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[00:00:01] Hey, folks, if you could take your seats and we'll get started in just a moment.

[00:00:34] This Economic Initiatives Committee meeting will come to order and we will get started with, first and foremost, asking if anyone had any changes to our meeting summary for the May 12, 2026 meeting. Any changes to our previous meeting summary?

[00:00:51] Okay. The next thing I want to mention is Director and Moderator is really doing, I think, a very nice piece. It's a one-pager. Each of us could take a moment to read that because it's just one page, but it tells us what's going on in the region, and that obviously is critical to all of us.

[00:01:13] So there's always a couple things I like to point out. So our business and economic data dashboard, September 2026. The quick takeaways, this is very well summarized, is unemployment eases and job posting surge. Good news is new layoff notices, however, and elevated federal claims signal continued strain.

[00:01:32] on the federal workforce, so you'll see that in the notes. Our unemployment rate fell, good news. It's much lower, about a percent lower than nationally. Our workforce so continues, our federal workforce continues to have issues. It's up 40% over 2025, but it's also 158% in 2024, the unemployment claims.

[00:01:55] So still lots of issues, and I know we're all real sensitive, particularly to federal employees, because they're a key part of our community and, frankly, are very involved with almost everything we do. We have a couple of Warren notices out that's the early warning notices that are required for large layoffs.

[00:02:13] We, though, are accelerating the number of job openings. It's up 7.4% over a month ago and 40% higher than a year ago, which is also tremendous. Sales tax revenues are up, and it's not just because inflation is continuing to run about 4% in our area.

[00:02:31] It's even beyond those items because inflation is mostly we're seeing that in food and fuel. But hospitality continues to do very, very well, 76% compared to 69% nationally and 72% around the area.

[00:02:50] So we're getting 76% occupancy rate, and others are much lower than that. It's 10% over a year ago. I think that's the core. So take a look and keep that in mind and know that a large part of our success is tied to our economy and allows us to do the amazing things that we can do as a county for so many of our residents.

[00:03:11] With that, I'm going to mention that we really have just one topic, so we should have plenty of time for discussion purposes. And I would highlight that we do and would like to have a lot of discussion. The single focus for today, though, is to make sure that we're looking broadly at a more strategic approach to supporting our economic growth.

[00:03:31] So it's a broad look. It's not a particular focus. It's a broad look. We're looking to better connect our economic development goals and structure to our new implementation tool, which is the Economic Growth Fund. And we're going to be hearing a lot about that in just a minute.

[00:03:49] Also, before we get into specifics, I just want everybody to understand that the focus today, again, is agreeing on our economic development objectives and then the tools that we think that would help us reach those objectives. In other words, the proposed fund that we'll talk about, but even others.

[00:04:06] So, again, keeping us at maybe a 20,000-foot level, try to keep your focus there. Remember, at Carryover, we addressed the structural challenge that we've had for years with our economic opportunity reserve. It was a separate fund, but one at that point in time that counted against our reserves that made it harder for us to use.

[00:04:24] We made that change at carryover, so it now doesn't require an annual replenishment. We get to, frankly, discuss today about how to build on that fund and how we might use it more strategically, maybe more broadly. But keep that in mind. Again, we'll have ample time for discussion.

[00:04:41] please consider, please do not bring specific projects or eligibility or criteria, but just look broadly. What is and how is it that we should look at this? How do we connect our strategic paths to more competitive and prosperous economy? Those are the key things. I want to see if the Chairman McCain wants to add anything to that before I move to Rebecca, Dr. Modric.

[00:05:06] No, I think you've handled it very well, Supervisor Stork. I would just add that um there is a ongoing uh conversation staff to staff with um dei and with the eda um that's not what this is uh that's for another day but um at some point in time the near future will be coming forward with some potential items for better collaboration between dei and the eda um on the work that we do uh and that we need to be doing together um and making sure that you know there's clarity around everyone's roles moving forward and clarity around the singular goal that we have

[00:05:46] in the way of economic development. And so that's coming forward at a later date. It's being worked on right now. I appreciate all the work that the staff is doing, both our leadership with the leadership of the EDA. And so just stand by on that part. More to come, but not the focus of this today. And just want to make sure we put that out there, that that work is ongoing as well.

[00:06:08] Excellent. And we do have an upcoming planned meetings at both the CEO level, our CEO, our opportunity folks. And then we'll come to this group as well following that. So it's coming. It's queued up. There's a lot of work still being done, but they're moving in the right direction.

[00:06:29] So thank you. With that, Director Maudry. Thank you very much. Rebecca Maudry, Director of the Fairfax County Department of Economic Initiatives. I'm joined today by Christina Jackson, our Fairfax County Chief Financial Officer, to focus on some of the fund and funding components, as well as Scott Sizer, the Deputy Director for the Department, for questions.

[00:06:53] So today's presentation focuses on two very much related topics. First, how the county is organizing and evolving our economic development work. and secondly, a new funding tool to help put that work into action.

[00:07:09] I want to take just a step back and talk a little bit about the kind of bigger picture, because this really is a strategic conversation that we're going to have about our positioning and our potential. We are, Fairfax County, without question, a pillar of this regional economy as well as the Commonwealth economy.

[00:07:29] we stand on significant assets that continue to deliver even in a very tumultuous economic time. In fact, Chairman Stork brought up the monthly indicators that I had shared on Friday, and you saw that really month over month, our private sector continues to deliver jobs, which is pretty incredible.

[00:07:50] And that is in part because our competitive advantage has always been our ability to adapt and to create the mission-critical innovations that really propel our entire country moving forward and create a very strong local economy.

[00:08:09] And there's never been a more significant time to lead than right now. We are in an AI economy that is reshaping how and where growth happens and also who benefits. And local governments, our local government has a really significant leadership role to play in that.

[00:08:27] we must continue to evolve not just to keep pace with change but very much to lead the way and we've already done a lot so today I'm going to briefly walk through the direction that this board has already provided to us the enhancements and updates that we've made as well as the proposed path forward and as chairman Stork had mentioned we are not bringing a specific program for you to review today we are not talking about nuts and bolts of criteria the the question really for the board

[00:09:05] today is is this the right approach so starting with kind of the direction that we've already received and where we've gone about a year ago we actually received guidance and really the impetus to work to advance our policies and programs through the chairman's task forces on housing and economic competitiveness. And under the leadership of Deputy County Executive Jennifer Miller, many agencies, as well as outside partners, came together to consider, vet, propose, and now implement dozens of recommendations. I think the total was about

[00:09:42] 66 between the two. 66 between the two. 66 recommendations and improvements that we are now at various stages of really building up and implementing. In addition, Fairfax County, we have a very rich ecosystem of economic development partners, and each brings important expertise in their particular area. But the contributory agency reviews that we were asked to conduct and participate in allowed us to consider ideal alignments and structures among all of those partners, which is another important step forward. And the most recent budget policy

[00:10:21] guidance that we received very clearly instructed us to identify optimum alignments between the Department of Economic Initiatives and the Economic Development Authority to enhance our service, to improve our role, clarification, and our overall set of impacts.

[00:10:39] And as the chairman indicated, we have been having great engagement and alignment in that. We're well on our way to improve coordination. And in fact, our EDA partners participated in reviewing and developing the approach that we're sharing today.

