 6%, right? So I would just say that where the meals tax can be voted on, it gets roundly rejected by the county.

[03:56:01] The county got the legislature to change the rules, and they will probably, you know, increase, roll it out. But it will result in reduced dining out. It will result in hitting middle-income and lower-income people, you know, families more than others.

[03:56:21] It targets an industry that is already just being pinched more than any other industry out there. At least I think so. We're already starting to lose some people, right? We just lost herbs. We just lost half a bite. There's others out there that are just holding on, right?

[03:56:42] Try to keep the people there. Let's try to keep our businesses here and get our revenue through the volume, not through the percentage. Thank you. - Our next speaker, Cyrus Coleman.

[03:57:12] - Hi, Mayor and council members. I'm the owner of Doce Vita Italian Kitchen and Wine Bar in Elise Restaurant here in Fairfax. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today. Yeah, I mean, just what most people are saying, this is going to put us at a competitive disadvantage.

[03:57:38] There's no other local municipality with a 6% meals tax. We are constantly competing with Fairfax Corner, Mosaic, to bring people to our restaurants.

[03:57:57] I also sit on the restaurant committee, restaurant week committee with Fairfax City. And we've worked extremely hard to make Fairfax City a restaurant destination. And there's no, this is going to impact that.

[03:58:17] All that work seems the common trend with some of the restaurants is that we're down. We are already losing traffic to our restaurants in the city. And this will tremendously impact that.

[03:58:36] Just to reiterate, Brianna, 3%. Alexandria, 5%. Manassas, 4%. Arlington, 4%. I got here a little early because of the time I didn't realize I started at 7, and I sat in on the work committee there and listening to the Sherwood Project.

[03:58:59] I'm not a city resident. I'm sure that project would be amazing for city residents. But if I ran my business like that project, I would be out of business. And so to increase meals tax to help support a

project like that, if that's the case, it just doesn't make sense.

[03:59:28] And to also, I mean, the restaurants are challenged right now. We are getting the burden of inflation. We are already raising our prices. This is not going to help things.

[03:59:47] So I would encourage you all to vote against this proposal and find another way to raise the money. Thank you for your time. Appreciate it. Our next speaker is Bridget Fonseca.

[04:00:05] Mayor, council, thank you. I'm Bridget Fonseca.

[04:00:22] Over there is Amanda and Rose. We're an all-woman and all-George Mason alumni owners of Patriots Pub and Grill. Patriots have been in the city and making fresh food since 1996, 30 years next year. We are members of the Central Favorites Chamber of Commerce.

[04:00:42] My concern with this 50% meal stack increase is that no restaurant has actually recovered financially since COVID. The prices of food have skyrocketed. We just had to increase food prices to compensate for our ever-rising overhead.

[04:00:58] We appreciate the city prides themselves in supporting small businesses with Restaurant Week and the extension of Restaurant Week, Small Business Saturday, Small Business Month, but this tax does not support small businesses.

[04:01:17] According to a report from Fairfax Times, this tax will directly increase the cost of meals, which will make families and individuals less included to go out to eat. This will result in the closure of more small businesses. When Patriots was observing relocation options in 2018, we decided to stay in the city due to the importance of small business success.

[04:01:41] especially because of support from the chamber the city does not need more loss and division we need restaurants to continue to provide a safe haven for include include inclusivity and family love i have 156 uh people petitions here if i may thank you our next speaker is josh alexander

[04:02:12] being mayor and city council thank you all for being here and dealing with all of this um i don't know i know how i'm doing but i also know how a lot of my friends are doing in this business, and there are some struggling folks. And a closed business, closed restaurant generates

[04:02:47] zero percent meals tax. And they might pack it out for another couple years, but when the lease is up, I can tell you they are leaving. They're packing it up, and they're going. Everyone's very tired. A lot of my friends are still living off of COVID money, and it finished up last year. It's coming.

[04:03:12] 0% doesn't help anybody. Let's just keep it at 4. Thank you. Our next speaker is Jennifer Rose.

[04:03:31] Good evening, Mayor, members of council. It was tough for me to pick which public hearing to speak in, so consulting with the city clerk, you threw me in here. But I'm going to be covering all the topics this evening.

[04:03:50] Again, on behalf of the Central Fairfax Chamber, we thank you for your ongoing commitment to the city's economic health. You do not have easy decisions to make. I do not envy you. As you know, the chamber represents a diverse array of businesses that are the backbone of the community's prosperity. And we value this opportunity to share our perspective as you finalize your budget. Earlier today, I did send you a more detailed statement. You probably haven't seen it yet because you've been in work session. But I wanted to publicly reiterate a couple of points. Your budget's resilience on reliance, excuse me, on

increasing the real estate tax rate, meals tax, utility fees, are going to have a direct and negative impact on small businesses

[04:04:28] and economic development in Fairfax City. These measures risk undermining years of progress in making our city a regional destination for entrepreneurship, innovation, and of course, dining. We urge the council to reconsider the current approach and instead focus on reducing tax and fee rates to alleviate the financial burden on those small businesses.

[04:04:51] Rather than seeking new revenue through higher taxes and fees, you have been, and we are appreciative that you have been reviewing city spending and really look towards those meaningful cuts and efficiencies. They are there. You can find them. This approach will help ensure the city's fiscal health without sacrificing the competitiveness and viability of the local business community.

[04:05:11] Our small businesses are resilient, but they cannot continue to absorb the ever-increasing costs without consequence. The proposed budget, as currently structured, sends the wrong message to entrepreneurs and investors who are considering coming to the city as a place to do business.

[04:05:26] So please demonstrate your support for economic development by rejecting tax and fee increases and making the hard choices to control spending. I appreciate your consideration of this, and as I was listening to the restaurants, one of the restaurant owners actually asked me earlier, how many businesses have closed in the last couple of years?

[04:05:45] And I just started thinking about the restaurants. Off the top of my head, I can think of probably eight restaurants in the city of Fairfax that have closed in the last two to three years. Another restaurateur asked me, how many new restaurants have opened to replace them?

[04:06:01] It's not eight. Thank you. Is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on this agenda item, on the meals tax? Good evening.

[04:06:20] My name is Doug Cox, 3916 Fairview Drive. Listening to these proprietors, you know, I saw this in the council reporter, 2% meal tax. And I thought, you got to be kidding me. When I was a kid, my dad said, if you like a local business, patronize local business so that they're always there.

[04:06:40] Now, as a city resident, what I'm hearing is there's potential 2% tax rate. I know, \$1 on every 50. Say I go out, nice dinner, 100 bucks with a friend or two, and I'm out two bucks. I know, not a killer in the grand scheme of things, it seems.

[04:06:59] But why as a resident am I being penalized for patronizing a local business? I mean, that's the way I feel with this. You're going to penalize me 2% because I want to give my business to a local vendor, a local restaurateur.

[04:07:16] Give them a break. All right, again, I came up here before, Almost 30% in the last three years would be 40% tax increase on my real estate, you know. And that includes stormwater at 6% increase year over year, you know.

[04:07:33] I'm paying a lot. Most people that come to these Fairfax restaurants, I guarantee you, are Fairfax City residents. Don't penalize us. Don't penalize them because I want to see those places when I'm hungry and feel like going out. I don't want to go to Mosaic. I want to go to Fairfax City.

[04:07:50] I happen to like a lot of these places that already spoke today. I hope they're around. Don't do this tax, please. Thank you. Is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on this agenda item?

From Derby Street.

[04:08:13] My parents had a restaurant a long time ago, and so I kind of know what it's like to run. I mean, I didn't really work there, but I would hang out. And I just think if we want the city to, just in general, for businesses, we have to make it economical.

[04:08:31] We have to encourage businesses to thrive here. And one way you do that is you keep the taxes low. I mean, it's as simple as that. I realize it's the businesses aren't paying the taxes directly. It's the customers, but the customers will end up staying away. I mean, maybe a small fraction, just like you said.

[04:08:47] It's not a huge amount of money, but they will. I mean, that's what will happen. And all these little struggling restaurants will have a much harder time of it. And I really like the restaurants. I really think they're great. And I think we need to encourage them. We need to encourage all businesses. But you can't do that by raising the rates.

[04:09:04] And I know earlier I've been talking about my own personal thing about the real estate tax. The thing is, we have to figure out how to spend less. I mean, I just think it's as simple as that. I mean, you know, you can tax the tree, you can tax everything, but that's just not going to help everyday life in our city.

[04:09:26] It's just not. And these businesses, we want them to thrive. And obviously, as you heard today from the actual providers, this ain't going to help. So thank you. Is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on this agenda item?

[04:09:45] Seeing none, I will close the public hearing. No council action will be taken tonight. Council consideration on May 6, 2025. We will move on to general public comment. I have a couple people who signed up prior to the meeting. Our first speaker is Tom Ross.

[04:10:06] Good evening, Mayor and Council. Tom Ross, long-term resident of Fairfax City, over 40 years, residing at 3520 Country Hill Drive in the city of Fairfax.

[04:10:25] Earlier tonight, you took action on item 4A on the agenda, which was added at the last minute. I am deeply, deeply disappointed with this action and ask that you seriously give consideration to reconsideration.

[04:10:44] It was done at the last minute. It was done without an opportunity for public comment. It was done without an opportunity for a public hearing, and it was done as though you were worried about what you might hear.

[04:11:02] very, very disappointed. About six weeks ago, I sent all of you a message on the George Schneider Trail, and I was planning to speak at your council meeting, but got slightly waylaid by an ambulance ride to Fair Oaks Hospital, which kept me out of action that night until recently. So tonight, let me intend what I have to say, even though this may be after the horse has left the barn, as they say. There are many in our community who oppose paved trails because they impact some of

[04:11:40] our natural areas of the community, and I understand that. I understood it when I was on council, when I was sitting where you are. There's no question that the Snyder Trail and others will have impacts on our natural world, which I and others in the community believe can be addressed through environmental restoration and have been so planned. However, there are others in the community who feel equally strongly about an interconnected system of trails, some paved, that provide access to all ages and abilities.

[04:12:16] I feel strongly that we both can do both, protect the environment and create an interconnected system that serves all of our population both now and for the future. That is why I supported those trails projects as a citizen, as a member of city council. So of countless other citizens, community leaders, boards, commissions, and others that have provided input.

[04:12:43] I believe we have an obligation to consider why previous decisions were made to support these projects and the benefits they will bring to our community in the long run. I believe we can accomplish both, protect and preserve our natural areas and at the same time allow for public access and participation in healthy activities.

[04:13:02] I believe the plans that were developed have done just that. Today is Earth Day, and I consider myself a conservationist. For almost 30 years, I served with the National Park Service overseeing a range of programs that address local conservation and recreation needs.

[04:13:18] In that capacity, we worked with communities throughout the nation to find a balance between public use and protection, creating trail and recreation systems that benefit both the citizens that reside there and the natural resources that are important to all. I honestly believe and have believed we had an opportunity to say them in Fairfax, but now that has gone by the boards.

[04:13:45] I encourage you again to reconsider the actions you've taken tonight There is a great opportunity to create an opportunity in this community for an interconnected system of trails that provides access and opportunities to all citizens in the city.

[04:14:01] Please consider that. Thank you. Our next speaker is Philip Latassa. I speak tonight representing the Friends of Accutane Creek. The Friends of Accutane Creek always advocate for the principle of making our streets safe for people before we make our forests safe for pavement.

[04:14:21] We therefore thank the Council very much for your resolution pausing the George Schneider Trail for reconsideration. We therefore also commend the newly described proposal for a route linking Eaton Place, University Drive, and Fairfax Boulevard. Such a route would complete the vision of improved east-west non-motorized connections while sparing our last precious woods and wetlands.

[04:14:43] We commend the Council also for the action taken this evening to pause the Pickett Road Connector Trail, a redundant duplication of existing connections. Thank you. Our next speaker is Michael Fabio. I'm Mike Fabio, 3920 Chambers Road, and I also would like you to reconsider your recent trail reposal decisions. Trails are treasures to be passed down from generation to generation.

[04:15:19] City councils, comprehensive plans, and prabs have recognized this for years and developed the plan and a strategy to fund the plan. I was looking forward to the day I could take a walk with my grandchildren from Old Town through Van Dyke Park and Country Club Hills to the George Snyder Trail. That dream seems to be coming to an end. How did these good ideas get so bad so quickly? Getting from point A to point B is only half the equation. The journey must be safe, accessible for all, and pleasant. The proposed alterations to the plan deny us that journey and

[04:15:56] thrust us onto busy highways. The vision has always been to have these trails off-road. The Daniels Run Trail is the best example of that. Forests and trails enjoy a symbiotic relationship.

[04:16:12] We can't have a trail without a forest, but the forest can't be enjoyed without a trail. A trail is a walk in the woods. A trail along a major highway is a sidewalk. We need recreational trails.

[04:16:29] The Country Club Connector Trail would allow the Country Club Hills neighborhood to have a pleasant short walk to the Snyder Trail. Conversely, it would provide Mosby Woods a fantastic access to the rest of the city. The environmental impact is low to moderate.

[04:16:45] It is funded. Get it planned. Get it done. The key idea of the Norfax Small Area Plan vision was to bridge the divide between Norfax and Mosby Woods, connecting both communities with the Eccatink Creek. A linear park and trails provided by the developers would terminate in the Snyder Trail.

[04:17:06] This will no longer be possible with a trail redesign. It's planned it's approved it's funded get it done the present picket road connector is the safest route because it's off-road it's short has low to moderate impact and connects to metro prosperity ave and the cross county trail it's planned it's approved it's funded get it done in these times of right raising taxes it seems unreasonable to give back any of the 41 million dollars of hard-won funding that has been awarded to these trails every month you delay raises the

[04:17:43] price tag for our taxpayers and everyone here has complained about raising taxes you my friends are raising our taxes as we wait thank you our next speaker is patrick walker sorry about jumping in there uh earlier i was pretty eager to talk but i'm not entirely familiar with all the jargon associated with these meetings and as such that kind of represents me patrick walker resident of

[04:18:22] one triple zero nine spring lake terrace in the country club hills community is someone It's just kind of a neighbor, not someone who wants to get in anybody's way, and definitely not someone originally who was against anything that would resemble a trail being paved. I've lived in Country Club Hills for almost eight years now, and in the first few years I thought how great of an idea it would be to have a paved trail through those woods so that residents could get to the other side on Fairfax Boulevard.

[04:18:52] Since 2017, though, four years ago I walked down my driveway to see someone passed out on the sidewalk right in front of my property, called Fairfax Police Department. They said this is a normal occurrence because they come, quote unquote, through the woods. Fast forward two years later, I get home, and this is a personal note, to find that my wife was on a walk along Spring Lake Terrace, which parallels the woods that separates Fairfax Boulevard and Spring Lake Terrace,

[04:19:27] where this trail would be paved, and someone had followed, harassed, and scared her and sexually harassed her until she ran home on her own. I said, well, where the hell is this guy? She said, I watched him come through the woods right out by where they have the books, which is exactly where trail would have ended up. So on that note, I understand that this can be a journey for many, but it's been a journey already through the more intrepid individuals, transient individuals,

[04:20:06] Homeless or not, drug-willed or not, I don't know. But these types of individuals would have a much easier journey just by going through that trail. So in this personal and rather selfish note, I am still against and will always be against this particular trail, the CCH connector trail, connecting to our neighborhood.

[04:20:25] Thank you. Is there anybody else that would like to make a general public comment? My name is Susan Kyler.

[04:20:48] I live in Cambridge Station. I want to thank you all for taking the design concept for the George Snyder Trail, which meets the criteria, by the way, for which the money was awarded, to VDOT for consideration. I also want to thank you for canceling the Country Club Hills Trail, which is something that is widely opposed by the people who live in the area.

[04:21:14] And I want to thank you also for pausing the Pickett Road Trail connector because there's some parallel ones. Even the county has said at one point during a meeting attended by the mayor, that why are you doing this when there's a trail of stone's throw away?

[04:21:30] So I'm really pleased that you paused that trail for reconsideration and to look for other design options that would provide access. So thank you very much. I know you have a hard job. I also want to thank you for looking at the budget and spending those long hours trying to figure out where we can cut in order to avoid tax increases. Thank you.

[04:21:50] Katie Johnson, 10132, Spring Lake Terrace. So I just wanted to say thank you very much for considering alternative alignments. We also truly, truly believe in a connected city that is walkable and bikeable, and I feel like looking at realignments that can achieve both are very possible, and thank you for taking that action tonight.

[04:22:15] Is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on general public comment? Okay. We will move forward to the consent agenda. Is there a motion to approve the consent agenda? Councilmember Hardy Chandler?

[04:22:31] I move adoption of a consent agenda for agenda item number 7A, consideration of the May 25, 2025 regular meeting minutes. Agenda item number 7B, consideration of the April 1, 2025 special meeting minutes.

