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Prince William Board of County Supervisors Meeting — Work Session, Tuesday, March 14, 2023

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- Official meeting video (Prince William County, Granicus): https://pwcgov.granicus.com/player/clip/3268
- Official Board of County Supervisors page (Prince William County): https://www.pwcva.gov/department/board-county-supervisors

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[00:00:02] Good afternoon. It's 2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 14th. We're going to try to start on time, even though Nolan isn't here to tweet that we're starting late, in deference to Nolan's staff who used to say we started late. Those who wish, please join me for a moment of silence. Thank you.

[00:00:28] If we could all rise for the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, With liberty and justice for all.

[00:00:51] Okay, well, we don't have any consent agenda. We don't have any approval of the minutes. So we are directly on to item number three, public comment time. Today, right so far, we have seven people signed up for public comment time.

[00:01:11] I'll call them five at a time. Each speaker will have three minutes to share their views and opinions regarding matters before the board. We ask that all speakers state their name in magisterial district or generally where you reside in the county at the beginning of your marks. After the first 15 minutes of in-person public comments, we will close the in-person public sign-up list.

[00:01:31] So we will start with our first five speakers. David Seary, Ali Imam, Chuck Wilson, Pastor Ricardo Payne, and Ayn Johnson.

[00:01:48] Mr. Seary. Good afternoon. My name is Dave Seary. I've been a resident of Gainesville for 24 years, and I support the Digital Gateway. This latest proposal to designate areas along Pageland Lane as historic is just another attempt to impede a project which is crucial to the future prosperity of Prince William County.

[00:02:14] We're entering what's going to be a serious and long-lasting recession, and the county is going to need every bit of revenue it can get. I move that agenda item be dropped from tonight's agenda.

[00:02:32] Thanks very much. Thank you very much. Next speaker, please. Ali Imam, Gainesville District. Thank you, respected board members, for your support for Prince William County and hard work.

[00:02:50] I thank you for your courage in supporting bold plan to bring data centers to our county. Recently, data centers have become the strongest backbone to build an economy that helps grow a county in multilateral directions. A perfect example is Loudoun County, which benefited from collecting huge commercial tax revenue from data centers.

[00:03:13] For our county, we have seen that with only 12% data centers built out, not counting the PW Digital Gateway, our county is starting to see the power of increasing the commercial tax base, so far about 4% to 5%.

[00:03:29] Because of this, you were able to reduce residential tax rate by $0.06. We have heard last year from some people who opposes PWDigital Gateway that this board would never drop the residential tax rate, another example of misinformation spread by the opposition.

[00:03:49] Once again, they were proven wrong. The tax revenue that data centers generate and will continue to contribute for years to come if PWDigital Gateway is approved is crucial to our ability to boost funding for schools, social services, and other county priorities.

[00:04:06] while decreasing the tax burden on county homeowners. Not only commercial tax revenue, data centers and their employees contribute to and strengthen our community as well. In 2022 alone, those contributions have had a tremendous impact of our lives in a positive manner.

[00:04:26] So your vision to bring more data centers will help benefit our county for generations to come. We know hard work and many overnight board meetings are yet to endure. to finalize this vision, but I'm optimistic that you would show the same courage you have shown over the last few years. Thank you. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Chuck Wilson, Gainesville District. Because of the work by this Board of County Supervisors, Prince William County is

[00:05:03] starting to see the power of increasing the commercial tax base. In 2022, data centers generated $101 million in tax revenues. This enabled the board to drop the residential tax rate by six cents. Naysayers said this board would never drop the tax rate. Not only did they accomplish that, the Board of County Supervisors has raised the computer and peripherals tax by 40 cents since taking office three years ago and will raise it 50 cents higher with this budget, a 72% increase. They're planning to continue giving a targeted industry certainty by establishing a

[00:05:41] new graduated increase matrix for this invaluable tax revenue stream. All these fiscally responsible decisions will allow this board to increase pay scales for our sworn and unsworn employees and initiate much-needed programs and services to all the Prince William County residents.

[00:06:00] Thank you very much. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Good afternoon. My name is Pastor Ricardo Payne. I live in Triangle, Virginia. I'm here on behalf of my daughter and my son attempt to adopt a child. I've been married for 46 years. I have seven children, 26 grandchildren, and three great

[00:06:37] grandchildren. And I understand the value of family. In their attempts, of all the people they've talked with, no one seems to know who's on first base. As a former, rather, Army officer, I understand chain of command, but we've yet to figure out what the real issue is. Instead of dealing with the exigencies of the child, it's become a personal tick for tack, back and forth.

[00:07:10] It has not been based upon the statutes and regulations that I have read of a three-inch notebook with all this back and forth that no one seems to take into account the well-being of that child. Having heard all of this, seen all of this, I would ask respectfully the board, the supervisors, to look at this matter for what it's worth. I understand investigations. I understand all of those type of activities. However, what is in the best interest of the child?

[00:07:46] That is the bottom line, that you have a family who's willing to step up to the plate, adopt the child, but instead of being given the opportunity to do so, it's become more of, matter of fact, while my mind is on it. I do not appreciate one of the officials here in this county saying that my daughter's a guinea pig. If they have something they need to say about my family, they can say it to me. Now back to the point at hand. The point at hand is this. We need to look at what the statutes

[00:08:19] are. We need to have them interpreted properly rather than expending time making it a personal vendetta. Thank you. Thank you very much. Next speaker, please. I think I got it. I think I got it. Can someone inform me if I just place the paper here? Will it project? Okay, she'll turn

[00:08:56] that on for you. I'm going to read everything there to the best of my ability. And look, if you could start the timer for me, then I can make sure I'm respectful of decorum. Of course, of course, I do apologize, ma'am. My name is Aene Johnson, and I am from the Woodbridge District. Thank you so much.

[00:09:32] Good afternoon again, county attorney, Madam Wheeler, county executive, and of course all of the supervisors there and all of the ladies and gentlemen virtually. My name is Aine Johnson, Woodbridge District, and I'm back again. I continue to stand today as a wife, a mother, again, expecting mother. Thank God I had a healthy appointment. And I stand here again to advocate for foster parents who have been failed by the Prince William County Department of Social Services.

[00:10:06] Whenever I stand before any body of individuals, of course, I can trailblaze and talk about any other thing, but I've got to go back to what's personal to me, and that's my family and my children. I go into my mom bag, that's what I call it, and to kind of make sense of everything that I'm dealing with.

[00:10:24] So right now, I'm dealing with a four-year-old, a four-year-old that's decided his full-time job is to be a dinosaur. So that means if he's a T-Rex, if he's a Mosasaurus, if he's a raptor, there's a sound for that. I have a one-nager, not teenager, not three-nager, not four-nager, a one-nager that's decided that dada, not mommy, hi, seat down. That's how she says it. Seat down is her form of communication.

[00:10:52] But again, there's a sound. But when it comes to the representation of the most vulnerable, which I consider to be children, I take that personal, there's a sound. You know what that sound is? It's not silence. So I've chosen again to speak up and I will continue to speak up. So if you don't mind, I'll grab the paper here and read it again. We are asking for accountability. We are asking for the following. A timely

fraud investigation specifically for VMATs when children come into foster care as well as when and how VMATs are administered. An ethical behavior

[00:11:32] of directors, social workers, such as referring to me as a guinea pig, a platform for foster parents to voice their concerns free from retaliation. We are asking the following individuals to be held accountable for their actions. Governor Glenn Youngkin of the state of Virginia, Commissioner Danny T.K. Avula, Department of Social Services, Mr. Christopher Shorter, Ms. Courtney Tierney, Ms. Diane Gestrich, Ms. Phyllis Jennings-Holt, Ms. Bridget Alston, Ms. Cheryl McMullen, Ms. Lillian Diaz, Ms. Caroline Lockerbie,

[00:12:07] Ms. Wani Diaz, Ms. Katina Wayford-Graves, and LaShawn Roberts-Gibbs. Again, last week in the event, my voice was not heard or the sound wasn't heard. Our phone number is 571-991-2827. Our email address is thejohnsons.fosterparents at gmail.com. Thank you. Our next two speakers are

[00:12:33] non-residents graham clark and mitch nason good afternoon member of the board and mr shorter my name is graham clark i currently reside in fockier county but i am a captain at fire station six in coals district and i've been an employee of the department of fire and rescue for the past 12

[00:13:12] years and i am a member of local 2598 but today i'm here on my own accord to express my feelings this is the first time i've ever come to address you but with the important decision that you face in the coming month, I feel moved to express how critical this matter is to me. I've been a supervisor in the fire department for the past five years, and I've tried to lead with the motto that we train people well enough so they can leave, but we treat them well enough so they don't want to. I feel that we have fallen short in the second part of this motto.

[00:13:42] I try to focus my employees' attention on matters that we can control. I cannot control compensation and benefits. This responsibility falls to you. I personally know 35 firefighters that have left the department over the past 15 months because they felt that they were not fairly compensated and valued.

[00:14:00] I've sat awake at night wondering if I held my own career back, affected my family by staying in this department, and not going to work for a county that compensates me at a rate that I believe I've earned. We have great people that work here, and we provide top-tier training that I would put up against any surrounding jurisdiction.

[00:14:19] But it's no secret that some of our competing entities in the region are more than happy to hire our personnel because they know they will get a top-notch employee, and they show that by compensating better. We are creating excellent firefighters and paramedics, but they're leaving in droves for opportunities in departments and the private sector. We need to retain these employees with a region-leading compensation package. My colleagues have presented the numbers to you, and it is obviously that we've been in a dire situation for some time. Contributing factors include reduction in holiday pay hours, elimination of our retention bonus and wellness days, increased work hours, inadequate raises based upon current times, mandatory overtime, tighter

[00:14:58] restrictions on leave usage, and reduction in available leave slots. While this is my choice, I stand here today now having to take a minimum of six hours annual leave in order to speak to you for three minutes. This is one of a number of new initiatives needed to ensure adequate staffing and minimize mandatory overtime. These changes compound over time and push people towards the edge. In 2021, the

community survey for the county, 90% of Prince William County residents felt that the fire and rescue staff provided a high quality of service. You now have the opportunity to show us how you value the members of fire and rescue. Lastly, our folks have been

[00:15:34] waiting for an appropriate compensation for some time now, and some are still waiting for this, their yearly step. I ask that you to seriously consider approaching, or excuse me, appropriating the decided upon compensation ahead of the July 1 start of the fiscal year and enacting the decided upon compensation in the last quarter of this fiscal year. Thank you very much for your consideration. Thank you. And before our next speaker, I'll call up our last two, Stephen Lorenz and Ken Nahr. Good afternoon, Madam Chair, members of the board, county staff, fellow employees,

[00:16:12] brothers and sisters. Mitch Nason, my address is on file. 18-year lieutenant, president of the Prince William Professional Firefighters. I stand before you the same way I've stood before you. I've got to get my English down. My kids watch these videos, and they're just going to be upset with me for not being able to get my words out.

[00:16:28] But I've been standing before you for months. The situation hasn't changed in terms of the numbers, the vacancies that we're dealing with, the staffing problems we're dealing with, and the compensation. And so I think Graham did a tremendous job. He's quiet, soft-spoken, but I think hopefully that message carries very strongly.

[00:16:48] And so it's that I just want to focus on the presentation today. You've had the numbers for me for months about where we need to be, and so I just want to address the specific slides that we're going to be talking about. And from what I understand, county staff has actually fixed one of the slides based on some feedback that we gave, and we're happy to see that dealing with our FLSA.

[00:17:03] But really I'd turn you to the very end of the presentation. That's the comparables between us and the other jurisdictions. An important point that I'd like to make sure we raise is that Alexandria, while currently working in the 56-hour work week, is now contractually bound through the collective bargaining agreement to decrease that to 50 hours a week over the next two years.

[00:17:21] So while they currently are on a 56, they will be reducing that. In addition, I believe that the number that's being reported for Alexandria for an annual salary is actually underreported. The number that I have is showing a 7% raise rather than a 5% raise, and that's coming out of their collective bargaining agreement as well. It's about $1,000.

[00:17:40] The other number that I believe is in error, through no fault of any staff's own, is that of Loudoun County. And that number is actually over-reported. I believe that Loudoun County's starting salary will not be $59,000 and change. It's actually going to be more at $56,000.

[00:17:56] Bringing that number up to you all is actually to my own detriment. It brings the average down, but I'm not interested in playing games. I just want to have real facts in front of you all. And so despite all of that, once we get what I believe to be the correct numbers, when you compare our starting salaries, we're still, after the 6.8 that's proposed, an additional 10.4 behind the regional average.

[00:18:18] And so we get to where we started, which is that we're about 17% to 20% behind the regional average. And so as I've been saying for months, there's kind of three legs to the stool. Number one is that the inflationary pressure that we've had affecting our wages for the past three years really equate to about 16, 17 percent erosion of our starting salary.

[00:18:37] Number two is pay parity within your public safety departments. And then number three is the market analysis of the surrounding jurisdictions. I believe that including some of our competition like D.C. and Fairfax City is important because we've lost personnel to them. But even using the four jurisdictions that are from our county procedure, we're still about 17 to 18 percent behind the market.

[00:18:57] So as you all deliberate that today, I hope that you can look at some of the folks that took the time out of their busy schedules to come sit here. And there are the countless that are at home watching or in stations watching. And so that we can try to fix the compensation issues that are plaguing our fire department and sooner rather than later.

[00:19:14] As always, thank you for your time to the budget staff. Hey, a month to go. So thank you. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Ken Nard, the Gainesville District. The NOVA region is defined by Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William County.

[00:19:36] The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments includes Alexandria City, Arlington County, Fairfax City, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William County. You might notice Stafford and Fauquier counties are not listed on either designation.

[00:19:53] Therefore, I commend the staff for properly citing our peer group last week. Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun counties are who we compete with on a daily basis for commercial enterprises, small business opportunities, teachers, firefighters, law enforcement officers, and county staffers.

[00:20:11] A leader has a responsibility to properly identify and assess the strategic landscape and the nature of the engagements therein. If any leader fails at either responsibility, they seriously run the risk of fighting a losing battle. In other words, they bring a toothpick to a gunfight. I commend this board and its leadership for properly identifying and assessing the financial landscape and the economic competitors across the Nova region.

[00:20:35] Prince William County residents on average pay $730 to $2,800 less taxes than our neighboring Nova County residents. Our average tax bill increases are going up between $167 and $448 less than our neighboring Nova County residents.

[00:20:53] Our comparative tax bill per median household income is 4.5%, the second lowest in the region. Only Loudoun County with a commercial tax base of almost 40% is lower with 3.9%. The other three jurisdictions in NOVA are between 6 and 7.6%.

[00:21:10] The proposed 24 budget decreases the residential real estate tax by $0.06 per $100 of assessed value. This will be the first time this rate has been under $1 of assessed value in roughly 15 years. The proposed 24 budget increases the computer and peripherals tax by 50 cents per $100 of assessed value.

[00:21:30] This will be the fourth increase in this commercial tax this board has enacted since taking office. Our commercial tax base is now over 17% and growing steadily annually year after year. This board has established the soundest and most secure financial situation this county has seen in several decades.

[00:21:46] This board, under the leadership of Chair Wheeler, has embraced the idea of taxing globally and spending locally. this board has increased the services and programs to our residents this board has provided the most revenue to education and transportation in our county's history this has been all been done while continuing to maintain the nationally coveted triple a rating this board is to be commended for

appropriately balancing smart economic development with the well-being of our 486 000 residents however more work needs to be done we can't give these deserving people what we

[00:22:18] don't have. Continue to fight for what's right. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Good afternoon. Stephen Lawrence, Gainesville District. I'd like to address an item in the work session this afternoon, 6B, presented by planning the Great Oaks Community Noise Monitoring results. As you may have recalled, Ken and I collected, using equipment from my own laboratory, sound measurements

[00:22:58] across the county over many, many weeks last summer and last fall. Great Oaks was an area that we did collect hundreds of measurements ourselves. And I reviewed the report that planning will cover shortly, and their numbers look totally accurate, or at least one of us is correct, but we agree, so I think that's a great thing.

[00:23:27] The report looks complete, well done, and I think it presents an adequate noise picture for that area and also for what we can expect in the future for data centers. The numbers are reasonable. The soundscape in Prince William County can be very complicated.

[00:23:48] One issue that we had trouble when we were trying to collect data was either an errant jet on approach from Dulles or a helicopter from the Manassas Air Park or an extra truck or a kid without mufflers I actually made it a challenge to get what an ambient background measurement is.

[00:24:11] In some areas, even in Great Oaks, we would see spikes at 70 decibels plus if a helicopter came by. But the ambient ran in the 40s, low 50s, which is supported by the report that you'll see shortly.

[00:24:33] And so sound containment and control is a reasonable thing to ask the data centers to do. and I think the plans going forward across all the different developers will support a reasonable sound environment for the county. Thank you very much. Thank you. This will include and conclude our in-person public comment time. Ms. Madden, do we have anyone online? I will turn it over to Vice Chair Bodie. Thank you, Madam Chair. To our folks online, like an in-person comment time, you have

[00:25:10] three minutes to speak. Please identify yourself and where you live in the county and again you have three minutes. Ms. Vann, shall we begin? Your next speaker will be Paige Snyder. I'm Paige Snyder residing in Gainesville as I've done for the last 73 years and I am angry. My entire life our county has been subjected to primarily Republican dominated boards who have consistently stifled opportunity and pandered to their conservative cronies and supporters to the

[00:25:47] detriment of the majority of our citizens. I've seen all the bad decisions that have held our county back for decades and kept us down in third rate. Decisions have been made to benefit the few at the cost of the many. Some members of this board continue to promote this pass of exclusivity.

[00:26:07] I'm going to be perfectly frank. The past two years, we have endured unprecedented, amazingly ugly and embarrassing threats and attacks on not only our Democratic board members, but on future progress for our county. I am proud to say that I am a Democrat who supports you.

[00:26:26] You have chosen the right path, and I'm going to continue to be frank and say what many people think. I am sick to death of hearing and reading all the extreme nastiness, ugliness, lies, and fear-mongering perpetrated by a minority of our citizens. We have had to suffer through lawsuits, recalls, undignified personal attacks, threats, songs, poems, cartoons, butterfly wings, fake accusations, extremist op-ed pieces, blatantly biased media reports, false claims of majority

[00:27:03] opinion, and now threats regarding re-election. The people who continue with this absurd and immature behavior make us all look like hysterical fools and have made us a laughing stock throughout the region. Since you took office, Democrats have had the forbearance to suffer through all these absurdities. You have listened ad nauseum with grace and decorum.

[00:27:28] You have stuck to your democratic principles in your pursuit of a better life for all facets of our society. I too have been attacked and insulted by these people who think lies, extreme intimidations, and threats will win the day. As I have said, I've lived here for 73 years and have friends all over the county who are as embarrassed as I am. We also know you have done a great job and have faith that you will continue to do the right thing and make decisions that will move Prince William County out of the dark ages. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Snyder. Next speaker, please.

[00:28:07] Your next speaker is Patricia Leon. I'm Patricia Leon from the Gainesville District, and I'd like to take a minute of public comment time to thank the Democratic members of the board for all they have achieved in their tenure so far. Our former Republican-dominated boards based many of their decisions on a hell no platform that denied the opportunity for the many by pandering to the few.

[00:28:41] This board has adopted a can-do approach and has made significant and important changes to many of our outmoded policies and attitudes. You have shown compassion and concern for the majority of the citizens in all parts of our county. Don't let the personal and political attacks deter you from what you know are the right things to do. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Leone. Next speaker,

[00:29:08] please. Your next speaker is Sally Chandler. Hi, this is Sally Chandler, and I live in the Gainesville District, I'd like to also address my comments to the Democratic members of the board.

[00:29:30] I just want to thank each of you for all of your hard work. I want to thank you for the tough decisions you have made and your grace in the face of extremely ugly comments from some members of the public and from other board members. And I thank you for doing what needs to be done to move our county out of the dark ages. You have not let the negativity deter you, and I hope you will continue to be unbowed under its pressure. You have demonstrated leadership, vision, and fortitude.

[00:30:08] Continue to stand your ground. We are all counting on you. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Chandler. Next speaker, please. Your next speaker is Lori Snyder. Hi, I'm Lori Snyder from the Gainesville District.

[00:30:32] Our Democratic supervisors have been constantly and unjustly attacked and vilified by an exclusionary vocal minority. I, for one, think you have made significant strides in moving our county from the old status quo to one of forward-thinking policies.

[00:30:54] I hope that you will continue on this path, keep to the path of enlightenment. We elected you for change, and you have done that. I will continue to support the decisions you make that benefit the entire county. Thank you.

[00:31:12] Thank you, Ms. Snyder. Next speaker, please. Your next speaker is Robert White. Hello, this is Robert White of Gainesville District, with only 12% of D.C. build-out, not even counting the W.D. Prince William Digital Gateway.

[00:31:50] The county is starting to see the power of the increasing, the commercial tax base of about 4% to 5% thus far. The box has dropped the residential rate by $0.06, which is 5%. Naysayers say this box

would never drop the residential tax rate, another piece of their information campaign.

[00:32:14] Thank you. Thank you, Mr. White. Next speaker, please. Your next speaker will be Mally White. Thank you. This is she. Again, the box will have responsibly raised the computer and peripherals tax 90 cents, which is 72% since taking office three years ago.

[00:32:44] And it is poised to continue, given a targeted industry, certainty by establishing this new graduated increase, which is a matrix form for this invaluable tax revenue stream.

[00:33:00] We are grateful for this. All of these fiscally responsible decisions will continue to allow the BOCS to increase our sworn and youth sworn county employees, in other words, unsworn county employees, their pay scales, and initiate greatly needed programs and services for all 486,000 CWC residents.

[00:33:27] Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. Thank you, Ms. White. Next speaker, please. Your next speaker is Aaron Such.

[00:33:49] Hello, good afternoon, Madam Chair, members of the board. My name is Aaron Such, and I'm the Atlantic Southeast Region Director for Solar United Neighbors. Solar United Neighbors is a nonprofit organization that represents solar owners and prospective solar owners, and many of which reside in Prince William County.

[00:34:08] I am speaking on behalf of the many homeowners that are continuing to have problems with the residential solar permitting process. In short, the residential solar permitting process is a bumbling and inefficient process, unfortunately.

[00:34:24] And Prince William County has the unfortunate distinction of being considered the worst permitting jurisdiction in Virginia. But we do have some good news. We've been pushing for solar at plus, which is a nationally recognized permitting process to fast track and streamline that.

[00:34:42] And I am just reaching out to the board today on behalf of the homeowners that are really pushing you all to adopt that and fast track we did have a spring goal after our beginning outreach we understand that many members of many homeowners have reached out to you all in which you've mentioned that you've been working with wade hugh of the permitting department we have been working with wade hugh since december of 2020 uh in which in after which supervisor vega in response to an inquiry from the residents or from installers representing residential solar companies had that

[00:35:19] inquiry we have found that mr hugh although may be cordial and means well has not produced a lot of results so again what we are asking is that we're coming to this board as a last resort to try to get some process furthermore an increasing amount of homeowners are noting that department needs some real scrutiny and to understand why the county or why prince william county permitting there continues to be such resistance to common sense reforms that are going to help bring jobs to the county and that are going to help give residents the power to harness the sun

[00:35:55] we're asking questions is it about resubmission fees is it about revenues is there any favoritism in the department but again many of the homeowners that we represent are wishing for increased scrutiny. So again, I respectfully submit these comments and really appreciate the opportunity to speak to you all. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Such. Next speaker, please. There are no more remote speakers.

