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City of Fairfax City Council Meeting, Tuesday, March 10, 2026

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Place City Hall, City of Fairfax, Virginia
Length 4h 24m (video)

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[00:01:51] evening i would like to call the regular meeting of march 10th 2026 to order welcome everyone to the chamber we are as you can see celebrating women's history month tonight if you are able and so choose please rise for the pledge of allegiance all right we have um actions out of

[00:02:30] the closed meeting is there a motion to approve the concurrence with personnel action council member Hardy Chandler pursuant to the city charter section 6.3 F a move that the city council concur in the personnel action outlined by the city manager in closed meeting is there a second second the motion has been made and seconded a roll call vote councilmember Amos aye councilmember Hall aye councilmember Hardy Chandler aye councilmember Peterson aye councilmember Bates aye councilmember McQuillan aye motion passed unanimously wonderful I will now invite the new director of economic development Colleen Cardez up to the

[00:03:07] microphone to make a few remarks and in her to introduce herself to our community welcome Colleen thank you so much mayor Reed members of council I am honored and grateful to be the next director of the city of Fairfax for economic development economic development is what creates supports and sustains the quality of life that makes people choose this a place to live a place to work, a place to

learn, a place to play and grow, and I cannot wait to lead the city through this chapter and to many more to come. Thank you for bestowing your trust in me, and I look forward

[00:03:46] to getting started and serving the city going forward and serving your strategies, your goals, your priorities, and helping the city to attract, retain, and grow businesses. Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you so much. We look forward to getting to know you too. I'm going to ask the Commission for Women to come down for the Women's History Month proclamation, if you'll just join me

[00:04:09] in the well. That's what happens when you say a lot. You get smaller and smaller and smaller.

[00:04:31] All right, ladies, look at all this. I love all this purple. All right. Whereas Women's History Month was established in 1980 as a way to acknowledge the contributions of women to our country and includes International Women's Day on March 8th, when we celebrate the contributions of women around the world. The theme for this year's National Women's History Month is Leading the Change, Women Shaping a Sustainable Future. And whereas one of the first women to recognize the importance of programs to support and protect Americans at every stage of life was Frances

[00:05:07] Perkins, the first woman to hold a cabinet position as U.S. Secretary of Labor under Franklin Delano Roosevelt from 1933 to 1945. She created the Social Security Program, initiated a minimum wage, established unemployment compensation, banned child labor, and enshrined the 40-hour work week through the Fair Labor Standards Act. And whereas the marine scientist and author Rachel Carson published Silent Spring in 1962, sparking the modern-day environmental movement by exposing the hazards of pesticides to the ecosystem and to humans

[00:05:44] and resulting in the banning of DDT in 1972. That movement has been taken up by activists such as Greta Thunberg, who has inspired young people around the world to safeguard our natural environment through on-the-ground actions against a multitude of threats. And whereas Dr. Temple Grandin created modern practices of livestock management and agriculture through the introduction of sustainable rangeland use, integrating grazing and crops, and the concept of animal welfare sustainability through more humane treatment of livestock and more responsible food production ecosystems, which benefit all of

[00:06:21] us. And whereas Katherine Johnson, for whom our middle school was renamed in 2021, was a gifted mathematician who contributed to the NASA space program and was a pioneer in early computing. Her work included calculating trajectories, launch windows, and emergency return paths for Project Mercury space flights, and were also essential to the start of the space shuttle program. Her work continues to impact the U.S. space program, which is a growing economic pillar in our region. And whereas Abigail Davis Spanberger was elected the first woman governor of Virginia

[00:06:57] in 2025, applause line, putting her in a position to sign into law the policies that benefit all Virginians and addressed issues of sustainability at every level, from environmental practices, conservation, and renewable energy to the full funding of education, support for working families through paid family leave, and a \$15 minimum wage. Her tenure will impact our quality of life, economic opportunity, and the preservation of our democracy through sustaining the vision of our founding fathers. And whereas Fairfax City's Commission for Women is part of this ongoing

[00:07:34] commitment of women to be leaders at every level, acknowledging that we owe a debt of gratitude to the many suffragists who fought for our right to be part of the electoral process and to fully

participate in our own government. Now therefore I, Catherine S. Reed, Mayor of the City of Fairfax, do hereby proclaim the month of March 2026 is Women's History Month and March 8, 2026 as International Women's Day and encourage all of us to learn more about women's contributions starting with our own families and local communities please join the commission for women's sustainability

[00:08:10] market at sherwood community center on march 15th 2026 as part of our month-long celebration all right i will uh keep it brief good evening everyone mayor reed and council community members i just want to say thank you on behalf of the commission for women i think representation truly matters. And you mentioned Abigail Spanberger. The first governor was elected in Virginia more than 200 years ago. And wow, does change take time? So I think to your comment

[00:08:47] during the reception, there is so much progress and still so much work to be done. And the commission is happy to be a part of those who are still committing to do the work. So thank you and happy Women's History Month. Okay. And now, and turn up. Short people in the front.

[00:09:09] Short, short, short, real, and tell us. If everybody in the front could squeeze in just a little bit more. Three, two, one, one more, and three, two, one.

[00:09:36] And the last one, three, two, one. Thank you. Thank you so much. I think you're going to get a whoopee cushion.

[00:10:04] We can move to the adoption of the agenda. Is there a motion to approve the agenda? I move to adopt the agenda as presented. Second. Second. The motion has been made and seconded. A roll call vote. Council Member Amos. Aye. Council Member Hall.

[00:10:19] Aye. Council Member Hardy-Chandler. Aye. Council Member Peterson. Aye. Council Member Bates. Aye. Council Member McQuillan. Motion passed unanimously. We will go on to initial general public comment. I had four people sign up by 5 o'clock p.m. today.

[00:10:35] If there's anybody in the room that wants to speak on general public comment, we'll have another option under agenda item 8. So our first speaker is Tony Milmo, if you can come up. Good evening.

[00:10:55] My name is Tony Milmo. I'm a homeowner here in Fairfax City. I'm also a member of the Young at Heart Senior Center, and I'm on the Senior Advisory Council. I'm also a member and a volunteer of the Fairfax Village in the city. As a recent retiree, these groups have meant the world to me in transitioning into retirement life.

[00:11:17] I'm here tonight to voice my support for the new Sherwood Center project. as a city it is important that we're looking toward the future this new center is essential community infrastructure not a luxury it will be a multi-generational hub serving families children adults and seniors all in one location the green acres senior center has a membership of 5 244 members approximately 40 city and 60 county with an average of 150 members that

[00:11:53] are badging in each day the existing green acres building is long overdue a replacement or at least a renovation at an estimated cost of over 58 million dollars for many years when updates and even essential repairs such as fixing the leaky roof have been requested the response has been that there's a new center coming and we don't want to spend money on repairing something that's going going to be

replaced. Residents have tolerated a subpar situation. They've been patient because something better was promised. Now city council members may vote against the project and it could

[00:12:32] fail. This is unimaginable to those of us who have been patiently waiting essentially after the millions of dollars already spent on planning the Sherwood project. It's my opinion that moving forward with the new center is the right decision. It is difficult to understand how the city has spent over four million dollars and 10 years planning a new center and now possibly abandoning and losing the four million dollars. In addition, Fairfax County residents have invested approximately

[00:13:07] eight million dollars in the project in addition to the city. Voting no could hurt our relationship with the county as well recently your path extension upgrade project was voted down and over a million dollars was spent in that planning and i just ask how can this keep happening we're spending millions planning upgrades and then the vote fails and the money is lost i ask each of you to support the sherwood center it will provide wonderful services to all ages in fairfax city

[00:13:42] as well as county residents. This facility is an investment that reflects a long-term value. It will increase home values and the quality of life for residents. Many studies have proven. I'll stop there. Please vote yes and support the new Sherwood Center. We're counting on you to look to the future. Thank you so much. Our next speaker is Mary Aggie. Good evening. I'm Mary Aggie, a resident

[00:14:19] of the city. I live at 10463 Courtney Drive. I should have started. Good evening, Mayor Reed and members of the city council. I'm here tonight to urge your support of the Willard Sherwood Community Center. There are just so many reasons for bringing this project to fruition. It keeps the county health services right in the heart of the city and increases preschool and child care capacity, provides significant enhancement to attract future residents here. It provides,

[00:14:54] finally, adequate parking for all of the green acres, especially the seniors. If you've ever been there when there's been a big event, you have to get there very early to get access. So I ask you, and I will say, as a taxpayer, I would gladly accept higher taxes to support this project because it'll benefit not only now but in the long term for this city. So I urge your support of that and making this community a more vibrant place. Thank you. Our next speaker is Art

[00:15:32] Hammerschlag. Good evening. I'm Art Hammerschlag, resident at 3843 Far Oak Circle. I'm speaking tonight in strong support of the Willard Sherwood Center. I will be brief. I won't repeat all the good reasons you have already heard. I just hope you were listening when the people gave you those good reasons. You've heard them already and more than once. The bottom line that I think people are

[00:16:11] saying is we want this facility. Yes, there are expenses associated with it. We think the benefits far outweigh the costs. We are willing to pay those costs. Bottom line, we want a modern, functional senior center. We don't want to look at a boarded up building on the corner of Blenheim Boulevard and Layton Hall for the next 10 years. That's a blight on the city. We've been promised this city, please do not, this facility, please do not disappoint us. Thank you. Our last speaker

[00:16:47] is Robert Beatty. Madam Mayor, members of the council, my name is Robert Beatty. My address is 10543 warwick circle and i also am speaking on behalf of the willard sherwood center um heard tonight and over previous uh meetings many many reasons for going forward with the center

[00:17:26] among them it is an agreed if we have agreed with this with the county for a joint uh construction here for starting 10 years ago was the first agreement, I believe, 2016 or 2017. Been going ever

since then. And the thing that I would like to stress now is the concept that people might be saying that this is too expensive, we can't afford it. My opinion, we can't afford not

[00:18:05] to. To start with, the existing site, Green Acres, is not, let's just say, not acceptable. It is derelict, essentially. It leaks.

[00:18:22] The restrooms were designed for six-year-olds. You have to get down on your knees to wash your hands. It is not an acceptable venue. It is an extremely inconvenient location. There's no parking. You heard earlier that the cost of replacing or renovating the existing structure is over \$50 million.

[00:18:52] in the agreement with the county the city's portion of the new center is 44 million and there is a contractor has a guaranteed maximum cost on this the county is paying quite a bit more than than 50 percent of the cost this is the best deal the city would ever get it makes makes no financial

[00:19:25] sense no fiscal sense not to go through with it and as i said we have a good working relationship with the county that's not always been the chance the case if we go do not go through with this that will not be the case in the future i would not expect the count county to give us the time of day if we back out on this but in summary i just say it we need this it is fiscally well thank you

[00:20:01] very much, but please support it. We can move to the consent agenda. Are there any questions on any of the items on the consent agenda? Any questions on any of the items on the consent agenda? All right. Are there any items council would like pulled from the consent agenda? Okay. Is there a motion to approve the consent agenda? I move to approve the consent agenda items 6A through F as presented and the accompanying motions in the staff reports. Is there a second? Second.

[00:20:41] A motion has been made by Council Member Hardy-Chandler and seconded by Council Member Peterson. A roll call vote. Council Member McQuillan? Aye. Council Member Bates? Aye. Council Member Peterson? Aye. Council Member Hardy-Chandler? Aye. Council Member Hall? Aye. Council Member Amos? Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

[00:20:57] We will go to the public hearing. Our first public hearing is a public hearing and council action on a request from Rise and Shine Preschool applicant for renewal of a special use permit in Prince SUP pursuant to city code section 110-6.7 to allow a daycare center as a accessory used to a religious institution in the RH zoning district on premises known as Fairfax Christian Church 10185 Main Street and more particularly

[00:21:28] described as tax map parcel 57-4-09-001. I'm going to recognize Anna Cherry from the Berkeley Group to provide the staff presentation. Good evening, council members and mayor. I'm Anna

[00:22:02] Cherry with the Berkeley Group. This evening, I'm introducing to you special use permit 25-11 for Rise and Shine Preschool located at Fairfax Christian Church on Main Street, Fairfax, Virginia, which sits on approximately four acres. The site is accessed from Main Street, Route 236, and surrounding properties are zoned residential and commercial.

[00:22:26] The applicant would like to expand their current child care operations to allow for more children under their care. The proposed increase is from 35 children to 89 children. This addition would propose four additional classrooms to provide care for ages 2, 3, to 5 years old.

[00:22:45] The current use is operating with a special use permit that was approved in 2021 for the daycare center as an accessory to a religious institution serving up to 35 children. The proposal is in

general conformance with the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan as the existing and proposed use of the subject site are both uses permitted within the social and civil network.

[00:23:12] The proposed use is a low-intensity use and a transition between residential and commercial areas. Staff finds that the number of parking spaces on the property is more than adequate to accommodate the existing resident religious institution use and existing and proposed expanded daycare use.

[00:23:30] Staff recommends approval of the request with conditions for a daycare center as accessory use as to the religious institution on Main Street with the following conditions.

[00:23:46] The operation of this establishment shall be consistent with the application, statement of justification and plans, and the zoning administrator shall be enabled to approve minor changes. The special use permit shall be valid for the applicant.

[00:24:04] It shall not be transferable to other entities. The applicant shall provide daycare services for a maximum of 89 children, and all required state and local permits and licensures for a daycare center operation shall be properly maintained. The proposed use is currently in a residential zoning district.

[00:24:23] Are there any questions for me? Does the applicant, sorry. First of all, do we have questions for, okay, let's start with Council Member Amos. Just a clarification from staff.

[00:24:40] It was likely in the staff report and I missed it, but any history of complaints with the operation or site at all? No, I'm glad to report that this is a very good operator, solid operator of two locations here in the city.

[00:24:57] We've received no complaints and don't a records check of various inspection entities. There are no non-issues at the property. Excellent. I'm glad to see about parking, and I understand that there's also typically staggered arrivals. I think that's a good thing.

[00:25:14] And I did see in the staff report that it was notified to the applicant that in the future there would likely need to be consideration of potentially right-turn-only lane off of Main Street. and so but that that conversation went smoothly applicant understands and that well they may have to take another look at in the future yes correct we uh went over that and it's the proximity of the left turn to the intersection of roberts road that creates the issue understood thank you council member hall you asked some of my questions thank you um with regard to the parking it did say that the kids arrive at scheduled times and they don't typically conflict which makes it easier

[00:25:49] for drop-off. With a change in, I think it's an additional 54 students or children, will that same staggered and scheduled time still exist, or is that policy going to change? I would defer to the applicant on the specifics. It's our understanding, though, that it may be a very close but slightly broader drop-off and pick up time to accommodate the additional trips, but the drive aisles both on the site and the parking are adequate for it okay yeah i did look at it online and as council member emails pointed out i mean having that requirement to turn right and make the u-turn

[00:26:28] would also negate that i was just curious if it had been considered just kind of a cleanup item that we did with the other two child cares that came before us are we able to modify the outdoor hours for this facility are there any that exist previously i think the other two they the kids You're not allowed to be outside until after 9 a.m. or something, and that was outrageous.

[00:26:49] Yes, and we'll leave that up to the applicant. It was part of their operational plan that was provided. We didn't condition it. Obviously, it's part of their package. If council wants to think through some sort of clarity in the conditions that allows for flexibility, staff would support that.

[00:27:08] Okay. Is the applicant here? Yes. Okay. What I will just say is, I don't know your specifics here, but it looks like you open at 730, and some daycares are not allowed to have children outside playing, I believe, until 9 a.m., and we waived that in other cases.

[00:27:25] So I would encourage you to see what your current standards are, and if there are additional needs for allowing children to be outside sooner than that, please do so. Absolutely. Any other questions before we open the public hearing? Okay, I will open the public hearing.

[00:27:41] Ms. Shinaberry, has the public hearing been properly advertised? Yes, it has. Okay. Is there anyone to speak during the public hearing? The applicant, did you want to? Does the applicant have a presentation they'd like to share? Good evening, Madam Mayor and Council Members.

[00:28:07] We just want to say we've been in business for 13 years here in the City of Fairfax. As you mentioned earlier, we have two locations. We're very happy to continue to expand our operations within the City of Fairfax. Very happy of the support that we've received and been given from the city of Fairfax.

[00:28:24] There is a need right now from families and parents within the city. We have a wait list, and we are hoping to address that need through this expansion. And I don't know if you want to say anything. Thank you so much for your consideration.

[00:28:43] Thank you. Okay, thank you. I didn't have anybody sign up prior to... Oh, go ahead. Kelly O'Brien, 10213 Savior Avenue. and I just had to come, my son Willie was a Rise and Shine child, and I can just attest to what a great program they provide. There's people in the neighborhood who all go there, we all walk down to that cul-de-sac, and most of us walk our kids down there, so even when we've driven, it's a nice easy flow. They just, they absolutely provide a great service to our community, so I highly encourage you to increase that capability so even more children can benefit from the great

[00:29:18] program that they offer. Thank you. Is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on this agenda item all right i will close the public hearing council is there any questions of staff or the applicant at this point seeing none is there a motion council member hartich andlin i move excuse me i move that the city council approve the request from monica downs rise and shine preschool applicant for the special use permit amendment to allow the expansion of the

[00:29:51] applicant's child care operation from 35 to 89 children as an accessory used to the Fairfax Christian Church in the RH Residential High Zoning District on the premises known as 10185 Main Street and more particularly described as Tax Map 57-4-09-001 with the following conditions. The operation of this establishment shall be consistent with the application statement of justification and plans. The zoning administrator shall be enabled to approve minor changes.

[00:30:30] The special use permit shall be valid only for the applicant, shall not be transferable to any other entity. The applicant shall provide daycare center services for the maximum of 89 children. All required state and local permits licensure for the daycare center shall be properly maintained.

[00:30:47] Okay, wonderful. A motion has been made by Council Member Hardy-Chandler and seconded by Council Member Peterson. Is there any discussion on this motion? Seeing none, a roll call vote. Council

Member Amos? Aye. Council Member Hall? Aye.

[00:31:03] Council Member Hardy-Chandler? Aye. Council Member Peterson? Aye. Council Member Bates? Aye. Council Member Quillen? Aye. Motion passed unanimously. We'll go to the next public hearing, which is the public hearing on the proposed FY27 budget. This is the first public hearing of the proposed FY27 budget.

[00:31:19] The city manager presented on February 24, 2026. Okay. I will now open the public hearing. Ms. Shinaberry, has this public hearing been advertised? Yes, it has. I had five people sign up prior to the start of the meeting, so I'm going to call those speakers up first, and then if there's anybody else in the room that would like to speak on the budget, they can come afterwards.

[00:31:39] So our first speaker is Jesse Thornton. Mayor, members of council. My name is Jesse Thornton, and I'm here tonight in my role as the president of the City of Fairfax Police Association.

[00:31:57] In policing, we don't make a habit of borrowing metaphors from our rival public safety partners, the fire department, but today it's appropriate. There is smoke in the police department. Where there is smoke, there is a risk of fire. That smoke comes from a growing staffing vulnerability driven by compensation disparities, repeated budget tightening, and regional competition that has accelerated dramatically in the last few years.

[00:32:19] Our city is thriving. Fairfax City remains a desirable, vibrant, and safe community. That reputation is not accidental. It's built in part on the strength and professionalism of this police department. Yet last year, our department absorbed a 10% budget reduction, lost its training allocation, and saw critical positions frozen.

[00:32:37] Our starting salary is low for the region, set at \$64,000, and we haven't had steady cost of living adjustments to offset inflation and compensate for our uneven pay scale. Meanwhile, neighboring jurisdictions have moved aggressively in the opposite direction. Fairfax County Police earned the last year of a three-year contract, which provided more than 20% average raise for their employees.

[00:32:59] Arlington County Police will, as of July 1st, offer new hires \$90,000 to start, lateral officers \$103,000, and provide a \$25,000 hiring bonus. Alexandria Police just agreed to a contract raising starting salary to \$75,000 and providing existing officers 3.5% raises and retention bonuses for the next three years.

[00:33:23] Our officers are aware of these numbers. They attend regional training with these agencies. They speak. They compare. They make decisions accordingly. With a portable state retirement plan, the absence of collective bargaining, and fewer employment incentives, the path outward becomes financially rational for many of our young officers.

[00:33:40] Fairfax City Police provides something rare, responsive, community-based, high-accountability policing. We handle the kinds of calls larger agencies might not prioritize, and we do so with the professionalism the community values deeply. But appreciation does not offset the rising cost of life. Support must be reflected in policy.