[04:22:46] Agenda item number 7C, consideration of the April 8, 2025 regular meeting minutes. Agenda item number 7D, consideration of an award of construction contract to Sagres construction corporation in the estimated amount of four million one hundred and seventeen thousand six hundred and eleven dollars for the intersection improvements at the mclean avenue warwick avenue fairfax boulevard intersection agenda item number 7e introduction of an appropriation resolution for the general capital wastewater transit storm water cable old town and transportation tax funds

[04:23:26] for the fy 26 budget year i move to approve the consent agenda items number 7a through e and the motion accompanying the consent agenda item as printed is there a second there is a second however okay we will cite item 7d and e will be removed for discussion a roll call vote on the consent agenda minus these items council member mcquillan aye council member bates aye council member peterson

[04:24:02] aye council member hardy chandler aye council member hall aye council member amos aye motion passed unanimously so item 7d is a consideration reward a construction contract to sagres construction corporation in the estimated amount of four million one hundred and seventeen thousand six hundred eleven dollars for intersection improvements at the mclean avenue warwick avenue fairfax boulevard intersection i'll recognize wendy sanford for the staff report Okay, thank you. The item before you, as the clerk mentioned, is the consideration of an award of a construction contract for intersection improvements at the McLean Avenue, Warwick

[04:24:41] Avenue, Fairfax Boulevard intersection. This project is a significant project. This is taking a very complicated intersection, simplifying it, adding pedestrian accommodations. As part of this, we will be adding a new traffic signal also at Far Avenue and Fairfax Boulevard.

[04:24:59] The city has been working on this project for a number of years. The city has smart scale funding to complete this project. We recently put this project out to bid. The bids came in under estimate, so we are within our engineer's estimate for construction.

[04:25:16] And so the city has approximately \$10 million in funding for this. again this project is within budget and also our capital project manager Sonny Sarna is here if you have additional questions are there questions from the Dias Council member Peterson and I asked for this just for sake of clarity because of a lack of familiarity so I appreciate the additional clarity that you've provided but also because I'm not familiar with public perspectives on this and just want to check and see whether there have been any significant

[04:25:54] public concerns around this, and if there have, whether they've been addressed and how, but essentially just to check, again, out of lack of familiarity with this, because I recognize this is a big and complex project, yeah. So this project, I'm recalling when this, we had the two-year program, and this project was even included, and the property owners at those corners did come to us and express the concern just about the functionality of that intersection.

[04:26:19] There was public engagement. There was all of the engagement with all of the property owners, There was outreach, particularly with the owner of the Baskin-Robbins and that property owner, and then the Kia dealership and then the printing company, and there were comments that came from the neighborhood and from these owners.

[04:26:38] Everything has been addressed. This project has been positively received, but I would also defer to Sonny or Mr. Summers if there's any additional comments they would like to add. Are there any additional questions? My only comment to add is that this is one of the more interesting intersections in the city, as I recall.

[04:27:00] So I know you're trying to deal with that. It's a difficult intersection. It's a multi-leg intersection. It's confusing. It also causes congestion on Route 50 because of the many legs of the intersection. So this is simplifying it, converting it to a really more traditional four-legged intersection, and then again adding another signal.

[04:27:19] And that new signal is also going to help with North Fax West, that new roadway that was just constructed. It's going to add a signalized access. So we'll be breaking the median on Fairfax Boulevard in that location for that new signal. It'll also assist the neighborhood south of Fairfax Boulevard in that location to get out making a left.

[04:27:39] Instead of utilizing the main intersection, they can come to the new signal at Far Avenue and make a left. There should be a map of the project in your... I was actually going to ask if moving forward we could have like a link or something to the...

[04:27:55] We had, okay, I'm sorry, we had posted that should have been included. There was a, I thought there was a one-page summary of the project that we had posted. No? Okay, we will make sure to get that to you. Not, no image. Yeah, I will make sure you have that.

[04:28:14] There is, the information about the project is also posted on the city website, and I can follow up tomorrow with a diagram of the intersection. One more question. I don't have the map, but I believe there's a car dealership kind of in the middle of all this.

[04:28:30] That's correct. Is the improvement here anticipating the potential for there to be any shift in the occupancy around that area in case, for instance, the car dealership was to decide to move where somebody else might?

[04:28:50] Because, again, it's kind of an interesting collection of things at this intersection. So there is a pending land use application involving that car dealership, which will be coming to council at some point so that's separate issue but yes it's all kind of intertwined thank you any other questions are is there a motion to vote on 7-d yeah we need a

[04:29:23] motion on the floor for 7-d back last page of staff report yes council member hard channel i move to authorize a purchasing agent to award construction contract in the estimated amount of four million one hundred and seventeen thousand six hundred and eleven dollars to sacred construction corporation for intersection improvements at McLean Avenue Warwick Avenue Fairfax Boulevard intersection is there a second second a motion has been made by council member Hardy Chandler and seconded by councilmember Peterson a roll call vote councilmember Amos councilmember hall

[04:29:58] aye councilmember Hardy Chandler councilmember Peterson aye councilmember Bates aye councilmember McQuellen aye motion passed unanimously go to 7e which is an introduction of an appropriation resolutions for the general capital wastewater transit stormwater cable old town transportation tax depth service and American Rescue Plan Act imprints ARPA funds for the FY 26 budget year I'll recognize JC Martinez for the staff report thank you mayor council as a city clerk just mentioned this is just an introduction

[04:30:34] OF AN APPROPRIATIONS RESOLUTION, WHICH IS NEEDED FOR THE GENERAL CAPITAL, WASTEWATER, TRANSIT, STORMWATER UTILITY, CABLE, OLD TOWN, TRANSPORTATION TAX, DEBT SERVICE, AND THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUNDS IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT THE FY2026 BUDGET.

[04:30:50] THE AMOUNTS CONTAINED ON THE STAFF REPORT ARE PENDING APPROVAL OF THE FINAL FY2026 BUDGET ADOPTION. AS WE'RE WORKING THROUGH THIS PROCESS, WE WILL HAVE A BUDGET ADJUSTMENT WORKSHEET, Which will show all the debits and the credits and the changes to the final Appropriation which will be voted on on budget adoption night May 6 happy to answer any questions councilmember Peterson well, thank you. I think again it was For clarity here and part of it is procedural and if I understand it correctly This is pending approval of the budget. So the details are subject to that. Is that correct?

[04:31:30] Yeah, so the the parallel the corollary that that I would give you is it's the same as the meals tax it's the same but these are all advertised maximums in this case these are the numbers that are reflected in the city manager's budget and then just so you can act on a night of the budget they need to be introduced and then you'll have the hearing in action on budget night okay thank you any other questions on this item okay seeing none is there a motion for item 7E councilmember Hardy Chandler I move introduce a move introduction of the

[04:32:07] appropriation resolutions for the general capital wastewater transit stormwater utility cable old town transportation tax debit debt service and arpa funds for the fiscal year beginning july 1 2025 i further move to waive the first reading and set the public hearing for may 6 2025 is there a second second a motion has been made by council member hardy chandler and seconded by council member Peterson a roll call vote council member McQuillan aye council member Bates aye council member Peterson aye council member Hardy Chandler aye council member Hall aye council member Amos

[04:32:44] aye motion passed unanimously okay we will now take a five-minute recess to go into the work

[04:32:50] session in the workroom all right then welcome back to the work session room into our work session

[04:43:00] and the first item is Shinneberry it's a discussion on the FY 2025 quarterly financial review I'm going to recognize gwen riddle budget director to give the staff presentation mayor members of council i'm here tonight to present the city's third quarter financial review for fiscal year 2025 the quarterly review process is designed to update and inform city council on the city's financial position and to identify and recommend funding priorities for council consideration budget reviews are presented to city councils on a quarterly basis the following presentation

[04:43:35] provides an overview and update to the FY25 forecast based on information available as of March 31st, 2025. This first slide shows the reviews and financial steps throughout the fiscal year. As you can see, the first four have already been completed, including first and second quarter financial reviews, presentation of the FY24 ACFR, and fall supplemental appropriations. After tonight, we'll be looking to adopt the FY26 budget and the associated tax rates and levies.

[04:44:08] The spring supplemental requests have been pushed back a few weeks, with approval now slated for June 10th. At the time of our review, we did not see any significant changes in actuals for FY25. Therefore, we're still projecting a shortfall of about \$1.4 million.

[04:44:28] Total revenues are about 3.2%, or \$5.8 million favorable to budget. As a reminder, the main drivers are increases in real estate assessments, accounting for \$2.6 million, An additional \$1.3 million forecasted for state schooling, approximately \$700,000 in additional investment earnings, and about \$500,000 for personal property tax.

[04:44:52] The primary driver for the 4% or \$7.2 million increase in expenses is the anticipated increases in the school tuition payment with Fairfax County Public Schools. This shortfall can be covered in FY25 by utilizing funds in the Budget Stabilization Fund.

[04:45:11] We will discuss this more on this topic later in the presentation. At this time, I will turn the presentation over to Christine Johnston, Real Estate Assessment Director, for the next couple of slides. Thank you and good evening.

[04:45:27] The next several slides are just a comparison of where we were last year, March of last year, as of the end of March, and then the end of March this year. So if you look at the bars on either end of the bar graph chart, that's a comparison.

[04:45:48] So we're very close as far as active listings. The next slide is sale price compared to list price. So you see it's sort of up and down, and it just depends on houses that are selling. A lot of times it's how renovated they've been prior to the sale.

[04:46:09] So, and that is just showing the, you know, the average. Next slide, please. Okay, so now we're just looking at, you know, days on the market in an average.

[04:46:25] So it is increasing a little bit, which indicates a little bit of a market slowdown. However, you see sort of the up and down, and that also can be predicted by the time of the year that things are selling things.

[04:46:42] Oftentimes in January, you'll see a slump, and that's where you see that peak there. And then the primary mortgage rates, we look at those because that is also an indicator of how healthy the market is

and also how active it may be.

[04:46:59] So these mortgage rates by Freddie Mac were exported as of April 4th. They have actually increased 20 basis points as of today from that graph. So, you know, it remains to be seen what will happen with the Fed over the next several months.

[04:47:22] Next slide, please. And then on the commercial side, we just look at indicators such as vacancy, rents, asking rents, what's available on the market. And we're right about where we were last year.

[04:47:38] So we're not really seeing any indicators in these sectors that vacancy is increasing, and that's usually the first indicator. The second may be that market rents will first stabilize, but then they could actually drop, and we're not seeing that yet.

[04:47:59] But it is pretty early in the year. At this point, we're not forecasting any change to the 1-1-26 assessments, what we have already budgeted for. We're thinking that it's going to be relatively flat, but we'll watch it very closely.

[04:48:19] and we'll certainly provide updates as they become available. Thank you. So this chart provides great detail to the revenue members I spoke about earlier. One thing to note is that we are forecasting where the state personal property tax relief will be recognized and not where budgeted.

[04:48:38] That's approximately \$3.1 million. This is a change that our auditors have requested. Also, in collaboration with school superintendent, we've redefined and updated the state school aid, which is made up of both state sales tax and Bakes' school aid.

[04:48:56] The estimate does incorporate discussions with the commissioner of the revenue who do not have any updated revenue projections. As stated earlier, the main driver of increases to expenses is the projected increase to the school tuition contract with Fairfax County Public Schools.

[04:49:13] After last year's unprecedented increase in the tax bill by 13.71%, we have increased from the 2024 payment another 8.25%, which is actually 12.19% higher than the budget of \$55.8 million.

[04:49:29] The highest increase since 2010 was 7.4% in FY13. City staff, along with the mayor, school board chair, and city school staff, met with the Fairfax County Public Schools in late March. The city voiced concerns over the increases and explained how continuing to increase at this rate will cause a challenge for the city.

[04:49:50] A second meeting to include Fairfax County was proposed and is being scheduled at this time so the five million dollar adjustment reflects the city's contribution to the eda real estate opportunity fund any changes to the accounting of these funds is not reflected in this report due to the timing of the transactions also the small increase in transfers is due to the increase in assessed values providing additional tax revenue for those prospective funds in summary the projected negative variance is 1.4 million for fy25

[04:50:25] this slide provides the primary drivers influencing the fy26 projections on the following slide similar to 25 the single largest factor is projected 12.6 million school tuition contract the projection assumes no changes in the real estate tax rate personal property or sales tax rates as you will see on the next slide the projected variance of 11.2 million is equivalent to 13.5 cents on the real estate tax rate when we look at the five-year projection there are a few items to note first the city will not use any unassigned fund balance to

[04:51:02] balance the budget in any out year unassigned fund balance will be reserved to be used during a year to pay for an unexpected expense which will be brought to council via supplemental appropriations again there are no chain anticipated changes to rates or levies and any increases in revenue is purely due to forecasted appreciation revenues are conservatively projected about two percent yearly increases the school's tuition contract is projected with a 3% increase beginning in FY27 and a moderate inflation increase in other areas.

[04:51:36] We will continue to monitor in just as needed. So to review, we ended up fiscal year 24 with an 18% or \$32.3 million of unassigned fund balance. We are currently estimating a slight reduction in the fund balance of \$600,000 due to the approval of the fall supplemental request, bringing the balance to 17.7% or \$31.7 million.

[04:52:01] This is still 2.7% or \$4.8 million over the policy of 15%. The funding of the Budget Stabilization Fund during fiscal year 24 gives the city availability to cover unexpected overages in certain areas. One allowed area is a tuition payment.

[04:52:19] Tentatively, the \$1.4 million overage projected for 2025 will be covered by the BSF. This will reduce the BSF from 2.6% to 1.7% and a balance of \$2.9 million. Staff will continue to monitor and track revenue and expenses throughout the fiscal year and work to ensure the city stays fiscally sound.

[04:52:41] Council will continue their discussions on the FY26 budget with adoption in May. And again, this chart just provides the dates for the fiscal reviews and actions for the remaining of the fiscal year. Thank you, and we're available for any questions you may have.

[04:52:59] All right, are there questions from the dais for Ms. Riddle, Mr. Martinez? Wow, you did such a fantastic job that everything is crystal clear. So well detailed.

[04:53:15] No one's got questions. It's almost a miracle. Thank you so much for the update. Well, you know, Ms. Riddle, for you. This was a great presentation. All right, we will move on. Our next item is discussion on the proposed FY26 budget.

[04:53:33] I'll recognize Brian Foster, city manager, for the discussion. I think I'm going to let Gwen do all the presentations from now on. so we can, you know, cut down on questions. That was great. Thank you so much. So we are here to continue our discussion on the proposed FY26 budget and the associated tax rates and so forth needed to fund the budget.

[04:54:00] We've had multiple work sessions. We've had an opportunity to ask questions of the staff. We've gone through the CIP in fairly good detail. You have asked lots of great questions. We've sent out answers, I believe, to all the questions.

[04:54:17] I think we are now caught up with the information that we sent out today. And I recognize that perhaps you haven't had a chance to necessarily see all of that correspondence that went out today. And we have updated the website.

[04:54:33] We have everything except for the most recent questions that I think Councilmember McQuillan had sent in are already in budget memo format and on the website, and those answers have been previously sent. And then we were able to answer, I think, the majority of our questions today, if not all of them, and that will be prepared in a budget memo as well to be put out on the website.

[04:55:00] So where we are is we have scheduled adoption for May the 6th. The goal, as we've said throughout this process, is for tonight's goal would be for council to have some type of consensus or at least majority on what you want to see in the budget and the associated tax rates, which will allow us to then prepare all of the requisite resolutions and ordinances with the correct information for your consideration on May the 6th.

[04:55:36] What we would like to avoid, and this is what I have been told has happened in prior years, is trying to actually do calculations on the dais, if you will, on Adoption Day from various questions or proposals.

[04:55:54] So last time we had a couple of council members, Council Member Bates, Council Member Hall had asked for some suggested revisions or alternatives to scenarios that we presented.

[04:56:11] And so JC is going to pull that presentation up and we've sent that to you previously. I don't think you've had a chance to discuss it. But in the interim, or since that time, Councilmember Amos, and I believe he's chatted with most of you or all of you, had asked for an additional variation or additional scenario, which we've run that as well.

[04:56:36] So the presentation that you've seen before with the various scenarios, the original scenarios one through five that we presented are still there. And then we have identified the variations that Council Member Bates suggested, Council Member Hall, and then Council Member Amos.

[04:56:56] So perhaps a good starting point would just be to briefly look at those and if there was any questions that anybody had, and then would, I guess, open up for council discussion or further questions if any of those are sort of where we want to be looking at or working towards, or if there's other questions or discussion items.

[04:57:21] But I thought if that's okay, we would start with the scenarios and the requested alternatives. So, JC, if you'll just quickly go over, if you'll just start with the first three just very quickly, and then we'll go into the rest of them.

[04:57:43] Sure. And as the manager spoke and said, so the five original scenarios are still in here in addition to what Councilmember Hall and Councilmember Bates had done. So very quickly, scenario one is just the city manager's proposed budget, which was presented to council at the end of February.

[04:58:04] That's sort of the starting point for all the scenarios and where we're working off as a reduction or an addition to. Scenario two would be a reduction in the real estate tax rate of two cents and a half a percent on the meals tax, utilizing some of the EDA real estate resource fund to basically balance it.