Thank you so much, Ms. Van, for all your help. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Vice Chair Bodie. Thank you, Ms. Van. This will conclude our public comment time for today, March 14th.

[00:36:34] That brings us on to item, agenda item number four, which is the County Executive Times. Mr. shorter the floor is yours thank you very much madam chair and members of the board just one item today for me and that is just an acknowledgement of the 15 men and women who were sworn in as police officers yesterday i had a really the privilege uh with many uh many members of the board here to attend the graduation ceremony yesterday and just acknowledge our new our new

[00:37:06] employees in the role that they will play here in the county very diverse class session 52 originating from i believe five countries the u.s bolivia colombia indonesia pakistan a very diverse group and one that i'm looking forward to seeing serve the county thank you thank you very much mr shorter uh that brings us on to county attorney time ms robo the floor is thank you madam chair members of the board we have two items for discussion in closed session this afternoon we will have consultation with legal counsel

[00:37:45] and briefings by staff members pertaining to the discussion and consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body along with the accompanying consultation with legal counsel and briefing by staff members regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel pertaining to lease agreement and purchase-sale agreement law, where such consultation or discussion or briefing in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position, negotiating strategy or litigating posture of the public body.

[00:38:19] And we will have a discussion of the reports or plans related to the security of the McCourt governmental building complex and the safety of persons using such building complex, including briefings by staff members, legal counsel, and law enforcement or emergency service officials concerning actions taken to respond to related threats to public safety.

[00:38:39] These items are appropriate pursuant to 2.2-3711A-3, 8, and 19 of the Code of Virginia. So moved, Madam Chair. Second. Motion made by Supervisor Angry, seconded by Vice Chair Boat. Any discussion? Seeing none, please vote.

[00:38:58] Vote unanimous. That's great. So that now brings us on to our work session, which are agenda items 6A through 6D. We're going to start off with a presentation by the Prince William County Community Energy and Sustainability Master Plan from the Office of Sustainability.

[00:39:19] Ms. Mano, the floor is yours. Good afternoon, Chair Wheeler, members of the board, CXO Shorter, Julia Mano, Director of the Office of Sustainability.

[00:39:38] Today we are going to be providing an update on the progress of the Community, Energy, and Sustainability Master Plan. As you know, this plan is meant to serve as a roadmap for meeting the county's climate mitigation and resiliency goals that were adopted by the board in November of 2020.

[00:39:54] The Office of Sustainability was stood up a year ago in March of 2022 to lead this process, and planning began last June when we brought on AECOM to support this work. Today we are excited to present to the board the work completed to date and what is to be expected in the coming months, including plans for upcoming public engagement.

[00:40:14] With that, I would like to introduce Tahira Abdul-Mateen, who is the lead project manager with AECOM, and will be presenting the update, and I will be available to help answer questions after the presentation. Thank you. Welcome.

[00:40:43] And you can raise the podium up, too, if you need to. On it. That works, too? Okay. Okay. Thank you, Julia, and thank you, Chair Wheeler and members of the board and CXO Shorter.

[00:41:04] My name is Tahira Abdul-Mateen. I'm the project manager for AECOM, and I'm happy to be here to present a status update to you all on the progress of the CESMP, the progress and the development of the CESMP. Our goal today is to review the county's goals, provide an overview of the planning process, and review what we've completed to date.

[00:41:28] We also want to share upcoming engagement activities for the public, as well as other key stakeholders in the county. Okay, so today we want to, again, just review the approach of the development of the plan, completed work, we've completed a vulnerability assessment and greenhouse gas emissions forecast, and then, again, just to discuss the upcoming engagement activities.

[00:42:00] Okay. Part of our team is sourcing key representatives from county staff. The core team that we work with is staff from county offices that were stood up. This core team was stood up at the beginning of the planning process. These offices are thought to be directly affected or responsible for the actions that come out of the plan. And with the core team that we have here, we have monthly meetings. They are also solely responsible for reviewing all of the, not solely, but responsible for reviewing all of the deliverables in terms of milestones that lead to the completion of the

[00:42:39] CESMP. In addition to the core team, we have my team. I'm with AECOM again. I'm the project manager and our team is made up of several different types of subject matter experts in climate adaptation and resiliency as well as greenhouse gas mitigation. We also have senior advisors that we're working with previously involved in the development of similar plans in the region such as Montgomery County. So what is driving this effort? I just wanted to provide a review of the goals so far.

[00:43:12] In 2020, the county adopted the climate mitigation and resiliency goals. In the resolution, it was acknowledged that the world is already experiencing the impacts of global warming. And to avoid severe climate impacts, greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced. And our counties must be made adaptable and resilient to climate change. So this is the context. So we know kind of what is driving the effort. Oh, sorry. Apologies. So the goals that we have that we're working with right now, the first two are from MWCOG and approved by the board, which is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

[00:43:51] countywide 50% by 2030, starting from 2005. And then goal five is the other one approved by the board for, sourced by MWCOG, which is to develop the climate resilient actions to move towards being climate ready by 2030. The other actions that we have are additional goals adopted by the county, including goals related to renewable energy, renewable electricity sourcing for government operations in countywide. So government operations, the goal there is to source 100%

[00:44:27] renewable energy by 2030. And for the county, it is to source 100% renewable by 2035. And then finally, to be carbon neutral government by 2050. And this is actually a guideline that is consistent within the region that we are also incorporating into our analysis. So now that we know again that what's driving the effort, what has been happening so far? So to date, what we

[00:45:02] have done, in 2020, the goals were adopted. In order to achieve these goals, the Board of Supervisors stood up the Office of Sustainability and the Sustainability Commission to develop the CESMP and advise on energy and environmental sustainability advancements. Last summer, AECOM was contracted by the Office of Sustainability to kick off, kickstart the plan development. And over the past six months, we've been introducing the plan development process to the commission, the core team. We've developed a plan for stakeholder engagement. We have reviewed the county's inventory, the greenhouse gas inventory, developed forecasts, collected data,

[00:45:42] done a lot of the technical analysis that was required up front to start working on actually developing actions for the CESMP. So MWCOG's 2020 goal achievement. One of the first goals that was set up in 2020 was to meet 20% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. And this was achieved already, despite the estimated 20% population increase. So how is Prince William

[00:46:13] County doing compared to the rest of the region? So as a region, the goals were met in 2020, but we still have work to do to reduce the emissions. This is not news. Prince William County, the message here is that Prince William County is in a different phase of growth compared to the rest of the counties. Loudoun County and Prince William were the only localities in NWCOG that experienced an increase in emissions in 2005, but they both sustained significant population growth and commercial growth. So that kind of sets them apart. So what is the proposed

[00:46:51] approach to developing a plan to meet these goals? Our approach for the development of the plan has five steps, four, including one crucial piece that spans the entire project. So this includes first, reviewing the county's existing plans, actions, and policies, and identifying gaps relating to the goals of the CESMP, understanding what the county's sources of greenhouse gas

[00:47:26] emissions are, understanding the county's vulnerable assets, including vulnerable populations. So we took time to understand what those are. And then we're working with the county now to develop the actions that the county can take to achieve its goals and prioritize these actions. Finally, the last step that we have here is to actually develop the climate, I'm sorry, the CESMP, which is basically a roadmap for meeting the county's climate and resiliency goals. What surrounds this entire piece, the big gray circle outside, is the engagement with the different stakeholders. We have

[00:48:04] the Board of County Supervisors, we have a sustainability commission, we have our core team, we have the public, we have business owners, we have residents, and all of those are incorporated at different points along our planning process. Each of the dots represents a different, each of the colored dots represents a different stakeholder and when our intention or thoughts were in terms of discussions with the Office of Sustainability to conduct more engagement.

[00:48:30] first half of our work involved the the the technical background understanding what's been done so far and now we're at the stage of developing the actions and then working with the the stakeholders to prioritize what's important what can get done what's in the county's control okay so what have we completed so far from this planning approach okay so the first thing that we looked at again was the county's sources of greenhouse gas emissions once we understood what the sources of greenhouse gas emissions were in the county. The next step was to

[00:49:10] forecast what they would be in 2030 and 2050. The key here right now is we used the 2018 greenhouse gas emissions inventory and the main, the two main primary sources of emissions are transportation and commercial energy and then followed by renewable, I'm sorry, followed by residential

energy and these are the sectors for reductions and the sectors where actions need to be focused on. So again, that's transportation, commercial energy, and then residential energy. There are

[00:49:44] inventory, greenhouse gas inventories that are collected every two years. The next one that was completed was 2020. However, we felt that that was more skewed towards a temporary situation in COVID. So we went with 2018. If there's more questions, we can take it after, but just wanted to mention that. Okay. So once we understood the greenhouse gas emissions and the forecast of them out to 2030 and 2050 we had to develop reduction scenarios how is the county going to meet its goals and we developed initially three and with the

[00:50:18] discussions with the core team reduce that down to one the the scenarios that were ruled out were the most extreme forms of how the county can meet its greenhouse gas reduction targets such as all renewable energy complete like total redo of the electrical supply so totally 100% clean energy obviously that would have been an extreme scenario case and what the final reduction scenario represents is just a more medium moderate approach that takes into a mix of different types of things that the county can do to meet its goals for

[00:50:57] example if you're looking at the first line for example clean energy the strategy there, one of the strategies as part of like the whole bucket would have been is to achieve 92% clean energy. What this slide shows is the impact of the ability of the county to meet that goal as it takes into account existing external regulatory forces and then adds what the county

[00:51:31] has to do after. So the county does not have to meet 92% clean energy because the RPS, the Renewable energy, the renewable portfolio standard already will reach about 33% of that. And what's left over is for the county to achieve 59% clean energy, clean electricity.

[00:51:49] And that's just one line, an example of others. So, yes, so this just shows the impact of external forces plus what the county has left over and targets how the county will meet its goals there.

[00:52:08] Supervisor Lawson? This is really technical. Yes, it is. Apologies. So I actually am glad that you said what RPS is.

[00:52:23] Yes. Because I didn't know. But can you repeat it? Of course. I wrote down renewable portfolio. Portfolio standard. And would you mind explaining that? Yes, exactly. And in all sincerity, anytime that you have an acronym up there, this is for us as well as the public.

[00:52:40] I guarantee you that a lot of people at the public aren't going to know what all your acronyms are as well. So if you would be so kind as to remember that. as you present. Thank you. You got it. You got it. Okay. So specifically the Renewable Portfolio Standard, sorry, just lost my screen there. It's basically a percentage of renewable electricity that utilities are projected to uptake. So if you're working with a major, if there's a major

[00:53:14] utility, the Renewable Portfolio Standard means that they will already have a percentage of renewable energy in their portfolio that you're receiving so that's an external scenario that's an external factor not within the county's control it's external to the county something that's happening that will positively impact do you mean like for example dominion energy yes and you know they're they're utilizing renewable energy sources but they're still predominantly utilizing coal. Yes. But you're factoring in RPS. Supervisor Lawson? Yeah. Can we wait till

[00:53:54] afterwards if you write some of the questions down? Just because we don't want, she has her presentation, but I do totally agree with the acronyms because, you know, zero emission vehicles, I'm not even sure what HFCs are. I usually know this, you know, but we don't want to, I mean, and especially about, you know, you just said that Dominion's portfolio was mainly coal and I know it's not anymore and so it's not it's not is that correct it's not anymore thank you well we can discuss that I mean I know that they have set their own goals but that's fine I can I can wait thank you but it's hard as you're going

[00:54:32] through a presentation when these technical slides I mean I'll do my best to go back to them okay but yeah this is this is technical stuff understood okay I will keep that in mind and we'll definitely change up some of these things moving forward and I believe the board has a copy of the slides okay okay all right my thought was actually to remove this one because it was so technical and it doesn't add value right now but it's kind of

[00:55:10] just the the point of this whole conversation right here is just to say that there are things happening outside of the county that positively help the county meet their goals. That's it.

[00:55:25] That's the whole message there. And those are just some examples of things happening outside. That's just about it. This is a little bit more visual. And what this shows is the amount of things happening outside of the county that help the county meet its goals. So that whole light blue shaded wedge at the top are regulatory and market forces external to the county and this is just to show again the magnitude of things happening outside of the county and then all of the other

[00:56:02] colors below that top wedge there shows different types of things that different types of strategies that if the county adopts will assist the county in meeting that goal such as the decarbonizing the electrical grid which basically means removing the coal removing things like that making it more renewable the next biggest one building efficiency and fuel switch the third one the vehicle fuel switch so not using gas but using more renewable sources and electric vehicles that type of thing so a transportation related so that's all the point there just to show the contribution of

[00:56:40] regulatory market forces and then finally this is also a little bit technical don't worry about the numbers. I think the point of this, again, is just to reiterate that if the county continued business as usual, there would be about 5.7 million tons of CO2 emissions. But taking into account the external market forces, after all of that, the reductions that are needed are only a

[00:57:16] fraction of that. That's it. So it just kind of puts it in a positive light that the mountain isn't that high to climb and it's it's doable okay so again the when we think about the ability of the county to meet its greenhouse gas reduction targets obviously there's some barriers there's a lot of things that are not in the county's control there's market conditions that we don't know there's technological barriers all of that kind of stuff but the message that we'd like to

[00:57:55] leave now is just that the feasibility, I'm sorry, there's a lot that's not in the county's control, but there is a lot that is. And our focus is to present in the CESMP what the county can do to meet those goals. And that's it. And there's a decent amount. So all of our actions are focused on what is in the county's purview of completing and does not take a look at what is outside of the county's control. Okay. So we just did a quick, quick recap of what we've done with the

[00:58:34] greenhouse gas emissions reduction scenarios and all of that the analysis that went into the greenhouse gas emissions the other piece of the puzzle is the adaptation piece of it so right there's climate

change we want to make the county more resilient and adaptable to climate change and in order for us to understand that and how it relates to the county we completed an initial draft of a vulnerability assessment and the vulnerability assessment provides a systematic way for us to first understand what are the climate hazards that are presented to the county, what are the county's assets in vulnerable populations, and where do those two overlap?

[00:59:12] Where are the vulnerable areas? Where are their sensitive assets vulnerable to climate hazards, and where does the county need to be more adaptable? So we worked with our core team, we worked with different types of stakeholders to understand what the county's assets are, And we looked specifically at a list of them, such as safety and security assets, food, water, and shelter, transportation, socially vulnerable populations.

[00:59:48] And then also looked at a standard set of climate hazards, such as precipitation, extreme weather, drought, storm surge, strong winds. And we work closely with emergency management. Emergency management is doing a lot of great work and already helping the county get ready for some of these emergency hazards.

[01:00:08] when things come up, they're ready. There's a lot of great programs that are being expanded upon. What we are looking at is something a little bit more long-term, so the long-term effects of climate change. So it requires emergency management's help to understand what programs are in place, as well as our forecasting to understand how things might change in the future and getting the county resilient and adaptable to those changes.

[01:00:34] So when we conducted our vulnerability assessment, We created a rating system where a low rating for an asset category would mean that they're not as vulnerable, a high means they're most vulnerable, and the results led to this summary table.

[01:00:55] And the point here is just to show us where which asset categories of vulnerable populations are most susceptible to climate hazards. And again, we're just looking at climate hazards.

[01:01:10] So when we think of resiliency and adaptation, we're not looking at things like cyber security or terrorism. We're just looking at climate hazards. So what we did was use this to understand where the county might need to focus more effort to make different types of asset categories and vulnerable populations more adaptable to climate change.

[01:01:36] Okay. Finally, what we did now was we took the results from the vulnerability assessment and the results from the greenhouse gas mitigation exercise that we did understanding what the emissions are what it would take to reduce those understood where there might be gaps in county policies and procedures and actions and then developed an initial draft list of actions for the county so this has been happening recently we did we just developed the initial draft list of actions

[01:02:14] And, for example, some of these actions that we've drafted include things like forming, developing additional solar incentives, streamlining permitting for solar installations. This was brought up earlier today, so I was happy to kind of hear that.

[01:02:32] We know that it's a pain point. Develop solar projects on county facilities. Some other types of actions include identifying county-owned infrastructure vulnerable to flooding, conducting feasibility studies to evaluate shoreline protection measures against erosion and flooding.

[01:02:51] So a lot of these actions are very targeted for either a specific emission or a specific climate hazard or a specific vulnerable population. Your slides are a little off, yeah, because you just went over that next one.

[01:03:07] You were just going over that, right? Nope. Oh, okay, you're new. Okay. I was like a preamble to this. Preamble to this. Okay. So the initial draft list of actions we have.

[01:03:23] The next part of the process in drafting the initial actions is to develop criteria through which we evaluate how crucial they are, how beneficial they are, how feasible they are, how much benefit do they provide the county. We've developed a draft list of evaluation criteria.

[01:03:42] We've discussed this with the core team, with the commission. The next phase that we're going through right now with the draft actions and the evaluation criteria is to rate them. And then once we rate them, we are bringing the results. We're validating basically all of the results, the initial draft list of actions with the core team, with the commission, with the public as well.

[01:04:09] So there's several key stakeholders that are involved in validating what are the priorities for the county. Okay, so from the prioritization process, and again, the point of the CESMP is to present a framework and a roadmap for the county meeting its goals.

[01:04:32] We have climate mitigation actions, we have renewable energy actions, we have climate adaptation and resiliency actions. We need to prioritize those, right? The ultimate result within the CESMP is to have 25 prioritized actions and then a handful of others that have come out of the process.

[01:04:52] But the 25 that will come out of the process as high priority will be expanded upon in the plan, identifying the primary benefits, greenhouse gas reductions and risk reduction and co-benefits, their current developmental stage, lead implementation to partner and primary partners, So who's going to be responsible for taking control of that action?

[01:05:16] Major milestones, initial funding needed to kickstart the implementation, and high-level performance indicators. So all of these are going to be expanded upon for those high-priority 25 actions in the CESMP. The remaining 42 will be listed as actions in the plan to be considered for the future.

[01:05:34] So the CESMP ultimately is a living and breathing document that would be updated within the future, ideally. So I spoke a little bit about that evaluation criteria, and what this slide shows is just where we're at with the evaluation criteria.

[01:05:52] There's still a little bit of tweaking to do, but we wanted to give you an idea about the types of things that we're considering. So we know that when we're thinking about an action that the county would like to take on, the cost to the county is important. The cost to citizens, residents, and businesses is important.

[01:06:11] How much do they have to take on? Whether a funding source has been identified, does it actually protect valuable resources within the county, does it take into consideration the impact of environmental and economic disparities, things like that.

[01:06:30] Does it save the county money? So these are the types of things that we will consider. These are the type of things that we were going to consider when evaluating the criteria. And how heavily those things are weighted, we are scheduled to get feedback about those types of things from the core team and the Sustainability Commission as well as the public as well.

[01:06:59] Okay, so again, next steps are we are right at the point where we've finished drafting our initial draft actions. We have a good list that incorporates feedback from the core team and the Sustainability Commission.

[01:07:17] And now what we're doing is gearing up for taking this to the public and really getting feedback on a really long list of actions to help us get a sense of what is a priority for the county, what's feasible, what provides benefit, what actually hits home. Once the prioritized actions, those 25, shake out of this process, then we're fleshing them out in the plan and providing more detail.

[01:07:40] And so finally, the CESMP is scheduled to get to the board towards the end of September. if not early October. Finally, this is the last slide that I have, which is our just draft upcoming stakeholder engagement plan, at least a timeline, where we're calling them work groups.

[01:08:10] And basically what's happening right now is we're developing groups of people to assist in workshops to take a look at different chunks of actions. The workshops will be made up of business owners, regulatory officials, stakeholders in the county, residents, residential groups, representatives from each of these types of stakeholder groups to provide feedback and review and prioritize the actions. So that's what's happening upcoming. In May, we will have a town

[01:08:46] hall presentation where we're presenting on this process what we've done so far, the draft actions, the prioritized actions, and getting feedback on the prioritized actions. And then once we receive public input. We're coming back to the Sustainability Commission. We're coming back to the core team.

[01:09:03] We're drafting the CESMP, getting feedback again through all the stakeholders, and then finalizing it. And that is all that I had. I'm totally open for questions now. Thank you for your patience. Thank you very much. I know a lot of work is behind that, and that's just the very top level of everything you did over the last few months. Let me just get out of my presentation so I can see speakers supervisor lawson okay so let's go back to um i like the chair thought that you were

[01:09:35] off on your slides instead it was a preamble to the slides um i think it was slide 27 you were um you're rattling off a bunch of actions and it was good but i didn't record it okay thank you It was, you know, the action evaluation and prioritization process.

[01:10:04] Yes. So do you mind repeating what these actions would be? So right now we have a list of roughly, I want to say 74. So there's about 74 actions.

[01:10:20] Draft. Give me the top five. So the top five would implicate that we have a top five. I'm sorry? So the top five would basically indicate that we have a top five, which they haven't been prioritized yet, but I can give you five from the list.

[01:10:36] Perfect. Give me your favorite five. Right? These are not my favorite five, but they are five. So some examples include establishing a streamlined permitting process for solar installations.

[01:10:59] Okay. So that shouldn't be shocking. We also did receive the fast-track items, and those are also incorporated. That was on there, like reforestation. Absolutely. We did that a couple weeks ago? And last week. Yes. And last week. Okay. Yes. But we certainly didn't cover 74.

[01:11:16] Nope. Those are fast-track, right? So they're short. Yes, yes. But yes, the reforestation, we have several actions in there related to reforestation. All of the fast-track items are in our list. A couple of other examples are promoting the purchase of utility green power options within the community.

[01:11:37] So several of the really impactful options related to facilitating the county getting more control in what type of electricity residents and business owners can purchase. So you're saying, like when you mentioned promoting utility green options for county citizens and leading by example that we, the county, do that?

[01:12:02] I thought I read somewhere where lead by example is one of your criteria. Yes, exactly. Okay. Do you have a list of the 74 that you can send us? Rather than, why don't you do that? Would that be okay to just shoot us an email with it, Julia?

[01:12:20] They're also already on our website as well. You need to speak at the... Thank you, Ms. Mono. The draft 74 actions are also posted on the website. Great. And by the way, I stand corrected about Dominion Energy.

[01:12:37] It's nuclear and natural gas. Coal has not been their major source for like 15 years. So I stand corrected on that. But I was using that question as an example of what you were referring to regarding that.

[01:12:55] Oh, what was that acronym? RPS, the Renewable Procolation. Yes, thank you. So let's go back to that technical chart. Where was that? Oh, here it is. I have page 16, or do you have it?

[01:13:15] Yep. That one. Okay. So what is HFCs? HFCs are related to, I believe, air conditioning.

[01:13:35] hydrofluoric carbon. So it's a type of carbon that is really negatively impacting the ozone and climate change and all of that. So it's a very specific type of chemical used in industry that we're trying to switch away from. Okay. May I suggest that next time we make a notation of that on this slide, because like I said, it's for us and the public and people will refer to these

[01:14:03] PowerPoints down the road. Noted. Thank you. And then you said a lot of things are out of our control. Now I've got to find my other notes. Where was it? I forgot what slide it was.

[01:14:28] 19. Much of our goals that were set were out of our control. It was page 18 with these graphs. Yeah. The mountain's not that high to climb and it's doable, but much is not in the county's control.

[01:14:55] Are you referring to energy providers as probably the greatest way to get there? Hold on. So I was referring to, I believe, this slide where, you know, the county doesn't own the grid.

[01:15:14] Correct. That is absolutely... And decarbonizing the grid is like a huge heavy hitter. Right, right. And then our part in getting there is within these 74 goals or 74 action strategies or whatever you're calling them.