[00:33:57] We recognize the fiscal challenges before you. Our goal is not conflict, it's prevention. Addressing retention now is significantly less costly than rebuilding a depleted department later.

Competitive compensation and meaningful retention incentives are investments in stability, safety, and long-term financial prudence.

[00:34:17] A recent public safety police employee survey showed 65% of respondents are considering leaving the agency, and 64% would not recommend working for the City of Fairfax Police to others. we ask that you act decisively to preserve the strength of this department before that smoke i mentioned earlier becomes a fire thank you for your time and consideration and i'd be happy to

[00:34:39] speak with any of you further on any of these matters our next speaker is doug cox good evening mayor and city council doug cox fairview drive fairfax virginia i reviewed the city manager's report for the budget and with all due respect folks let's be a little more honest to the

[00:35:11] residents all right i get it we're cheaper in rate than fairfax county falls church a couple others not so much for prince william arlington loudon etc etc um i guess the rate of 1.080 not counting stormwater because i pay hundreds of dollars for that folks so that's another 0.3335 on top of the

[00:35:41] 1.08 being advertised. So Fairfax County in the last four years has raised their rate 1.136 percent. Every jurisdiction in this area seems to be working within what they get from assessment increases. Falls Church in the last four years has actually gone down. Fairfax City, if we look at the real numbers, with us at 1.055, we've gone up 4.455% rate increase. Now, my assessment came in

[00:36:19] 9% higher. Zillow says it's the same this January as last January, but Fairfax City says my house went up 9%. And now you guys are talking about increasing the rate to the point where if we went at 1.080 plus the 6% stormwater increase, in the last four years, the check I write to this city will have gone up roughly 36 percent it's absolutely outrageous start trimming the budget or something folks i don't know where the hole is in the money bucket but we can't compete with

[00:36:53] fairfax county so quit trying to do bigger better all right now i hate comparing ourselves to other jurisdictions but let's statewide amongst all the cities all the counties 22 23 23 24 how many of those 136 jurisdictions had rate increases in both years four and now we're talking about our fourth rate increase in four years it's outrageous winning is being better to yourself not competing

[00:37:27] with people they're doing poorly let's do better let's start trimming the budget figuring out where the money's going apparently it's not going to the police or they're gone but let's do better folks all right we already pay lots of taxes i said on top of property we got storm water i got a bag tax to pay my utilities my goodness my water bill 26 percent of it's for actually water the rest of it is sewer and things coming to the city all right money is coming in we're just spending

[00:37:59] too much thank you our next speaker is rusty russell good evening my name is rusty russell i'm come to you as the chair of the environmental sustainability committee and i want to thank everybody for the great work session we had in early february i'm simply here to reinforce some of the points that we made at that time our community is at a point where energy costs are rising public infrastructure is aging and extreme weather events are increasing

[00:38:38] and that's not news to anybody frankly we've been at this intersection for years and to be honest we've been discussing being at this intersection for years there have been some moves forward we've allocated funds for a climate action plan, the last municipality in the region to have one.

[00:39:00] In concert with Fairfax County, we've designed, but not constructed, the first LEED Gold Resilience Hub in the city of Fairfax. And three years ago, funds were allocated for the development of a green building policy, which would provide the tools necessary for both public and private buildings to reduce energy consumption, a good thing, and save money, also a good thing.

[00:39:23] This policy is awaiting adoption. And our former temporary climate and energy manager applied for and received an EECBG grant from the Department of Energy, which will provide 100 free energy audits for city residents.

[00:39:39] And there are other energy-saving projects underway, such as gaslight replacements in Old Town, replacement of gas equipment with electric alternatives, and solar assessment of public buildings.

[00:39:48] But to recap, no climate action plan, which is the primary underpinning with which municipalities protect their residents, the first LEED Gold Resilience Hub in the city, a completed but not adopted green building policy which would provide significant energy savings to both private and public structures, no staff capacity to seek external funding, unlike surrounding municipalities, and a piecemeal approach to funding and implementing sustainability projects.

[00:40:20] I hope you don't think I just come to you with problems. I think the solution is the hiring of a full-time, permanent climate and energy manager who would shepherd the climate action plan, collapse the administrative silos within the city and realize operational efficiencies, implement the then-adopted green building policy, saving energy and realizing significant cost savings in all public buildings, and provide the staff capacity to seek and secure external funding for the wide variety of sustainability projects specified in the Climate Action Plan.

[00:40:56] I urge you to consider the considerable progress the city can realize with one single hire. Thank you. Our next speaker is Adele Wiseman. Good evening. My name is Adele Wiseman. I'm a student at KGMS Middle School.

[00:41:21] And my leadership class has done a project on environment and redevelopment in our area. when we learned that the general budget for the green building policy was not adopted.

[00:41:38] Please pass and hire a climate energy manager to help with this policy because we need to keep the growing community of Fairfax green for the future of kids like me. Thank you. Our next speaker is Henry Street.

[00:42:02] Hello, I'm Henry Street. I'm also a student from KJMS. I'm also here to talk about the green building policy. I also learned that it wasn't adopted, but it's very important because it will help to increase the green energy in the area.

[00:42:20] It will provide incentives for people, such as slight tax reductions for those who adopt it. And we need to hire someone to market it because not many people know it exists. I just learned that it exists a couple weeks ago.

[00:42:37] So we need someone to share the word, get it out there for people to include in their new buildings. Thank you. Is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on the proposed budget? All right, then.

[00:42:56] This public hearing will stay open until April 14, 2026. We'll go to second general public comment. Is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on any other item that was not a

public hearing item? All right.

[00:43:14] I think we will move on, then, to items not requiring a public hearing. Yep. So the only item we have is the consideration of the maximum real estate tax rate for a fiscal year FY 2027 to be advertised. This action sets the maximum real estate tax rate that can be adopted as part of the FY 2027 budget. This action does not set the real estate tax rate for FY 2027.

[00:43:39] I'm going to recognize Daniel Alexander, city manager, to provide the staff report. I will recognize J.C. Martinez. Thank you. Mayor, council, the city manager's FY27 proposed budget recommends a change in the real estate tax rate of .025 or two and a half cents, increasing the tax rate to \$1.08 per \$100 of assessed value.

[00:44:05] Staff recommends advertising a maximum real estate tax rate of at least \$1.08 per \$100 of assessed value. Once a proposed rate is advertised, city council may adopt a lower rate but cannot adopt a higher rate without restarting the public hearing process.

[00:44:23] The Old Town Service District Tax and the Commercial and Industrial Tax are not required to be included in this advertisement. Given the discussion that we had last week on March 3rd, 2026 work session meeting, several council members expressed interest in potentially advertising a rate above the city manager's proposed rate, Therefore, an alternate motion is included for council's consideration.

[00:44:49] Advertising a rate above the manager's proposed rate provides additional flexibility, provides council's options prior to final adoption. It keeps all options on the table during deliberations, allows reallocation flexibility if other revenue sources are reduced, and provides leverage to support high-impact community investments.

[00:45:12] Staff are happy and willing to take any questions you may have. Are there questions of staff? Seeing none, is there a motion? Council Member Hardy-Chandler? I move that the City Council advertise a proposed real estate tax rate of 1.095 per \$100 of assessed value.

[00:45:35] Is there a second? Second. A motion has been made by Council Member Hardy-Chandler and seconded by Council Member Amos. Is there any discussion on the motion? Discussion on the motion? Okay. A roll call vote.

[00:45:51] Council Member Amos? Aye. Council Member Hall? No. Council Member Hardy-Chandler? aye council member peterson no council member bates aye councilman mcquillan no mayor reed the mayor votes aye okay motion passed four to three i will now recess the regular meeting to

[00:46:11] go into a work session we'll take a five minute recess to go into the work session room welcome

[00:56:05] to our work session ms shinneberry what do we have up first our first items discussion on beacon landing tax grant requests i'm going to recognize jamie ergas housing program manager to provide the staff presentation. Good evening, Mayor and Council. Thank you. I'm here alongside Christine Johnson, Director of Real Estates Assessment, and as Melissa shared, we're going to be bringing forward the tax-related requests for the Beacon Landing Project. So in recognizing that all of you are familiar with this project, I would just briefly cover the project background, project timeline, some specifics around permanent supportive housing itself, as it is a unique project type,

[00:56:45] and then I'll turn it over to Christine to cover the tax-related request. So this project, I know I've said it's unique. It is 54 units of permanent supportive housing, and it is serving those that have the

lowest of incomes. So 30% AMI. So when we talk about affordable housing, when we think about the ADU ordinance, we're looking at 60 to 80% AMI, depending on whether it's single family detached or multifamily. This is the lowest of incomes for our neighbors here. There are some campus amenities and building amenities that focus both on building community and creating opportunity. So employment services, case management services, all of this is designed

[00:57:24] specifically for the population that will be residing here to ensure that they can stabilize in housing, to ensure that they can be successful in housing, and then they have the opportunity to thrive. The financing, as I have listed here, is quite complex, as it usually is for any sort of affordable housing projects. This project, as it is deeply affordable, is all the more complex.

[00:57:45] You can see in the list of financing, the city of Fairfax did contribute funding to this project. It is probably about 2% to 3% of the total budget from what the city contributed. But I will say that by the city contributing, they are able to leverage the funding to get other resources at the table.

[00:58:05] So that's common in affordable housing. If the local jurisdiction can demonstrate that they are committed to the project, they're able to usually bring in the remainder of the financing that is needed. The project is being brought forward by the Lamb Center in Wesley Housing, and we have representatives from both with us this evening.

[00:58:22] And this project is located at Fairfax Boulevard, Campbell Drive, within Fairfax Circle. The special use permit was approved in December 2022, moved to the design and permitting phase, financing, final plans, closing. I think many of you were at the groundbreaking this past fall, and I'm told that it is on pace to finish as scheduled, to be completed at the end of this calendar year, December 2026.

[00:58:49] So permanent supportive housing is a very specific term. When we talk about affordable housing, that is a broader term. So permanent supportive housing is really, it's the combination of affordable rental assistance with supportive housing services connected to it.

[00:59:04] And it's really focused on individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and helping them achieve the long-term stability that's needed. The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services found that 94% of residents in permanent supportive housing programs remain stably housed after one year.

[00:59:20] I think that's also my experience in the nonprofit sector. I operated the largest family permit supportive housing program in Fairfax County. I've also operated permit supportive housing in the city of Alexandria. For the population that it serves, it is extremely effective, and that's evidence-based even beyond.

[00:59:37] I think I learned of the project type in the early 2000s. There was an article in The New Yorker that followed a gentleman in Colorado, talked about all of the services that were utilized over a period of time, I think over 10 years. And it looked at the service costs between hospital stays, between rehab, involvement in the criminal justice system.

[00:59:58] And they actually found it to be more cost effective if they would have housed him based on the services that were provided to him. So in addition to it being a humane intervention for people that are experiencing homelessness, it can also be quite cost effective for the population. For those that will be living at Beacon Landing, again, we've talked about people experiencing homelessness.

[01:00:18] But when they are accepting referrals through the Coordinated Entry System, it'll be prioritized for those that are most vulnerable. And they'll often include older adults, people with disabilities, which are actually two priority populations in the comp plan. So the supportive services, before I turn it over to Christine to cover the tax request part, I just want to emphasize the importance of the supportive services and the success of the project.

[01:00:44] And in the current climate, funding sources that used to be predictable for this project type are unpredictable. So some of the federal funding, the Continuum of Care Program funding, which is the largest federal investment in homeless services, priorities are shifting.

[01:00:59] So resources that once might have been feasible to pursue for this kind of project are not as obtainable. I'll turn it over to Christine. Thank you. Good evening. So tax exemptions are allowed by the Code of Virginia, specifically 58.1-3651.

[01:01:22] And this was a portion of the code that was updated in 2003. And what it did was it enabled localities to either classify or designate a nonprofit or specifically a property as exempt.

[01:01:40] There are specific criteria where a nonprofit can be classified as exempt. This nonprofit or group of nonprofits would need to be designated as exempt because it's not called out specifically.

[01:01:57] The Code of Virginia is in need of updating, but it's very, very specific on that. So the way it works is the property must be used for the purpose. So the process would be nearing completion, maybe six months before completion, we would accept an application for tax exemption, real estate tax exemption.

[01:02:24] And I would do a preliminary review. I would ask the tax exemption committee, which is called out in the city code, to convene, look at their financials, look at their mission statement, make sure that there's nothing in their bylaws that would, you know, prohibit an exemption to be approved. And then we would make, based on the financials, we would make a recommendation to council. So we would bring that to you, probably initially in the form of a work session,

[01:02:59] then an introduction, and then on to a public hearing. So the structure of Wesley Housing, They're both nonprofits. This is a little unique situation because right now the code talks about one nonprofit, like one LLC.

[01:03:17] But there's nothing expressly written in the code that prohibits more than one. So what we would have to do is look at both of their financials, not just one LLC. And then, based on that, then we would make the recommendation to city council.

[01:03:39] So the structure, like I said, it's two nonprofits that are working together. The LIHTC funding awarded points for nonprofit status, demonstrating precedent for considering the organizational structure.

[01:03:58] So, again, council would have to designate that this is nonprofit. And once an entity is designated triennially, I have the ability to review that application to make sure that nothing has changed in their financials or their bylaws, and the city code does allow the assessor to revoke it.

[01:04:22] But that would be put in writing if that ever came up, which I can say it never has. Okay, so next slide. All right. So what the Lamb Center is asking or the Wesley Housing is asking for now is a tax grant based on what Jamie had mentioned before about their financing.

[01:04:50] They're requesting a grant from the city, and this largely offsets, well, it does offset their real estate taxes. So this is kind of an interim. And the process is that the city appropriates it via the budget process.

[01:05:08] And the EDO, in collaboration with the EDA, they will provide a refund. So the taxes are paid by Wesley Housing, but they're refunded back to the applicant.

[01:05:25] So the cost, most people want to know that. So right now, based on the real estate assessment, because we haven't seen any other than just some groundworks as of January 1st, 2026, the taxes are relatively low at \$10,208.33.

[01:05:46] But with new construction, we will pick up that new construction. So if this project is finished as of January 1st, 2026, or any time during 2025, we'll capture 100% of that value, we'll supplement that assessment, and then bill them for a supplemental bill.

[01:06:08] If it's done shortly after 2026, then we will prorate it. We'll estimate what that percentage is. So if they're 95%, then that's going to get added to the assessment. So we're estimating that the foregone taxes is about \$115,000 for FY 2027.

[01:06:32] We'll open it up to any questions. Thank you. All right. Council Member Amos? No, thank you. Great presentation.

[01:06:48] Big fan of Beacon Landing, obviously, at the ribbon cutting and then at the Governor's Housing Conference when you all presented. So greatly appreciate you hyping up the city across the state. Got to love that. and knowing that PSHs are already extremely difficult to finance, I imagine, and if you could go a little bit more into it, and maybe this is directed to you all, and this is more of a curiosity question on that federal funding that you were counting on that is no longer applicable here, what exactly did that look like? And just, again, I just wanted to know.

[01:07:29] Nice to be with you all this evening, and thanks for the question. So the funding that you're, I think probably referring to is the COC funding and there is a lot of uncertainty around that there has been a shift away from permanent supportive housing which puts funding for these kinds of projects at risk so so so that's the COC funding there are other revenue sources

[01:08:06] that we are looking at and I also want to just share for the benefit of the council that the Lamb Center itself has taken 100% of the responsibility for financing the services at Beacon Landing, which will cost approximately \$600,000, a little over \$600,000 a year.

[01:08:27] So even with the partnership of the city, which we are so deeply grateful for, because Beacon Landing couldn't have existed without your support and early intervention, which was we were able to leverage the initial grant from the city for \$700,000 to receive other funding, which got this project rolling.

[01:08:48] So there's a long history of us working together, and I want to acknowledge that tonight. But even with the conversion of these resources, which we would be paying in taxes directly into services, there's still an enormous responsibility and an enormous cost to provide the kind of resources that are important to this project.

[01:09:14] And I think it's also interesting context for you to realize that the low-income housing tax credit that we applied for to support the development of this project had a very minimal requirement for

supportive services, very, very minimal, something that wouldn't be acceptable to you any more than is acceptable to us.

[01:09:34] We committed when we brought this project forward to the council to go through entitlement that we would provide round-the-clock supportive services. We will have 24-hour staffing in this building to care for the residents and to care for the community around Beacon Landing.

[01:09:55] And in doing that, that far surpasses what is required to have brought this tax credit project forward. And the Lamb Center is committed to that. And so that's just a little bit of additional context around the federal funding, which is questionable, and the need and the real cost of the services that we're going to be providing at Beacon Landing.

[01:10:28] Greatly appreciate that context. And hopefully, once things are a little more stable at the federal level, you'll be able to either get the COC funding at a future time or something equivalent. I know a lot of folks are excited for this project. I was just at hypothermia prevention this morning. And a lot of people are hyped up for it.

[01:10:45] So thank you for what you're doing. Council Member Peterson. Thank you, all of you, for the presentation. If I understand it correctly, the tax grant here would be directly reinvested in services on-site.

[01:11:07] That's correct. Okay. So that's a fairly specialized condition in this case. We're actually tying this very directly, the on-site service need that exists and was a part of this. The second thing, if I understand correctly, the tax grant that you're requesting for this year would not be necessary in subsequent years of a tax exemption is granted.

[01:11:42] That's true. Okay, so this is really raising two actions, a budget action or regulatory action, if you will. And the consequence of that would be to eliminate the tax burden long term by granting a tax exemption.

[01:12:03] But you still have a financial burden on top of that that you have to meet. So this will help but not resolve your entire financial burden in terms of covering the support services that take place on site.

[01:12:21] And to that point, you will be looking for a variety of sources of funds to do that in the long term. Is that a fair characterization of kind of where you are? Yes. Got it. Okay.

[01:12:37] I may have a question or two more in a minute, but that's all for now. Council Member Hardy Chandler. So I'm curious if this project speaks to the housing plan in some way, shape, or form. Is there some connection between this project and sort of the long-term strategic aim of our housing plan?

[01:13:01] Absolutely. As it's being developed. Yes, yes. The Affordable Housing Strategic Plan, which, as you know, we just adopted within the last several weeks. We do need to think of creative approaches to ensure that we can bring affordable housing projects into the city.

[01:13:17] I think this is an example of a creative approach to support a deeply affordable housing project. And like I started from the beginning, that is unique. It is hard to finance these sort of projects. This is going to meet a huge community need. And I think it does align with the Affordable Housing Strategic Plan as well as the priority populations and the comprehensive plan.

[01:13:37] Thank you. And while some sources may be uncertain, the need is absolutely certain. And I really appreciate this being sort of a request that's based in whole community and the contribution that

the Lamb Center is making to those services.

[01:13:55] So I see this as kind of a whole community kind of project. It is, and if I may just briefly add that with your cooperation and support in this investment in services of Beacon Landing, we will leverage that with other grant sources.

[01:14:14] So this is, while it is a significant contribution, and I acknowledge that and I'm grateful, it's not the full amount that is required. But we will take this award, if it is given, and use it when we're making other grant applications and say, this is what the City of Fairfax was able to do.

[01:14:36] And that helps us greatly when we're applying for other grants. So it's just an interesting way that we can leverage your resources. Yeah, I appreciate that note that it isn't just, you know, going into those services, but being leveraged and maximized. And I wish we lived in a world where services were free, a magical world where, you know, we could meet needs on air, but that's not the world we live in.

[01:15:03] And so these investments, and particularly the opportunity to garner some synergy around these investments, are really important in the real world. So thank you. Councilmember Hall? Put on my new reading glasses. I'm officially old, I feel like.

[01:15:22] So we had the opportunity to speak earlier, and so I asked a lot of questions then, and I'm just going to follow up on a few of the highlights and then some questions for Jamie Ergos as well. So the strategic plan that this specifically refers to, I believe, is Strategy 2.3, so Section 3.2.3.

[01:15:43] The reason why I bring that up is because what this states from the city's side is that the goal is to support the preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing. The city of Fairfax can develop targeted financial incentives for property owners by providing grants, low interest loans, and tax incentives. The city can encourage owners to maintain and renovate their properties while keeping rents affordable. So I recognize that Beacon Landing specifically is different than a typical other opportunity that we might see for this. But as I did mention to Jamie a little bit earlier, my concern with the way this is written

[01:16:22] is that, and I expressed this earlier to you when we spoke, is that does seem like this might be opening an opportunity for other entities to come and ask us for this. And so it talks about action items of offering grants or low interest loans, like I said, and implement tax incentives such as abatements or exemptions for owners who commit to maintaining affordable units and collaborate with nonprofits, developers, and investors to acquire and preserve at-risk NOAA properties.

