

**PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**  
**December 10, 2024 – 5:30 P.M.**  
**Hybrid Meeting**

**I. COMMISSION PRE-MEETING (Agenda discussion(s))**

***Beginning:*** 5:00 PM

***Location:*** NDS Conference Room

**Members Present:** Commissioner Schwarz, Commissioner Stolzenberg, Commissioner d’Oronzio, Commissioner Solla-Yates, Chairman Mitchell, Commissioner Yoder, Commissioner Roettger, Commissioner Joy

**Staff Present:** Patrick Cory, Missy Creasy, Kellie Brown, Krisy Hammill, Jeff Werner, Brennen Duncan, Dannan O’Connell

Chair Mitchell called the meeting to order and noted the changes to the order of the meeting. It was clarified that the work plan report could take most of the first part of the meeting, but we will have matters from the public and the consent agenda prior to the public hearing. Chair Mitchell provided the process for addressing the CIP hearing. There will be an overall motion and the ability for amendments to be made. Votes will occur on each amendment request and then the overall motion with approved amendments will be voted on. The Chair encouraged members to remain at high level discussion and provided an example. Commissioner Schwarz noted that he will be abstaining from any vote or discussion related to affordable housing projects.

Concerning the 2117 Ivy Road consent item agenda, Mr. Alfele provided a clarification to easement language on the plat for this site. He showed the change that will occur and outlined that this change will not affect the site plan. Commissioner Joy asked about what happens if the change is not addressed. Mr. Alfele noted there will be a maintenance agreement so it will need to be addressed.

There were no questions on the Entrance Corridor item.

Commissioner Schwarz had concern about the traffic signal at Rugby/Rose Hill Drive (coming from the bypass), noting that it was hard to see the signal as it is too high if you are first in line. There is a similar concern with the light at 10th and Wertland. Mr. Duncan noted that was the first time he had heard these concerns, and he will take a look at the intersections. There was a brief discussion of the color and materials for traffic signals.

**II. COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING – Meeting called to order by Chairman Mitchell at 5:30 PM**

***Beginning:*** 5:30 PM

***Location:*** City Hall Chambers

**A. DEPARTMENT OF NDS**

**1. NDS Work Plan Presentation**

**Kellie Brown, NDS Director** – I have been in my role as the director for 3 months as of Monday. I have been enjoying getting up to speed on all the department’s work and getting to know many of you and my colleagues. I wanted to take an opportunity to check in with you tonight on the department’s work, where we are in our workplan for this year. I will be sharing an update on our workplan with City Council in January. I thought this could be an opportunity to get some feedback from you all as we prepare for sharing that information with them in January.

**Next Slide**

In my presentation tonight, I will share a little contextual information before diving into our priorities.

**Next Slide – NDS Organization**

I wanted to share an overview of our department's organization. We have made some changes to the organization over the past several years. Some changes were initiated by Mr. Freas before he moved to the Manager's Office, in which I have been able to fully implement with the support of Deputy Director Creasy. Here are some of the key highlights that I wanted to share: We are a department of 28 staff. We currently have 4 vacancies. We are really divided in our organization into 2 primary groups. Deputy Director Creasy supervises our building code and property maintenance code oversight and our zoning administration and our historic preservation planning staff. I supervise the work of our larger planning team, which is made up of our current planning services led by Matt Alfele, as our Development Services Planning Manager and our transportation planning group and our support services. We are currently recruiting for a long-range planning manager that will be a counterpart to Mr. Alfele and oversee the development of small area plans and long-range policy work in the areas that have been identified through our workplan. Our planning staff is a small group. Our development services group is made up of 3 planners and our planning manager. Our long-range group is the planning manager. We will be recruiting for another planner to support that work.

**Next Slide – Notable Accomplishments**

I wanted to highlight some of our accomplishments from the past year to help frame where we are now and where we are looking ahead. We have and continue to support a significant amount of development review and building review. There have been over 1000 permits reviewed in this past year. There have been over 1700 permits issued and over 6000 inspections. That work is primarily supervised in the building code side of the shop. A lot of that work comes from a lot of the plan review that our planners do. It is a day-to-day responsibility of the department. It is important work. It leads to a lot of the revitalization of our community, increased housing production. I wanted to highlight here several of our development approvals from FY24 and the first quarter of FY25, several student housing developments: The VERVE with 468 units, Aspen Heights, several other housing projects which include affordable housing components. This is work of all development approvals that have come through and will continue to need our support as they move into the building and construction phase of those projects.

We also have several accomplishments that are worth noting in other areas of our responsibilities. It is important to mention that it has still been less than a year since we have adopted a new development code, which is creating a new framework for how we support reinvestment in our community and help to meet our Comprehensive Plan goals. In terms of some other accomplishments, we have submitted a grant application for reinvestment on the Downtown Mall through the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. We are working in our transportation planning group on several initiatives such as school bike fleets for after school programs, the creation of a regional transit authority, numerous improvements through Safe Routes to Schools, and the completion of a downtown walking tour guide. There were a couple of things I wanted to highlight that showed the breadth of the department's scope. We have done a lot of work in staff development side. We have a new director and development review planning manager. We are recruiting for a long-range planning manager, a new property maintenance inspector to support off-grounds student housing, and a new transit planner. We continue to send staff to conferences and supporting professional development.