[01:15:34] Yeah. Okay, here's my big question to you. This might actually be more for Julia. The Sustainability Commission, why don't you step up to the podium. The Sustainability Commission, in June of 2022, unanimously supported this board to consider energy and sustainability impact assessments to, sorry, I got the wrong, here it is, my bad.

[01:16:11] It was August of 2022, and it was unanimous. The Sustainability Commission recommend that to align the land use, housing, and mobility chapters of the draft comprehensive plan to our goals.

[01:16:29] Did we do that? So there was some incorporation and revision of the language in the comp plan to include measures that would be needed to meet the goals. Define some.

[01:16:47] I have the exact language and updates provided to me from the planning office, and obviously it's in the comp plan now, but it was around, I believe, mostly land use. There was the Sustainability Commission invited the planning office to one of their meetings, and we discussed a few revisions.

[01:17:07] I don't remember the exact language off the top of my head. Okay, I would say that we fell really gravely short when we're going to take a massive area area of our once protected rural land from the local environment for a lot of different reasons and industrialize it and and and we know the reason the reason Loudoun County because Loudoun County grew a lot more than us if you put that slide back up Loudoun County grew a lot more than

[01:17:38] us I think we were at a 30 percent growth rate they were at 70 percent growth rate we our emissions went up six percent theirs went up 54 so if you look at the difference you might think that maybe they would go up maybe close to 15 to 20 percent but i would argue that probably the biggest reason why they went up so much more than us is because of what industry more than anything else i would i would i'd be willing to guess it's data center so i i don't think you can just throw that out

[01:18:17] there without any information. I just said I would be willing to guess. Did you not hear that part? Well, I know, but you throw things out. That's all right. Go on. If you can just wrap, just keep on going, and then we'll let other people ask questions. Okay, if you would not interrupt me, I would greatly appreciate it. Supervisor Lawson, when sometimes when you say things... No, I asked you not to interrupt my time. Thank you.

[01:18:35] Supervisor Lawson, you aren't the chair, and I'm asking for a little bit of privilege here, and just to say that when you throw out facts that aren't true, I feel a need to immediately counteract them. I'm asking you to treat me with the same respect that you treat the other colleagues on this board. So that is my point in all of this.

[01:18:56] I think that the work that you're doing is good work. And we absolutely want to do what we can to reduce our greenhouse gases. But what I take issue with and why I did not support back in November of 2020 is because the majority of the board did not want to incorporate this board's land use decisions and, excuse me, this board's land use decisions and how we achieve these goals.

[01:19:34] So as much as I might think these are honorable goals, I don't think they're attainable unless we incorporate and we're serious about the land use decisions that this board is making or we're going to get there these are as sustainable as me playing nine holes of golf with Tiger Woods and beating them that's just not going to happen so I think it's important that we manage expectations for the public and as worthy as these goals might be if this board and it's

[01:20:08] not your fault if this board does not incorporate our land use policies into this initiative it's unattainable and that's what i have a hard time you know uh promoting this with the with the public watching and expectations are unattainable it sounds like your assumption is that they are not incorporated well i haven't seen your 74 action no no i mean it has nothing to do with the actions

[01:20:41] it would have to do with what went into our forecast right um well you you've already you've already conceded that a lot of a lot of it is a not in our control but my argument is what is in our control we're missing a lot of what i think are the actions that this board can take to help achieve those goals and i think that's why you see where prince william county and loudon county have actually had the reverse effect from from our neighbors that's that's my point and i'm just

[01:21:19] simply saying i don't have questions i'm just simply saying i think that we the board are doing a disservice to the public if we you know are saying one thing and doing another and that's my point um so something that might be helpful is i can explain how our greenhouse gas forecast was developed and what factors were incorporated into it um so that might help to answer some of or if you could do that briefly briefly thank you um so the top line that you can see in this graph

[01:21:53] here that's our uh greenhouse gas forecast it shows if we were to take no action where would our emissions be in 2030 and 2050 what went into that was were um the county's growth factors that were incorporated for the 2040 comp plan so that included growth that was a number of households resident population square footage of non-residential space which included projections from from the digital gateway amendment a number of employees and total vehicle miles traveled so I just want to let you know that the all of those growth factors are included in that top

[01:22:32] line and we worked backwards from there to decide which sectors need our emissions reductions which top you're referring to this top line yes yeah that very top one okay um i tell you what julia will you uh schedule a meeting with me and i think we were trying to get something on the books before today maybe i have a vague memory of my staff telling me that you wanted to meet and unfortunately we didn't accomplish that but i would greatly appreciate some time maybe a zoom call? Sure. With you and AECOM? Yep, let's do that. Thank you. And just a point of privilege,

[01:23:11] I think, you know, there was a lot of conjecture on that part. We did build some of those things in, and I think some of the market forces are the data centers and other industries using renewable power that they took into account and some other things, which is regulatory market forces. That's good things that those are actually happening outside of our control. I'm just going to point out that's a good thing because it's happening without us having to do anything and the question is how much how do we make up the rest of that a lot of that will be decarbonizing the electric grid I mean even looking at some of those things not a lot of that has to do with land use or any of the things that you just referred to well so that's okay but of course let's go on

[01:23:51] of course we can't you and me have nothing to do with decarbonizing the electric grid that somehow you just you you have just I would just I got to say you just you sort of seem to think that the fact that we're building homes and doing something in the rural era has has a lot industrializing it has a lot to do with it when it comes to just are that's fine you should sit down and understand how they came up with the uh the forecast and some of the things behind it i think that'd be really useful thank you i i absolutely have made my points very clear and you're having a hard time accepting that and that's okay you're entitled to your opinion madam chair

[01:24:29] and I'm entitled to mine, and we'll leave it at that. Opinion, exactly. Supervisor Bailey. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, so that I'm not a parrot in any of this. I just want to say my little piece and turn this around if I can. First of all, let me just thank you for coming to our offices and making this presentation because, as my colleague said, we are not very technical and we do not understand the acronyms and the terms.

[01:24:57] But I have to say, when you came to my office, you made it very clear and put it in layman's terms so I wouldn't have to remember what HVAC, I know that's air conditioning, I wouldn't have to remember what the acronyms meant, so it makes sense to me.

[01:25:13] Secondly, I want to say that what gives me a sense of comfort with your presentation, I'm going to get to my question, but I want to make some comments, is the fact that this is compatible with the COG requirements, and that says regionally that we are on the right track and responsible citizens for the land and the environment as it relates to sustainability.

[01:25:40] So that gives me a lot of comfort because in layman's terms, the community may not understand the technicalities of this, but the community does understand that we have to heal the land and save the land. And so I appreciate that. And so with that, I just, I want to say, I want to ask a question, two questions, and then close out with a comment.

[01:26:01] One is, how do you, how will you go about coordinating your stakeholders? because I know that that is an important component of this from the experience of setting up the mental health facility that we're setting up, and I know that's a part of it, but what's the process that you'll go by in establishing your stakeholders in support of what you're trying to achieve?

[01:26:25] Absolutely. With a lot of feedback from a lot of you, actually, I think we received a lot of great recommendations on how to engage the public. Again, we have a long list of draft actions. They tend to fall in three different types of buckets.

[01:26:45] One's related to community vulnerable population adaptation, so vulnerable populations. So there's actions related to making vulnerable populations more resilient and adaptive to climate change. And then there's ones related to building efficiency, actions related to buildings and assets that way.

[01:27:06] And then there's actions related to transportation and fuel. And so our thought was, given that they kind of break into these types of chunks, if you will, we asked ourselves and the core team and Julia, what type of person or entity would be most affected by this action?

[01:27:28] And from that, we developed lists of, we received recommendations from the commission, from the core team, from the board, types of people that would fit into this. For example, if there's an action related to building policy or reform or energy, something like that, building owners, homeowners associations.

[01:27:51] If it's a vulnerable population, vulnerable population groups that represent vulnerable populations, and that's geographically, socially, ethnically, all of that. And thinking about what types of groups already exist, pulling a representative.

[01:28:09] So we, again, I mentioned the work groups, right? Having work groups take a look at these actions and provide their feedback on what's a priority. We want to create work groups of up to 12 people, one each a representative of one of these types of groups that I mentioned.

[01:28:25] So, for example, Department of Transportation or an energy company or what other types do we have? advocacy groups as well lots of different types of people that would be impacted by the actions bringing them to the table and listening not talking not explaining i mean not we have to explain some but really listening to to what they're finding important their gut reaction to what we presented um and so those are scheduled for april and may i saw your schedule yep and then um yeah does that i'm sorry no no no you know you don't have to go on but i i i ask you that

[01:29:02] question because I want the community to know that they will in fact have a part in this as it relates to resolution to this vast problem that we have or opportunity. Now, in terms of vulnerability, that's

the other part that I want to bring up because to my colleague's point, as it relates to industrialization, yeah, that's a component of it. But one of the things on slide 25, if you will, if you go back, slide 25. I would like for you, in short order, if you

[01:29:37] can expound on, because one of the things that will be a part of this, inclusive of the industrialization and all that, is the heat areas in our communities. And I'm looking at social vulnerability populations. I'm looking at food, water, and shelter as one of the vulnerable result entities, and we experienced that during COVID with food insecurity.

[01:30:04] Am I on point, Ms. Mano? Okay, so could you just kind of give us just a description, if you would, how that impacts upon sustainability, the vulnerable areas, how it impacts upon the sustainability and the process thereof?

[01:30:21] Does that make sense? It does. Yeah. So yes, so when we were, we used equity emphasis areas to determine where the vulnerable populations were in the county. And then our vulnerability assessment lets us know which climate hazards have the most impact on those communities. So we're looking at precipitation, extreme temperature.

[01:30:48] We then developed our mitigation actions based off of the vulnerability assessment. So which asset categories do we need to focus on protecting the most? So then we developed a list of mitigation actions. We then, as Tahira mentioned, worked closely with emergency management. We also consulted with social services to see what type of programs are currently available for things like, like, for example, you mentioned extreme heat. So, you know, we have cooling centers in the county.

[01:31:17] We have, similarly with when it's really cold, areas where people can go to warm up. We learned about what programs currently exist and what need to be expanded upon to protect those populations. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Okay, and so, Madam Chair, I have one last question.

[01:31:35] Why is this important now? Supposed to before or in the future? For the future. Oh, okay. And I ask that. Please. Not out of ignorance. I ask that because in the early 70s to the maybe early 90s, people were focusing on environment and sustainability.

[01:32:02] And then we took our focus off of it. So as it relates to our future and where we're going in the future for the next generation, why is it important now? What's happening now that makes us focus on setting up a commission? And I say this for the public mostly so that they, you know, because there's an element of cost that's going to be associated with this, and it can be very expensive sometimes, but why now?

[01:32:29] Yeah. Well, we're seeing some of the effects of climate change now. We know that those will be exacerbated over time, And there's a reason why you see across the world, nationally, regionally, and now locally, we are setting these goals on this timeline.

[01:32:48] We need to begin to reduce our emissions as quickly as possible. And, you know, there are targets set by the scientific community to figure out what we need to do to reduce the impacts, you know, basically as quickly as possible.

[01:33:07] So also why we're doing it now, because the board set the goals. We have a timeline now, 2030 and 2035. That's not too far away, so that's why I believe we set up the office now and the commission to begin working on this as soon as possible to be able to hit our targets.

[01:33:23] And I just want to offer a compliment to you, Ms. Mono, you and your team. Thank you for that. I want to offer a compliment to you in that you've done this in short order. What has in other counties has taken a long time to stand up, identify a subject matter expert to do the work and to bring forth a team and to my colleagues compliments to them for appointing the right hands to help you. You've done this in less than a year. And so just thank you for my one-eighth. I appreciate it. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Supervisor Bailey. Supervisor

[01:34:02] Rega. Thank you, Madam Chair. Ladies, thank you for the presentation. Julia, thank you for meeting with my office and for walking us through this. I had a lot of questions and i have a few questions today um i in our meeting talked about addressing the elephant in the room and so i'd like to ask you both i don't know who wants to answer uh who or what is the greatest contributor to a greenhouse gas emissions in our county in general who or what i'm going to pull

[01:34:31] up our the inventory again yeah i just want to take a look so everyone can see it was it this way there we go okay yeah so you can see from our 2018 inventory um and this is not uh unique to Prince William County. It's in most localities. The commercial building sector, transportation sector, and residential buildings are the largest sectors. So transportation, obviously you need people, right, to be behind the wheel and driving. And I talked to you about that, how population

[01:35:10] plays a huge role when it comes to the goals that we're trying to achieve. And when Supervisor Bodie initially brought this forward in discussions with my staff, I always talk about achievable goals, and then these goals that I like to refer as pie in the sky. Are they really attainable? Are we really going to get there? And if so, how? And so I have a bit of an issue with what's being presented, in particular what's coming from COG, because it's conflicting information. And I say that because, you know, they're the same folks that told us that we need to add 100,000 more people to our county by 2040. Then they tell us that we need to decrease greenhouse gas emissions

[01:35:44] by 50 percent in the next seven years from 2005 levels and by 80 percent by 2050. And so my question to you ladies is, what are we supposed to do with this conflicting information as we head towards trying to achieve these goals that have been put forth? Yeah, that's why this work is so difficult. So, you know, with sustainability, I like to think of it, or the sayings that they're the three Ps, it's people, planet, prosperity. It's like a, it's a juggling act. You have to consider all these things. It's not just about the environment. But we have to do the best that we

[01:36:22] can, considering, you know, making sure that there is housing for everybody, affordable housing, all these other important things to incorporate. So the question was, how are we going to do it? So that's what the plan is for. So we're going to present the most viable options. There are some market forces, again, on our side, like particularly with transportation.

[01:36:43] There are electric vehicle adoption trends. So we can expect that by 2030, between 17% and 25% of light-duty commercial vehicles will be electric by 2030. You know, that's something on our side that we won't necessarily have to act upon.

[01:37:00] But we will have to ramp up our public transportation resources, really encourage and incentivize folks to get out of their single-use vehicles. you know, think about our trails and our biking opportunities in the county.

[01:37:18] I can't tell you right now exactly what the exact list will be, because as Tahira talked about, we will be prioritizing those. But our job through this plan is really just to show the board and the county the most viable path forward, and then we'll have to make our decisions from there.

[01:37:36] Yeah, and I just want to make an emphasis on the points, rather, that I'm raising, because you know the folks in this county hold us right to whatever we put forth and so if we're going to be setting goals they have to be realistic goals right and so if we have the same unelected group of people in D.C. telling us that we need to add x amount of you know individuals to this county by a certain you know time frame and at the same time and the same breath they're telling us you know that we have another set of goals it's just contradicting and I think that we need to be prepared to answer those questions also from the public because they're going to come and so to Supervisor Lawson's point we don't have to go to slide 10 but she briefly mentioned it

[01:38:13] I think it's also important to highlight that the counties that have experienced the fastest population growth are the only two that have seen increases in their greenhouse gas emissions and that was Loudoun County and that was Prince William County based on slide 10 that you presented and so that leads to my next question based on the work that you all have done and by the way just want to acknowledge some of the members of the sustainability commission that are here thank you for your time and your effort in educating us as we navigate, in my opinion, or for me personally, waters that I'm not very familiar with. So thank you for all that you have done.

[01:38:48] Have our land use policies and continual packing, in my opinion, of more people into the same size place had a negative impact when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Prince William County? I don't think I have the data to support or negate that. Yeah, I don't think I have we have data that would exactly get to that answer okay do you think it's likely that we will at some point all right so the question is is population growth negatively affecting emissions

[01:39:21] and and how have our land use policies impacted that as we try to achieve these goals um land use policies potentially yes in the future could impact greenhouse gas emissions okay one of the the actions that we have is an action related to understanding that yeah i mean that's one of them I think some of the effects are not 100% known.

[01:39:52] Some of the actions that we have proposed would assist the county in understanding exactly that impact. And that's part of what Julia's whole office and role is kind of tied into. I guess I would ask one clarifying question because your two questions seem to be connected.

[01:40:09] What conflict are you referring to? Is it that the conflict between more population means more greenhouse gas emissions? Right, because humans are the biggest contributor to that, right? And so if we're talking about, you know, population growth and explosion of housing, that's going to negatively impact, right, the targets that we're trying to achieve.

[01:40:31] And so there's no action. And so, you know, I want to also know more about how our land use policies are either negatively or positively impacting us achieving these goals. Absolutely. I would say that there is definitely a negative impact if there is no action taken. okay with the actions that we have they are set to curb that negative impact and so a lot of them for example decarbonizing the electrical grid or switching to electric vehicles is is dealing with a behavior or an outcome taking taking the option away for even if you had more people they're using electric vehicles right so it's kind of just changing that which is why the cesmp and the

[01:41:11] actions are really important because it's not just like they're trying to target a source right at the source rather than at the effect, I guess I should say. And it addresses policies, it addresses actions at the county level and at the residential level, at the business level, those kind of things.

[01:41:29] And that's a good segue to my final question for now. So on slide 18, it looks like we're looking at one-third of this reduction to come from market or regulatory factors. I'm always looking for costs right what is it going to cost the county to make their vehicles you know efficient and most importantly what is it going to cost the citizens of this county to implement these changes that's really my priority and so my question to you is what happens if those outside market or regulatory factors don't happen don't come through yeah so as was mentioned earlier this is we like to think

[01:42:06] of this as a bit of a live document we can make our assumptions now and and decide which priorities to to take now but uh we will see in five years what the effects of some of these external market factors are and we may have to adjust um so if that happens then then we will have to adjust so what i will ask um as we continue to work on this and uh when you guys come back to us for you all to factor in uh that cost if these outside forces don't come through we've already had certain projects in this county that we thought we were going to have federal or additional state funding coming to us and that has not been the case and so who's going to pick up the burden or

[01:42:42] the tab if you will so i would appreciate having a different set of numbers to compare if those outside forces don't come through sure yeah and that would essentially be again if that so instead of looking at uh that top chunk being taken away from market forces we'll be looking at what would happen if if no action was taken correct we can do that yeah thank you so i'm going to go on to supervisor franklin just as a time check it is quarter four and we do have three other presentation and work sessions this afternoon not because i know you haven't said anything so i'm not saying you have to be responsibly brief. I'm asking other people also to be responsibly brief.

[01:43:19] I'll be very brief, hopefully. So thank you for the presentation. And again, thank you for coming to our offices and walking through this. I do have a few questions. And I do want to kind of build on some of the discussions we've been having around population increase and transportation specifically. But first, I do want to ask, so you, on page 10, we do have the surrounding jurisdictions and their change in emissions by locality do you know what those numbers look like for washington dc and the reason why i ask is because they obviously have a larger population

[01:43:54] than we do but they also have a more accessible public transportation system and so if if it sounds like you may not have those numbers not off the top of my head no okay if that's something at least you can just provide to my office maybe our other colleagues that'll be great because i do think that growth is going to come and so i think to your point how do we mitigate some of the environmental factors when we do see an increase in population i think that we have to do that starting with transportation we have to figure out a way to get people at least in this

[01:44:30] region in prince william county how do we get people out of their cars and to me that's all that it comes down to a change in mindset and a culture change almost but but obviously we also have to change our public transportation system right we have to make it to where it's more available to many more communities than it currently is but then you also get to well if we have a bunch of buses on the roads you know what emissions does that give off so then it also raises the question of we need to make

our buses more sustainable as well which I know PRTC we're going down that road of doing so. So to me, it kind of goes back to, all of this goes back to the

[01:45:07] discussion of transportation. How do we make transit more available here in Prince William County? And then if we do that, how do we make it more sustainable? But even if we made it more available, again, we have to kind of change our mindset to want to get on the buses, to go to Stonebridge, to go to the mall, to go to even the, if you're on the eastern end, the western part of the county or vice versa if you're in Washington DC or even Arlington I would say it's nothing for people to just hop on the bus to get to the grocery store even right and so in Prince William County we have to kind of start almost a mindset change but we also have the resources to do that

[01:45:46] right I have to be able to get on the bus to go to Stonebridge and to not take 30 minutes even though I live five minutes driving away so that's kind of the the first point I want to make but also going to the discussion about funding for making our county more sustainable. I am hoping that we are exploring federal and state resources to do that because that's going to be important.

[01:46:12] We can't do this alone and quite frankly, and I always beat up on our members of the General Assembly, they ought to be providing us with more resources to be more sustainable. I think the last thing I'll say is with regards to equity. One of the challenges, and obviously I believe in sustainability, I support it, let's do all of that, but one of the challenges that we've seen is it costs more money to be sustainable than not, right? If you want to get a solar panel, that costs lots of money. If you want to get an electric vehicle, that costs more than your gas powered cars. Now there are tax credits to do some of this, but I guess if you can just address

[01:46:49] some of the comments that I've made. How do we be more sustainable? How do we get the state and the feds involved in helping us be more sustainable? How do we make our transportation systems more sustainable? And then how do we really get at the equity piece? And if I want to be sustainable, can I actually afford to be sustainable? So that was a lot, but I hope you can address some of it. Yes. So starting with the funding, as you all likely know, with the Inflation Reduction Act, that is, I think, it's the largest sum of money that will federally is being invested

[01:47:26] in climate in U.S. history. So there's a lot of federal funding that will soon be available, and it is meant for localities to take advantage of to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. So guidance, there's still guidance coming out about those opportunities, and I'm definitely keeping a close eye on them, and the hope is that we can take advantage of some of those opportunities to help to implement the plan.

[01:47:51] Your other questions were equity. Oh, yes. Yeah, so thinking about cost to residents, we want to, some of the evaluation criteria that will be used to prioritize the actions, it's going to be looking at cost to residents.

[01:48:14] And the whole point of the vulnerability assessment is to make sure that we are equitably implementing some of these actions for the communities that would be most affected by climate change. So yes, that's going to be a big consideration in the prioritization and implementation. Thank you. Supervisor Weird. Afternoon, Julia. Long time no see. Yeah. A lot of these questions will be familiar to you from Sustainability Commission. Glad you're on page 10.

[01:48:49] In looking at the statistics here, you've got Prince William County, 32% population growth, emissions increasing by six. Loudoun County increased 54 with a population growth index of 71%.

[01:49:05] Everybody else has increased, but they've decreased their GHG emissions. So from this slide, I would take it that population growth has nothing to do with greenhouse gas emissions on average. You're essentially decoupling population growth through these statistics from increases or decreases in greenhouse gas. Otherwise, there'd be some measure of uniformity to increase or decrease based on percent population growth. Yeah, so I'm going to repeat something that Tahira said earlier, where

[01:49:39] if there is population growth with no or little action to mitigate the effects of population growth, then greenhouse gas emissions, I think, are more closely tied. But if there is intentional action towards reducing emissions, then you will see reduced emissions.

[01:50:01] But I would also suggest that if you look at this chart and plug in a different dynamic, namely bulk energy users, Loudoun County and Prince William County have had the greatest growth in bulk energy users over that same time period.

[01:50:18] Is it possible that that is the actual driver between the increases? It's a possibility to be a factor. All I'm saying is population growth seems to be relatively useless in terms of defining how or why greenhouse gas emissions are either increasing or decreasing.

[01:50:44] Yeah, I would say it's not the sole factor. It's really more based on action. Other factors. Yeah. If we could go down to slide 15. Okay.

[01:51:01] I think this sort of underscores what I was just getting at. If you break it down, 89% or 31% is 27.6% of the greenhouse gas emissions inventory is coming from commercial energy, specifically commercial electricity.

[01:51:21] Given where we're at currently, with increased demand, again, from bulk power users, is that likely to significantly increase GHG emissions absent any change in the way that Dominion supplies power or the type of power Dominion supplies?

