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## City of Fairfax City Council Special Meeting and Work Session, Tuesday, February 17, 2026

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Place City Hall, City of Fairfax, Virginia  
Length 3h 30m (video)

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[00:00:15] Good evening. I would like to call this special meeting of February 17th, 2026 to order. For those of you joining us, instead of celebrating the Lunar New Year, the Year of the Horse, or Mardi Gras, welcome. Welcome to our special meeting here on February 17th.

[00:00:34] Ms. Shinneberry, what is the first agenda item? Our first item is the consideration of a resolution to endorse the city's application to the Transportation Planning Board's Regional Roadway Safety Program. I'll recognize Wendy Sanford, Transportation Director, to provide the staff presentation. Good evening, Mayor, members of the City Council. I have an extremely brief presentation to introduce this item. The city is applying or proposing to apply for technical assistance that would be administered through COG. Technical assistance is not actually money that we received. The COG has a bench of contractors that they use, and if you are awarded technical

[00:01:12] assistance, they match you up with one of their consultants, and then COG pays the bill. So that's how technical assistance works. They have two programs that they utilize. They have the Transportation Land Use Connections Program and the Regional Roadway Safety Program, both of which provide technical assistance.

[00:01:28] We have received both grants before. Most recently, we received funding for the Roadway Safety Program to do the Main Street Safety Audit. I'll mention that more in a minute. What we are proposing to apply for is another regional roadway safety program, technical assistance for Pickett Road.

[00:01:47] And as I just mentioned, they just fund, they provide the funding through technical assistance for planning or to address roadway safety issues. The FY27 deadline is coming up on February 27th. What is a road safety audit?

[00:02:03] This is a formal safety audit of a road or an intersection that is done by a multidisciplinary independent firm. They are looking at what the road safety issues are and identifying opportunities for improvement. So a road safety audit is actually a defined thing, and there are guidelines for it, and that's what is shown on the screen.

[00:02:25] The proposed project area for our safety audit is Pickett Road between Fairfax Boulevard, Route 50, and Main Street, Route 236. It is shown on the screen in the red oval. And why Pickett Road? Why have we chosen this?

[00:02:41] So in the comprehensive plan, it is specifically stated that we want to look at improving safety and efficiency on Pickett Road. We have received a number of emails from residents with their concerns and observed risk factors. We've also looked at the crash history and also taking into account that there are a number of redevelopments that have occurred and that are that are occurring presently and so looking at that holistically that is the purpose of the road safety audit is to take into account all of the factors that are occurring on the roadway and see if there are proactive things we can do to address them we have done a road safety audit as I've

[00:03:18] mentioned on Main Street this is available on the website and Chloe Ritter did a presentation about this about a year ago when we finalized this audit and it provided an evaluation of existing conditions it looked at vehicle speeds volumes looked at pedestrian comfort and it looked at some of the intersections and it provided a number of recommendations for both short and long-term improvements and we are already taking a couple of those projects and moving them into construction so we are received funding to improve the pedestrian crossings to improve lighting and we are currently doing a constant

[00:03:56] plan to look at the intersection of Main Street and Lindhurst so we are taking what we received from that last safety audit and already moving forward with it. The hope would be to receive this funding for Pickett, this technical assistance, and to do the same thing. How this is different from Move Fairfax? Move Fairfax, that is a safety action plan. We are looking more holistically, more higher level at the entire city. The idea of this roadway safety audit, if we receive it, is to really drill down and specifically look at all of Pickett road. So in terms of next steps, what we are seeking this evening is the council endorsement

[00:04:30] of our application, again, due February 27th. Then, once it is received, the staff at the Transportation Planning Board will make recommendations. Ultimately, the TPB would vote to award-recommended projects. Award would occur this spring. This is technical assistance that we would receive starting in July. So this is something we would receive in the next fiscal year. And then once selected. We would continue to engage residents. We would provide that input that we receive, both input that we have already received. We have a number of emails, and I know that the City Council has also received a number of emails. We would take all of that input plus

[00:05:10] new input, provide that to the consultant to inform the study, and then the consultant would complete a draft. We would present that to the City Council, and then there would be endorsement of a final study. So that's the proposed trajectory of this if we were to receive the technical assistance that concludes my presentation happy to take any questions thank you for that uh council member amos thank you for the presentation no questions just a comment we've all received a number of emails regarding picket road and safety at this intersection so i think the timeliness of this is perfect uh greatly appreciate your effort on this and i'm assuming

[00:05:46] part of the outreach to residents would be to the adjacent hoas along that road so thank you very much council member Peterson well I am very strongly in support of this and I think everybody is acquainted with Pickett Road and what that experience is like and I think that the staff report here is as lengthy as the issues in it are that described the risk factors that need to be addressed I'm not sure it actually covered everything because this is an interesting part of town just a couple clarifying questions first I agree with council member Amos the time

[00:06:21] is of the essence. I like the timeline of this, which I understand to be a relatively rapid turnaround in terms of the study, and I think that's very badly needed given the issues. Just maybe a geographical question on the scope of this. Where exactly is the start and stop on the north and south end of this? And I'm asking because partly how does this include the 50 intersection for instance and then how far does it go on the south end so we would have the opportunity if we're awarded the funding to determine the

[00:06:58] limits but I would anticipate that it would include both intersections and we did already look at the intersection of 236 and Main Street as part of the Main Street so we'll look at that again but in the context more of picket okay well that is good to know that we've got a little bit of flexibility because there's again a lot going on here clarifying question we have we have had a lot of input councilmember McQuillman and I Actually spent a long session with many residents. I believe councilmember Amos may have had a visit as well But we've really and then that's just at the the south end of picket

[00:07:33] We've had expressions of interest now for a stretch at the north end as well So there's a lot of interest by residents In making this happen and being involved and just to clarify My understanding is procedurally what we're going to do here is we're going to be including the feedback we've received from residents as a part of our application so that that's part of the scope that we're putting before the TPB for this.

[00:08:01] So I really appreciate what you're doing with that. The residents have wanted that very badly. I don't think there's going to be any shortage of interest in engagement on this issue, and I think they are really very much appreciative that we're getting an early start on making that happen.

[00:08:16] And so I'm hoping third time is a charm here and we can make this thing happen. But again, I want to thank you guys for hopping on this and I'm crossing fingers and toes that this will happen. Council Member McQuillan.

[00:08:32] Thank you, Mayor. I have a question about the timing, the schedule. When would the study be taking place? So the technical assistance would become available to us in the new fiscal year. So they usually reach out to us July, August.

[00:08:49] So most likely we'd get started in that time frame. And when we did Main Street, it took about six months total from start to end. Perfect. So I wanted to just confirm that the Ice Field renovation will be complete at that point, and people will be visiting. I want regular traffic.

[00:09:06] Yes, I understand. The Ice Park is scheduled to be finished in the summertime. Awesome. Thank you. My last question is, do you know what consultant we would plan to hire for this? So, again, we don't directly hire. How this works is we receive technical assistance from COG.

[00:09:24] COG has a bench of contractors. And so what happens typically is that they take the pot of awarded projects. So there might be, let's just say, for simplicity, five projects, five consultants. And they sort of do a match. We have a little bit of input, but we are not directly putting out a solicitation.

[00:09:40] Excellent. Thank you so much. Appreciate that. Councilmember Hull. Yeah, thank you. So just a quick question on how this may complement or not the Pickett Road Trail. that is proposed? Would this do anything with regard to pedestrian safety and things like that?

[00:09:58] So I just wasn't sure how the sidewalks were a concern. It will look at pedestrian safety, so it will understand that their picket trail will be there, but it will also look at sidewalks and how pedestrians are moving across picket as well. But these are somewhat separate. It's really looking at the roadway. Okay. Okay. Thank you. Sure. Any other questions? Yeah. Mr. Alexander.

[00:10:25] So, as it relates to the information that has been collected, if Council would be so kind as to send me whatever additional material they might have from the community, that would be helpful. I don't want to miss out on anything. I know you've had a lot of engagement around this, and I'd be happy to pass it along to staff.

[00:10:40] So, thank you. Any other questions or comments? Councilmember Amos. This is just more a process, clarity question. So, is the plan, do we just go around and just say if we're in support of it, or? No. So, this is a special meeting, not a work session.

[00:10:56] we haven't retired into the no no no no this is this is a weird thing so let's all just learn together so we're in a special meeting so there will be a motion you'll vote on it at some point when we go through the things we need to vote on we will retire into a work session so we're in a different room doing a different thing in a different way but you're good okay so is there a motion council member hardy chandler i move to approve a resolution to authorize the city manager to submit a letter of endorsement for the city's fy 2027 application to the regional roadway safety program, including recent citizen input and requests for key issues to be considered

[00:11:34] in the application and proposed scope of work, and noting that the city will provide all public input to the selected consultant to inform the evaluation and transportation safety study. Is there a second? Second. Motion has been made by Council Member Hardy-Chandler and seconded by Council Member Peterson.

[00:11:52] Is there any discussion on the motion? Seeing none, a roll call vote. Council Member Amos? Aye. Council Member Hall? Aye. Council Member Hardy-Chandler? Aye. Council Member Peterson? Aye. Council Member Bates? Aye. Council Member McQuillan? Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

[00:12:08] We'll go to the next item, which is a consideration of a resolution endorsing an application to the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's Transit Ridership Incentive Program. I'll

recognize Wendy Sanford, Transportation Director, again, to provide a staff presentation.

[00:12:25] Mayor. Thank you. Thank you. This will be very brief. The city is proposing to apply for a second trip grant. And so the city has already received one, and this provides replacement for fair revenue when we are in a zero-fair policy.

[00:12:42] This is really as a follow-up to the November 4th work session where we discuss potential options. And I realize that you all have not made a final decision on that. That would be made as part of the budget deliberations. That said, the grant cycle is open for us to apply for this funding.

[00:12:58] To be perfectly honest, I'm not sure if jurisdictions are eligible to receive a second trip grant. No one has applied, but I'm going to. Why not? Because the worst they could say is, no, you've already received one. But this would then, I think, sweeten the pot if you all decide to continue with the zero-fair policy for QBUS going forward.

[00:13:19] And so the presentation that we gave back in November was attached to your packet. It is available online. I am not giving that presentation. I am just reminding you that we discussed this a few months ago. And just a reminder that we suspended fare collection back in 2020. We formally adopted a zero fare program back in 2022.

[00:13:39] That pilot now ends in June 2026. So we are here reevaluating fare policy options. What a TRIP program does is it provides step-down funding. They provide 80% of the fare revenue in the first year.

[00:13:55] that was lost based on the so in the last grant was based on 2019 fair revenue and when I submit this next application it would be based on what we would project would be our fair revenue in this last fiscal year even though we didn't collect revenue year two provides 60% funding three is 30 and then in year four zero percent so it's really just to offset and encourage offset that fair revenue loss and to encourage jurisdictions to remain fair free as you know our ridership has increased steadily since 2020.

[00:14:28] We haven't, since we've been zero fare, our ridership has increased 53%. So I think we have a strong case to make to DRPT that this is a really great return on an investment. So what I'm proposing is that we submit an application to renew our TRIP grant.

[00:14:43] Again, unclear whether a jurisdiction can receive a second one, but I'm going to try. And as I mentioned, the application would be based on updated ridership and fare projections. That was again. These these are the numbers they were provided in the last presentation That concludes my presentation. I know I ran through that pretty quickly, but I think it's self-explanatory questions councilmember Peterson Well, I want to reach back if I might something I Didn't include in our last agenda item. I think I misspoke when I Didn't include all of the council members who may have been part of the community contact

[00:15:24] process at pick a drone i know council member hall's been involved in that i know others may have as well but i didn't want to leave any of the council members out of that process because i know that it's been very active with everybody thank you council member mcquillan sorry have to switch gears um are there any unforeseen or any foreseen or potential issues if we receive the grant but don't accept it or decide not to use it in some manner if we were selected for the second trip grant, we would find out sometime in the spring it would coincide with budget adoption, and so we would have the opportunity to say we're not interested

[00:16:03] if you all decide to take a different direction. But I didn't want to miss this window to potentially receive this money if we could. I appreciate that. Thank you so much. Council Member Hardy-Chandler? If you know, can you speak to why jurisdictions haven't applied for second grants, or would have been the hurdles or barriers to that? I don't know.

[00:16:22] When I reached out to the staff about this, they said, well, we don't know any other jurisdictions that have asked. And I said, okay, well, I'm going to ask. So that's it. I don't know the answer to that. Well, let me applaud you for going ahead and trying. It's sort of the Oliver Twist moment. Please, sir, may I have another?

[00:16:45] Okay, Council Member Amos. Council Member Hall. Thank you. Thank you, Council Member Peterson. That was very kind. A bit of an unrelated question, but can you just remind us on how you calculate ridership for for the regard to the q bus trips oh how do we we have automatic passenger counters on our bus so they detect when a person gets on the bus and when they a person gets off the bus so we have that's how we know what our ridership is and we also know it by stop because it detects when a person gets on or off at a stop so we know on's at a stop and off's at a stop okay but you don't

[00:17:21] necessarily know and i wouldn't expect it to that i get on it stop a and i stay on through step f no we don't have individual ridership information like that no okay so but you do know how many people are on a bus at any given time then throughout the time okay that's correct that's very helpful thank you councilmember amos i just wanted to say thank you again for doing this i know we had a discussion on this back in november with the q q bus and i think there was expressed interest on trying to keep the zero fare option going uh juice for the squeeze as we described it and I suspect that if we are able to pull this off and get a second one there

[00:18:00] probably won't be a third so just consideration of future outlook if we were to be awarded what that would look like in year four just so we have a strategy moving forward okay other questions or comments councilmember Peterson I would only say that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush so go for it anyone else of course I'm a I'm a longtime fan of the Q, one of the original riders from 1981, and I say that with pride, but I think we need to look at the Q bus and our overall goals, missions, and vision for the city, which is to get people, that ridership, regardless of whether they pay or they don't, meets our

[00:18:39] long-term goals of getting people around the city without cars, so, you know, when we see that ridership go up, we have to understand that our whole goal for the city is to get people on buses or bikes or sidewalks. And so if introducing a fare, and we have to think about that, ends up reducing the number of people who ride, then that's why we talked about is the juice worth the squeeze if we make a little bit of money, but we don't actually feed our long-term goals of being a community that uses transit. And again, the free Q bus means people of all ages

[00:19:16] can use it and that is students as well as senior citizens and everybody in between so very interested in seeing if we can move this forward and i appreciate you asking so i'm going to ask is there a motion council member hardy chandler i move to approve a resolution endorsing the city's application to the virginia department of rail and public transportations transit ridership incentive program is there a second second a motion has been made by council member hardy-chandler and seconded by council member peterson is there any discussion on the motion

[00:19:51] seeing none 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 aye motion passed unanimously we'll go on to the next item which is a consideration of a resolution to adopt the affordable housing strategic plan i'll recognize jamie ergas our housing programs manager to provide the staff report.

[00:20:22] Good evening, Mayor and Council. As Melissa just shared, I'm here in regards to the Affordable Housing Strategic Plan. This was actually a consent agenda item in the January meeting. The snow happened. This was pushed to the special meeting. So I'm really just providing a short introduction and the highest level refresher.

[00:20:42] TPMA, the consultant that developed the Affordable Housing Strategic Plan, brought this forward in November for a work session discussion. They started working on the plan about a year and a half ago, in summer 2024. They conducted in-depth analysis and research, coupled with extensive community engagement. So they did a couple initiatives to outreach the community, including a survey which received almost 700 responses. One key finding of the research was that 50% of our renters and about 20% of our homeowners in the city of Fairfax are cost burdened, meaning that they pay more than

[00:21:18] 30% of their income towards their housing. This is just one of the key findings that I think highlights the importance of this topic. The plan itself has three core focus areas. Affordable housing development, affordable housing preservation, as well as strengthening community services and programs. So really two-thirds of the program, the plan itself, focusing on existing programs, right, or existing housing. I would like to say that the affordable housing strategic plan is a milestone. It's the first of its kind in the city. We've also reached a milestone. The housing division is now a year old the housing and healthy communities advisory board is now a year old

[00:21:55] the plan does identify goals strategies and actions as well as potential partners to engage best practices to explore and timelines to consider in the implementation of the plan adoption of the plan establishes a policy framework and direction it does not automatically authorize specific projects funding allocations or regulatory changes so as noted in the staff report for this evening, recommending the adoption of the Affordable Housing Strategic Plan. Alternative actions are to not adopt or to defer. That concludes the introduction. Okay. Are there questions of Ms. Ergis about this? Council Member Peterson? Well, just a comment, and that is thank you very much

[00:22:34] for this. I appreciate also the opportunity that has been created to have some Q&A with staff, you know, leading up to this. And this is, as I understand at the beginning of something that will need continued work and attention. If I could use the baseball analogy, it sounds like we're somewhere around first base, but we've got more work to do to get all the way around to the home plate. So that's going to take some time and some effort and some support that we provide to you to help you get to that finish line.