[04:58:27] Again, scenario three is another decrease of two cents and another half a percent on the meals tax, now requiring additional potential expenditure reductions to sort of balance the budget again. Scenario four, original scenario four, is a three and a half cent potential proposed increase to the current real estate tax rate and a half a percent meals tax increase, again, utilizing more potential expenditure reductions that are listed there in red.

[04:59:02] We had the Council Member Bates suggested scenario of three and a half cents with no change to the meals tax and associated use of those potential expenditure reductions on the left there, or on the red.

[04:59:22] I'm going to skip over Council Member Amos really quick. Scenario 5, this was the last original Scenario 5 one, which was a 2.5 cent increase to the current real estate tax rate, no change to the meals tax, and incorporation of the following or the listed in red potential expenditure reductions.

[04:59:45] Council Member Hall had a recommended proposed change to Scenario 5, which kept the real estate tax rate at an increase of two and a half cents, no change to the meals tax, utilizing those potential expenditure reductions in red. Given those reductions, it was actually found that we could potentially reduce the real estate tax even more so and potentially have a rate increase of

[05:00:14] 1.75 cents, making the potential FY26 real estate tax rate \$1.475. Any questions on what was previously discussed and shown if not i'm going to go to scenario 4.1 council member amos which had proposed a three cent increase to the current real estate tax rate and no change to the meals tax that would provide some revenues minor or a slight change from scenario one which

[05:00:54] is again the proposed manager scenario to this one would be a reduction of about 7.7 million in revenues, yet utilization of the listed in red potential expenditures. So again, utilizing the full amount for the EDA real estate resource fund, the previously identified prior CIP appropriations applied to the school bond, \$3 million request, reducing the minimum cash transfer from general fund to the CIP, utilizing the proposed 5% police reduction that was previously provided by police

[05:01:33] in the 10% exercise reduction, but not the whole 10%, just the five. Utilizing an additional \$1 million in the hiring freeze of non-urgent vacancies for an entire year. Reducing travel and training by 420, so not the entire amount.

[05:01:50] I think it's 535 was the entire amount, so there's a little left over there. Reducing the Renaissance housing funding by 392, so basically zeroing that out. Adding in additional funding for an efficiency audit.

[05:02:05] I think one of the council members had brought that up as a suggestion at our last work session, adding in an additional \$118,000 to fund salary and fringe of one FTE for a spout grant position, which has currently gone unfunded, which was previously communicated to council during a Saturday work session or retreat, reducing the nonprofit grants by \$100,000, so not the full \$300,000, so they would still receive \$200,000.

[05:02:38] And then decreasing the amount of the proposed annual fee for senior programming from \$60 to \$15, which would negatively impact our proposed revenue of about \$71,000. Doing all that on the left-hand side there, those bulleted red and blue items, would actually have a very small positive variance of about \$67,000.

[05:03:03] This additionally would allow for a 3.5% merit to be paid to all general salaried employees in addition to the scheduled public safety step as well. And then also implementing the pay study specifically for the property yard of about \$500,000.

[05:03:24] I think I'm covering everything. I don't know if I missed anything, Council Member Amos. Happy to answer any questions and or collaborate with the Council Member. And I mean, if we quickly also just wanted to pull up 4.2, because there's not much of a difference there at all outside of the 0.5% meals tax consideration for discussion.

[05:03:45] Of course. So as the council member stated, the only major change here is a potential increase to the meals tax of about half a percent. That would allow for an additional, or maybe the request would be for an additional \$550 of that additional funding to be dedicated to the school bond project with a potential sunset.

[05:04:09] If the 1% sales tax option was available, this is the option that the General Assembly or the governor potentially keeps striking down, that if that were to come into fruition, at that point, council would have the option to potentially retract this half a percent meals tax increase at that time, once that was available.

[05:04:29] I think everything else sort of still holds true. That does show a larger positive variance of about \$617,000. Are there questions? on council council member hall um thank you for sending the pace study implementation um can you kind of run through that i really didn't get a chance to look at it before our work session started sure i don't have a copy of it here so i'm going to go off of memory memory is probably

[05:05:03] good enough to do theory based sure so i'm going to estimate that there are probably about 30 to 40 potential affected individuals within the property yard in different funds so different functions as well. So this would be QBUS, which would be transportation fund. You also have stormwater and wastewater employees that also work down there, but within those specific funds. And then the larger pool are the general fund employees who do fleet, asphalt, refuse, other things within

[05:05:35] public works within that area. There was a study that was initiated in early 2024 by the request OF THEN THE PRIOR CITY MANAGER ALONG WITH THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HR TO LOOK AT POTENTIAL RETRAIN -- RETAINING INITIATIVES FOR EMPLOYEES THAT WERE LEAVING FOR POTENTIAL HIGHER SALARIES AND/OR OTHER FACTORS, BUT SPECIFICALLY HIGHER SALARIES WITHIN THE REGION.

[05:06:04] HR TOOK THE INITIATIVE INTERNALLY. THERE WERE TWO INDIVIDUALS, TWO HR STAFF THAT did an internal evaluation of that set group, their current pay rate, their years of experience that they currently had with the city, their years of experience that they previously had acquired wherever else that was, how it was relevant, and where they came in at initially when they were originally hired, and how they compared to others who may have come in at a later time with an equivalent amount of service and or experience, but were being paid differently. So this is more

[05:06:42] an internal equity fix that is being proposed it was presented and finalized in about july or so of 2024 it was presented and discussed with the new city manager at that time laszlo packel who also sort of embraced and supported the idea of implementing this his suggestion at the time was to incorporate this in the fy26 budget discussion because of the magnitude of about \$500,000. It's about \$385,000, \$395,000 in salary and the remaining amount in fringe. It's about

[05:07:20] \$500,000 to basically rebalance and provide equity internally within that select group in the property yard of employees. Thank you. And to confirm, this is not a one-time expense. This would be something that gets added to the budget and then continues to add and grow every year based upon other merit or cost of living adjustments and such correct yes but let me clarify so it's not five hundred thousand dollars every year that would be the one time to basically realign everyone but to your point council member now because you're doing that there would be an ongoing perpetual

[05:07:58] cost associated with that increase if they were to get merits if medical insurance were to increase. If retirement contribution percentages were to change, all that would perpetually impact whatever those new rates are. But it would not equate to \$500,000 every single year for this group, if I answer your question.

[05:08:20] I don't mean to be simple-minded, but if big picture, someone's making \$50,000 and now this pay study said they should be making \$80,000, that's a \$30,000 increase this year. Wouldn't that then have a \$30,000 increase also next year over what it would have been had we not done the pay study implementation?

[05:08:41] So, yes, and I think I may have misunderstood or not explained it as well. So to the base budget, yes, you now have to increase the base budget by this potential \$500,000 going forward. In addition to that, then you would have to increase it an additional, I'm going to make a number here, 3% or 4% based on inflationary costs, medical insurance, fringe benefit costs, potential merits, things of that nature.

[05:09:10] I think we're both saying the same thing just different ways. Yes. Okay. Okay, thank you. And for those employees that were included in this, does that include the consideration of a three and a half cent merit, or would that be completely on top of in addition to whatever that number is?

[05:09:32] It would be on top of if approved, and that would be effective January 1, 2026. Okay, and are there other departments for which this same process has yet to be done that we need to be thinking of long term?

[05:09:47] That is an excellent question. I don't know if I can fully answer that, but I can say that in the past, in the recent past, and I think I noted it in the email communication, that there was a very similar study done in 2022, if I'm not mistaken, with public safety moving them from the general salary scale to their planned step scale.

[05:10:10] and there was an increase at that time I could not figure out the number 100% of what that was but it was budgeted and that was the last internal equity analysis that was done a few years ago for that for that area for that group okay yeah that's actually what prompted me to ask the question of are there others because there was one then there was another one so we just I feel like we just need to understand if that is potentially an issue I recognize that

[05:10:42] this is a hard conversation to have. I mean, I think it's not uncommon in most fields for people to change jobs and move around. I'm not saying that's exactly what happened here, but people get hired at a certain date. They get ongoing merit increases, cost of living adjustment, whatever it is, and they get to X and Y salary in five years. Someone new comes in, comes over from somewhere else, has similar experience, but the market is paying a different number. It's not unheard of.

[05:11:12] it happens it's unfortunately just hitting I think at a very bad time combined with a lot of other things so I do think it's a conversation to be had and to be discussed and to be thought about but I'm not exactly sure where I am on it right now thank you for bringing the information though so we can understand it okay okay go ahead if I could elaborate so in other jurisdictions So Alexandria is the most current one that I can explain or give experience.

[05:11:49] They actually do a one-third review every year of their entire class classification. So they all review within those positions, sort of see what the market is doing specifically within local government,

and if need be, they would propose any adjustments for internal equity and also maintain competitiveness within the region.

[05:12:13] The next year, they would do another third. The next year, they would do another third. So then by year four, you've done 100%, and then you start back with that original third. So it's not uncommon in local government. We're not there yet. That might be something that we would consider. I know we're in the process of hiring a new HR director, but again, just initial thoughts.

[05:12:32] We're just wanting to provide that feedback. I appreciate that. Seems like local government is its own wild animal that does not relate or portray out to some of the real world, it seems. So thank you.

[05:12:45] Council member McQuillan sorry just to confirm this is public works is the only department that and public safety is the only department that's had this type of analysis done I can only can pay study sorry correct I can only confirm of public works and previously of public safety there were previous pay studies done I don't know if they looked at any specific just a specific department or what's been implemented 100% I can only go back two or three years

[05:13:22] given my tenure here thank you sure councilmember amos yeah to so to just briefly go over uh both scenarios um so i wanted to meet with everyone first and i pretty much got to everyone either in person or via text message so appreciate the feedback i wanted to see what everyone's priorities were and where we could get some consensus on reductions but what are some of the hard lines that we want to draw. My approach to this is, in my opinion, with the

[05:13:58] school bond on the horizon, until we have that 1% sales tax, I can't really go that low. And so when I was approaching this, it was with that mindset. And consider the fact that with the tariffs impacts, rising construction costs, it is quite possible that we actually need that full \$220 million, which, mind you, exceeds our entire CIP. So we can never truly make enough.

[05:14:25] And so with this, it's pretty much preparing us for the chance that we don't get it. Because if we don't, then things get much worse for us and we have a horrible year next year. No one's going to walk away from this happy, in my opinion. So with 4.1, that was excluding the meals tax, and we were pretty much just right there, and that was to keep that flat because I do agree with the comments that we received earlier that our restaurants have been paying that for a significant amount of time. Granted, we are now also operating with the knowledge that the county

[05:15:01] is planning on going to 4%, and in addition to that, we are having a much different conversation than we were back in March. We're no longer looking at 9.5% and 2%. I don't like the meals tax. What I will say in addition to that is if there were to be any kind of meals tax, for me personally, I wouldn't feel comfortable unless if it were dedicated in some kind of way. And I know that one of the priorities, especially with the 1%, is if we dedicate it specifically for school funding. I also played around with the idea of if we dedicated it specifically back to restaurants through Restaurant Week and a culinary program, as we previously discussed with entities like

[05:15:38] Josh Alexander, for example. But we felt like the schools would be the best avenue if we were to pursue that. But I wanted both on the table just for discussion. But my approach to this is pretty much we need to be prepared for the worst scenario. I don't even know if we're there with this one, but I'm trying to incorporate what I heard from everyone to some degree in there, making sure that nonprofits have

funding, providing the merit for staff, looking at where we can reduce, including with the cip transfer transfer but also for example some of our grant positions do we have

[05:16:15] additional flexibility to prepare for those if we and potentially lose more like the sprout grant and in this scenario well both scenarios the sprout grant is funded through next fiscal year rather than ending this december which is something that we've received from for example esc members prab in addition to that so it is a mixing pot of pretty much all of us so i'm looking forward to the conversation about it. Other discussions? Councilmember Bates? Thanks. I just want to

[05:16:49] put out there that first off, as far as the 5% police department cuts, according to the memo that we got, that the 5% reduction, they can maintain current staffing levels, but it would impact equipment purchases, training, vacant tent positions, and retention incentives. And so even that five percent cut is a no-go for me um any cuts to the non-profit grant program is are a no-go

[05:17:21] for me as well because this is really not the time to be considering that given the conversations and and actions that are happening at the federal level and sure we didn't see the entire amount utilized last time around but that was the very first year that we did it and it was still most of it. I believe it was a little bit over \$200,000. Is that correct? Yeah. So a little bit over \$200,000. And we also, first off, we're going to see most likely the word getting out

[05:18:00] more so the second year around than the first year, but also probably more demand due to uncertainty surrounding federal funding. And additionally, I do not support cutting the PACE study implementation, I think that's probably been a long time coming from, based on my familiarity with it, and I want to make sure that we're taking care of our frontline

[05:18:32] public works employees and making sure that not only they can continue providing the service levels that we want to see and that we don't lose more of them, but also just they're being taken care of in exchange for the hard work and the hard jobs that they have.

[05:18:52] I also would not support cutting the merit increases. I think that's consistent with what's been done in the past, and I would be extremely wary of any additional cuts to training and travel because that, you know, if we were to just kind of go to the max cut from, you know, that's equivalent to what's in scenario five um that may not directly impact services and staffing

[05:19:29] but it may have an indirect impact in terms of them not having the travel and training that they need to go get training and you know get a skills enhancement of you know certain kinds um so yeah i mean that's kind of where i am but um one additional potential uh compromise i'd like to propose is uh if we were to increase the meals tax by say 0.75 percent or 0.5 or even 0.25 percent

[05:20:06] but not increase expenditures at all and just use all of that to further cut the real estate tax rate below that 3.5 cents. So, open to hearing what the others think. Councilmember McQuillan.

[05:20:25] So, I agree with Councilmember Bates in regards to the 5% police reduction. That's a no-go for me, especially as we are facing a lot of issues with our economy coming up and increased costs of things a rise of unemployment we need to retain and treat our police well because I'm really concerned about that I am okay with a hold on the merit for one year training and travel I'm

[05:21:01] completely fine with cutting the travel element but I don't want to cut training I unless it's something that's very vital and they have to leave for it and travel for it I think right now we're with this

increase, potential increase in real estate tax, as we've heard from a lot of our constituents, that means a lot of people won't be able to take vacations. They're going to have to cut costs themselves. And so it's not right that we're sending people when they can get that same knowledge, um, potentially, uh, through, you know, the internet or something, um, or virtually. I

[05:21:38] prefer to keep it, the real estate rate under three cents increase right now. That's kind of what I'm looking at and leaning towards anything above that I'm just not even that's that's tough for me and you guys know where I stand on the meals tax so that's what I'm thinking right now councilmember Peterson on the merit increase has there been any evaluation of or any consideration of a lower merit increase combined with a market rate adjustment for people at the higher

[05:22:15] end I would say not formally if council were to propose because there have been different proposals of reducing it by a percent to two and a half percent to two percent to a half percent we could look at those options if need be we just sort of need that direction and we can also scenarios together we can have the 4.1

[05:22:45] Peterson scenario if need be sir for Amos so I would not support going doing that I prefer the full the full merit. I will also acknowledge that in my opinion we are a little we need to focus more on the long term because some of what we're doing here to get the tax rate lower is using one-time money for

[05:23:22] recurring expenses which is a very poor practice especially in government and so some of these will be permanent but for example if we want to increase travel and training in the future that becomes far more difficult. Same for Renaissance housing funding, if we want that to come back, if we were to reduce non-profits, scaling it back to the \$300,000. So I'm extremely cautious about using one-time money for recurring expenses. I'm

[05:23:51] not a big fan. So that's where I'm at. Councilmember Hardy-Chandler. So I would like to commend my colleagues for coming up with these scenarios to help lead us to a compromise discussion. We have to remember we started out at what 9.5 cents so so the fact that we're having a discussion around three is I think a lot of progress listening to where people are understanding the current climate

[05:24:28] with that said I think that even as we're considering numbers we absolutely and I think this is something that you are trying to get at council member Amos we have to consider the longer term impacts of these decisions the investments in prevention these are beyond numbers they have implications and they tell the story of our city and so I think that when we go below three I think

[05:24:59] I think three is so bare bones but willing to look at that as a compromise area the barometer for me is going back to those priorities and values that we talked about earlier.

[05:25:16] Safety is important, so the 5% cut to the police is not something that I can support and nor can I support anything that diminishes the merit of our staff. I believe that there are beyond the numbers service implications and long-term implications that have to be factored into our budgetary decisions.

[05:25:42] So I am leaning, and I also want to say that I would not support more scenarios. We've worked hard to get to these and reducing scenarios to try and find some common ground. So I don't think we need to add other permutations if we can help it.

[05:26:02] If we can find something among the ones that are before us, which are not going to make everyone happy, not going to cover everything, but I think gives us an opportunity to really reflect where

people are and what is reasonable in terms of running a city.

[05:26:25] So I appreciate the work of these scenarios, and I would love the conversation to sort of narrow down some of the support not support areas so that we can maybe come up with an approximate whole city council scenario other comments council member hall so i spoke with chris bruno with the eda and he was able to offer i said take out the 10 can we just focus on maybe

[05:27:01] a hundred thousand dollars so he was able to offer up the culinary careers collaborative and the Women's Entrepreneurship Program, as well as a miscellaneous bucket for unplanned studies. So that could be another \$100,000 that we could reduce. I get that it's only \$100,000, but when you want to add back in other things, I think that maybe that is something to be considered.