[01:51:51] Yeah, so if there, are you saying if there is increased energy demand and usage and no action to mitigate, would it increase emissions? Yes. Yes. Okay. The reason I'm noting that is because decarbonizing the electric grid, given current demand, future demand projections, and where both PJM and Dominion claim to be in terms of their ability to provide capacity to meet those projected demands.

[01:52:28] They're not going to be able to do that with renewables, which means they're going to have to rely on either gas, nuclear, which isn't going to be an option because they've run out of nuclear capacity, or potentially, worst-case scenario, either unretiring coal plants or, in the alternative, buying more power from coal-fired plants out of state and importing it into Prince William County or into the Dominion service area.

[01:52:56] If that's the case, since a significant portion of your reliance for reducing or meeting your goal is on market and regulatory forces, RGGI or Clean Virginia Act be damned, essentially, If the only way that Dominion and PJM can supply the power is through gas or coal-fired plants, doesn't it make it unachievable?

[01:53:25] And are we contributing to the potential for the goals being unachievable with each new bulk energy user we approve? Or does it at least make it significantly harder to achieve those goals because Dominion is always going to be behind and running on their hamster wheel trying to catch up.

[01:53:50] Okay, so our assessment, I guess, does not include some of the assumptions that you're making.

[01:54:07] We are going off of the information that, you know, regarding the RPS, which does say, you know, through the Virginia Clean Economy Act, it established the RPS requiring that more renewables be incorporated into the grid.

[01:54:25] I think that you're saying that it might be unlikely that that comes to fruition. I think it's a question of at what point does policy meet reality? And if you increase demand or consumption at a rate that Dominion or PJM cannot keep up with, which apparently is the case, you know, with projections of gigawatts of more capacity required in the coming years, and even PJM caterwauling about, you know, regional brownouts, not just in the Commonwealth but in the Mid-Atlantic,

[01:55:06] doesn't it make achieving the goals through market and regulatory forces significantly less possible just because so much of that is going to be tied to meeting RGGI or Clean Virginia mandates that they're not going to be able to make because of the increased demands created principally by Loudoun and Prince William County?

[01:55:28] So I guess if I can, it may be helpful just because I don't want to put the team in a position to speak for Dominion Energy, to actually invite them.

[01:55:46] I don't want to assume that inviting them is even possible and that they would accept the offer. But I just don't know that we're in a position to answer some of the questions. If you would so desire, they're on my speed dial. And I think they would be more than happy to come and address that, at least Dominion would.

[01:56:05] And in interest of brevity, I'll leave it at that, but I would suggest that if we're going to continue with this presentation, perhaps, I don't know that the population growth serves any purpose in that one particular on slide 10, and I would just decouple it from the growth and find something that has more of a correlation between increases and decreases and the various jurisdictions other than population.

[01:56:39] Supervisor Bode. Thank you, Madam Chair. First, thank you for the presentation. I really appreciate the presentation that we got in Senator Bailey's office a few weeks ago. It was a really good precursor to this conversation and helped sort of tee up this conversation.

[01:56:56] Also, thank you to our partners at ACOM for all the work they've done on this thus far. We've come a long way since, you know, we got that first resolution approved back in 2020. And I also wanted to welcome Chair Freed, who is my appointee to the Sustainability Commission, Mr. Beaton, who is here as well, and all the work that they've done.

[01:57:14] Speaking of that resolution, Julia, do you have that resolution keyed up at all anywhere? I do not. Correct me if I'm wrong, but in that resolution, we talked about applying the CSMP to the entire comprehensive plan, right? Not just specific chapters?

[01:57:32] To be incorporated into the comp plan, yep. That includes land use by virtue of that, right? So as we continue to have these conversations, and I know that some folks have been unhappy with the sequence because we got you all stood up and this work done while the train on the comp plan itself was on its way to adoption. But once we get to the point where we adopt the CSMP, you've sort of placed in the comp plan ways that can handshake together and amend and implement this into the existing comp plan.

Is that right? Correct. The hope is that it would be adopted as an amendment to the comp plan. As an amendment to the comp plan. So wherever there might be some incongruities

[01:58:10] or places there's friction between the two, this would help smooth those over. If we're not at a place where these two would be in inherent conflict, correct? So I just want to make sure that the public understands that just because we may have approved and adopted a new comp plan back in the December of last year, which has mobility, land use, housing, utilities, that we're not at the end of this process yet because we still have the CSMP, which will come as a result of all the work that's being done, all the feedback that's being given, and what have you. My second question, to go back to something that Supervisor Weir said, which I appreciate,

[01:58:46] is this idea of population and transportation and greenhouse gas emissions. The other counties that were mentioned that have had decreases over the years, they're closer to a core, a metropolitan core, which has more access to jobs and actually denser population centers, so you have more people that are able to live, work, and play in the same areas.

[01:59:09] And as Supervisor Franklin said, more access to actually mass transit to get them there They don't have to jump in their cars and fill the atmosphere with more greenhouse gas emission. I guess my question as a corollary to that is, in the comp plan where we adopted it in December, where we, for the first time in the county's history, actually decreased the number of lane miles that we approved expanding, and we're actually looking at alternate transit options, we're looking at metro, we're looking at more buses, we're looking at BRT, We're looking at more express VRE, especially once the Long Bridge is completed.

[01:59:46] Are we on the path, especially given what you're looking at in your recommendations, of actually changing that paradigm where we will start to join the other jurisdictions where we have more options and we're getting denser? We have more options for folks that are not jumping in their cars and what have you. I know that's a long-winded question, but I hope you followed that.

[02:00:04] Yeah, so, I mean, everything that you said is correct. if you know if where you can live work and play all if that requires less transportation that helps cut down your vmts if folks are using public transportation more that obviously helps to cut down your your vmts um are we on our way to that i mean with the changes in the comp plan i believe so and we don't know the exact prioritization of the recommendations and the cesmp yet but i think that some of the ones that you just mentioned will be at the top of the list so i would say yes that's that would be moving in the correct direction so if you could just say that one more time with the adoption of the comp plan you believe that we are building bending that trajectory in the right

[02:00:42] direction yes yes okay appreciate that um just two more if you don't mind i'm trying to know we're short on time um as we talk about population growth and and and housing projections and things that cog which helps set the framework for all the other work that we're doing in the region does um what's the value proposition or what we lose out on if we continue to try to push away growth in Prince William and allow other localities like Stafford, Fauquier, and those outlying jurisdictions to absorb more housing as opposed to us managing our growth in a way that makes

[02:01:20] sure that people aren't driving all the way from Fauquier, Stafford, Fredericksburg, through our locality into where jobs are? What's the shortfall there? I don't know if I can really answer that question if that's under my wheelhouse in terms of economic impact, and I think that's what you're asking. Not

economics, it's greenhouse gas emissions, whereby you have folks in these outlying counties, which are even farther out than Loudoun and Prince William, literally having to jump in their cars to drive through because they've been priced out of the housing in this jurisdiction and others because we've not done the right job of doing housing. How does that factor in the

[02:01:52] greenhouse gas emissions? If people are commuting further, then that would have an impact on our transportation sector. Right. Which does count in our inventory. The way that the transportation miles are calculated. It's not necessarily limited to who lives in the county. Folks who pass through the county are included in our inventory as well, the way that it's the methodology. Right, and I appreciate that. And why I bring that up is as we continue to work through our vision, not only from

[02:02:31] the comp plan, but from this standpoint, we continue to have conversations around housing, transit infrastructure, jobs. At the end of the day, people drive and move to where the jobs are, but they live where they can afford a good quality of life for their families, right?

[02:02:48] Those things don't always align with each other. That's why for this community, for the longest time, we've had a large number, almost three quarters of our folks, sometimes commuting outside of where they live in order to have a good quality job. But we're on the cusp of changing that with some of the changes that we've made and some of the things that you're looking at.

[02:03:06] And so I just want to highlight for folks that what we're doing right now is not only trying to rectify some of our own shortcomings in terms of our greenhouse gas emissions. We're also looking at the fact that as a regional player, we do have folks that drive through our locality every single day to get to work, where they could be driving to our county or living in our county.

[02:03:28] So as we continue to have these conversations, I want to make sure that folks see the bigger picture here and realize that what we're doing, especially with the CSMP, isn't just about our stake as Prince William County. It's about our overall stake as a member of this region and how our actions, the policy direction that we give impacts the greenhouse gas emissions and, frankly, the climate resilience of the entire region.

[02:03:53] Thank you so much, Madam Chair. Thank you. Then we have Supervisor Angry. He's the last one to speak so far because he hasn't said anything. So please go ahead for your first time, and then hopefully we can wrap up. Thank you, Madam Chair. It is my goal to take you off the witness stand.

[02:04:11] I do want to say, Julia, our Sustainability Commission, and Tahira, I hadn't met you yet. So thank you and ACOM for what you've done and this presentation. Everything they said here is right. I mean, this is a new commission, a new path forward, tying to everything we've done.

[02:04:29] But I'm going to jump off of you now, and I'm just going to talk to the board here for a second. So I feel that these presentations that we get, the conversation is with us, and we spend a lot of time having a conversation out here. I think most of the questions we ask here was a conversation that we need to be having.

[02:04:46] You know, when I hear about a population growth from Cox and 100,000 people, I recall Cox saying if we want to get the blue line down here, the metro, which everyone wanted, that we need to see a growth on this east end of about that much. I'm not so sure if that's ever going to happen.

[02:05:02] But I think most of the conversation that we've been having here is conversation that we should be having about the future of where this county is going. But it seems that we jump out here and it's almost like we're lawyers or we're attorneys here and we're drilling down here.

[02:05:20] I just want to talk to us and see if we can get this conversation back to us. So, Madam Chair, don't want to overstep, you know, in your lane. But I'm hoping that as we have these discussions and we start pulling out these points, whether it's land use or growth or emissions, that we're talking about the future of Prince William County.

[02:05:38] And if there's a clarifying question we want from our presenters, we get it. And they corral us to make sure we're in the right ball field of questioning. because I'm pretty sure that sitting right here with these four are smarter than anyone up here when it comes to sustainability, which I appreciate you all being here and the work that you've done thus far.

[02:05:58] I just want us to focus on us to have this question about where this county is going based on the information that is given to us from our presenters. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Supervisor Angry. Supervisor Lawson, you have another question?

[02:06:15] You're on my list. And then maybe we can wrap it up after that and we can move on to our next presenter. Yeah, actually, Supervisor Anger, I have actually more of a reminder. This is a work session, and Julia is absolutely smarter than me.

[02:06:30] She's county staff. I rely on her to teach me about sustainability, which is why there's Q&A. And if you recall, I said it's the board's decisions that are going to help us meet those goals.

[02:06:47] But that's why this is a work session, and I asked them questions. Those technical slides I absolutely needed help with. Mr. Shorter, a few weeks ago I gave a directive when we thought that the DEQ, well, the variance for the diesel generators, the emissions.

[02:07:11] I don't recall if my directive included having somebody from Dominion Energy. I thought I'd mention Dominion as a possibility, but now that the DEQ has removed Prince William from the variants, I think they've removed Fairfax as well.

[02:07:32] There's still obviously community interest, but Dominion should absolutely be in the queue for coming to us to discuss lots of things, especially everything Supervisor Weir was touching on. Just wanted to remind you.

[02:07:48] Thank you. Okay. Well, thank you. seeing no further discussion. Thank you for all the information that you gave us. And we look forward to having you bring back more and after you speak to the stakeholders. And thank you for our, and Warren Beaton's my representative on the Sustainability Commission. These two guys here are pragmatic and practical, and I really appreciate you. So thank you, and we look forward to seeing when you come back with next. Thank you. Thank you. Our next presentation is

[02:08:27] from Ms. Horner regarding the Great Oak Community Noise Monitoring. I know that was sort of a very technical report, and it was all it was was a technical report, and maybe you can sort of sum up and tell us where we are and where we go. Good afternoon. Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board, Rebecca Horner, and we have with us today virtually Jared Dempcher. I think I said his name

correctly, but to give you a little background and context, last year, almost exactly a year ago. The county was receiving concerns, complaints about a data center off of 234 in

[02:09:06] Godwin, which is next to the Great Oak neighborhood. And they engaged, the neighbors engaged with the board members who then gave us a directive to work with AWS, who's the data center owner, and the neighborhood. So we started meeting with them. And through that process of meeting together, there was a request made of the board by the neighborhood to perform a sound study to measure the decibels in the neighborhood related to the data center output. So the county entered into a

[02:09:41] scope of work with a contractor, ATCS, which Jarrett is with, and they were engaged to measure sound levels, decibel levels over a 72-hour period continuously. And they have developed a report which was provided to you with your board packet. And Jarrett is here to provide a brief summary about the study, the methodology, and the results of that study, and can be available to answer

[02:10:15] questions as well. So I will introduce Jarrett and allow him to provide that presentation now. Thank you, Rebecca, and thank you, Madam Chair and members of the board, for the opportunity to present our noise study today.

[02:10:32] As Rebecca had mentioned, we were contracted with the county to do a noise study for the Great Oak community, which is directly next to an AWS data center. So just a little bit about myself. My specialty is in acoustics.

[02:10:49] I'm a senior noise environmental manager for ATCS. and part of what we were contracted out to do by the county was to take noise readings along the community of the Great Oak HOA. As you can see here, the aerial imagery depicts where we took measurements, which is at the edge of the back of the property line for each residential property closest to the limits of the AWS facility. We worked with the county's office

[02:11:24] us to obtain land plots to make sure that we were within property boundaries on the Great Oak community side. So as you can see, we had five sites, sites one, two, three, and four, where as far as we could go while staying within residential land uses adjacent to the facility to obtain noise readings. And just to give a little bit of background, the way we select these noise sites for measurements is to get the best data available based on topography,

[02:11:59] ease of access, and just acoustic sound knowledge in general. So the purpose of the first four sites, sites one through four, were to try to identify and isolate sound that was being emitted by the AWS facility. And then site number five was placed deeper in the community to try to capture basically control noise to identify how noise would propagate over the existing terrain. There's a little bit of a depressed area in here throughout the middle of this corridor

[02:12:35] here between the AWS facility and the residential land uses. I will note that we had coordinated with the HOA initially prior to conducting noise measurements in these locations to gain proper access and permissions to the properties. And I will just note that we were, like I said, on the residential property, but just outside of the fence boundary. And acoustics fences act as a noise shielding mechanism. So to create the true worst case scenario where any noise would be blocked, we wanted to get those noise measurements and those noise meters on the opposite side of

[02:13:14] the fence. So they're placed here, as you can see, accordingly. And just to kind of show you guys what we use in terms of acoustics, we use RION NL42 meters, which are class two noise meters.

[02:13:31] They're ANSI certified, which is the American National Standards Institute certified. We get our noise meters calibrated on a two-year basis, which is within standards of VDOT and any other various DOTs that we work with up and down the East Coast. And then in addition to that, we both pre and post calibrate our noise meters to ensure that they are within the right readings prior to taking any measurements. So the purpose of this study was to try to conduct a 72-hour

[02:14:04] continuous noise monitoring session for the community. So what we did was we went out and place the meters at those five locations, as you had seen in the previous slides. And daily, these noise meters were checked on, batteries were changed, and any observations while our noise analyst was on site was documented as extraneous noise that was not attributed to the facility.

[02:14:31] So things such as somebody stomping through the woods to go get the noise meters and change out the batteries. Or, you know, there's a Norfolk Southern Rail pretty close by, you know, a horn was identified. So those types of spikes in the data were stripped out to really try to isolate the noise data that was being emitted by the AWS facility. So since this was a 72-hour monitoring session and the report, we wanted to kind of capture the entire duration of the study.

[02:15:03] So these are the levels, the mins, the maximums, and the average LEQ levels obtained at each site for the entire duration of the 72-hour period. I'll just make a note that these readings were captured in five-minute intervals just so that we could have a more manageable data set over the course of 72 hours.

[02:15:26] The LEQ, just for everybody's reference, stands for an equivalent continuous sound level. So the energy that's being emitted by the facility, that's what the meters pick up on, and that's what we report out on. So as you can see, for the 72-hour period, our max noise level was around a 66.1.

[02:15:47] Our minimum was around a 39.3. And our average for the entire period was a 54.7 decibel. And to take it a step further and to try to, you know, we weren't contracted to directly compare this to the noise ordinance, But within the noise ordinance currently, you know, there's two timeframes identified.

[02:16:12] There's a daytime noise ordinance and there's nighttime. So for the county's benefit, we wanted to break this out into those two sessions and do a similar exercise where we identified the min, max, and average within the daytime timeframe.

[02:16:30] And for the daytime timeframe, the maximum was at a 66.1, obviously exactly the same as the entire period, which we identified in the previous graph. The minimum was at a 41.6, and the average was at a 55.2. And isolating the data into the nighttime monitoring session, we observed levels of a 61.7 as a maximum, a 39.3 as a minimum, and a 54 decibel as an overall average. So if you were

[02:17:07] to compare those three graphs, that both the min, max, and average within the three different timeframes that we broke out between the entire duration, the daytime, and the nighttime levels, they're all within a decibel to a decibel and a half of each other, which makes sense due to the sheer size of the data set that we were working with and the levels that were obtained.

[02:17:28] So the purpose of the study was just to report out on what we observed and the levels, and that's a high-level capture of the noise readings. Obviously, we have more data that's in the report that we can discuss, but I just wanted to give a follow-up that in addition to the noise measurements, we're working with the county on conducting some noise contour modeling.

[02:17:55] So we work with a noise modeling program called Soundplan, which is an internationally known point source noise program, which allows us to accurately predict noise contours. And what I mean by that is how the noise propagates over the current terrain into the community and the levels associated with that based on the Amazon Center.

[02:18:22] So this is a 3D model that takes into consideration the structure heights that the facility has, the parapet walls that wrap the tops of the buildings, the stack heights of the fans, the acoustic of the axial flow fans that sit atop of the buildings, as well as any other noise sources and 3D terrain elements within the area.

[02:18:44] And the program has a logarithmic equation that is able to properly and appropriately model to predict noise levels associated with the facility. So currently, right now, myself and my team are coordinating with AWS on obtaining some beta to finalize that modeling.

[02:19:04] And we'll certainly share that information with the board once we finalize those activities. But right now, we're still kind of in the coordination efforts with AWS. And so far, they've been pretty forthcoming on all of our data requests. We're just kind of working through the logistics of it now.

[02:19:20] So if anybody has any questions, I'd be happy to answer. So thank you for coming. This is Anne Wheeler, the chair. I just have a real quick question, and I know I should know the answer to this. What is our ordinance say about the maximum decibels during the day and during the evening?

[02:19:39] What are those two numbers? I know now that we're not exempting commercial AC in the evening. So what are the numbers in the ordinance? They vary per zoning ordinance, but in a residential community, it's 60 decibels during the day at the right-of-way property line for a residential and 55 decibels at night.

[02:20:05] Great. Thank you. You're welcome. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. First, I don't want to belabor the issue here at hand. You all know that this community is in the Coles District, and they've been living a nightmare, in my opinion, over the last couple of years, not just with the blasting and the initial phases of construction, but also with the noise coming after the project was completed.

[02:20:30] I do want to take this time to thank my colleagues here on the day as for supporting the directive unanimously. If it hadn't been for the unanimous support of the board, we wouldn't have gotten to this place. I know that it was just stated that AWS has been forthcoming with data. That wasn't always the case.

[02:20:46] And because that wasn't always the case, that propelled for us to ask for an independent study. and here we are, which just revealed that the issues that folks in the Great Oak community had raised were valid and not just something that they had made up or that they were just hearing things. To your point, Madam Chair, if we could please bring back up the slide that has the sites that were tested, I'd appreciate it.

[02:21:12] Rebecca, I don't know if that's you or him. Anyway, while we get that up, Madam Chair, you were asking what those numbers were. I think it's important to highlight that on Site 1. We discovered through the study that there was a violation 32 times in Site 2, 51 times.

[02:21:33] Site 3, 29 times. Site 4, 39 times. And Site 5, 25 times. I think it's important to highlight that the first number is from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., and that was in excess of 60 DBAs. And the second number is 10

p.m. to 7 a.m. in excess of 55 DBAs.

[02:21:50] So just moving forward and to manage expectations, I know that we're going to have the working group put together, And I look forward to interacting with those folks. And it is my desire that we will be more balanced towards having the input of the community rather than the industry. Because those are the folks that are being negatively impacted by having a data center in a residential area.

[02:22:11] And so I'm very much looking forward to that. Also want to invite my colleagues, since you all supported this initiative unanimously, I do plan on having a meeting with members of the HOA community and our police department. At our last board meeting, we talked about concerns in terms of enforcement, but I know that our police force takes any and all calls very seriously, and so just to manage expectations, how we're going to go about enforcing and reporting violations as we move forward.

[02:22:37] So in summary, just want to thank the consultant for doing this in, I would say, honest and even-handed manner, and to the county for pressing forward with this study to help validate the community's concerns. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you. Supervisor Bodie?

[02:22:54] Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll be brief, and I appreciate the commentary by Supervisor Vega in regard to this issue. My only question is in regards to the actual monitoring that was done, the range, because you talked about the decibel levels and the actual intensity of the noise, but did you measure a spectrum of noise, tonal noise, the sound of generators, the sound of the HVAC systems?

[02:23:21] What all went into the different types of tonal noise? that you all monitored for. Sorry, could you repeat the question? I was having audio difficulties for about half of the question. Sure. So I won't say the entire thing. And my question is, what types of noise did you monitor for? Because you talked about decibel levels and sort of the volume of noise, but did you measure for different types of noise, so different tonal noises and things like that. Yeah. So I think what you're referring to is octave band monitoring. Based on the scope of

[02:24:01] work that we were identified to complete with the county, it was just decibel related noise. So we didn't connect, we didn't conduct any octave band model or excuse me, monitoring, nor did we do, and I know that some meters have the capabilities to, you know, you set a certain threshold and you're able to audio record what that tone is or what that noise is. We didn't, we didn't conduct any of that based on our scope of work with the county. Okay, I appreciate that because what I ask is I don't think it's necessarily in the case of this specific site, but we know that in other areas where there's been concerns, there's been not only the HVAC systems and the fans, there's

[02:24:38] also been generator concerns about noise. There's been tonal noise of different frequencies of tones that, you know, some children might be able to hear that adults can't. I just want to make sure that we're being holistic with how we look at this information. Thank you. Yep, you're welcome. Hold on, let me just see who's next.

[02:25:00] Supervisor Bodie, then Supervisor Franklin. Sorry, it was Supervisor Franklin. Sure, just want to echo the comments to a degree. Supervisor Vega and Supervisor Bodie. I do have maybe a recommendation or a suggestion.

[02:25:16] I think I've said this before. Obviously, the police department is going to be working in making sure that the enforcement is taking place. I would also just encourage us to figure out how we can levy

permitting penalties against particularly this entity, but any entity that is in clear violation, as we've seen from the various sites.

[02:25:39] Obviously, our police department has a lot to do. And I think, obviously, since they're violating a criminal, I'm sorry, since the violation will be of an ordinance, it will be a criminal penalty. But I would just, whatever we can do to also levy penalties against companies like this and start snatching permits, that's really going to, I think, get their attention because at that point they wouldn't be able to effectively operate.

[02:26:09] So that's my suggestion. I didn't run that by anybody. But, again, I think that that would make quite the difference in whether a company chooses to violate. Madam Chair. So I guess I do have a question.

[02:26:25] You know, we were talking about violations, and you said, you know, 39 times and 20 times. But do we know that that's actually the facility next door, or could that have been a helicopter? And I'm sort of asking the gentleman who put, you know, those are instances. And so do we know that all those instances are tied to the facility next door?