[00:23:07] And that would include things like targets, but we're a ways off from being at that point. But what we do have before us is a framework here to be able to initiate that process so that it doesn't have to be further delayed in order to do that under the framework. So if I'm understanding this correctly, it sounds like a very constructive foundational starting place for us to move forward.

[00:23:30] Thank you. Any other questions or comments? The only thing I would say is it's a living document because some of the things that are happening in the General Assembly may or may not impact it, and that's every year things that happen in the General Assembly may or may not impact the tools we have.

[00:23:47] So, I think this is a great start. I mean, this is a great foundation. You've done an excellent job. Our consultants did an excellent job in gathering the research and talking to the community about what our priorities are. So, I appreciate all the work. Councilmember Hardy-Chandler, is there a motion?

[00:24:07] I move that the City Council approve the resolution to adopt the City of Fairfax Affordable Housing Strategic Plan as presented, directing city staff to use the plan as a strategic framework to guide future study, prioritization, and policy development of affordable housing-related policies, programs, and initiatives subject to available resources and future city council approval.

[00:24:32] Is there a second? Second. A motion has been made by Council Member Hardy-Chandler and seconded by Council Member Peterson. Is there any discussion on the motion? Seeing none, a roll call vote. Council Member Amos? Aye. Council Member Hall? Aye. Council Member Hardy-Chandler? Aye. Council Member Peterson?

[00:24:48] Aye. Council Member Bates? Aye. Council Member McQuillan? Aye. Motion passed unanimously. I will now recess the special meeting to go into the work session. So now our meeting matches the room. And I will recognize Ms. Shinneberry for the first work session item for discussion.

[00:25:06] All right. Our first item is a discussion on the development of the green building policy. I will recognize Stephanie Kupka, our sustainability program manager, for the staff presentation.

[00:25:24] Good evening, Mayor and City Council members. We're here tonight to discuss the proposed green building policy that will establish clear building performance standards that will save on long-term operating costs, make our city more resilient, and ensure that the buildings we approve today align with our sustainability and climate goals while also remaining affordable and high-performing for decades to come.

[00:26:02] Tonight, I'll walk you through the background information on the development of the green building policy, the proposed standards for both the public sector and the private sector, the incentives that were evaluated during development, the administrative framework and costs for implementing the green building policy, and then finally, we'll be seeking council feedback and direction on how we should move forward with the green building policy.

[00:26:34] I'll first start off with some background information. You may be asking yourself, why does this policy matter now? So one building decision today locks in 30 to 50 years of operating costs.

[00:26:52] We're talking energy, water, maintenance, and repairs. At the same time, we're facing rising utility costs. Just last week, we learned from Dominion Energy, they're proposing to increase what they're charging for electricity by 32%.

[00:27:12] starting July 1st. And this is not going to be a one-time increase. Based on Dominion's latest integrated resource plan, electricity rates could double over the next 20 years. And this is mainly due to the data centers. It's been uncontrolled and rapidly increasing. So our energy demand is going to be skyrocketing in the years to come, which of course is going to impact our rates and have an impact on our fiscal sustainability here in the city.

[00:27:47] On top of the rising costs, we're also experiencing high development pressure, which is putting a lot of strain on our environmental resources, such as our urban forests and our streams and habitat. So if we continue with business as usual, we'll continue to see degradation of our environmental resources.

[00:28:07] We're also seeing increasing risks associated with climate change. We're seeing increased flooding, more frequent and intense weather events, and extreme heat days. This policy is about responding proactively to these challenges.

[00:28:24] We want to improve our resilience, reduce our long-term costs, and deliver on our environmental fiscal goals the city has already adopted. So now is the right time to act. With continued growth and new development, every project that moves forward without clear performance expectations increases our long-term costs, not just for building owners, but for the city infrastructure, utilities, and taxpayers.

[00:28:51] This policy gives us a consistent framework for planning for the rising energy costs, and so we can make smarter decisions up front and lock in savings for decades to come. The development of the green building policy has been in progress for years, starting back in 2019.

[00:29:23] It was developed as directed by the City Council in 2020 and also developed in accordance with plans that have been adopted over the years, which include the Comprehensive Plan, the City's Environment and Sustainability Stewardship Goal, the Virginia High Performance Building Act, which is the state's green building policy law that we need to follow for our public buildings, and the adoption of the 2024 strategic plan.

[00:29:47] Staff has spent years researching best practices, working with consultants, engaging with stakeholders, and aligning this policy with state and regional best practices. In February 2025, the draft green building policy was ready to go to council for consideration for adoption, but unfortunately at that time, the previous city manager had paused that presentation due to fiscal concerns. The green building policy scope. So, the green building policy

[00:30:24] establishes green building performance standards for both the public and private sectors. So, the public sector includes new construction, major renovations, and existing buildings. And for the private sector, it includes new construction and major renovations. So, what does the city get for this investment? On the public sector side of things, it protects our own assets. Implementing the policy can deliver substantial cost savings and long-term benefits. So let's break it down.

[00:30:56] So a LEED certified building typically sees 20 to 30 percent lower energy costs, 11 percent savings on water bills due to low flow fixtures, rainwater harvesting, and native landscaping, and a 10 percent, 10 to 20 percent reduced maintenance due to the durable high quality materials and smart building systems. The policy also encourages renewable energy, installing solar, reduces electricity costs 20 to 50 percent over 20 years. Also, the policy

[00:31:32] improves indoor environmental quality. And studies have shown that LEED-certified buildings lead to a 6 to 9 percent improved staff productivity due to that improved environmental indoor air quality. And this policy improves waste reduction due to reduced construction waste and sustainable material choices. On the private side of things, this policy creates clear expectations with developers and provides multiple benefits to the city. So this policy

[00:32:06] helps us stay competitive with the region. Right now, we're behind with what others are doing in the region. So this catches us up with the other policies that have been adopted in the region. And it gets us higher quality development without us having to invest capital funds.

[00:32:24] It reduces the development impacts on our tree canopy, water resources, and habitat. It reduces demand on public infrastructure and utilities. So if you think about it, it lowers the long-term strain on energy, water, and our stormwater utilities.

[00:32:42] And it improves building quality, comfort, and resilience. And it aligns investment with council-adopted environmental and economic goals. And another thing that it does, it helps promote access to the commercial PACE program that the city adopted last year. So right now, developers have access to low-cost, long-term fixed-rate financing that they can use to hire green building consultants and engineers to implement the green building policy.

[00:33:11] So we have financing in place to help our development community. The green building policy is a practical tool to deliver on city-adopted goals. First, I will focus on climate and environmental stewardship.

[00:33:29] This policy helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improves energy efficiency, encourages renewables, reduces water consumption citywide, also strengthens protection for our natural resources by reducing stormwater impacts, reducing light pollution, and supporting environmentally sensitive design.

[00:33:48] Second is resilient and healthy communities. This policy improves indoor air quality and occupant health. At the same time, it enhances resilience to heat, flooding, and extreme weather. Third is smart growth. This supports innovation in building design and construction.

[00:34:07] It also encourages growth that aligns with long-term infrastructure, capacity, utility systems, and natural resource constraints. Fourth is fiscal responsibility. As I mentioned a little earlier, for the public sector, it lowers long-term operating costs.

[00:34:23] And for the private sector, it reduces long-term infrastructure costs and strains that the city provides. And finally, leadership. Adopting this policy, like I mentioned before, catches up what is happening in the region and aligns with regional best practices and state law. So in summary, this policy helps take planning policies into measurable results in our community. The city has a couple climate action targets. So we have a goal to reduce

[00:34:59] greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050 and achieve 100% renewable electricity for city operations by 2035 and citywide by 2050. As shown on the pie chart on the right, this shows how our greenhouse gas emissions are attributed to different sectors. About half of our greenhouse gas emissions are attributed to buildings. And of that, 25% of our emissions come from commercial buildings, which is why it's so critical that we have green building standards for the private sector, specifically targeted at commercial buildings.

[00:35:37] And to be able to achieve these targets, not only do we need to adopt a green building policy to help achieve them, but there are other actions the city's taking in the future, such as developing a climate action plan, EV readiness plan, and solar site assessments. So it's just one of the many tools in our toolbox to achieve our goals.

[00:35:57] For the timeline, the development of this policy has been a deliberate and inclusive process. From stakeholder committee formation in 2023, hiring a consultant to help us with developing the policy, conducting research, holding council work sessions, public meetings, obtaining advisory committee

input, developing multiple draft iterations, the policy reflects an extensive review and refinement and stakeholder engagement.

[00:36:31] I'll next talk about our research and community engagement procedures. This policy is grounded in best practices. Staff worked with Cadmus Group, our consultant, to evaluate peer jurisdictions, the Virginia Building Codes, the Virginia High Performance Building Act, which I mentioned previously is the state mandated green building standards we need to meet for public buildings, and we also reviewed nationally recognized green building standards.

[00:37:04] I was also happy that the city was selected to be a member of the USGBC's Green Building Policy Accelerator, where the city has received free technical assistance from USGBC and other communities throughout the nation so we can make improvements to our green building policy.

[00:37:25] This slide shows how the city of Fairfax proposed green building policy compares to other green building policies in Virginia. In Fairfax County, for their public sector green building policy, they strive for net zero energy, LEED Gold with improved energy performance.

[00:37:47] For their private sector, they require LEED Certified for rezonings or added density. Arlington County, they require net zero or LEED Silver for their public buildings. And for private sector, they have an incentive program for density bonuses if they achieve lead gold or beyond.

[00:38:10] For the city of Alexandria, they actually just adopted a brand new policy. So this information is out of date. So just a few weeks ago, they adopted a brand new green building policy, which strengthens their standards even further, focusing more on energy and resiliency factors.

[00:38:32] The City of False Church, for their public sector, they aim for LEED Gold. And then for the private sector, they require LEED Gold for rezonings and special exceptions. So these examples show that green building policies are now standard throughout the region.

[00:38:48] And it shows that the City of Fairfax is not out in the front of things with this proposed policy. It would then catch us up with what's going on in the region. So that way we have the same level of quality, efficiency, and long-term performance that's on par with the region.

[00:39:09] Next is stakeholder engagement. For stakeholder engagement, we had both an internal and external advisory committees. For internal, we had representatives for various departments and divisions within the city. And for the external Green Building Advisory Committee, it included members of the development community, subject matter experts, members of the ESC, and the general public.

[00:39:34] Input from these groups were used in the very beginning of the development of the policy and helped guide the development and made a significant impact on what it is today. We also did a lot of public engagement.

[00:39:51] We had over 250 stakeholders engaged throughout the process. We held meetings with the city council, planning commission, EDEA, ESC, and PREM. We also had a public meeting and presented at the development industry meeting over the summer.

[00:40:08] Plus, we tabled at public events and had an online engaged Fairfax page. Public input played a very important role in the improvements that we made to the draft plan that we published. Overall, stakeholders helped make the policy what it is today to make it more feasible, equitable, and implementable.

[00:40:30] So how did feedback shape the policy? First, we took that feedback to balance ambition with feasibility. We focused on the high-impact practices to advance our goals while making sure it's still feasible with our development community.

[00:40:49] For building size requirements and eligibility, we specifically included that schools will be part of the green building policy based on stakeholder feedback, that it was very important that schools were developed sustainably. We also chose the building size to align with the state mandate, the Virginia High Performance Building Act, so that way we're in alignment with state law.

[00:41:17] For green space and tree canopy, we heard a lot from our stakeholders that they want to make sure that development is not negatively impacting our natural environment and that we're preserving our tree canopy and improving biodiversity in our community, and they want to improve resiliency.

[00:41:34] So special credit requirements were added to the green building policy to meet those needs of the community for that area. We also made sure that the green building policy was in alignment with the Virginia High Performance Building Act and peer jurisdictions.

[00:41:53] We evaluated various incentives. The tax abatement incentive came out as the most attractive to our development community. However, we heard on the flip side of things from our residents that there were some fiscal concerns with that and also equity.

[00:42:10] So there was mixed feedback on that incentive. We also heard feedback that the community wanted more detailed technical definitions, so we made those improvements. And then we also simplified the certification process to reduce the administrative burdens on the city and to streamline procedures to make it easier for developers to be involved with the process.

[00:42:35] So lots of valuable feedback, which we improved within the draft final policy. In the next few slides, I'll discuss the proposed green building standards for the public sector. So this includes any facility that the city owns and operates.

[00:42:53] So the public sector buildings applicability, so it applies to existing buildings that are 1,000 square feet or greater, new construction or major renovations for buildings that are 5,000 square feet or greater, and then major interior renovations that are 5,000 square feet or greater.

[00:43:16] So this is an example that shows the Bledham Civil War Interpreter Center. So to get an idea of size, this is approximately 3,600 square feet. So for the existing buildings that are 1,000 square feet or greater, what the policy proposes is that we would conduct energy benchmarking and audits.

[00:43:42] Those buildings would be retrofitted to achieve LEED operations and maintenance silver, and that annually we disclose the energy performance data to the public. For new construction and major renovations for buildings that are 5,000 square feet or greater, these would have to comply with the Virginia High Performance Building Act.

[00:44:08] They would achieve LEED building design and construction gold. They would achieve all electric appliances and achieve net zero emissions while achieving a 50% reduction in modeled energy use.

[00:44:30] And they would achieve the key sustainability credits that I was mentioning earlier, which include rainwater management, biodiverse habitat, enhanced resilient design, light pollution and bird

collision reduction, and electric vehicles. So this standard dramatically lowers long-term operating costs while helping the city achieve greenhouse gas and resiliency goals.

[00:44:52] For major interior renovations for buildings 5,000 square feet or greater, the building would need to achieve LEED interior design and construction goals. So even with minor improvements to the interior, this will ensure that it will improve efficiency and occupant comfort.

[00:45:20] Now on to private sector green building standards. So for private sector green building standards to apply, it would only apply for developments that are subject to special exception, variance, rezoning, plan development review, or special use review processes, and the new construction major renovations greater than 5,000 square feet.

[00:45:49] So just so you understand, so this is only when projects are seeking discretionary approvals. This would not apply to by right development. So for those buildings that meet those requirements, those private projects would need to achieve silver certification, either using LEED or earthcraft standards. So it provides developers a little more flexibility with what rating standards would best fit their project.

[00:46:23] And they would also need to meet key sustainability credits, the same ones that the public sector would need to apply to as well, to ensure that we're improving resiliency and sustainability within the city. Next, we'll discuss incentives that were considered as part of the policy.

[00:46:45] So why were incentives evaluated? So with being a Dillon Rule state, there's very little we can require. So incentives are a way to encourage higher performance without those mandates.

[00:47:02] And those incentives, how they're usually built, is to provide, to offset that additional construction cost the developers would have to pay to meet those higher standards. So there'd be some kind of tradeoff that provides that incentive for the developer. And the incentives help maintain market of competitiveness.

[00:47:20] Other jurisdictions within the region do have incentives. So if there's really attractive incentives in other municipalities, developers may be more attracted to those areas. And then we want to align private investment with city goals. So we want to meet our city goals.

[00:47:36] We want as many developments as possible to achieve those higher green building standards. So the incentives that were evaluated include tax incentives.

[00:47:52] So what we looked at was a tax abatement for development that achieved that higher lead certification. As I mentioned before, this was identified as the most attractive incentive by developers.

[00:48:08] However, there were some concerns from the community on that. Height and density bonus was considered. So developers could achieve a height or density bonus if they meet those high building standards. At the time when we were evaluating this, our zoning ordinance did not allow this type of incentive.

[00:48:29] So we tabled it at the moment. However, you'll be hearing from community development and planning later on tonight. For the small area zoning text amendments, one of the community benefits we can build into that is green building standards in return for height density bonus.

[00:48:48] So now that that is available, that could be another attractive incentive to provide developers. For permitting, we could provide discounts on permitting or expedited permitting.

[00:49:04] However, at this time, expedite permitting isn't feasible due to staff capacity. Technical assistance and marketing was also considered. However, we heard from developers that they typically have consultants that do this type of technical assistance and marketing already, so they didn't see this as a big driver.

[00:49:26] So what we recommend with incentives, since there was mixed reviews from the community regarding the tax abatement, and now we have the opportunity to revise our zoning ordinance.

[00:49:45] We now have more options to consider, so staff does not recommend adopting an incentive at this time, and we recommend further researching when incentives are available to us and what those fiscal and environmental impacts would be for those incentives. So we would like to work and partner with CD&P in the future to further research and evaluate those and bring those back to council at a later date for consideration as an addendum to the green building policy.

[00:50:21] Next is administration and costs. So to administer the green building policy, a climate and energy manager would implement it. Their tasks are documented in the SOP within the green building policy and also there's justification in Appendix A that you can read over.

[00:50:43] As part of the green building policy, every year the city would produce a green building policy progress report. And then every five years, the city would review and update the policy to keep it up to date. The city will track key performance indicators to measure success.

[00:51:01] There's a few examples of KPIs below that we would regularly track and report on. So staff is seeking guidance from council on how to proceed with the green building policy.

[00:51:20] The city can adopt and fund the policy or decide to scale back, delay, or cancel the policy. Staff recommends adopting and funding the proposed policy. The funds required to implement policy include the costs associated with hiring a part-time permanent climate and energy manager, which is an essential position to implementing the green building policy because we don't currently have staff capacity for that.