[00:10:57] Our efforts have also included conducting an economic development landscape analysis to determine optimum positioning and priorities for my department, the Department of Economic Initiatives. We developed an action plan to guide our work and establish department structures for execution.

[00:11:18] That is in place now, and we are very excited, in particular, to lift up our real estate and place development functions, in large, because of the support and guidance of the board. So, here we have a pretty simple diagram that kind of lays this out.

[00:11:39] This represents our primary county-funded entities that lead or contribute to our economic development work. As the economic development needs in the county have become more complex, increased coordination among these partners is really important, increasingly important.

[00:12:01] And through our linkages, really our collective impact is greater than the sum of our individual parts. And what you can see here is kind of three functional lanes represented. The core economic development team, which includes the Department of Economic Initiatives in the Economic Development Authority, our countywide tourism and arts partners, which are very significant inputs into creating vibrant places and economic impact and revenue, and local place development, the on-the-ground entities that are focused on place-led economic development

[00:12:34] that is so crucial, especially in a county of our size and complexity. We've made really significant strides in better connecting with and organizing the partners that lead these different components um that are all important to attract visitors create great places through public art and support community activation and program programming and um this is all of course in in the larger structure of our national uh state regional as well as local partners

[00:13:07] um they bring different levels of commitment supports as well as um resources so um to bring these kind of in this enhanced coordination to life, both in the short term and the long term, we very much need a strategic approach, a strategic framework that our activities and programs are built around and meant to execute towards. So our department and the EDA are proposing an economic development framework that we would jointly develop that sets the goals, defines roles, and advances our alignment priorities.

[00:13:47] This framework would come to the board, this board, as well as the EDA Commission for Approval, and be revisited every three years to make sure that it is fresh and current, especially as the economy changes so quickly.

[00:14:03] This framework really should be the backbone of our work, and once that backbone is in place, the natural next step is to then develop the programs to execute on the set of goals that are established. So what we want to talk through next is the fund to help support that.

[00:14:21] And I am now going to turn it over to Christina Jackson to help bring us up all to speed of where we have been and where we are now in terms of our economic development funds. Thanks, Rebecca. Yeah, these next couple of slides are really just a rewind from our caregiver meeting a few weeks ago.

[00:14:42] We recognize that there are different audiences between budget committee and economic initiatives. We thought it might be helpful to go back over these slides. So these were the recommendations that were included in the carryover package that the board ultimately approved when they approved carryover last week. So this grew out of budget guidance, the board wanting a more flexible tool, recognizing that the economic opportunity reserve needed to be replenished.

[00:15:04] So as part of carryover, staff made a recommendation to shift the funds, a majority of the funds, in the Economic Opportunity Reserve, shift them over to increase our revenue stabilization fund. That was 5% of general fund disbursements. As part of the new policy, it would be 6% of general fund disbursements. And just a reminder, for that particular fund, we could not dip into it unless revenue is actually decreased within a current fiscal year, and any use of that fund would also have to be paired with expenditure reduction. So there's very specific policies and guidelines in place before we could utilize that reserve.

[00:15:40] We do plan on updating the county's 10 principles of sound financial management as part of our FY28 budget process. That's when we would normally update those principles so that these new percentages would be codified in the 10 principles as part of the 28 budget process.

[00:15:57] So then recognizing that we've shifted the funds out of the Economic Opportunity Reserve, if we go to the next slide, what staff had proposed as part of carryover was utilizing some of the funds that we had available in our Reserve for Economic Uncertainty. And so as part of carryover, we moved \$15 million, essentially a seed money, into this new EOR.

[00:16:17] And I know there's some plans to rebrand it and rename it, which I think is appropriate. But that would allow the board to have an initial pot of money, which again should have more flexibility. There's not any specific replenishment guidelines. We would anticipate that any replenishment of this reserve would come as part of quarterly reviews with one-time funding.

[00:16:36] And so as a result, we would certainly recommend as kind of a baseline that any use of the money would then also be one time in nature. So, again, we just wanted to include those two slides from the carryover presentation just as a reminder, and especially for folks that may have missed what took place as part of carryover.

[00:16:54] And if I could interrupt CFO Jackson, thank you very much. I just wanted to take a minute because this is, I want to make sure everybody understands and appreciates what we've done, as well as if they have any questions on it. I know that I spent some time talking with them further prior to the

carryover, and one of the things I wanted to make sure I understood is we are now establishing really 10%, and above and beyond whatever we want to do above and beyond that will be a separate fund for economic opportunity fund, if you will.

[00:17:23] And we also have other funds like this that represent, I know, hundreds, 100-plus millions of dollars. And I just wanted to reference that this ties into some of those other funds that typically do get replenished, but they're not a requirement that they be replenished every year.

[00:17:42] Can you just touch on that for just a moment? Yeah. I mean, we have a number of preserves throughout the county. You know, one that comes to mind is our vehicle and apparatus reserve. So, you know, there's not necessarily a set replenishment formula for that. Certainly, we look at when we might be buying new apparatus, buying vehicles.

[00:17:59] We want to make sure that we had enough funding in that reserve. actually think there was a carryover recommendation as part of this year's carryover package to put some additional funding in that reserve too but certainly those reserves as well as this new fund we would anticipate would fluctuate right so it's not like that core 10 percent that's now going to be held in revenue stabilization and managed reserve which we would anticipate to remain at that 10 percent every year as disbursements increase that those funding amounts would increase as well and so those reserves are there in case there really is some type of economic downturn or catastrophic event. So now we know we have our 10% and it's safe.

[00:18:37] I didn't know if any board members had questions on that because this is the perfect time. It's not really a question. I think it's just a reminder. I mean, I appreciate that context because obviously that's what we've always been concerned about and appreciate, you know, the budget guidance and the flexibility of getting us to a point where we can use, you know, some money for economic development projects that don't have some of those requirements. But just for order of magnitude for people watching, I mean, the total core reserves that you just mentioned are, give or take, \$614 million, I believe. Is that right?

[00:19:08] That sounds right. I might have to phone a friend behind me. Yes. Joel hates giving me the thumbs up. And the other reserves that we have are a myriad of different causes, but I believe are in the order of \$152 million. And so I am just putting that out there for context for people watching who might not have numbers in front of us, don't understand this. We're not talking about \$15 million transfer as a huge substantive change. We're talking about this transfer allowing us to have flexibility, use it for economic development projects, but in no way, shape, or form is counting against the core reserve requirements that we have

[00:19:46] that we reiterate with our AAA bond rating and the bond rating agencies that give us the AAA rating on a more than annual basis, but at least on annual basis. And so I just want to make sure that context is out there so people know the order of magnitude of the amount of monies that we're talking about here and what it is we're looking to do. And frankly, the transfer that we're talking about here and the flexibility, hopefully, is money that can be invested in things that sustain and build our economy. They're not some of the other reserve requirements that are necessary, but don't have that replacement requirements like the, I think you mentioned

[00:20:26] and the vehicle replacement, and some of the other ones that are a little bit more discretionary. And so I just want to make sure that's out there for people to understand. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I see Supervisor Alcorn, yes. Yeah, just a question for Ms. Jackson. I can't remember if this is a reserve or it's a different thing, but a related issue with building replacements.