[02:26:47] Not 100%, and that's why the purpose of conducting the noise contour modeling, which is really able to, the program is really able to isolate the sound to the axial flow fans that ultimately contribute to a majority of the noise coming from the facility.

[02:27:04] I will say that, you know, obviously we weren't able to man the noise meters for a 72-hour stretch. Typically when we do noise monitoring sessions, we do like to note the spikes and things like you had mentioned that are attributed to other noise sources, not directly related to the source that we're looking to isolate.

[02:27:24] And while on site, when I was in the field, I tried to do that with instances like dogs barking, the train, and we were able to strip some of that data out and really try to drill down to what was observed. However, since we were not able to be with the noise meter for a full 72 hours on site making those notes, yes, there is the opportunity for other noise sources to have contributed to the overall ambient noise environment.

[02:27:52] Okay, I just want to make sure everybody's on the same page with that. Supervisor Lawson and then Supervisor Vega. Do you have a follow-up comment to us? Well, to both of you, yeah. So it's 176 total violations, and I think it's important to also highlight that I never, prior to this time, received any complaints on noise from this community until the data center was starting to be built and after the fact.

[02:28:17] So I don't want to dismiss their concerns and say that there are other, you know, like helicopters or anything like that, because this is a very valid concern and issue that this community has been facing for a very long time. I'm not, I know that there are noise issues and I'm not saying they're not noise issues. I just, you know, the number of instances, I know that there were outliers that they couldn't necessarily, it's not like, oh, they violated 39 times. Some of that might be like a nighttime helicopter, but without doing more of a sophisticated study, I think it's hard to say, but I'm not saying that there's not noise issues. I'm happy to push forward for a more sophisticated study we can do that too i'm not saying there's not a noise

[02:28:54] problem okay i completely agree uh but to supervisor uh franklin's point i'll defer to the county attorney but i believe that our police department is needed because it's a class one misdemeanor and so i

understand you know trying to think outside the box and use additional um resources but am i correct madam chair members of the board as written your noise ordinance a violation is a class two misdemeanor you can go up to a class one misdemeanor as the board knows You have created two working groups that will, in reality, be the same working group.

[02:29:24] Mr. Shorter is coordinating that with Ms. Horner. Our office is working with Mr. Shorter and the police department. There will be discussions with regards to what recommendations there to do with regards to the noise ordinance, what recommendations to you to do with regard to the land use matters, et cetera, and we will come back to you on that.

[02:29:44] but at this time the only penalty is the class two misdemeanor and i know the police department will be working on this with training etc and education for the for the uh community thank you you're you took your question down okay supervisor lawson thank you um if i recall correctly miss roble we also would discuss state legislative changes correct you have the option to do a civil penalty but right now you have in your noise ordinance you have it as a

[02:30:22] criminal penalty which is why staff recommended to you to put a sunset clause in place so that we can study this and work on this and monitor it and then come back to you in a year as to what what are your options and where do you want to go right but to supervisor Franklin's point when when she said whatever we can do if I recall correctly the civil would require a state change in the code that would allow us to do that there you have the option if you don't want to do criminal enforcement you can do civil and which but currently sorry I don't think I'm being clear then do we have we currently have that option yes you currently have been then remind me a couple of the concern was

[02:31:02] that the option is only and I don't have that right up that the amount the amount was not very which significant to be able to change the behavior well especially if you're Jeff Bezos which is why staff was recommending to look at this from various angles also with regards to the the zoning and the dcsm to see how we can attack this issue okay so that was that that's why we were looking at maybe for our legislative agenda um okay um now i forgot oh the other point the other question i was going to make so 176 total

[02:31:37] violations sir did did i understand you just say not 100 of them were attributed to the data center complex, but the majority of them are? What's his name? If you're speaking, we can't hear you.

[02:31:58] I'm sorry. I didn't say that there was 176 violations. I don't know where that number came from. That came from my colleague. Oh, okay. I'm sorry. That must have been while the meeting was muted for me. I can't say in certainty that all those violations came from the data center. I don't know where those violations were. I know you said your colleague had drafted those i would have to actually look at them and compare them to the data and the different noise sources extraneous noise sources that we were able to isolate to compare to see if that number actually is you know directly correlated to the facility or if it's actually

[02:32:36] you know okay well the the mid i believe you said and correct me if i'm wrong if i misunderstood you did did i understand you say though that the majority of whatever the number of violations are, you believe, I thought it was in, you were answering the chair and her question a few minutes ago, that the majority are what you attribute to the data center complex? No, I didn't say that. I said that the majority of the noise was just an entire capture of the ambient noise of the general

[02:33:09] area to accurately identify and isolate the noise that's generated from the facility. That's where the modeling comes into place. And that's where I've worked with Rebecca and Adam on, you know, getting contracted to do the contour noise modeling to really isolate the axial flow fans there atop of the roof line of the AWS facility to try to get a better understanding of the noise there. Just because I forget, you know, which board member had mentioned it earlier. There is other noise sources in the area that, you know, if you're not with the noise meter for 72 straight hours you can't directly say that you observe this as a as a spike and need to show out and

[02:33:48] that's fair for probably almost every community certainly dogs but this community also lives in the near a rail line but my i guess my question to you would be and you may not be able to answer this and it sounds like we possibly need a phase two to go you know more deeper into the study with the contours and things of that nature that you already discussed and supervisor bode asked my question is barking dog rail rail a rail line going through are typically short in nature of

[02:34:26] course we have a noise ordinance to address dogs that bark like more than consistently more than 10 minutes um but what if it's a if it's coming from the hvac system next door adjacent to the to the property, do you have any, did you measure like if this is hours at a time or do you have any way of calculating or did you calculate the length of the violation in time?

[02:34:53] So we took just to, just to pare down the data, we took five minute interval readings. So every five minutes it equates the noise energy level from an acoustic side, what was equated over that course of the period, and then multiply that by the course of 72 hours. So there was, you know, a thousand some plus readings. So there's no way to identify, unless we're doing second by second readings, which you're talking about an enormous amount of data to manage. And for this facility doing it for 72 hours, that was just, you know, kind of a, that would have been extremely difficult

[02:35:30] to do. So no, there's no way to identify how long the violation occurred for. I will say that we can try to identify how long those spikes were for over the duration of time using five-minute intervals. That said, I think to more accurately depict what you're trying to identify, you would either want to do a minute-by-minute reading to see how long of a duration a violation would be or a second-by-second so that you could actually see those spikes in real time, if you will, as opposed to a little more of a honed-in sliver, if that makes sense.

[02:36:10] It does. It sounds like the minute-by-minute is probably more manageable for you because Yes, that would be accurate. The amount of evidence or data you'd have to work with if it were more than that. Yeah, I mean, over the course of a 72-hour period, sure, minute-by-minute would be ideal um if we were to do a more in-depth study um if it was a 24-hour period i think we could do second by second or even 10 second intervals um you're just you're looking you're working with a bigger data set that's you know just a little more cumbersome to pare down so okay um it's it's not to say that it can't be done it's just you know a little more labor intensive okay thank you i

[02:36:48] appreciate it uh the clarity and supervisor vig i would absolutely support um the the board approving a phase two essentially if if that's your intent in the future or in the near future supervisor Bailey thank you madam chair I just as I'm listening and supervisor Baker thank you for bringing us to our attention as I as I'm thinking this do we have a specific standard industry standard that we're

[02:37:23] monitoring this by this may help us craft that as we go forward is there a specific standard that we're, that we really are monitoring this by? Rebecca or somebody?

[02:37:42] I'm not sure I understand your question. We have the noise ordinance. But, so it seems like it's a lot of variance, you know, in terms of how we, the repercussions for the noise. So, you know, what are we governing it by? How are we determining to come to a final solution? Well, right now the measurement is the noise ordinance, which is decibels. So that's why we have the working group is to look further into benchmarking against other jurisdictions and to

[02:38:17] better fully understand impacts from data centers and then brainstorm and bring forward recommendations on how to mitigate those impacts. So that's the solid standard that we're working from? We are working on putting together the noise group to identify, well, it's really all data center impacts and bring forward mitigation measures for that because from what we're understanding that our current mitigation standards are not adequate okay all right thanks well thank you thank you for joining us today thank you for filling us in thank you ms horner

[02:38:54] on filling us in on that i know that um we have next steps and i know the working group is being formed so i know that will be useful okay that will conclude our item 6b that goes on to agenda item 6C, a presentation from the Department of Transportation and the Police Department on the Automated Enforcement Feasibility Study. I believe Mr. Canizales and Lieutenant Peake are here or okay. Welcome Mr. Canizales. Thank you. Good afternoon Chair Wheeler, members of the board, Rick Canizales, your Director of Transportation. Thank you for the time today to discuss

[02:39:31] Automated Enforcement Feasibility Study and some recommendations that come along with it. The things we're going to talk about today, a little bit of objective of why we did this study to start off with, some of the results of that study that we did. We're going to talk a little bit about what photo enforcement regulations and the state code says, the potential benefits of doing a pilot or a program of this magnitude, the citation process of what we're doing here, the roles and responsibilities of the vendors, of the county, of everybody involved.

[02:40:02] We're also going to go through an example where we're going to show you an actual versus one versus another being pulled over versus a photo performance citation, as well as give you an example of a ticket that was given through a camera, through a red light camera.

[02:40:21] We're going to talk a little bit about recommendations. We're going to talk about how we came up with the methodology to the locations for where we believe the pilot study should go, both for the red light cameras and the school's zones. And finally, we'll just talk a little bit about next steps, about where we're going with this and what we need to do to get to our recommendation.

[02:40:45] First a little bit about the study. Obviously we need to remember that this was done based on a directive given to the board and the impetus of that directive was safety, was the fact that we were finding out that we were having a lot of pedestrian and speeding deaths around the county. Cardinal Drive was a main concern, Route 15 and Battlefield High School was a main concern. So we talked about those things and safety was a big issue in this.

[02:41:10] So the directive was given to take a look at both speed cameras through construction and school zones, as well as red light cameras. We got an RFI out there and got three vendors to look at the locations that you see there.

[02:41:26] That's 16 school zones, three construction zones, and the eight intersections we looked at as part of the study that did not give out tickets. It just took pictures and collected data. Just some numbers

from the study. So you're well aware, and I've highlighted some of the numbers here.

[02:41:41] But in the 16 school zones, in the five days that they were studied, out of 211,000 vehicles that went through those school zones, 22% of those vehicles, or 46,600 vehicles, were speeding more than 10 miles an hour through that school zone.

[02:41:57] In the three construction zones, we had 4% of the people going 10 miles or over. Again, it doesn't seem like a large percentage, but when you see the whole number of vehicles going through our construction zones, which we have construction zones on Route 1, Route 28, some major routes, 4% generates about 15,000 vehicles that are violating at 10 miles an hour or more. And finally, the traffic light enforcement, we did that for 24 hours at eight signalized intersections. We had 6,500 violations, but what you see there, and I think the key number there

[02:42:33] is that 71% of them, or about 4,600 of them, were right turned on red movements. And we'll talk a bit about that here in the future photo enforcement state regulations well we do have to follow some rules in this uh the county and we do have to enact an ordinance that we'll talk about a little bit later as well we do have to give a 30-day warning period once we put a camera up so if we put a camera up we put the signs up everything's ready to go for 30 days that camera is going to be shooting pictures and sending warnings to the violators not tickets warnings for 30 days the

[02:43:08] The program is structured by the county and we do get to play with some of the rules, the speeds, the fines, those kinds of things that we will be setting as part of this. Our recommendation though for school zones is that we keep the speed at 10 miles an hour or over with a flat fine of $100 per violation.

[02:43:30] In the county we could do up to 100 schools, which we do have about 100 schools. For the pilot program we are suggesting 8 to 9 schools. We will get to those recommendations here in a minute. work zone we are recommending as well 10 miles an hour over just like the school zones with again a flat fine of a hundred dollars again on the work zones it has to be a flashing an active work zone with flashers signs and warnings up before you can give or enforce that area so again in schools and in construction zones it's a part of the day that only gets done because only when the flashes are on when the school zones actually active or when the

[02:44:07] construction zone is active is when violations can actually be photographed or videoed on on the traffic light signal enforcement we're saying that anybody that goes through a red light it is a $50 flat fine we can usually implement this program in one for every ten thousand one intersection for every 10,000 people we have in the county so right now we're thinking we can we can implement up to 48 signals. Again, that would be maximum. We're recommending eight as part of the pilot program when we get to those locations. Potential benefits. I think the biggest benefit

[02:44:46] of it all, and it isn't at the top here, but the biggest benefit of all is safety. We're trying to reduce pedestrian fatalities. We're trying to reduce pedestrian accidents. We're trying to reduce speeding around the county. We're trying to reduce accidents. That is the main thing. Typically, though, once you put these facilities up, there's about 80 to 95 percent compliance once you get these up. So you say to yourself, okay, well, if everybody's mostly complying, how will we get violators? We showed you the numbers before. The whole numbers are large. 20% of 400,000 vehicles is a lot of vehicles. So there's still a lot of whole number

[02:45:24] violations out there. And we hope that that starts even getting lower and lower as people continue to go through the facility making sure because what we've seen and you see there is that what

we're trying to do here is change driver behavior and you're not only doing it at that initial location where that where that where that enforcement is put up but they don't know where it's at in the future or or once they see that that that camera in their minds it triggers that there might be cameras down the road so it kind of drives on drives behavior uh to to to slow down

[02:46:01] and to slow down and actually stop at red lights. We also, it makes it easier, and this is a great benefit of it all because we're talking about what the staffing is going to be, but the reality is that by putting these enforcement devices up, it frees times for these other officers to do other more important things than being at a school zone only being able to pull over one person every 15 minutes or being at a stoplight that they can only pull over one person in hopefully a safe location.

[02:46:33] You know, it allows for those officers to be dealing with other more serious issues, and it allows for this enforcement to happen at a red light 24-7 and at the other locations when those locations are active. It is a cost-effective method of enforcement. We're hoping and thinking, and what we have been shown, is that the program will most likely be, at least the pilot, will most likely be cost-neutral to the county.

[02:46:58] We'll be asking you for funds, but it'll be more of a bridge loan as we get to that. will be more of a bridge loan and we'll be able to recoup those funds as part of the program. We talked about making the police resources available for other activities. The citations are only civil. This is very important. The citations are only civil. So when you get a citation or the violator, it doesn't have to deal with the criminal system. They don't have to deal with the courts. They don't have to deal with paying additional fines. They don't have to deal with a police officer. They don't have to deal with insurance being, you know, demerit points and insurance being affected.

[02:47:32] It's a civil fine, but it still hits the wallet, and we know when it hits the wallet, it changes behavior. Citations cost less than summons from a police officer, and we'll see an example of that here in a second. And again, and I mentioned again, this program is expected to be at minimal revenue neutral.

[02:47:49] A little bit on the process, how this kind of works in the next couple slides are going to get to this, but what happens is a vehicle operator goes either through a red light or speeds through a school zone. They get a violation. The camera sends it over to our vendor. the vendor takes a look at it. The vendor makes sure that the violation is clear. Then that vendor will then send it over to our sworn police officer who then certifies and make sure that what the vendor saw is something that the police can feel comfortable going to court with, making sure that the violation is clear, making sure that you can see the license plate clear, making sure

[02:48:29] of all those things that you need to see, making sure that the violation actually occurred. once the police officer certifies that it goes back to the vendor where then the vendor sends it out and does all the mailing and the collection part of it sends it out to the vehicle owner the vehicle owner that is key here because it goes to the vehicle owner and what what those license plates are at so the vehicle owner at that point has three choices they can either pay the fine they can request a court hearing or they can transfer the liability of it because again and you'll see in per our example the cameras only take pictures of the vehicle and the license plate

[02:49:06] so you don't know who's driving the vehicle so it has to be sent to the perv code has to be sent to the vehicle owner that vehicle owner if he knows that his son was driving the car that day can then give that violation just like i did with my daughter when she got one of these in manassas um but uh i you know

the biggest thing here is that fleet vehicles not only our fleets but any kind of rental vehicles any kind of other fleet vehicles plumbers you know uh electricians that are going through this intersection, it's always going to go back to the company, but the company can then transfer the liability to that driver. So that's why that option is there and it's very

[02:49:43] important. Request for a court hearing, just so we get ahead of the question, from what we've gathered in Manassas, it is very low percentage of these that go to court. These tickets supply you with a camera view as well as a video of the violation. So you clearly see if you have violator or not and it's very small. I think I believe that our guys here told me that Manassas had about 12,000 or 13,000 violators at tickets that went out. 23,000, not even better, 23,000

[02:50:16] and only 67 went to court. So it's a very low percentage. Next slide please. This is kind of what we'll talk a little about my roles and responsibilities here. As I mentioned before, it is a role responsibility of the vendors to put up the equipment and maintain it. So they put up the equipment, they maintain it. We have to ready the sites and we have to get everything ready, but the vendor puts up their equipment and they maintain it. They also review the citations before they go to the sworn police officer for certification. They handle all the mailings and they handle all the collection. And what they do is they deduct a fee, a structured fee from the contract from each individual ticket to recoup what they need to. And then the

[02:50:56] additional money gets sent to the county the county uh what we need to do is again i mentioned this is we need to have officers review the and certify the the violations so we are asking for for our two officers to be doing this and and if we have questions i know uh lieutenant peak here has some thoughts on how that's going to be done it's kind of listed up there we do have to have a supervising officer as well as a transportation manager that manages the implementation of the school zones where they're putting the cameras works with the police and kind of make sure that we're measuring the program for effectiveness because we do have to come back to you in about

[02:51:34] a year and tell you guys how this pilot program went if we decide to move forward with it and let us and let you know the efficacy of the program so our manager will be doing that all the staffing and all the resources we're doing for this except for the police officers that we'll talk about here in a second are being done within our our current staffing so our current staffing will deal with through the pilot program whoops sorry i hit the button my friend can you uh send me back thank you all right we got two examples this this is for more for a um for a school zone uh violation and then we have a and then we have a video for a red light camera but for the schools and what we did

[02:52:13] is we did a contrasting of what would happen if a person got pulled over for speeding 10 miles an hour on school zone or a person got an automated ticket if the person gets pulled over the individual has to be pulled over. The officer has to stop. We have to find a safe location for that officer to stop. It's going to take about 10 to 15 minutes to give that citation, which pulls the officer from any other violations that are happening at the time. And if challenged in court, it's going to be, there's going to be additional court fees. Plus there's the merit points. It's $132 base

[02:52:48] ticket and your insurance company will get, will find out and it'll affect your insurance rates, as I know, because of my daughter. Automated enforcement, all vehicles that are going through that zone 10 miles an hour or over are getting a violation. It's a flat violation of $100, which is what we are suggesting. This is received in the mail by the owner. There's no demerit points, no police officer involved, no court,

no insurance. It's just a civil offense. And again, if it is challenged in court, which I told you the low rate of challenge, if it is challenged

[02:53:28] in court, if you do not win at court, there's no court fees. It's pay the original citation only. Next slide, please. What you're seeing here is a video supplied by the city of Manassas to us. I wanted to show you a couple things, and you saw what just happened there, and it'll start over.

[02:53:49] And I asked Richard to stop it a little more, a little more, and stop. So what you see here is these vehicles are taking a left the left turn lane that vehicle has passed that stop bar and that light that signal is yellow that vehicle will not receive a citation with its camera enforcement what you see here coming up from left to right you see a vehicle crossing crossing three lanes of traffic to get to the to the right hand lane and as you see as he's crossing the crossbar

[02:54:26] that light is already on red that vehicle although you see him illegally crossing three lanes he cannot get a ticket for that you can only get a ticket from a red light camera for the red light violation so what you see in there is this individual will receive a citation for crossing that that that stop bar when the light was red and it'll be a flat fifty dollar fine next slide please this is the ticket they received i knew it wasn't my daughter because she doesn't drive bolts, right? But you can see here, what it does show you here is it shows you that the vehicle

[02:55:02] was going 15 miles an hour when it passed the bar, stop bar. It gave you the amount of citation due. It showed you at the top where you could go to see the video that we just saw, so they can see the citation that is being given for what. And you can see also the vehicle identification within the ticket. On the right-hand side, you can see that you can pay the ticket by the web, by phone, by mail. You can get a court date. You can submit an affidavit, again, to transfer that liability that we talked about. So all the choices are right here when you

[02:55:38] get this citation in what to do and how to move forward with your ticket. With those two examples given, we want to give you our recommendations. And our recommendations is that we should move forward with a pilot program. I know we did a study that didn't give tickets. It kind of showed the data. I think that we're ready for the next step to do a pilot program that would run for a year. We would do the pre-launch period would be right now. What we're trying to do is get to these school zones before school starts the next year and have them up and running by August 21st so it can be ready by the time school starts. I know we most likely, because of the timing, we may not be

[02:56:16] able to get all of them up by August 1st, but we hope at least to get all the school zones ready, signs up, so everybody knows at least where these cameras are going to go through that time period. We hope to start this in August, September of this year, both the red light cameras and the school zones.

[02:56:33] The project would run from July to August of next year, but we would start gathering data in the early summer next year to come present to you and make sure that we want to either move forward with the program from what we see if the pilot has been efficient or not, or if we want to stop the program, if we want to increase the program, if we want to change the locations of what's being recommended today for the following year.

[02:56:56] Those kinds of things, but we would have to come back to you with that data with a recommendation at that point in time What we're trying to do is we're trying to do to eight signalized intersections Which we'll show you in a minute and eight school zones with one roaming construction

zone The camera they can go to different construction sites The total the total amount we need is eight hundred and fifty thousand dollars The some of it is at the beginning because we need to again fund the school sites make sure that they are all in compliance and to standard before we put cameras on them.

[02:57:29] And then the $500,000 would be for staffing in the next year for the two police officers or the equivalent of two police officers that I mentioned earlier and having to staff those positions to get those tickets or the violations certified.

[02:57:46] Again, we think that at the end of the day, the $850,000, dollars, which would be coming from local transportation funding, recordation specifically, would be more of a bridge loan. We believe that this program, again, as I mentioned throughout the presentation, is cost neutral, and we will be recovering those funds within that year.

[02:58:06] Again, the initial sense of this program is for safety, and we've developed some methodology, making sure that safety was a key in what we were doing here. We looked at our red light camera locations and what we did is we looked at the locations that we had seen a lot of crash data on in the last few years. We also looked at the roadway incident management program or the as you know the RIMP report from the police to look at the locations there. We did exclude locations that had near-term projects so if there was a project on the road or near the intersection or near that

[02:58:43] school zone. We did kind of exclude that. We did have some locations that weren't applicable at the time because we would have to do too much to try to get those school zones or those areas into standard before we wanted to go forward in the program in August. Garfield High School is one big example. Garfield High School was our highest scoring school for most people going through it at 10 miles an hour or more. And we couldn't move forward for that through the pilot because because just to get the school zone to standard and to try to figure out how to reduce it, because it's a very long school zone through that area, it would take a lot more time than we had at this time.

[02:59:21] So this could be one of the first ones we do if we decide to continue with the program. But as we're trying to do this pilot and trying to get through expediency, that's not one that we could recommend at this time. So again, that's what we're trying to do with the red light cameras, with the school zones. Again, we looked at what we had received from your offices, what we had received from the schools, what the police had received for additional enforcement, kind of took those schools into consideration, and then took all those locations that we just talked about, looking at safety and requests for speeding and all that stuff, and then we took those and broke them down into location all over the county.