[00:51:49] And it's a brand new program that will be regularly recurring annually. The cost of this position is approximately \$85,000 per year, including benefits. Staff recommends holding a public hearing to adopt the proposed green building policy as presented.

[00:52:09] So, the impact of that, by adopting and implementing the green building policy, there's many benefits. It aligns the city with state law and council goals and enables high-quality development, protects our natural systems, such as our urban forest streams and habitat.

[00:52:28] It saves money citywide, energy-efficient buildings, lower infrastructure stream, utility costs, and long-term municipal operating expenses. And it'll maximize grants and incentives because a lot of the federal and state grants require staff capacity to apply, manage, and report on grants.

[00:52:47] And it'll also enable us to perform ongoing performance tracking so we can make data-driven decisions to help improve the city's facilities. Adopting this policy and funding staff now allows us to implement clear, cost-effective policy that saves money, reduces risks, and positions the city to meet evolving state requirements.

[00:53:10] The other options include scaling back, delaying, or canceling the policy. The city could narrow the policy just to the public sector side of things. This would require us to use consultants on new

construction, major renovation, and then for existing buildings, that would be something we would have to complete at a much slower pace when staff capacity is available.

[00:53:41] Or the city could delay or cancel the proposed policy. In that case, staff would have to rely on the existing 2009 green building resolution plus follow the Virginia High Performance Building Act, which we're required to follow.

[00:53:58] The impact of scaling back, delaying or canceling the project includes continued ad hoc decision making without the clear standards for developers. We continue to fall behind with what other jurisdictions are doing in the region.

[00:54:15] There would be increased stress on our environmental resources from private development, such as our urban forests and streams. And there would be higher costs to the city due to capital projects that lock in inefficient designs, having less efficient buildings.

[00:54:31] This, paired with the rising utility costs, increases our utility costs for years to come. So we lose out on a lot of energy savings that we'd have from making our buildings more efficient. And there'd be a greater demand on our city's infrastructure, increasing costs of the city.

[00:54:49] And there'd be a loss of grants and incentives due to lack of staff capacity to implement them. And the city would miss out on sustainability commitments. So in closing, each of these options have a cost. We can either be proactive and improve our resilience and reduce long-term operating costs while managing risk in a financially responsible way.

[00:55:16] Or we'd have the cost with the increased costs from delaying action as well. So we want to ensure that our buildings we approve today align with our sustainability goals, remain affordable and high-performing years to come.

[00:55:32] So to reiterate, we do propose adopting and funding the proposed policy. So we're looking for clear directions so staff knows how to move forward. We have a few questions posted on that slide that we'd like your feedback and direction on.

[00:55:52] I'll now open it up to questions and any feedback you have or council guidance. So thank you. Thank you for that presentation. Council Member McQuillan? Okay. I have some questions regarding the processing times.

[00:56:10] Does this increase permitting processing times or anything? What are we, in implementing this plan, what is the cost to either our city, our community, the developers? There's some exchange usually. So I'd imagine either it's going to be more costly for certain things or take more time, potentially.

[00:56:32] So the main cost is for that climate and energy manager, which would be \$85,000 per year. So we have worked with our ombudsman to integrate this into the existing procedures, so it wouldn't add any additional time.

[00:56:48] So this would be streamlined into the procedure. We have worked out standard operating procedures within the green building policy that outlines how that would be done. so there wouldn't be a delay. The cost would be that staff time for the climate and energy manager to complete those tasks so that we can remain timely. Okay, so the \$85,000 is going to be a permanent ongoing cost? Yes. Okay, and then I had a question about historic buildings.

[00:57:20] How will they be treated or affected? Businesses that are in historic sites or buildings, Will this also be required to come up to the standard of the green building policy if they're going to do any major renovating, things like that? Will that add additional time processing, need specific expertise involved, things like that?

[00:57:42] Yeah, so for historic buildings, we did actually, we have a section within the green building policy that addresses historic buildings and other projects that would need special consideration. So they could potentially get a waiver.

[00:57:58] So like Grandma's Cottage, I don't think it makes sense, you know, since it is such a historic building to do those fancy renovations where we want to maintain the historic nature of that building. If there is something we can do, we can make minor upgrades.

[00:58:16] However, we wouldn't hold them to the same standard. So there is flexibility, and we discuss those on a case-by-case basis and determine what would be best for those buildings. Of course, working with historic resources, I know there is some historic resources guidelines that we did work with when that was developed.

[00:58:36] So, like, for example, in historic buildings that for public facing, like if we wanted to install solar, we wouldn't be allowed to put solar, you know, front facing, but in the back we could. So there's things like that where we would work with historic resources to make sure we're following all the protocols with that and being sensitive to it.

[00:58:56] Okay, so would that add additional time to like the process of somebody renovating their business or building if it's a historic building? Could that add more additional time then? You're telling me there's just one employee that's going to handle this stuff that we need.

[00:59:16] And then – so I'm just trying to consider that perspective from – Yeah, so they – like I said, they may request a waiver. That might be granted. We haven't really evaluated what – if it might delay things.

[00:59:33] However, it would be part of the – Dave, do you want to take this? I think the first few years of implementation, you're spot on. But I think once we get up to speed, two or three years, I think it would be streamlined enough that it would be insignificant. Okay. So you think that'd be only like two to three years to get up to speed to get there?

[00:59:53] I believe so. Okay. It's fair. And then just a quick comment for me. I really would prefer further research of the incentives. I think that's a key piece to this plan. I would want to explore and understand more because there are a few here. The height and density for me isn't, I don't feel a fair exchange or trade-off. So I'd like to just know whether their options are out there and be presented with those so that we can actually look at them and compare. And then I would like to also

[01:00:28] go back to the tax incentive discussion and just hear a little bit more to try to really understand the feedback that you received and what you explained to them, you know, what was discussed essentially to really kind of understand where the issues were with that and maybe if there are some alternatives or opportunities there thank you councilmember Hardy Chandler so I absolutely appreciate all of the work that you put into this presentation especially I want to draw special

[01:01:02] attention to your regional look and how you're commenting on us being behind when you look at the region certainly we're not under a glass bubble right there are costs that are going to happen in this

world and we've certainly felt the impacts of that and so being behind has its own you know level of cost so I really appreciate that regional view and sort of a little bit of attention to the cost of being behind in this region. I do want to ask about if there is

[01:01:41] additional information comparatively in terms of staffing so you're requesting a part-time permanent person. How does that compare regionally to other staffing configurations with our neighbors? So I don't have the exact numbers here, but I have reached out to them. And in some cases they have one or more full-time positions, but it's typically to scale where Arlington is larger than us. I think they have at least two green building specialists. So it depends on the size

[01:02:17] of the jurisdiction. I can get that information to you. I guess how many people implement their policies if that's helpful council member hall thank you i appreciate the presentation very much very informative some of my questions i think are covered in the staff report but i just want to clarify a few things the first one is just to piggyback on the part-time person is that like a 50 person is that a seven you know 0.75 what 20 25 hours a week okay so a little more than half

[01:02:52] time. Okay, total side note, and if hopefully my colleagues are in agreement with this, but I would like to see if the city of Fairfax as an entity, as a group, could push Dominion for price consideration to push back on this. If, you know, if we're looking at potentially a 32% increase, boy, I'm glad I did solar before the end of the year, but not everybody did, and not everybody can. But that's insane. And especially if it's coming largely from the data

[01:03:28] centers. And I really think that we need to do what we can to work with our colleagues in the region to really push back on that, to push for them to do if they're not already, you know, kind of closed loop water systems, you know, provide their own energy. I mean, this is, it's not, I know life isn't fair, but it's not fair to any resident anywhere, especially ours that don't have the tax benefits of these great data centers, yes, we're benefiting from the service they're providing, but we're also supplementing their bill quite a bit. And I

[01:03:59] have a problem with that. I asked Stephanie, I said, Stephanie, could you guarantee me that the energy savings and grants coming into the city would immediately exceed the \$85,000 a year you want to spend on the person? And to her credit, she couldn't give me a definite answer. But I feel that pretty confident that in a few years of that person being able to generate this

[01:04:33] program, that with the opportunity to save energy on the 22 city buildings and in some of the grants, and she's already gotten grants on her own, that this person would end up being revenue neutral, at least, in the future.

[01:04:53] Okay, thank you. That was actually one of my questions for our city manager, too, was, was any of this considered in your upcoming budget presentation, and if not, are there any possible budget neutral options to consider to make it happen? I don't need an answer if you don't have one. Well, yeah, it's a great question, and ultimately looking at total enhancements, and I'll see if my CFO's paying attention over there, about how much are we looking for at least dollar value and potential enhancements going into 27? If I recall from memory, so total enhancements not including FTE, so this would just be enhancements, was well over \$3 million.

[01:05:32] When you include FTEs, it was potentially another \$3 million or almost 30 FTEs that were requested citywide by all the departments. So I think, if I recall correctly, and there's a lot of

enhancements to cover, the initial request was for a full-time position, I believe.

[01:05:50] And so I think we should consider this within the context of the entire budget. Now, that may or may not show up in the presentation you see in a week or two. It's certainly an enhancement we can consider later, too, as we engage council and look at your priorities as time goes on.

[01:06:05] But we certainly should look at this within the context of the 27 budget process. Okay, and if that FTE, I'm sorry, if the part-time employee was not considered, would this program itself flop? Would it still be manageable just at a much slower implementation rate?

[01:06:24] So the policy proposed tonight, we don't have staff capacity to do. So if we needed to adopt a policy that existing staff capacity could do, we'd have to scale it back dramatically. So it would just be the public sector because you need staff to work and engage with developers, and there's just not staff capacity to do that.

[01:06:47] But on the public sector side of things, we can use consultants. However, that, you know, showing research, consultants are typically three times more expensive than staff time. So I don't know if it's really worth going down that route to scale it back.

[01:07:04] Plus, with the staff capacity for existing buildings, we wouldn't have capacity to make those retrofits to existing buildings where we could see a lot of cost savings. So I think we'd be missing out on a lot of energy efficiency savings from delayed action on our existing buildings.

[01:07:22] Okay. Thank you for clarifying that. And then just a couple other questions on page or I don't know what slide this technically is. The one that talks about the adopted targets has the pie chart. Sorry, I don't know what page it is.

[01:07:37] This one? Yes. What are fugitive emissions at the bottom there, the 6%? It's just not a term I'm familiar with. I'll need to get back to you on that. Okay. This one here. So COG completes our greenhouse gas emissions, so I can go back to the data sheet to find exactly what those are.

[01:07:54] Okay. And semi-unrelated, but bird-safe windows, I think that was covered in the presentation or in the staff report, can you talk about the bird-safe windows? I think they call them bird collision reduction. Yeah, so if you go to page 9 of the green building policy, so one of the credits we do require, I guess, page 9 is the sustainable sites credit for light pollution and bird collision reduction.

[01:08:28] So this would minimize light pollution, glare, and sky glow to protect night sky visibility and reduce negative effects on wildlife. So having this credit would help reduce bird collision deaths because windows, they would be such a way where birds wouldn't, you know, they would know that it's there and would reduce bird death.

[01:08:55] Fugitive emissions are unintentional releases of gas from industrial equipment. Okay. Thank you. And I do just have a couple more questions here. Let me just flip to my pages that I pulled down here. You mentioned on the administrative procedures towards the end about it would be every year to do a green building policy progress report.

[01:09:16] I assume that's something that could not be handled without the addition of that part-time person as well. Whether or not we got it implemented, is that a huge time? Well, I guess if the policy wasn't implemented, there's nothing to report on?

[01:09:34] Well, yes. I guess I'm just thinking, is this something that individual businesses, the sector, you know, do they report that back to us or that's something that our staff would need to do in order to get that information? I'm just thinking, like, is it when I, you know, have to do a recycling report or something for an entity?

[01:09:51] It would be our staff reporting back, so how many developments met the green building standards, how many do we give waivers for because they're historic buildings, so it would be done by internal staff versus requiring developers to report out because they would be tracking all of that.

[01:10:10] so it basically it'd be providing a progress report like so how is the green building policy doing are we meeting the goals you know if not what do we need to change so it's basically like a check-in to see how are things going and how can things be approved okay yeah i foresee it to be similar to our solid waste plan okay i think that's the one i was kind of thinking of just one final comment um to answer some of your questions there from us is i am very interested in this i do share concerns about incentives specifically for height and density. I am very open to additional

[01:10:46] or other considerations as far as incentives go, but I think height and density are not the place that I want to see us encouraging people to do something like this. Thank you. Thank you. Council Member Peterson, then Council Member Amos. Well, thank you for all the great work here.

[01:11:05] As much as I regret that we didn't discuss this a year ago, in an unfortunate way, it's possibly a favorable thing because we're now able to look at a new set of circumstances that I think recast this issue, and perhaps significantly, and helps put us in a position where we can consider this in a way that we might not have a year ago.

[01:11:33] And to that point, I am wondering if you could simply restate for us your understanding of what the near-term proposed electricity price increases by Dominion Energy and also what you understand to be the forecast longer term for electricity price increases.

[01:11:55] Yeah, so to reiterate about the rising utility costs, last week we learned from Dominion Energy that they're proposing to increase what they're charging for electricity, which they want to increase what they're charging by 32%.

[01:12:15] So Council Member Hall had asked earlier, like, what could we do to try to work with Dominion on this to help reduce that cost? So we work with Webka. So this is a Virginia, Virginia. Basically, we work with a lawyer and a city attorney, sorry, attorney to help reduce our electricity costs.

[01:12:37] So we set up a contract with them for all municipalities within Virginia that are in Dominion territory. So negotiations are still happening. So we hope to reduce that cost. However, based on what Dominion's energy demand is, I don't know if we'll be that successful in reducing that cost.

[01:12:57] So we're projecting, you know, a significant increase around at least 30 percent. And then long term, based on their integrated resources plan, that the energy demand is going to increase so significantly from data centers that we're looking at electricity rates doubling within the next 15 to 20 years.

[01:13:21] So very significant utility increases. And that's just for electricity. So we have yet to forecast other utilities such as water and natural gas. I don't know if you folks remember or noticed, but back in the

summer, Dominion made some significant infrastructure improvements to the substation located at North and Main Street.

[01:13:44] So they're getting ready for the demand. So I appreciate that, and I actually think this should not be a surprise. I know I've mentioned this earlier, many other people have, that the handwriting has been on the wall because of load growth that is predominantly associated with data centers, and that's a long-term issue.

[01:14:08] So I think it's right to be sober and prudent in terms of how we view the energy price situation going forward. And maybe to put that into a little big picture, and then I want to focus on the green buildings policy per se, But I do support the notion that the city should take advantage of opportunities above and beyond its inputs to General Assembly legislation

[01:14:39] to encourage the state, to encourage Dominion Energy through the IRP or whatever other means to consider our needs as well as the needs of other jurisdictions. And so there's a lot going on right now, and some of that is within the General Assembly, But some of it is outside of the General Assembly and goes through administrative actions and agency actions by the state.

[01:15:01] And this is going to be a very active and important year, as will next year be in those areas. So just put a plug in for us keeping our eye on the big picture on that. As a part of that, one of the practical impacts of this price increase is that it will make things more profitable in terms of energy supply and energy demand reduction than they were just a year ago and before that.

[01:15:32] So for folks who don't work in the field, there's these cost-effectiveness calculations and curves that basically tell you for a given technology, does this break even? Does it turn a profit? Does it turn a net benefit? What's the payback period, et cetera?

[01:15:49] For a long time, renewable energy and even energy efficiency has struggled to hit the price points on those cost curves to enter the market in a way that competes successfully against other things. With energy prices going up the way they are here, and I happen to work these numbers for a living, this should open the gate to a flood of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

[01:16:17] That's the good news. The bad news is that will not happen by accident. It will require a mechanism to be created, and the IRP is the predominant mechanism for that, so that this new supply of energy can come online to help us.

[01:16:32] Every city, every county in the state has the opportunity to be a part of that by then moving more solar, more energy efficiency into its system to try to create more electrons. So we're living in an environment where realistically we need every electron we can get and we cannot leave renewables behind.

[01:16:50] We cannot leave energy efficiency behind. So the lead standards here are a regulatory incentive plus other incentives to do just that. But it needs a little bit of help in order to create the gateway for investment to flow in. Energy storage is another important part of that.

[01:17:07] This is a very active area for nationwide investment right now. There is simply no reason that the state of Virginia, and for that matter the city of Fairfax, shouldn't be a recipient of that flood of investment that's going into energy storage.

[01:17:23] And that's important because it makes solar operational by giving you the electrons in the middle of the night, even though the sun is not shining then, so battery storage. So this is a big issue. The other thing that, you know, I think this is a part of a broader menu of actions the city should be considering to be able to address the issue of energy cost and affordability.

[01:17:48] And as you've indicated, we're not just looking at energy price increases, we're looking at other commodity, we're looking at a series of commodity price increases, food, But we're also looking at utility increases, including water. So commodities and utilities are all going up.