[01:16:55] And so my questions and my concerns here are that the ask right now is about \$115,000 or \$117,000 for fiscal year 27. Per the staff report that is not being shown with this presentation, it has that laid out for the next 10 years. And so the first year, the assessed value is about \$7 million. So the ask is about \$73,850. Because that goes over the fiscal year, we're calling it \$115. So I'll just use years and assume moving forward that we're discussing fiscal. Then it

[01:17:34] jumps up to a value of \$14 million in year one. The tax value at that point, the taxes that would be due was \$148,000. When we jump up to year 10, the assessed value is expected to be \$18.7 million. And the ask for the real estate taxes at that time is now \$197,000, \$198,000.

[01:17:55] So the ask over 10 years is actually 1.7. Again, I recognize that we're asking for year one now, but it sounds like the goal, as Councilman Peterson explained as well, is to attempt to get the nonprofit

exemption status from the city, from council, which would then allow future years to not have to come in and have an ask for this annually.

[01:18:18] That's correct. Okay. So as I mentioned to Jamie earlier, my concern is that this might appear to be setting up a precedent for nonprofits to do the same thing here, for other people to come and build similar housing.

[01:18:35] What we talked about earlier was that this is specifically permanent supportive housing, which is different. What we also did talk about is that the Pathways Project, I got it right, right? Yes. The Pathways Project is 15 units compared to the 56 or 52 here.

[01:18:54] 52. 52, sorry. That is also permanent supportive housing. When I asked you before if they were providing the same 24-hour services and the types of level of care, we don't know the answer to that at this point. So I'm only pointing this out so that people realize, or we realize, that this might not be a one-time ask. It might be another ask from another organization or potentially someone else in the future that's looking to do the same thing here. So I just want to establish that.

[01:19:27] I understand that there's a need. I'm very happy to hear that the money will be going directly back to pay for the services that are going. One of the questions I asked you when we spoke earlier was about the anticipated need for police or fire or the HRT team.

[01:19:49] And you had responded, Tara, that that was expected to be handled in-house essentially by your 24-hour team. And so the expectation is that the needs of the police and the fire department would be significantly less than those same individuals might be facing at this time or the services that are needed from our police and fire might not have to happen because you'll have that ongoing care. So I do think that's really important to point out to show that, you know, we might be paying on one side, but maybe we're not paying on the other side with some of those extra services that are being provided at the moment. How long typically would

[01:20:28] it take, Ms. Johnson, for that tax exemption status to come through or to be presented to council and is it something that can be given for three years at a time or is it a permanent thing i understand you said there was a triennial review period if there becomes funding available from the fed or from the state or some other super donor that decides to give money and the city you know could pause their assistance for some time is is that an option there's a lot of questions in there

[01:21:00] i'm sorry it is not so upon the triennial review that is based on so if they're still operating with the same mission as a charitable organization and these are charitable organizations and i just want to clarify that not all affordable housing is built by a charitable organizations or private developers so they may may or may not receive any sort of tax exemption uh we value affordable housing a little bit differently. So that's where, you know, lower taxes can come in,

[01:21:38] but not necessarily charitable. So they have to be charitable in order to qualify for a tax exemption. So your next question was, so that, yeah, the triennial review would only, it would only be revoked if they were not operating, no longer operating based on their charitable mission and their financials were contrary, then yes, it could be revoked.

[01:22:07] But council would not have the ability to do that, that I'm aware of. Thank you. And then just to answer or to ask another question, the townhouses that are being considered on the church property, I realize that they serve a different, it's not permanent supportive housing, it's affordable housing.

[01:22:27] are things like that in line with this exemption request as well like is that something that they would seek potentially right so they they have filed a tax exemption application um that in that situation i can approve it by classification so it doesn't need to come in in front of you however and just for everyone's knowledge here that once so they've they've partnered with habitat habitat will sell those homes they will be valued as affordable units similar to how we valued

[01:23:06] affordable units in sutton heights those will be taxable the two homes that will be maintained by the church and leased to you know for emergency shelter purposes those will remain tax exempt so it's a little different situation there okay and then just to scope it out a little bit more there was a presentation from a developer on main street that was talking about five buildings i believe in one of the buildings was going to be entirely affordable would that building qualify

[01:23:43] for non-exempt or not because they're not a non-profit that's doing it they're just a developer more than likely they wouldn't that would that would be where the valuation we would take into consideration that they're leasing below market rent, they have below market rents for whatever reason, but we will take that into consideration. We value Westwood Oaks a little bit differently because of that, because they have some controlled rents over there. Okay, thank you. I know this is just specifically about your beacon landing, but I feel like it does bring up a lot of other questions and concerns that I'd like to try to address head on so that we understand what we

[01:24:20] might be committing to for us in four future years. So thank you very much for the time. And if I could circle back to the comments around the Affordable Housing Strategic Plan, I think the action and strategy that you're referencing specifically refers to the preservation of affordable housing. So we're looking at our naturally occurring affordable units and anything that's added through the ADU ordinance and figuring out what we can put in place in order to retain the affordability on those properties.

[01:24:45] So it's a little bit different from this project, which is redevelopment, adding new units. So I think the Affordable Housing Strategic Plan, it does open some doors to think about things a little bit differently. But as it is right now, it's a framework. So I think the exact incentives and what that looks like is still to be determined, things that we need to work out.

[01:25:07] We don't have many ADUs, maybe no ADUs, that have a point that we are anywhere near close to losing. I think other jurisdictions are looking at, you know, as they reach their 20-year or their 30-year mark, some are going offline in terms of how affordable they were.

[01:25:23] Those are things that we'll have to think about as we get 80 units that come online, but that's for the preservation of existing, so a little bit different than this. Okay, thank you. The reason why I brought up that one area of the strategic plan is just it's specifically referenced in the staff report where it says that the request is consistent with that section of the Affordable Housing Strategic Plan, So I just want to make sure I understood that properly.

[01:25:46] Thank you for the clarification. So one point that I want to make as we're talking about the structure of this money, you know, a lot of things are not possible that we would like to do because we do not have a dedicated source of funding, something that you can count on.

[01:26:05] And there's many programs that we would like to do, but there's no recurring source of revenue. What this does by putting this exemption in place is however high the assessment goes on the building, it is a small but consistent stream of revenue to maintain the operation of the building.

[01:26:28] Earlier tonight, we heard about from two KJMS students going, oh, please, please, please hire somebody to manage the green building program because there's so many benefits from hiring this person, and we can do all these wonderful things if we just had somebody to manage the program. There's so many benefits. Well, it's the same thing.

[01:26:44] The city's investment in providing the highest level of service, which is not even paying 100% of the highest level of service to the people residing here, benefits our community, and it allows you to know that every year you've got at least this much money, which makes a difference when you are hiring staff, trying to retain staff, trying to put programs in place, build relationships with people living there and in the community.

[01:27:12] That kind of stable financing is so critical to everything, and it's no less critical to this. You struggled, I think there were 23 sources of financing, to get the bricks and the sticks up, right? But it's not just the building.

[01:27:28] The real value of this kind of housing is the fact that people are getting 24-7 care, when they need it, how they need it, with people trained to do it. And asking the city for a reliable, recurring source of revenue benefits us as well as benefiting you.

[01:27:49] And I just would like to state that that is my perspective on this. So we will move along, Council Member Bates, and then Council Member Peterson. Yeah, I just wanted to add, you took the words right out of my mouth on pointing out that we don't have a recurring, sustained funding source for affordable housing in the city.

[01:28:11] And so this is really, as I see it, the least we can do. And I spoke in support of this project just before it first took office and supported the appropriation from the, you know, what we call the Affordable Housing Trust Fund a couple years ago.

[01:28:31] And really this is, in general, a big part of why I ran to begin with is supporting affordable housing in the city. And permanent supportive housing is a very special case of that that provides a lot more than just housing. And to me, we need to do everything that we can to support that when a nonprofit comes forward and says we want to take this on.

[01:28:53] Because really, and as was pointed out, this is essentially a potential investment in possibly reducing costs of services to the city later on. And, you know, we need to support organizations that want to take that off of our plate for us by stepping up and providing not only that housing, but those services for the most vulnerable among our population.

[01:29:24] Council Member Peterson. Thanks. Just to see if I capture a couple takeaways here correctly. One is that the situation here is a pretty unique one.

[01:29:42] This is not just a generic affordable housing issue. This is permanent supportive housing. This is reinvestment in services 24-7 that offset or reduce costs elsewhere and guarantee a level of safety that is otherwise not attainable.

[01:29:59] So this is a unique facility, and that seems to be very apparent, and that is in contrast, again, to more generalized affordable housing. The second thing is the strategic plan, and I think this was noted in the resolution as we pass the furtherance of that strategic plan.

[01:30:19] It's a work in progress. It's a framework. There's a heck of a lot that needs to be done to make it more specific and to sort out the kinds of cases where things like this might apply. So it does not sound as if this is, in fact, a precedent that guides or drives the remainder of that.

[01:30:37] That's an open series of questions to go forward. And then the actions that we choose to take or not take today on this upcoming budget, it would seem to me, are tied to two future sorts of actions that we take.

[01:31:00] The first is the tax exemption, and that's on our side. But then it sounds like there is, I'm going to say, a good faith effort on the part of the Lamb Center to continue to work as hard as possible to mobilize additional revenues that will close these gaps, recognizing we're in a changed environment now, but it will continue to change and with time there may well be creative or even conventional opportunities that reappear, but that it would be perhaps fair in my view to expect that the council would contemplate

[01:31:36] future action for an exemption and that we would have some earnest commitment for the Lamb Center to continue all best efforts for creative and conventional revenue generation to try to reduce this burden. Is that a fair description of where we are? Absolutely.

[01:31:54] You have my word. That is my job. I have to find other sources. With your partnership, I will leverage your resources into new sources, and I'm happy to provide status reports and share with you where we are. But even with your generous supports, should you provide it, I still have quite a bit of work to do.

[01:32:18] But to the mayor's point, to have that continuity would be tremendous because you bring staff on and you find good staff and you train them. And, you know, these are people that are doing very hard work and you want to hang on to them.

[01:32:34] And so that continuity piece is a good one. I'm glad you raised that point. Thank you. Well, just to clarify, if I might also, in terms of continuity, if I understand correctly, if we choose to designate a tax exemption here, that is a permanent act.

[01:32:55] That's not one that's periodically reviewed and reversible and what have you. Once in, it's on. Is that correct? Unless there's some performance failure of some kind. Right. It's a permanent action by council, but it could be revoked if there was a change in their mission or their charitable status.

[01:33:17] Okay, and then I do believe this is a really high-valued facility and a high need. It happened to occur in a place that was commercial, and so we have seen a loss of tax revenue that would otherwise have occurred on this commercial site.

[01:33:35] It's a case where we did a conversion to commercial to non-commercial purposes. Given the value of this, I'm not debating that that was a good thing to do. I'm just noting, though, that the city, I believe, would want to be very cautious in terms of where it places any sorts of facilities in the future that move it from commercial to non-commercial use because we, of course, are very badly in need of commercial development.

[01:33:58] Again, I want to underscore the value of this facility. I'm not questioning, and I'm just noting that that's the reality of the circumstance we have here. Councilmember McQuillan. Thank you, Mayor Reed. What is the size of the current funding gap right now?

[01:34:19] The services I mentioned will cost just a little bit over \$600,000 annually. And so we are fundraising on the Lamb Center side. We've created a capital campaign, and we're continuing to bring in resources. And we've applied for support from Fairfax County.

[01:34:40] The COC funding is not an option for us right now. So we are prepared, and we are committed, and we are people of faith that the resources that are needed for this project to support the residents, specifically with the services, we will get them.

[01:35:00] We're committed to it. And that is because we're not in this as a business. We're in this because we care very deeply about the people that we serve and the way that they are served.

[01:35:18] This is a vulnerable population that needs intensive care. And I'll be honest with you, I was talking with Camilla just before we started about a piece that Jason De Parle from the New York Times did about permanent supportive housing a couple months ago.

[01:35:34] And it was a very nuanced look at PSH and why some PSH projects do better than others. It has everything to do with the services. It has everything to do with building a community. And so in addition to the paid services, we are working partnerships with our faith partners to come in and do community events in the evenings and to really bring every resource that we can to stabilizing this population, creating a sense of community, and working on the challenges that these people have so that we're not reliant on those public interventions that happen in the middle of the night

[01:36:13] when you're calling 911. So we are going about this in every way we can, with funded sources, community sources, and all the knowledge and passion that we bring as an organization to Caring for People.

[01:36:30] Thank you. I did have another question about our, let me see, where is it? Sorry. Scrolling through my notes here. Is this the only way to structure the grant?

[01:36:51] Do you know, is there another way to structure the grant as like a bridge for temporarily if funding did become available later on? How have we ever?

[01:37:09] I could try to answer that, Council Member. So one of the things that wasn't mentioned here that we would eventually do as well if Council does proceed to do this and it's incorporated into the FY27 budget is work out the agreements between Wesley Housing and Beacon Landing and additionally with the Economic Development Authority or Economic Development Office as well in conjunction with the City of Fairfax to see how that would look.

[01:37:38] That would be a potential option is in that structure while we're developing that agreement that if alternative financing or funds were found that they may supplement in that instance, But in lieu of that, that we would go ahead and more than likely fund the entire request of the \$115,000, \$117,000.

[01:38:00] Okay, thank you. How do we traditionally decide what is our policy or the criteria we use to provide grants for housing in this type of scenario?

[01:38:16] Or is this the first time this has happened? Sure, so I can try to answer that question again. I think this would be the first time this would be the precedent that would be set. That being said, we have for the last two years, I think three years now, have nonprofit grants where there is an evaluation for that, not associated with housing per se, but for other activities that directly impact residents within the city.

[01:38:39] That's one of the main criterias. And then also other things that are being evaluated this year, FY26, that total amount that was approved in the budget was \$200. We issued \$199,400, so very close to maxing that out.

[01:38:56] In FY27, that amount is being budgeted at \$200,000. Council can increase or decrease that as they see fit as well. Thank you. I would just chime in for housing-related requests. We have the existing, what we call is the Housing Trust Fund, the \$540,000.

[01:39:12] There's a strategy team within HCAP that's working on developing a process and procedures so that we can make that funding accessible. Although without any dedicated ongoing revenue for the housing trust fund, we don't anticipate any cash donations coming in with the affordable dwelling unit ordinance in place.

[01:39:30] We anticipate getting units. But that means that we would have sort of a one-and-done process with the existing funding. Council Member Hardy-Chandler. So regarding dedicated revenue, are we aware of other jurisdictions that do have that and how that works?

[01:39:53] I think, I forget the mayor's wording, but without that here, I'm just curious if regionally there are other jurisdictions that do have dedicated funding. Are you talking specifically for the housing trust fund, or are you thinking of the tax grant?

[01:40:11] Like the tax, so maybe this, for Wesley Housing, you operate a number of programs and housing all over the DMV. Is this model something that you have seen elsewhere in the DMV? And I guess I would clarify whether we're talking about the capital grant, the housing trust fund.

[01:40:29] Yes, absolutely. Many jurisdictions have dedicated funding for housing trust fund dollars. Fairfax has the penny, what they've, you know, colloquialized as a penny fund. It's at a penny and a half, I think, right now, looking to go to two pennies of tax receipts dedicated.

[01:40:48] And other jurisdictions do have dedicated capital funding sources. And likewise, for services, there are some jurisdictions that also have services dollars. But usually that's a federal source. I would imagine, Jamie, you probably have more insights there. I think a mix, federal sources.

[01:41:06] Fairfax County has the Consolidated Community Funding Poll, CCFP funding. So there's a mix of service dollars, housing trust fund dollars. There was a white paper report that I shared following the HCAB presentation that listed the surrounding jurisdictions and housing trust funds and what they have committed and what that looks like.

[01:41:27] City of Fairfax does not have one. I think there's another jurisdiction that I mentioned there that didn't have one, but their pull of existing funding from proffers is \$2 million versus our \$540,000. So, Ms. Johnson, are there other jurisdictions?

[01:41:46] I assume since any jurisdiction has the ability to designate or classify, There must be other projects in the region that have classified or designated this type of project. They have, primarily Arlington.

[01:42:03] However, most of their projects are a collaboration between Arlington County and the nonprofit themselves. So I know there's affordable housing going up above the Goodwill store in Arlington. That's one of the projects that I know. I don't know the details of that project or how Arlington County is working with Goodwill to support that particular project.

[01:42:26] Right. And from what I understand, that project will be tax-exempt. That's what we were looking for, I think, Council Member Hardy-Chandler. Ding, ding, ding. That's what we were looking for. Other questions? Comments? Council Member Peterson. Just a big picture thing.

[01:42:42] I really want to say that the heartfelt work that you're doing is appreciated here. I mean, you made a decision a few years ago to do something that took some courage, and you're living that out with the operation of not just one facility but now bringing another one on board.

[01:43:01] And financial backstopping is not for the faint of heart. And so you're putting a lot into that courage, and I think I just would like others who are listening who would be potentially available to help support you financially to recognize that you still need a lot of help and you're doing everything you can here and there's a point at which others need to put their put legs under their faith too so this is sort of the nature of partnerships that exist and I think you know we're kind of all in this together but I know this is difficult and I think the sense is

[01:43:39] we want to do everything we can but we can't do everything and so others are going to need to step up to be a part of this to make sure it's successful and sustainable in the future and in the middle of all that again i just want to say that what you're doing here is is recognized and appreciated any other questions so my final thought is that you can't put a fiscal number on faith but there's something remarkable about the lamb center in this city having built the building that you're in now that was completely on faith raising the money which seemed huge at

[01:44:16] the time to build that building so you could serve more people in a better way the piece of property becoming available on the same street as the Lamb Center is remarkable. The fact that you could leverage our \$700,000 and make it into the money necessary to build this building is remarkable.

[01:44:36] Three snow plows showing up in the middle of Snowcrete at the same moment to plow your parking lot so you could open. This is faith. And I don't know how you put a dollar figure on that. I can just tell you, having lived in this city for 26 years, somehow, someway, it shows up. And it shows up because you're working very, very hard to make sure you're there to make the things happen. And so I hope that this city continues to support you by having this consistent, dedicated source of revenue as a mere baseline to the other half million dollars you are going to have to raise

[01:45:16] to serve the people who are living there in the way you envision serving them. And I appreciate you not losing faith in the fact that we can make this happen. Thank you so much for the presentation. Ms. Shinneberry? Our next item is a discussion of the draft Small Area Plan Zoning Ordinance Amendments.

[01:45:36] I'm going to recognize Paul Navtee, our Planning Division Chief, to provide the staff presentation.

[01:45:49] Thank you, Mayor Reed and members of City Council.

[01:46:12] As a quick reminder, the purpose of this project is to align the zoning ordinance better with our adopted small area plans and generally improve the review process for development and activity centers. I'm here with Justin Wallace and Mark White of Whitesmith and Casino Planning and Law.

[01:46:31] This is our consultant that's been working with us on this project, as well as Anna Safford, the city's urban forest manager. Quick review of the process for this project. This began in mid 2024. The first phase of this effort involved our consultant doing background research, looking at our existing zoning

ordinance and interviewing different stakeholders to discover what types of issues we're facing when looking at development in activity centers.

[01:46:56] And then in phase two, the consultant put together a series of strategies to confirm what they should be looking at as they prepare the amendments. We met with the city council in May of last year to confirm this. And from that point on, they began working on the actual draft amendments.

[01:47:16] So now we're in the third phase and we have a first draft of the proposed amendments to review. We will be back with additional versions of this as we move forward. But the purpose of this work session is to continue our discussions on this first draft.

[01:47:38] So this slide is something that the consultant shared with us at the end of phase two. This was them confirming the different topics that we wanted to cover as they prepared the draft. And so what this resulted is a recommendation to create a new zoning district.

[01:47:54] We're calling this the Activity Center or Zoning District in the draft. And this is a district that would not be proactively rezoned. Anybody who wanted to utilize it would have to request a rezoning. And this means that it would have to go before the planning commission and city council for approval.

[01:48:11] And the use of the activity center district would be limited to the defined activity centers, which will be added into our zoning ordinance. They're currently only defined in the comprehensive plan. And so looking at these topics here tonight, we'll go over these in a little more detail.

[01:48:28] I want to know the two items are red are two topics that city staff pulled to work on independently and parallel with this process. The first is related to tree conservation and landscaping. This is something that we have been considering to review citywide anyway.