[02:59:58] We were trying to hit every district all over the county, and what we were also trying to do for the red light cameras, we were trying to hit different intersections. We were trying to hit different intersections with different configurations, T intersections, four-legged intersections, four-legged intersections that we were only doing two legs on, that kind of stuff, just to see the different configurations, different aspects of that facility.

[03:00:19] For the school zones, we tried to look at different school types. We looked at elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, schools that had two schools in one quarter or one location, those kinds of things. And we took those locations as well as the location of the district into consideration as we looked at those. We did run this, or we put it into the equity and fairness tool that we have here in the county, the assessment screening tool.

[03:00:44] That assessment screening tool doesn't really give you results until after you give it data. So we need the year of data to get some results. But from explaining it to our equity and inclusion director here in the county, she felt comfortable in what we were doing because of the methodology that we just explained about spreading it out through locations, not only looking at one corridor, trying to do different configurations in different areas.

[03:01:07] So we knew that it was not looking at just one population, but it was looking at everywhere countywide. So, to the bottom line, the proposed initial intersections for red light enforcement. And I know that we also talked to you individually, each one of you, and kind of ran this through and made sure that we were getting to your needs.

[03:01:31] But these are the intersections that we ended up with. As you can see, Linton Hall at Noakesville Road, that's a major intersection in Brentsville. I mean, that intersection, I don't know how many accidents we have in that, but the volume that goes through that, I think, Supervisor Lawson, is just so much.

[03:01:46] And the amount of accidents we have in there, I think this is a perfect intersection in your district for that. Route 1, Gordon Boulevard, I mentioned that we weren't going to do intersections that had projects in it. I said near-term projects. We don't expect a project in this area, even though we are working on one for quite a few years.

[03:02:04] so we wanted to make sure that we looked at it because it was a very voluminous intersection and it also was a T-intersection, so we wanted to look at the configuration of it. Dale Boulevard and Miniville Road, kind of the same as Linton Hall and Nokesville. That is just a very heavily traveled intersection with a lot of problems. We were actually looking at a VDOT study to improve that intersection before we did this that we had to drop off on because VDOT wasn't willing to look at above-grade improvements.

[03:02:30] So we're looking at that intersection and making sure that we can get some safety going on through there as well. Prince William Parkway in Sudley Manor, again, that is a major intersection on the parkway, very heavily used, and it's one of the two intersections along that same area that did not have an interchange or intersection that's being worked on at this time.

[03:02:52] So we wanted to take a look at that. Prince William Parkway in Hoadley, I drive that intersection every day, so I know exactly what it does. My wife tells me that everybody runs a red light. I hear from her every day, are you going to do something about that? I see everybody running a red light out there.

[03:03:08] So we know that's a big intersection as well, lots of volume on it. Old Bridge Road, Harvard Drive, down in the Old Bridge corridor. I know that Supervisor Bode wanted to focus on Old Bridge Road and the safety of that corridor. Old Centerville Road in Yorkshire, in Coles District, going through Old Centerville Road, and that's a very heavily used corridor with with a lot of density and schools and other and other commercial areas around there and then Lee Highway and Heathcote Boulevard that if you know that intersection in Gainesville when you get off the highway that is probably the intersection with the most accidents in the county or close to it so those

[03:03:48] are the those intersections we chose for the red light district at this time again initial intersections we say this because once we get our vendors on board we got to make sure that all these

intersections that we're proposing to you are feasible to do, the cameras are feasible to put on, etc. But this is what we are proposing at this time as part of the study. Did you have questions? Okay. Proposed initial school zones to be considered. You see the schools here. Again, we wanted to get a mixture of schools, high school, elementary school, middle school, as well as having some schools that were in the same area,

[03:04:24] kind of like we did with Patriot High School and Claywood Elementary, as well as Woodbridge High School and Old Bridge Elementary. These schools are right next to each other. Those school zones run at different times. We wanted to make sure we were capturing that and making sure that was enforceable. Then we looked at Fitzgerald Elementary School over in the Neasco District, Tyler Elementary in Gainesville, Ripon Middle in Woodbridge, Beville, and again focusing on the Dale Boulevard Corridor, Benton Middle in Coles District, that's on Hoadley, and again looking at the Hoadley Corridor and Battlefield and uh oh I'm sorry Patti Elementary School in

[03:05:03] Washington Reed which that is a a tough one there because of it lies right on 234 one on either side of the road and and the speed of the road there's kind of high and and and we know there was a lot of violation there so we're going to work on that school zone make sure that we get that up there as well and then finally uh Battlefield High School which again we talked about earlier today was the impetus of or one of the impetuses of getting the directive uh that we God to move forward and look at this. Next steps. We are looking to, if you are willing, we are looking to go forward with this pilot. We would have to draft an ordinance, which we're already

[03:05:41] working on. We have to develop a public education campaign to make sure that all our citizens are aware of what we're doing, how we're doing it, where we're doing it. We have to establish operating rules and the fine structures that we talked about. I gave you some recommendations here today. We have to confirm the initial sites for implementation. Like I mentioned, we have to make sure that they're feasible. Right now, we believe they are, but we have to get the vendors to agree with us as well. Procure that vendor that I talk about so much, and then finally get all the permits necessary. We will be looking for VDOT permits. We will be talking to the schools. We will be doing those kinds of things for this. With that said, today is just a presentation for you. We were

[03:06:19] We're bringing forth an authorization to do a public hearing to get that ordinance moving that's required at our next meeting. And then hopefully at the April 11th meeting, perhaps, we can get both the ordinance under a public hearing, we can transfer and budget the money, and approve the pilot program if so interested.

[03:06:40] With that, I will take any questions. Thank you so much for all that information. I know, did you go to all the individual offices also? I did, ma'am, yes. Okay, just so I know that people have seen this before. Yes, ma'am. Everyone. We won't get beleaguered with stuff. So, Supervisor Angry. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just one, well, first of all, Madam Chair, for work sessions, are we, is it the same as we go two rounds of questions, then discussion, or is it all, can we?

[03:07:04] You know, we don't have those rules of procedure set, but I'm thinking about maybe we need to do that and have time limits, too. Because I only have one question, but then I just kind of want to talk to you all about some things. So my one question is, you know how the red light camera you showed, the picture of the car stopped on the line.

[03:07:20] Would this stop cars from stopping so they won't get a ticket if they're over the line and the light is red? They will not get a ticket if they are over the stop bar when the light is yellow. The car doesn't

have to be completely past it. They just have to be what's considered in the intersection when the light is yellow.

[03:07:41] So I'm asking, when cars are in the crosswalk, stop at the red light, would that trigger? Supervisor, Richard Weinman, principal and kind of traffic engineering. So the code is written that the vehicle has to pass through an intersection.

[03:07:57] So if you got stranded in an intersection or you rolled over the stop bar just a little bit, that would not qualify for a citation. Okay. And my apologies in failing to introduce Mr. Richard Weinman and Lieutenant Sean Peake, are really the brains and the working behind this. I'm just their mouthpiece.

[03:08:16] So then my comments to you all, the board, is that I really love this and I want to get these cameras in as soon as possible and anything to slow people down and stop pedestrian safety. And I will say this here. I'm concerned about the 10 miles. Like 10 miles and over triggers a ticket because it'll tell people that they can drive 10 miles in a speed limit, a school zone before. I would like to see that at 5 miles. I want to say that to you all.

[03:08:41] And I don't know, but as we're discussing this, I would like to see that down to five miles, because even two miles over in the school zone is fast. It's a great idea, Supervisor Angry. I completely agree with you, but unfortunately, the Virginia State Code only allows us to do it 10 or more.

[03:09:00] You can set more than 10 miles an hour, but you can't do less. We're going to add that to the legislative priorities, because we need to change that, because that's not right. Exactly. That's not right. And then I'm going to say, I think also for this group, the two officers to make this program work, police might not like me saying this, but I think those should be two civilian positions because if you make them two officers, they might end up moving them over later to be officers.

[03:09:27] And again, sir, another great idea, but the state code asked them to be sworn officers. But Lieutenant Peek will speak a little bit about the staffing plan because it's not really two officers that we're looking at. It's kind of equivalent, and he can speak to that a little bit. Madam Chair, members of the board, I'm Sean Peake with the police department.

[03:09:45] So we've been working on this project, and we work with Manassas City on some of the ways that they manage the program. Their traffic enforcement unit currently spends initial part of their day validating the summonses. So the code requires an officer to certify it, and the officer who certifies it attends court.

[03:10:05] So as we start the initial process, obviously if this grows, we could change that, But we're going to probably have to use some of our existing resources, as is county transportation, and that's our goal. We don't want to take up too much time out of that day, but working with Manassas City, they spend about an hour or two looking at the previous day summonses or, you know, on a Monday morning over the weekend summonses to go through.

[03:10:28] Well, that makes sense. I've seen that play out in the courthouse this last week, so understood. Well, I love the program. Can I just touch on the court process? So working with the City of Manassas and other jurisdictions, they kind of have a red light and speed camera court date, which is usually a Thursday at 1 o'clock, so it doesn't interfere with the other dockets.

[03:10:48] We have worked with the Clerk of the Court briefly on, you know, this may come to fruition and how are the impacts of will with the court. As we mentioned, Manassas City in the year of 2022 had approximately 23,000 citations and approximately 65 of those went to court.

[03:11:09] In the process of those, some people choose to pay ahead of time anyway, and then six were found, I believe, not guilty and the others were found guilty. And like I said, as Rick mentioned, there's no court fees attached to it.

[03:11:29] Are we done? I think he's done. Supervisor Vega? Thank you, Madam Chair, gentlemen, because that's who we've been interacting with. Thank you for the hard work and for meeting with my staff and I and discussing this. Rick, we were exchanging emails up until late yesterday, so, you know, we ask for information and we get it when we get it, be that as it may.

[03:11:51] This really gives me heartburn. It really does. You know, we talk about areas in this county where we've had the loss of life that are prone to speeders, that are prone to a lot of car accidents, but I'm not sure that this is the answer to solving those issues.

[03:12:10] And granted, nothing is 100% ever, but I just don't know that this is the direction that we want to go in. And I say that because, you know, we talk about the areas of concern, And out of those areas of concern, which propelled me to ask you all of the questions that I asked you in terms of what was recommended, what made the list and what didn't, I'm of the opinion that if the data shows that these are the areas that need attention, then that's where, right?

[03:12:37] If we are going to go down this road, the red light cameras should be. But, you know, in some of your responses to me as to why those locations didn't make the list, one was it didn't have a signal when you were talking about Guardfield, talking about how extremely long the school zone is and recommended reconfiguring this area before proceeding I don't know if perhaps we should direct our attention at actually getting those locations up to par where they need to be you know before moving in this direction I can tell you that I've had folks you know reach out and say that they're concerned about what happens to this data their personal information how accurate these cameras

[03:13:12] are and if you do want to go ahead and you know challenge the ticket that you get the likelihood of you coming out on top because they refer to the system, right? It's your word versus an officer that has been trained to monitor this. And so the accuracy.

[03:13:28] So my question to you all is, for those here in chambers and those watching at home, how often do we test these cameras to ensure that they're properly functioning, right? And, you know, Supervisor Angry brought up a point of the video that you all showed.

[03:13:45] And you said it wouldn't qualify for a citation, but does, in my opinion, nothing to prevent the loss of life or a pedestrian getting hit by a vehicle. And remind me, but we got here, right, because the whole goal of this is to save lives and prevent accidents.

[03:14:04] And so I ask these questions because I don't think that this is the answer. And so if you could answer the question that I just asked, because I have a follow-up in terms of, you know, how do we know that this is working properly? How often is it tested? Just before we answer that question, just to make sure you understand that this program isn't made or the pilot or what we're trying to do here isn't made to actually prevent the loss of life as at the program.

[03:14:35] It's meant to change driver behavior in an overall fashion to then prevent the loss of life and to then have somebody slow down or have someone stop at a red light. It's not about making them stop because there's a camera there and there's a pedestrian coming.

[03:14:52] It's about changing driver behavior. So that's the one thing I'll answer. I'll let the officer answer about that. Supervisor Beggar, members of the board. In reference to how often is the equipment calibrated or tested, the equipment is tested daily. That's important with the program manager to work with the vendor of whatever we choose to verify that equipment is working properly and that it's capturing the right data.

[03:15:16] If it's not, any violation during that period of time is all dismissed. We would work with the vendor that during a certain block of time, that those summonses would not be issued. If the equipment were in a school zone, if the wink-o-matics weren't working, or if the red light camera was inoperable, or the red light signal itself was out, all those tickets during that time frame that would be issued would be voided.

[03:15:40] They wouldn't actually even come to us. we would work with the vendor and so the officer wouldn't waste man hours to validate those summons that so they wouldn't even come to us at that point once we know that there was a equipment malfunction with either the wink-o-matics or if the the light the camera equipment with the vendor wasn't working properly so does that answer your question somewhat yeah so speaking of the vendor and in terms of of data and whatnot um you know first we start with uh school zones and then we wake up the next day and they're all over the county. So that data is protected by the vendor?

[03:16:16] Correct. Okay. So in all of, anytime that the summons with the state code, once the summons, the citation is written, it has, once it's adjudicated, it has to be filtered out of the system every 60 days. So, and as Rick had mentioned earlier, these are rear-facing cameras, so it doesn't capture a picture of anybody's any person's information they don't share the information besides with anybody other than the police department um and there's no all of the information goes to the registered owner of the vehicle okay and then um you know to to rick's

[03:16:54] point about trying to change behavior um you know we are all guilty of speeding not that i'm asking for a confession but i think that if we look at ourselves we're all guilty of guilty of speeding And so, you know, whenever I'm reminded to slow down, it's because I know of the consequences.

[03:17:11] If we're talking about changing behavior, I mean, on slide eight, we have here that if a police officer, you know, pulls you over, it's a $32 fine and three points. With this camera, it's only a $100 fine and no points. So, again, I'm not sure that we're solving the problem here because if I'm well off, let's put a hypothetical financially, I can speed whenever I want and I'm just going to get a slap on the wrist with $100 fine.

[03:17:33] What about the next person that's not? And so in many ways, this can, yes, I will say be predatory. And I don't want us to lose sight of what it is that we're actually trying to achieve by bringing in something and later on having to deal with unintended consequences. Correct, and I don't disagree with that whatsoever.

[03:17:51] However, it does, as Rick noted, officer resources are not as plentiful to be out there 24-7 in all the school zones we have. So with the small recommendations of the intersections that we're choosing out

of the approximately 100 schools in the county, we hope that this program influences people to change their behaviors throughout the county.

[03:18:15] And that's why we chose the locations to try and work across the county lines and not just in one magisterial district. And that was pretty hard, you know, working with the data, working with the requests that we get for extra enforcement to work out different schools to make it a county-wide project and not working because we could put them along the Prince William Parkway, Dale Boulevard.

[03:18:42] We know we have speeding issues. So while the summons is only $100, I just will say that we can't have an officer at every school zone and we can't have an officer at every intersection. So while I do agree with you to that point of, you know, every vehicle is going to get it who did break the violation of speeding or red light violation, I think it's a start.

[03:19:03] Thank you. And then the last question that I have is on slide three, and so 71% are right on red. So my question is, are there national studies to know what this percentage generally is in other jurisdictions? Supervisor, yes, there's a lot of different studies out there.

[03:19:23] One of the things that we did is we looked at a lot of these studies, and I can show you some data that shows that this these studies programs when they are implemented do improve safety at federal highways is one of them that shows that and it does improve safety on that right to movement I can send you some information on that it that is a very controversial topic at the moment because obviously the bike and pedestrian people are extremely concerned about this it's not a major accident corridor source particularly when compared to you know straight throughs where you have these severe accidents however it is a

[03:20:01] vulnerable you road user which is your pedestrians and bicyclists that that are impacted by this so it does show there's a lot of studies that show that this does improve safety on those movements and that generally the right from red It is the primary violator.

[03:20:20] Now, that doesn't mean that you can't turn right on red. It just means you have to come to a stop before you turn right on the red. That's what the state code says. And one of the recommendations we're putting forward is to allow a grace of about three miles per hour for vehicles to slow down, because that's what your typical pedestrian walks at.

[03:20:38] So that way, vehicles can still keep moving, but there's a little bit of grace in there to help accommodate that, than being hard on that on that stop just comparatively so you understand what he's saying Manassas and City Manassas Manassas Park they give no leniency it's it's it's either stop and go if you go one mile over if you go one mile an hour over the intersection and you didn't fully stop you get a ticket what we're doing is we are proposing to give a little grace on that right on red knowing that the violations are high and we're looking after pedestrians at that speed that pedestrians walk as well thank you I'm just going to insert just

[03:21:17] two things before, and ran for me as Supervisor Franklin and Supervisor Bailey, I will point out that things like Waze and Google Maps and things like that incorporate these, which is why the behavior changes.

[03:21:33] I know for, oh, red light camera ahead, and so there is that sort of technology component that I just want to point out that makes a change. And I just want to go on record saying, you know, someone said only $100, but I think a hundred dollars is actually a lot um you know given our population i just want to

throw that out there um because i know that you know they said the citation for the police was only 32 dollars versus only a hundred dollars i just 132 okay sorry i miss unhurt but i still think 100 is not inconsequential so uh supervisor franklin then supervisor bailey then supervisor lawson

[03:22:09] then supervisor bode sure i'll also say um just to that point it's not only the financial portion but also the process of actually, if you decide to fight it. I mean, that takes a lot of time, not that I know from personal experiences. And then also, thank you for clarifying that you have to actually come to a complete stop for turning red, because I don't think my colleagues knew that.

[03:22:35] Just kidding, just kidding. Maybe I didn't know that. But I do have a clarifying question, Rick. And I'm sure you've explained this, but I think I'm a little confused. is there a difference between the school zone red light camera and the i know there's a difference between the school zone and the work zone but where's the red light camera no no there's a difference between and there's two different sections of code one deals with the school zones and the construction zones and then the other code deals with the red light camera okay so and so can you talk about the mobile enforcement sure the the mobile enforcement is what we're

[03:23:15] looking for to have on a construction zone. And obviously the reason you need a mobile enforcement there is because construction zones aren't there permanently, right? So you have to move the zone once the construction is complete or substantially complete. Then you can take a unit such as the one you see in the picture here that is a mobile unit. It doesn't have to be attached to anything. It's not hardwired. And you can take that and take it to another zone. Okay, because I'm not sure that was necessarily clear, at least for me. Oh, I'm sorry. That's only on the construction camera, If we can take it to the slide where we show the construction.

[03:23:45] No, no, no. You have the, there you go, work zone. Inactive construction zones can receive a sign. Right. Sorry. So let me just ask. For the mobile enforcement, is that only for construction zones? Yes, ma'am. Okay. So for school zones is where you're doing the red light enforcement.

[03:24:02] No. No, ma'am. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. If you can just clarify exactly which is going where. The red light enforcement is for red light cameras. So it's taking a picture of you going through an intersection. So that intersection is at a certain location.

[03:24:19] Those are the locations that we're talking about putting red light cameras at those intersections. Are those the same as work zones? And they are not the same as work zones, and they are not the same as school zones. Okay. I just think that that needed to be clarified. Sure thing. In the next slide, what we show is the school zones. So we're talking about three different things here. We're talking three different things, man.

[03:24:35] Okay. Yes. This is the school zones. Now, the school zone, some of these schools may be in the same corridor, like Dale Boulevard or Old Bridge Road, that we are putting a red light camera up on, but they're not in the same location. Right, and so let me just say, because I didn't know that there is actually the ability for the county from the General Assembly to put red lights or cameras at red lights throughout the county that's not school or construction.

[03:25:03] We are not allowed to put speed cameras on anything but school zones and construction zones. Okay, so now can you explain the difference between this and a speed camera? Sure. The red light camera captures you either stopping or not stopping at an intersection.

[03:25:20] Which is different from capturing someone from speeding. From speeding, correct. Okay, so yeah, I just wanted to clarify that because I'm not sure that we actually ever talked about the difference between the red light cameras. So I will say this, and we can have this discussion, I'm fine, with the pilot program.

[03:25:37] I would need to have a lot of discussion about red light cameras because I think our challenge, and I get what you're saying that we're trying to change behaviors, but I think the challenge just goes to speeding. And I always go back to the Cardinal Drive instance where we've had a lot of deaths as it relates to speeding specifically.

[03:25:59] Now, if we're going to have a discussion about putting red light cameras across the county, I think we need to have a very specific discussion about what that looks like. I've expressed concern before about the manner in which they do it in Washington, D.C., where let me just continue, where to me it does seem to be predatory.

[03:26:19] and i've used the example um this is a serious example as some sometimes people laugh at but if you're coming down a hill um and obviously you're going at a higher rate of speed than maybe that is posted so that basically means you're speeding but they don't give you time to actually slow down as you go from one um like a 45 mile per hour to that of a 35 mile per hour so for me and i understand kind of the limitations that we're putting on here which are different i guess what i'm saying is we would need to have a lot of discussions in my opinion about where we

[03:26:54] put these uh red light cameras and we can man but the example you just brought up was a speeding uh camera that's a speed camera that we're only allowed to put in school zones and in construction zones so that kind of predatory thing would not happen in the county and again i i need everybody to know that that you know that we're speaking to that the laws are very very different in maryland dc and virginia virginia has the most strict program and does and and does a lot of um puts a lot into their code that a lot that doesn't allow it to be a predatory program that allows

[03:27:30] it to be a safety program and again we just want to make sure that you understand that all we're doing here is a pilot program we're not trying to put red light cameras everywhere we're choosing just eight locations that we think are very high volume and what we're trying to get to with the red light cameras is not the speeding and the deaths of speeding but more get to the impetus that we talked about with the pedestrian deaths that we're having here in the county with the side swipe accidents that are happening at these intersections that are that are fatal that the people that are going through those red lights and people that are trying to turn out and running those red lights going through them and hitting those people that are turning I mean those are the type of safety issues that we are trying to get to through the through the red light

[03:28:09] camera the the speed zones are more for a speeding factor and for keeping the children safe and construction work and I appreciate the clarification I think our excuse me I think our priorities should be those that are speeding so super supportive of construction zones and obviously the school zones and I think that should remain the priority thank you supervisor Bailey thank you manager chair Rick thank you thank you man promises made promises kept you have journeyed with us on this on this project and a lot of it has even from our

[03:28:48] police chief has been concerning behavior problems I mean he said that and you know when we did the studies and all and so Sean thank you also for your focus on this as well and for the

presentations that you've made in the town hall certainly that I've had I really appreciate it so promises made promises kept and so I'm really I think that you know this will curtail the pilot program will give us more information and curtail the speeding behavior that we've had as it relates to fatalities as well and so I just wanted

[03:29:25] to make note of the fact that you know and you're coming to us and asking us what we needed I think you have a good list but that's just me I'm okay thank you with the list that you created and just covering all of us at some juncture and and I'm really thankful for the fact that you consider the Washington Reed and Patty area where we did have the fatalities I've had several conversations with the former supervisor from my district and that was really one of her concerns and that she lived there and I live there as well so we do have to protect our children I still think that speeding is a concern

[03:30:03] I think also the mobility piece that we're adding will help because there was an accident with construction on 234. So we are addressing that also. So I wanted the public to know that we're trying to encompass everything as we really, really focus on protecting our children as well. So I think that, again, promises made, promises kept, and we're not finished. But adding in the citations and from the state perspective is very important also because we started from a place where we didn't know how to get there. And now we do have a parameter of how we get there and even beyond.