[00:20:48] And is that actually a reserve fund, or how do we do that? So we have a reserve for emergencies. Emergencies. So, yes, so if we have an HVAC system that goes down or a boiler, like, we have a reserve fund for that.

[00:21:03] But for building replacements from the capital side, we don't necessarily have a reserve. But we do plan for that. We have contingencies in place. Yeah, actually, maybe the county executive, yeah. I mean, when you talk in buildings, we do have a CIP. It's a five-year plan.

[00:21:19] I think that's where Supervisor Alcorn was going with that. But when it comes to maintenance, we're working on that as we speak. as you know. We've had a lot of system failures. We've had parts issues. I mean, look, Panino was down from a pinhole of a leak for almost four or five months because we couldn't get parts. But we have, we're starting to put together a portfolio that allows us to deal with our buildings that are 20 years or older that are 70% of our buildings. And I think that's, I think that's where you were leaning to.

[00:21:53] Yeah, yeah. And I'm just curious how the different processes we use. I know they're different, but I think there are some parallels to this as well. Thank you.

[00:22:16] One, I'm very excited to hear about the idea of a strategic framework. We've had some conversations around kind of what, so I'm very excited about this. I think when we're looking for where is our county going, how are we, you know, building our own smart economy you know that where the federal government's a plus we've talked about this and not just an only I think this is great I think obviously if we're going to do something we're going to have to fund it so I understand the importance of a fund totally supportive but I think I'm feeling a little bit like we're jumping to the third step in most of these slides and I would

[00:22:51] and I know you're waiting to get staff are you know for a buy-in for staff to go and develop the framework so i understand that too which is why we might be getting to that but to me the first step is the what and then it's the how and then it's the how much right and the what to me from what i'm reading sounds like a strategic framework and on slide 15 you mentioned aligned with the board slated goals but i didn't see anything about how those board goals we're going to get there and we're not okay so i just want so i'm just talking about this okay i will i will save my comments then. My apologies. I thought it was the whole thing. I'm jumping ahead. I'll just,

[00:23:30] you know, I will wait. Right ahead. That's good. Very good. Uh, anyone else? Supervisor Lask. Yes. Yeah. I'll, I'll say I appreciate that this effort is being coordinated with the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. I think that's really, really important. And for us to be able to have their boards buy in, to be able to move forward, I think is pivotal when necessary. Um, And I also appreciate the point that we're establishing a separate fund to address some of our economic development opportunities.

[00:24:04] And I'll make the point that while I hear that we aren't necessarily replenishing it year after year, I would make the point that we need to be doing something to shore that up over time. Because I think as we spend down that fund, we're going to need to have future dollars to continue supporting the economic development efforts of our county.

[00:24:29] And I just think back to when I worked at the Economic Development Authority and how important it was for us to be able to think about some of the incentives. And I'm not going to go directly into this conversation now, but I think we need to be positioning the county to be more competitive for

some of the deals and the opportunities that we might not have been as competitive for in the past. So I acknowledge that we have state partners who also work with us. And I think

[00:25:05] that's part of the, I think the calculus is how do we work with them and what dollars come to the table to help support closing a particular opportunity. And I know that in the past, We've talked about infrastructure mostly and not saying that's bad, but if there's a deal and a company is going to make a decision about where they might go, I would argue that they're going to say, wait a minute, infrastructure is nice, but are there dollars, are there funds that could be put on the table to help us make the decision to locate here?

[00:25:40] So I think this is pivotal. This is important for us to really commit to because this is how we're going to close opportunities in the future. And this is how we're going to shore up our commercial tax base. There is a return on investment. There is a return on investment for the effort that we are talking about here today.

[00:26:02] And I just wanted to make sure, you know, as a person who's worked in this line of business for a while, I see how important this decision is. So thank you. Supervisor Herdy? I just say ditto on that. I mean, I think it's, I mean, we've never had to do incentives.

[00:26:21] The time has passed. We need to do incentives. But they need to be tied to things which we're going to talk about later. And that's really part of the reason that we have, we set up the suburb fund. It's \$15 million, but it can be, literally it can be whatever we want it to be. And is there any limitations lower or higher than that?

[00:26:40] I mean, that's not been defined, and not only we could define it. Supervisor Stork, Chairman Stork, in this instance. We haven't set up a lot of the framework around it, but Christina Jackson and I have had several conversations.

[00:26:59] There was an opportunity, I believe about six months ago, and I thought she was going to be very unhappy when I came back and told her what I was thinking about with the EOR funds. However, it also got us to a place where we needed to think about what can we do differently to advance the economy in Fairfax County.

[00:27:19] And this is where we are today. We're competitive, but are we really that competitive? We need to be more competitive when we move out and go after corporations and industry and whatever we're doing. This opportunity for us is a start.

[00:27:36] When we have our next CEO meeting, you're going to hear some things that we're doing with the TCA as another start. but the board pushes us to do things differently this is one of those opportunities where i believe that if we do it right we'll reap the benefits and it will come back to us hopefully for every dollar we put in we get seven dollars back i'm still trying to get that math scott thank you mr chairman yeah just uh just for context a few things i mean it wasn't that long ago we didn't even have a dei uh in fairfax county uh wasn't long ago that we had an eda that thought their

[00:28:15] only role was fill office space nothing else and the world has changed and there have been some opportunities that have come up that maybe we could have been more aggressive on but for the fact that there wasn't a revenue source to be able to do that and a framework to be able to do that and frankly there wasn't good enough communication between county DEI and the EDA on some of those they were working on some things we were unaware of we were working on some things they were unaware of. And

that has to stop because there needs to be one team working on economic development in the county. And that's one of the reasons why the conversations are ongoing about how to do that.

[00:28:53] There also needs to be a place where we can very clearly see what our investment is in these areas and where we can be more spry and potentially using public dollars to make private investments happen. We've never done that really in a very direct way in Fairfax County. So we need to be going into this with eyes wide open, but with the cooperative people at the table who are ready to do this. And I will say, as someone who's been sitting here for a long time, this is the first time we've had that opportunity. I'm not pointing fingers at anyone here, but we did not have a robust operation in the county working on specific economic development opportunities like we have

[00:29:31] now. And we absolutely didn't have an EDA that felt like that was in their travel lane. And so there was this big, gaping, missing hole of work that wasn't getting done. Economic development, important part of that is filling office space, but that's not where it ends. And one of the things we saw during COVID was the importance of also having the county work with a lot of, particularly our smaller businesses, to be able to support them as well. And coming up with a unified vision for how we're going to move forward is a part of what this is. But the presentation on the financial piece that we just saw was an action we already took and carry over in part

[00:30:09] because the board felt very strongly that there were opportunities out there that we weren't able to take advantage of. And that action has already been taken. And so it was an important first step. That's why it was in the budget guidance and an important first step to the conversation that we're getting ready to have on some of these deeper elements. But I don't want anyone here watching thinking that we had a system in place that was uprooted. We had a system in place that became very stale without a lot of communication happening between the two entities. And I think everybody in Fairfax County acknowledges that. Our staff has acknowledged that with the work

[00:30:47] they're doing. The EDA leadership has acknowledged that in working with our staff on how we're going to move forward. And that's going to be the type of attitude that's going to be necessary to be able to support future growth in the county thank you mr chairman um see if jackson anything else that you need to add all right thank you i'll turn it back to director modus thank you very much so we'll walk through kind of the rest of this to kind of paint the picture of where we're proposing to go so as um christina jackson pointed out you know the the economic opportunity reserve

[00:31:23] was designed to kind of serve two different purposes both the fiscal reserve and as an economic investment fund. So we are now kind of have the opportunity now with this established fund to really sharpen that criteria so that the capital that is set aside can really move us towards our goals, as you all have kind of just pointed out. And one of the things that we are proposing as part of this is to actually call it the economic growth fund, to just avoid confusion of what reserve is and is not.