[01:48:45] It's also a recommendation of the recently adopted Urban Forest Master Plan. And so Anna Safford will be going over our recommendations in that area. The second of these is to look at our parking standards. This is something that we want to look at independently because we have some additional data that is locally available to us that might help inform what this is a little better i'd also point out that these two items also could stand alone independently as separate zoning ordinance amendments they don't necessarily have to be tied to the activity center amendments so tonight the Justin from WSC will go through

[01:49:21] all of the main topics that are listed here this includes frontages open space circulation dimensional standards and community benefits and then city staff will cover these two items that we pulled out being tree conservation and parking. A quick look at our schedule for the review of the first draft. This began earlier in February. We had introduction work sessions with both the Planning Commission and City Council. I note that the full the full package of draft amendments was provided to you with the staff report for the February 17 City Council meeting along with a summary that was intended to help give some guidance as you read it. We then had that

[01:49:59] introduction work session to give you some highlights another you have some more time to look at it we can talk about it in more detail we then are having the subsequent work sessions again with the Planning Commission and City Council we met with the Planning Commission last night and with White and Smith here to help support us and to answer some questions that staff couldn't answer then lastly I wanted to point out that in your staff report there is a there was a link to the items from the

February 17 staff report that's where you had the full draft amendments but we also added as attachments in this staff report additional information for

[01:50:39] those items we pulled out this being our tree conservation amendments as well as the parking amendments and then lastly there's an attachment in your staff report where city staff began doing test fits on recently approved development projects and so there's more information in there and we'll to give a kind of a high-level overview of those as well.

[01:50:56] So I'll now turn it over to Justin Wallace from WSC, who will give us an overview of the key sections of the draft amendments. Good evening. Thanks, Paul. It's been a while since we've been here, since last May, but if you'll remember, we delivered some concepts to you all, and now we're drafted in more detail, and so we're going to present some of the key components of the Activity Center Zoning District.

[01:51:28] And just to recap, the goal of the Activity Center Zoning District is to promote growth in a walkable, vibrant, and predictable manner. And this is for the, to implement the small area planned areas.

[01:51:45] And so some of the key components that we are going to present is frontages, open space, and then the community benefits program. We'll start with the development frontages. So why are we proposing frontages?

[01:52:01] Just to recap on this, the purpose of the development frontage is to strengthen the building's relationship to the streets and enhance the pedestrian experience and activity center areas to allow more flexible design outcomes and more nuance at the street.

[01:52:19] We also felt that given the city of Fairfax already has design guidelines that get into detail that the development frontages was a strategic way to incorporate placemaking within the zoning ordinance. The small area plans envision more creativity, variation, and flexibility in development.

[01:52:41] That's a plan to occur in activity centers, and so the development frontages is a way to promote placemaking and active ground floor frontage. So when we talk about development frontages, that means the building and site components that occur at the front of properties and regulate the siting location of buildings and we've assigned develop different development frontages using these maps that you see on the screen so we have four different types of development frontages priority retail flexible commercial open space and residential frontage the priority

[01:53:19] retail supports those core areas that are pedestrian-focused in the small area plans. When we think about restaurants, retail, and hospitality uses, so those high foot traffic areas. The build-to zone here is much closer to the sidewalk, and so it's a much more narrow setback than the other frontages. We've also proposed a flexible commercial frontage. This would apply along the major commercial thoroughfares with retail use and those larger format stores

[01:53:54] that might have some parking associated with it so this has a more moderate setback and some entry design requirements and requirements for variation along the wall plane at the front of the building we also have an open space frontage so naturally this is along parks common spaces urban trails

[01:54:19] And so this provides a frontage to allow some transition of landscaping between the building and the open space so that you have a landscaped edge condition and some minimum requirements for the upper portion of the building and how it overlooks into a park space or open space.

[01:54:40] And then finally, we have residential frontage, and so this is a more generous setback, but a minimum of 6 feet and a maximum of 20 feet, and this applies to residential, like townhouse and multifamily development within the activity center district.

[01:54:57] So it allows for more active frontages with stoops, patio yards, and those sort of things. So generally, each frontage type controls the siding of buildings, entrance requirements, and ensures that the building in some way engages with the street and the sidewalk area.

[01:55:22] I'm going to keep going, so we'll next talk about open space. One of the main concerns that we heard through the process was needing more consistency and clarity and guidance when it comes to open space, particularly with urban development and activity centers.

[01:55:42] And so we've provided some provisions that aligns with the values that were expressed throughout the process. That includes having a network of interconnected spaces, having a variety of scales and programs, having open space that's more activated.

[01:55:59] and includes resilient and sustainable features. So what the activity center provides or requires is a 10% minimum open space area, which aligns with the other commercial districts.

[01:56:15] But not all the open space is treated the same. So we have a weighted value system where open space that has more of a publicly accessible presence, such as plazas, parklets, and greenways are weighted higher, count more, versus lower value open spaces. So residual spaces, setbacks, or different types of spaces that aren't as publicly accessible count lower. And so the weighting system discourages the leftover or inaccessible

[01:56:50] spaces, but encourages spaces that are more visible and usable in a development. And so that is how we've structured the open space using a value system, and there's various types of open spaces that developers and applicants can choose, and then they use the weighting system to meet the minimum requirement.

[01:57:14] I'm going to move on to access and circulation. These are some provisions that ensure walkability within and internal to the development.

[01:57:30] And so the provisions that we have include a required pedestrian path from the entrance of the building to the sidewalk, the public sidewalk, but also internal pedestrian paths that connect. If you have multiple buildings, they would connect to all of the entrances, to parking areas, and the common open space.

[01:57:51] And so that gives you a continuous pedestrian path through a development. It connects back to the street. We also have included some provisions about those main vehicular drives in developments, and we're requiring those to be designed like public streets, even though they're private streets or private access drives through the development.

[01:58:17] And so they're required to have sidewalks and street trees, And so that, again, is just improving pedestrian connectivity and providing for a safer pedestrian path through development. And so that's access and circulation.

[01:58:36] And the next component is I'm going to talk about incentive-based zoning. We've created a community benefits program, which is essentially an incentive-based zoning program. So as we

understood, density and height has been, you know, it happens through the negotiation process when a rezoning comes through the review process.

[01:59:05] So we've tried to establish a clear menu of community benefits so that the city and applicants know what is expected of development up front. It's baked into the code. And so incentive-based zoning is permitted by the state law, and it's commonly used in local governments, not just in Virginia, but nationwide as well.

[01:59:32] And so our goal with the community benefits program is to ensure there's a measurable community benefit if the project wants to go higher or more dense with their development. So how does this work?

[01:59:50] The incentive program works by establishing a base height and density for the district. So we have a five-story base height, which is reflective of commercial urban district. And so if a development wants to go higher or more dense, they would have the community benefits program as an exchange for more height and density.

[02:00:19] I keep saying community benefits, but I'm going to describe what those are. One incentive-based provision that we have is for land assembly, and so this encourages assembly of smaller parcels or fragmented parcels, and the goal being that with larger parcels or more parcels, more land, you'll be able to develop in conformance with the small area plan.

[02:00:50] So a better block structure and that's envisioned in the small area plans. We've applied the land assembly incentive to all small area plans except for Old Town Fairfax where you have small parcels and it's encouraged there.

[02:01:09] So we're applying it across all of the other areas. And how it works, there's a graduated scale that's tied to the amount of areas that's assembled, and then there is a density bonus that is attached to the amount of acreage assembled.

[02:01:29] So that's one example of an incentive provision. I'm going to go into two of the community benefits, which we've included in the program. That includes open space and transportation infrastructure.

[02:01:46] And these are the two programs that we heard the most about that have the most applicability across all of the small area plans, and they relate directly to the public realm and within developments.

[02:02:08] So open space, that means parklets, mid-block passageways, transportation infrastructure includes new roadway connections and internal street networks. And so the idea is that if you're asking for more height or density, you'd have to adhere to the open space or transportation infrastructure eligibility requirements within the program.

[02:02:36] I don't know if you recall, but we did explore some other programs. Those are listed here on the screen. So we did look into adaptive reuse, green infrastructure, neighborhood support space, and green building.

[02:02:52] And each one of these has their own merits. There were some key factors in the evaluation. One of those factors is whether such a program has been tested or tried in other areas within Virginia. So that was one of the key factors.

[02:03:10] Another factor is the proportionality when you consider the cost implications of some of these programs compared to each other. Some cost less, some cost more. That was another factor. And then another factor is, again, whether they could apply across all of the small area plans or were they singled out to one area versus another.

[02:03:34] And so we try to be intentional about including open space and transportation infrastructure. And so those are the two programs that are included within the Community Benefits Program. And did you want to add anything to that?

[02:03:52] No. Okay. So I'm going to turn it back over to Paul. Yes. So when looking at the density standards and the Community Benefits Program, We realized it's kind of difficult to see how this could affect things because the community benefits in particular, in some ways, a applicant could receive additional density in terms of willingness per acre.

[02:04:18] In some cases, you might have seen in the last slide, it specifically said a new open space would achieve a certain amount of units, not units per acre. So what does that actually mean in terms of the type of development that we're getting? So we wanted to run a couple of quick test fits on some recently approved projects, and we plan to expand this as we go forward in this effort.

[02:04:38] But this was really just focusing on the community benefits and density sections of the draft amendments. And so we looked at the point over at Camp Washington and Willowood, which is more recent, because there are different projects that were approved at different times and different scales.

[02:04:54] And we had to make some rough estimates in this because some of the community benefits where additional units could be earned, for example, was through open space. And in the draft amendment, you'll notice that there are specific standards on what has to be submitted by an applicant for us to be able to make these calculations.

[02:05:14] We don't have those standards now. And so when we look back at these applications, we had to make some guesses and take some measurements and things like that. So these are all very rough. But what we came off with when looking at, first of all, looking at the recently approved Willowood project, this project was approved with 260 units, equating to 88 dwelling units per acre.

[02:05:34] When we ran it through our test and the draft amendments, we came up with, as it was designed, about 226 units or 77 dwelling units per acre. So a little bit less than what was approved. I don't think this is so significant that this development couldn't have moved forward.

[02:05:50] There could have been some minor modifications to the plan. There could have been some additional programmed open spaces, maybe a slight reduction in units. But in all, I think it generally lines up with what was approved. The point in Camp Washington was a little bit less dense.

[02:06:06] This was approved earlier. This was approved with 403 units or 48 dwelling units per acre. And when we ran it through the test fit, we ended up with 727 units or 87 dwelling units per acre. That's a very significant difference. much more than what was approved but I want to point out one of the significant reasons for that difference is the land assembly bonus analysis the first bonus that mr. Wallace described and this is one that we have really been questioning the merit of in the earlier phases of this project we had a lot of people asking us to include some kind of incentive for property owners to acquire

[02:06:43] additional properties around them and are certainly some benefits to that the larger a site is the more comprehensive it can be the more it can create a cohesive community but when we start adding additional benefits to it it could be taking away from opportunities to achieve other benefits and so just to see what this would look like if that we didn't include that and by the way the point it was an assembled parcel it was acquired over time the zoning orders amendments say that this would have to happen after these amendments are adopted so it really wouldn't apply to this, but we just for this purpose of exercise made some assumption.

[02:07:18] So in the case of the Willowood project, this was not an assemblage, this was an existing parcel that is actually parceled off of an existing one. So they didn't get that bonus. For the case of the Camp Washington project, if we did not include the land assembly bonus, it would have been about a 25% increase in the number of units from what was approved as opposed to the 80% that we see here.

[02:07:40] So just for some frame of reference, again, these can't be taken as exact numbers, and we'll continue to develop some more of these as this project goes forward. And we also want to bring in some of the other standards to review, such as the frontages and open space.

[02:07:56] So with that, I'll move into now the connected efforts. These are the things that city staff is picking up on our own, and there's one we didn't mention earlier is that we are looking at some changes to the use table and the zoning ordinance. will be some minor changes but essentially our goal here is if we do establish this new activity center district that will be the preferred venue for any new particularly mixed-use development in activity centers and so we're going to look at changes to the uh the use table that would discourage any other venues so we've had other people use the commercial urban district they've used commercial retail district with special use permits we've had planned developments all those

[02:08:33] are really not the ideal path for this we want to focus on what we're writing here I'll go through the parking recommendations at this point, and then I'll turn it over to Ms. Stafford to go over the tree conservation amendments.

[02:08:51] In the draft you have, there is a section on parking, and we'll explain why we're proposing something different. But what's in there, I also want to point out, a lot of the language is from our existing ordinance. It's just kind of setting up how it would work. So the items seen here are in the draft, but they're really our current standards.

[02:09:10] And this includes that we have a maximum parking requirement that's 10% over the minimum. There's standards in there about how we calculate when we end up with a number that's 1.5 parking spaces at 1 or 2, that type of thing. There are exceptions in the historic overlay and the transition overlay districts. There's also a 10% reduction in the commercial urban district, wherever parking is provided in a parking structure.

[02:09:32] And there are also opportunities in the current ordinance for shared parking and off-site parking. There are two more general new recommendations in the draft. And these both allow changes in use that would result in an increase in required parking without requiring the parking to actually increase.

[02:09:51] So outside the activity centers, this is proposed at a 5% increase. Inside activity centers, this is proposed as a 20% increase. The reason for this is as we have change of uses, it can be difficult for new businesses to move in if they have a different parking standard, and this is intended to alleviate some of those issues.

[02:10:09] But the main change that we want to consider is changes to the actual parking rates, specifically in activity centers. And so we have our current rate shown here. There's a lot more detail on all of these that are provided in your staff report on how we got to these.

[02:10:25] But at our current rates, we broke down the three primary uses that we're seeing in activity centers, and that is multifamily residential, retail, and office uses. So the column on the left is for residential, and the blue row shows our current standards. And for multifamily residential, it's a little bit unique in how we calculate it in that its parking is dependent on the number of bedrooms in each unit.

[02:10:51] So for each efficiency unit, for example, currently 1.25 spaces required, one bedroom is 1.5 and two bedrooms and above 2.0 spaces the for retail the current requirement is five spaces per 1,000 square feet in office it's about 3.3 spaces for 1,000 square feet the other two options we're looking here the green which is called the 25 percent reduction this is what's in the draft that is what's provided to you this is what the White Smith team came up with after coming going through the first round of reviews and this essentially rouse allows an applicant to request up to a 25% reduction to the parking standards if

[02:11:29] certain amenities are provided and those amenities are listed in the staff report it includes things like carpool spaces tree preservation additional open space and those types of things I did want to note the Planning Commission meeting last night they asked about incentives for underground and structured parking similar to what we have now in the CU district centers for EV charging and loading and ride-sharing so the last item the orange row says custom reduction this is something that staff is is proposing as an alternative to the 25% reduction because based on some data that we have available to us we

[02:12:08] believe that there are differences and discrepancies in what our parking requirements are based on these different uses and I'll explain that in a minute so as we started to get into this we started looking at the recently completed Fairfax County parking reimagined project this is an effort that Fairfax County spent quite a long time working on and it was approved in 2023 and it resulted in holistic changes across the county and what their parking standards are the reason this is such a good useful resource for us not just because Ferris county surrounds us and we have a lot of the same characteristics but they broke down their parking standards based on the types of areas that there are in the county so they have a countywide

[02:12:48] standard requirement for each use and then there are reductions for different types of areas in the county there's a full table in your staff report that explains all of them but it goes from your most suburban and rural areas all the way down to your most intense metro accessible areas such as Tyson's and we fit somewhere in between and the the biggest comparison that or the most likely comparison to us that we believe this was called a revitalization area these are areas that are older commercial areas that are redeveloping examples include downtown annandale downtown mclean and the fairfax corner area we think these are most comparable because they have

[02:13:28] similar characteristics to us but they are not directly accessible to metro and so we use that as one comparison we also looked at the overall county base rate which is quite a bit higher uh we also uh looked at um the fairfax city 2025 transportation demand management survey this is something that uh was proffered into some of our recent multi-family approvals uh that they complete a survey when requested from us and we sent something out to them last year it was primarily intended to residents

asking how they get around the city and what incentives could be used for them to use transit but we also had questions for the property managers we asked about their

[02:14:07] parking utilization. And so they responded to us and shared with us things about how many residential parking permits they have. And we can compare that to the parking spaces that are available based on their approvals. And lastly, we have the 2024 Old Town Parking Study. This was done primarily to look at some redevelopment that's happening in Old Town and how it might affect parking. But in order for that report to be written, the consultant did a detailed analysis this parking utilization in all parking lots around Old Town and so they shared that data

[02:14:43] with us and we're able to pull out some information to help us with this and so the the the custom reduction that we're proposing is based on this information I'll explain the the three uses here for residential we are proposing a reduction in the numbers you can see what those are I won't go through them but for comparison sake in the county parking reimagine study they ended up with an overall county-wide base rate of 1.45 parking spaces per unit in the revitalization areas is 1.23 spaces per unit now I know that's hard to compare because we break up our bedroom but I

[02:15:20] should just give you a general sense of it we also ran these numbers through the the the bedroom makeup of some of our existing multifamily complexes and that's in your staff report that help with that and with the transportation domain management survey results received from scout and point and the point in camp washington indicated utilization rate of about 1.0 parking spaces per residential unit now this is for the residential spaces only both of those have commercial components that are different now we're not trying to work towards a utilization rate we

[02:15:54] like to have some buffer room but that's just a frame of reference for retail we have the county essentially has lower parking rates for retail than us but they also separate restaurant uses which we don't we combine them and their restaurant rates are higher so we're somewhere in between the old town parking study had two shopping centers included that we that were useful for this that weren't necessarily in the core of old town that's main street marketplace and courthouse plaza both of which had a peak utilization rate of around two to 2.5 spaces for 1,000 square feet

[02:16:32] and for reference main street marketplace has 3.7 spaces for 1,000 square feet courthouse plaza has 8.4 and then lastly looking at office we that same old town parking study this one gave us some more significant numbers the peak utilization found for the offices generally around old town and we excluded those that were in the core of Old Town that were likely dependent on shared parking and public parking. But for other types of facilities, it averaged out to about 1.54 spaces per 1,000

[02:17:05] square feet. And this is when we separated out vacant space. So that's 1.54 spaces of occupied office space in the Old Town area. So the reason we wanted to not just depend on the 25% reduction is because we find that there might be some room for some minor reductions in residential and retail uses, but there's a significant opportunity for, we think, a major reduction of parking requirements for office uses.

[02:17:31] And this can have some benefit because it allows office property owners to invest in potentially additional uses on their properties to add value to those properties. So I will now turn it over to Anna to go through the tree conservation amendments.

[02:17:49] All right, thank you. So jumping into the tree conservation amendment options, but before going into the slides, I want to note there's a lot more technical information in the staff report, and so I'll be touching more on the high-level options that we could consider for adoption.

[02:18:06] So starting with background, to provide a little context from where we're starting from, the city's tree conservation and landscaping requirements are combined within our zoning ordinance. The city also adopted its regulations prior to the state adopting regulations for tree conservation during land development.

[02:18:27] When the state adopted its code, it did allow localities to keep its pre-existing code if they chose to do so. But with that said, the city's regulations are quite similar to the state code, the most notable being that the city and state's canopy requirement is based off of zoning density.

[02:18:46] And then from there, it's important to note that the city's current tree canopy requirements or total tree canopy requirements do maximize the state-allowed percentages based off of the city's zoning densities. So what that means is we don't have the opportunity, based off state code limitations, to adopt higher or different percentages at this time, but there are other ways that we can still strengthen our tree regulations.

[02:19:15] So moving along to the different options, you can think about tree protections that are allowed from state code in two different buckets. One is protections during land development on the left-hand side, and then also on the right-hand side, tree protections for street memorial heritage specimen trees.

[02:19:36] Most of the presentation is focused on the left-hand side for tree protections during land development, But I'll touch briefly as to how we can make changes for potential amendments in the future. So focusing on those protections during development, one option is developing a percent tree preservation targets.

[02:20:00] What this is, is a percent of the total tree canopy requirement that's required at land development must be met partially by preservation. This percentage is also based off of zoning density, and similarly, it's also dictated by state code.

[02:20:18] Second option is a tree canopy fund and bank. This would be required to be adopted if we move forward with the preservation targets. This is an administrative process that the city could grant applicants to provide in-lieu monetary contributions to a tree fund for planting or to contribute towards efforts for off-site tree preservation or restoration projects, which is the bank.

[02:20:44] Again, the state has very specific requirements as to how, when, and where a tree fund can be used during land development. Then next, also, if tree preservation targets are adopted, the state requires canopy credit multipliers to incentivize preservation and planting best practices.

[02:21:05] These are kind of similar to that community benefit program that mentioned previously in the way that it functions. And again, the state dictates what credits are available and how they're applied during the land development process.