[05:27:24] Personally, I think three is too high. I think we are facing tough times right now. And I just, I feel like when people come and they talk to us, it's not that it's falling on deaf ears, but I just don't feel like big picture, we seem to be taking things to heart. And I think that people losing their jobs, people not knowing what they're going to do, I think that those things are not being fully considered in some of these scenarios. And quite frankly, I love our staff, and I think they do a great job. But to me, this is not the time to give a merit increase.

[05:28:04] If you want to call it a cost of living adjustment, I might be able to get a little bit more behind that but quite frankly no I think that people should be embracing and happy with the jobs that they have right now and if they're not and they can't recognize that this is a tough year for our city and for every other city across the country well maybe you're not in the right place maybe none of us are in the right place then I mean I I just I think that that I just think it's silly. I think that most people are happy to have a job right now, me included. I think that the

[05:28:42] Renaissance Housing Fund, I think if the memo was from Mr. Harden was correct, it said that we would only be able to do about one to three loans regardless. So to me, I love the program. I took advantage of it, but that's \$392,000 that I think is a hard no for me that needs to come out.

[05:29:01] It could maybe be brought back later, but with the high interest rates and everything else, to me, hard no. I do actually think I would like to consider the additional funding for the efficiency audit. I think that's something that we really truly need right now and thank you to Councilmember McQuillan for suggesting it and for Councilmember Amos for suggesting it in his plan. I'd like to have a little bit more feedback I think on the Sprout grant position and whether or not that position would actually be able to do any of the items that are included in the budget for those

[05:29:34] items to be completed with the CIP. I got the impression at 5% police reduction from Natalie that that was okay, that they were, that that was manageable. That's a million dollars. So I would like to reconsider that. I do not support any meals tax increase regardless of where it's going.

[05:29:57] Reducing travel and training, I think no to travel. I think mandatory required training is where we need to be. Again, this is a year. This is one year. It gives us the opportunity to see how are all these other things shaking out? How are the grants eliminated? How are the federal workers that were laid off? How are the contractors that are laid off? How is everything shaking out? It's one year. If you can't survive for one year here, I'm sorry. I just, I don't have a lot of patience for that. We're in a tough position. Everyone is in a tough position, and we all need to act like that i would agree and i think we should look at things like eliminating

[05:30:37] rock the block and the fireworks display because if we are having tough times in this city then everybody needs to wear that austerity across the board and those are nice to have not must have and if we're doing it on the backs of our employees public works parks and rec and public safety to put on these free events not just for our residents for the county i think they need to be taken out. That's just my two cents worth. Council Member Amos? I actually wasn't done speaking. Sorry. That's okay. Thank you. There, I'm glad that you actually bring up Parks and Rec.

[05:31:13] So there were some questions that I had in there. I think we discussed earlier about the trout situation and the pond. Do you know if that's something that we fund annually, \$2,000 to stock the pond for the event? Or is that just a one-time thing because the pond ran out of trout? I don't know if i can answer that question so i'm getting the head nod saying yes annually okay so that i love a fishing contest for kids but two thousand dollars for trout and i was also told that they like very oxygen rich water which apparently doesn't continue so maybe we should switch to

[05:31:50] sunnies or something else that can live in ashby pine year-round um there i also think we need to reconsider the thrones i think we need to reconsider i had asked some questions i don't think I ever got an answer on my Fiesta Fairfax, the number of participants that came. And I also didn't get an answer on there were some math errors on the spreadsheets for some of the holiday events. I was just trying to, I was trying to do a cost per participant analysis to see. And I believe with, I'm going to get the math wrong, but I want to say it was like \$58 to do the fishing derby because it's like \$2,500 divided by 75 participants. So I was trying to go and do cost

[05:32:30] per person and try to come up with like what is this really worth to us where could we look for outside sponsorships where could we try to do something else so I'm at two two is I think probably the max that I'm willing to go to I don't know where the numbers I just suggested shook out I also council member Amos want to recognize that you had a \$15 increase in the annual fee I'm sorry, an annual fee of \$15 for seniors, I had proposed zero before, I would be willing

[05:33:09] to do \$15. I think that is manageable. That being said, I do think we need to look at more cost recovery models for some of these other things. So when you come and you do lunch with Santa, that was a favorite thing my kids used to do.

[05:33:26] Maybe you have to spend \$5. Like, there's small things that we can implement. I don't want to just, you know, charge everybody for everything, but we cannot just continue to give things away for free, for everything, and if we're going to start to charge one segment of people, then I think we do need to consider charging others, so I'll stop there, and I'm sure I'll have more to say in a minute, but thank you.

[05:33:48] Councilmember Amos. So, I mean, in terms of looking for reductions throughout the year, I completely understand that, and that is the point of including something like an efficiency audit. What I do want to reiterate is that, for example, at the budget open house, which was the goal to hear from more people. I did hear from people as we did tonight that there were a lot of people who didn't like their tax assessments. I also heard from people who actually told me they were okay with the nine and a half, which I think is wild, but no, it was multiple people. I've actually received multiple emails as well saying they understand, especially after the budget open house. We are having a completely different conversation than we were back in March,

[05:34:24] including from what a lot of people referenced today. There were still people who thought it was going to be the full nine and a half now we're looking at three I would testify on nine and a half I

probably wouldn't be too too upset if it were a three cent increase to be honest with you and the same for the meals tax that conversation today was two percent not a point five now I understand that if there's no support for that that is perfectly fine but with the approval of the school bond with us trying to use one-time money to afford recurring expenses I thought

[05:34:58] these were mistakes that happened in the past that we did not want to replicate. And so I understand wanting to get to two, but I think building in buffer space and getting that 1% sales tax next year, because assuming that it will pass on the referendum, we still wouldn't have it till FY28. No, the budget, budget FY28, it'll be in 2027. And because it still has to go on the referendum and it still has to pass that even if we were able to get through this. We're banking on an election this year for the 1% to pass, and we don't have a backup plan. And I've

[05:35:37] asked about it, about if we can get private funding for school renovations, what are some options on the table, and we don't really have that. And when this school bond was passed, and I, you know, 70%, extremely important, I get that. It was on the idea that we would have that 1% sales tax. Now, we can assume that we're going to get it, but that's just not how you do fiscal management.

[05:36:00] When I first learned about the school, and I attested this, when I first learned about the school bond it was in conjunction with the one percent and so that i mean not to turn this into a school's discussion what i'm saying is with financial planning we can keep looking for reductions but we still need to make sure we're preparing for the future this is not just a one year thing and so i just want to tell y'all where i'm at i can't go to two so that's me

[05:36:31] councilmember peterson did you have something to share no but i'd be happy to well i just see you buzzing around the room and i thought maybe there was something something to all that buzzing around that you'd want to share with us well i i think that um a possibility here that needs some additional um review by our chief financial officer is that uh within i'm not sure where

[05:37:09] it is within whether it whether it's in cip it's in sustainability okay it's in sustainability The city has planned, and I have spoken about this before, I absolutely support this, doing a combination of two climate action plans at the same time, one for mitigation and one for adaptation.

[05:37:35] It's a total cost of \$440,000. I think one of the possibilities here is that we stretch that over two years and free up \$220,000 to give us a little bit of breathing room here. and actually give the staff a little bit of breathing room, too.

[05:37:54] It's really tough to do that work in that period of time. They want to do that work correctly, which means having stakeholder involvement and doing it in a stepwise manner. It's really super technical work. I just think giving them two years makes their job a heck of a lot easier, and it gives us a little bit of breathing room here as well.

[05:38:15] But that's dependent on you. So we just confirmed, and my hunch was it was in the CIP, Gwen just confirmed it. She just pulled it up. It is in the CIP, so it would not, both of them, it would not impact the general fund 100%.

[05:38:31] Well, okay. Is there a way to take advantage of this opportunity that would help us here? We could do what you were suggesting if it's still amenable to all parties and if that's the will of the council, but it's only impacting the CIP, and that is a potential \$220,000 reduction in the CIP, but not the general fund to sort of really impact the proposed scenarios.

[05:39:00] So in terms of a cash transfer to CIP, this doesn't have any impact? No. You know, it was in one of the responses that we sent previously. You would have to, because it's in the CIP, if you wanted to cancel the projects, I'm not suggesting that, but the way to take advantage of it is what you, is like, is analogous to how we're funding the school bond, the CIP, basically prior CIP appropriations, instead of spending it on that, you wouldn't spend it on that.

[05:39:37] You didn't have to spend it on the school piece, but you could reduce the cash transfer by \$420,000. But then you would not have the funds and you would not be able to do those plans because that money has already been appropriated and it's in the CIP to be spent on these.

[05:39:58] And so it's not going to help you with the tax rate or what you're trying to do in terms of getting balanced. Councilmember Hardy-Chantler? So getting back to the scenarios, I think that there are, I try to look for and opportunities.

[05:40:18] So I think some of the questions you raised, I think there are opportunities to get at those, but through the efficiency study. I would not want it to be sort of popcorn, different things, and I would certainly wouldn't want \$2,000 to hold us up from coming to some agreement. So I think it makes sense to invest, especially for the long term, because decisions about 2026 are stepping stones to the years beyond that. And these are not siloed decisions. These are things that impact things for the long

[05:40:55] run. So I think if we think sort of what kinds of things can impact future things, I think we can get to some of the questions and things that you want to look at free versus pay, but through a data-informed approach that is more planful and intentional. So I go back to, of these scenarios,

[05:41:24] I think for me, something around the Bates Amos thing leads us to a full, for May 6th, a full city council. It doesn't mean that other questions don't need to be asked.

[05:41:42] I think they do. But I think that we can be planful about those questions for upcoming periods through the things that we incorporate in the approximate scenario that we select and again I just go back to when we talk about our staff beyond their pay they also eat in Fairfax City they have lunch in Fairfax City they they also in various ways beyond their job support our city so

[05:42:16] to me that has rippling benefits economically for all of us again it's thinking about the numbers, but it's also thinking about the numbers beyond the numbers. So I'm hoping we can kind of come back to where we can find common ground among the scenarios that people worked really thoughtfully to create. Council Member Amos. I also just want to acknowledge that a lot of what we're looking at potentially cutting or suggestions that have come up during this process, we didn't

[05:42:54] ask people if they want those cut. And I still don't think we've even come close to hearing from the majority of citizens. And so I do want to make sure that's on the table because we're about to get that information. We're about to do a community survey where we can fund an efficiency audit. We can have those in conjunction for next year. And if we allow ourselves some buffer room, get the 1%. Because if it passes the state, I don't know if we can assume that it's going to pass on a referendum considering what's happened to the meals tax in the past but I think with the contact to the school bond people would be understanding I think with that narrative we could even get to a

[05:43:33] point within the next year or two where we could keep it flat or reduce it further but if we get to next year and we don't get that one percent approved by the state what are we going to do outside of jumping the tax rate by potentially 20 to 30 cents in a couple years Mr. Foster Thank you, Mayor, if I may.

[05:44:02] So I appreciate this has been a very good discussion. If I may, if I just can sort of reflect back for just a moment what I've been hearing. And I was trying to take notes when everybody was speaking. So it sounds like a majority of you do not want to increase the meals tax.

[05:44:24] That's what I'm hearing. At least half of you are not interested or would not support, those are my words, that's what I'm hearing, but would not support the 5% PD reduction that has been mentioned as an alternative.

[05:44:47] What I have heard is somewhere between \$0.02 and \$0.03 as far as what you might be willing to consider for real estate. So we're, I say we're making progress, we're getting a little closer.

[05:45:11] We can, I mean, we can certainly, one suggestion would be is if we could, you know, we can agree on the rate, on our suggested rate, we can get you there. You have all these options, and I don't want to say they're all plug and play, but I mean, we can adapt those to, I think, to get you to the number that you want to be at.

[05:45:36] um but uh so that so i would say that the other thing i was just sort of would reiterate and and some of you have said this um is when you adopt the budget whatever the whatever you adopt and the tax rate that you adopt we're not going to stop looking at the budget or stop talking about the budget or stop figuring out ways to figure out how we can reduce things or as your priorities change or as you flesh those out, whether they are going down the same path or

[05:46:15] whether you want to veer in a different direction. We're going to continue to do that. So this isn't a one-time decision in the sense you've got to decide this and then, okay, we're not going to talk about it again until next year. And this is an ongoing process. So you've mentioned efficiency study. That's perfectly fine. Welcome that. I would also say I think there's a lot of that we could that we can do i've done that i think the staff could do that um but you want an outside

[05:46:47] person third party perfectly fine you know because it's going to tell you you know it's going to tell us what it's going to tell us whether that there's things we can do things we can't do um or you know things we can do better it'll give you that it goes still goes back to um what this community what you as a council what this community values so i hear you talking about we we we want to do these things we you know you've talked about cost recovery but we don't want to charge the seniors a fee we want to talk you know we talk about we can't do this uh what we but we offer all these

[05:47:27] free programs um so again we can continue to do that and as i've mentioned to you before it's all about the choices that you make and so whatever number you land on you're not going to you're not going to do what I, what was proposed and recommended. I get that. Then that's perfectly fine. But with that decision comes these kinds of reductions in order to get there. And so we're prepared, um, to do any or all of those. Um, but we, we need to get hopefully enough agreement from

[05:48:03] council on the direction that you want to go. And, and what I would say is, is that when I say you don't necessarily have to make all those decisions this evening you do need we do need to decide what direction we're going to go but all of these things that you're asking about can we do this can we be more efficient can we look at cost recovery can we are there better ways to do things technology improvements etc etc we're still going to continue to look at those things the fact that we adopt about it's not like we just stop once the budget's adopted and then we wait and we wait until next year we'll continue to do that and so i i just share that with you just to

[05:48:42] sort of hopefully provide a little bit of context that um you know we're prepared to do what the council wants us to do but i would but really what i'm hearing is you're between two and three cents and so you're very close um and i would like to see if there's a way for us us being the staff or certainly as you continue to discussion if we can get you to a place that you're comfortable with this evening and that we can then we'll have everything prepared and show you what that looks like but with the assurance that we're going to keep looking at this you don't have to decide all

[05:49:22] this tonight you're not going to be able to decide all this tonight all these are these are weighty questions and things that we don't some things we don't know the answer to and we're not going to know the answer to for some time whether what's the economy going to do whether we're going to get a one percent for the option to fund schools those are things we'll continue to to work on react to but you all have a have have a weighty decision to make and that is what is it that you want to do for this budget and so i think you're getting close and um and i just want i just wanted

[05:49:59] to just i guess reassure you that we're going to continue to do all the things i hear you talking about which is how can we do things better how can we get the best value for our residents and our taxpayers. So that part's not going to stop, regardless of what you do this evening, or regardless of what you ultimately, even if you adopted my recommended budget, that would not stop. We would continue to look at those things. So I thank you for letting me share that. And just to further complicate this, you know, I'll remind everybody that the mayor can

[05:50:36] vote on the budget and the mayor cannot vote on the tax rate. So if the budget is 3-3 and I vote to break a tie it doesn't mean anything because if it's the same 3-3 split on the tax rate then you have a dilemma and I think we need to talk a little bit about what happens then and why we need to get to at least a majority of four because I am out of the equation on this so mr. Foster could you talk about that yeah sure so the mayor is correct and I know that the city attorney is in the

[05:51:10] process of helping and we'll be sending you a guidance document just on what things can the mayor can vote on and not vote on because it's kind of quirky so she's correct she can vote on the budget but not on the tax rate so and the two obviously work hand in hand so in the same thing on the appropriation she can't vote on the appropriation part either I think that is that correct mister yeah okay he's giving me the thumbs up um so again um you know ultimately we've got to get some we have

[05:51:47] to get a budget adopted it's going to take four votes or excuse me the mayor can break the tie but the reality is is with the tax rate and appropriations all of that works hand in hand so the reality is you need four four of you have to agree on something and whether you know you may And again, I know you all have certain priorities, things you feel very strongly about, which is very understandable and admirable, but this is a body.

[05:52:20] You act as a body, even though individually you all have your own opinions of what you think needs to happen or not happen. But we need to find a way to get enough agreement so we can move forward and continue the business of the city with the assurance that, again, we'll continue to look at all the ways that we can be more efficient and look at things and see how else we can reduce costs, find new sources of revenue if they're out there that don't necessarily negatively impact our residents and our taxpayers.