[00:31:58] So you'll see that term now throughout this presentation. And we are kind of, our proposal presents two kind of tracks or two paths forward under this new fund. First, larger programs that are designed to meet economic development needs.

[00:32:17] And second, a track that is really individually reviewed investments that are for unique and one-time opportunities. This approach is modeled on structures that have worked. It allows us to move quickly on established programs while ensuring that the board retains approval authority, giving us both, ideally, speed and accountability.

[00:32:44] So I'm going to review these two tracks now. First of all, under the kind of programs track, This proposes to meet the economic development goals that will be set forward in that framework. And those programs, if they require funding, will come before the board for review and approval.

[00:33:04] And those programs will include things like clear objectives, defined milestones, regular reporting, sunset dates, and dollar limits. These programs would be designed to be non-recurring, meaning nothing would continue indefinitely without there would always be evaluation required.

[00:33:24] There would be clear limits on that. And some examples of previous programs that we have developed just like this to meet our larger needs and our set of goals, they have been very successful. And you see them listed here.

[00:33:41] This includes our Rise and Pivot grant programs that help keep small businesses afloat during COVID. Those programs utilize federal dollars. They were approved by the board one time and were operated by staff over months and years. Also, the Fairfax Founders Fund, it's a very detailed program that has several different components that supports economic diversification and competitiveness.

[00:34:06] the board, again, approved this program one time, allowing staff to operate a multi-year program that has directly supported numerous promising startup firms in Fairfax County. Not every opportunity will fit neatly inside an existing program's eligibility criteria. So the second track is designed for those situations. These opportunities would be, we are proposing, they are brought forward by a board member or the county executive.

[00:34:37] That would give the county the ability to move with speed when real opportunities arise and while still maintaining accountability for review. So if we are to follow this track, we will develop and bring forward the criteria and the process to evaluate these unique investments and make recommendations on funding.

[00:35:00] So some examples of what unique investments might include under this track are things like providing a match for an economic development grant or an opportunity that arises, or unlocking private capital for a public-private partnership or real estate opportunity.

[00:35:20] And this slide kind of brings the whole proposed system together into one picture. So briefly, we are proposing a board-approved economic development framework and the goals that are within that framework. If funding is required to meet those goals, there are two tracks to consider the economic growth fund.

[00:35:41] Track one is developing programs approved by the board and administered by staff. And track two would be unique investments that don't fit in an existing program but meet our economic development goals and will be reviewed individually by the board. And on the topic of replenishment, this would be a board consideration made at future budget reviews.

[00:36:05] We anticipate that this would be at a minimum every three years as we update the proposed economic development framework. And replenishment conversations will be guided by the impacts that reported from previous investments made by the fund. So our next steps, if this approach is supported, we will immediately begin developing the economic development framework and set of goals with the EDA. We'll also set the criteria to evaluate evaluate those track two unique investments for the

[00:36:41] economic growth fund and both of those would come back to the board for review and approval before any funding decisions should be made. So, again, our question is pretty simple. Is this the right structure?

[00:36:56] Is this the right approach for Fairfax County? And thank you very much. You're welcome input and questions. If the board doesn't mind, I'm going to start down with Sylvester Bierman, just come this way. Why do you think the Economic Opportunity Reserve wasn't utilized more?

[00:37:16] Do you want to start with that? I thought she was just going to say because of her. I mean, I do think that when it was set up, I mean, they didn't play nicely in the sandbox, right? I mean, that we had to keep it 1%. And I've talked with a few of you that, you know, Phil and I in the budget office didn't, we always felt like we were negative Nellies, that we were kind of the wet blanket because we essentially looked at any allocation from the EOR as an advance on carryover.

[00:37:43] And so in a lot of the circumstances, unless it was some kind of opportunity that time was of the essence, a lot of times those conversations could wait and just be part of our normal budget process and our normal budget review. So I do think that replenishment need was really what kind of mitigated its use.

[00:38:04] Christina, didn't you think it was also around those project-specific things as opposed to economic development type of things as well? We were really looking for economic development, and the projects just didn't fit as well, in my humble opinion. But you weren't negative, Nellie.

[00:38:20] I was negative, Brian, as well, so it's all good. Well, to build on what the county executive and the CFO said, one of the things we're trying to remedy through this approach is having a clear set, what are we driving towards, right?

[00:38:35] What are the clear set of goals? So our criteria is viewed through that lens. The proposals or the projects that were brought forth were varied, and our job was to evaluate the return on investment, and that was very hard to do and didn't always work.

[00:38:53] So that's why, you know, we had a lot of discussions over the years of here's an idea or an approach, but it does not fit in this fund. Does it fit somewhere else? So we're really trying to be, well, strategic now so that things that fit in another fund go there, but what's going to fit here is clear and as measurable as possible.

[00:39:14] So that's all a good answer, and that's exactly the answer I was looking for. I hope that we can learn from the challenges that we had, but I also hope we can take from the rubrics and requirements that were positive.

[00:39:31] So, for instance, trying to get return on investment within 10 years, that may not be the easiest thing to figure out on every project. but setting out goals about return on investment I think are very important to trying to make this fund work better. I believe I'm the last supervisor to benefit from the Economic Opportunity Reserve and that was in September of 2024 when we allocated \$500,000 towards the McLean Project

[00:40:06] for the arts which then resulted in \$6.2 million of private philanthropy coming in to fill space that had sat vacant for six years. I recognize that maybe nine years from it opening, we may not hit that 10-year window, but I think we probably will. And I think that was really good.

[00:40:27] But I also understand that those projects were few and far between and very hard to find. So I appreciate what you've done to try and disentangle this process from the things that made that type of work hard. And I also appreciate something that you said, Director Moundry, Rebecca, sorry, Director Moundry, there will always be evaluation required. You were actually talking about not the projects part, but the impactful programs. But I think it goes to everything that you're doing with this fund. And so I'm very supportive of this effort. Thank you.

[00:41:06] Thank you, Supervisor Beerman and Supervisor Manus. Do you want anything? Okay. Supervisor Lusk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to go to page 13, and I just appreciate that you've acknowledged where there have been previous programs that have been able to generate returns on investment.

[00:41:28] As we think about the success of the programs, are we also thinking about the continuation of those programs as well? So for me, if you have something that works and you can show a defined return on investment, wouldn't we want to continue that program into the future?

[00:41:47] So I hope that that's part of the calculus, that's part of the thinking that we're going to be undertaking as we decide on what things we fund into the future. And then second, I wanted to kind of understand this relationship between, because I appreciate that you've established that there are two goals.

[00:42:09] One is programs, and the second is investments. When we look at the economic development or economic growth fund, I want to call it the economic development growth fund, sorry. That's just my orientation. economic growth fund, do we anticipate sort of a ratio of expenditure between programs and investments, or are we just sort of leaving that open? What's the thought as of right now?