[02:21:20] So all three of those options that would help strengthen tree conservation generally during land development is quite specific from state code. And lastly, of those regulations, the state does allow localities to adopt it as a stand-alone tree conservation ordinance outside of its zoning regulations.

[02:21:44] It would function similarly to how it does now in the zoning ordinance, but would provide potentially two benefits. One is it would create a better framework for future incorporation of other state legislation. So again, that state code there on the right-hand side would be better incorporated into an ordinance.

[02:22:04] Protections for those trees would not be regulated by the zoning ordinance because they're not necessarily specific to zoning regulations. And so it would create that framework. And two, it starts to better emphasize tree protections as environmental protections and less emphasis on the landscaping and land use provisions as it's incorporated right now.

[02:22:28] And before moving forward, I want to note that there is a state bill that we've been tracking that would make a change to the tree preservation or tree conservation regulations during land development that we're tracking through that process. To summarize some of the outcomes that would occur with these amendments, first is primarily the tree preservation targets would increase preservation on sites with existing canopy.

[02:22:59] It's primarily in residential and planned districts, and so when development is occurring in those districts, there's more opportunity to preserve trees because that's where most of the city's existing tree canopy is. The second important thing to note is there would be more what the state calls deviation requests to that preservation target and are more commercial, urbanized areas.

[02:23:24] These areas have less canopy, so there's less desirable canopy to preserve. And so the state does provide an option to request what's called a deviation when that can't be met. And again, that's specific for the tree preservation component, not the full tree canopy requirement.

[02:23:40] It establishes that administrative process for in-lieu monetary contributions instead of as a special exception. And generally, the amendments incentivize quality over quantity of tree canopy through development.

[02:23:56] And it emphasizes, again, that environmental protections and enables future legislation in the future if we wanted to incorporate. And so on this slide here, we have outlined options. The first two are staff's recommendations.

[02:24:14] Those two involve moving forward with either or all of those amendments. And then the next two include some sort of pause to the project, whether it be a short-term pause to watch the state amendment or more of a long-term pause. And again, there's more details, and I know it's a quite technical amendment in the staff report.

[02:24:38] So to wrap things up, I just wanted to make a couple of statements about our discussion with the Planning Commission last night. As I mentioned, they had a similar type of work session as you did, and they had a number of comments.

[02:24:53] We won't go through all of them, but a number of them I wanted to point out related to concerns of complexity. This is a very complex package of amendments, and we understand that. But the reason for that is that we are trying to replace a lot of negotiations with code.

[02:25:11] And so in order to cover all of our bases, it means there's a lot of different paths that we have to go down. And the Planning Commission, I think, understood that, but they wanted to make sure that as we

go forward that we make sure of a couple things. One is that we be careful that we don't lose what we want to do in one area and replace it for doing something in another.

[02:25:34] An example that gave to that is that we have standards about trees in both the streetscape sections and the tree canopy section, and we don't want those to conflict with each other. Be careful about gaming the system, about people trying to take advantage of loopholes. I think we heard similar comments from city council when we last met with you.

[02:25:53] And also recognize that if we get too specific, we might prohibit what we might actually want or go back to having a lot of special exception requests, which is also what we're trying to avoid. So we'll be paying attention to all of those. And any thoughts that anybody has that can help us with that, we certainly love to hear it.

[02:26:11] I also wanted to mention that at the last discussion with city council, there were quite a few comments and questions about the smaller airplanes in general. I don't think intentionally, but there are, for example, concerns about loss of office and the building heights that are in the small area plans.

[02:26:30] We'd rather not try to change the small area plans through the process. So we said at that time was that we are thinking about actually small area plan review process. And so we have scheduled a work session with city council on June 2nd to talk about what that might look like, talk about schedules and topics we might cover.

[02:26:48] So keep that in mind. And as you're reading this, other concerns might come up with the smaller plans, and we'd be happy to talk about those efforts as well. So lastly, I wanted to point out, coming up, we have an open house on this project on March 26th.

[02:27:04] This will be at the Sherwood Community Center from 5 to 8 p.m. You can show up any time in that window. There'll be stations that focus on each of these topics, so people can go directly to where their interests are. Also, on our Engage page, we'll be posting the draft amendments tomorrow.

[02:27:20] With opportunities for people to provide comments and I'll be up for a month or so. There's a QR code for that page there So that's all we have for tonight. I appreciate your time and we welcome any thoughts or questions Thank you for the presentation Councilmember Amos. Thank you excellent presentation. I do think it's heading in the right direction I like a lot of what you're incorporating here. I would also share your concerns with land assembly While it is a preference I don't know about this specific bonus component of it if there's an alternative to explore i'm not sure what other jurisdictions have done but would like to take a look at that

[02:27:56] because obviously we want to prioritize consolidation but i think there's better ways to go about it i know i asked this last time but just wanted to clarify again specifically because it was touched on with the tree conservation portion will there be a component of this that also allows for off-site improvements aside from the in-lieu payments or not really so the the tree bank would be a contribution whether it be to a conservation easement or a deed for preservation or restoration projects off-site i should clarify my question i get that piece is that applicable

[02:28:35] to other standards in the zoning ordinance is what i meant uh as it's written i i don't think there's a piece for a monetary contribution for open space but i think there was uh interest from city council from last time and it's the only one i can think of at this time but we can certainly to explore others. I know there's a number of legislative pieces in the pipeline. I think on the slide deck that we had,

it also had parking going across. So I wanted to kind of factor in to what degree is this also trying to get ahead of state legislative changes that we think are coming down the pipeline that we might be required to follow anyway? I apologize that

[02:29:13] that got removed from this. I would like to touch on that since you brought it up. There is a piece of state legislation that's moving forward that is setting maximum parking requirements that our jurisdiction can allow. My read on it is that it would apply to us because it is long transit accessible areas and transit includes bus lines.

[02:29:33] If that does pass, then it would certainly, the requirements would have us have lower standards than anything that's in any of our options right now. So we are following that, and we hope to get a confirmation if it's going forward, I think, in April, so we'll know how to proceed from there.

[02:29:49] Thank you. I also noticed on one of the slides it mentioned community space as a potential bonus opportunity. I'm assuming that's referring to, like, parks and playgrounds. You're talking about, like, outdoor community space, or... I assumed it was not amenity space because that's usually required for a lot of different LIHTC applications and things like that.

[02:30:07] That was actually, and I'll let Justin expand upon that, but based on some of the recommendations of the smaller year plan, They had suggested that we could look at actually having or requiring or allowing bonus density for community accessible states within a building. So something that a nonprofit could use or that the city could use or that type of thing.

[02:30:26] So is that you go first? No, exactly. Paul was getting at that. And obviously, some of the language is not 100 percent yet. But that is something that we caught that for the community benefit program that we should clarify and specify what types of open space is eligible for such a program.

[02:30:48] And it should be publicly accessible and those types of things. But that is some language that we need to tweak. I appreciate that because if it is indoor, a lot of LIHTC applications and different grants and local funding and state funding require community amenity spaces already.

[02:31:05] So I do want to make sure that we're differentiating between that. That way we're getting the best bang for our buck. But I mean, otherwise, again All in on the parking reductions. I think that's something that's needed to happen for quite some time So thank you for for taking such a strong look at that and great work. I'm looking forward to seeing what the open house produces Councilmember Hall. Thank you. Um, you just said something about Parking and you said that the if there are an ordinance or a regulation that comes down from the state

[02:31:39] for maximum parking that that would be less than we are currently requiring did i understand that correctly that's correct as it's written now and i don't have the exact numbers but i believe the maximum would be allowed to require is something like 0.5 spaces per multifamily unit one space per single family unit and it wouldn't apply to the whole city based on my read of it it's areas that are within i believe it's a quarter mile or half mile from a bus line and are we monitoring this in that we're watching it or that we are actively pushing against this because those numbers likely won't work here we have i'm not aware that we've taken any action on

[02:32:19] it we have just been watching it okay i i'm happy to learn that because i have serious concerns about that i understand that many people seem to think that we're going to turn into this biking everywhere community and we're all going to be like we're in amsterdam i don't buy it and quite honestly,

I do struggle with getting parking spots sometimes when I go places, notably to eat at the Korean barbecue place at the bottom of the point. I've been there twice and not been able to park there twice. So this is real. You also mentioned the marketplace parking, and that's another place

[02:32:57] where I struggle to find parking. And so sometimes those things discourage me from going there because I'm not in a place that it's super convenient or easy for me to walk or take the bus and be predictable. So, but I do have some other specific questions, but that's just my concern is that I don't know that watching that is enough if our standards are significantly higher than them. Because I think then what's going to happen is that people are still going to have that car, but they're just going to be parking it in a residential neighborhood that's near them or in another business parking lot or some other place that they can get away with it

[02:33:35] for a little while until they can't, but it becomes a nuisance or a burden for, let's say, single-family homes that are not dealing with that parking right now. On page 33 of the slides, you talk about the Tree Conservation Tree Fund and Bank. It says that the code for Fairfax County is \$1,113 per tree, if I understand that correctly? Yes. Okay. It looks like that with the flats, they did 76 trees for \$83,145. That works out to \$1,094. You can trust my

[02:34:10] math. And then for N29, 25 trees for, in lieu of \$21,860, but that's only \$874.40 per tree. So two things. One, Fairfax County does update the unit price schedule either annually or biannually. And so I have seen it increase over the past few years. And then second, because those, we don't have a standardized tree fund process. It was just done through negotiations.

[02:34:41] And so we requested or recommended an amount that sometimes there was then some back and forth on the exact amount. Okay. I would think, and maybe this is just me speaking out loud, but I would think in lieu of a documented policy here, I don't think allowing developers to negotiate on that is in our best interest and I think if we are going to allow them to negotiate then we need to quote the Fairfax County going rate per tree at that time. I think really N29, I understand we're building on a parking lot but I don't think \$874 per tree is sufficient. And this process would

[02:35:20] standardize it. We would either adopt Fairfax County's unit price schedule or our own or something within the rates and levies on an annual basis. Okay and one of my concerns with that in general is just that what I don't want to see is now we all of a sudden are planting a thousand extra trees at Kuttner Park or Van Dyke Park just because that's our only tree conservation area and so and I'm throwing out probably extremes here but I do worry that if another area is currently undeveloped or underdeveloped but then it becomes redeveloped in the future is it possible that we

[02:35:56] would have used or put trees on that place thinking it was a safe space and now all of a sudden we're uprooting all those trees there right so for the planting there wouldn't necessarily be automatic protections unless we had it again that other additional public tree street tree type ordinance adopted in as to what the replacement process would be for those trees which we don't currently have and then generally in terms of like again that the state does outline when an applicant can request using the in-lieu contribution it's not a guarantee that the city would grant it there would be a lot of justification that would have to

[02:36:33] be put forth and the city can counter with other design alternatives or suggestions as to how they could incorporate trees and so it's not a guarantee that they can use it it mostly just provides that administrative process versus going through either negotiations or that special exception process okay but

if we go through that process and we allow them to give us money cash in lieu where right now, for example, the N29 trees and the trees from the flats, where were those trees planted? We would incorporate and be able to use those funds to offset the city's tree planting

[02:37:11] operations. And so basically it would start providing funding towards the city's regular tree planting, whether it be street trees or park trees, as needs are throughout the operations. So have those trees been planted or not yet?

[02:37:28] We've used some of that money, for example, in the Van Dyke restoration replanting. There was a turf area we converted and replanted, and we used some of the funding from the flats to cover that. And so it's one of those things that as projects come up, we use that towards planting opportunities.

[02:37:46] Okay, I think, and I don't mean to beat a dead horse here, but I think my concern is that areas that already have trees, but that we need to take out and replant. And I mean, that to me needs to be done regardless. I don't know that it to me is acceptable to use funds that should have gone for other new trees in another new area or in an existing area in order to replant existing trees at an existing spot that already had trees.

[02:38:16] Does that make sense? No, I do understand. And I mean, ultimately, when it comes to this package of amendments, again, it's imperfect in terms of if we have interest in strengthening tree preservation requirements at land development, it just comes with kind of this baggage of a process and allowances that we need to be making in terms of the fund or the canopy credits. And so the hope is that over time, those processes kind of, we get more leverage from the city or more leniency from, or not from the city, from the state in order to shape it to our needs.

[02:38:52] Another option that is within the use of those funds is to provide it to a 501c3 who has, I think it's community beautification efforts or mission, and you can provide them the funds. And so they would have opportunities to plant on, like, private property versus, like, city has less ability to plant, say, on private property.

[02:39:15] but private property within the city, not within the county or elsewhere? The planting, the tree fund money, yes. The tree bank can be banked within what is the same non-attainment air district or area as the city, which is through the Clean Air Act.

[02:39:36] And so there's different non-attainment areas where we're not meeting air quality standards for ozone and air pollution. And so we're within one of those areas. A tree bank could be within that area. So it might not be in the city, but it would be in the surrounding area. And again, it's all that what this is is what state would require us to do if we were to adopt it.

[02:40:02] Okay, so I'm still going to beat the horse and just continue to say that I think that these things need to be done in the city in an area that is lacking in trees or is in need of trees and is not taking down another tree to plant another tree in the same spot or where it was.

[02:40:20] So I'll move off the trees for right now. I'll kind of start back at the beginning. So on slide nine, I think that's where you mentioned the space from the street or from the sidewalk was going to be anywhere from six feet to 20 feet setback.

[02:40:40] Sorry, I know we're rewinding to a totally different topic here, but where were those numbers derived from? I don't, are we currently have anything in the city that is six feet from, is it from the street?

[02:40:57] I just want to make sure I understand what that setback is. Yeah, so I think you're referring to the residential frontage, and so that requires the, there's a, we're calling it a build-to zone, and so the minimum is six feet and then a maximum of 20 feet.

[02:41:14] And so the minimum six feet allows for a porch, a stoop, a patio yard in front of either townhouses or multifamily development. So it allows for space for those type of features to occur.

[02:41:33] And so that's where the minimum six is derived from. Okay, and so if we're looking at this picture that you have up here, where the sidewalk ends and where the building starts, if there was a six-foot minimum set back there, that building would need to be another six feet back to allow a six-foot porch or stoop or grassy area of some sort.

[02:41:55] That's correct. Okay. Is six feet a state requirement, or that's something that we're proposing? It's not a state requirement. It's a typical standard for a usable porch area, and it's fairly common.

[02:42:12] Is it common in the city currently? I'm trying to think, like Mount Vineyard, I think, is the only one that I can easily, and then the new ones where, like, the breezeway was, like, I'm trying to think on Oak Street. Like those, they're further back than six feet, right?

[02:42:29] Brooke, Paul, someone who lives here, drives here. I don't have exact advantages. I think Mount Vineyard has significantly more setbacks because they were working to preserve oak trees that were there at the time it was approved. The newer townhomes on Oak Street, part of the breezeway development, I'm guessing they are close to six feet.

[02:42:50] I had to go out there and look again or check our sheets, but it's getting closer to it. Okay. Personally, I think that's pretty close, and I would like to see that be further back, maybe a minimum of 10 as opposed to six feet. My concern is that when that happens, and if I'm correct, I'm sorry, I know I have a lot of questions, but if I'm correct, that was in an area that was deemed, was that the flexible commercial or was that the?

[02:43:23] This was the residential frontage. So it would apply to all of the areas that do not have a frontage assigned. So it would apply on all other frontages. So we're setting a minimum on all the streets that don't have an assigned color on slide five, if that makes sense.

[02:43:49] Okay. So yes, I have serious concerns that that is way too close and could become very problematic and could make us look and feel like a mini Falls Church or a mini D.C. in that regard. Just my personal concerns.

[02:44:05] Page 11, I actually really appreciate this slide here. And I just had ChatGPT help me with some of these dates. I just think it's very interesting to see how the dwelling units per acre have gone up significantly in a very short period of time. So 2020 is when the Scout was built.

[02:44:22] That was 46. 2022 was the point. And that was 48. N-29 is up to 88 dwelling units, and that was in 24 when it was approved. And then 25, this council, not me, voted to approve the Davies at 102 dwelling units per acre.

[02:44:40] So I think the proof is in the pudding right here as far as how things are progressing. And I think that this is, I think it's asking for trouble. I think it is way too much density. And I think we need to be very concerned about any bonus height and density that we add in if this is already what we're now

viewing or people are viewing as our new standard. So I have very, very serious concerns about these bonuses.

[02:45:10] And the example that you, the fit test, I think you called it, or test fits. I mean, the fact that, and I understand it's a, you're fitting it back to what it was, but on slide 14, where you have Camp Washington, the point, at 403 units, which is 48 dwellings per unit, which is, you know, that was the 2022 standard, it seems. To imagine 727 units there, I mean, that's almost double. And I don't know if that would be achieved by extra stories or if that would be achieved by less green space or taking over some of the building, you know, or property

[02:45:50] next door. But that to me, again, me personally speaking on behalf of me up here, that's not what I want to see in our city. And I do not support anything that heads us in that direction. So if these test fits are key indicators of where we will be expected to go, I am not in favor of this.

[02:46:13] And I think it needs to be strongly reined in. I understand that there is benefit that's provided with some of the, I'm trying to think of the wording that was used, but the community use space and things like that. I do think community use space inside a building sometimes is not as valuable as green community use space outside a building, where it looks and feels like we have a little bit of a park area here or a little bit of a sitting area here. But when you have that in a space, we already have a high school. We've got two elementary schools. We've got a middle

[02:46:50] school. There are ample places that a community can hold a meeting at any of those places. They can hold it here. I mean, there's a lot of opportunity for that. I don't think we need to be relying on private developers to be giving us that extra benefit. To me, it's not a benefit.

[02:47:09] I'd rather see them give that to their residents there to have, you know, a game room or something else that's fun and makes people want to live there. I appreciate the parking recommendation slide i think it was slide 17 and the county comparisons again to me this is already to me at what a minimum parking should be when you come to your custom reductions here and so if the state is trying to make that even worse that's a really really big concern i understand that we are trying

[02:47:45] to encourage people to live you know within a bus line or within a metro station or all those things But we don't have some of those things. And as much as we have a Q bus, I don't think it runs as consistently and quickly and accurately to make it a super reliable mode of transportation for most people.

[02:48:06] And I'll leave that at that. I think that might have been my last actual question, but just want to flip through. Yeah, I think that's all of mine. So thank you for listening to my concerns. Councilmember McCullough.

[02:48:23] Thank you so much for that presentation. I appreciate all that information. i have a few questions first um my first question is on page or i'm sorry or slide seven um when we discussed or it's mentioned defined open space types and the weight based on benefits to the city could you go into a little more detail on that how that weight waiting would work sure

[02:48:48] um let me just make sure i have it up here sorry okay so we have specified types of open space we have a table provided and there's 14 different types of open space this is similar in some ways to the plan development district and that there's types of open space that are defined we have a similar table in the zoning

[02:49:23] ordinance draft except this table applies a multiplier number with the open space type. And so, for example, conservation area, we've defined that. We've given some qualitative descriptions in the table. And then we've assigned that a multiplier of 1.5.

[02:49:47] And so, if and when a developer has an open space that meets the criteria of conservation area, That would weigh heavier than, say, a setback or a buffer yard that is already required of the development.

[02:50:07] So for a setback, we have 0.5. And so it's weighted less. And so, in other words, the developer would need to put, you know, more, ideally, they need to think through how they're using their land to meet the minimum open space requirement.

[02:50:26] it's it's the area so the applicant needs to meet 10 percent based requirement for minimum open space and so that gives them a certain amount of square footage that they need to meet and so if they're if they have setbacks then that would require that would give them less than the the other type of open space so they're trying to meet the minimum and they're using the use the open space

[02:51:03] types to satisfy that minimum requirements what's the explain the multiplier part how that population is done and what that results in because i think that's where i'm confused um so it's making me do math on the spot i'm sorry but ideally so if you have a a conservation area with a certain x amount of square feet that's going to count more so you multiply that once 1.5 so 200 would be I mean it

[02:51:43] would count more than the setback area so you're you're trying to meet the minimum so that's your you're multiplying that to compute the area is that what you're saying okay thank you yeah no I'm sorry for not explaining it.

[02:52:03] You went a really long way around, so I was kind of confused. Okay. I understand what you're saying. I just wanted to understand that you're using that. I still don't understand it, I think. I'm still confused by the explanation. Yeah, I understand that too.

[02:52:19] It is a difficult read when you first look at it, and we understand that. Part of this is because the things that have a higher weighting are usually a lot more expensive to provide for the developer, Were there things that the city would be hard-pressed to unilaterally just demand that the developer provide?