[05:52:59] Those are things that we continue to do as well. we're somewhat hamstrung by our friends in richmond and we are overly reliant on property taxes that's no no different than the rest of the localities in

virginia um and that is not something we can change um so we have so that's the things we have we have to to work with so to the mayor's point ultimately four of you are going to have to and in an ideal world it'd be nice if there was some unanimity but at the end of the day four of you are going to have to agree

[05:53:33] on on something. Councilmember Hall. Do we happen to have the March 31st ADM numbers from City of Perfect schools or FCPS? That has not been communicated to us yet. Seems like we should, right? I can inquire with the superintendent but that has not been shared with me yet. Yeah okay. We'll see if they're posted on the state website and look at that up. I'll look at that right now and Mike can get you an answer. Just one more thing I want to say. If if we're not going to

[05:54:13] consider in this current budget any other sort of cost recovery models for programs events etc then I withdraw my vote for considering the \$15 for seniors I think it's not appropriate if we're not going to be looking at other things councilmember Amos I mean I think we should keep looking at cost recovery and that's also why we have the parks foundation so I think that's an ongoing process well not just cost recovery but also privatization which I know we were going to cover tonight, but we're going to reschedule it. But seeing where we can also get private dollars for covering, but I think it should be a combination of multiple things,

[05:54:52] reductions, how can we decrease our debt, but also cost recovery, privatization. Well, we're decreasing it. We're getting there. We're getting there. But at the end of the day, a lot of the debt that we have is CIP related and is not really completely assisting us with this general fund. So that's part of the reason why the proposal I brought up, all that stuff, But we've got to get to something.

[05:55:17] Councilmember Hull. Yes, less debt, great. But until we can pull out the CIP that's not CIP, the operating and maintenance for next year, which I cannot wait to see, did we not get the report for the CIP from prior years of funds that were scattered around that we don't know about or not aware of?

[05:55:39] Still working on it, ma'am. Okay. This is why it's really hard to say, yay, we're going to have consensus tonight because there's so many moving pieces and parts that are still out there. And to your point, no, it's not over.

[05:55:55] But I'm withdrawing my vote on any sort of senior tax if we're not going to be able to consider anything else in the current year budget with that. Council Member Peterson? Yeah, so it appears that there's still some outstanding questions that could be helpful here in terms of getting to a bottom line.

[05:56:27] A lot of stuff came in today, yesterday, stuff has come up in this meeting. I don't know how much potential there is within all of that to help us out a little bit here, but it sounds like there may be some, and we haven't exactly resolved that yet. I mean, my own take is I have been working very hard to see if this two-cent scenario was something that could be made to work, and I'm not done with that, and I'm taking that very seriously.

[05:56:55] I'm not saying I don't have flexibility around that, but I really kind of need to see a little bit more resolution of some things. And I have clarifying questions on a few things that came up earlier tonight that would be included in that. I don't want to burn too much time, but there still are some things that are kind of gaps from my standpoint that we kind of need to get on top of.

[05:57:17] But again, I am leaning towards protecting the taxpayers in this city and finding ways to restructure our spending in both the short and long term and get a start on that while we are at the same time protecting vital social services and safety, really key things in the city.

[05:57:39] But we, in my view, still have some outstanding questions here that haven't quite gotten resolved yet. And what questions are those so we can... Yeah, so I heard the police chief say that she was okay with 5%. I believe that's I believe that is correct. She we had the same. The conversation that we had was they could maintain service. The question was, can they maintain the the services out on the street as far as with the personnel they have and so forth?

[05:58:13] she told in the memo talked about what the what the challenges were she did say that um you're correct three of your colleagues were say what i heard three of your colleagues say is that they were that was not something that they wish to consider so that's not for so we can't you know unless if if unless somebody wants to change their opinion on that that's really not going to help us

[05:58:39] My question would be, why is it that when the police chief says she can live with five, any of us believe that we cannot live with that figure for public safety when we have the assurance from the police chief that we can? Councilmember Hardy-Chandler.

[05:58:58] so my recollection is that came up as part of a very you know sort of across the board discussion about the 20 or whatever it was 10 percent and I think people offered up a lot of things that would not have been optimal again security is an important thing and again I think it was because they a lot of people maybe felt pressure to offer up something if there wasn't

[05:59:37] that pressure that's not my interpretation of some of the presentations that we got that people were reluctantly offering up things to comply with that request but again I go back to things that I think our priorities I also go back to the individual departmental presentations where there There was information about things that they wanted to do and that were in the best interest of the department, again, long term.

[06:00:07] So that's my reason for wanting to maintain, not include the 5%. Council Member Amos? This has nothing to do with the 5%. Just to follow up on the senior part real quick, I do also want to acknowledge the \$15 increase is only about \$23,000, \$24,000.

[06:00:28] So technically, even in this model, that could still be covered, just so you know. So that doesn't, if I'm understanding that correctly, that's just revenue generated. So it could still be covered by this model, and we don't do any increase and keep it free. So programming could still remain free.

[06:00:46] I just, I didn't know, again, whether we wanted to add additional revenue factor. I thought the full 60, I understand, especially in one year, was a bit much. I know we talked about cost recovery in the past, so that's why I included that in there. But if that's something that we're not amenable to, it can still be covered.

[06:01:02] Council Member Peterson. Well, I'd just like to go back to maybe the 5% and beyond that. What we heard from department heads here who I think take their jobs seriously as well as the commitment of the city. And we have pushed people and they're pushing us, including the citizens.

[06:01:20] And folks came forward to see what they could do here. And in the case of the police chief, she gave us her assurance that she could stay whole at 5%. But she wasn't alone. We heard other department heads come in and say, you know, these are things we can do that weren't part of the original game plan, and we have assurances from them that that would maintain services or infrastructure at levels of protection that they felt comfortable with.

[06:01:44] So I have a really hard time disagreeing with that assurance, and from my standpoint, that is translatable into an agreement we can reach here because I think those were reliable statements. because this was a relatively short period of time my guess is there's more where that came from but we may not have time to actually uncover it here but I'm certainly of the view that those are reliable statements that we should count

[06:02:13] on for our budget here councilmember Bates so again this is verbatim from the memo that we all got via email at a 5% reduction in expenditures the police Department can maintain current staffing levels the reduction would largely impact equipment purchases training vacant tent positions and retention incentives so that's the report that we got and I certainly don't dispute that you know they can certainly maintain current staffing

[06:02:51] levels with that 5% reduction but you know it has other impacts that that might have more long-term implications that I'm not totally comfortable with Council member Amos is Well, I guess I'll just ask is that one of those things that we could not do the full amount that we could have a discussion on Like for example keeping the retention incentives would people be more amenable to that instead of doing the full million We could see kind of get more of a cost breakdown what that 5% really looks like. Well, I'm sure anything is possible

[06:03:30] well, I mean Two cents the difference between two cents and three cents is eight hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars that's what that's that's what you're that's the that's the delta if if if that's the discussion point and maybe that's not the discussion point but the but the difference between a two cent increase and a three cent increase is 835 000 so that's what you need to if that's that's the difference that's where that's what that's the bridge that's what you have to bridge if you're wanting to come to some kind of agreement whether you're meeting in the middle or figuring out an

[06:04:08] alternative way to do 835 than what's being proposed for to go from three cents to two cents councilmember Hardy Chandler and so can we and if that is the tipping point I mean that I think does get us closer in the discussion because aside from you said you could get us there right somehow you could get us there and so if that is the one of the factors to get us to three cents i think you know that's

[06:04:44] something that um we should consider but um could there be something else that covers that 800 and whatever thousand dollars to get us there also there's there i mean there's lots of options i mean so so and i'm sorry and just to follow up what do you need tonight i'm sorry what do you need tonight in terms of what we i mean because i think we could talk about this right until the we hours but i'm i want to also give the staff what we need to sort of i'm i'm looking at them

[06:05:22] but i i have seen i i have done this before in other places and then what i think what i think we can do and i'm looking at them and they might kill me when i suggest this however is what we need to know is the tax rate which tells us the revenue and then we can plug then we can we can plug all the things that we need to to put in place what we can do is we we can um uh hold the

[06:06:01] hold the so if we're need so i guess what i'm saying is if we need to uh if you agree on the i'm just going to say for sake of discussion if you tell us we will do three cents no change to the meals tax that's just only i'm reading that because that's what's on the screen at the moment then that's going to sit then then then what that tells us is that we need to reduce uh 7.8 million dollars we can and we can show you how to get to the 7.8 million dollars we can we can that would

[06:06:33] allow us to get to adopt or to put things together and we can um in essence um have that have a play in essence a placeholder for that for that an offset for that number to as a placeholder until we can figure out exactly the certain things i i for example i i believe everybody is fine with the five million using the five million for that from the eda i've heard nobody say don't use that

[06:07:06] so that so i mean uh huh well yes we took it back the lunch of reserve that it didn't get spent i'm gonna need to comment on that one then i did not like the way that happened i i i feel like reading through that agreement it should have been that council directed city manager to pull that money back i think it i won't say it eroded our relationship with the eda but i don't think it was the best action at the moment i think asking them not to spend it was totally sufficient

[06:07:46] and i just i didn't like how that whole thing went down that being said we need the five million dollars back they understand that we have it but i did not like that councilmember amos and i was just going to say that the only reason we're having this conversation between two and three is because of the EDA money anyway, which won't be there next year.

[06:08:09] So, throwing that back out there. I'm looking, I believe we can have a placeholder, but knowing the number, that's the important thing for us. Is that not correct? I would say, excuse me, I would say that is the primary thing, if possible, and if I could kind of overstep.

[06:08:33] The secondary thing is, of these items, which ones are truly non-negotiable? where I think the manager was sort of alluding to that of where are there four votes of no or four votes of yes, and then we can fine-tune that given where there's consensus or potential consensus of either a yes or a no.

[06:08:58] Versus us come back to you knowing that there's a tax rate, a potential tax rate, but then still not providing accurate information because we're unaware that the 5% police reduction is should have never even been brought up as a as an example or the pick one was not supposed to be on there so just as a starting point to get there would it be helpful to go down each of these and survey us i mean because it still may be three three tonight but that's okay but i'm sorry i i

[06:09:36] think so okay councilman yeah i was just going to say if we want to not just look at this one but we could also look at scenario two because i think it lists out more that we could just discuss and see what's non-negotiable and what yes just because I think it lists out more so we could just have a more comprehensive discussion of either way okay so so councilmember Peterson well of course the other way we could do this is start from the bottom and work our way up which is I think where I'm leaning

[06:10:10] right okay mr. Martinez did you want to proceed we can so when you say from the bottom you're talking about councilmember Hall's scenario we can do that i just asked just for a quick clarification um the real estate fund as i understand it that was in cip originally before it was pulled out and sent to eda is that correct it was in the general fund transfer to the cip we had not transferred that okay we do our transfers at the end of the

[06:10:49] year okay that's helpful because just double checking on the uh the dbw issue we talked about before. Just to clarify and verify, there isn't a way to pull that out of CDP to realize the financial savings that we could then apply to putting this thing on a two-year stretch as a part of a general fund thing. From what I understood, you say originally with that suggestion was a delay or an extension of... An extension. So instead of a one-year program, it's a two-year

[06:11:27] program but in totality the 440 was going to get utilized is that a correct statement that's right but not in fy26 so those funds have already been appropriated unlike what i think the school board chair identified and so did uh director summerfield those projects were not going to go forward so they can be reallocated to something else in this instance regarding the um the climate plan they're still going to be utilized so i can't reallocate them i can extend them but i can't

[06:12:05] reallocate them to something else i guess where i'm stumbling a little bit is why this is a capital improvement project this is um you know a policy development project it seems to me to be something that could fit in more than one place and there would be some flexibility around that we're not building a bridge and i would say that the when it was originally appropriated in 2004 2005 that's the fund that the project manager or the person sponsoring the project identified them to go.

[06:12:38] So they're within that fund right now. I recognize that. I'm just double-checking to see if it could not be reallocated in some place that matches the cash flow reality of what would happen with an extension. I mean, you can...

[06:12:59] We're talking to you. I mean, the cash flow is... I don't want to say it's not relevant, but it's not relevant to this discussion. The money you're talking about was appropriated in prior years. So in essence, it's from a budgetary perspective.

[06:13:19] It's already not truly spent from a cash perspective, but it's already done. You put it in the fund. I'm not disagreeing with you. Why is it in CIP? I don't have an answer for you. There's lots of things that shouldn't be in the CIP, that are in the CIP.

[06:13:35] And as we previously communicated, we're going to work on getting that corrected to where it's a more, you know, it should operate as a truly capital plan. But to what you're asking is we can stretch it out, we can, if that's the desire, but it's not going to help you balance this budget.

[06:14:02] you would have the only way you would have to and I guess you could you could remove it from the CIP and but then you have no way to pay for it yeah I guess you could take the funding out of the CIP and the project out of the CIP but it's again it's money that you've already it that's over and done with and you haven't spent the cash yet the cash is still there but from from a process perspective it's it's in the past you can't go you can't undo it from that perspective it's money you've already spent yeah i think the point of confusion is that we've been

[06:14:36] through a lot of cip things some of which we don't even know about yet uh that turns out uh they're probably not going to move forward or don't need to or could be done on a delayed basis and we've been rearranging them uh i mean we heard from parks and rec we still don't know what that full list looks like and so it's just a little odd that you know we've been moving things around in cip right and stuff again we're still on that discovery process here but in this case we can't do that and I'm sure I'm missing something that we'll need to follow up on but again that's just a little bit confusing that we've gone

[06:15:14] through that process on other issues when you say you've gone I'm not sure I follow you on that parks and rec identified yeah 1.6 correct yes and that money is in CIP they're not going to do that they're not going to do those projects that money is already in the CIP and it is supplanting adding money to put in use it's it's your you instead of putting in new money to do the schools it's money you're reducing the cash transfer you're offsetting what was expected to be the cash transfer to do that project with in essence money that

[06:15:54] you have already allocated that's how you save or that's that's how you impact the budget so if you want to use that 440 to impact the budget the way it will impact the budget is you cannot do the project or or i should say not do to postpone the project to some future date use the money that's already been appropriated to offset the cash transfer that would that's a that's a half cent of real estate tax but then you have no funding to do your study until you at some point come up with money to do the study.

[06:16:37] Well, again, it's, thank you, confusing and frustrating because it's an example of where the cash flow side of this is not lining up with it, apparently in a cruel approach here. Correct. This is not private sector accounting.

[06:16:53] We're not on a cash basis. So it's fund accounting. That's just how government accounting is done, right, wrong, or indifferent. That's how it's done. We're not on a cash basis, and so we do fund accounting, and that's how this process works.

[06:17:11] And I can sense you're frustrated with my answer, but that's how it works. Well, but I mean, I am familiar with public accounting that's done both ways, I mean, for all sorts of purposes. So, I mean, that's a longer thing we can talk about after the budget's over in terms of how we manage these things.

[06:17:31] There is going to be an interesting anomaly between the actual cash flow and the fund-based accounting that happens here because of a bunch of timing reasons. And we'll be very interested to see at some point what that actually looks like when we look at it on a cash basis to see how much we actually needed and spent.

[06:17:50] But all that said, if that's not something we can do right now to help here, you know, it's too bad. I just wanted to see for sure because the whole pool of CIP stuff is a really big one for us to attempt to do something constructive with council member hall so before we jump into scenario five are there any opportunities in our supplies or other charges throughout all these other various budgets i know we i had brought that up before we never really drilled down into all of them but is there nowhere to look in there and find a few hundred thousand dollars that

[06:18:28] is not going to be missed by not doing it for one year or something that's really not significant in all of these different departments so insignificant that it just got called other i would hope and i would think that the department heads listed those items already in their 10 exercise i'd have to go through what was sent out to council and provided by all the department heads but i think a good portion of that was related to non-personnel costs but i'd have to go through line by line and figure that out for you okay well i guess i need

[06:19:06] to go back through the 10% budget since we're still trying to iron things out so thank you all right so are we gonna start from the bottom now to given scenario five all at two and a half cents no change to the meals tax if that is sort of the starting point the items on red there I guess starting from the

[06:19:41] bottom up as well I'm assuming everyone would be okay with the 18197 going away from communications which is 0.25 FTE that is not being utilized and nor is there expectation of it being utilized right now there were other obsolete items too from that that he had listed as obsolete okay that equaled that amount

[06:20:07] I'm hearing okay \$95,000 which would impact a revenue reduction no change the annual fee for the senior programming would everyone be okay with that as a potential reflection of the new scenario as in not charging as in not

[06:20:37] charging as keeping the FY25 approved amount the same next item would be a total reduction of the nonprofit grants this was a new initiative in FY25 we had set aside \$300,000 in this instance all \$300,000 would go away as well I'm not comfortable with that. Yeah, I think that's Bates, Amos, and Hardy Chandler. Could we agree on \$200,000?