[01:18:05] And the city, I think, in my view, has a responsibility to know what it can do to try to help people across that front. On energy, it would normally mean, as I think these other jurisdictions will demonstrate, that you put in place a comprehensive energy plan.

[01:18:20] And so we have in the proposed listing of capital improvement projects or activities by the sustainability division putting in a climate and energy plan, which would be a logical place for this to be done. And this would be a part of that, I would presume, but it doesn't make sense to wait.

[01:18:36] This is something that doesn't need to wait to go through a longer-term planning process. But I think it's not the only thing we should be thinking about doing to deal with this situation because the affordability issue with energy is a real one. Again, we've seen the handwriting on the wall, but the chickens have come to roost, and there are going to be a whole lot more of them.

[01:18:55] A couple of specific questions. So, by the way, I'm not sure how much Cadmus did to help scope out some of the payback periods associated with this, but when we asked the question of how much it will cost and how much somebody who makes this investment will benefit from it, One of the ways they look at that is how long does it take to get a payback for the money you put in in terms of energy savings.

[01:19:23] As the cost of energy goes up, that payback period goes down. It's faster and faster to recover the funding and creates a natural incentive to do that. And so it reduces the amount of additional incentives that are needed to encourage that because the market itself is driving this with these now much more aggressive payback periods.

[01:19:45] How much have you done regarding payback periods that would help us understand what that might look like in the public sector and the private sector for this program? If there's an upfront expense for this, do we have any benchmarks on how long it takes for that to turn around in terms of a payback period?

[01:20:06] So one of the first steps in order to calculate payback period, at least for the public sector, is to get a utility data management system set up. Right now, the city doesn't have that. We have in a variety of Excel sheets, which makes it very hard to analyze and report on.

[01:20:22] So right now, I guess we don't have the data and data management systems available to be able to calculate that. So I guess the first step is getting that utility data management system set up. Our division has found cost savings within our operating budget, and we hope we found enough savings to be able to implement a utility data management system this spring.

[01:20:46] So we can implement that with existing operating funds. For the private sector, we don't have any cost estimates for specific projects because it's unknown what projects will come to be in the future.

[01:21:02] We could make some estimates based on past performance, but it would be estimates. So the Cazolda didn't do some calculating for payback period for tax abatements.

[01:21:17] So I do have that information that I could share, but for the proposed building policy that I presented tonight, we don't have any numbers per se, but we could make some estimates for that. Okay, well that might be helpful. I think there may be some benchmarks out there from related jurisdictions that could help shed a little light, but I'd be surprised if it didn't show that that payback period is looking better and better.

[01:21:43] The only example I can think of is about 10 years ago, we hired a company called Amaresco that did a performance contracting on numerous city buildings for energy savings. And it was one of those deals where the energy, they give you money and take some of that energy savings back.

[01:22:06] And we use some of that money for capital improvements for like chillers and stuff for the city brings. So we got the money right away, and they were getting the savings from our energy over the next, and I believe it was like a 20-year cycle. Yeah, I think, again, what I'd like maybe to suggest is that we're dealing with what I guess I would have to characterize as a completely new equation right now because of the energy situation.

[01:22:36] So what would have been a benchmark 10 years ago or even a couple of years ago, and in this case even last year, doesn't even work now. This is how fast and how much this has changed. And it might be good just to kind of scrub that up a little bit to see what we're looking at now, because I think it's a different world.

[01:22:53] The money is chasing these tight paybacks now on getting out from under the risk exposure to energy prices. And I think we want to kind of take a look at where we are on that. I'm curious what the crosswalk is potentially between this policy and then the capacity that comes along with it, which is this part-time staff person and opportunities for renewables and efficiency during school renovation.

[01:23:32] And whether this, if we do retain somebody, are they going to be able to help with that renovation process so that they can be contributing to the design work that will take place this year that will help ensure that that process is incorporating these opportunities more than it otherwise would?

[01:23:52] Can you comment on that? Yes. So the part-time climate and energy manager would be a subject matter expert, and they would be part of this process. So I have been working with schools so far on the design.

[01:24:07] So they've invited me to the kickoff meeting for Providence Elementary, I think Daniel's run will be soon so but I have very limited staff capacity to provide input feedback or provide any guidance we they have reviewed the proposed green building policy and just so you know since the schools have started design since this green building policy hasn't been adopted yet based on how the policy is written they would not be required to meet the standards adopted in the green building policy if it is adopted this spring because they already started

[01:24:46] design however the consultants and the schools did say they're open to working to see if they can improve their green building standards that they're meeting and just so you know just in case you're not aware schools did budget the major renovations to lead silver so they have budgeted to meet lead silver. The proposed green building policy is for LEED gold. So the climate and energy manager could help working with schools to identify ways where they could perhaps use their funding more

[01:25:19] innovatively to reach LEED gold or at least LEED silver plus so we can make the schools as efficient and as green as possible. But yes, that position, that would be part of their job to help city buildings for new construction and major renovations to ensure that it follows the green building policy and are efficient and as green as possible. And in the case of schools but this may be the same for others the project period we're looking at for construction is what is it 20 30 years or whatever we're essentially locking in something what's the period of lock-in? So for

[01:25:57] new construction major renovations that could be locking us into building performance for the next 30 to 50 years depending on when we'd either rebuild or renovate again so these are long-term investments we're making so i think it makes sense for us to invest as much as possible to make our buildings efficient as possible so we see that return on investment over the long-term period of time and just another question and thought so the issue of retrofit that said not sure whether

[01:26:31] cadmus covered this for you or not but my understanding is that it is much less expensive to incorporate a lead standard silver or gold at the time of construction as opposed to going back and doing a retrofit is that a fair characterization so the earlier the better so if of course incorporating green building standards within design is the best case scenario so we want to include those green building standards as soon as possible yeah you're absolutely right because

[01:27:07] going back to the performance contracting we went through the same thing the only thing we were able to do with the existing buildings was take out the uh the uh the lights and put led lights in put special thermostats in put sensors in that shut off the lights there's a limit to what you can do in um with existing buildings that have a reasonable payback in a reasonable amount of time Okay. And so the struggle is always how we deal with the upfront cost of a later stage return.

[01:27:41] But again, I think because we have a different set of dynamics here, that picture looks different than it did even a year ago. And it would be helpful just to understand that as well as we might as move forward considering this. I would just add also, I would agree that in terms of the basket of incentives, I don't favor density and height bonuses, particularly because the marketplace under these circumstances is now creating a much, much stronger incentive in the private sector than it did before, and I think it recasts that.

[01:28:14] But I also agree that that's not a favorable tradeoff for the city. But we should be examining these other areas of incentives as we go forward. Thank you for all your work in this area. Much appreciated. Councilmember Amos. Sometimes it's hard to separate my developer hat and my council hat, so I'll wear a bit of both tonight.

[01:28:33] But excellent work on this. I think this looks great. I think similar to the affordability and housing strategic plan, it's a good launching point for what we're undergoing. I had a few questions, some of which likely you cannot answer tonight. Follow-up is appreciated.

[01:28:49] And it's just my thoughts and framework as we move forward with this policy. The first question I would like to bring up is related to cost, especially from a developer perspective. Particularly, I am concerned in execution of this policy targeting small and minority-owned contractors.

[01:29:09] How do you address that inequity, especially when we're not launching this plan with a tax incentive program of some sort? I don't really understand from the private side how this plan works without tax incentives. So we did a lot of outreach with developers in the development of this plan.

[01:29:30] And then we also worked with our consultant, Cadmus Group, to evaluate what are the upfront costs for developers to meet lead standards. So Cadmus did research, and it showed that for developments to achieve lead silver, it's actually cost neutral.

[01:29:47] It doesn't cost developers any more to meet lead silver than business as usual, as long as they build that into their design process. So studies have shown that LEED Silver is a best practice and doesn't cost developers anything extra.

[01:30:03] So that's why we chose LEED Silver as part of the private sector policy. So the incentives that we were looking at would require LEED Gold or beyond. So that's where the incentives would help provide that additional cost to developers.

[01:30:22] An existing, so for whatever reason, let's just say it's really hard to, You know, there might be special circumstances. It might be hard to meet lead silver. We do have a commercial PACE program set in place. So developers can take advantage of that to get upfront financing to help pay for a lead consultant and any kind of projects or retrofits they would need to do to achieve lead silver.

[01:30:47] So they do have that commercial PACE program in place that provides that financing mechanism for them to achieve lead silver if they do have special circumstances. and it's not necessarily cost-neutral for them. So that's how we came to decide on LEED Silver as the private sector standard.

[01:31:06] That's why I figured you selected LEED Silver, so that's good to know. Additionally, I saw that LEED Silver, EarthCraft, does that also allow for comparable mechanisms like NGBS, or are you prioritizing LEED and EarthCraft in particular? We are prioritizing LEED and EarthCraft, and we'll see how that goes.

[01:31:24] We did have a longer list of green building standards, but that was part of the feedback that we received from the community. Since there were so many rating systems we were providing, that it would be more administrative burden on staff to be able to understand all of them, implement all those different rating standards.

[01:31:43] So we did limit it to the two that we felt were most relevant to this region, and that would be most beneficial to our developers. And to your point, every developer has their own that they prefer because likely their consultant specializes in that one. My next question, going to the public sector, and this is probably not a tonight question, I would be curious on the rate of development growth, be it CIP projects or any type of public sector building pre- and post-green building policy implementation.

[01:32:15] I think that would be helpful to see at least what we would expect on our end when it comes to timelines. I think what we expect from the public sector versus private sector is very unique and different. And I would like to assess kind of what our circumstances are. Are you talking about like new projects or existing buildings?

[01:32:32] New projects, yeah. Oh, okay. So, for example, what's kind of the current turnaround of our existing either CIP projects or development projects that this would apply to without the policy? And then what would it look like moving forward and see if other jurisdictions might have that data?

[01:32:50] If not, I understand that's a bit of a hassle. Okay. I'll look into that for you. I do know that the Willard Sherwood Center has been designed to lead gold. So that would meet our current standards and have to look into other planned CIP projects and get back to you on that.

[01:33:08] Greatly appreciate that. I only have one more question and a comment. So what would be the timeline on the incentive program if we pursued the addendum route? Because again, in my mind, it's still a chicken and egg i feel like you need the incentive program to really strengthen this policy um and when other localities have implemented this they do in it something similar to an addendum or was the incentive already built in depends some of the jurisdictions in the region have had a green building policy like over a decade so i don't know which came first you know

[01:33:45] the standards or the incentive chicken and egg so i don't know that off the top of my head um but timeline i guess will depend on council guidance tonight like if we're even moving forward with the green building policy so that i guess is up to council and city leadership if we move forward with the green building policy so it if timing works out maybe it could all be adopted together you know i'm hearing a lot of feedback that density and height bonus is not something that is attracted to some council members so I guess it depends on

[01:34:22] guidance we received tonight about how and when we want to move forward with things gotcha and my final comment to answer your question I think this is definitely worth pursuing I just want to be cautious with how we approach it that we're not pricing developers out and I'm hesitant to support something like this without an incentive program understanding that there's an addendum

[01:34:43] on the way with a timeline I think that is perfectly fine. Councilmember Hardy Chandler. So I'd like to help offer you some direction and that's what you came for. I do believe that as a starting point this does strike a balance between not only ambition but aspiration which is something that I think we need as a city and being grounded in something that's viable and the feasibility part. We have the advantage of learning from our neighbors being so behind that whatever they've gone through I think there are lessons there that can help

[01:35:19] ground us and avoid perhaps some of the potholes that they've had to go through so we have at least that advantage looking from behind but I support moving forward I support continuing with this policy I feel like we need to you're talking about you know 30 50 year timelines and I think it's important for us to take action now for a lot of things. I think that you have offered examples of incentives, but I would certainly be in support of further research of an array of perhaps

[01:35:58] innovative incentives. These are examples. That's my interpretation of EG, but not an exhaustive list. And so however broad those incentive packages can be, I think those are things that we can leverage in not only working with developers but quite frankly building relationship with developers that also hold these as part of their developmental their development philosophy right and their values so that's the piece I would like to see also integrated if you go to

[01:36:33] can you go to the slide that says how we do this there's a there's a slide with a line in the middle and the two sides. So this cracks me up in a way because you can literally look at the left side and see a rainbow and the right side and see a cloud, right? I mean, so my question here with this slide is the scaling back. There's an extent to which you scale something back and you're actually not moving forward at all. So for the right side, I mean, how realistic is that in terms

[01:37:07] of really having an impact, or is it sort of box checking, right? So to what extent is that really a viable option for what we say we want to do as a city?

[01:37:23] So scaling back, it really reduces the effectiveness of the policy extremely. So with existing staff capacity, the only thing we'd have capacity for is the public sector, But then we'd be relying on consultants for any new construction major renovations.

[01:37:45] We want to be able to provide support for schools and their renovations that are going on right now for existing buildings. We don't have staff capacity to look at them, you know, buildings all at once. Like we may be able to do one a year. Like it would really slow down the process and really reduce our impacts.

[01:38:03] And because scaling back, you know, to just the public sector, it really reduces our impact. So if you remember that slide with the pie chart, I mean, the majority of our emissions are from commercial properties. So the public sector is just a very small portion of that.

[01:38:22] So if we really want to make an impact, we really need to make sure we adopt the private sector side of things. However, it is, you know, staff time consuming to educate and work with developers and develop, you know, online forum, educational materials, etc.

[01:38:39] it's really just time consuming to develop and implement the private sector side of things. So that it is staff time. So anyway, so I guess what I'm trying to say, scaling back would limit the effectiveness, say at a high level. So, and then no action or limited action has costs as well, you know?

[01:39:07] So even though we might be saving costs from hiring a person, we would be increasing costs because we're not avoiding costs from energy efficiency and renewable projects. And so there'd be years of less efficient buildings and more increased costs to the city.

[01:39:24] So although we're saving money from not hiring someone, we wind up paying more from inaction. I would add that with what I see in the future with Stephanie's division, As far as the solid waste plan and redoing the ordinance and making our refuse and recycling program successful, they're going to be even more drained in the future on that side of their workload.

[01:39:51] So I think that very little would be able to be done on this, especially what I see coming down her way in the future. Right. So in an environment of exponential change, the more you scale back, you actually fall further behind faster is what I'm hearing.

[01:40:10] And going back to the staffing, because we have access to information, or I'm assuming we have access to information from our neighbors, is there the possibility for that person to become cost neutral quicker than we're anticipating because this person would not be – let's say, starting in a vacuum? Yeah. So, there are some immediate cost savings that we can see.

[01:40:39] So, implementing a utility data management system, that would be one of their core responsibilities. So, studies have shown that by actively evaluating and checking on your utility bills, that these systems can find like billing errors and other issues. So, the studies have shown about you'll save about 10 percent on your utility bills after the first year of implementing utility data management system because of finding those billing errors and fixing things with the

[01:41:12] utilities so we'll see some immediate cost savings from that right off the bat and the more that this position can work on improving the efficiency of our existing buildings the sooner we'll see a return on investment for those projects. So staff capacity will help increase the return on investment for our

capital projects. I don't have that number now because we don't have the utility data management system in place, but once we do, we'll be able to provide better forecasting and

[01:41:45] budget estimates for cost savings. Yeah, I would say definitely in water and electricity, you know, there are areas where we have water leaks, which we may be able to pursue reimbursement from Fairfax Water, if we can track it. And once in a while, you know, Dominion will make a mistake with the meters. So I would say there would be some payback from that. And I would think if this person could get us even one grant a year, it would potentially pay for this.

[01:42:18] And that was my final question about grant possibilities. So let me just reiterate my strong support for the policy the policy is not specifics in practice but with additional research and additional information i think we can move forward and i'd emphasize that there's a certain urgency to this that i think is important so thank you so much councilmember bates thank you certainly support moving forward and i also do support further

[01:42:52] researching the incentives and i know that you all are not at a um you know good spot right now to provide a recommendation on that but certainly want to look into that further and a note about a height and density i think that if we were to at least you know not write that off at this point uh if anything this would make sense for that because talking about height and density um Assuming the same, you know, footprint, all else illegal, et cetera, greater height means lower surface area to volume ratio in terms of heating and cooling efficiency and greater density.

[01:43:31] Looking at where our multifamily developments are in the city, they're mostly along transit routes. So a greater number of people concentrated along transit routes, potentially, and a greater number of people being served by common infrastructure within that building, and then less land consumed per unit, assuming we're talking about housing here.

[01:44:01] But again, I would think that we at least wouldn't want to count anything out at this point, especially what's been presented to us. I do also have concerns about the tax incentives, but again, wouldn't want to rule anything out. And I would want to see if there might, even in that case, be a greater return on investment than what we're putting into it.

[01:44:24] And so again, you know, strongly support moving forward and strongly support evaluating incentives. Continue to look at that. Council Member Amos, you know, certainly agree with his concerns about moving forward without even concerning incentives at all.