[02:52:42] We really have to create an incentive. And where we started thinking about that was some of the small area plans that would show like a trail running through it. That's really a capital improvement program thing. But if a developer wants to invest the money and wants to make it public, something we couldn't demand that they do, because we're in Virginia, and as you heard, Virginia doesn't make it easy for us, we reward them more for that.

[02:53:13] If it's something on the other end, like a required natural resource area, and they're going to protect it, they would have done it anyway. Well, that costs the developer money to do as well, but they don't get rewarded as much.

[02:53:30] Okay, I see. So that's the thinking behind that. And it gets complicated because we created a big menu because we're sort of walking this balance. We're trying to make this more predictable for developers. It'll be easier just to say, oh, well, they'll come forward and proffer it with rezoning.

[02:53:50] Well, that's exhibit A of what's an example of something that's unpredictable. We went the other direction. We had to define everything. We recognize that all these small areas covered by the plans are different.

[02:54:06] Some of them have, you know, one of them has streams running through it. Another is probably developing as something that's closer to a main street in character. And all of these spaces are different. I mean, you need a different space. One of those, you might have a courtyard or a civic space or something.

[02:54:24] The other one, preserving a stream and putting a trail by it is the most workable. So, yeah, recognizing that they're all different resulted in this bigger menu with different weightings. So hopefully that helps. So the higher weight means I need less area.

[02:54:40] Correct. Correct. That's what I was trying to say, but I could not explain it. I understand. But I think maybe a sample, we can put a sample calculation or even a diagram to help explain that because it is the math is yeah it's yeah i didn't need you to do all the math i'm sorry i just wanted to wrap my brain around how this actually worked um i do have a question regarding parking have we looked at how parking reductions in other jurisdictions have uh have affected adjacent neighborhoods over time because i hear that concern a lot when the parking stuff comes

[02:55:15] up yeah we haven't and really um you know typically if we want to do a full-scale evaluation of our parking standards we would hire another consultant and go through the time to do it we really just saw things have been done around us as an opportunity to take advantage of studies that have already been done so we didn't look at a whole lot of of other examples the fairfax county parking reimaged study we felt was a good fit and that has not been around long enough to see what the repercussions are so wonderful thank you if we move forward with the reduced parking requirements what safeguards do we have to ensure that overflow parking doesn't negatively impact

[02:55:53] our neighborhoods do we have we discussed that we haven't um and but the tools that we traditionally have in the city are parking districts we we try not to have those and because they can be a burden for the homeowners as well i get to get permitted and that type of thing it's kind of a last-ditch resort um uh we haven't had too many problems with commercial or mixed-use properties resulting and people parking off-site it's usually been more institutional uses um but we'd have to we can have more conversations about that but that is the one tool that we have okay wonderful um and then if these amendments are adopted how will the city track whether the new parking standards are

[02:56:30] working as intended um it depends what we mean working as intended i mean there's the reason that we would want to reduce parking is that we don't have excess supply because that means that properties are investing more in parking where they could go into other things or we have more pervious surface or those types of things so the measurement would be first of all if we're if the the desired amount of parking that an applicant wants is closer to what our requirements are the follow-up would be to make sure that there isn't an excess demand for parking on those sites and that's something that we can either track going back in a couple of years or we just hear

[02:57:09] it through observations for example we hear about a boulevard marketplace and so there's there's not really anything you can do and go back to add the parking um and you can't really enforce it but there's also there's issues with tenants and things like that so there's only so much we can do like so if we did track it we can't really change anything once it's built yeah that's my biggest concern is we change this we do this we watch the growth occur and then we recognize that oh we do need more parking here or maybe we limited too much and so i was just curious what how we're going to monitor that how we're

going to check in to keep moving in this direction if there's a plan I'm sorry no skip that you just answered that question for me that was perfect

[02:57:48] frontages I also hear a lot from residents regarding the setback stuff I know frontages are a little different but kind of the same thing as a setback right is that what we're okay and what I hear most often is that with greater height and density it feels like we need a greater setback because they're, especially with the way a lot of these developments coming in are being developed, they're very square.

[02:58:14] They feel very modern and industrial. And a lot of, I know a lot of residents here are very concerned about that kind of encroaching on this historic small town feel and charm that we have here in the city. So my question is with, it wasn't a question.

[02:58:30] That was just my comment. I just wanted to make that comment to let you all know that that's kind of what I'm hearing. I wanted, when Councilmember Hall mentioned it earlier, that resonated with me because that's one of the things I hear. I don't think residents are upset about the density necessarily.

[02:58:47] It's the fact that what they're seeing occur with these giant developments isn't what they were expecting. So, and I think a lot of that can be modified or can come across a little bit easier of a sell if, when they're walking through those areas, it feels like it belongs here.

[02:59:03] It feels like it's adapted to, you know, the look and feel of our community and our city. So I just wanted to mention that since I notice it comes up all the time. I think that's, oh, I did have a question about, you did mention test fits on recently approved developments.

[02:59:20] Could you share what those showed on whether any projects would have been designed differently under the proposed standards? I know you showed some of that a little bit, like the, this is what it would look like here. But were those the only two, were those the only used? Those are the only two we've done so far.

[02:59:37] This is our first draft, and we actually had some requests from the Planning Commission to look at others. Great. So we will certainly expand this. Excellent. Thank you so much. I appreciate all your time. Council Member Hardy-Chandler. I just wanted to circle back to the state legislation that you're monitoring.

[02:59:56] Having read the bill, and we know bills can pass with amendments and not look like what they look like today, right? But depending on, and I'm relying on your interpretation of what you read, some bills can be written so that that's a floor that you can always, that the locality can make decisions above that.

[03:00:18] And sometimes it's, you know, just a straight requirement. What is your interpretation particularly regarding the parking in terms of whether or not that's framed as a floor that the city can still go above, or is it framed in a different, more prescriptive way?

[03:00:40] I will start with the caveat that I have not reviewed this with the city attorney, but my read on this is that this is a requirement. I didn't see it as a floor, and I read it a couple times to try to confirm that, but again, I'm not an attorney, and I don't want to say that's the final city interpretation of it.

[03:01:01] Okay. Separate from that, I'm curious on slide 13, I believe. I think it's slide 13. Yes. So other incentive options were explored and you kind of covered that they had different pros and cons and you landed in a different space.

[03:01:24] I'm curious how these zoning amendments would speak to if the city was to adopt, let's say, that green building policy, how would the zoning amendments kind of speak to that policy or coordinate with that policy if it were adopted?

[03:01:44] Because I'm also, you know, always kind of looking across other things that have been presented. So again, this is something that we need the city attorney to weigh in on, and he has expressed concern about some of these, which is why they're in this court.

[03:02:01] That being said, as you recall, the green building policy, aside from looking at the tax incentive, the other incentive was bonus density. And so the thought as we began this process and we realized we're going down the path of utilizing bonus densities, was that could be folded into this calculation.

[03:02:18] And so we would have to determine what a measure would be for that. And we would come up with, we'd probably look at some pure examples of what other people do, but there would be some kind of measure for what type of level the building achieved, number of square feet, and then that would turn into a bonus number of units.

[03:02:36] And that would all be added into this. And the benefit of looking at something like that in conjunction with the two that we have here is that we can get to kind of what our kind of maximum agreed upon desire is for a maximum density and make sure we're not exceeding that with everything combined.

[03:02:55] So if something like that were to be added later, then we could look at adjusting this, but it might mean that we are taking away from the open space bonus or the transportation bonus or that type of thing. And in terms of the 25% reduction over custom, it sounds to me like the custom makes more sense.

[03:03:14] If I heard you correctly, and maybe you could sort of reiterate those benefits, it's not, you know, just across the board, but there would be some formulas applied to how those reductions are calculated, correct? Yes. It would be a standard reduction in the rates, and this would, again, only apply in activity centers, not citywide.

[03:03:36] But the difference is that we could customize what we want the rates to be for the different uses. And so the reason that we suggest doing that is because we feel there's much more opportunity for reduced parking at office than the other types of uses. Whereas if we just had a percentage reduction, it would be consistent across the board, and we're probably still over parking for office and maybe under parking for other uses.

[03:03:59] So would that be a right fit as opposed to just more of a reduction? I mean, does that open up an opportunity for, because I think in some cases we have more parking and less parking. And I'm just wondering if that opens up an opportunity for more specific allocations as opposed to, I may not be asking the question correctly, but.

[03:04:25] Specific allocations in terms of. Or more tailored allocations, I guess. No? Is it my lay interpretation of custom? It's probably us overusing the word custom. Okay. What we're proposing is setting a standard, allowing the city to decide what the standards would be for these three uses.

[03:04:45] Once those standards are in place, though, there's no adjustment to it. - Okay. - That being said, you know, we could have some kind of combination, and in your staff report, there is a calculation of what

a combination would look like if we had the custom reduction and then had the 25% reduction on top of that.

[03:05:04] We could have something that kind of blends the two, maybe it's a smaller reduction, that way there is some customization, and that additional reduction would be through, as we said earlier, amenities such as carpool spaces, preserving trees preserving open space and that type of thing so okay thank you so just piggybacking off this for one minute and talking about parking you know one of the reasons that we opted on the city side to put two levels of underground parking at the sherwood center was for this reason right i mean we are a city of asphalt parking lots it is not the best use of the limited amount of space

[03:05:41] that we have in 6.2 square miles so you mentioned in passing talking about incentivizing people to do underground parking. So it's not just the number of spaces, it's how it's configured on the parcel. The other thing is some of the designs that we've presented to us also allow things for like, you know, ride-sharing, pick-up and drop-offs, and things like parking for Uber Eats and Grubhub.

[03:06:10] So if you notice the plaza, which was built before ride-sharing existed, there is no place for people to be picked up or dropped off unless they go inside the parking garage. So we can't redesign that to allow for the fact that people do ride-sharing now, especially when they go to and from restaurants.

[03:06:27] So we have to think about how cars are being used and not necessarily to park for anything more than 15 minutes or to pick up and drop somebody off. So design becomes important. Underground parking on a parcel gives us a different way of providing parking.

[03:06:46] And the other thing I'd just like to point out about the bus, the Q bus is not the only bus that serves the city. Metrobus and the Fairfax Connector also serve the city. And so knowing in the future that we could end up with autonomous vehicles of every description, we have to think about how we are looking at designing how cars take up space, how people use cars, and how cars are going to be needing spaces differently than just parking.

[03:07:14] I mean, I think to me, and we're starting to see this in the designs that are being brought forward, about how different kinds of parking spaces are being allocated for very specific uses. So I think we have to kind of think outside the parking garage, you know, parking spot and how people are using that.

[03:07:33] And we have a model that is in our head, and I think we need to just think a little bit differently about, and I think the projects that we're getting are already demonstrating an understanding that you need to provide these certain kinds of very temporary, very brief parking spaces.

[03:07:51] And the other thing we keep talking about, you know, the rate, you know, it specifically said Greenway, and we have a Greenway in the small area plan, and the Davies property allowed for that in their design, and the pre-application we got for Christopher Companies also were like, yeah, we know you said you wanted a Greenway, and here's this preliminary design that says here it is.

[03:08:15] So these things are already happening. We're already starting to see evidence that developers are starting to think about parking and our design for greenways, and we're starting to see that in the things that are coming to us now. So it seems to me that these recommendations are actually following, in real time, the realization from developers that the city is looking for certain kinds of accommodations and how we see housing and parking and open spaces working together.

[03:08:46] I think that's the value of the small area plan, just period. So this is a logical, to me, a logical follow-on of the work we've already done. That said, Council Member Peterson. Thanks. I won't restate the many good things that have already been said this evening because it's getting late.

[03:09:07] But I would like to reinforce a couple points and then raise a couple of others. First off, I do share concerns about the height and density bonus that have been registered earlier. On the parking issue, I think there's some caution there that needs to be brought into play.

[03:09:26] I mean, there was, you know, the comment about biking. Biking in our city, as in Fairfax County, is about 1% of our commuter load, and that number hasn't budged in five years, so there may be some real limits to that. There are alternatives, but I think we need to be a little bit careful about that.

[03:09:43] The same commuter survey that showed that percentage also indicated that transit-oriented development is associated with and induces higher-priced housing, and that's been universal. So we're seeing that throughout the metro area as we've gone to Todd's transit-oriented development.

[03:10:00] We've gone to high-priced housing concurrently with that. There's a cause-and-effect relationship there. We need to be, I think, cognizant of that if that's what we want to do. On the forestry side, lots of great points here.

[03:10:17] First off, I think that the attainment area that we're talking about here is the whole Washcog area. I believe so, but I'd have to double check that. So if we... Sorry, it's within Virginia, in northern Virginia.

[03:10:35] Okay, it's a pretty big area, but to maybe just simplify this a bit, if there is some sort of incentive that says you can place trees outside of the jurisdiction as long as it's in the attainment area, it might end up as a practical matter, meaning we're putting trees in Mr. Alexander's old neighborhood in Dumfries, Virginia, and not very close nearby.

[03:10:59] But just to kind of illustrate what it means to say this does not have to be within jurisdiction or within site response, it could mean a long way away. There are other, I mean, this is a whole field, as you know, a lot of concerns about doing things that are off-site, doing things that are banking-oriented, et cetera, cashing in trees that are old versus trees that are very young, all those kinds of things.

[03:11:24] There's just a heck of a lot of cautionary stuff on these forestry mechanisms and a history that is beneficial in some ways but pretty checkered in others. And I'd hate to see the city of Fairfax kind of naively walk into this and think that we're doing ourselves a favor by putting in some of these mechanisms and finding out that they had unintended consequences.

[03:11:46] We ended up accelerating a forest loss. I think it's and I guess I would be interested in knowing as we have approached um the protection of trees forests canopies canopy whichever of those metrics we're after how does that tie back to a set of targets and timetables and a set of goals for the protection of forest land in the city is has that yet been established or is that yet to be done and if it is yet to be done that

[03:12:23] seems to me to be something that ought to be taken into consideration when we do this to find out what we're actually trying to accomplish numerically and whether these are the best mechanisms for doing that sort of feels like right now we're playing tennis without a net and we're not really sure that what we do is accomplishing some greater goal that we want and need to do so I would just raise that for further

um consideration uh big picture oh um yeah big picture the mention of June 2nd and a work session on small area plans i think is enormously important for the city we've

[03:13:03] discussed this before and recognized like other uh planning instruments that we have in the city they are dated and things have changed quite significantly during the period of time in which they were created and we're going to see a very different future than the past by all counts here and so it would be i think really important to try to understand how those updates take place and capture the new realities that we're dealing with and part of those realities are the community's

[03:13:37] concerns about things and we've talked about some of what needs to be updated part of it's the drivers, forecasts of growth, et cetera, that are within the small area plans, and those clearly have shifted, and they are already under consideration for updating by COG.

[03:14:04] There was a meeting this morning to take a look at the methodology by which the cooperative forecasts are formulated and look at update methodologies for that, and that's partly driven by this recognition that we're living in a different world now, and we need to make sure that our estimates and our forecasts and our understandings and assumptions about the amount of growth we're trying to either accommodate or control are really reflective of new realities.

[03:14:34] So where that goes from my standpoint is the question mark of whether it is prudent to be cautious about how many of these zoning changes we adopt now before we've had a chance to take a look at the small area plans and see where those updates need to go because if we end up concluding that there are significant updates that may have a material effect on some of these i know the last time we got together it sounded like for some of it it may not be sensitive but i think it's a fair point nonetheless that if we're taking a look at the updates for the small area plans we would be

[03:15:12] a little bit careful about locking in zoning amendments prior to that process because it could have some impact on the way we approach things here. It is going to raise issues of height and density, location, design, ratios, mixtures, all those kinds of things that are very fundamental. And I would include in that batch, for instance, some of the conceptual design that I think has got to get back on the table about thinking about some areas in terms of activity centers.

[03:15:41] And you think of Courthouse Plaza, the Old Town area, where one might think of that as a prime location for an activity center because of its proximity to Old Town. Activity corridors, like the corridor between there and George Mason University, which is logical and recommended in many ways.

[03:16:02] I think the decision we made on the Davies property is inconsistent with that, but nonetheless, that is very much a development strategy that is probably worth taking a second look at and seeing where that leaves us. Again, that would influence what we want to do here in terms of zoning, and I think it's important that we be careful not to take actions now that would foreclose that kind of updated thinking that we would have in the future.

[03:16:29] And I think that is really consistent with the interest and concerns that we hear from so many people in the community, and you mentioned the results of the meeting that was held and some of the inputs around that. I think those are good indicators that it's very much time for an update.

[03:16:49] So I would, again, hope that we would be cautious along the way and that we would be serious about the examination of the small area plans sooner rather than later. Thanks.

[03:17:06] Any other comments or questions? Council Member Bates. So I'd rather not turn this into relitigating who voted which way on previous proposals, since that's not why we're here. But looking in general at this, I think, sort of points to how density within itself is inherently somewhat arbitrary.

[03:17:31] Looking at, for example, the Davies property, that is a project that utilized below-grade parking, which is something that, as was mentioned, we want to incentivize, not discourage. And, you know, with that comes the potential for additional density because that room isn't being taken up by a parking garage.

[03:17:56] The point now, it's called, is a project that had above-grade parking. You know, it is wrapped, I believe, so you don't really see it, but it is above-grade parking, so that's one thing that takes up a lot of room there.

[03:18:12] Anyway, on the other hand, looking at, for example, the botanist, the Willowood Plaza complex has, of course, been subdivided. But if that happened to still be a single parcel, a single development, that density becomes, of course, a lot less.

[03:18:32] And that is, at that point, mostly commercial. And that's altogether perhaps closer in size, I believe, to the point. So anyway, my point is, no pun intended there, that when you're looking at density within itself, it's going to be perhaps just somewhat arbitrary regardless of which way you slice it.

[03:19:01] But I think that the zoning ordinance amendments that we're looking at here go a long way toward taking some of that arbitrary nature out of this zoning ordinance of ours and putting in perhaps elements that pay more attention to the overall quality of the development, that kind of thing.

[03:19:25] So anyway, going back to what's before us here, pre-conservation, fully support staff's recommendations on that. Thinking about parking, that's something where I have yet to hear somebody come up to me and say, You know, those are some really nice-looking parking spaces over there.

[03:19:46] So I don't think that we want to really go real far above the absolute maximum, you know, utilization per unit or per square foot or whatever it is that we see elsewhere in the city on parking. You know, we certainly want a little bit of wiggle room there, but we don't want to have really a major excess of parking that just doesn't really do much for the city.

[03:20:11] I mean, it's, you know, not much to look at. If it's not being used, it's not serving a purpose. So I wouldn't want to do that sort of piecemeal as an incentive, but rather just kind of across the board, look at what we really actually need in terms of parking. Because otherwise, that could be additional green space, additional tree canopy, which even if it's not utilized, does provide a benefit to the city.

[03:20:33] Now, thinking about the community benefit component of this, I definitely agree that the issue of providing additional incentives for consolidation is perhaps not quite as directly beneficial as other options here.

[03:20:57] And at least as part of this draft seems to be weighted fairly heavily overall compared to some of the other elements. But I understand that that can be tweaked and all that as we go through the process. But one sort of potential alternative that I've been thinking about, and I should have brought this up last time, and I'm not totally sure that we can even do this, if we could provide an option for developers to go above the affordable housing requirement that we have,

[03:21:34] Like let's say, you know, if you do one additional unit at what's, you know, what's required and the required percentage of AMI in the ordinance, that can increase your total unit count by five or something like that.

[03:21:52] or if it's maybe even a different benefit for different maximum AMI. Like for 30% AMI or half what's in the ordinance, it's maybe 10 or something like that. I'm just throwing numbers out there.

[03:22:08] But another idea that we might want to think about since affordable housing is something that I think also provides a significant benefit, perhaps more so than consolidation on its own or what have you. That's all I have. Thank you. Other questions or comments?

[03:22:27] Time check, Ms. Shinneberry. 10-22. 10-22. You've got two budget items to talk about. All right. Well, we are going to thank our presenters and move on to our next item. So one of the two budget items for discussion is the discussion on the meals tax.

[03:22:48] I'll recognize Daniel Alexander, city manager, for the discussion. Thank you. Recognizing the time. Yeah, I would love to know what our time estimate might be for these two items. I can give you a number of slides that would probably go very quickly.

[03:23:05] The rest will be dependent on the council and their appetite to, excuse the pun on meals tax, to discuss the items further. So we can at least get a presentation to you and then gauge your interest in questions and answers if that would be satisfactory.

[03:23:21] So why don't we go ahead and start with the meals tax discussion and ask JC to lead us quickly. Sure. Thank you, City Manager, Mayor, Council. Thank you again. Quick six slides presentation. We'll try to go through these as efficiently as we can. Next slide.