[06:21:16] Because right now there's \$217,000. I don't think we need to leave extra wiggle room for other opportunities to request money, and I think you also mentioned before about the Salvation Army consideration. It can be amenable to \$200,000 a year, but I would prefer to come back. Okay, it looks like Council Member Bates is not cool with \$200,000, but everybody else seems to be. So let me just clarify not reducing it by 200 but reducing it by 100 to 200 perfect so that it remains sorry

[06:21:56] next item is 392,000 reduction on the renaissance housing funding that would again very similar to the previous item would be zeroed out for fy 26 can we just do this gladiator style Yeah, we can do a gladiators. Yes, okay. It sounds like it's Unanimous next item feel like a bitter saying next item up for bid Sorry next item

[06:22:36] \$440,000 no merit for the general employees in this instance It does include the public safety step which is funded done scene three this this looks split maybe discussion there is this an area where back to my earlier question mark there's a partial plus a market rate at the top market rate adjustment the top

[06:23:05] we might consider we know what that might look like so I'm gonna go very quick here so each half a percent yeah each half a percent is roughly equivalent to about sixty three thousand dollars if when you're looking at three and a half percent merit it equals if I got this right you have \$440,000 so each half percent is about

[06:23:45] 63 so if we were to reduce it by a percent that's 120 some odd thousand dollars that'd be a two and a half percent merit but what if we did a lower merit and then just include I think like Tom said a market rate adjustment sorry I was just pulling in my mouth for those at the top I think we'd have to calculate the market rate adjustment so that's not included in this that would be a smaller amount because you're only affecting the top in the bottom of the range there are some employees that are at the bottom and there are some employees that are at the top I would have to work with payroll and HR to

[06:24:24] figure out what that was because that was not a part of even the proposed manager scenario yeah I would be curious to know what that looks like okay in and in the past we've done a two percent market rate adjustment is that the potential starting point or something else how are people feeling to one percent you know at some point one percent is just an insult really I mean yeah well you know people have bills to pay

[06:24:57] to who work for us and while I would I want to not burden our property tax payers instead we're burdening our employees and we're still asking them to maintain the same level of services to our community but you know their expenses go up and we're not taking care of them so to me a one percent increase i'm just speaking for myself is an insult i'll just say oh sorry go ahead council member bates um so i would be comfortable going down to 2.4 percent that is the current year over

[06:25:37] year inflation rate according to the census bureau for the dc area um somewhat arbitrary but that i think is what I could go down to. I could be amenable to that. Okay, 2.4, Councilmember Amos, Councilmember Hardy-Chandler, Councilmember Peterson, Bates, 2.4. Okay, so it looks like we

[06:26:07] have four that are yes and two that are no. Am I counting noses correctly on the 2.4? That's Amos, Hardy-Chandler, Peterson, and Bates. Clarification, if I may? 2.4% merit, no market rate adjustment. No. Just clarifying. That's what I heard. Just clarifying. Is that what everybody heard? Excluding market rate? I actually didn't. Why are we excluding market rate? One, I don't know

[06:26:46] what that cost is going to be. It's not going to be significant. I would assume 2% would probably be about \$40,000, \$50,000 if that. I heard 2.4% market rate, I'm sorry, 2.4% merit and a 2% market rate adjustment. I'm wondering how much support we have for 2.0 across the board. It's a question

[06:27:18] for your colleagues, sir. So 2%, is that something people are willing to do? 2? Is that the bottom that we're willing to? Can we establish that that's the bottom? That is the bottom? Okay.

[06:27:40] It sounds like three. Okay. It sounds like we have at least four who are not willing to go below 2. Okay. One more. If I could just make a comment. I mean, people need to see it on their paychecks. I feel like people are seeing a paycheck, which some government employees are not.

[06:27:59] Sorry, that's just me. Yes, Council Member McCollum. Yeah, I just want to remind people that a lot of people are just lucky to keep their jobs this next year going into this economy. And so I'm not trying to diminish the roles that our staff play or the service that we receive.

[06:28:15] but when we're talking about increasing real estate tax rate and taking more money out of people's pockets we do have to recognize that at the same time if we're giving our staff increased raise and things like that even with market I'm just saying that's not happening for most people right now and and I would say that we need to take out some of the things these employees support like the fourth of July fireworks which is not a must-have and all the rock the blocks which are not a must-have they are free events and our employees set up clean up and run

[06:28:53] them and so that's not something that is deserving that our community is paying for and i don't know why our employees should feel like they've got to deliver this premium quality of life in our city when no one wants to pay them council member amos uh just to just to just to add um i still prefer the 3.5 and contextually the reason why i say that is because over the next few years we don't know what the budget is going to look like and it is quite possible especially if we don't get the one percent that we won't be able to increase merit next year the year after at least through 2030

[06:29:32] 2031 2032 that is on the table so that's why i would recommend doing the full 3.5 i can be amenable to two but nothing below that if i may yes councilmember hall i understand what you're saying and I respect it but I also think that the citizens of our city pay taxes because they want to be able to attend some of these free things and maybe instead of being able to go on a vacation this year they're going to enjoy the heck out of every single rock the block and every other free

[06:30:07] event that we put on because that's all our family can afford to do this year because one of their spouses lost their job meanwhile and again I appreciate all of our workers but meanwhile all of our employees still have a job we didn't lay off anybody we just didn't overly merit reward them because it's a tough spot that we're in so thank you council member amos yeah and just so we don't go far too down this rabbit hole again we have a parks foundation to try to get private money to cover those events well they're supposed to assist with sponsorships that's one of the things

[06:30:45] yes we're looking for sponsorship opportunities for our our events that are run by parks and if if we're not doing that then we should be but the county they do summer concerts all the time that are

completely free because they're covered by private donors so we have an opportunity to do that as well so that's not just an end all be all here council member hardy chandler to my mind it's not our residents versus our employees it's our residents and our employees and we should

[06:31:20] support what they do in service to our residents our residents there's a cost um to losing them also that our residents will pay in addition to that so different perspectives on it but it sounds like we've landed somewhere even if it's for different reasons are we done on this one well yes mr martinez just just to clarify because i was slightly distracted two percent merit

[06:31:59] cola whatever you want to call it and a two percent market rate adjustment is that or was i did I miss something in between I'm sorry are you adding in 2% market for the high-end people or you're adding it in addition to the 2% merit so the market rate adjustment what that does is it resets the scale of the of the salary so each grade has a starting point and a high point we're talking the step no so each classification has a beginning salary range and an ending salary like

[06:32:38] a cap. The market rate adjustment adjusts that percent by 2%. So if it was \$100,000 where you're starting, it's now being moved to \$102. If you were at \$100,000, you would automatically get a \$2,000 increase because that's the new bottom. If you were at the top range of that, if the top was \$100,000, we would do a market rate adjustment of 2%. So now you would be eligible to get a 2,000 or 2% increase when that availability came as far as the merit it's

[06:33:15] just the range I would maybe just keep it simple and do the to merit and leave it at that if that's okay to folks I'm looking at all of you okay it looks like

[06:33:42] leave it at 2% merit next item was a \$500,000 pay study as was previously discuss this mostly impacts the property yard those individuals that are in the general fund the those that are also in different funds specifically wastewater storm water and transit those specific funds would absorb whatever those increases would be this is only displaying the

[06:34:14] general fund side of things excluded or included correct when don't exclude thumbs up council member Hardy Chandler I recall we were talking about this towards the beginning just to clarify

[06:34:42] this would would this increase the pay for those who with its impact those who are toward the lower end of the pay scale the most yes so the majority of these have a pay in equity where for some reason they've been here x number of years or have x number of experience but are not being paid comparable to someone who has an equivalent number of years of experience doing the exact same job.

[06:35:16] Okay, thank you. So the question on the table is, do we make an adjustment based on pay and equity as it has been identified in this study?

[06:35:38] Right, so can I see a thumbs up on supporting the \$500,000 pay study implementation? I see two. Okay. I have a clarifying question, if I might.

[06:35:53] Is this a two-way street because, you know, when you do salary surveys, sometimes people are above norm and sometimes they're below norm, right? So this is strictly bringing them up, not anybody adjusting or holding somebody who's possibly too high.

[06:36:08] There are people that are not getting the increase because they are in parity with their payers. So there are multiple people that are right where they should be, and no one would ever be losing where their salary is.

[06:36:29] All right, so it looks like we have one, two, three, four. This is for the \$500,000 to keep it, implement it, implement it.

[06:36:45] It looks like we've got at least five for that. Well, on that one, one thing that maybe wasn't totally clear is whether this is 100% or none.

[06:37:07] Is there anything in this that's a partial option that makes sense? That is a good question. and that is a very hard question for me to try to answer.

[06:37:27] The inequities have existed, as I've mentioned, since the beginning of 2024, so it's been over a year. If this were to take into effect, it would be January 1 of this year, so it would be almost 18 months. I don't know if the employees even know that there are inequities.

[06:37:50] I would think that they probably do because everyone talks about what their salaries are. I don't know, I can't really speak for them, but I would think that they would be happy for any increase. This is just what the analysis and the pay studies showed to bring everyone, not those that were lagging, to an equitable rate compared to their peers doing the exact same job.

[06:38:18] I don't know if I fully answered your question. It's a tough one because neither of us have the data in front of us to know how this distributes and whether there's a critical set that really are ultra priorities that comprise half of these funds and the other, you know, are arguably things that could be postponed a bit.

[06:38:35] But we don't know the answer to that without looking at that distribution. But that would be sort of my question mark is whether there is something that comes out of it that indicates that that we could take advantage of. I mean, I'm happy for that to be a follow-up to see whether there's some flexibility here based on that kind of look, if that's information you could actually get access to.

[06:38:55] So the spreadsheet and the data, and it was in an Excel spreadsheet, so you can manipulate it and inform it whichever way you want. That information is there. And to Gwen's point, not everyone that's listed on there is getting an increase.

[06:39:12] It is just those that were in an inequitable position or situation. Right, but if there are varying degrees of inequity, if there are those that are glaring inequities that simply can't wait and others are marginal and canned, that's important possibly to know.

[06:39:29] Correct. Because it's a big chunk to do all at once. It is. And I think that was the previous discussion with the city manager of, because it was such a large chunk, instead of rectifying it right then and there and impacting the budget and it now becoming a part of the base going forward, let's try to be a little more cognizant and plan for it.

[06:39:58] in the FY26 budget development process. Well, I'm not sure what we do here, except at a minimum, I'd like an asterisk on this if we decide to move forward so that you have the opportunity to do that second look and see whether there's something that might constitute a partial here that makes sense.

[06:40:16] I don't remember the vote count, if there was four or five. It was this administration.

[06:40:43] It's just like dump, dump, dump, and it's super frustrating. And I blame prior councils, I blame the federal administration, I just, I can't, it's just a lot. It's a lot. And I hope our residents realize that, I hope our employees realize that, because I'm feeling like a jerk up here, not agreeing to things, but it's a lot.

[06:41:09] Council Member Hardy Chandler and then Council Member Amos. I think a clearer division is what Council Member McQuellen suggested earlier is the next item in terms of reducing training and travel, and I appreciate it. the split of supporting training and maybe limiting travel that to me makes clearer sense it doesn't get to a fairness question where I've done I've been a part of multiple compensation studies it's hard to do some splitting there when you're trying to bring people up to fairness so I

[06:41:48] would like that conversation more in terms of travel versus training supporting and including training uh pulling out uh travel for fy26 i'm sorry did we wrap up the prior issue may we do that so you know my two cents worth you know pay inequities when you talk about the property yard these are the some of our employees who work the hardest the longest doing the toughest jobs

[06:42:20] manually and they we are trying to solve a pay inequity and i'm sure they are grateful to have their jobs. They show up every day to do the jobs. Our residents are thrilled at their curbside pickup and we have reliable Q bus drivers and all the people who work down there doing the jobs that I don't think unemployed federal contractors are going to want to do. I do think this is important as a city to address inequities among our employees. Our residents prize more than anything

[06:42:58] else probably our parks and rec and our public works employees and when these folks who are not at the highest pay scale in our staff are are know that there are inequities because they do know what their co-workers make to me this is a priority to solve this problem and 500,000 may sound like a lot but spread that across these people look at their take-home pay after the deductions and it's a little bit of money but for somebody who now is in an economy where yeah

[06:43:34] everyone's talked tonight the restaurant owners about how expensive food is a little bit of money in your paycheck makes a big difference it makes a big difference in how you are living your life and i don't think it's too much for us to ask this city to do that for these employees council member amos all i was going to say is that look in my opinion everyone here is doing a great job there's some structural things I think we could work on but I can wait till post budget but We were given a lot mostly a new council and honestly from the conversations I've had with the community and from the testimonies

[06:44:14] We've heard we've been afforded a lot of grace because we are dealing with a very unique situation Between the school bond the administration and some of the grant money and the uncertainty of the economy So keep working. We'll get through it. It's okay. It's okay at the end of the day. We got we're gonna move forward So can we just go back around again to for the pace the pace? Oh, yeah, but I what we we can what we believe we saw was that the majority of you supported

[06:44:47] including keeping that in the budget yes week I mean we can we can go and reevaluate if the sort of the criticality of them I don't know you know what exactly that, I mean, we have the, I mean, the amounts vary depending on how out of whack some of the folks are, so the reality would be, at least on a surface level, would be that the ones that are most critical are probably also the largest amounts, and, you

[06:45:26] know, you might could argue maybe not, but, I mean, if that's where the most disparity is, that's probably the ones where you wouldn't want to wait, so you would not get, you would probably not achieve the level of reduction by trying to make that, to do that analysis is all I'm saying.

[06:45:48] I would only add, I agree, except in terms of how you measure largest, you might try it on a percentage basis to see which ones have the greatest percentage variances. True, true, sure. And again, at

the low end, if that pops up at the low end, that could be super critical stuff.

[06:46:06] We can do that, yes. On the travel and training, not to jump ahead, I know we've got more to go through. The suggestion I would make, I know that 535, in this one, is that a zero out?

[06:46:30] Okay, I'm just going to, what I would say is I think we can, we hear what you're saying. What I would say is even if you zeroed it out, we would still need to find money to do what I would say is the, you know, if I need a paramedic to get recertified in order to do his job, we're going to pay for that whether you zero out training or not.

[06:46:55] And so what I would say is those kinds of trainings where people need to maintain certifications, what I would, for lack of a better term of what I call mandatory, we would still do. And that may include travel. They may have to go to Richmond or someplace in order to make that happen.

[06:47:12] What I would, I guess what I would assure you is, and I don't know what the number is, I'm leaning towards around 400 or so, is rather than reducing 535, I think we could reduce around 400 with the commitment that what we would only do necessary training and we would not do any travel unless it's necessary it's needed for or if it's required for the necessary training certainly any other trainings we can bring in-house you know free trainings online virtual we can still continue to do that but I

[06:47:49] think that that's how we would manage that and I think that's that would be my suggestion to the group council member Hardy Chandler that would be acceptable we heard from staff that there are mandatory trainings that are needed for certification we need it we need certification for people to and organizations to be accredited and so those would be accepted it would not be hard and fast but if there are optional trainings that are that that require or things that require travel that are optional or would like then those would be the ones that would be right right so for it so for example most of our staff

[06:48:29] have or belong to professional associations excellent training opportunities would not say that they are absolute mandatory required for certification so that might be the kind of thing we would skip this year but if I need somebody to you know if the the assessment staff needs to get their license renewed and require that CPE we would pay for that and make sure that happen so they're still have their license or paramedics or whatever could be a variety of departments but we want them whatever they need to do their job

[06:49:03] but it would also say sometimes certifications are are not necessarily mandatory they're nice to have and that just helps them you know be more qualified but it's maybe not a requirement of the job but again we would that's that's the distinction we would try to make and limit that funding And so, and I'm looking at JC, he gave me a nod.

[06:49:25] We would suggest we could do 400, which wouldn't zero it out, but that would be the total. So the reduction wouldn't be 535, because in this scenario it zeroes it out, but we'd reduce it 400, and we'll try and see. We should be able to hopefully make do, and obviously, and if we don't need to spend it, we won't, but that's just, that gives us a target number.

[06:49:46] I'm sorry, so you're saying instead of 535, we would leave 135,000 in the budget? Correct. Okay. Why did I think when we did the 535 initially that that was still allowing for mandatory travel, mandatory training?

[06:50:04] So the 5, no. I mean, I trust your numbers over mine, for sure. The 535 is zeroed out, all departments, all travel and training at that time. So people are good with 135 for travel and training, for continuing education, anything deemed necessary?

[06:50:22] Everybody's good? Is there a thumbs up on that? Okay. presuming it's not requiring travel to las vegas or europe correct actually councilmember hardy chandler being from las vegas that's a fine place to have training thank you very much go vegas golden knights okay so that brings us to the police reduction it does i i do have one um i only have

[06:50:58] one sheet though so if you want i can try to read it and this is directly from the police chief there's the cover memo budget savings five percent executive reduction of three hundred and thirty two thousand peer support services training promotional testing mental health patient sitting criminal investigations reduction of sixty eight thousand dollars encompasses training two cadet position temps which equals sixty two thousand of the sixty eight patrol operations

[06:51:35] reduction of \$369,500, which encompasses training, EST, CNT, CDU, I don't know what those are, on-call, breaching kits, shields, e-bikes. Of the 369, there are four officer position temps, \$320,000 of the 369,500. Administrative services, reduction of \$134,000, MVR repair contract

[06:52:09] training. Additionally, temp help, one dispatcher, one property evidence technician, which is \$116,000 of the \$134,000. Professional standards reduction of \$119,000. Incentives for instructorship and specialty pays. Temp help range masters of \$70,000 of the \$119,000. And then lastly, community services, \$30,000 training by team gear and equipment. So the breakup that she had here was \$488,500 in equipment, training, and incentives programs,

[06:52:49] \$568,000 in temp help wages, for a total of \$1,056,500. Yes, Mr. Foster. If I may, if council wants to consider some alternate amount rather than worrying about where they are, just pick your number and let the police chief determine what things to keep and not in terms of, So if you want to split the difference instead of the million, do half a million,

[06:53:20] then she and her team can determine how to spend that half a million or \$750 or \$250 or whatever number. If you're wanting to consider an alternate number, my suggestion would not be to try and figure out those things.