[00:42:41] That is not something that we have proposed here today. As we move forward into kind of our next steps of developing out the framework and then the programs, I mean, that's something really for us all and the board to consider, but today there is no ratio. I mean, we know right now, today, the fund is \$15 million. So what we're proposing is that staff develops framework goals and programs to meet those. It's up to the board to approve those programs and at what level.

[00:43:16] Okay. Again, just was wondering if you had any thoughts about it and understand. And then the other thing I wanted to... On that point, just real quickly, because these are recurring, let me ask it a different way. You envision the \$15 million fund being used for recurring programs.

[00:43:34] I mean, if it's a one-off, obviously, that's a different story. But these are successful recurring programs. And so is the thought from staff that those successful recurring programs would be housed somewhere else in the budget, potentially and not be coming out of the \$15 strategic kind of one-time economic development investment fund.

[00:43:55] Yeah, we've had some discussions about this, that really using this new fund for the pilots, right? And maybe that pilot would be multiple years. So, you know, one-time recurring. Maybe, you know, it's a three-year pilot. But then once the board determined whether or not they wanted to continue that, then we would shift that into baseline funding.

[00:44:12] And I think that's the important thing because, you know, What you don't want to do is drown out the strategic elements of the \$15 million fund. These recurring programs are successful. They stand on their own in terms of metrics. They should be being considered then as part of our annual budget process

for the things that we fund as the county, as opposed to eating away at the \$15 million fund, which I think we're all seeing a little bit differently.

[00:44:40] So I appreciate that question. I appreciate the philosophy on how that's going to be handled in the future, because I do think that's important. This can't be a fund that just funds ongoing programs every year that are good to have, or else you're going to end up at some point with it drained and not have the strategic element of it that you need.

[00:44:58] So I think we need to look at those two things a little bit separately from a budgetary standpoint, maybe not so much from an ROI and staff evaluation standpoint. And I'll say this, I'm certainly open to however the programs get the additional funding.

[00:45:17] I think the point I'm trying to make is that we want to continue those things that are successful and we want to continue them because they're helping address our issues around capital investment and growth of our tax base. And I, just to clarify one point, the funds and the programs that were already in place, those funds remained.

[00:45:38] So it's \$15 million plus, I think it was around \$1 million, that was already allocated. So I think Founders Fund was included in that. So I just want to make sure that we're not losing any momentum. We still have the \$15 million. It's \$15 million plus that little bit that was already allocated out of the fund.

[00:45:54] But those also have a cycle, right? I mean, so Founders Fund, what we approved as a part of the actions that the board took in the past was envisioning being able to support that for a certain period of time, but not indefinitely. So the main question is still the main question, which is regardless of what's left in the funds to implement and support these programs, at some point we probably need to decide to continue to support those as part of our regular budget process and not as a part of the hindrance on the 15th.

[00:46:26] I just didn't want the board thinking that the existing programs were somehow, yeah. Okay, yeah, appreciate that. Thank you. So just to build on that, the Founders Fund is a really good example, because it was actually, we've been provided funding for one more cohort.

[00:46:43] That is going to, by the time we execute that cohort, we're going to have some really good data on the additional impacts. The information you see here is for just the two out of three cohorts, and now in another year, we will have had four. The information that we gain out of that will allow us to understand, was this successful, was this impactful, is this meeting our goals, and would we recommend to continue this?

[00:47:09] That would be a discussion with the board and with the budget team in terms of if we do and how. And then if I could finish my thought on the one-time grant match, and just appreciate the comments that were made by the chairman earlier, but I will differ in the point that in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership is the entity that handles the Commonwealth, what was at the time, Commonwealth Opportunity Fund, which is a fund that provides direct payments to companies when they make decisions to really

[00:47:49] relocate or locate to a particular locality. There was a time when Fairfax was a recipient of many dollars from that fund. There was a significant change in philosophy at the state where they decided not to send as much investment to Fairfax County and they intentionally, intentionally directed dollars to other jurisdictions, and that was what caused some of

[00:48:23] the difficulty that the chairman was raising earlier as it relates to our ability to close on some of those opportunities and to be able to get that investment here in Fairfax County.

[00:48:38] If we want to be a player, if we want to be successful, we've got to be able to put dollars on the table. And this point is one that's going to allow us to be able to do that. And I think this is the differentiator that we've needed over time. And we as a board are now stepping up to provide that mechanism. So I look forward to seeing how we implement this, but I acknowledge that we're going to be working with others. This is a little bit of a sandbox. It's not just Fairfax County.

[00:49:13] It's going to be Fairfax County and the Commonwealth of Virginia and maybe even others, depending on who's at the table, to close and help us win these deals. But I recognize that this is a sea change in terms of Fairfax County because we have never provided dollars of investment into projects.

[00:49:36] We've only provided infrastructure. And as I said earlier, the state decided that infrastructure was not enough. And that's why it became harder for us to close deals, not because of something that the EDA did, not because of something that was changed in their process.

[00:49:56] It's because of something that happened at the Commonwealth of Virginia, just so we're all aware of that and understand that point here around the table. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Supervisor Luskin. I think all the above and all in is where we're trying to go with this because we know that that's the only way we're going to continue to be the economic engine of Virginia.

[00:50:20] We just hope that more people around Virginia recognize that and send a few more dollars our way since we just get 50 cents on the dollar. We'd love to get 60 or 70 or even 80 cents on the dollar. So, Supervisor Palachuk, we're coming up this way. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to all of you.

[00:50:37] But for me, what really stands out is on slide five, enhanced coordination for efficiency and impact. I think that's critical. That's key. We are no longer at a time when we can be in silos, when we can finger point, when we can even point down to the state.

[00:50:52] We have to do a better job coordinating and having those frameworks and understanding we're one Fairfax, right? Which direction are we moving? What's our role? What's EDA's role? What's a smaller group's role? And I love, to me, I turn this into an umbrella, but I love that you've got the wide, right?

[00:51:11] We're huge, right? We're a huge boat, over a million residents, thousands of businesses. And if we, I think we're catching up to having a framework. To me, that's critical. So we understand how our EDA and your office are supporting, like, I would say from the bottom up, right?

[00:51:32] What are we seeing in the community? What are we seeing county-wide? from visit and arts fairfax and then how do we bring that right to the decision makers that have the the purse to be able to support that um i think there are a couple critical things and questions i had that some were asked i think some will come in the next step um number one will be figuring out exactly i think i don't think we fully defined the approach one two and baseline right, because I'm thinking, okay, how does this compare to our HHS grants and pilots and, you know, recurring funding and baseline, right, a place where we've already done this kind of work

[00:52:11] in health and human services. That's for Jimmy. And so what have we learned there in addition to what have others learned in this field? Because I was sitting here before it was mentioned thinking,

okay, pilot, does pilot fit in two? But, you know, is pilot one and two? Is pilot, let's say we don't have a program yet but maybe we want to try a new program a new project that could become a potential program that could potentially become a baseline but you know as we walk through those frameworks and and i think it's going to be iterative right like how do we invest how do

[00:52:48] we make that decision how do we ensure that it works um i know drpt the department of rail and public transit director is uh convening all of her grant recipients now to to really have those conversations what has worked what hasn't in the pilots what what are they doing with those grants so i think having all those criteria and the ability to have those conversations and i guess my my other point is one that has i think come up a little bit and that's as you put together this proposal. Who are we talking to? Who are we listening to? What are we learning from our

[00:53:27] existing businesses that we've brought here or that came on their own, from our local businesses that have received, I know we got to hear a restaurant owner who said that the grants really saved her during the pandemic. How do we understand, you know, from the small and large businesses that are here and the recipients or potential recipients, you know, what has been missing?