[03:23:43] So you've seen this slide before. This was a part of the manager's budget presentation. Just really quickly, the nine local comparison localities within the region who also have a meals tax, when you add those nine together, that's where you get the 4.22%.

[03:24:03] To the left of that, you have the City of Fairfax that's currently at 4%, and then also the proposed 4.5%. Again, currently, the meals tax is at 4%. The FY27 budget is proposing a half a percent increase to 4.5%.

[03:24:21] The last time the city raised the meals tax rate was in 2003, from 2% to 4%. Of note, really quickly, Arlington increased their rate from 4% to 5% on July 1 of 2025, so almost a year ago.

[03:24:38] Similarly, the town of Vienna also recently raised their rate from 3% to 4% since January 1 of 2026. The town of Herndon increased their meals tax rate from 3.75% to 4.5%, also on July 1 of 2025.

[03:24:55] And then of note that I'm sure everyone knows, as of January 1 of 2026, Fairfax County implemented a meals tax for the first time at 4%. This slide shows the 23-year history of the city's meals tax revenue, basically from 2003 when it was at 2%, and then what has happened in the last 20-some-odd years.

[03:25:19] So within those 23 years, meals tax revenues has more than quadrupled from roughly \$1.9 million in 2003 to over \$9.3 million in 2025.

[03:25:35] This trend shows a consistent long-term growth pattern. One of the most important things this chart demonstrates is the stability of meals tax revenues. Even though national recessions in 2008 and the

COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, meals tax revenues rebounded quickly and continue to grow.

[03:25:56] Meals tax are unique because they capture revenue not just from residents, but from visitors, commuters, and patrons coming from outside the city. This allows us to export a portion of the tax burden to non-residents who enjoy our local businesses.

[03:26:12] Of note, as previously stated, the city increased its meals tax by 100% in 2003, again from 2% to 4%, and revenues increased by 8.1% during this transition and averaged about 3.3% increase every year thereafter between 2005 to 2007.

[03:26:36] And then just a quick note also as listed on the slide there of 2008, increases that year from 2007 to 2008 were due to an accounting change on identification and classification of prepared foods in addition to improved enforcement and auditing of the establishment.

[03:26:55] That's the significant increase between those years, relatively stable from 2008 all the way to where we are now. Next slide. Zooming in just a bit, looking at a 10-year history of the city's meals tax between 2016 and 2005, or the last past 10 years.

[03:27:15] Highlights are not just in revenue totals, but also year-over-year changes. So what you see there are numbers in thousands. So between 2016 and 2017, we had an increase of \$53,000, or almost a percent increase.

[03:27:32] Slight decrease the following year, and then you can sort of figure out the rest going forward. It gives us a very clear picture of how the restaurant sector responds to economic conditions. From 2016 to 2019, meals tax revenues showed steady, predictable growth, increasing from about \$5.9 million to \$6.37 million.

[03:27:55] Prior to the pandemic, the meals tax behaved like a stable, gradual growing revenue stream tied to normal economic activity. This chart clearly shows the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality industry. In 2020, a decline of 13.7% when restaurants were closed or restricted.

[03:28:16] Even with the unprecedented restrictions on dining, the decline was temporary and the revenue base remained largely intact. In 2021, it essentially stabilized. This is where the story becomes particularly notable. growth in 2022 of 24 percent followed by 2023 of 19 percent and then in 24 and 25 a little bit of over 4 percent annual growth per year. Over the past four years meals tax revenues have increased

[03:28:50] from roughly 5.5 million to a little over 9.35 million representing a 70 percent growth during that time frame. Next slide. This slide again shows the revenue but a little different barometer of what that revenue generates in a one penny equivalent or what it translates to. So in 2025 the meals tax equated to about 11.2 cents on the real estate tax rate. This means that 9.3 million

[03:29:25] dollars paid largely by diners and visitors not just property owners without meals tax revenue property taxes need to be adjusted by 11 cents or higher to generate the same funding. Each penny matters for budget planning, and the slide shows that the key equivalencies, so one cent currently in the 2026 calendar year FY27 planning, one cent equals to just under \$884,000. The proposed a half a percent meals tax would generate about 1.2, almost 1.3 million dollars in additional

[03:30:01] revenue. This means the small adjustment generates large revenue impacts. Small policy changes can have meaningful impacts. Just a half a percent on the meals tax again generates almost \$1.3

million annually. As was noted in the manager's presentation, that extra half a percent on the meals tax equates to about 25 cents extra on a \$50 dining bill. Next slide. Over the last decade, meals tax revenue has generated more than 68 million dollars to support core city services and investments such as public

[03:30:38] safety parks infrastructure and schools while the meals tax supports city services our restaurants also benefit through a collection rebate program that has provided more than two million dollars back to the food and beverage establishments during the same time period over the past decade fairfax has added 59 new restaurants and food establishments reflecting continued investment in our local dining economy. Data shows steady expansion, and the city has added about 70 restaurants each year, representing about a 3% annual growth in the food and beverage sector.

[03:31:18] And then last slide. This slide is just a comparison of the city of Alexandria, who has a 5% meals tax. They've had it for over 20 years as well. And the city of Fairfax at 4% year-over-year change. So over the past nine years that are demonstrated on this chart, Alexandria has a higher meals tax rate of 5%, yet still experienced strong revenue growth.

[03:31:41] Our neighboring jurisdiction with a higher meals tax rate has experienced strong restaurant revenue growth, showing that a modestly higher rate does not appear to deter dining activity. In several key years, specifically 2019, they increased 31.3% versus our 6.8%.

[03:32:01] In 2022, Alexandria increased almost 32% versus our 24%. In 21, they increased 11% versus our zero. Alexandria's meals tax revenues grew substantially faster than ours, despite having the higher tax rate.

[03:32:18] This slide supports data-driven decision-making that this comparison allows us to ground our discussion in data from a neighboring city, rather than assumptions about how diners respond to meals tax. With that, happy to answer any questions. Thank you. Council Member Amos. Thank you for the presentation. I don't have much to say. The only thing that I'll bring up is that we're also considering a 1% sales tax that's working its way through the state. We'll have a conversation about that, but just worth revisiting for the FY28 budget once, if, and when that's in place. Thank you.

[03:32:55] Council member hall. Thank you. That's actually a question. I wanted to ask the if the 1% sales tax goes through and we're allowed to put it and it passes here that would also apply to meals as well. Correct? Correct. Under the current bill structure. Yes. Okay. Um, the good thing about meals tax is we can always add it and take it away if we need to. Um, I am typically not a proponent of it, but I do have to say that trying to make that up in real estate tax dollars is an

[03:33:30] awful lot of money. The only other comparison I think I would have liked to have seen, which I feel like you gave us everything except for, I'm wondering what the cost of food has done to those graphs. Is it because people are dining out more, or is it because the cost of food has gone up exponentially, which is thereby generating additional revenue for us without it being actual extra demand for restaurants? I think that's a great question. I can go back and look at I think last week's presentation where we actually had inflationary information over the

[03:34:06] course of the past 25 years, if I'm not mistaken, and try to recalculate that out. I know specifically in the last three or four years there was high inflation that probably impacted and drove some of these numbers going up, but we could definitely try to calculate that out. Yeah, as the daughter of a baker, I was always aware of the cost of flour. You know, it was always a huge bill my data to pay, and it was

COD. So well aware of those rising food costs. Are there any other industries that the General Assembly allows us to assess a tax on? Like where specifically did

[03:34:42] the meals tax come from in comparison to others? That is a great question. I don't know the answer off the top of my head. I'm sure there are a lot of other industries. We have the C&I tax, the commercial and industrial tax, the TOT tax, the transit occupancy tax, the tobacco tax.

[03:34:59] There's a whole bunch of taxes that we could try to figure out. Unfortunately, as was stated in earlier presentations, we are a Dillon Rule state, so we have to go ask mom and dad for permission, which we are in the process of doing right now, at least for the transit occupancy tax as well.

[03:35:15] Right. And are we, I know I had asked questions about the B poll before, and thank you, Paige Johnson, for the chart and information that you sent. Are we at the maximum for the tobacco tax, or is that something that we have flexibility to go up on? I don't think that one was covered. I believe we are at the maximum.

[03:35:35] Okay. There was a change a number of years ago that prevented localities from changing their rates, but I'm not an expert. I'm not 100% sure. But we are, I think, at the highest we can be. Okay. And I know that the conversation that was had previously with the Commissioner of the Revenue was that some of these rates haven't been changed in 30 years.

[03:35:56] I think we would all love to say that our real estate taxes have not gone up in 30 years, But we know that that is certainly not true. So I find that we are, like every other locality in Virginia, extremely dependent upon real estate taxes. And I would love to see an opportunity for us to maybe increase some other areas a little bit that would lessen or reduce or at least keep constant the burden that is on our residents.

[03:36:25] So if there are other areas that we could jump up a little smidge, like some of the ones that Paige sent us, I think that that would be a conversation to be had. I understand that we maybe want to be less than we are than the county or a neighboring jurisdiction, but we can't be less than everything and everywhere all the time.

[03:36:48] So I just think real estate taxes are a huge burden for people, and they're used to cover everything. So thank you. Council Member Hardy-Chandler? I just want to express my very quick appreciation for the data so that we can make data-informed decisions, particularly with the chart over, what is it, 25 years or so.

[03:37:13] And that's just really helpful to put maybe some assumptions that might be made in context. So I appreciate the work that went into providing us the data to make data-informed decisions. Thank you. So in talking about different taxes, the cigarette tax, people, it's a declining number of people who smoke.

[03:37:34] And, you know, once we prohibited smoking in restaurants, there was a precipitous decline. Gas tax, same thing. I mean, the gas tax, we depended on that in the Commonwealth of Virginia. But, you know, people are getting electric vehicles or they're getting hybrids.

[03:37:49] And so suddenly the revenue and gas taxes has declined. And so it's kind of a moving target. Even with the TOT, the Transcend Occupancy Tax, we don't have that many hotels. But that means as we build hotels, the potential for that to, the revenue to increase gets bigger.

[03:38:06] But it is, you know, people's consumption habits and what we're taxing is sort of a moving target. But we have, we can see the growth in the restaurant industry here. That is, we have a healthy restaurant industry here, and people are eating out. And it's not necessarily our residents.

[03:38:22] It is people coming from all over because we have an enormous number of ethnic restaurants here which draw people in from not just the region but from out of state. And so we have to think about that too. We can't parse how much of the meals tax is people from outside the city.

[03:38:41] But I think it's significant because we have a large array of very specific kinds of cuisines that people are coming into the city for. One of the things we don't have dedicated revenue for right now is tourism. And I just had this conversation today with Alex over at Okanami Grill about Restaurant Week.

[03:38:59] I said, you know, it's not about promoting restaurants. It's not about Restaurant Week. It's about tourism. And we are just starting our effort in tourism, and we don't have a dedicated funding source for tourism. But tourism is one of the things that underpins marketing our restaurants as one of the economic pillars of the city.

[03:39:18] All of this is very interrelated. But I think our restaurant industry is incredibly healthy because of the mix of very unique establishments you cannot find in other towns and other cities. And so we have to make the assumption, since we can't, how much of that tax is being paid for by non-residents.

[03:39:41] And it's significant. So just to put that out there for us to think about, the 1% sales tax is for something very specific. Like, we can't use that for anything else. It has to be for this thing. but some of these other things that we want to do affordable housing dedicated funding stream tourism dedicated funding stream you know all of this money has to come from somewhere that's not the residential real estate tax so i think we do have to be expansive in our thinking and understand that you know some of the things we do may not have an immediate payoff but over the long term they may have a bigger payoff as we start to track it other comments questions on the meals tax

[03:40:21] councilmember Bates I'm good I think you pretty much said what I was thinking about saying anything else anybody else okay so what are you looking for from us mr. Alexander at this point at this point it was simply a discussion on okay and then we have about three slides for the next one okay great so we are all gonna cogitate on this for we'll circle back around a lot of cogitation all

[03:40:50] right it's good evening mayor council last week during our discussion that came up to talk about the city expenses versus the real estate growth and in the assessment growth. So we pulled together a couple slides. So over the past 15 years, the cost of school tuition has consistently grown faster than the city's primary revenue driver real estate

[03:41:30] assessments and faster than other operating expenses. The structural gap is an important factor driving long-term budget pressure. On average, school tuition costs have increased 4.4% annually compared with 3.7% for other operating expenses and 3.1% for the real estate assessment growth. While these differences may appear small in a single year, the effect compounds significantly over time. Because tuition costs grow roughly 40% faster than the tax base,

[03:42:04] the 4.4% versus 3.1%, the share of the budget required to fund tuition gradually increases each year. Over a 10 to 15 year period, this creates a widening structural gap where expenditures grow faster than revenue source most relied upon to fund them. As tuition costs rise faster than assessments, a larger portion of new revenue growth must be directed toward covering these increases. This limits the city's

flexibility to fund other priorities such as infrastructure, public safety, services, and capital investments. The chart also shows that tuition growth is not

[03:42:41] only higher on average but more volatile year to year than other expense categories. Certain years show spikes as well above the long-term average, which can create sudden budget pressure and make fiscal planning more difficult. In contrast, most of the other operating expenses have grown at a more moderate and predictable rate. Their 3.7% average growth is closer to the pace of revenue growth and therefore more manageable with the existing budget structure. Since real estate assessments are the primary driver of local revenue growth. The fact that they have grown

[03:43:15] only 3.1% on average means that tuition increases are constantly outpacing the city's ability to generate revenue organically. The data shows a clear long-term pattern. Tuition costs are growing faster than both the city's tax base and other operating expenses. Even modest differences in annual growth rates compound over time and are a key driver to the city's structural budget challenges. And this is just looking at percentages of the total expense versus the real estate.

[03:43:50] So over the past 15 years, the city's total general fund expenses have grown at a rate that is generally aligned with growth in real estate assessments, which are the city's primary revenue source. This indicates that overall spending growth has remained relatively disciplined and largely consistent with the growth of the tax base. On average, general fund expenses increased 3.7% annually compared with the 3.1% average growth in real estate assessments. While expenses have grown slightly faster than assessments, the difference is modest and shows that the city has generally maintained spending growth close to the pace of revenue growth. The relatively small gap

[03:44:30] between expense growth and assessment growth demonstrates ongoing efforts to manage expenditures responsibly and align budget growth with available revenue capacity. This suggests that the city has been largely successful in avoiding structural spending increases that significantly outpace its primary revenue stream. Because expenses have grown slightly faster than assessment growth, the city has relied on additional revenue sources, meals, personal property, interest, income, etc., to support operational needs while maintaining service levels. The chart also illustrates that

[03:45:05] both expense growth and assessment growth fluctuate from year to year. Economic conditions, Reassessment cycles, inflation, and operational needs can cause temporary spikes or dips in both revenue and spending growth. Certain years show more pronounced changes. For example, the spike in total expenses in fiscal year 22 compared with a more moderate increase in assessment growth.

[03:45:28] These variations often reflect specific one-time costs, economic shifts, or external funding changes rather than sustained structural trend. In the past few years, real estate assessments have shown stronger increases, for example, around 7 to 8 percent growth in fiscal year 23, which temporarily improves the city revenue capacity and helps support operational funding. While overall city expenses track relatively closely with assessment growth, it is important to recognize that the individual cost components behave differently. As shown in the previous slide,

[03:46:04] certain expenditures, particularly the school tuition, has grown significantly faster than both assessments and overall operating expenses. As previously mentioned, over the same time period, school tuition has increased 4.4% on average, with particularly large increases of 10.3% in fiscal year 24 and 12.9% in fiscal year 25. These increases significantly exceed both the long-term expense trend and the

growth of the tax base. The data shows that the city has generally maintained responsible overall spending growth relative to its tax base, but certain major

[03:46:40] cost categories notably the school tuition are growing faster and will continue to be a key factor in long-term fiscal planning and this is just going over the remaining meetings that we have as part of the budget cycle where we last week we met and discussed with the school board tonight you approved the advertised tax rate and then we just had our discussion on the mails tax

[03:47:15] And on the March 24th, we'll have a second public hearing for budget comments. And then, again, we'll be reviewing the CIP program, Stormwater Utility Fund, and the Wastewater Fund. April 7th, we have it slated that if we need the discussion for general funds or other, and we're available.

[03:47:36] April 14th is another public hearing, again, for general budget comments. And then whatever topics you would like to discuss at the work session. April 28th, there's five public hearings that evening, all on tax rates, the real estate tax, C&I tax, wastewater rate, stormwater utility rate, Old Town Service District, and meals tax.

[03:48:01] And then we'll have a final work session and go over any draft of the changes that were presented and hopefully come to an idea of where we'll stand for the May 5th final night for budget adoption.

[03:48:17] So you will know April 11th is not on this list. I know that is on your city council calendar. That was not part of the adopted budget that was calendar that was approved back in November as part of the budget package.

[03:48:35] And there's also some additional events happening that morning that council is being requested to be at for the Ashby Pond ribbon cutting and the fishing rodeo. Okay, thank you for that.

[03:48:50] Councilman Reims so while I have many questions I'm only gonna ask three and the rest will just come by email like all my other ones have been The and this first question if it can't be tonight because it's maybe more directed towards director Summers It's concerning the wastewater fund and specifically the increases associated with the gnomon coal plant I'm just curious on what that looks like after After fiscal year 2031, it's cited in the budget that that's really between now and that period is when we have the heaviest expense.

[03:49:23] Is this expecting to even out or taper off following that, or is it still going to be gradual increases following from other projects? Sure. So I can give you a preview to the March 24th discussion where we're going to go into more detail on that. Unfortunately, the projections that we're receiving from Fairfax Water specifically associated to the Nomen Coal Capital Improvement looking in excess of \$100 million over the next 10 years.

[03:49:52] That does not include the contractual obligation, the contract that we have to just maintain operating services as well. That continues to sort of put a lot of pressure on the Wastewater Fund as well. On the March 24th discussion, you're going to see sort of a projection pro forma for the next five years and then probably the need to go ahead and issue some debt to pay some of those CIP, but we can definitely have more discussion on the 24th.

[03:50:20] So it's unlikely we'll reach rate stabilization anytime soon. Yeah, we'll talk about the 24th. That's cool. And this is why I don't like utility monopolies, but anyway. One thing that I saw that was in the budget

package was that we also had a spike last year in tax relief specifically for elderly and disabled veterans.

[03:50:40] It was about 32%. I'm just wondering, that's good on us for education. Are we expecting another spike, or do we think that will taper off a bit as well? So, Director Johnston, so there was about a 33% increase in disabled vets applying for relief since the budget was approved last year.

[03:51:03] And so that's the biggest spike. I will let real estate talk about that. For tax relief, last year we reviewed if we were on par with other jurisdictions. And so we increased the income limits.

[03:51:22] I believe we also increased the net worth that's allowable. So we had a lot of participants. And then we added another 25%. So we have 25% increments now. So there's a 75% versus going from 50 to 100.

[03:51:40] So that did bring a lot of new participants into the program. We're not really expecting an increase in the number of participants, but we've inflated it for what assessed values have done year over year on the residential side.

[03:51:58] If I could just add, so very specifically on the veterans, this is disabled veterans who are 100% disabled who live within the city, who could obtain a 100% deduction on their real estate.

[03:52:16] This is a state mandate. The state does not reimburse any locality for this. So even though it is this amount for the city of Fairfax, it is an even larger burden for localities that have a higher number of veterans, such as Norfolk, Virginia Beach, those areas where they have bases there.

[03:52:36] But again, I think talking to the commissioner of the revenue, trying to have legislation to have the Richmond sort of reimburse localities on this mandate would be something that we are continuing to pursue as well. I look forward to that alleged package, but I think it's also a testament to good outreach, so right on, good on us, but just definitely want to monitor that as we move forward as well.

[03:53:01] And the last thing is just a comment while we're looking at different priorities, you know, for example, climate energy manager and the unfunded FTE list as a reference point. We've had discussions last year, I'm sure it'll come up again this year, on what cost recovery opportunities look like, and part of the discussion with the climate energy manager was that component of it.

[03:53:22] At the same time, there's other positions that were on that unfunded list or maybe even other ideas that we're not discussing as of yet. For example, and I think we talked about this last year, but I bring it up this year as a reference point, with Parks and Recreation, that grant sponsorships and volunteer manager position, that's a full-time FTE, but their entire job is to get money for the city.