[01:44:42] um and uh also agree on the urgency of this uh and uh you know i think we're definitely heading the right direction a lot of exciting stuff happening here thank you council member peterson can you unpack just a little bit more functionally day-to-day what the energy manager would do and i think the core of my question is um whether this is a proactive position where somebody is chasing

[01:45:18] goals and targets and outreach that's necessary in order to make projects happen, to meet them and provide the necessary technical assistance and, if necessary, financial assistance, et cetera. I mean, a go-getter job to be sure that this moves the kind of volume we're interested in, or is this a passive thing where somebody's waiting for orders to come in the door that they can help kind of process?

[01:45:45] I mean, what's your characterization of what this position really involves? This position would definitely be a proactive position. So they would be using a utility data management system to make data-

driven decisions, come back to council regarding additional CIP projects that help improve energy efficiency and renewables.

[01:46:03] On the private side, also proactive because they'd be educating developers, making sure they're aware of the commercial PACE program, guiding them through the process for how the green building standards will be met through our existing development review procedure.

[01:46:25] But if you look at Appendix A, the Climate Energy Manager staff justification, it goes through what their implementation tasks would be for the first year, getting the green building policy up and running, and then also what their long-term level of effort would be for the ongoing policy management and implementation there is also the standard operating procedures and performing monitoring procedures within the green building policy at well that that will

[01:46:58] outline how the climate energy manager is involved with the development review procedure so i'm happy to go through those with you more detail i guess let me know but they would definitely be proactive So to give you an idea, they do a lot of cross-departmental support, ensuring consistent interpretation and enforcement.

[01:47:22] They provide technical guidance, like you had mentioned, to both internal and external project teams. They support voluntary participation by private sector projects. They may not qualify for the standards, but people could voluntarily be involved.

[01:47:43] But, yeah, in the very beginning, they'd be developing detailed implementation guidance, templates, compliance checklists. They'd train internal staff because they wouldn't be the only ones guiding this process, work with developers, architects, engineers, contractors.

[01:48:00] They'd manage the public sector projects. They'd coordinate with Fairfax County public schools on the new renovations. They'd establish baseline data and then also regularly report on our performance data. using the utility data management system.

[01:48:16] I guess there's a lot of things that they do in here. I guess you can review Appendix A and the SOPs, but happy to expand further if you have questions. Thank you. Just one final comment. First, I very much appreciate this and support the approach, but I have cautionary notes about the incentives, one of which I've already shared.

[01:48:39] But I would just say beyond that, the whole issue of providing incentives to developers, We are either at or rapidly approaching the point at which because of our energy system and the pricing issues that we've talked about as well as the many benefits associated with managing them where high-efficiency buildings will and should be considered standard product offering, which is to say that if a developer is not able to provide standard product offering for these really high energy efficiency projects,

[01:49:16] I think we have to question how much we want to go out of the way for that particular developer because the market is rich with people who are meeting standard product offerings today and are geared up to meet standard product offerings that include these energy standards and other standards, including water, et cetera, in the future.

[01:49:36] And the history of that kind of migration forward to upgrade standard product offering is that it increases market share, profitability, et cetera. It may be a dividing line, but, again, I'd like us to be very cautious about not harnessing the full potential of the marketplace on these issues to help us out.

[01:49:59] Thank you. Council Member Amos. And I don't disagree with what you said. What I will say is, and, again, why I'm glad it's lead silver, is that you still need to be realistic if these projects can't pencil out ever.

[01:50:14] I mean, we're struggling with our own CIP projects, let alone a developer with far more limited resources who are trying to scatter and get all the soft funding together to make these projects work. If you don't have these incentives in place, you have, and obviously this isn't applicable to buy right developments, but if you don't have incentives in place for developers, you're going to get stuff that some folks may not like.

[01:50:37] For example, mixed-use products. I know that's not the flavor for some folks, but the thing is, if you don't put money or put skin into the game, that's what you're going to get. You're going to get what the market tells you and market rate is housing, especially I'm I'm housing oriented is already Especially difficult to develop right now that everyone's trying to shift to affordable get a light tech financing options are already limited If localities don't provide additional options, but provide additional restrictions You're going to get stuck in one place and you're gonna get the same development over and over and over again

[01:51:08] Which no one here wants so that's all I got to say on that councilmember McQuillan so as we're discussing this And I recognize the need for the utility data management system. Completely understand and think that that needs to happen like yesterday.

[01:51:26] So I'm with you on that. My question is, is one part-time employee going to be enough? You know, we're going to be asking developers and, you know, ourselves to develop at a standard and to supply, I'm assuming, more information and certain details and things of that nature.

[01:51:46] So that tells me that the expense for them is going to increase. I want to ensure that if that is a possibility, that the process, that's why I was asking questions about the timing and what that means on that side of the equation for developers coming in.

[01:52:05] Will the one part-time employee be enough? I'm hearing all the things that this person's going to have to handle and manage and maintain. If we're going to implement something, I want to ensure it's successful. I don't want it to get off and then we have, you know, a part-time employee trying to scramble and get this going and then it just causes more frustration.

[01:52:24] As any new program that we endeavor, you know, we start out with what we believe is the necessary resources and we do the work and then we come back to the council. So let's say, you know, we do have this person.

[01:52:40] We would come back to you in six months or a year and give you a status update on how it's going, how much money we have saved so far, what this person has done, how the program is growing. And possibly if the program grows very, very quickly and largely, yeah, we might come back for additional resources.

[01:52:58] But this is a starting point. You know, I put a lot of pressure on Stephanie to try and get this. How could she do this with the minimum amount of resources? So she really knocked her head around to come up with the minimum she would need. And I believe that's a good starting point.

[01:53:15] I do too. I just want to make sure that if we get into a position where someone needs more help, we need to keep that process moving fluidly, that you guys will come back. You'll let us know that

that needs to happen because that's what I see with any new implementation of any new policy.

[01:53:34] It tends to, if it's not done well, then it just becomes a big sticking point and frustration point. And I can just, I don't want staff to have to deal with that, to be honest with you. I don't want anyone to have to deal with that. So thank you. I appreciate you answering my question. Council Member Hall.

[01:53:51] Yeah, just two quick points. To your comment about, you know, not wanting to ask too much of developers, I think it was, in my opinion, fairly obvious from the slide that you presented that we are way behind the eight ball, whatever that phrase is, with regard to what other localities are doing. So to me, I don't see this as a burden that we're putting on that's not already existing. It's not like we're, you know, leading the trend with this. I wish that we were, but we're not. So I don't, I understand the concern. I'm not sure that I share it. I also have a very different job. So, you know, there's that.

[01:54:28] I also did ran over and I asked Mr. Martinez if he could pull together, not at the moment, But what we do spend on the buildings that we would be considering as far as electricity goes so that we can really understand if there is a true 32% increase coming, what does that number look like?

[01:54:47] And potentially, does that increase itself get us close to what the cost is projected here for the \$85,000 in order to get a part-time employee going? So just I thought that was a good, you know, potentially somewhat neutral way to look at it and see where that comes.

[01:55:04] So I understand that that doesn't take into consideration, I forget what you called it, but the energy consumption, what were the words you used, where they track the tracker? The utility data management system? Yes, that one.

[01:55:19] I realize it doesn't consider that too, but it was just another way of my brain looking at numbers. So thank you. Thank you. So to answer the questions, is there general consensus that we believe the plan has the right aspiration and has feasibility built into it.

[01:55:41] Consensus on that? Do you want to proceed with the adoption of the green building policy with the caveat below, further research on incentives? Does that capture on the dais because this is what they want to know?

[01:56:01] So it's a green light for proceeding with an asterisk that says, please look further at what kind of incentives might be part of this. But the consensus on the dais is that we do want to move forward.

[01:56:17] We do recognize that there's a lot of potential future cost energy savings, that we need to be in step with the jurisdictions around us because we're not an island and developers develop all over the region. So what we're asking for is not out of line with what they're already accustomed to in other jurisdictions where they're building projects.

[01:56:39] So, yes, Mr. Alexander. Just very quickly, thanks again to staff. They put a lot of work into this. Over the last month or so, we've heard a lot of very positive things around environmental sustainability and the screen building policy. So thank you very much. Also, understanding that in a week we'll be presenting our next budget.

[01:56:58] And so, as I mentioned earlier, this will have to be part of that as we move forward. And so we need to think about it within that context of bringing the information back and then deciding how we want to proceed from there. Right. So another asterisk that's not there, which is this cannot happen without this position.

[01:57:17] You can't have a policy without the staff capacity to execute the program, which is the reason it was held up to begin with. Can't have a program without staff to actually run the program. So everyone understands that if you want to proceed, we're looking at rebates and incentives or whatever we're looking at.

[01:57:36] but we're also acknowledging program is not separate from having this person to run it so every still consensus every everybody still good with that council member Peterson yeah the one thing that I think also came up sort of across the board is the need to the extent possible to freshen up some of our context and financial implications of the new energy situation because that may make things look a little bit different here. I suspect it will. I'm not suggesting we let another contract out for consulting on this, but I think to the extent we can take a look at some of the

[01:58:15] benchmarks and what have you. Again, I just want to reiterate, as I think we've heard, we're living in a very new environment right now. All right. Thank you very much. Thank you. Go have some king cake or something. Throw some beads. I don't know. Ms. Shinneberry? Okay. Our next item is the introduction of draft small area plan zoning ordinance amendments. I will

[01:58:38] recognize paul nabty our planning division chief for the presentation thank you mayor reed and members of city council uh it's been a while since we've talked about this project so i'll give you a quick background also for anyone who might be hearing about it for the first time

[01:59:12] we'll give you a background and then we will go over an outline of this draft and essentially the purpose of this meeting is just to introduce you to the draft we recognize that this is a fairly significant document and is pretty complex. And so we plan to come back to you on March 10 to talk about it in more detail. So for background, the smaller plans were recommended in the 2019 comprehensive plan. And since that time, we have developed smaller plans for four of the five activity centers that were identified in the comprehensive plan. The fifth at Pickett

[01:59:50] and Main is in question as we are trying to determine if there's a need to develop a full plan for for that location and based on the recommendations of the 2019 comprehensive plan the smaller plans are intended to provide more detail in each of the activity centers regarding the mix of uses densities and attentities design aesthetics street locations and multimodal connections infrastructure improvements parking and open space with the smaller plans adopted these become an extension of the comprehensive plan which is our land use policy however it is

[02:00:28] not regulations so as city council is aware as we have had private development applications come in since the plans have been adopted a lot of what we see with those proposals is a negotiation process where we are trying to achieve the benefits to the community that are identified in the small area plans through the development process where we don't have any standards that make this consistent in addition there are also recommendations in the smaller plans that may conflict with the regulations in our zoning ordinance and so we have conflicts we have to work through as well the comprehensive plan has an action that suggests that we regularly review the zoning ordinance to ensure it supports the future land use

[02:01:07] map and other guidance from the comprehensive plan and smaller plan so this was a genesis for this project starting with the intent of removing the majority of the conflicts between the zoning ordinance and adopted smaller plans as well as minimizing the need for negotiations and having as much

of that material in the code so this process began in the summer of 2024 retained a consultant white smith in casino planning and law and be they began by developing or looking or doing background research

[02:01:45] and conducting interviews with stakeholders and holding community meeting which occurred in fall of 2024 we also had introduction work sessions with the planning commission city council in january of 2025 this is followed by what we call the strategy development phase and during this phase the consultant took what they learned from the initial phase and identified the types of issues that we would need to deal with through these amendments at that time they weren't proposing any specific text but just want to make sure we were covering the right topics this was confirmed with planning commission city council in april 2025 and then another community

[02:02:22] meeting was held to confirm this with other stakeholders in may of 2025 so the result of that second phase of the effort was to identify those topics that were the consultant was to be dealing with as they prepared the text and i won't go through all of these but these are those topics i wanted to highlight the two items in red that since that time we have identified that would be better for city staff to lead because these may be applicable outside the activity centers and aren't necessarily directly related to specific recommendations of the smaller plans and these two items are looking at tree canopy requirements and the

[02:03:00] related tree ordinance this is something that city staff is going to be working on anyway particularly with the recent adoption of the urban forest master plan and then the second item is to look at our parking standards the smaller plans as much as they discuss parking and sharing parking and creating single parking districts they don't have specific recommendations on parking quantities and so this is something that we felt was not within the scope for our consultant so since spring of last year when the consultant finished phase two

[02:03:34] they've been working on the draft that is in the staff report and this is something that as I mentioned we recognize that this is a long document also very complex and so we want to have this initial work session to introduce this to you provide you an outline so as you read it it will give you a frame of reference help you understand what you're looking at and then we'll come back on march 10th to have a full work session to go over each topic that is in there you also notice in the staff report is a summary of the

[02:04:06] amendments hopefully this will be useful as well the draft will also be posted on our engage page in the next couple of days and we'll send out notices so people will be able to provide comments online we are also scheduled to have a community meeting on march 26th this will be from 5 to 8 p.m in the sherwood center and we'll get more information about that shortly and once this review is complete with the planning commission city council as well as with the general public we'll begin working on a second draft and come back for another round of work sessions

[02:04:45] and community review after that and then hopefully head towards public hearings so the on this slide looking to the left you can see the schedule that we have proposed for this review we met with the planning commission last week to have the same introduction we also got into some of the topics with them at that time uh today we have an introduction with you and then the next two meetings with the planning commission we'll be going into some of the more detailed topics with them again and then we'll be back to you on march 10 to go over the details with you and we are also proposing this isn't shown in the calendar that we may separate those elements that city staff are

[02:05:24] working on just recognizing the amount of material here it may be too much to cover on march 10 so we might come back to you at a future date to talk about the tree ordinance and the parking standards so for today's summary the things that we'll go over the five topics to be aware of that are in draft ordinance in your packet are the zoning structure this is how the the the proposed amendments will fit within the structure of the current zoning ordinance and relate to our existing processes we'll talk about dimensional standards there aren't a lot of them but the few that there are are pretty significant and that also relates to community benefits per the conversations we're

[02:06:02] having earlier community benefits would be a means for developers to achieve bonus density on those dimensional standards for providing community benefits that wouldn't typically be expected of developers. There is a section on frontages, which is guidance provided in small airplans on ground floor uses and design.

[02:06:23] The small airplans are intended to be pretty flexible with uses, recognizing that they are a mixed-use district, but the exception to that is specific locations where certain uses and conditions are desired to create a cohesive environment. And then lastly, there's a section on open space, and there are different standards that are proposed from our typical open space standards, because the smaller plans desire not just open space, but each open space to have a particular type of character or use to it.

[02:06:52] And then on the bottom there, the connected efforts, these are the items I mentioned that city staff is taking the lead on. This is our use table, which I'll explain more later, parking requirements and landscaping and the tree ordinance. And as I mentioned, we may come back to you a later date for those after March 10th. So I wanted to quickly mention, you'll notice there is a section on parking in the draft amendments. That is one option that was provided by our consultant.

[02:07:17] I'll talk about that in more detail on how that might differ from what staff will be proposing in a couple of weeks. So a couple of things to be aware of as you dive into this. First, the note that's in red here on the page, what's in the draft amendments that you received is the specific text that the consultant is recommending. This is the first pass and so we expect changes, but we want to let you know that we are looking at the actual text here. But you should also know that this will be divided throughout the zoning ordinance so it'll fit within our existing structure. It won't all be one single document like it's shown. As we get closer to the end, we will show how it will fit in our existing zoning ordinance, but it will be distributed

[02:07:57] in multiple locations. Some topics we are still working through, trying to find the best options to deal with and so we're seeking to get feedback from you and the planning commission and the general public and other stakeholders and we don't even have an agreement on some items between city staff and the consultant we have begun running some tests on some real development projects that have been approved just to see how this pans out to see how things would work and if we'd be able to get to the type of developments that have been approved recently and again just a reminder the goal one of the goals is to minimize negotiations and put more focus on having requirements and particularly things related to community benefits

[02:08:36] in the code however there are certain cases where this just can't work based on various elements including limitations with the state code and so we have to recognize going into this while that is the goal there will be cases where we still have to negotiate with developers on certain things so with that i'll go over the five topics pretty briefly the first topic is the proposed zoning structure and as i mentioned we'll be going over these in more detail on march 10 this is just to give you a frame of reference as you read

the document the proposed zoning structure if some council members might recall back in the spring our consultant was looking at different ways to

[02:09:16] incorporate amendments into our zoning ordinance it included things like using a new overlay district modifying the existing commercial urban district using a planned development district using something like a form-based code which would be kind of its own standalone zoning document but what they settled on as a preferred option is to create a new activity center zoning district we call this a floating zone because it would not be proactively mapped a applicant would have to request a rezoning to this new district in addition to that it would be limited to only be applied in the

[02:09:52] defined activity centers and so the activity centers aren't currently defined in our zoning ordinance only accompanies a plan so we would bring them into the zoning ordinance and if someone was going to utilize this district they'd have to be located or have a property that's in one of the defined activity centers there will be special submission criteria for this and as we go through some of the details you'll see that there is information that will be required for this proposed district that isn't required for all most of our other districts and so there might be some unique situations such as defining as i mentioned defining how open spaces

[02:10:28] would meet certain definitions and the fact that this would require a rezoning means it would still have to go through planning commission and city council for approval you may recall one of the questions we asked back in the spring is whether we want to move towards buy right type development there wasn't a lot of support for that and then continuing this process recognizing as i mentioned there'll still be some things we have to negotiate with developers for The preferred option is that this still goes through a land use process and still goes through the Planning Commission and City Council for review.