[00:53:51] Either, you know, from our offices, from EDA, from chambers, et cetera, where is that gap? Because I do think this is going to help us, but maybe it could get confusing as to whose role is where, right? So that's why I think that framework exists, because we're always cautious of what's the role of government in this versus private sector.

[00:54:12] And then finally, you know, as we develop these programs, continuing to clearly have those metrics, understand there might be multiple outcomes out of this. I think that's what has to be defined, right? Is there just a monetary outcome?

[00:54:30] Is there an equity and monetary outcome? You know, who are we supporting? Are we filling gaps, right? I think we'll learn a lot as we do more of this. But I do think it's - I'm hopeful we'll have a framework.

[00:54:46] I'm not sure it's going to be perfect when you bring it to us, right? And so maybe before we get to the three-year, we're going to have to get some more yearly updates on how it's going to understand. Because three years for the initial phase feels a little bit long to really understand and wrap our minds around how this is going.

[00:55:04] But I think this is absolutely the right approach. Thank you for bringing it to us. And I do think this is the beginning of the tough work of you've started, but building out what exactly do we mean by this framework, the rubrics, and ensuring that investments we make actually make sense.

[00:55:22] Because I know other jurisdictions have invested public funding in projects and have not seen the ROI. So I know we need to make sure that we're learning from failures as well as successes. So thank you. Thank you. Supervisor Rechner. Sizemore Heiser.

[00:55:39] It's okay. It's a lot in words. So I was so excited. I jumped ahead. So I'll sort of start my remarks again. But I do want to start by saying I am very excited. Sometimes I'll jump straight into, hey, here's all my questions. So very excited. I agree with my colleagues. I think this is very needed. I think this is going to be really impactful. And especially in this moment in time with our economy and what's happening in the federal government, I think it's needed more than ever. So much appreciated.

[00:56:04] I will still go back to what I originally said. Before I get into my bigger picture comments, to pick up on what my colleague was talking about, I do love the coordination for efficiency and impact, but I think we also need to look at what exists and what may be missing. For example, when I look at place development, I see Tyson's Community Allowance and Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation.

[00:56:23] Well, there's a lot of the county that isn't embedded in either of those two groups. So I think it's worthwhile looking at what is missing in the groups we're already coordinating, right, to make sure it's covering the whole county. as we develop out this framework. So just on that slide itself, to piggyback on my colleagues' great comments. So I'm going to go back to my original statement. And this may be coming as you develop the framework, right? But I wanted to ask these questions now. I think it's great that we're, have a fund that we're targeting towards growth within a framework. Perfect. I still would want to know, what is this framework? Slide 15, we talked about the board, it's going to be aligned

[00:57:02] to the board develop goals, but I didn't see in here, and maybe it's coming, what's the process for the board to develop those goals? Or are those goals that are already in the strategic plan? Is it separate? I would imagine since we're starting a new framework, the board may want to have a conversation about what the goals are that then you use as part of the work. And I agree with asking our community and stakeholders as well. But I think if it's starting from the framework is coming from the board developed goals or is that piece yeah just a question um sorry that may have been a little confusing so the intent here is the framework will include goals and it

[00:57:39] will all be approved by the board so we're not there's no set of goals we're jumping off from right now we're going to be developing that out and having engagements to establish um collectively those goals so it's going to be more of an individual engagement with the board as you could be okay that yet so that's maybe coming and then i'd love to kind of see as you build it out the what right what's the in this framework what is the vision maybe three year five year 10 year 20 year whatever it is what are we building towards because i think where my head went when

[00:58:15] we had the conversation on the fund which i agree with having i don't want to get to what we're going to be spending the fund on if we don't know what we're building towards and that's the piece I'd love to see what is the vision that we're building toward. It could be a vision. It could be goals. Then the how, what are the pillars that we're going to look to, to develop those goals?

[00:58:34] What are the metrics? What are the reporting points? That's what I love to see, right? So you've got the vision, you've got the goals, you've got the how we're going to get there. And then how much is the fund, right? So to me, that's, and then what is coming out of that fund and how does it relate to those pillars and those goals? That's kind of what I love to see as you're building this out. So we know we're all kind of aligned. So then when we're looking at the collaboration between these groups and everything else, we're aligned in what's the vision we're building towards? What are the intermediate goals we're building towards? And it could be buckets of goals, right? Placemaking. Could be a goal around building a future-focused industry. Could

[00:59:14] be a goal around helping bring more businesses. I don't know. I'm making this up. I will stop because I could talk to you forever about this. I'm very excited about it. But I would love to see as you build up that framework, board engagement on that as well as community and stakeholder engagement on what that what, how, and how much look like. Because my concern when I read this, I'll be honest, when I read impactful programs and individual programs is I was worried that we were skipping the other pieces and

then we would go back to kind of siloed individual as opposed to sort of this framework. So just my two cents. Great work. Excited to see where it goes.

[00:59:50] If I may, I mean, just kind of touch on the how and the process. And I think that goes back to a comment that Supervisor Behrman made earlier. You know, we did have guidelines in place for use of the EOR. And we've had discussions with Rebecca and Scott about going back and revisiting those and trying to pull out kind of those components that were actually positive and then trying to, you know, maybe it's a little bit administratively burdensome, seeing if we can eliminate some of those things that were hindrances to usage of the funds other than the replenishment requirement, certainly.

[01:00:21] So I do think that there's a starting point there. There's a lot that we can build off of. Make one quick comment, if you don't mind. I'm fully in support of you. If we're going to do economic development in the way that takes our county forward, we have to fund it. I'm uncomfortable with the idea of how much we're a fund until I kind of know some of these other answers, right?

[01:00:38] Like what we're building towards. And just in terms of the \$15 million, some of that was just based on the availability of the funds we had at carryover. And certainly the conversation is going to be taking place with the board in terms of kind of where your comfort level is with where you'd like this fund to be. I would just say that this would be helpful to me.

[01:00:53] I'll stop here. Thank you. All good. And we have, and just, this is not being done in a silo. We have so many studies out there that we've done the last couple of years. The work that's being done really in the last, particularly six or nine months with EDA and DEI.

[01:01:10] And so I think you're going to see those elements coming more and more together. But it really will be, I think, through the first half of next year before you can maybe see the whole landscape. And obviously, you're going to be intimately involved with the when, where, why, and all the other elements that go with that.

[01:01:28] So thank you. Suvite Alcorn. Thank you. I'll start with my easiest question first, because I think it's pretty obvious. But the criteria that we're talking about to evaluate the unique projects, those will be one set of criteria across once we get that finalized right.

[01:01:46] So there won't be different criteria for different projects. That's right. We anticipate one set of criteria for that. Okay. Yeah, I thought that was okay. I just want to make sure. And I did want to, you know, we probably do need real measurable criteria when we look at this.