[03:53:43] And so if we're talking about cost recovery and where we can recoup some of our dollars where the bang might be worth the buck, that's something that we need to discuss as a group. But I'll email the rest. Thank you. Council Member Hall. Bless you. Thank you. This might be a couple questions for Mr. Summers, but the stormwater and wastewater, are there, if we could do a crystal ball and go back in time 15, 20 years, are there things that we would have done differently with developers or buildings and things like that?

[03:54:18] And if there are, have we made those changes so that what we're expecting from redevelopment in the future now is taking into account all of this excess rainwater and impervious surfaces? Like, are we balancing that out now?

[03:54:33] I'm just wondering, you know, the city, if you look through our CIP, I mean, there's so much that the city is covering with regard to infrastructure. Is that just normal because it's 60 years old, or is that knowing more now we should have done better before, or both?

[03:54:53] I think it's a combination of a couple of things, and not to necessarily speak for Director Summers, but having conversations with him and hearing him say this is, one, a lot of this is legal mandates. So you have TDML, MS4, DEQ requirements that have been imposed over the last 10 or 15 years, Chesapeake Preservation Act, things of those nature that we now need to comply with that were not present 10, 15 years ago.

[03:55:24] And then in conjunction to that is just aging infrastructure that has not been either replaced or upgraded in the last 40 to 60 years that have now sort of come due. I think Council Member Peterson last week made some comment of either five or six water main breaks on his road.

[03:55:45] A lot of that is just aging infrastructure, not just within the city, but within the area as well. It's sort of that generational once-in-a-lifetime that the bill is coming due, and this is sort of where we are right now, unfortunately. Okay, thank you. The gas-to-LED streetlight conversion, It seems like that's gone up, but it seems like it's now been broken out a little bit more over the next three years.

[03:56:11] I think it was 1.5 this year and like 600 next year and the year after. I understand that we're dependent upon Dominion to do that work or to identify where the gas lines are, right? Isn't there like some digging that needs to be done, and then once they disconnect it, then we can go in and do the light conversion?

[03:56:31] I'm totally speaking to the wrong person, probably. That is my understanding. I don't recall the numbers changing from year to year. I think those have been stagnant, but I can verify that for you. Okay, yeah, and I just, what I recall last year was David was saying that it's possible that we could be able to get all of that done in the next fiscal year as opposed to having it lag out over two more years, and my understanding is that if that was able to happen, then it wouldn't be any more money than it was going to be, but I think it would actually be less money.

[03:57:06] So just making a clarification on that, I guess. We'll double check. Okay. And this is a question that a resident raised, but why do apartment complexes not pay the transit tax? I think that's an excellent question.

[03:57:23] They're there for greater than 30 days. It's state code. Of course it is. If it is zoned or used for residential, we cannot add the tax to it. Okay. That really seems counterintuitive when we're talking about trying to put things within a half a mile of a metro or a bus line. I think that's a note to go to our package next year, things that should be considered by Richmond. We can certainly add it. This question has been asked before, and I've brought it forward to the legislative liaisons. It is something that

[03:58:02] has been discussed down at enrichment um and there's a heavy realtor lobbyist group that is why it is set up the way it is good old lobbyists okay and then i said one other question if you go back to slide three that includes the tuition costs baked in there right okay did you run it without by chance um i did not i have the raw numbers i'm just curious how i could definitely get it to you if you want to put it in there I would just be curious it you know because

[03:58:39] we we do hear that we're overspending you know we are not living within our means we're not we're overtaxing but we're not paying people we're not doing this we're not doing that and I am just curious

if we completely took out the tuition yeah where where that really would put us and that's kind of where I on this first chart what I tried to show is you know you can see on the bottom that just tuition and then what the percentage increase of that. And overall, we're steadily growing in expenses overall, but you can see the other non-tuition expenses growing at a much

[03:59:14] smaller pace or even being flat or negative. I do have all that data I can add to that graph. And I can put that in the staff report or the budget memo. If it won't take you an extraordinary amount of time, I would appreciate it. But this is really helpful. I mean, I think it really does key in on where our costs are increasing, which I think we all know, but it's showing it in a different way that I think is really, really helpful and indicative of kind of what we can expect. And I think until we can get the county to pull back in some of their spending or FCPS, I think it's really a concern. And then I had one other question for our city manager.

[03:59:54] The gentleman that spoke up about the policing during our public hearing, he shared some concerning numbers, that 65% of the department is considering leaving, and that 64% do not recommend working here. I'm curious when those numbers came from, if they were pre-new police chief, or if they were more recent than that. And I'm also just curious if we have any other information, or if you were aware of this, or if this has been discussed at all. It just seemed...

[04:00:28] No, we'll follow up with the police chief about it. Okay. It's, you know, it's generated by an association. Yeah. So you have to take that into context. Okay. And we certainly will discuss that further with him. Okay. And I have to be quite honest.

[04:00:43] I mean, if we could afford to pay brand new people \$90,000 a year, that would be great. But I don't think that that's going to happen in most areas. So I would, you know, I think it's a great question, you know, in terms of pay.

[04:00:59] I would suggest that we're going to probably Commonwealth wide see some significant shifts with collective bargaining. Yeah. Um, and so, you know, when it comes to our situation, we're going to have to be very careful that our comparators are true comparators as we look at, at, uh, classifications, compensation.

[04:01:19] Yeah. And actually that brings up two things. One, correct me if I'm wrong. Do we, or tell me if I'm right, but do we have to create an ordinance in order to allow collective bargaining in virginia currently currently we would okay so if it's if it changes in the legislation then all it would take would be for a unit to petition and get get enough votes in essence to establish that relationship with the jurisdiction okay and so it's no longer a choice by the local jurisdiction would be required okay and then the other thing that i just wanted to state publicly i know we

[04:01:59] talked about this in our very, very early kind of one-on-one budget meetings, but my company gives what's called a total compensation statement that shows how much your company, or in this case the city, pays for your benefits, for your health care, for your this, for your that. So, you know, if your salary is X, but you really make all this extra money, especially when it comes to the retirements here, I think those are really, really critical things for our staff to be seeing on an annual basis. I just think it really gives another picture to people. And I think it's just information, right? And I think as a result of the work that we're going to be doing around

[04:02:39] compensation, you know, you have to take in that total picture as you look at that. And if we get into comparators, we'll definitely have to include that information. Yeah, for sure. Especially because I don't know how much our health insurance rates went up, but in some companies, like back with my company one year it literally doubled and so the cost of my family doubled you know pre-obamacare it was like six hundred dollars a year to to do my family now it's like twenty four hundred dollars i'm sorry a month now it's like twenty four twenty eight hundred dollars a month that my company pays for my family so it's a huge huge number that i don't see every month but it's

[04:03:14] there right so okay thank you council member peterson i'm not sure whether this is in the I THINK IT'S A CARRY OVER FROM AN EARLIER CONVERSATION THAT INVOLVED A PLAN, A REQUEST, A PROPOSAL TO MOVE FORWARD WITHIN THE SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM WITH THE UTILITY DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, A DATABASE AND A TOOL THAT WOULD ENABLE SAVINGS WITHIN THE CITY'S FOOTPRINT AND THEN POTENTIALLY EVEN BEYOND THAT.

[04:03:52] it is that in and one of the reasons I ask is I as I recall the cost of its implementation was not the issue because existing funds could be used for that but it has the potential not guaranteed but the potential for saving city expenditures on energy for something like up to a hundred thousand does that ring a bell and do we know where that stands when you want to go ahead and answer that I believe and I will clarify this with Stephanie is that as you stated um council member peterson there is funding to get the software um i've been asking for what

[04:04:31] the yearly amount would be that if it was to be added um and i'm not sure if she had that information available okay well that'd be great to follow up i mean we've talked about the energy cost issue earlier so it's an important thing just a general question as we move forward with the budget i'm operating on the assumption that as we move forward if for whatever we reason we believe that we need to identify some additional revenue options that the

[04:05:08] city manager would be prepared to come forward with some potential options and recommendations by which that might happen I think it's it's true on on both revenue and expenditures so if you know if there's something that we need to pivot on. As we said before, there are some other things that we're not quite aware of yet from a Commonwealth perspective that may come forward. So certainly, you know, I think that's part of the ongoing process is to evaluate both revenues and expenditures as we move forward. Great. Thanks.

[04:05:42] Questions or comments from anyone else on this? All right, then. I am going to reconvene the regular meeting and we will move on to future meeting topics all right i'm ready to go clerks like just go i'm not even going to recognize you okay um just very quickly uh we've covered a lot of this content based on the budget process which occupies much of our agenda of note we're

[04:06:17] bringing back to you the options for construction management design build on the 24th so again those are just creating options those aren't requiring us to take a particular tact as it relates to that process the noise ordinance will come back again we've walked through that already another public hearing for the budget as our assistant city manager CFO mentioned we will be talking capital improvement stormwater and wastewater of note on the 24th also talk about mayor council

[04:06:50] compensation during a work session on the seventh discussion on more general fund questions uh and responses at that time we'll have a discussion on city services and support for older

adults we will have a discussion on uh we're calling translation services really language access options for council meetings on the 7th and so we'll bring that to you as you look at the 14th

[04:07:24] a lot on consent related to the budget of note another public hearing and then um another work session that night and that takes us through the 14th be happy to answer questions up to that point or beyond related to future items council member amos i have a question and then a recommendation for an addition for the question regarding the discussion update on city services and support for older adults and this might be directed towards my colleague i'm wondering are is the

[04:08:00] plan to invite the village as well like to the meeting or would this be is this was the intent supposed to be joint i wasn't entirely sure what the direction was there for that one when it comes to the village i see council member hardy channel oh my thought was just that the staff member would be presenting that because she is staffed to the village and other human services but if she brings support i welcome that as well yeah that's that's exactly correct um leslie will be here with um

[04:08:34] jason the village coordinator and possibly crt team as well but not the village group excellent thank you and then uh my request for an addition uh so in my day job i ended up having a meeting briefly with uh tom fleetwood from the fairfax county redevelopment housing authority fcrha and we were talking about development stuff and a project i'm working on the county and then you know of course council stuff trickles in because everywhere we go council stuff trickles in uh

[04:09:03] And one of the things that he, we had a robust conversation regarding, you know, their experience with housing metrics and data and what's going on there, their growth rate, they're forming, they formed a whole task force recently.

[04:09:19] I think the report came out either last month or supposed to come out relatively soon on reevaluating their housing priorities. One of the recommendations that he had, we talked about Beacon's Landing because the county chimed in on that, too, was FCRHA and Director Fleetwood come do a work session with council on just not just housing, but the relationship and partnership with the city.

[04:09:41] for example they operate our adu ordinance so not adu but um well yeah yeah i'm tripping uh so coordinating a work session through jamie with fcrha to bring director fleetwood here to chat with us about county city relationships and all that fun stuff and it does not need to be pre-budget let me clarify that that's a really good clarification i don't have any more information

[04:10:19] my intent would be if there's interest to have jamie coordinate that with director fleetwood and fcrha it's not something that i came up with so yes miss it i had a conversation with jamie about that this afternoon and um it would be good if she could guide that process if the council wants to have them come before her what we talked about was maybe there's an opportunity for that group to come and speak with HCAB first, and then Jamie can bring forward a more complete

[04:10:55] presentation, maybe with recommendations, I don't know, but something to feel that out before it comes to council. I think that's a really good collaborative approach is to have Mr. Fleetwood address HCAB, first of all, because he runs our housing programs here, and then for that discussion to kind of set an agenda for what the presentation might be to the council because, as Mr. Fleetwood expressed to you, he thinks there's more opportunities for us to work together, and if he thinks there's more opportunities to work together,

[04:11:33] then it would kind of be in our best interest to explore what those might be. So it sounds like this has got some consensus. I see a lot of head nodding about adding this sort of in the iteration that you just presented. All right.

[04:11:50] Anyone else things, additions? councilmember peterson april 28th the first item on consent is awarding a construction contract for blenheim boulevard it just brings a bell for me that if it's possible it would be nice for our community to get a bit of an update on the blenheim boulevard project and what's going to be happening and what is happening etc and whether it's through that item or separate i'm not saying it needs to be long but uh it's my neighborhood and people are asking lots and lots of questions

[04:12:29] yeah and i think you know the clerk will correct me if i'm wrong we talked about moving that off of consent or did that would that was or maybe we didn't okay we talked about moving something off consent in the meeting recently so i'm not sure if that was that one or not oh okay all right Okay.

[04:12:56] Anyway. Well, if you could just look into that and figure out what's possible and what makes sense and is agreeable. So are you thinking that there's some communication that you want to go out about that, or is it something that you want to do in what mechanism in terms of?

[04:13:18] You may. I think it's been a while since our community has received an update about it. I think just a breakdown, a little synopsis of what's been going on, where we're at in the process. I think that should, does that sound? Yeah, I just didn't know whether you wanted us to bring something as a short workshop item.

[04:13:37] Did you want us to, just something we can push out? For me, I just, I think personally, I think our community would just like to hear a little bit of an update. I don't think it needs a big presentation or anything, but just when we pull it out of consent, how you usually do, I think that's perfect. I agree.

[04:13:54] May I ask also just, this is budget process, and could you clarify for everybody, When we go to April 14th, we have a stack of things in consent. We go to public hearing in a work session. On April 28th, we're doing public hearing on a bunch of things.

[04:14:12] On the consent on April 14th, do those items get discussed at all? They can. They're just introductions at that point, but there can always be a discussion on an introduction? Well, just on behalf of everybody who's doing their very best to keep up with what's going on and what's going to happen, It would be good in some simple fashion to explain what is being introduced, why, and what happens with it going forward.

[04:14:45] Sure. And I would just say this is just an administrative process. It's an introduction. There is a public hearing, and then there's actual action on budget adoption night. But we can definitely try to reiterate that administrative process.

[04:15:04] I think it would be helpful. I think people would appreciate knowing what and why and when and what's coming up and how to put that in perspective in terms of trying to track all this and participate. It's a little worrisome sometimes when things go on consent and they don't know what that exactly means.

[04:15:25] Yeah, I think that it's a great question and challenge. Much of this is getting discussed within the context of our work sessions. But there are items like CNI that are probably on here that we've not talked a lot about. so we'll look for a way to try to communicate more clearly about it.

[04:15:46] Thank you. Other questions, comments, additions? I would just ask on, we did bring up the 11th. I know we have some other work sessions that are upcoming. It's not on our calendar. I know we have other things going on. It's a pleasure of the council to schedule that retreat on a Saturday or try to work this within the context of our existing schedule.

[04:16:09] Anybody have a burning desire for a retreat on the 11th? Yeah, it was, it was, it's April listed, listed as a, as a budget retreat. I think it corresponds with a quarterly, but we specifically, I think, titled it as a budget retreat.

[04:16:26] Yeah, some of us specifically asked for that last year. So, um, I feel like maybe give us another week, have another meeting. We could come back on the 24th and get your, your feel for that.

[04:16:43] Okay, we'll circle back around on that then. Anything else on the futures list? Okay, we'll just move on to the manager's report out. The council comments. I don't have anything for this evening mayor. Thank you. Okay. Let's start with councilmember Mcquillen council comments Okay Councilmember Bates no comments. Thank you councilmember Peterson. I just have to tell a quick spring story It's that time of year and if you haven't noticed when you're out walking your dogs or whatever Very high up in the sky are snow geese that have been flying north and they started two or three weeks ago

[04:17:21] they may be done now. They're not like Canada geese that honk. They sound like high-pitched bells. And a lot of people don't even know that they're there, but they're flying over us here in the city all the time. And for those who notice them, they're amazing. There'll be several hundred of them, and they're way up there. And it's just amazing, because they rest Occoquan, Huntley Meadows, what have you. They fly over our city, and they head northwest across Winchester, and then up to the Great Lakes, and they're in Canada within just a few days. So they get up, and they'll fly

[04:17:56] as much as 10,000 feet up there, 50 miles an hour, and they cover 500 miles a day. I mean, it's just amazing. These birds can do it. So they rest up here, and then they take off, and they do a quick shot all the way to Canada. And don't try this on your own, but you can look them up. They have the ability to fly half asleep. They literally shut down half their brain when they fly to conserve, so they can go long distance.

[04:18:23] So anyway, I know this is a little bit offbeat, but sometimes it's worth just paying attention in the springtime at the end of the winter. You'll hear them, you'll see them, and once you do, from that point forward, it's a sound you will never forget.

[04:18:38] And kids particularly love to see them and get out a pair of binoculars and watch them way up there. So just a little springtime celebration to share. Council Member Hardy-Chandler. Lying half asleep, that's adorable. Two things. In addition to Women's History Month, it is also Professional Social Work Month.

[04:19:01] And as a very proud professional social worker, I would like to, first of all, challenge people who haven't talked to social workers, challenge your stereotypes about social workers and what they do. Talk to social workers. They do a wide array of very important things for OUR COMMUNITY. AND I DO BELIEVE THAT SERVING ON CITY COUNCILS, SERVING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SERVING ON COMMISSIONS AND BOARDS IS GREAT GENERALIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE. SO SHOUT OUT TO ALL OF MY SOCIAL WORK COLLEAGUES. AND AS I SAID LAST YEAR, EVERYONE SHOULD BE CELEBRATING THIS

[04:19:39] MONTH BECAUSE WHETHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, YOU'RE BENEFITTING FROM THE WORK OF SOCIAL WORKERS AROUND YOU. SO THAT'S ONE THING. THE OTHER THING IS I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY YESTERDAY TO TALK TO A FEW STAFF MEMBERS ABOUT A PRELIMINARY IDEA FOR THE CITY AT NO COST, AS WE'RE TALKING ABOUT BUDGET, TO HOST A YOUTH SPORTS FORUM.

[04:20:00] I CHECKED IN WITH THE CITY MANAGER ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF THAT. HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO REACH OUT TO COUNCIL MEMBER BATES WHO ALSO EXPRESSED SOME INTEREST. BUT I THINK THAT THERE ARE SOME COMMON GROUND AROUND SOME OF THE STAKEHOLDERS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO YOUTH SPORTS AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE A NEUTRAL CONVERSATION TO FIRST OF ALL IDENTIFY THAT COMMON GROUND AND PERHAPS SET THE FOUNDATION FOR MORE COHESION AND WHAT WE WANT TO LOOK LIKE AS A CITY.

[04:20:31] I WAS THINKING ABOUT THE TWO YOUNG PEOPLE WHO TESTIFIED OR IS IT TESTIFYING? IN THE PUBLIC COMMENT THAT'S MY OTHER LIFE TESTIFYING BUT THE TWO YOUNG PEOPLE WHO MADE PUBLIC COMMENT I DON'T KNOW IF I WOULD BE brave enough to do that, and they did a wonderful job. And I just really think that the council holding space for conversations around sports is a good start, but it also represents some of the things that I think we want to support around youth, period, you know, sports and working

[04:21:06] together and collaboration and teams and those kinds of things. So I want to just introduce that idea i strongly support it i know council member bates supports it and i would love to have further conversations with my other council members about supporting that idea as well those are my two comments council member hall nothing from council member amos nothing thank you uh just two quick things one i just wanted to uh it's hymotherapy prevention week at my church but it's been going on throughout winter and just wanted to say thank you to facets and all the faith-based partners

[04:21:43] who've been sheltering a lot of our guests during this abnormally cold winter. A lot of folks are safe, but, you know, it can be very difficult out there, and a lot of people have struggled. And so greatly appreciate their work on that. And then kind of a combination of Black History Month going into Women's History Month, going to make a book recommendation, pull a page out of your book and go a little offbeat like Councilmember Peterson, too.

[04:22:07] Highly recommend reading The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lox, if you have not already read it, and read about one of the greatest injustices done to an individual and her family in history. And I think it's a good merger between the two.

[04:22:22] If you have not read it, do yourself a favor and do that. I know they have an HBO show, too, but I've only read the book. Well, just pitching off that, there's plaques in Roanoke to Henrietta Lox because she was a Virginian.

[04:22:37] And the story is quite remarkable. It's a wonderful book. And it is a major injustice that was done without consent. But her immortal cells brought us a cure for polio. And her immortal cells brought us so many leaps forward in science.

[04:22:55] It is just a fascinating book on Henry Alex. So I support your recommendation. It's still ongoing. They're still ongoing. I would just like to thank the Commission for Women for the reception for Women's History Month. I thought it was a lovely event. And I would like to wish a happy St. Patrick's Day to all who celebrate next Tuesday since we don't have a meeting.

[04:23:18] And I would just like to wish my oldest child a happy birthday. She turns 40 today, as do the rest of Fairfax High School class of 2004. All of you millennials, happy 40th. And I think that officially means I am no longer middle-aged.

[04:23:36] And so with that, I am now going to adjourn this meeting at 11.23 p.m. on Tuesday.



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