[02:10:57] That being said, we are also proposing that there is an alternative compliance process for some elements of this. And what we mean by that is that if a developer can't meet the standards that are in this new zoning district, that there be a means for them to request a form of exception.

[02:11:13] And there is a specific process that is defined in the draft amendments for this. It would be different from what we normally call a special exception. they would have to go through a process of explaining the purpose for the entire alternative compliance and some cases provide calculations also want to mention in the in the draft amendments that for alternative compliance right now it's just the only things that could apply to are for parking and frontages we're seeking feedback from the planning commission and council on this but we would also suggest that hype be added to that in particular because the old town smaller plan as an example specifically recommends that we

[02:11:51] support building heights that go beyond what is shown in the plan for specific desirable uses including things like hotels and entertainment and and other types of uses one thing to note on this is that the planning commission also asked that we consider the differences between old town and the other activity centers with this and so as we continue to refine this news this new zoning district think about whether old town should have a different way of dealing with it or perhaps utilize the existing transition overlay district as a replacement. So that's something we'll be

[02:12:27] keeping in mind. The next piece of this, and probably the most significant, is the dimensional standards and community benefits. As I mentioned, these are interrelated. So the two dimensional standards for which a bonus could be achieved through the community benefits program are height and density. So I'll come back to those in a minute to go over them in more detail.

[02:12:48] The other dimensional standards are transitions. What this means is that there is language in the draft amendments that accounts for relationships between development within the activity center and development outside the activity center. And so there's language about building heights transitioning to lower heights as they get closer to the periphery about having landscape setbacks and those types of things.

[02:13:10] For two properties that are both within the activity center, we don't have these same standards except in the case of historic districts. But in most cases, the vision of the smaller plans is that developments become interrelated, and so we're not trying to create barriers between them. But we also have to recognize that for areas outside the activity centers, we could have very different characteristics.

[02:13:29] The last item on the bottom here is a standard for consolidation. And this is something that is not specifically identified in the small area plans, but we heard a lot of feedback during our earlier phases of this project about a desire to encourage property owners consolidate before proceeding with redevelopment and so there is a unique bonus density calculation you'll see in there for consolidation that would apply only to property consolidation that happens after the effective day this ordinance so it's trying to encourage new consolidation and an applicant could

[02:14:07] receive additional density based depending on the size of the property able to consolidate. Staff doesn't necessarily support this part of the amendments, but we wanted to at least look into it because we heard a lot of feedback onto it. And the Planning Commission's initial reaction is also that they're not necessarily wed to this either.

[02:14:27] So going on to the community benefits and the two dimensional standards that are proposed to have bonuses to them, the two community benefits, types of community benefits that are identified in the draft amendments are for open space and contributions to the transportation network there are a series of other items that were looked at this includes green building as Ms. Koepka talked about earlier if we wanted to further research this this could fit into this overall program and we could look at how those numbers would work it also includes provisions for community space which would be publicly accessible or institutional uses that are

[02:15:04] provided within a building provisions for adaptive reuse of existing buildings and the planning commission suggested that we also look into incentives for additional affordable housing beyond what our base requirements are so based on feedback from the city attorney we we tried to limit this to just those things that are most important to us and most important to implementing the vision of the smaller year plans and that is open space and contributions to the transportation network and so you'll see there are provisions for both of those in there so a developer can receive additional units or residential units in exchange for providing those items in the case of open

[02:15:42] space there is a base requirement for open space the bonus would only be applied for open space provided beyond that base requirement so for the densities or the bonuses that would be received for height the base height that's proposed for the zoning district in general is five stories and the bonus could be achieved to receive anything up to a maximum of what is shown in the smaller plan maps these maps will be incorporated into the zoning ordinance as well and thank you council member bates for pointing out we have some discrepancies between the maps that are in the draft ordinance and the smaller plans we will correct these when we come back to

[02:16:20] you but to point out the the major ones are that the maps in the draft ordinance show a maximum of six stories for uh for a large area south of old town where this should be five for the small area plan and also shows a maximum of six stories for the core of the camp washington area which have which should have a maximum of seven for the small area plan and there are a few other smaller deviations in camp washington fairfax circle again these will be corrected the intent is that what is in the ordinance matches what's shown in the small area plan for density we had to introduce

[02:16:56] a density for a residential density for this district and so that is proposed at 48 dwelling units per acre that is consistent with what is recommended in the comprehensive plan for activity centers where a smaller plan has not yet been developed and then from there the bonuses can be achieved. And I also want to point out that we have run a couple of test fits on recent development proposals. We'll continue to do this and share more information when we come back to you. But just as a quick recap, we want to point out that the two projects we've looked at so far

[02:17:30] were the N29 slash Willowood project that was approved about two years ago. It's now under construction. And the project is now known as the point at Camp Washington, which was approved in 2018 and was completed in 2022. In the case of the point at Camp Washington, the resulting densities that we believe could be achieved through the contributions to the transportation network and the open spaces provided on the site are higher than what was ultimately approved and built. In the case of the Willowood project, the resulting densities are less than what was

[02:18:07] ultimately approved. However, in that case, we don't think it is so far off that the project would have halted there probably would have been modifications maybe there would have been a slight density decrease or an increase in open spaces or other amenities that it could have gotten them higher what we do believe is that in that kind of situation if the applicant was aware of what the standards were from the beginning then they would reprogram their project and we would still end up with something there that maybe looks slightly different from what was approved one note that the planning commission had on this topic is to make sure we have safeguards to show make ensure

[02:18:42] that the bonus provisions are not abused and this could be in the form of something like maximum densities that could be achieved or more specific standards on what could be counted as open space or could be counted as contributing towards a transportation network the next item in here are the frontages as i mentioned the smaller plans are flexible on uses however in some locations specific uses and design elements are recommended on the ground floors and there is as you go through you'll see each of these frontage types has descriptions that show not just the types of

[02:19:19] uses that are proposed in those frontages but also design elements that should be provided such as storefront windows stoops and entrances into ground floor units and those types of things i do want to point out that there are some modifications to the frontage maps from what's in the small area plans this primarily relates to the open space frontage type this frontage type was not introduced as an idea until the fairfax circle smaller plan which was the last of the four that we completed so it did not exist in any of the others this this frontage type is

[02:19:55] also only has recommendations related to design not uses and so we felt comfortable giving our consultant guidance to go ahead and show where those types of frontages could occur in the other activity centers based on the recommendations that are in those small area plans again this is wherever the green lines are shown there's guidance for design on how those buildings should engage open spaces

but it doesn't have a requirement saying there has to be retail on the ground floor or residential or anything like that whereas the other the other items do the next

[02:20:33] section is on open space so what is generally proposed in these amendments is a base requirement of 10 open space this is consistent with what is required in most of our other commercial districts the difference is that in order to qualify as open space specific design elements must be included to fit a certain type of character and so the draft amendments have a list of types of open spaces and they all have defining criteria and so an application would have to show how each open space meets with one of those types of criteria and is defined as one of those types of open spaces

[02:21:11] in addition to that there's a weighting factor so some types of open spaces are more beneficial to the community some are just kind of tangential so those that are more beneficial have a weighting factor so that they can apply more of their weight towards the area of the requirement and then those that have less benefit would have less of their area applied towards the requirement some areas were not accounting towards open space including parking lot islands transitional yards which are required through other sections of the zoning ordinance and so on and also as I mentioned in addition at once exceeding their base requirement developers can seek to have bonuses applied for

[02:21:50] additional open space these open spaces also have to meet those defined open space types that are in the ordinance. And then lastly, I want to mention the what we call the connected efforts. These are the items that city staff is working on separately. The first is looking at our use table in the zoning ordinance. If these amendments move forward, we would want to encourage them to be used over other venues. And so we have a predictable and consistent process. And we would do this by removing uh current opportunities for residential and mixed-use development to occur through a

[02:22:29] special use permit process in many of our commercial districts and this is a way that some applicants have been able to bypass the planning commission and it has resulted in an inconsistent way which development applications are reviewed so if a property is in an activity center and is seeking to have residential and mixed-use development it is expected that they would use this new district and these other opportunities would be eliminated the exception being the commercial urban district we would propose keeping that as an option because there are some locations outside of activity centers where we may want to support mixed-use development and so the commercial

[02:23:07] urban district would be a way that that could still happen that would be our only other option but we would not support the commercial urban district being used in the activity centers we would this would be really desired for the new district for parking there are a couple of options that we have come up with and so as i mentioned there is a parking section that is in the draft amendments that you have and through that section the consultant is recommending an opportunity to reduce parking by as much as 25 through various incentives this involves things like parking lot

[02:23:40] design tree preservation providing carpool parking and those types of things and city staff however has started to look at other ways of dealing with this primarily because we have some sources of information through recent surveys through recent work that has been done by the county and the parking study that was done for old town last year so we have some data that shows how our parking is actually being utilized and we do see that our parking requirements do seem to be a little bit high for residential and retail uses however they are very high for office uses and so

[02:24:16] rather than have a consistent reduction that apply to all uses equally we're proposing looking at custom reductions for each use independently really with the focus being on trying to encourage better use of parking lots for office buildings because that's where we have the most oversupply for landscaping the city staff is separately working on a tree conservation ordinance this one of the recommendations of the recently adopted urban forest master plan this would include things like strengthening recommendations for tree preservation using considering tree canopy requirements as green infrastructure and looking at options such as establishing a tree fund

[02:24:56] we are looking at state code and what is allowed in the current code for this and also monitoring current bills that may go forward that may change and actually enhance the way we're able to manage tree canopy through our ordinance or through a separate tree conservation ordinance.

[02:25:16] In addition to this, there are some provisions in our zoning ordinance that have conflicting information, and this will be an opportunity to be used to clean this up. So before we wrap this up, I wanted to mention the comments that we received last time we were with you back in the spring. We're raising concerns about what would happen if we went back and changed our small area plans and how this would impact any types of zoning ordinance amendments that are related to them and we do expect that we will be reviewing our smaller plans and making some changes and so this is something we need to be ready for and so here we have listed all the topics that are

[02:25:55] in the proposed draft and the items that are in red is where we may have or we would expect to have a little to no impact if the if the smaller plans are to change items in green are where we could have some impact however in each of these cases we expect that we could make amendments to accommodate those impacts so for example looking at dimensional standards if we reviewed the small air plans and decided to change the height recommendations of some locations these amendments are setting up a structure for those heights to be defined if we wanted to change that

[02:26:33] in the future we could amend the zoning ordinance and really just change the maps or the numbers and not have to change the whole structure and i also want to point out the item on the bottom one of the concerns we've been hearing about is the overall development capacity that is shown in the smaller plans combined and this relates to this could be affected by looking at things like traffic analysis or school impacts or fiscal analysis and so if we if we look at the total number of residential units that's proposed in a particular smaller plan if that were to change whether to go up or to go down that really should have minimal impact on the zoning ordinance

[02:27:11] because this applies to individual sites not the holistic not the holistic target and so that's what we have for today as i mentioned we will be back in a couple of weeks feel free to send us questions as you review the draft we aren't expecting questions or comments but if you have any we'd love it if you share them as well because that will also help your colleagues as they review the draft as well so we'll leave it at that thank you thank you council member amos uh thank you for this excellent presentation i only had a couple of questions the first one was just going back to that consolidation piece and staff's insight but also the discussions among the planning

[02:27:51] commission why was consolidation bonuses considered less attractive and are there discussions for alternatives uh when when looking more into the details and we'll get into more in this later but I'm glad you brought up now we the the program that is proposed in the amendments it relates only to site size and a lot of the concerns that we've had in the past about consolidations isn't necessarily

the size of the site but the fact that a particular parcel is being omitted and so in working with our city attorney we tried to see if there's a way that we could encourage consolidation or purchase of another property or showing how another property could

[02:28:30] developed and he just didn't feel comfortable having that kind of language in our ordinance so that's one of the things we feel is gonna be left to the good negotiating table if the interest is more about having larger sites because it creates better cohesive development then that is something that this does contribute toward and we could consider continue to consider it understood thank you my next question would be well one happy to really talk about the parking reductions and opportunities i think the custom parking reductions as you noted uh would make a lot of sense i think there are certain areas where we're under parked for example where i used to

[02:29:07] live lane hall but there are a number of areas where we're over parked particularly with some of the newer developments so i think if we can exchange that and incentivize it for for example additional open space that would be far more preferred and so going on to the open space component those potential bonuses i'm assuming that's restricted to on-site improvements it's not like for example a fund that they could do off-site improvements for open space and still qualify for points is that correct uh in the current draft no it would not include off-site contributions okay and my last comment is i'm sure the planning commission is happy to to have that

[02:29:44] inconsistent review process be shifted so i imagine that came up pretty heavily it did thank you council member hall thank you a lot of information i tried to absorb everything in the report but I don't think I got it all just I'll piggyback right off of your last question which is about the the open spaces and potential for off-site contributions I think that there should potentially be a consideration for off-site improvements because if I read it correctly it

[02:30:21] talked about that there was there was open space that was considered open in that anyone could access it and it wasn't part of the transitional area but there also sounded like there were open spaces that were essentially closed off but still accessible only by the residents did i interpret that correctly my laptop just died too so i can't that's correct okay so i think if if those are only the areas that can be improved open space wise i think we might be missing out on a potential contribution to a van dyke enhancement or other you know park activities that you know the greater

[02:30:55] public might be using. Same kind of goes for school proffers and some of those other things along the way. I was hoping you could explain a little bit more about the transportation bonus. Is that just if they're contributing to like the Q bus fund or something along those lines? The transportation bonus is specifically for contributions toward the street or pedestrian network on their site.

[02:31:20] So similar to open space, we see it as things that a development is providing that provide a benefit to the public that wouldn't be just for their own use. Okay. Page 11, I think, of the staff presentation, if I understood it correctly, it was talking about that there were certain areas in that green that now no longer would potentially require commercial on the ground floor?

[02:31:53] Yes, so that's one of the things we're working out with the map, if I understand correctly. With the green, the green locations never had recommendations for commercial on the ground floor. That was just design-based. However, there are locations where when we added the green to the map, it overlaps with the blue and the red, where commercial is required.

[02:32:14] And so we're trying to work through that to make sure we're not losing the commercial piece. And in some cases on these maps, I think there are some small pieces where the green kind of took it over. and we're going to work to correct that. Okay. Yeah, I do share concerns about, or not share, but I have concerns about reducing the amount of commercial. I know one of the pre-applications that we're going to see, I think next week or the week after, completely eliminates a commercial, 100% commercial space at this point and puts it 100% residential. And so I think as we continue to see things like that, I just worry that we really, we're so upside down with residential

[02:32:49] versus commercial now anyway and i think that if we intentionally continue to contribute to that it's it's going to be a bigger situation that we're going to be not happy with um the parking situation i understand that there are uh the community benefits that there is bonus density options in addition to parking reductions i just want to make sure that those two things are not at work for the same place for the same competing situation you know like if you're allowing more units because they're doing these other things but you're also allowing a reduction in parking

[02:33:29] i just think there's a fine line between that that we need to make sure that we are still following our minimum formulas and i'm sure you know that better than i do but it's just a concern yes we will keep track of that and there are you might notice there was a piece in there on the parking reduction for tree preservation which is something you can also get a bonus density for and we'll to make sure when we finalize this, there's no double dipping. Okay. And on the heels of parking, it was talking about how for a good 2,500 square foot office, an office itself would need nine spaces, whereas commercial retail would need 13 spaces. And whether or not that's too high or too

[02:34:04] low, I don't know. I have to trust you guys on that. But it did just remind me of the situation that we dealt with before with the parking situation at a home-based daycare where they couldn't have extra children because they had a linear driveway that would be blocking.

[02:34:23] And I just think that if we're talking, and I understand it's unrelated, but if we're talking about parking reductions in certain places where people are going to be for a considerable period of time, visiting an office, shopping, we really should be very mindful of what we're forcing our daycares to do for a very, very short period of drop-off and pick up. Especially when I know that specific house, I believe that three of the kids that were there actually walked. And so if we're trying to encourage all this multimodal stuff, I just think we need to be cognizant of what we're doing as we try to consider those other areas as well. Again, I know, understand it's unrelated, but it's not in my head.