[06:53:36] She and her team know best how to spend that. She was identifying things that could be saved as part of the exercise. So if this is, if council is willing to consider an alternative amount that you all can agree with, let's just agree on the amount, she can take and her team can take care of where to place it.

[06:53:58] Okay, Council Member Peterson. Well, the other way, though, that this could happen, I know the timing's not right here, is for her to tell us what is it that will maintain a full protective level of safety for the committee here, for the city, rather, and what is that amount?

[06:54:23] I mean, we came in at the five, but there's more. There's a five-plus in the questions. How much of that plus falls in the category, no, this is really critical to have? No, it's not critical to have right now. That would, to me, tell us where the number is, and I don't know where that falls. I agree, cherry-picking the thing is impossible for us to do, but that's the other way to look at it.

[06:54:44] Fair, but her comment, which I pulled up, Mr. Bates read to you, is they could still maintain full staff, and she told you what was impacted, but with the million-dollar reduction. So, again, at least the last

time, the three of you did not really like that option.

[06:55:04] So it's either you can leave, we can leave it in because there's not four votes to take it out, or you could agree on an alternative number, and my suggestion is, again, is let her and her team determine what's best, to your point, to continue the function.

[06:55:26] We can certainly report that back to you, but rather than trying to figure out what that is what you know because anything is better i mean uh losing some amount less than a million is better than losing the whole thing so we can figure out how to best spend that or she can figure out how to best allocate that where it is best for her department and for the community i think councilmember bates has something uh so i just want to kind of um add to my stance on this i would

[06:56:01] be willing to support a reduction if that reduction is recommended by the city manager and or the police chief that they say that this you know whatever we're cutting is really just not worth the cost and we've you know gone back and figured that out whatever that amount is so I don't you know I don't know what that amount might be that we might want to go back for but i mean whatever it is if we have a recommendation that that um that reduction

[06:56:37] is actually recommended over the full amount because whatever we're cutting is just not really worth it right now um then i could support that reduction council member hardy chandler so i agree with council member Peterson for the chief to tell us what proportion with the parameter that the decisions for the cut truly take in long-term impacts not just positions for now or whatever

[06:57:10] those elements are that we're thinking in terms of safety but also what might be a stepping stone for their long-term plan the other thing is you said we should keep it in if they're not votes to take it out it's only in because we're starting with scenario five that we started with an earlier scenario there wouldn't be three votes to put it in so i just want to make sure that this is not the decided on fair enough we we had to have a starting point this was the starting point we were working from so i'm okay um to and i think this kind of echoes what council member

[06:57:45] bates was saying um if she wants to propose a smaller number with the guidance that it it isn't just a cut it's a cut that doesn't have long-term consequences thinking more broadly than I could support that I can certainly consult with her and her her team and and can come back with something what I would I think what I

[06:58:22] would offer is that the original budget proposal didn't have any of this this reduction in it um and it was a way to identify things that could you know but when you talk about it's retention incentives it's training it's all the things we've been talking about so yeah to you know can you forego that for a year for a short period of time i mean i think what she's saying is yes we can do that is that the bet i mean is that best for the long-term operations of the department um considering that you've talked about you know the the the previous study

[06:58:59] that was done and so that with that we had we were will have to build up towards and this is would this reduction I think would just put us further behind if the goal is to try and get us to some of the things that that plan talked about that's exactly my point you know if it interferes with our competitiveness in this market then I would want her to not offer that up so So let me add to my guidance that she can also come back to us with zero.

[06:59:35] Councilmember Bates. Yeah, and that's sort of what I was getting at. I mean, if the recommendation is that, you know, the recommended course of action is to not cut anything, then I would not support cutting anything. And also, I want to look at, make sure that we're looking at not just, you know, is this recommended for this year, but is this recommended as a permanent cut?

[06:59:59] I meant to add that earlier, because we want to be looking again long-term. I mean, I don't think that we want to keep taking a bite out of the police budget, then adding it back, and then taking it out, adding it back. I don't think that that's really very healthy for any department, especially in public safety, given the amount of stress that they're all under, even more so perhaps in other departments.

[07:00:24] So, yeah, definitely agree with Councilmember Hardy Chandler on that. It's not a permanent reduction. Right, so... It was not proposed as a permanent reduction. So for purposes, because we're trying to work our way toward a tax rate, for purposes of trying to get there, should there be a placeholder number?

[07:00:45] Is there, like, a placeholder number that says suggestions? So what I would suggest is just a suggestion, understanding what the manager and everyone else has sort of communicated, leave the 5%, the \$1,056,500 as a placeholder now, confirm with the police chief if that is an accurate number and or if it can be modified down.

[07:01:12] If it's modified down, it would be incumbent upon the finance team and budget to figure out what the delta is and identify that gap. Right, right. So that would just benefit the tax rate to be able to reduce it if reducing it is something the chief says she wants to do.

[07:01:33] Correct. Is everybody okay with this as a placeholder? This is a placeholder number to get us to a tax rate. Council Member Peterson? Just to clarify, so we've got a million and change here that is being shown as a reduction.

[07:01:49] Correct. And we're adding it back in? No, we're leaving it in. We're leaving it in. We're leaving it in. Leaving it as a reduction, but she can come up with a recommendation. So leaving it as a reduction. And so just a million dollars is 1.2 cents, roughly, is what you're talking about.

[07:02:07] of a tax rate impact if if you put it back in councilmember bates uh one more question the uh well this is kind of about both this one and the next item but um the well first off the non-urgent freezing non-urgent vacancies did that include temp positions or only permanent positions no this those are fte i mean it's not eliminating but it would be freezing

[07:02:37] FTEs full-time and/or part-time as they become vacant and we would, again, we still need to better define it, but the term we're using right now is non-urgent, so again, if public safety, presumably, it would be considered urgent, so if there was a vacancy, that's something we'd fill.

[07:03:00] If it was an administrative position, that's probably not considered urgent. We wouldn't fill that, but that would be frozen for some period of time. So it would be sort of on a case-by-case basis, depending on what our staffing is. For example, some public works positions, say like a fleet mechanic, might be considered urgent, but a different public works position may not be considered as urgent.

[07:03:23] So again, we can't necessarily tell you each what would be or what wouldn't be, but we would be evaluating that as that happened. Right. So I guess the one thing I would say is that with the vacant temp

positions, not just within the police department, but at large, if we could maybe look at those with the same criteria that we looked at, the \$1 million for freezing non-urgent vacancies already.

[07:03:58] Absolutely. I'm sorry. Maybe I'm, I guess I misunderstood. I was just that we were intending that freeze to be regular positions. Certainly temps would be that we would look at the same way. Okay. So that, so that million does include potentially temps as well.

[07:04:16] Yes. Okay. So, well, actually, kind of a follow-up to that then, so all those temp positions that were included in the 5% reduction aren't necessarily an additional... Well, so you were saying that you did not include any public safety under that non-urgent vacancy, so even the temp vacancies in public safety are considered to be urgent vacancies?

[07:04:44] No, what I would say is that million dollars, that number that's there, is our best calculation of what we would save by freezing non-urgent positions.

[07:05:00] We don't actually have specific positions, with the exception of the one exception, the Debbie City Manager was certainly in there. we would not that would be one that we would not fill but as far as other positions I can't necessarily say it's these positions that we were looking at that is a you know a number we feel very comfortable with if we could save more we would or we would we would absolutely do that and part of it is we it's

[07:05:37] something that we would be monitoring as the year goes on so it could be that we if we have lots of turnover we can freeze positions for less than maybe we would need to but if we don't have much turnover then some positions would be frozen for much longer and again it's part of that is that's a management issue in terms of how we how these things come up because we can't necessarily predict which things might become vacant or or remain filled okay so I guess the the

[07:06:12] you know the one last thing is that from what it sounds like we want to make sure that you know the the 5% police reduction if or whatever comes back to us if that includes temps you know is that in addition to the million or you know partially in addition to it and partially overlapping with it or you know whatever that might come out to me I understand that million is not really is more

[07:06:45] of an estimate but but just something to kind of consider council member Peterson and thank you those are really great questions I guess I have a bit of a bottom line question which is can you work with this number work with it and what I mean do you mean you want to be larger no no no I don't mean can it be larger you just essentially explain this is an estimate and it's just it will require further management going forward. Yes, and what I would tell you is that we would if the million dollars is what we need to achieve, then we're going to manage it to make sure we get

[07:07:24] at least a million dollars over the course of the year. Which means we may freeze positions for longer than we'd like, but if that's what it takes to get us to the number, that's what we'll end up doing. My only hesitancy slash recommendation would be if upon further examination you find out that that is requiring freezes of a duration that are critically not wise to do for some reason. I certainly wouldn't want to force that, right? So there needs to be perhaps a little

[07:08:03] bit of flexibility on discovery here, right? Sure. I mean, absolutely. I mean, it's up to us to to manage um and so certainly if there's if we were to get well into the year and we're finding that we weren't having issues with with that number we would certainly come back to you and we'd either we'd have to get a supplemental or come up with something different yes so so is

[07:08:36] that million dollar is is everybody good with that is that a million dollars it looks like that everybody is good with that number so it takes us to the cip not not to rush how do we feel about the next three does do we want to pull one out or because we've talked a lot i think about those three and i think the plan is kind of i don't know if we need to did anyone have any questions about them or can we just kind of go up to the other items that all depends on whether i'm allowed

[07:09:12] to vote twice for things yeah okay um and then i know that i think the only things that were really different on mine were the addition of the efficiency audit and the Sprout grant if I'm correct yeah just go to that slide if we're finished with the hall we'll go to Amos 4.2 and that one yeah so I think those are the only two that we have not discussed so how does everyone feel about Sprout grant do we want to fund that through fiscal year or just or would that end this year how do

[07:09:50] we feel about appropriating an additional 118,000 to fund Sprout grant through it's just through next fiscal year correct is this will be to fund the position that was defunded with the with um the federal government ending the stuff's program yeah that came up at our uh april 5th work retreat when we all found out at the same time so this is 12 months but the grant has been canceled correct so we have found funding through the end of this fiscal year for

[07:10:27] her or for the position, which would end if there was no additional funding found. Yes, Councilmember Hardy Chandler. And that includes fringe and benefits and all of that stuff, which is folded in there.

[07:10:42] Okay. If we didn't continue with this role, we would lose the outreach programs that we're doing as far as like training, super volunteers, invasive control.

[07:11:01] Can you kind of comment just on some of our highlights of what the role does? I think you're absolutely right. At the April 6th meeting, I actually had a copy of the position's job description. I think the manager actually read it. To your point, I think it was everything and other items that I cannot recall off the top of my head right now, but yes, what you stated and more.

[07:11:27] Are there other costs associated with that role that if we are not thinking about those, then we wouldn't be able to do X, Y, and Z events that are not funded elsewhere?

[07:11:45] Or was that not included in the grant at all and it was just straight up salary and benefits, and then those other things are included somewhere else in like an ESC or public works budget? You know what I'm saying? Okay. Brooke has a cheat sheet that will provide some clarifying information.

[07:12:08] other person and she can't do anything so and i and hopefully this was shared previously i'm sure it was there's a lot of emails among all the things um but the urban forester looked at if the grant were to be canceled but the cip items continue to be funded and the stewardship coordinator was funded there would be a reduction in the amount of services activities that that that position would provide but we would continue to do the invasive management the

[07:12:47] contract services associated with that the education and outreach associated with that role in working with the the mason fellow the volunteer programming the forest rescues program coordinating this year was 213 volunteer hours continuing that into fy26 the residential tree giveaway program tree planting on public property tree watering and establishment care

[07:13:25] and tree removals for invasives or vulnerable species all of those activities would still proceed albeit at a reduced rate with the stewardship coordinator remaining in employment for fy26 councilmember hardy chandler where would all of that fall if not coordinated by this position it would be they would be either canceled or dramatically reduced if it were just other staff

[07:13:58] that were that were responsible for this so to go through that list the invasive management would be heavily reduced more reduced than it would be otherwise education outreach would be heavily reduced things like the force rescues program the residential tree giveaway the city jobs program relationship with that would all be canceled we wouldn't be able to to continue with

[07:14:31] with supporting those activities things like tree planting on public property watering and tree removals would continue but at a reduced rate so i think this is really important because it's earth day um and this community has made a commitment to these things that we've just named which is why we applied for the Sprout Grant. It's why we got the Sprout Grant, because we are a small city, and having someone to engage our community, to run these workshops, to do the training,

[07:15:08] to do the education, it is vital. It truly is vital to what we're trying to do in the city, which is a huge job, especially when it comes to invasives, which are eating the city. Dare I say, zombie apocalypse. But anyway, it seems unusual to carve out this one position, and yet this one position really supports something that repeatedly we say is a priority for the city. Councilmember Hardy Chandler. And I would also add, having worked with a lot of volunteers, the hours that

[07:15:44] good coordination of volunteers contribute to the city far exceed the salary. If we had to pay for all of those hours that would you know more than cover this out so i i question the quality of continuing all of those activities in the absence of this this position i don't see it happening councilmember hall yeah i agree i'm in support of continuing to fund the role i did just want to

[07:16:18] ask are we at all in consideration of reducing the hundred thousand that the eda provided with with the Culinary Careers Collaborative and the Women's Entrepreneurship Program and the Miscellaneous Bucket for Unplanned Studies that would kind of offset this role.

[07:16:35] Could we give any consideration to that? - Well, I would say this about the Culinary Program. It is a job training program. It is a workforce program. And being able to provide that, I think that's the one that we are doing currently with Vienna and George Mason University that is a free program to give people training in restaurant skills.

[07:17:01] And so, you know, it is an opportunity that we would be taking off the table for people to get job training in an industry where there's a lot of openings in their good entry-level positions. The Women's Empowerment Program, I mean, I think those were small grants to women entrepreneurs.

[07:17:22] You know, that could probably be cut. What was the third one? It was just the two. I asked Mr. Bruno, forget the 10%, but if you could come up with \$100,000, where would it come from? And those were the two plus items with the bucket.

[07:17:39] So we could certainly go through and pick other things in there or do the same thing with the 10% on other levels. I mean, I'm trying to do that, trying to look at some of the supplies and stuff. So it was just a question. I didn't really want to touch the lift and fig programs.

[07:17:57] Right, because just like our commitment, you know, if you think about our city council goals, economic development is number one. And if we start removing our investment in economic development, this starts to eat away at the ways we're trying to be the city of preference for businesses being here.

[07:18:18] So that's a tough one. I know. It's just a tough one. We can't say yes to everything. I'm trying to say no to some things. Council Member Hardy Chandler. Could we leave that open and just charge staff with potentially exploring possible offsetting places somewhere in alignment with our goals and priorities just to see if there is anything to offset?

[07:18:41] But I think there is consensus that we do want to maintain this role. Yes, Mr. Hartman. If I may, Madam Mayor. As part of community development planning's 10% potential reduction, we had identified \$139,022 in contract services that could potentially be reduced without an impact to our day-to-day services.

[07:19:10] If the council desires, we could apply that to the difference. That is incredibly generous of you. Yes, Mr. Martinez. so i'm not saying no to my colleague but we're actually trying gwen's actually has a real-time debits and credits so as we're continuing we're seeing either the deficit grow or decrease my suggestion would be i think we have one more item potentially i think on hearing we're in

[07:19:45] agreeance with the 118 or at least leave it in as a placeholder and see where we are and then we have one more item on top of that yeah and then if we can figure out where the variance is either talk about edo and or cdnp and or other and see what we can come up with okay does that sound like a plan getting us to two or three where is that right now two and a half right now councilmember Peterson as long as

[07:20:18] director Hardin is not allowed to sneak out of here before we're done oh yes Council Member McQuillan. I don't know if she'll be happy with me sharing this information, but I did receive some information from the chamber regarding some of the services they may be able to provide or assist with in terms of the women's empowerment and culinary arts.

[07:20:48] So just throwing that out there. She may or may not appreciate that information, but I just thought I would share that with the rest of my council. okay so so are we are so we're set we we've approved the 118 for the sprout full-time position that leaves the last thing that we're looking at which is the additional funding for an efficiency audit councilmember Hardy Chandler so I I think in the spirit of a legacy for the city I think that some sort of

[07:21:27] efficiency audit needs to happen but what I heard the city manager say is there are existing staff resources to do that. I would want to make sure we make use of the resources that we already have before paying for external consultants for that. But I do think the audit itself should happen. And it sounds like that could answer and set up a lot of other future decisions. Councilmember McQuillan. So I had thought about that initially when I

[07:22:03] started to research and understand more about efficiency audits and what other municipalities do. And my concern is when it comes to identifying potential bloat or areas in which we are inefficient, I really don't want to put another staff member in that position. I feel that that puts them in a moral potential dilemma. And I think having an independent audit would be better just since it removes that moral dilemma or the potential for it to come into play.