[03:30:41] So it's just a comment, Madam Chair, but I just wanted to acknowledge that. Thank you, ma'am. Because it's very important when you're doing this that you do include all of us in the decision, and you made that promise and you kept it. Thank you. Thank you, ma'am. Thank you. Supervisor Lawson. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[03:30:59] Rick, you mentioned, or actually maybe it was Richard mentioned, bicycles and pedestrians have concern about the right turns. Is that right? - Correct, that is what's most impacted on a right turn on red. When a signal is red and you have one of those pedestrian signals, the signal is red for the oncoming vehicles.

[03:31:20] On that right turn lane you're supposed to stop, so you allow pedestrians to walk through that when they have the walk light on or the not walk light on. When they have the walk light on, but you're still allowed to make that right turn on red. So it's their concern that as they're going through that and if a vehicle doesn't stop, that's when there's major accidents either bicyclists or pedestrians well that supervisor we're and I were like wondering from that conversation do bicyclists are they ever you know find

[03:31:51] or cited because they are expected to follow the same correct safety supervisor Lawson you are correct and that is the case and we do find a violation some most of the time the pedestrian at fault there was one unfortunate case in your You said the pedestrian at fault?

[03:32:13] Bicyclist, actually. Okay, you said pedestrian, but you meant bicyclist. We have said several, pedestrians or bicyclists, at fault in the actions. Last year alone we had 11 pedestrian fatalities, and the pedestrian was at fault, from what I recall, approximately seven or eight times.

[03:32:30] We actually did have one in your district a little over a year ago at the Devlin Road-Lenton Hall intersection where a bicyclist was coming up the sidewalk, a vehicle was making a right turn on red, and the bicyclist just barely hit the back of the car, but due to age, he didn't have a helmet on and hit the ground, and he succumbed to his injuries a few days later.

[03:32:55] No, I don't believe I knew that. Well, I can review that case with you later. But that is a huge concern. Richard and I experienced it yesterday, turning into a parking lot. We had the right-of-way, a pedestrian was crossing. We were on our way to a meeting, and I knew the pedestrian wasn't going to stop, but I braked enough to stop, and the pedestrian didn't cross in the crosswalk.

[03:33:17] So it is a concern. I will make a note real quick. On the citation that was just after the video, the speed of that vehicle that came over three lanes and made that right turn, you can see their speed was 15 miles an hour. That's why we want to do a grace speed of approximately three miles an hour to give that leeway.

[03:33:37] It's enough for the driver to be able to make eye contact with a pedestrian before they cross the roadway and for the driver and the pedestrian to have some type of, you know, eye contact to prevent those type of accidents. Thank you, Lieutenant. You're welcome. And your red light camera obviously captures measure speed.

[03:33:58] Correct. Just as much. Okay. Obviously. So, yes. Can you go to that slide, Richard? So on the citation here, in this middle box here, it does capture the speed that the vehicle was going through. However, with the red light camera, it could only issue a citation for the red light violation.

[03:34:16] But it does have the potential to capture your speed, and it shows you actually how fast you were going through the intersection. Right, because like you said, the code... Correct. So that's where it would show if you were going over three. So no one under three miles an hour would see one of these if that's what we choose as our business rules, which we're set to do that.

[03:34:40] Okay, and here's my next question. So right turned are clearly the greatest violator, right? Which of the three left, through, or right caused the most accidents?

[03:34:56] All three of them caused the most, pretty significant. The most dangerous are to move straight through, especially when vehicles are going the opposite direction, making a turn. You have those angled collisions, which are the most violent.

[03:35:13] Say that one more time, Luciana. So if a vehicle is going straight through an intersection, we'll use the Parkway and Holy Road. If you're going eastbound on Prince William Parkway, but a vehicle is going westbound on Prince William Parkway, attempting to make a left turn on Holy Road, and they have a green signal or either one ran, Due to the speeds there at 55 miles an hour, that causes the most violent collision or most injuries.

[03:35:38] Okay. That's where we see most of our major collisions. Supervisor Bodie's next, but yeah. Can I just chime in on that? Because that literally just happened last night at Dale Boulevard in Holtley. Correct. Okay, so car coming Holtley, flying, cars turning on Dale, head-on collision, car fire.

[03:35:58] Luckily, no one died. qualified, fully involved from that, from the red light and speeding. Like it's both, it's red light and speeding. Correct. A T-bone? Head on. Head on? Yeah. So what the lieutenant's saying is basically frequency is the same for each movement.

[03:36:15] It's just that the effect of the accident is greater on that straight movement. And Supervisor Brody's next. I do want to say that there was legislation of the General Assembly to let bicycles not follow the automobile rules because we talked about it at nvta and bicyclists wanted to be able to just do what they wanted to do and anyway it didn't go through so supervisor brody thank you madam chair um first

rick uh lieutenant p richard everyone who got us to this point thank you for this you know back when i uh asked requested at the beginning of last year for a traffic safety

[03:36:52] work session we that's when you guys started the the data collecting program to get to this point It's been a long time coming, but, again, it's one of those things where I'm glad we're here and we're finally looking to do something about it. So I wanted to give you guys kudos first. My question pertains to the speed zones for the schools, and it's just more of a clarity question.

[03:37:14] You mentioned it. Where we have, like in my district, you have Old Bridge Elementary and Woodbridge High School. So those are on the opposite of the stratum when those school zones are active, right? Correct. It's not like it's an elementary, a middle, or a middle, or a high. it's like there will probably be a gap there some correct and so my question is exactly that so woodbridge high lets in a lot earlier than old bridge elementary correct so during that time that there's actively going to be people walking or driving into school that's when there can be citations and the flashers are on correct and then there's a break there because if there was middle school there that would be when the middle school kicks in but there's not so there'd be a

[03:37:51] break in that flasher and those citations would be issued at that time that is correct and then Old Bridge Elementary, which is the last one in there, then there's flashers there and there will be citations issued during that time. That is correct. So it's sophisticated enough that it's able to tell those times and be able to discern when and when not.

[03:38:09] It will be time with the flashers. Right. Okay. So just wanted to make sure that everyone's aware of that because there are a couple of different school zones up there that you put on that there's literally a school next to each other where that would kick in. Correct. We have three that are double schools, two that are next to each other, two that are on each side of the road.

[03:38:24] Right. And I appreciate that. And my last question before our final comment is the construction zone speeding. Yes, sir. The work zone. So it's one mobile unit you said is going to be sort of roving around the county. And let me clarify that. It's not going to be roving around the county.

[03:38:44] We will put it in a major worksite area that's happening and kind of leave it there. Again, you know, we want to be able to capture a project. The only reason it's mobile is because, obviously, there's no chance of that being there permanently because it's a construction zone, you know.

[03:39:02] But we'll probably pick a construction site that's probably going to go on for the next year or close to where we're going to put our construction zone for this pilot. Yeah, and that's actually where I was going with it because with the red light cameras and the in-place school zones, it's pretty easy to have sort of geographic and socioeconomic diversity there, right?

[03:39:26] But when we talk in the work zones, I just want to make sure that we're aware that, you know, we have work projects going on all throughout the county. But it may be sometimes there's more work zones on the eastern end or more work zones in the county, more work zones going on in western. So we don't just have the work zone camera in one part of the county for too long just because there happen to be more work zones in that particular part of the county.

[03:39:50] Correct. And we will avoid that for sure. And again, just want to let you know as well, as we move those cameras, as we move the roaming camera to work zones, you still, every time you move that

camera, you do have to have that 30-day grace period per code. So you do have to inform people that you're putting it up there.

[03:40:07] You have to have flashers in the construction zone. You have to have the warning signs that the cameras are up. You have the cameras up and you can only have them active when it is an active work zone and those flashers are on. And for those first 30 days, people will only be getting warnings.

[03:40:23] And so then, if I could just last one, Madam Chair, and where I see this going, because I appreciate some of the commentary about being sensitive, especially the red light conversation, but more holistically looking at this, where I see this as one of pilot, like was said before, we're just testing it out, looking at the data, looking at what happens, looking at if there's that change of behavior that you guys have good stats on that you gave us at the outset, but also as a bridge to potentially some of these intersections, some of these work zones, some of these, well not work zones, but some of these school zones, We may decide, hey, we may not keep a camera there forever, but there may be other traffic measures we can take to fix the issue at all, right?

[03:41:03] We talked about Garfield earlier, where right now that doesn't work because of how long it is. But let's say one day in phase two, we put a speed zone camera at Garfield. And over time, we see that, one, it does sort of change behavior here and there, but it gives us more data to then do something else, like a pedestrian bridge, like something else.

[03:41:21] Where, to me, there's data that's collected here as per the actual violations, but there's also more data that the police can collect from this, that you all can collect to this, that there's other methods we can take later that isn't just citing people and punishing them for their bad behavior on the wheel. And correct, and just to further that point, I think once you see that there's, you know, compliance, a very high level of compliance, the school zone cameras can be moved, and then we can come back to you and ask you where you think, or again, look at the data, see where we go with the next school camera to make sure that we're changing the driver behavior in that area.

[03:41:55] But again, once you do change that, it starts over the 30-day grace period that you have to look for it. And we have to, you know, again, make that school zone standard and look at all those factors as well. Because I see that the centerpiece that you all are looking at is safety for everyone involved. Safety.

[03:42:10] Safety for motorists, safety for pedestrians, safety for cyclists, safety for officers too. Because someone gave me this stat really early on in our term that one of the most dangerous interactions that police officers have are those traffic stops. And you're taking some of that out of the equation completely because you no longer have police officers having to stop people as often because we have an automated system that takes care of a lot of that.

[03:42:31] And I've got to be selfish. Safety for my construction, guys. Oh, yeah. Appreciate it, Madam Chair. Thank you. Okay. Well, thank you, Lieutenant Peake. Thank you, Mr. Gonzalez. Thank you, Mr. Wyman. This is great. Thank you very much, man, for your time. I know that a lot of work went into this. And, you know, we're not done yet, so I know we'll have you come back.

[03:42:48] We're not, but I do want to give all the credit to these two guys sitting behind me. Thank you very much, guys. Thank you very much. Next up is 6 D. I believe which is the Mr. Gilkerson with the human resources presentation on the fire and rescue compensation

[03:43:14] Thank you Madam chairman member of the board. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak with you today We'll go through the slides should only take about four or five hours to get through these so Well, I'll do my best to pare it down this first slide talks about our current compensation policy This is taken right out of our procedures And who we who we compare to?

[03:43:46] Gallagher followed the approved Prince William County compensation policy, but by providing that data from them Talk a little bit about market 50 market 50 is how Prince William County's average salaries paid compares with the markets Average salary paid across the benchmark jobs. So from all if you take all the jobs You know from the most entry-level person to the most senior person you average them out You do that with each of the comparison localities you compare that against what our average is for the same

[03:44:20] That's how you come up with the market 50 and how we compare to them. The data is what drove the CXO's recommendations for proposed salary increases compensation study the findings What this is showing us right now is current actual pay and salary structure are below the market at all ranks, with a midpoint at a 6.8% below market.

[03:44:51] Our third-party vendor, Gallagher, recommends a flat adjustment of a 6.8. That's what they're recommending for the fire salary structure due to comparison with the market. And then at the last number, 6.8 equates out to roughly $5.6 million or $5.5 million.

[03:45:14] This slide here will discuss comparison localities. It's the proposed midpoint increases. As you'll see, the blue line is where the market midpoint is currently.

[03:45:30] And then if you go to the orange line is where they will be if all of their proposed increases are approved. And then we drew a line across where the 6.8 is at this time. Our comparison localities for the operational work schedule.

[03:45:52] What this shows now is the different comparison counties. The 56-hour ones are Alexandria City, Fairfax County, and Prince William County. The population, their schedule hours, across the amount of stations they have, and if they have a combined system or not. Talk a little bit about the 7K rule.

[03:46:12] The Section 7K of the FLSA provides that employees engaged in fire suppression, law enforcement or correctional officers whose primary duty is to maintain custody of inmates and correctional institutions may be paid overtime on a work period basis from seven consecutive days. The county chose the seven-day schedule. Overtime is achieved after 53 hours of work in a seven-day period and the results this results in three hours of overtime for each week for six Senate pay period. This is a corrected slide. I apologize. I'm responsible for all the data that

[03:46:51] leaves my department. I did not catch this when it came out, so I apologize. I do appreciate Mitch if he's here for catching that. I prefer proper data over pride any time, so I'm glad he caught that error, so thank you for that. The Department of Fire and Rescue in Prince William County uses the 56-hour schedule equates out to 29-12 for total hours work for the year. And this equates out to just showing you what it looks like when it's broken out. Starting salaries by locality

[03:47:29] for a tech one. So in the far right, it shows where the starting salaries are right now. As we go across, we talk about the proposed scale increase, what that brings that minimum to, The hours I work, how that breaks out to the hourly rate, and then the amount of increase.

[03:47:50] And then the far right talks about the step increase that's proposed as well. I know that there's been some talk back and forth about, I think, one of the localities, I think, Loudoun, I think they're saying it's 7. I'm going off the data that was presented to me from when we did our research out there.

[03:48:08] This research was done on March 4th, I believe. So that data is the data that I'm working with just to keep everything straight with what we're presenting. If they come back with seven, that's something that's going on since we've got this data. They've not given us any indications that that's changed, but I'm not saying that Mitch is incorrect either.

[03:48:31] Scales are not identical and can be created in many different ways, as we all know. Prince William County has established the scales to ensure internal pay equity and eliminate compression. I know HR works with the various departments.

[03:48:46] Whenever we start to see this, we start to work with them in order to make sure that the compression is eliminated as best we can. One thing to look at as well, each scale handles a top-out differently. So each locality or jurisdiction has a top-out.

[03:49:04] Sometimes they go all the way down the scale, so really the last step would be their top-out. For us, ours is generally at about the 25-year mark, but just because of the math how it works out, it may be a little different for each of the positions.

[03:49:22] Fiscal year 24, Prince William County is proposing a 3% step increase on the anniversary date, and that was a very quick four hours. I'm willing to take any questions.

[03:49:44] Thank you, Mr. Gilkerson. Supervisor Bodie. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Mr. Gilkerson, for the very concise presentation. Much appreciated. Just a couple of questions from me. I know that you mentioned that you requested information and got it from Loudon as of, you said, the fourth of this?

[03:50:02] My data as of the fourth, yes, sir. Did you ask them at all if they pay any differences based on level of education, a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, what have you? Sir, we based this just off of the base salary for the step.

[03:50:18] Okay. So that said, if they did hire and give folks a higher bump or a higher starting salary based on their education level, we didn't necessarily look at that because we don't do that. I believe we may. Is the fire chief here? With that said, though, we didn't consider the hiring bonus either from our part. We're going off of just the base. Okay. And my last question for right now pertains to the ALS certifications once you get is the EMS folks ALS what have you did we do any granular comparisons there not with this study

[03:50:56] but we can certainly do that I believe that's on our on our agenda for next steps thank you thank you supervisor Franklin I will add if I can just the example, Supervisor Bodie, that you gave around paying additional pay for some additional skill. I think there is one example that I'm aware of, and there may be others, and that is for bilingual employees. So I think there is an additional stipend there. So if there is room in our policy to do it in that instance, there may be room in our policy to do it in others. So I just wanted to

[03:51:34] make sure that I made that clear. Just a couple of questions. so on page actually this the last page page 7 I know we listed jurisdictions that we compared now I see Fairfax I'm assuming that's Fairfax

County did you all look at Fairfax City at all we did not ma'am that was a typo that came over we did not compare it to Fairfax City just Fairfax County okay do you know the numbers for Fairfax City I do not ma'am I can get those if you if that's something we can come back with because it's my understanding they have an even higher amount that they pay. And so I'd be curious to see what that number is and how we compare.

[03:52:14] And then my next question is, can you just talk a little bit about in this, I don't know if you can answer or it may be to those that did the consulting work, but the methodology for how we came up with kind of the 6.8. I know we talked about that a little bit, but if you can just drill

[03:52:28] down a little bit more and kind of in how we arrived at some of these numbers. Yes. So this right here we were looking at the market mid for this so when Gallagher was doing their research

[03:53:05] their research showed that when we looked at the market mid which is the third box over at the top that we were 6.8 below the market for that so that was the methodology that they used for this gotcha and then I think my last question which kind of goes to the methodology did you all parcel out various positions within fire and rescue and compare them to other jurisdictions we we compared like positions that we had to other jurisdictions so if they had something similar to us that that

[03:53:44] fit our job description and was comparable that's what we compared to sure and then you may have sent this to us but if you have that actually parceled out that we can take a look at each specific position and how they compare to other jurisdictions that would be helpful for us and And then again, just kind of getting us the numbers for what I would say Fairfax City, and then maybe a few other fire and rescue jurisdictions within this area that may not have been included.

[03:54:14] Yes, ma'am. Supervisor Weir? Afternoon. I'm kind of looking at some of this data, and I'm wondering, do we have any supporting documentation from Gallagher to indicate how they arrived at the market midpoints and what sort of criteria they used?

[03:54:40] Because I'm assuming that in the modeling they're using, that market midpoint would be influenced at least to some degree by the varying levels of upper echelon pay versus lower echelon pay, depending on how large the department is, how many people in the lower ranks there are versus how many people there are in the upper ranks, such that if they happen to be a top-heavy jurisdiction, it's going to raise the midpoint there.

[03:55:07] And the other thing is, on that particular aspect, do differing staff levels within the pay bands impact that market midpoint? And do we know if that data was looked at? So for your second question, are you saying that do we look at breaking out the different ranks individually or, I'm sorry?

[03:55:30] Did you, were the different ranks or the different pay bands individually looked at so that if you've got one jurisdiction with, for sake of argument, considerably more technician ones than technicians two, Because that's going to impact where your mid-band is.

[03:55:47] With the data that we have, I believe we can show you how many are each of the categories, each of the ranks. So if that would help, I can get that to you. Okay. Well, I'd love to see that data because I'm kind of curious about how this market midpoint was reached.

[03:56:04] On slide six, I mean, I'm a budget wonk. And if you look at, you've got base pay entry level, $52,749, 56-hour schedule, $52,749, and then scheduled OT at $1413.75.

[03:56:23] All you're accommodating in that scheduled OT is the halftime in addition to the regular. From an actuarial standpoint, you should be having base pay for the first 53 hours and then factoring in what your full overtime cost is for the three hours that you're paying overtime. I get it. It's mandated overtime, but it's a different line in your, or it should be a different line in your budget, regular salary versus overtime. So you need to split that out

[03:56:56] to give a true total or an accurate representation of the total. And then skipping down to the bottom line because of the way you're factoring it in there you make it appear that their hourly rate is actually 1860. The hourly rate is what the hourly rate is. It's 1811. The fact that they're getting overtime doesn't change hourly pay. It stays at 1811. I'm glad this slide got changed because I had some serious issues with the with the methodology and the math on the previous one

[03:57:32] um but yeah um last question with respect to the proposed fy24 budget does that factor in the 6.8 and what percentage of your allocated fte does the budget allocation of 108 million and some

[03:58:06] change cover and i only ask that because your actuals for 2021 and 22 are significantly lower than what the proposed budget is, and I'm assuming that you had similar vacancy rates in 2021 and 2022.

[03:58:24] I can go back and review that data and respond to that question. I don't have that in front of me right now to be able to give you a good answer on. Well, the reason I ask that is if you've got it budgeted at 108.5 and it looks like the actuals were actually dropping from 20 to 22 and you're 8% higher than the FY23 adopted, and this factors in something significant, if this factors in salaries and benefits for significantly more than what your current staffing is,

[03:59:05] then you've got money already baked into the budget to cover a higher salary percentage increase without us having to scurry around and look for additional monies. So I'd like a complete picture on this, what that FY24 proposed allocation is actually going to cover on a percentage basis of your allocated FTE.

[03:59:30] And I'd also like to see where that Gallagher-supporting documentation is going to kind of look at and figure out how they arrived at that. Because I've got some serious questions on how the analysis was done to compare us from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

[03:59:50] And I don't think you have to look any further than slide seven and the average hourly rates, understanding that we're on a different hourly schedule or a different weekly schedule. But, I mean, you've got a $4 difference in hourly rates, actually more than that, top to bottom.

[04:00:11] And it looks like, you know, we're at the low end of the scale. And quite frankly, some of these guys could probably make more money working as a barista than they could as a fire department. employees so i'd like to see all the data so i can i can again i'm the budget wonk i'll i'll delve into it but i'd like to see all of it before we go any further with this yes sir mr shorter would you like to say something yes just to clarify and absolutely we'll work with director to make sure that we provide the additional information supervisor but i don't

[04:00:49] want to have the board wait on a question around FY 24 budget proposed the the the budget as proposed includes all FTE the full FTE count for the fire department so we are assuming a 6.8 increase at July 1 along with the additional 3% in November at their at their anniversary date we are also including vacancy savings yes and will provide some additional information

[04:01:27] associated with the actuarials so for vacancy savings but the budget contemplates full employment for all full employment for all FTEs associated with fire the fire and rescue system I'm not going to belabor the point here because it'll take up way too much time but could you accompany mr. Sinclair on friday to discuss some budget issues like this because i've got a real problem with what you just said from a budget from a budget forecasting and budget standpoint and this isn't on you you've

[04:02:04] been here a hot minute so i'm not going to hang this on you uh but but from a practical standpoint and of how you construct the budget i've got a real issue with that construct happy to happy to discuss further and i don't think that would change this year supervisor we're considering we're in the middle of the process i'm just saying i i would suggest that we're we're in a process where the county executive has submitted a budget recommendation some might call it a budget wish

[04:02:39] list but at the end of the day the budget belongs to this board does not belong to him does not belong to any of them at the end of the day we are responsible for it and part of the process is taking the information and crafting a viable budget based on real data.

[04:02:56] To do anything less is not to live up to our fiduciary responsibility. That's the oversight that we're supposed to be taking, and I take it very seriously. Well, I'm glad I know they've sat down with you and sat down and explained a few other things that you had questions on, so hopefully they'll be able to talk to you about this also.

[04:03:18] Supervisor Angry. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to jump right in from that point. If you scaled back the 56-hour work week to 52, 50, whatever, would that change the dynamics of the pay? And would that allow for an opportunity for more than a 6.8 increase?

[04:03:36] Instead of this 3%, you've got a step increase on the anniversary date. So if I understand you correctly, if we reduce the hours, what impact would that have? Yes. Yes, sir. So if we reduce hours, we're going to have to increase headcount.

[04:03:53] Increase headcount. So let's explain that. You mean hire more firefighters? So if we reduce the amount from, let's just say, from a 56 to a 50, that would require us to increase headcount, demand the stations. And you've heard me say it a thousand times.

[04:04:09] I'm going to say it again, though. You know, this is a combination system. There's an opportunity in there for all the volunteers that are in this county to add to this problem. So we keep talking about growing, but if we're talking about paying our firefighters now, I think there's a great benefit opportunity to use some of the free labor that we got to make sure we can get them whole.

[04:04:31] You know, I will just say that. Secondly, I want to ask, on your slide five, you know, you got, so the county chose the seven-day schedule of the 56 hours. So we see 56 hours between Alexandria City, Fairfax, and Prince William County.

[04:04:49] So what did those other localities do if we chose the seven-day schedule? What is their schedule? Do you know what their schedules look like? They would be like our 56-hour schedule. So, got it. But, I mean, but you said the county chose the seven-day schedule. So, when you say that, was there an opportunity to choose something else?

[04:05:08] Or is that tied to the 56 hours? I don't, for the sake of brevity, because it will be a four-hour session, but you can do a big check, little check, which is a terminology. We chose to do it this way where

we try to make it a little more leveled out.