[02:35:02] The height bonuses, I get very concerned about those because I think that you open a window and I think then the door just goes wide open. And I saw, unfortunately, my laptop died, but I think it was in the North Fax area. It showed seven stories. And I think in the Old Town area, it was limited to six. And then in the Fairfax circle, I think it was nine. Where are we currently with, are any of the maximum heights in that area, those small area plans, are any of those currently

[02:35:42] being met with what that maximum is uh you mean are there any like development projects underway that are building to the maximum yeah or like in north facts i think the residence inn is six stories might is that i think it might be five five okay but the um the uh camera the name of the the senior living facility that is under construction is seven which would be the maximum there that one though i will say is tucked back whereas if you're looking at where the FUD records is and things like that those might appear very frontage based and that was

[02:36:19] one other thing I really didn't love in here is I feel like with the frontage pictures that were shown it's looking very much like a DC a Falls Church a some parts of Vienna where it's I understand there's a benefit to having the stores and the commercial at the street you know at the parking I'm sorry at the sidewalk there so you can see it and not having a big parking lot in front. I understand all of that, but it really does, in my opinion, make you feel like you're

[02:36:50] in a very tall city. And I think some of that can really hurt our small town charm, our old town feel. So I was just surprised to see some of the height maximums that are potentially proposed with the bonuses in what I would consider to be residential areas. It's one thing I think for Fairfax circle to be a little bit taller because you don't have a lot of single family homes that would be competing with that visually, right? They're not like looking, but when you get into Northfax and part of the Camp Washington area, I just think some of that might be a little oversized

[02:37:30] for what we're talking about. So I think those are all of my comments for now. You came up, so I think you had something to say. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to talk over it. No, no, no. It was a great conversation. I wanted to circle back to the question you had about off-site open space or contributions to parks since our city attorney is not here that is something we're going to have to have a conversation about you will as a point of information mr. Foreman is going to be bringing a level service study to you all that will delve

[02:38:02] into impacts by developmental city services and that will eventually ascribe what the expected level of service, you know, mitigation factor to directly offset the impacts by development on city services would be.

[02:38:21] It's a little different, but we're constrained by what the state enables us to allow in the zoning ordinance. We're kind of stuck on what we can or can't. Very good question, though. Thank you. Really loud. Thank you very much. This was a very helpful, informative conversation and certainly brought a lot of meaning to, you know, the slides that I was reading and trying to understand.

[02:38:41] So I appreciate it very much. Council Member McQuillan. Thank you, Mayor. So the things I hear most from residents, I'm not a zoning professional, obviously, or a planner. So forgive me if this sounds ignorant.

[02:38:57] I'm just going to relay the things and the concerns that resonate most with the residents I hear from. So one is the parking. I know I received this study, too. And even though we have plenty of parking, there is this feeling that we don't. And the big concern with reducing any parking requirements is that then people will then decide to park in residential areas and on streets and things of that nature.

[02:39:24] So that's a concern I hear a lot of and just something to be aware of. The tree fund, I think tree conservation, the tree conservation ordinance is a strong idea. Establishing the tree fund, I just think there needs to be a little bit more communication about that, exactly how that's going to work.

[02:39:42] The concerns that I hear from residents have to do with the, if they can just put the money in a fund, those trees won't be back. We won't have the canopy. We won't have the things that we have now. And so I think there's just a lot of misinformation, and they just need more information to clear that up a little bit.

[02:40:05] Just on that I want to mention, when we talk about that in more detail, Ms. Stafford will be here to provide some explanation. But I want to let you know there's some regulations from the state about how

a tree fund would be applied and how that would relate to a tree bank, which has some other concerns to it.

[02:40:23] And what she will tell you is that the state says we have to adopt them together if we're going to adopt one. And so this is something that I would say staff is not 100% bought into yet, and we'll want to continue to evaluate that with you. Excellent. Thank you. I also hear, and personally, the height and the density is always a concern.

[02:40:43] That's something that always comes up, the standards for that. You already are aware of that. You've discussed that in your presentation tonight. I also share the sentiments that Councilmember Hall stated regarding the frontages. Just this evening, council had a great discussion with someone who complimented the feel and the look of our old town area and concerns regarding, you know, preserving that feeling, that small town feel.

[02:41:14] And so the height and density standards and the frontages, that all I think kind of plays into that. Just ensuring during the community outreach portions that we're really understanding what it is that makes that small town feel. So because that means something that everybody, it's something different to everyone.

[02:41:33] Could you go into a little more detail on the floating zone regarding special exceptions? you mentioned that um that they could apply for special exceptions um would have to request it through the could you just go back over that yeah so the what we have is it's a different process from special exceptions um called alternative compliance um and what this means is that i can't find the slide but uh anyway it's it's a section where we recognize that this is something very new for us a lot of the things that are in this proposed district are different from

[02:42:10] any other district we have and so we don't think we're going to be able to have something to perfection the first go around and I think there's going to be cases where somebody proposes something that the city really wants and just some portions of it might deviate from what's in this code and we need to have a venue an outlet for them to request a way to to get around that And so a typical process in most of our zoning districts is that there would be a special exception.

[02:42:37] If somebody wants to propose a building that's taller than what's allowed in the zoning warrants, they request a special exception, and it goes with the rest of the package of their amendments. In the case of this district, instead, we would have this alternative compliance process, and the district has specific standards for how they request that that are different from the special exception process, and that they have to explain why they are seeking this alternative compliance, why it makes their proposal more inconsistent with the small area plans, and that type of thing.

[02:43:04] So it's something we accommodate in most of our districts through a different process. Just the language is a little bit different, and we would request different criteria. Okay, so that interaction would occur between the planning department or zoning, or since that would basically sound like we would not need to be presented on that special exception.

[02:43:26] It would be handled by staff. Is that correct? It would be a part of their Oval All Land Use Approval. So the Planning Commission and City Council would receive all the materials on the request and you would have to approve it. It would be a single process. So if you approve the overall rezoning, you'd be

approving the alternative compliance request, but you would receive all the materials that shows our justification and those sort of things.

[02:43:51] All at once. Yes. Got it. Thank you. That's it. Thank you so much. Thank you. Council Member Peters. Well, thank you. I'd like to chime in and say thanks so much. A lot of great information to absorb, and also a number of questions, comments that I had have already been covered, so I won't go back to them.

[02:44:11] Just one thing I want to pick up on. You mentioned the small area plan, current status of these plans and their design, et cetera, will be going through a review process. What is the timing of that? We don't have a timing yet.

[02:44:28] I think we're going to have to come back with you in the next couple of months and discuss what that review might look like, what type of content we want to cover, and that type of thing. And at that time, we could establish more of a time frame. But it's something that's in the near future. Okay, helpful to know.

[02:44:45] Then just big picture, it was a little bit difficult for me to follow in the mix of all of the things that are at play here. The extent to which the updates and zoning involve moving from special exemption to buy-right, can you clarify that?

[02:45:04] How much of that is embedded in this? With this proposal, there would be no additional opportunities for buy-right development. The change would be that in some cases, residential and mixed-use development can now occur in commercial districts with a special use permit, which is not by right, but it goes to city council but not planning commission.

[02:45:30] With this district, those opportunities would be removed and a rezoning would be required, and so it would have to go to planning commission and city council. But there would be no by right opportunities that don't currently exist. Okay. Really helpful to know. And then I want to also agree in terms of some of the community perspective on this.

[02:45:54] There's a continuing concern about height and density. We've certainly heard about that. But part of that is a little bit of a disconnect that might be helpful to explore on the numbers side. So we received a very helpful note from our city manager on the number of housing units that are either in progress or planned from the period of 2020 to 2025.

[02:46:26] And we also have numbers that are provided on the forecast, and now we have actuals or estimated actuals on population growth and housing growth. And so we get those numbers. The cooperative forecast has a set of forecasts in them, but we have actuals from census.

[02:46:47] And I guess here's where there's a little bit of disconnect that may make sense of some of the concerns that we hear from the community. So we see in the cooperative forecast basically that there was expected between 20 and 25, based on the city's estimate, to be about a 15% increase in population.

[02:47:07] It actually was about 11 to 12. The increase in households was expected to be about 13, a little bit less than that. I don't know that exact number. It also, by the way, includes what's embedded in that is the fact that we're incorporating more population per household, which is a trend here.

[02:47:27] But again, hang on to the number that what we actually saw in terms of population growth was 11 to 12 percent. The increase in housing units is almost 42% in that same period, almost four times the

rate of population and four times the rate of household estimated growth.

[02:47:52] And that number puts us at where we otherwise would expect it to be by 2030, so we're way ahead of schedule. And then in addition to that, my understanding is the small area plans are the translation of that forward is about another 4,000 units in the next 10 years, which puts us numerically past 2050 in terms of where our population and household growth would be.

[02:48:23] So we are, again, way, way past the growth rates for our population and household with our actual units and proposing to add more. And on top of that, there's an unanswered question about the translation of the maps for the small area plans after that period of time.

[02:48:44] And that's a little bit unclear, but the estimates that have come in is that that could as much as double the city's population. And so I think it's not a surprise that we're hearing so much concern from the community about the level, the volume of new high-density development coming in the city and where that is projected to go.

[02:49:05] It would seem to me that that would be one of the top issues that ought to be reexamined in the review of the small area plans to try to recalibrate all of this. And based on this history alone, we have on top of it, though, Now, the decline in population, we've seen this last year, and that may hold for a good stretch, and we've seen a decline in employment, which also is expected to hold for a stretch, which translate into the last modeling I saw, possibly a 20% reduction in household growth here in the city of Fairfax.

[02:49:40] So the numbers are not matching, and my concern is that the small area plans are based on assumptions that may not be fitting in terms of where we are with population and household growth. I think the question becomes then when is our next opportunity to take a second look at that so we can bring alignment between both the small area plans and the zoning ordinances we have to be a little bit more reflective of where we are in terms of household and population growth. So one thing I want to point out on this slide.

[02:50:19] The item on the bottom gets at what you're mentioning and we agree the market analysis that were done for the small air plans when they were adopted, some of them coming up on six years ago now, is very dated. A lot has changed since then and we think that there's room to re-explore that.

[02:50:39] But again, those are the more holistic numbers and so we think that the zoning ordinance amendments, we can still move forward with applying a structure here. And if we end up changing what we expect the total household growth to be through the small airplane reviews, that wouldn't necessarily affect our review of individual properties. It would affect what our long-term policy is for the small airplanes. But certainly the questions and concerns you raise are something that we have identified and we do plan to look at them. Okay. And I would just maybe add the other point that I believe came out of actually staff

[02:51:14] discussion for what it's worth as a part of that that the inputs to the cooperative forecast by the city of Fairfax have historically been quite a bit higher than those of neighboring jurisdictions so that would be another thing to take a look at and maybe bring them into alignment with the region thanks council member bates thank you um and and that's actually a good point to consider that, you know, the difference in population growth versus growth in number of households.

[02:51:52] And that actually reminds me of the fact that the plurality of new multifamily units I see, if not perhaps even the majority, you know, correct me if I'm wrong, in new projects or studio and one-bedroom units, I believe.

[02:52:08] Whereas in single-family homes, townhomes, you're seeing probably, you know, at least existing ones, you know, and I guess we've seen some new ones, two, three bedroom units. And then in addition to that, you also see perhaps greater likelihood for there to be more than one person per bedroom in, you know, single family homes, townhouses, possibly, you know, thinking about families with kids, possibly multiple kids, you know, that kind of thing. And additionally,

[02:52:41] So, you know, going off of that, when we're talking about, say, 300 multifamily units, you know, that's not necessarily the same as 300 single-family homes. And so that's, you know, a good point to consider.

[02:52:59] Now, thinking about just, you know, heights in general, since, you know, that is sort of part of this, you know, we, Old Town Fairfax, for example, Old Town, particularly Old Town South, you know, number of five-story and even six-story building fronting onto the sidewalk in that area already.

[02:53:24] And Camp Washington, right across the city line, I believe there are a couple eight-story buildings right nearby. And then, of course, Fairfax Circle, we have around 12 to 14-story buildings right over the line over there. So thinking about the context, but, you know, again, this is based on what's in the small area plans that have already been adopted.

[02:53:48] And, you know, I do want to note on that note that I, this is really an exciting time for me as someone who's followed the development of small area plans and development in general since those first small area plans were considered back in 2020, that this is finally coming to fruition in terms of our zoning ordinance because the two have really been kind of out of sync for a number of years. And so circling back, you know, I, this is really going in the right

[02:54:22] direction and it's really fascinating to see the functionality of how this all works, how this kind of hard codes some of the expectations of the small area plans. And, you know, certainly I I understand it's not going to be perfect and that we are perhaps hamstering to some extent by the nature of the Dillon rule.

[02:54:46] But with that in mind, I'm thinking about we have, in some cases, City Center West, which I know is, I think that's out there, that that's been inactive.

[02:55:04] But when that was approved, you know, you're looking at, I think it was technically considered nine stories due to there being a little bit of a dip to, you know, have the entrance to the parking garage above ground, but mostly is about seven to eight stories above ground.

[02:55:22] But the density there is a lot lower than, you know, the density that we see in some other projects, like on the other hand, Davies property, five stories along Chain Bridge, you know, and then as you get over to university, substand to four stories.

[02:55:39] But it's a bit more complicated than that because you see a very steep grade change. And then, you know, additionally, you see a lot of variation in terms of the amount of green space that's recommended versus the amount of, you know, the building footprint that's recommended in smaller area plan.

[02:56:01] You know, of course, that's, I know, very rough, not, you know, exact. The Davies property, as an example, is much higher density, and that was recommended for approval by staff, but I believe for denial by a planning commission, but still, you know, both informed by the small area plan and comprehensive plan.

[02:56:25] And so I just want to make sure that, you know, we're kind of considering the nuanced nature of what certain densities and certain heights really look like throughout the activity centers and in different parts of the activity centers and make sure that we're not inadvertently making it more difficult to build certain projects that staff would otherwise see as being in compliance with small area plans.

[02:56:56] And, you know, so something to consider, you know, and I'm thinking about different ways of looking at this. I know that 48 units per acre makes sense based on the recommendation for sites that are not subject to small area plans in the comprehensive plan.

[02:57:17] And I think that makes sense as a starting point. But maybe we might think about having different base densities for different parts of the activity centers. For example, looking at the Old Town core, that's recommended to stay at, you know, three stories max, I believe.

[02:57:36] So maybe that might see, you know, a lower base density, whereas, you know, you have other areas that are recommended for max of six, seven, nine stories. So maybe those might be, you know, considered for a little bit of a higher base density, something like that.

[02:57:54] or maybe different densities per floor, if that makes sense, or a little bit greater there. I know that we can't necessarily get too granular, and that takes a lot more time and effort.

[02:58:10] But just an idea, as far as parking, additional consideration there. Perhaps I know that that's more ancillary to this, uh fairfax circle is by nature a lot more transit oriented than the other activity centers so just due to its proximity to the metro station there um so maybe an additional consideration might be to have um different minimum parking requirements in different activity centers based on their

[02:58:44] proximity to transit or something like that um and anyway that's uh i think all i have for now thanks councilmember McQuillan thank you mayor I just want to also echo the sentiments of councilmember Peterson in regards to the small area plans and zoning alignment and that increase that 42% I appreciate your comments councilmember Bates but serving on the school board when you see this type of growth so quickly you really notice how it affects the infrastructure particularly

[02:59:23] our tuition rates because, you know, we can estimate that we're only going to have one or two individuals when, in fact, I have seen families or couples with small children that do move into these units, and so that does affect our infrastructure, and so it does need to be considered, and I, too, would like to know a little bit more about that and where we are in the numbers for our small area plans in terms of units because that is something that I know just having been on school board, we were very, very concerned about. You would

[02:59:57] see these new developments come in. I would drive by that development before the new development would come in. I'd see the bus stop full of children, you know, and then be told that it's just going to be this number of single units. And so not only do we wonder about where those children go, and you recognize, you see the shift, you see the change. And so what often is reported isn't always what we're experiencing. So that's, I just wanted to offer that perspective a little bit, having been on the school board

and seeing those student yield counts. Thank you. Council Member Hall. Thank you. I will just echo that with some information about

[03:00:36] Scout on the Circle. I think based upon the number of studios, one bedrooms, etc., it was expected to be very, very low student yield. And I don't have the most up-to-date numbers, but I believe it was either 54 or 56 students that come from that building, which was completely unexpected. And I think it's very easy to say that if we build these studios or one bedrooms or even two bedrooms, that we're not going to see students because maybe we're expecting young professionals are going to take them or, you know, people that are leaving George Mason or

[03:01:09] couples. I think that the cost disparity and just the crunch that people are feeling overall in their entire budget, I think it's making people take a very, very different approach to home ownership or to what type of unit they want to rent.