[01:02:09] You know, we're coming at this in Fairfax County from a very, very, very conservative standpoint. I mean, this is something most places have already done. But honestly, I'm glad that we're starting from where we're starting because I think our taxpayers, frankly, appreciate that.

[01:02:26] So I think it probably would be helpful to have criteria that maybe aren't the easiest to meet, in part because I think if we are actually going to use this fund for economic growth, then maybe some of the things, even some of the things, frankly, that we paid for out of the economic opportunity reserve maybe doesn't qualify. And I think we also need to understand that there are different ways that we can pay for things. I mean, we just did the Chantilly

[01:03:03] arts thing at carryover, you know, out of carryover funds. Not everything. I think we need to be careful and think this through because I don't want to have this be basically, frankly, the way that we pay

for stuff because we can't find general fund money for it. And that's going to be the temptation. I'll be honest. I think we all recognize there will be a temptation for us to, we can't figure out any other way to pay for it at some point in time. We can say, oh, well,

[01:03:38] that's sitting there. Let's go do that. And I think we need to be careful about that. And I think one of the ways would be to have real criteria that we can all agree to going in, but also with the understanding that there are other ways that worthy projects, they just might not be directly economic growth projects. And I think we should all be comfortable with that on a case-by-case basis. And, you know, maybe they aren't huge ones, but they might be very important

[01:04:12] on a localized basis. I do want to make sure as well that we really think through the replenishment piece. Because I think, Christina, you might have actually mentioned something about, well, different budget reviews we would be looking at that. And I know the slides say at least once every three years um yeah let's do think about uh this because um i guess let me just ask this question i i guess uh quarterly reviews would be one possible source for replenishment is that the idea yeah and i think the once every three years wasn't necessarily tied to the replenishment

[01:04:52] um okay so it really would be at every quarterly you know if we had balances maybe this is we had a balance after decisions were made after a quarterly review the balance could go into this fund. I think there are several opportunities that we could use. I think that my main recommendation here would be not to set a specific target that we have to make sure that we are always, because then we're going to be right back to where we were before, unless we have like a multi-year replenishment schedule or something along those lines. Yeah, and we don't have any utilization data right now. So because this is a new thing, I mean, I agree with every single word

[01:05:30] that that supervisor alcorn uh just said because there are plenty of ways to fund things in this county um but there's strategic ways uh to do that and and i would look at this as you know when you're looking at replenishing or in a budget cycle for me at least as one person it would be based on utilization rate what is the current balance what is on the horizon and how does that compete with all of the other things that we do in the county because you know this is a set aside fund but should be a very protected strategic fund for the types of economic development

[01:06:05] opportunities that come along once in a rare moment that need financial support in order to happen in Fairfax County. And many of the things that have been funded out of the EOR because this didn't exist wouldn't meet that criteria today. They're good programs. I would suggest you don't fund a single program out of this fund. That if you have programs that are successful, they compete against other things in the budget, and you lose the strategic opportunity, I think, that this fund would present to the county for the instances that come along where there is no other way to maybe

[01:06:43] make something happen or to grow our economy in that area of the county. And so I didn't want to interject, but I think what was just said is really important guidance, and I also believe is where staff was heading with this because none of us know how this fund is going to be used until it's put in place, implemented, and has some time to understand how it's being used.

[01:07:04] And it would be really hard to sit here and try to figure out, you know, what is the right amount of money now? Will be different than what might be the right amount of money next year, two years, or 10 years from now based on the global economy, based on the local economy, on the utilization rate and other things. And so the \$15 million was literally a budgeting maneuver, a technical maneuver to move

existing funding that was sitting in one fund into a fund that we could use for these types of things in the future. And it literally was that balance. So I think as sitting

[01:07:39] here today, whether that's \$1 million or \$50 or \$100 million in future years, I think is what the board will have to be deciding on an annual basis. And hopefully by that time, we'll have some real data to look back on and to understand a little bit better. Yeah, I appreciate that very much.

[01:07:55] And I do also, if quarterly budget reviews are going to be one likely source for this, you know what would be really helpful? Because you're right, you're talking about every other need we have in the county. We're funding a lot of stuff out of our quarterly reviews.

[01:08:13] I mean, you know, we do a lot of IT, you know, we're putting a lot of affordable housing stuff through that. I mean, pedestrian, you know, active transportation, doing a lot. I don't know, and maybe this could be a budget question, but I think it would be helpful for us to see at least the bigger stuff that we're paying for out of quarterly reviews over the last few years so that we can go into this with our eyes open. Because you're right, I think it's, I mean, I'm all for this. I'm all for it. But particularly as we start looking at replenishment, let's do

[01:08:48] that not in a silo let's make sure as a board we understand oh yeah we're using these funds for all these other things and i know the the amount that's available at our quarterly reviews is not going to be the same too it's you know it's gonna we can pull together that budget q a there's definitely certain things that we feel like we have to fund certain third quarter carryover um thank you that'd be very helpful appreciate it thank you sir right i was going to see where you Yeah, I agree with a lot of what's been said.

[01:09:20] If I can, go to slide 11, because this is something that really bothers me, because I'm a CFO. I'm sorry, maybe it's slide 13. It's the three different comparisons. Yeah, 13 awardees generated \$23.5 million in additional revenues, contracts, and additional capital.

[01:09:42] Those are three entirely different things. to add up revenue contracts and additional capital, it doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me. I, you know, the key to this going forward is going to be in the, and then compare it to 30 million in capital raised formation, which is actually pretty incredible. But to, the key is going to be the criteria. And the one that's not up there on any of them is jobs, which I think is something that we ought to track. So I'm just using that kind of as a slide. For me, the key is what is the criteria going in? I mean, it's the goals, the criteria, and then the metrics you're

[01:10:22] tracked on. And I think we really need to look at those. Where are you looking for this criteria and the metrics and the goals? I mean, if you can share kind of what research you're doing and where you're looking. Yeah. Thanks for that. So we've kind of proposed two tracks, right? That if funding is required for special economic development projects that meet an established set of goals that the board will approve, you know, the Economic Growth Fund would be the place that we would look

[01:10:56] to. If we develop a program, and the Fairfax Founders Fund is an example of a program that we developed, and we had specific kind of criteria that, very detailed criteria and processes that were brought to the board for approval. So the criteria would be developed depending on, in this case on the specific program. And it could be, very well be jobs. Has to create a certain number of jobs or capital expenditures or, you know, in our previous UR, it was return on investment by looking at revenue generation back to the county. So I think it depends on the specific

[01:11:35] program because different metrics, you know, will have different, we'll be meeting different goals and different metrics may be required. It's a little bit different from the, you know, the track to these unique investments, which would have one set of criteria that we would evaluate and that would probably have a pretty high threshold. And we noted here things like direct impacts and benefits like jobs, capital expenditure, or revenue. So these are things we're going to be developing based on our experience with the EOR and other programs and looking at peer jurisdictions

[01:12:12] and how their funds are managed and bringing these back as our recommendation to you. And I would hope and think that you're looking at VDEPs because if we're going to want to be matching theirs or, I mean, that's what I was hoping the answer was going to say, VDEP and some of the surrounding, because we don't need to recreate the wheel here, I don't think.

[01:12:32] There are a lot of these programs that are out there. What was I going to say? I think we need to keep looking at doing the infrastructure investment. I still think that when I'm going to look at my EDA colleague or former EDA colleague, I think that's still a key piece to deals many times is the infrastructure investment.