[07:22:37] That's my thought process on that. Other thoughts on that? Leaving it in, Council Member Peterson? I do think there's merit to an independent audit. I have no idea whether that's the right number for one.

[07:22:53] And I also think there could be merit with perhaps a blend here. There may be some things that could and possibly even should be done in-house. whereas other things might be done independently. But I don't know where that lands in terms of the number, right?

[07:23:10] Maybe it cuts it in half, maybe it doesn't, I don't know. Council Member Amos and then Council Member Hardy-Chamley. Based off of that feedback, maybe it'd be another one of those where we kind of keep it as a placeholder and then adjust it based off of what we determine, what can be done in-house versus what can be done independently.

[07:23:33] Placeholder scenario? I'm amenable to that. the pros of in-house is that you have knowledge of your organization, but to your point, you do lose the independent objectivity. A combination could be very helpful. I would also want to know if there is any available information on the actual savings that could come out

[07:24:06] of an efficiency audit from similarly situated cities is this investment you know it's kind of like when you pay somebody to do your taxes you want the refund to at least cover the taxes right you know the preparation amount so if we're going to do this i would want the savings or at least some indication that for similarly situated cities that the savings that is possible or probable is likely to cover that cost anyway well let me councilmember Hall and council member McQuillan I am big on outside independent independent audits for a

[07:24:45] variety of reasons I think all of which have been stated and covered but I did just want to put my vote in for outside agency because I think it's it's much easier to take a hard look at things and ask the tough questions and not feel like you're going to offend the person that you like but that you think their role is not as productive as it could be um and i just it's just information right how we choose to act with it is an entirely different conversation but i think i i would heavily support an outside audit and not an internal one and if it's only going to be internal then i don't think it's even

[07:25:20] worth doing to be honest council member you don't think it gives us what we want oh you lost your train okay um so so we seem to have settled on where we can do some stuff internal where can should we be independent and kind of revisit at some point like with the community oh yeah okay

[07:25:53] okay oh this was so the other thing with the efficiency audit that i not just about finding money in ways to but it's to be more efficient right so it could be reallocation of an employee into this space or just um working two different departments a little bit differently to become more efficient so i'm i agree i think that i would like to see you know that this is going to benefit us in the future but i think overall since we've never had one and it is something that municipalities it's very common as our cfo had stated previously that they a lot of municipalities

[07:26:32] have this yearly annually so i just think it's worth especially since we seem to be at this crossroads as council member hall had stated where everything feels like it's just coming timing wise on us now and so i think it kind of eliminates our it allows us to govern it gives us recommendations um and allows our staff to do their job as well without tying their resources up and their time up on things you

know like this okay thank you okay yes council member amos yeah and i mean just to quickly add to that i think if i think the intention is to probably do

[07:27:09] more than one of these uh at least over time and maybe i don't know if it'd be annually recurring whatever we're looking like but it would be some kind of recurring cost so seeing where we can reduce to try to get the best deal out of it as well would be good councilman Peterson I would be in favor of this provided that director Hardin can circle back and help us out a little bit with his offer and if there's anything that's still there in the EDA offer from director Bruno it'd be great to see about that also particularly in light of some of the alternatives that were

[07:27:45] raised so love maybe it's time to move to that but that would be my take on what I'd like to see happen here. Okay. So it sounds like everybody wants to leave the 200,000 in as a placeholder for an external or hybrid efficiency audit. All right. So where does that leave us? So tentatively, yes, drum roll. At two and a half cents, no meals tax, no changes from

[07:28:21] what is being discussed, votes up or down, without further clarification from the police chief right now. So taking the full \$1,056,000, we're at a negative variance, meaning we need to come up with money of about \$363,000. Incorporating potentially \$100,000 from EDO, incorporating intentionally \$150,000 or so from CDMP, that's a negative variance of about \$124,000, which I

[07:28:58] think collectively we can figure that out probably go back to the 10 percent cherry pick and hopefully i'm not speaking out of turn manager um cherry pick some items from that if that would be amenable to council two percent no no mra so two percent for so yeah so recap so we can do all this at two and a half cents no meals tax however the million dollar five percent reduction for release is still

[07:29:37] included so if all of that if if to your question was have talks police chief come back what can we live with and or what's that what recommend so if the recommend is that we need all of that million dollars then that's another 1.2 cents now you're up to 3.7 well or yeah I'm just saying that that's fine but But that's how the math works.

[07:30:12] Or you can say 450, 400, and you could put some of that back and be at three.

[07:30:30] I mean, we can still ask the question, and if the answer still is the million is fine, then you're at two and a half. but if she comes back and says anything less than a million then that two and a half is going to have to increase uh that's you know or or you're going to have to cut something else so and i don't think we're back at the drawing board i think you know what i've heard is that people are some of us i don't want to speak for everyone some of us are comfortable with three we're now from two to three

[07:31:05] to two and a half to three so if she comes back with something around that puts us at three not 3.7 but 3 I think we could have a conversation and still consider this work tonight progress councilmember Bates so so if we were to not want to cut any of the million fifty six thousand but we also did not fund the efficiency audit or the sprout grant where would that leave us

[07:31:41] potentially one so just to confirm fully not to do the five percent reduction for police so add back in the million 56 and then do away with the sprout and the efficiency study that would put us at a negative variance of 862 862 000 so basically backed up to around 3.5 cents i think another

[07:32:17] penny that's right okay um so all things considered i guess depending on what we kind of come back with what they come back with but um one more thing uh since it looks like we're talking about

roughly you know a one cent difference that we're down to um what would the increase in the yearly bill if you happen to have it for a median valued home come to for a one cent increase in the tax

[07:32:49] rate. 65? 65, right? What's the median price, 65? \$65 for one penny. Okay. That's for the median, roughly for the median house. Yeah, that sounds about right. So just want to kind of put that out there that, you know, how much do we really want to kind of haggle over \$65 for the

[07:33:28] year for somebody who owns a median valued home? \$650. Yes, I do carry around my tax bill all year with this in case you're wondering so yeah so one so one so on again it depends on what your property is assessed but for a median 650 one penny of real estate 65 dollars your 770. right yeah

[07:34:07] yeah that's i mean that's that would be what the additional cost on an annual basis would be if you did one cent more than what you wanted to do that's what it would be again some will pay less some will pay more depending on what their property is assessed at so mayor no yes yes yes

[07:34:41] okay so uh thank you for all the discussion so where we're at now is two and a half cents based on uh all of the and with the major play the major placeholder being the pd piece which i will have a conversation uh tomorrow with the chief and can report back but we can certainly um prepare what we need to prepare based on the with the two two and a half cents no change the

[07:35:15] meals tax um and have that um for consideration um and then we can show an uh an alternative based on if she if she comes back with an alternative number what that would look like so we can have that ready for may 6. okay yes council member amos and just reiterating so so everyone knows I will be on a work retreat that day, but I will be, I guess, calling in or video in.

[07:35:46] I don't know how that's supposed to, video, video, Cap. Okay, yeah, that's good. You can still participate. It works, it works. This is, I mean, this is good. We'll have different scenarios and options, and I'm sure we will hear some updates between now and May 6th, too, as you find these things out, correct?

[07:36:07] Correct. We can, we'll have something for you this week. Yeah, that's right. I'll, I'll, this is helpful because now, now we know, now we know what you're at. The two and a half cents, no meals tax, we can, we'll, I'll, I'll talk with PD, we'll have that conversation, and then if it's a number other than the million, 56, then we'll also have a discussion on the alternative ways to make up that delta without, and leave the rate at two and a half.

[07:36:43] Okay. But what we're going to do, and what I'm seeing nodding the heads, I just want to confirm, but what we will do is we're, based on this, all the discussion feedback, we're going to prepare ordinances and resolutions, et cetera, to show a real estate tax rate increase of 2.5 cents, and that's the only tax rate increase.

[07:37:08] There'll still be the wastewater and stormwater charges that were proposed, and with these changes, and that's what will be in all of the documentation, which you will, of course, get to see ahead of time. And I will communicate with you later this week.

[07:37:27] It probably will not be tomorrow, but later this week on my conversations with police. depending on what those conversations yield um if we have to if we have any alternative scenarios to but but i but i think we can keep you at two and a half cents and no meals tax change and if that is in these with these general parameters if that's if that's acceptable then that's what we'll be able to prepare for you okay thumbs up do we have thumbs up on this is a plan this is a plan

[07:38:04] councilmember bates sorry one more question just to clarify for those watching from home um that 65 dollars that's looking at the current value of a home for this coming fiscal year right so 2.5 cents versus 3.5 cents for this upcoming budget that's a 65 difference for the median valued home for this current year taking into account um increases in assessments and all that correct i mean that's what a one cent difference would mean the 65 on a median median value of six

[07:38:38] of 650 000 that's correct thank you okay that puts a exclamation point behind that sounds like everybody is a thumbs up they we have our staff has a direction to go in and we will hear something later in the week once we you've talked to captain we will we will we will i will send out uh communication um later this week with confirming the the all the details and this is what we'll have ready for you um for your meeting on may the 6th that sounds excellent um if we're good

[07:39:14] with this then i am now going to reconvene the regular meeting and ask the manager if he has a report out for us uh i do not but let me just say thank you i know this is a lot of work i know you don't necessarily like where we've ended up but and i would agree that it's totally unfair for you to be new and have all this come on you at one time but i appreciate all the discussion all the questions i think you have done very good

[07:39:51] work to get to get us to this point so i think we can we've now can get the ball over the over the goal line now and we will be ready for you on May 6 and as i mentioned earlier we'll continue to do all the things that i mentioned as far as continuing to evaluate and come up and if there are other alternatives that we can because i think we're all mindful of wanting to make the most efficient use of the resources that we have and not you know spend more than we need to

[07:40:28] All right. Council Member McCullough. Just wanted to say Happy Earth Day and congrats to the Chocolate Lovers grant recipients. And i'm looking forward to the History Day and Arbor Day this weekend. Thank you. All right. Council Member Bates. Thank you. Happy Earth Day and happy belated Easter to all who celebrate. Thanks. Council Member Peterson.

[07:40:53] I want to thank everybody who stays up late to watch us, and in the case of today, started early. It's been a long day, but really thank everybody who's contacted me by email, and I can't count the number of emails I have received, but I very much appreciate them.

[07:41:16] I've done my very best to respond to everyone and hope that you will continue to be in touch and let me know how you feel about things and what you need to be well represented. in the city your voices really do make a difference and it's been a great help to me to understand your perspective on things the other thing i would just say on a personal note is i wanted to take the opportunity to wish my mother her happy 96th birthday birthday mom council

[07:41:50] member Hardy Chandler so i want to thank my colleagues for the collegial discussion around the budget and around these very challenging issues, it's been a journey, but it is what we signed up for when we put our hat in the ring, and i do want to actually encourage other people to run for office to experience this dynamic.

[07:42:17] I do want to highlight that it seems like every few days, or at least every week, i at least get some information about one of our departments or an individual receiving an award.

[07:42:34] We have award-winning staff, and it's constant. And i try to think of different ways to say congratulations, but mostly i'm really proud of the work that's done by those who serve this city. That can't

be underestimated. So I really want to acknowledge all of the staff who are constantly winning awards, achieving accreditation, achieving acknowledgements, not just from us, but from national entities, and that's something that we should all, as residents of Fairfax, be very proud of. Congratulations to everyone for the awards that are won, that have been won,

[07:43:14] and that will be won. Councilmember Hall. Thank you. I will echo your sentiments. This has been a night. Well, it's been an afternoon. That turned into a night, but I do think we did good work here. I think we all contributed, we all worked hard, we all helped, and I hope that the community can see that we truly did try and we got it down from a lot to, I hope, what is a reasonable number for our community to be able to manage. Just a couple other comments. I'm sorry, I don't have the name of the poetry student, but your poem is beautiful. Congratulations, and thank you so much

[07:43:51] for being willing to come up and read it, and thank you to teacher Faiza alum for bringing forth your wonderful students as usual I did just want to point out that we have wonderful footpaths in our city I know it's not a trails conversation it's just a statement in general I'm still continuing to learn where some of them are and I am enjoying them and I would like to see more of them so not everything needs to be a transportation project but I think that there are definitely opportunities that we can build into a little bit more connectivity in some different ways.

[07:44:28] Just to one point, and it's really just because a community member spoke up tonight, I think it's important to note that when we ran, we had absolutely no idea what a proposed budget was going to look like for the city.

[07:44:44] I don't think any staff members knew what a proposed budget was going to look like. So when we hired our interim city manager, Brian Foster, he came in, he looked at the numbers, he came up with a budget. So the rest of us up here, your council members, we sat by, we learned what that proposed budget was.

[07:45:04] We've been working, we've been talking. I don't know what stage in the game people are in watching all this, but we didn't do anything up here to make a budget. We're working with a budget that was presented and trying to do our best to incorporate all the things that we think are important and things that maybe are not as important.

[07:45:22] So just want to be sure on that process. Finally, I want to thank all my colleagues for not supporting a meal's tax. I was the child of a small business owner. My parents, my dad owned a bagel bakery. My mom did too, but she was a teacher, and an Italian bread bakery.

[07:45:40] So I know what that's like, and I know that when you raise the prices of flour and sugar and butter and all the things, it really does make things extremely expensive. So I want to thank our city businesses for coming out, for speaking up, for all of the signatures and petitions that were passed out tonight. I know that's a lot of work.

[07:45:56] I know it's a stress and a strain on you, your business, your employees, and your patrons that come, quite frankly. So thank you for doing what you do, and I do want to agree with Doug Cox. We all like to go out to eat here in our city, and so if we are able to do so and can support our local businesses, please go out and do the best that you can for them so that we can all try to ensure that they're still here.

[07:46:23] And one other just question, point of clarification, is it possible to allow video messages for residents if they're not able to come and be at our meetings? I was told the county does that and then they

play them at the meeting.

[07:46:40] Is that something we could look into or consider rather than sending an email, but that way they know that their voice is being heard and read and voices, faces being seen? Is it possible? I'll look to Brian, but I believe the question is yes.

[07:46:57] The concern we have from a staff perspective is we would... I'm going to get your mouth moved. You're right. Oh. What am I doing wrong? We would want to see those ahead of time, so there would have to be a deadline so that we could vet them.

[07:47:14] That's the same reason why we don't allow people to bring forward PowerPoint presentations or give us a flash drive, because we have no idea what's on that, and we wouldn't put it out to the public. Without vetting at first, and I understand that but if they're here in person and they start going off the rails What do you do?

[07:47:38] But you'd kind of mute their microphone or similar to what you would do on a video I would imagine I have no problem with them being viewed in advance as long as we Understand that we're not filtering and if there's something that's inappropriate Then it would still be shared with the council just not publicly shared with council Maybe if that's you mentioned that you had heard that this was happening in the county. Yeah, we'll take a look Video test video testimony. Yes pre-recorded the day before Cannot pop up the same day. So we'll look at what the county is doing. Okay. I just think a great opportunity for our residents. Sure. Okay. Thank you

[07:48:19] There we go. I don't know what's going on now. Okay. It's that time of night. Cool So just wanted to thank you all we got through it brutal, but we got through it wanted to thank staff I know we've been spamming you so appreciate all the updates and the random scenarios and the point ones and point twos also want to thank Brian Foster our city manager for kind of taking the bull by the horns after kind of getting thrown into a quite a situation especially with a new council and then all the things that we have coming up with CIP and all that stuff so wanted to thank everyone involved there I'll be sending out an

[07:48:57] email later so just wanted to let y'all know in advance I think that after the budget is approved our one of our first work sessions needs to be something on structure rules and procedures reviewing Roberts rule of orders all those things so I'll be sending that email probably tonight or tomorrow in addition to some of the fun events coming up just wanted to shout out it is National Poetry Month as a poet myself wanted to just throw that out there and also month of the military child so shout out to all my fellow military kids there we go you had japan that was pretty cool uh and then also because i know i feel jennifer beaming into

[07:49:36] me right now wanted to make sure that uh spotlight on the arts is recognized because it is coming up on april 25th uh which is going to be next friday from no this friday this friday my bad i forgot what day it was uh from 7 p.m to 8 30 p.m uh it is on our calendars so uh it is a public meeting because there will probably be quite a few of us there so uh be sure to attend and have a fun time

[07:49:59] All right. I really don't have a lot to add. Just to echo the sentiments of everyone here on the dais, it's been a lot of work for our staff, for our city manager. Everyone here has done an awful lot of work. It has been a lot. It's been a heavy learning curve for everyone. Even Billy and I who've been through two budgets together, there's always a lot to understand about this process. And I think the public has been right there with us. They certainly were tonight.

[07:50:29] It is Spotlight on the Arts this Friday at 7 at Sherwood Center. We have History Day coming up on Saturday, and these are the things that make our community special, and I appreciate our employees who make those events special for the residents and for the visitors from outside our city who cherish these events as much as we do.

[07:50:51] And with that, I am now going to go into a closed meeting. So there you go. We're going into a closed meeting. That means some of us go and some of us stay. All right.

[07:51:09] Bye.



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