[03:01:26] And so I, you know, to echo what Councilmember McCullin said, I just don't think that it's as easy as, well, it's this many, you know, studios or one bedroom, so we're only expecting this. I think we really do have to be using the most accurate data that we have for each of those buildings that are newer now or, you know, a couple years old and see really what we're generating um and i know i've said this before and i will say it again but and correct me if i'm wrong here but the small area plans were put into consideration and circulation in 2020 is that correct the first two for old town and orthodox were okay and was that when they were

[03:02:05] enacted or that was the work leading up to them and the discussion and conversations went on during 2020? They were adopted in June of 2020. So the work began in 2019. Okay. And then with the next one, that was 22? 22, I think, for Camp Washington. Okay. So then that came around during 2020 and 2021, I presume? Yes. Okay. And just to remind everyone, we had a pandemic then. So I think not that everyone comes out and gives their opinions on everything all the time anyway, but I do wonder if the small area plans are still serving us in the way that we expected them to

[03:02:42] and did we get out of them what we wanted and I think for those who put in the time and the energy and and had a vision for it I think it probably is very accurate and I applaud those who worked on those but I do wonder that if we take a step back and we ask the residents now that we see how they look what kind of development we're expecting in those areas now that we understand exactly what we've signed off onto are we really seeing what we expected to see as residents here so that's my takeaway from that thank you council member amos look i'm never one to argue against

[03:03:18] market analysis so i have no issue with that but what i what i will say is that when we're looking at household growth population growth uh and household growth outpacing population growth we need to consider all the contextual factors so at the state level you're talking what ninety four ninety six percent of zoning across Virginia's for single-family households and you're talking less not even close to five percent I think it's significantly less is for multifamily so that's a factor here even in the city looking at our at the National Zoning Atlas only six

[03:03:55] percent of two family six percent of three family six percent of four plus family are allowed by right, 66% of the land in the city prohibits multifamily development still. And that's an issue. And so I, not to be too selfish, I talk about Layden Hall a lot. And I think it's part of the reason I do that is because I'm not entirely certain we've had a council representative who rented at the same time from an apartment in

the city. And I get passionate about it because one of the considerations for me, even considering staying in the city was

[03:04:32] primarily because of council. If it weren't for my role here and my love for the city, it would be difficult for me to stay. Why would I keep investing \$1,700, \$1,800 in a one-bedroom apartment when I know I can afford more? I could have moved down and got my house for probably \$300,000 less in City of Manassas, but I love this place. And then when you factor that in, you look at fair market rate for a two-bedroom apartment in Richmond, Virginia. You're looking at what, 14 to 1,500, sometimes breaching 1,600, but it's usually around that 1,500

[03:05:06] range. Here in this region and in Fairfax City, you're talking 2,400, 2,500. And so I think when we're having these conversations, we need to make sure we broaden our scope to include all that. There are people who want to live here who can't. And that's important to keep in mind as well as we move forward. But we also need to make sure we have the most up-to-date information. Completely agree with that. And we also need to consider what is obviously we're dealing with a wild federal context, wild state context. Things are constantly fluctuating. Minimum wage is increasing. Will that help at all? I'm not entirely certain. I don't

[03:05:42] know. But what's post-2028 life going to be like, post-2030? We don't know with certainty. No one could have predicted the pandemic back in 2019. And I think, was a market analysis before pandemic or post-pandemic? For the first two, it was pre-pandemic. For the others, I think it was during an odd time where we had to make some interesting calculations just because the data wasn't accurate. I think everyone was making interesting calculations back then. So I think having all that context will also matter. And just quickly on the parking point, going back to Scout on the Circle, I think we also need to acknowledge Scout on the Circle is severely

[03:06:21] over parked. They don't use a lot of their parking spaces. And imagine if we have something in this place where they could have converted those parking spaces into additional open space or some type of investment back in the community that could have been more effective.

[03:06:39] Councilmember McQuillan. Sorry, I don't want to steal your thunder, but I just had somebody who lives there state that they have a tough time finding parking. So, again, on paper it looks like one thing and we hear one thing, but from residents, and I have to just make sure that the residents' voices are heard here and that somebody represents that because that is the element that we're providing, right?

[03:07:05] It's not your job to tell us everything that constituents are thinking, and especially as trends and things change, you know, that's part of what we bring to the table. That's part of our purview. So I just wanted to share that with you that I literally just had that conversation with someone because of the parking presentation that we received.

[03:07:25] I was curious, and so I started to ask people in all different places, especially in apartments because of Leighton Hall, because of the things that you say. I honestly do try to seek those areas out and get some resident feedback to ensure that the information that we're being provided is still applicable to those living there now.

[03:07:43] So that is something I hear you. I know that it says that they have a lot of parking. But honestly, let's go to lunch and let's go see the parking because I did just have lunch there the other day, too. And it's not always very easy. Well, there's two different kinds of parking.

[03:07:59] There's parking for retail and there's parking for residents. So we're talking about building structured parking, so many spaces per unit or square footage. So it's about \$34,000 a parking space for structured parking, roughly.

[03:08:15] So if you're building too much parking for the units and not enough parking for the retail, this is part of why it is difficult to figure out not just parking per unit or square foot of a building, but what kind of parking and where it is, right?

[03:08:31] So there's a lot of parking requirements for units where families don't own two cars. They own one or they own zero. But people parking in front of the restaurant don't have access to resident parking. Yeah, we were in the garage, but that's...

[03:08:47] Right, so there's resident parking in the garage, and there is retail parking in the garage. Anyway, this is getting very granular. It's getting very late. It's about 10.15. Anything else? Because we do have one more presentation on this. Just a final comment. I appreciate you. I know you all need some feedback. I think it's great work and very helpful, but I think the context for this causes a little bit of concern to me.

[03:09:10] We're off by a factor of four, at least, in terms of supply being ahead of demand, and the system is built around something that is so far off in calibration. Again, it's a real concern in terms of what this might look like if it was better aligned and what it would look like going forward.

[03:09:30] just remember a reminder that we got off base before we had a change in federal administration and some of these other issues took place so it's even going to be more going forward and so i would look forward to us rethinking this a bit council member bates we had a housing assessment performed and i would encourage everyone to give that a quick review right and so the final thing i will say is that not everybody in this city is against high density housing, and I would hope that voters and

[03:10:09] residents are talking to people on the doors as our candidates are door-knocking to ask questions about where they stand on basic development or the small area plans. This is the city's opportunity to find out because the people sitting here are the ones who make the decisions.

[03:10:26] So an informed resident and an informed voter means talking to the people who are making these decisions to ask where they stand Because you do hear from community members, but there's 26,000 people who live here, and there's 18,000 registered voters, and we're not hearing from everyone.

[03:10:43] So an election year is the opportunity for voters to have these conversations and to let more of the population be heard on how they feel about these big visionary plans that are guiding the future development of the city.

[03:10:59] I mean, the small area plans, the comprehensive plans, they guide the development that comes here, the people who choose to build things here or not. So people need to understand that who sits on this dais that has an enormous impact. All the planning, all the studies, all of it makes a difference, but ultimately it comes down to the votes that are taken here on what does or does not happen.

[03:11:25] so i would encourage the people in this city to talk to the people who are running for office this year it's very important and with that we will thank you very much and miss shinneberry what do we have next our last work session items is a discussion of alternative delivery methods for construction i'm going to recognize patty and asenti our procurement manager for the presentation

[03:11:50] what's our time check what's our projection this is going to be a lightning round okay A lightning round.

[03:12:28] So thank you for including me on the agenda tonight. And what I'm going to speak to you about briefly are procurement matters related to construction projects for the city.

[03:12:46] The takeaway here is nobody's an expert. I don't expect you to be an expert by the time I finish the discussion. It's really just an overview of the methods that are available to us through the Virginia Public Procurement Act to conduct procurement projects.

[03:13:05] So one of the things I want to talk through are the methods of project delivery. And under the state code, there are three methods to do construction contracting. One is design bid build, and that's what we've been doing in the city.

[03:13:22] That's the only thing we're allowed to do. There are two other methods. One is design build, and the other is construction management. I'm going to present both of those, but the takeaway again is tonight we're just going to run through those options, and then my intention is to come back to the council again in a few weeks with a resolution asking you to adopt the procedures.

[03:13:46] So the state code requires us to adopt by resolution procedures if we want to do either of the alternate methods of construction delivery. It does not mean that we have to use them. It just is another tool in the toolbox for our public works, both on the city side and for the schools.

[03:14:09] So, you know, the variables and considering these three options are really accountability, cost, and the amount of risk that is associated and put on the owner being the city. Overview of design bid-build requires two contracts.

[03:14:28] So we have a contract with our architect engineer to produce our construction documents that are completed, and then we go out to bid for a construction contractor. There's, I'm trying to think of a good way to phrase this, but there is a relationship between the architect and the construction contractor, but if there are circumstances where they don't agree, that risk gets put on the city.

[03:14:59] The other implication here is that it is a longer timeline because the work is all done sequentially. We finish the design, and once it's completed, then we go out and issue the solicitation, the invitation for bid. One of the alternate methods is design-build.

[03:15:18] So we have a different relationship. there's just one single contract. So we contract with the design builder. It improves constructability, innovation. There's one point of responsibility. So if there are conflicts as the project's being built out, we're only dealing with one entity. There's no conflict between an architect and the construction contractor. Key points on advantages. Like I mentioned, there's a single point of responsibility. Design and construction overlap. So when we're doing

[03:15:52] design build, the project does go faster. You bring the contractor in earlier, they're involved in the design decisions, so it does improve some of the decisions about the, you know, kind of redundant here, but let me just leave it at that. Faster project delivery can be more cost efficient and more collaboration with the owner, so that's your design build. Excuse me, and then construction management, which is the third alternate method. What we're doing is bringing in a construction

[03:16:30] manager to work as a team with the owner and the architect. What is unique about this, and I'll have some more bullet points about it, is that the construction manager provides a guaranteed maximum

price. So they're going to be coming in at the schematic design. So the design for the project is not complete. It's probably around 30%, and then we're bringing them in. They give us a guaranteed maximum price, and then they hold that with their subcontractors. There are two methods

[03:17:04] or two flavors to construction management, but what we're really talking about here is construction manager at risk or CMAR, and there's a little slide there that gives you a illustration of the relationship between the three parties or two parties I'm sorry. So under CMAR we issue a two step solicitation. We go out with an RFQ and we pre-qualify the contractors. Then we go back to those that have been pre-qualified. We ask them for their pricing. We validate their technical competence, the schedule. One of the unique factors and this is also part of the state code

[03:17:44] is the contractor cannot self-perform more than 10%. So 90% of the work, they're subcontracting out. So we have two contracts, one with our architect engineer and one with the construction manager who also works to advise during design and construction.

[03:18:05] Advantages of construction management, better constructability, there's certainty because you do have a guaranteed maximum price on the contract. It helps mitigate risk. It is well-suited for phased and occupied facilities and faster project delivery by overlapping phases.

[03:18:27] So this is a little graphic that sort of illustrates the differences between first on the left you see design bid build, which is the traditional method in the middle, design build, and you can see the overlapping roles between the architect and then your design-build contractor and then on the right, construction manager at risk.

[03:18:55] This graphic shows and illustrates the comparison on the delivery schedule. And again, design-build you'll see is a little bit faster, see them at risk. Again, the overlapping roles between the parties involved in the project.

[03:19:12] And any decision to use any of these is really the responsibility of public works or, you know, if we're a school's project for the city schools, it's not a determination made under the Office of Procurement Services.

[03:19:30] My role here is just to conduct the solicitation through the method that they deem to be most advantageous for the project. We talked a little bit about risk, so more risk under design, bid, build for the owner, less under a design, build contract, and even less under a construction manager at risk.

[03:19:52] Key takeaways, really no size, one size fits all. And, you know, that speaks to what I was just saying. We really rely on the decision between the project manager, the owner, and the architect to make those decisions about which method of construction contracting is best for a particular project.

[03:20:17] So, again, it's just another tool in the toolbox. But what I would like to do is come back to you again in a few weeks as we are required under the Virginia Code 2.24382 is to, first of all, adopt a resolution and then adopt procedures to use design, build construction practices, and then construction manager at risk.

[03:20:42] It's defined by the state secretary of administration. So there's really a very good template laid out. we would just tailor that to the way that the city wanted to use it, but I'm just here advocating and letting you know that we would like to expand the way and the manner in which we do construction

contracting in the city by adding these two alternative procedures, very much like we did back, I believe it was in 2022, when we added Public-Private Education and Infrastructure Act.

[03:21:15] Just another tool in the toolbox doesn't mean we have to use it, but we rely on the experts to make the decision on that. Thank you for the presentation. Councilmember Hall? Just a very quick question. We, the Willard Sherwood is under a construction manager at risk.

[03:21:32] Is that because it's a combined project with the county and they already have this resolution done? Correct. Okay, so we're just kind of operating under their umbrella of that? Well, they're the contracting entity, so yes. Okay, thank you. council member hardy chandler then council member amos so i appreciate this would be an additional tool not a substitute for traditional right the question that came to mind for me and this is out of my not having expertise in this area is when you do the design build and you remove the bid process does that decrease the competition we're not removing any bidding process it's just

[03:22:12] where at what point do we bring in our construction contractors so design build they're coming in earlier and then they're working and that the effort to finalize the details for the facility is done in conjunction with the architect. So in a traditional the architect's done and then we bring in the construction manager. So you're saying it's more sequential whereas this would have a little bit more overlap. So not tonight but when you come back I would love to

[03:22:47] hear more about how that pyramid of risk how that really breaks out a little bit more in detail thank you council member amos just for clarity and thank you again on this so under seymour you have because construction management that that phrase is confusing me a little bit so when you're looking at the bidding process you have a bid for the architect designer you have a bid for the construction manager and then another bid for construction or is that or are you saying construction would fall under construction management, and they could make a recommendation.

[03:23:23] Could you clarify that for me? Sure. So you're asking specifically about CMAR, construction manager at risk? It made it seem like construction manager, and then the construction service, whoever would be the GC we brought on are separate. So there would be two parties. There would be our architect, and then our CMAR GC, who hires all the subs. Understood. Okay, okay. So they're also the CMAR. Sorry, I just wanted to clarify that point.

[03:23:52] Okay, good question. And my only other question would be, I know through my job, we typically have the construction manager actually built into the architect and designer. Is that something that's even allowed? Could this be a state issue, or has that been a consideration?

[03:24:10] In practice, there are really three parties, because we also have an owner's representative who's working on our behalf to oversee the construction of the project. So there's really three parties involved.

[03:24:27] We have the architect, we have our project manager, owner's rep, and then we have our GC, who may be also operating as a construction manager at risk if we want that model. Yes, but let's say for the initial bid for the architect, we also in that bid included an architect who provides construction management services.

[03:24:50] has that been is that an option or a consideration point we have contracts that are written that way and it is permitted under the code as a multi-phase but i and i reluctant to speak for our project our

public works director dave summers but has not been in my experience his preference to do that he'd rather have a third party act as the owner's rep yes and for-profit housing development compared to public sector public works you know development i imagine are very different so i was just curious about that thank you okay council member Bates so as I understand it from the

[03:25:29] presentation it sounds like we're talking about not choosing one size fits all approach but just looking at these three different options and in some cases one might be preferable and in some cases another might be preferable right and it's really the determination of the public works director and any consultants and architects, engineers that are leading the project.

[03:25:56] So if they came to me and they said, we'd like to do this as a CMAR, if we adopt the resolution and procedures, then we could do it under that method. Yeah. Yeah, that makes sense. I mean, you know, I think that we should always be looking for ways to reduce costs, increase efficiency, you know, reduce time expended.

[03:26:17] I think it's not necessarily good reference, but I do work with a lot of procurement directors throughout the Commonwealth. And, for instance, higher ed frequently uses CMAR. They find it to be more effective and ensure that they get good quality contractors, particularly, you know, if they're doing specialized buildings on a campus.

[03:26:40] Yeah, that's good to know. Any other questions or comments? I think it's pretty straightforward. You're just giving more flexibility, depending on what the project is. I mean, you know, a good example is Old Town Hall, which is a historic restoration.

[03:26:57] So we only had one choice to do it one way, and that's the way we're doing it. But henceforth, in other CIP projects like the property yard, it might make sense to do something entirely different than this one option we have. So it seems to me there's no real risk here.

[03:27:14] There's no real downside to giving flexibility to the decision makers, depending on what project we're looking at. So I look forward to you coming back in a couple of weeks. They've got questions. Yes, Council Member Peterson. A question that maybe is for our city manager, but if not, you can redirect it.

[03:27:37] We have experienced a number of CFP projects that have started at one cost estimate and ended up somewhere very, very different.

[03:27:52] But an exception to that is the Willard Sherwood Center, which I'm understanding is under the construction manager approach here. I don't know whether that explains the difference between the two or how we should be thinking about this. but it would seem to me if we're into having a menu here and matching it based on project, it would be great to figure that out because I think it's a little bit of a difficult situation for us to see these kind of cost escalations, and it makes it a lot easier when we don't, to state the obvious.

[03:28:22] So I don't know whether there's an answer to that right now or whether we circle back on that.

[03:28:34] Anything else? Okay, I will now reconvene the special meeting and turn it over to Mr. Alexander. Thank you, Mayor. very quickly I've received some questions I think about goals in general and overall priorities just a reminder you know the council as a continuing body and the strategic goals have been previously adopted we're still operating in terms of the work that we do in that framework and so I

think it's important just generally to cover those priorities and reinforce that you know when we We do provide new direction that may change, but for now, you know,

[03:29:13] the major goal areas that we're focused on are the economic development, environmental sustainability, stewardship, community, transportation, and governance. I won't go through all the detail. It's posted online in the interest of time, but I have received questions about that, and I just want to reinforce that those remain our goals and our priorities until that changes.

[03:29:34] Thank you so much, Mr. Alexander. And with that, we are adjourned at 10.33 p.m. on Tuesday.



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