[04:05:24] Right. And because, you know, dressing the elephant in the room, 56-hour work week isn't the preferred schedule, as we've heard from many of our firefighters. So I want to cue that up. But then lastly, and I agree with Supervisor Ware on that overtime in the 53 to the, you know, the three hours of mandatory overtime.

[04:05:43] What I'm curious is because a lot of this was based on, I think you used a scale of a tech one. So as we talk about, and I think there's an issue here with the schedule that are currently working and then the base pay, if you will, to what that should be.

[04:05:59] But I've asked this a lot of times, and I know right now no firefighter in this county, to your point, is really hurting because, well, they are in one aspect, but they're not in the pocket because they're working a lot of overtime hours. And those overtime hours pay you some really good money.

[04:06:15] I just want to make that aware here. So there is an issue to fix this because what I want to see is that that overtime goes down. And then I would even say that with that overtime that we've seen that we spent out, if you adjusted these schedules to get them right, could that money then be used as to Supervisor Ware's point, adjust some of these pay scales internally without us trying to figure out increasing our, you know, figuring out our budget for the next budget season.

[04:06:44] We can certainly do some research on that and circle back with you. all right thanks yes sir thank you uh supervisor lawson then supervisor vega thank you um one of my colleagues asked you joe for comparisons of like positions fairfax county may have a different rank structure but you're able to compare apples to apples uh is that right we look at the job descriptions to do that so it may be a mcintosh to a granny smith but it's apples to apples okay And you are going to provide us that data for all the jurisdictions, or was there a specific request?

[04:07:24] Remember, Fairfax City is on the compensation, but rank was for all the peers? I'm sorry. As far as a comparison, so that a lieutenant in Fairfax County, is that the same rank as lieutenant here in Prince William?

[04:07:45] Same duties? Right. So we looked, again, at the job descriptions were the same. Right. And they both were called lieutenant, and they were both compared. Right. But from what I understand, you're going to supply us with that? Yes. Yes, ma'am. Additional information? Mm-hmm. Okay. This is how I understand the best way to compare Prince William County DFR to Fairfax County.

[04:08:09] because i do know that alexandria city is moving to a 50-hour work week within the next two years where you i don't know if you're you're gallagher we're aware of that yes ma'am so i think it's fair to say that alexandria may be a comparison now but as we're having these discussions in the long term they're really that that's that's worth noting then they would fall into the arlington

[04:08:42] category um so for my sake i think it's fair to or most equitable to compare us to fairfax county so my question to you is what would be the percentage adjustment on the scale increase if we were to match fairfax county i can run those numbers for you can you do that and can you also run the number of the costs like you have five point i think it was 5.7 million

[04:09:11] at the 6-8. What was that? Where was that number? Right here, ma'am. Yes. So can you also calculate or have Dave Sinclair calculate what the cost would be to match the Fairfax number? Yes, ma'am.

[04:09:31] Thank you, sir. I like all these yes, yes, yeses. Thank you. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just for clarification purposes, Supervisor Angry, were you referring to the free labor? Were you referring to the volunteer firefighters?

[04:09:48] Yes. Okay. Do we know what that number is? Because it's my understanding that the number of active volunteer firefighters has drastically decreased. Is that correct? Ma'am, I don't have the statistics for the volunteers right now, but if you'd like to have that data, we can look it up.

[04:10:03] Thank you. If we could just go to slide 7 real quick, just to have a real quick question. No, we were talking about methodologies, and so this is without the overtime, right, for the 356ers.

[04:10:20] this is you know just the 52 hour work week but do we are we sure that this isn't like do we know how they treat the overtime because you know we we treat it we may treat it differently than other people um and so that actually the whole total salary may be different do we are we aware of that did gallagher look at that at the end of the day we looked at just the base so that's what they're getting you know however they're doing the the overtime is is above what the base is right and so i guess what i'm saying is you know by law they have we have to give the overtime which is the three hours and do we know if the other jurisdictions handle that any differently than us

[04:10:55] and are we double are we absolutely sure that none of this has the overtime for the salaries the base salaries has any of the overtime in it just double check that it doesn't will do yes ma'am thank you mr shorter yes i just again for uh for information and as a reminder i believe uh davis Sinclair did testify to the percent increase for fire for consideration.

[04:11:25] So I think this answers the question of where we would be as compared to some other jurisdiction. So for each percent increase, I think it would cost us an additional $819,000. So from $6.8 to $7.8, $7.8 to $8.8, et cetera, et cetera.

[04:11:47] So I just want $819. supervisor Bailey thank you madam chair I you know just in the spirit of collaboration I don't know if my colleague mr. Weir was here when Gallagher were you here for the presentation Bob I'm not sure and I'm looking the question some of the questions that you had is could help when you meet with the with Dave Sinclair and the county exec so I would encourage if you could share that with him that would kind of set the question

[04:12:25] and answer playing field yes ma'am thank you mm-hmm thank you very much mr. Gilkerson I am sure we will see you again yes ma'am and that's all good thank you have a good night very good okay that concludes our work session for the day we're through with 60 brings us to supervisor's time we do have some appointments that we need to vote on 7 a b and c I'll entertain a motion for 7 a b and c second motion made by supervisor Franklin seconded by supervisor vice

[04:13:01] Chair Bodie any discussion seeing none please vote okay I'm just looking at the thing up there so we are on to supervisors time I'm just going to start to my left with supervisor Bailey madam chair supervisor Vega I'm sorry real quick just next steps I know that the fire guys have been here for a long time and just so that they know what comes next I'm not sure who called for this presentation but don't want them to leave wondering why it was so short and

[04:13:41] what's next? Sure happy to speak to that. So a series of budget work sessions have been scheduled for this month and this was one of those conversations. We will continue that process for the next few weeks and have a budget recap where we really have a conversation about any changes that that

the board intends to move that are changes from the proposed budget. So the proposed budget is now public and I'm sure very much aware you all are very much aware of what has been

[04:14:20] proposed. So I don't know if that answers the question. Yeah sure. Very good. Supervisor Bailey. Thank you Madam Chair. I just want to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Jacob Geovia for being a part of the design and construction standards manual and zoning ordinance advisory committee. We appreciate his expertise and that he will be focused on making sure that he's partnering with this committee to assure that the next steps for our county will be adhered to. So welcome and congratulations Mr. Jehovia. On March the

[04:14:54] 9th I had a wonderful opportunity to go to the GSCA meeting with Madam Chair. There's an excellent opportunity for the FBI headquarters to come to within our region and so I was very honored to be asked to be a part of that regional initiative to make sure that the site in Springfield is a part of our region on the 11th I had the privilege to speak to the Court of Honor ceremony for Miss Emily Lindgren who is 17 years old and she lives in Woodbridge and she was

[04:15:30] celebrating her achievement to this as the awardee of the Stars and Stripes initiative that is with the American Heritage Girls, and it's the highest honor for that organization. And Emily, we congratulate you and thank you for allowing me to be your keynote speaker for your ceremony. On the 13th, we had the opportunity, and this will be forthcoming, and I would like to ask the county exec if we could do a work session on Possum Point coming forward in the near future um not too near but we had an opportunity to talk about the progression

[04:16:08] of possum point and so we'd like that opportunity for the board to get an update on that um and again on the 13th um just congratulations to the new um basic law enforcement session number 52 uh for coming on board with our police force uh congratulations and to speak to the diversity in our county and how we serve, we congratulate the chief and his staff for a job well done.

[04:16:36] On the 30th of March, I will, just a reminder to the community, I'll be having my Potomac District Community Town Hall. It'll be at the Potomac High School from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. And so, Madam Chair, that is my report.

[04:16:53] Thank you, Supervisor Bailey. Vice Chair Bodie. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a couple quick things from me. On the 11th this past Saturday, I was able to attend the St. Patrick's Parade up in Manassas. Originally was supposed to march in it, but I had my famous wingman with me, Miles Joseph Bode, so I didn't really want to walk the whole entire route with him. But he had a blast nonetheless. We had a lot of good showing from, I know some of my colleagues went and marched in the parade. We had our colleagues from Manassas march in the parade, and it was a really great celebration of Irish heritage in the greater Manassas Greater Prince William region. The last thing I have is I know a lot of folks from

[04:17:31] the fire department came out today and a lot of them had to leave as we went through some of our other presentations but I hope that folks understand that as we go through this talk and these conversations about compensation and where folks feel like we're falling in our neighboring jurisdictions that there's a seriousness I think that all my colleagues share when it comes to addressing this issue and addressing the shortcomings that folks feel like we have in valuing and compensating our fire and rescue folks.

[04:18:00] So that said, I hope that I can put on the county executive radar that I hope we continue to have conversations not only around adjusting salaries this year and doing a little bit better over that 6.8% that's currently proposed, but also looking at things like we may have surpluses in later parts of this year's budget to maybe do a little bit more to show these folks that we haven't forgotten about them.

[04:18:21] Because I know that what we did in December for the police department was necessary, and we need to do that. There are other folks in the enterprise that feel like they have been historically behind in terms of where they fall in our neighbors. Especially as we talk about other jurisdictions that have folks working less hours for more money.

[04:18:40] It puts folks at a disadvantage, and frankly has a lot of folks that have been priced out of the county over the last few years in terms of housing. I have a couple of constituents of mine that were members of the fire department that have since moved out of the county. because they haven't been able to afford to live here. So I want us to keep those things in front of mind to get closer to recap and budget adoption.

[04:18:58] Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Vice Chair Bodie. Supervisor Lawson. Thank you, Madam Chair. So a couple quick notices of intent to appoint Mr. Joel Becker to the Solid Waste Committee and Ms. Rhonda Reese to the Architectural Review Board.

[04:19:16] And I have resumes for the clerks. And I also wanted to congratulate Patriot High School Boys team. They had a hard-fought game for the state championship last – when was it?

[04:19:33] Last Friday night down at the VCU Seagull Center. And they came up short, but, man, they certainly gave it their all. And I may be a little biased, y'all, but I absolutely think that the refs were biased for Hayfield and not for Patriot.

[04:19:50] I'm just saying, and I think there was a lot of people that thought that, at least on our side. Were you playing Duke by chance? No, we weren't playing Duke. I would agree with that. Anyway, and then the Brentsville girls, they also came up short, but they gave it their all, and I just want both teams to know that their communities are proud of them.

[04:20:15] what an incredible experience they these teenagers got to enjoy and their coaches and I enjoyed being there to cheer them on and you know I'm sure none of them are listening to me but I certainly am I'm proud of them and all their effort and dedication to their to their sport and school community and then the last thing I want to say is I'm wearing green today because it's obviously St. Patrick's Day on Friday but as I put this jacket on this morning I could not help but have a heavy heart for Supervisor Marine Cadigan. A colleague that I enjoyed working

[04:20:53] with for five years and she was the epitome of an Irish lady and she would have absolutely been wearing green today if she were sitting up here on this dais and I have a heavy heart for her because her beloved son or beloved husband, Jim Cadigan, I just botched that, passed away last week and he fought for years and I remember he had health concerns when she was still serving and she was just such a beautiful wife, always taking care of her beloved husband

[04:21:29] and I know that the board is aware of the funeral later this month. Maureen served on this board for 20-plus years, 26 years. So I haven't talked to her yet, but I just have a heavy heart for her.

[04:21:47] And she and Jim were what I would call a role model of a married couple who loved each other for decades, raised their family here, served the community. Jim, I believe, served our nation. And anyway, Maureen, I just want you to know that you're heavy on my heart, and I'm wearing this green for you, ma'am.

[04:22:08] Thank you. Supervisor Billy just wanted to say something. Yeah, I just want to thank you because that was in my notes, and my mind went blank. So thank you so much for bringing that forward. Maureen, you are in our hearts, and she would be wearing green today. She absolutely would.

[04:22:23] My condolences to you and your family. We had an opportunity to pray with her on Monday right after he has passed. So thank you for your service, Jim. God bless you. And thank you, Maureen, for yours. Thank you, Madam Chair. Supervisor Weir. All I've got is one notice of intent, and that's to appoint Joshua Quill to the Veterans Commission, and the clerk's been provided with the resume and application.

[04:22:48] Supervisor Angry. Thank you, Madam Chair. Congratulations again to Session 52 on your graduation. Welcome to Prince William County Police and Sheriff's Office Finest. And so Manassas City Parade, another great successful parade, enjoyed it.

[04:23:05] It was a little breezy, it was cold, but it was good. Also, congratulations to Yorkshire Volunteer Fire Department on their installation of officers. That was another great event. And I want to thank the volunteers, and I'll get the group names, they're going to put the list together for me, that went out to Andrew Leach Greenway.

[04:23:22] They removed 2,332 pounds of trash over two miles of that course. And so once I get the list of everybody together, I'll be addressing you at an appropriate time. And just want to thank you for doing all that and putting it together. I also want to send a huge thank you and congratulations out to the Teamsters, Local 639, and Keolis for coming to a great agreement on their strike.

[04:23:53] And so proud to say that PRTC OmniRide is officially off strike. And the buses are fully back in service. As we work on more drivers, we're back to the same issue with shortage of drivers. So as we create that pool, hopefully we'll see more routes, more services, and really do what a lot of the talks we had today was with public transportation.

[04:24:15] I do also want to point out that this Saturday, the Bell Air Women's Club is going to be having their, I'm forgetting how many years it is now, 50, might be 50 years, a fashion show and everything. So I'm looking to attend that and have a great time.

[04:24:32] And then lastly, I just want to send a salute out to Colonel Cadigan. So very sorry about your loss, Supervisor Cadigan. So thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Supervisor Angry.

[04:24:48] Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have one thing. As you all know, Maria Burgos sent out a survey recently asking the sexual orientation and gender identity of those who work in the County. Not only was this creepy and intrusive, but you literally couldn't get onto the survey unless you filled out that portion. After I informed the taxpayers of Prince William County of the type of stuff their tax dollars were funding, I received the following email from a County employee who asked to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation from their boss and potentially Ms. Burgos's office. I would like Madam Chair to read this County employee's email

[04:25:25] into the record in full and without interruption. Supervisor Vega. First, I would like to sincerely thank you for notifying the public and shedding light on the DEI employee survey that was sent to employees in mid-February. As the taxpayers have funded this effort, I believe it is important that they are aware of how their hard-earned dollars are being spent. Since receiving the survey the first time and then the subsequent reminder email encouraging us to complete it, I have struggled with what to do and who to reach out to regarding its extremely offensive nature.

[04:25:56] Until publication of the news article, I was unsure if the Board of County Supervisors had seen the content or were even aware of the survey and had considered emailing you to offer my thoughts. I also briefly considered reaching out to county leadership or my direct supervisor to offer the same, but quickly realized that would not only be a wasted effort, but would most certainly have unintended negative consequences. While I have very strong opinions about the survey and am a firm believer that it is important to stand up for what you believe in, I have been reluctant to reach out due to concerns over the possible ramifications to my career of not aligning with the current narrative and speaking out against it. It seems these days that anyone who speaks

[04:26:36] out is met swiftly and unwaveringly with efforts to destroy their reputation and livelihood, a now common occurrence to which I do not want to fall victim. It was with both great sadness and anger that I received the email from my employer leading me to a survey which begins by asking me my gender identity race and sexual orientation to be honest i had not seen the questions the actual survey poses until the potomac local article posted them as i refused to answer these pre-survey quote-unquote demographic questions on the basis that they are patently offensive and extremely invasive and employees are unable to proceed to the survey itself without answering them

[04:27:13] they are mandatory not only are the demographic questions mandatory but the questions regarding gender identity does not offer a selection such as prefer not to disclose. You must pick a selection from male, female, trans man, trans woman, genderqueer, gender fluid, agender, intersex, or non-binary, or other, and make up something totally new to submit. There are no other options, so while it is counter to my beliefs that anyone can have a gender other than male or female, once biological sex. I must put those closely held beliefs aside in order to participate. I and anyone who follows

[04:27:49] a belief system or religion that dictates traditional or conservative principles which prohibits responses to questions that offer selections such as non-binary or trans is excluded from survey participation. That does not feel very inclusive. Not only that, I feel that I should not be required to disclose this information in order to participate in an employee survey regardless of my opinions on the merits of the possible responses amen to that the survey goes on to ask my race age category department tenure role in status making it increasingly likely that identification of survey respondents is in fact possible and would be discerned if one desired

[04:28:27] particularly the identity of those working in smaller departments why would i ever respond to the questions contained in this survey if there is even a small possibility that my identity could be determined. Demographic question number four inquires as to my sexual orientation. This is the most offensive, outrageous, and abhorrent question asked. It is not my employer's business nor place to ask me the gender of my sexual partner. Why is my employer asking me for details of what happens in the privacy of my home, particularly the bedroom? What is the likelihood that I could bring a subordinate employee into my office, sit them down, and ask them this question and not end

[04:29:04] up embroiled in both a civil lawsuit and an internal investigation for sexual harassment or worse, with likely outcomes of termination and an award of monetary damages to that employee? Why is it that the leadership of this organization can do the same to me and it be deemed, quote unquote, progressive and okay, and on top of that, pay tens of thousands of tax dollars to have it done to me, quote unquote, professionally?

[04:29:28] Moving to the survey itself, it is clear that the questions and available responses were crafted in such a way that it forces respondents to answer so that it gives only one possible appearance of employee opinions as a whole and minimizes or even eliminates the possibility of any dissenting opinions. Note that none of the 20 questions in the needs assessment offer any possible response other than that all 20 have value or importance to some varying degree.

[04:29:54] There is no available response that something is not important or not applicable. Those 20 questions also do not offer any write-in opportunity that is not available until question 21, which specifically directs your answer to this open-ended question to be about the importance of inclusion. It is clear that the survey was intended to put forth one message alone, and anything contrary to that will be minimized or rejected. I do not believe that this was simply an oversight or incompetence on the part of those who crafted the survey, but rather intentional in order to force an outcome that appears to offer organization-wide support for the DEI initiative, something that not all employees actually support.

[04:30:31] I'm almost done, Madam Chair. I can assure you that many employees do not in fact support this initiative. Every peer with whom I have discussed the survey felt it crossed the line and that the Equity and Inclusion Office and its activities as a whole is a waste of county resources. This is evidenced by the low response rate to this and the prior survey and that some departments have opted to make their training sessions mandatory for select employees in order to bolster attendance and force participation.

[04:30:56] It escapes me how this survey was ever approved by county leadership and how they thought this line of questioning was appropriate or acceptable. I respectfully ask for your assistance in having the survey permanently terminated and any further inappropriate DEI initiatives canceled. It is clear that the office and the implementation of their initiatives require closer scrutiny, oversight, and management.

[04:31:17] Humbly, a concerned Prince William County employee. As this employee states, they're not alone, and I want to encourage anybody else who is working in this county that if you do not wish to tell Ms. Burgos' office who you have sex with or anything other that is intrusive to your personal life, please reach out to my office, and we're happy to have this discussion in further to make sure that these type of surveys don't get sent out anymore.

[04:31:38] That's all I have, Madam Chair. Thank you. Supervisor Franklin. Sure. On Sunday, March 12th, I gave remarks at the 250th anniversary of the Virginia Committee of Correspondence at the tomb of Colonel William Grayson, a Revolutionary War patriot, soldier, and one of the first two U.S. senators from Virginia.

[04:32:01] I want to thank the local chapter for the Sons of the American Revolution for the invitation. And fun fact, if you've heard of the Grayson Precinct in the Woodbridge District, it's named after Senator Grayson. So thank you to those who invited me to that event. A couple of upcoming events I have.

[04:32:18] I'll be co-hosting an affordable housing town hall via Zoom on March 27th at 7 p.m. in conjunction with the Coalition of 100 Black Women, Prince William County chapter. And then on Tuesday,

March 28th, I will be co-hosting our second annual women's history program at 6 p.m. at the Ferlazzo building alongside Supervisor Bailey.

[04:32:40] And then lastly, this year, we will be hosting Dumpster Day in the spring and the fall. The spring day will be May 13th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Fred Lynn Middle. And in the fall, it will be September 30th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Ripon Middle.

[04:32:56] And we will, per usual, have the shred truck at both events. And then lastly, Madam Chair, I do want to encourage us to go back to our traditional work sessions where we get out of the board chambers and we go to a location in various districts.

[04:33:13] I think the work sessions have become a bit formal. And then, you know, I just think that I've never, since my time on the board, had the opportunity to host a work session in the Woodbridge District, so I would like to, again, put that out there. I know that in the past we've talked about whether certain locations have the proper equipment, but I'm sure that we can work those details out.

[04:33:36] So I just want to throw it out there for consideration. We'll love to give back into the community in terms of work sessions. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Franklin. I think we might do that after the budget season. I think for the issue of transparency, we probably need to do the work sessions on the budget sessions in Chambers, unfortunately.

[04:33:55] But I completely agree with you about going back out. I want to express my condolences to Maureen Cadigan and her family on the loss of her husband, Jim, that it's never easy. It doesn't matter if it's expected or not. It's just never easy.

[04:34:11] And I know her long tenure here, our hearts go out to her. I also want to – the Patriot Pioneers lost on Friday, and I lost a bet because I – because, well, this happens every year. I have a bet with Chair Jeff McKay, and I lost last year, too, I think twice, actually, for two different groups.

[04:34:32] But that's okay. I'll be treating him to lunch soon in Prince William County on my own dollar, which is fine. It's good to get together with him. I was grateful to be with Supervisor Bailey at the GSA talking about, you know, advocating for Northern Virginia to have the new location for the FBI headquarters.

[04:34:49] That makes a lot more sense to put it in Virginia. I'll just say that out loud. And we had a good group talking about that on Thursday morning. Later that day, I got to visit Porter Traditional Middle School by invitation, and I got to participate in the 8th grade social studies, civics, and economics class presentations, where they gave presentations about things that were wrong in the county and how they wanted to fix them.

[04:35:12] And it was really good. They gave presentations on a lot of different topics. I think we saw eight of them, ranging from decreasing pedestrian fatalities to addressing community substance abuse. And what was really cool is every single issue they brought up is something that we have been talking about at the board level, and I could share that with them.

[04:35:31] More monies for libraries, yay. On Saturday, I got to walk in the Greater Manassas, St. Patrick's Day Parade, with some of the good people at the dais. A lot of fun, always good to be out there in that community. Yesterday, I was honored to give remarks at the graduation of the Basic Law Enforcement Class 52.

[04:35:48] Albeit small, it looks like a really tough class, a really diverse, wonderful class, and we're looking forward and glad that they chose Prince William County to come. March is Big Wheels Deliver Meals Month, and I did mine today.

[04:36:04] It's an annual program run by the Agency on Aging, so I was able to deliver meals to some elderly residents around the county this morning. I went from the Senior Center in Woodbridge, and I got to go with Jane and Renee, who have been delivering meals for 16 years.

[04:36:23] We have some wonderful people in our community who are just wonderful volunteers. I will let you know that the Arian agency is looking, I was going to say desperately, but they are looking and need volunteers who will deliver Meals on Wheels to people.

[04:36:43] They are doing that on Tuesdays, and they are just definitely looking for volunteers if anybody out there wants to do that. You either contact my office or contact the Area on Aging. So a great program, great volunteers. with that i'm done uh we can move on to the next item on the agenda which is our closed meeting so we the board will now close for a closed session and um when we come out we will report out thank

[04:37:12] you we are back from closed session we have nothing to report out but if i could get a motion to certify please so move madam chair second motion made by vice chair body seconded

[04:37:44] by supervisor bail any discussion seeing none please vote vote unanimous i'll entertain a Motion to adjourn, please. So moved, Madam Chair. Second. Motion made by Vice Chair Bodie, seconded by Supervisor Bailey. Any discussion? Seeing none, please vote.

[04:38:09] You know that stays in the system, right?