[01:12:56] So I would make sure this isn't instead of or used for infrastructure, but I'm just throwing it out. I don't know whether it needs to be clear in the criteria or not. You know, and when I did my little look at VDEP and the criteria that they're used, which I think is pretty decent, it's tried and true and tested, but they also have, reminding me, they've got a bunch of programs that our residents could be using.

[01:13:25] one that I've used in the past is they incentivize exports, and they will give you, you know, grants of hundreds of thousands of dollars to incentivize, you know, for us, we had to develop the ITAR compliance with the ITAR regulations and a few other things because we're doing military stuff. But I think a part of this program should be making sure our folks are aware of what's available from the state. So I would, I don't know whether we're doing that already, but I would make that a piece of it and and I'd actually go as far as to steal their programs and advertise

[01:14:02] them kind of as ours and then just make the connection and hand them off but if if you're i didn't mean stealing but that's what they that's what they do anyway but anyway it's i i think things like that so i those those are a couple of additional suggestions that i would make because i know i i'm pretty engaged in government and it was like five or six years ago that i fell into the the export grants and i didn't know they existed but i do now but if i didn't know they existed as engaged as i am in the communities i'm engaged in in business and government i i guarantee a lot of

[01:14:41] companies don't and i'm sure there's agricultural ones i know there's so how how do we take those and repackage them so that our residents and our businesses get the maximum from from what the state offers in addition to a little bit and that's why i think we almost want to match the beat up goals a little bit because you double your whammy you get the you get the state and then you get local so anyway that's my two cents i kind of kind of glad we didn't spend the 15

[01:15:15] million but i'm i think the criteria on this really happy we didn't spend the 15 million the the key here is going to be on the the goals criteria and the metrics but i'd make sure jobs is a piece of that. Are you surprised I heard any advice?

[01:15:34] Thank you, sir. I think it's really exciting on slide six that you are going to have this discussion with the EDA. I think clarity and purpose is a really good thing and not redundancies in ensuring that we

hit all the areas we need to hit. So I'm really happy with that.

[01:15:52] And I really appreciated your comments, Rebecca, about we need to review programs because over the years, because you talked about the Founders Fund and all of that. We do need to review what we're doing and make sure it's working, because sometimes things get in the budget and they're there for 20 years and nobody remembers why they first got in.

[01:16:16] So thank you very much for that. I appreciate this work, and I look forward to the results. I think one of the things we talked to actually in the previous meeting, we talked about what the Audit Committee had been doing with the transportation and really a lot of what came out of that.

[01:16:32] But I think that's a value of what we do with our Audit Committee, And I think we definitely can always be doing more. But identifying the contributory fund, that was one of the issues that we talked about. So a lot of ways to do that. And I think that having this as a core jumping off spot, which is really more how do we go forward.

[01:16:51] Again, you will get multiple more conversations about this. Probably the next, and I'll turn to Director Madre, but I think the next major opportunity will be through the CEO meeting because that's what we're looking to do, an even higher level kind of where and how these pieces fit together and then looking for them to frankly engage with us and share with us your thoughts and ideas about what we're trying to create and what we want to do and then looking to bring that on to a follow-on EIC meeting where we go a little bit deeper into that, into all the processes.

[01:17:27] Just to note, what we're looking at is there's a Council for Economic Opportunity meeting in January, where I think that's the timeline for us to kind of connect with the EDA, develop this proposed framework, and really use that public-private forum to gather input from one venue to gather input and direction from some of our private sector leaders.

[01:17:52] And if I can just make one plug really quick, building off of Supervisor Herity's comments. The export program and the VDP programs, there are some great programs, and they are an important partner of ours on the Fairfax core platform.

[01:18:08] So we've been able to connect very closely with the VDP reps that actually are up here in northern Virginia, as well as the state-level folks to help make sure that those sorts of programs, when they have webinars or events or, you know, announcements and ongoing program information is on Fairfax course.

[01:18:28] That is one way that we are now trying to more. It's all about collaboration and alignment as well as promotion and getting the word out on that. Yeah, I'm glad you brought that up because we do partner with them on a lot of things.

[01:18:44] I would just say that over time in Virginia, the state has had this attitude that, you know, Northern Virginia might not need some of these programs as much as other parts of the state and have set up criteria in some places that are very clear to me looking at them that that exists.

[01:19:03] And we are also unpacking that. Secretary of Commerce and I and others have had conversations about this. Victor Hoskins and I and the secretary have had conversations about this, about challenges that have existed in the past with accessing state support.

[01:19:19] And so I do think the point about advertising what the state has is really important. We are doing it, but I think we need to do more of that, especially at a more granular level so that residents of Northern Virginia and Fairfax County know about what those programs are and how to tap into them.

[01:19:37] So that's just a statement. The one question that I have, and this may be a ridiculous way to end this conversation, because I'm not necessarily looking for the most direct answer to this, but I do want us to think about it. So while we're building this framework and while we're working towards this program, there may be opportunities that come up in the meantime, and we don't have very specific criteria for them.

[01:20:05] So if those opportunities come up, we need to be thinking about the mechanism we're gonna use to have those discussions and maybe advance some of those while we're working on ultimately what this program could look like because anyone who's done economic development knows an amazing opportunity could pop out of nowhere tomorrow and so while we're taking the luxury of time to get all of these things in place and get them right one for anyone watching in the private sector we are not pausing any of our activities to draw economic development in any way shape or form into Fairfax County and if an opportunity

[01:20:40] does come up while we're working on this program, we'll be having a mechanism to be able to adjudicate and hopefully support that while these other conversations continue. And so maybe not a question, just a statement. I'm getting nods of agreement over here, but I wouldn't want anyone leaving this meeting thinking that we're pausing economic development, you know, incentives, opportunities, recruitment, while we're working on a framework. We're going to continue to steer this ship while we're rebuilding pieces of it for our economy.

[01:21:15] And to that point, and maybe just I don't know if it's comfortable doing this, but we've had a lot of conversations about where DEI is and EDA and kind of what the big picture is of how we're moving forward.

[01:21:31] I don't know if you could just at least summarize the key elements, the key pieces that are within that framework that will not only have we talked some about that today, but what we'll be talking about in the future. So I know I'm surprising with this, but maybe you could help the board understand how these pieces are going to be fitting together. Currently, we have an MOU that we're moving forward with to articulate who does what and how we're going to play in the sandbox together. As Ms. Madri stated, she's had numerous

[01:22:06] conversations with the EDA and having that cross-pollination is the key. I just want to get back to the chairman's comment. When something unique comes, we're going to have to be spry and fast. And this is the opportunity for us to do that. VDP has a lot of great opportunities. We work with them seamlessly. When the EDA is doing their thing, VDP comes into play. We're looking also for us to be not only the transportation that we offer, infrastructure, but if there's

[01:22:45] a cash incentive as well, we're going to be ready to go. So I think in the next month or so, you'll see the synergy a little bit better, and I think we can answer that question wholeheartedly. But, you know, they have a new executive director.

[01:23:00] I haven't met him yet, but I'm sure at some point we'll get together and we'll figure out how we're all going to play together. Fair enough. All right. Thank you all very much. With that, this meeting is

adjourned



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