**Next Slide – Key Workplan Considerations**

I wanted to provide a few more framing comments. This is the lens through which we have used to identify our priorities for the rest of this fiscal year and looking ahead into next year. It is very important that we seek to timely accomplish our non-discretionary core mission services. With our building code and enforcement, property maintenance code enforcement, development plan review, and historic preservation zoning enforcement, a lot of that happens in the background. It is very important work and work that we are attentive to on a day-to-day basis. Prioritizing efforts in support of health, safety, and the implementation of the new development code is also a key priority. That is before we think about adding new initiatives. What are the things that we need to do to make sure that we are doing everything we can in those core areas? It is important that we consistently apply an equity lens to our work and the selection of it. Something that I try to do whenever faced with a decision about priorities is asking some key questions. Who would benefit from this decision or this choice? Who might be burdened? Who is missing from the conversation? Who is left out as a beneficiary? How do we know these things? What data are we using to help us make decisions? That is an important lens for prioritizing our work and how we do our work. Finally, aligning our workplan commitments with staff capacity

and recognizing that we are a small but mighty department in terms of our workforce and making sure we can accomplish what we identify as our priorities given our existing capacity; being creative and trying to grow our capacity through professional development and training.

### **Next Slides – Workplan Priorities**

I will start to lay out what we have identified as our main priorities for the rest of this year. I have tried to group them by theme. These are themes that are present in City Council's Strategic Plan. Organizational Excellence is one of Council's Strategic Plan Priorities. You can see that there are several priorities that we are focused on with regards to organizational excellence; continuing to maintain the city's review of all property development and property maintenance with applicable local and state requirements, working to continue to improve our electronic plan review system, looking holistically at our development review process, and seeking to identify where there are some opportunities to streamline and make our review more efficient. We also need to be focused on how we are going to undertake our 5-year Comp Plan review. We will be required to conduct a review. How should we be setting ourselves up to complete that by 2026? What are the key areas that we want to be focused on there? We will continue to be focused on the recruitment and onboarding the new staff that we are bringing on board. We have also identified needs for several other staff in the budget and training and professional development.

We also have several priorities in transportation. One of the first items that I wanted to highlight is scoping for a comprehensive transportation plan. This is an item that has emerged, recognizing that the city has several priorities across several different plan documents. They don't always 'speak to each other' consistently. They don't always come across in a way that everyone can understand where we are going. We will be scoping a new comprehensive transportation plan this year. At the same time, we will be focusing on developing policies in several areas where it does not make sense, or we cannot wait until we have a comprehensive transportation plan in place. We will be looking at new policies, procedures, and community engagement around the creation of Safe Streets, traffic calming, lowering the speed limits throughout the city, continuing to support Move Safely Blue Ridge, and building out our pedestrian facilities and sidewalks. That is something that we hope that the CIP investment will greatly support that work.

With our regional and CAT planning, I am happy to refer you to Ben Chambers to answer any questions on these items, biking and bike facilities, continuing neighborhood walking tours, and focusing on micromobility.

In the area of Economic Prosperity, we will continue to support a range of inter-departmental efforts related to revitalizing the Downtown Mall; currently, bringing forward updates to the café standards for their review and approval. As we approach the milestone anniversary years celebrating the Mall's historic district status. We will be focusing on homestays by improving enforcement and by investing in software. That will help us with tracking. It can be a data point to conduct a zoning study to help refine our existing regulations to make enforcement easier.

With climate and sustainability, this has been identified, coming out of the development, as an area of additional work. It is a review of our environmental policies and developing a new policy framework for how we are going to steward our natural resources within the context of our goals for reinvestment in new housing in the city. With those new policies in place, what does that mean for some regulatory changes?

Housing will continue to be an important area of focus for us. A lot of this is related to continuing to socialize the development code in the community. We will begin scoping the scope of work for a small area plan for 10<sup>th</sup> & Page. That is also something identified coming out of the adoption of the development code. Our initial step there will be starting to pull together an understanding of the existing conditions in that neighborhood and seeking to identify what are the key issues that can be addressed/should be addressed that a small area plan can help resolve and working with the community as well as collaborating with them to identify those key planning issues. With the development code, we are going to continue working to make it more accessible to homeowners, investors, looking to develop more training materials that can help break down some complicated concepts into more digestible material for whatever the opportunities. Monitoring and evaluating the code: Where are the issues that remain that present barriers to investment? We are maybe starting to identify unintended consequences. We will be creating a task force to address how we can start to stabilize a few properties in the city that represent a limited number of neglected or deteriorated properties and return them to stabilizing housing opportunities.

### **Next Slide – Development Code Monitoring and Evaluation**

Anticipating that there might be some questions on the development code and what we are monitoring, we have already taken stock of as potential issues to address. We have created 3 ‘buckets’ at this point of areas that potentially need an amendment or need some further study. The first category is Technical Corrections. Those are things like typos. The second category is Clarifications where there is a clear intent, but the language does not best reflect that intent. Those are things like providing better language to allow attached dwellings across zoning, side lot lines. We have also identified Policy Questions that will be on a longer-term time horizon. There are the types of things where we anticipate needing some community engagement, conversation with you. This is what we were thinking when we adopted the development code, but maybe it isn’t what is best for us now that we have had a year to sit with it. Things like re-evaluating height in feet and stories within the residential districts. Those are the types of things. I wanted to give you an idea of the types of issues that we are documenting as we become more familiar with the code and speak to perspective applicants daily.

### **Next Slide – Looking Ahead**

I wanted to identify a few items that we do not anticipate addressing in any meaningful way over the next 6 months but are areas of potential focus looking ahead into the next fiscal year. With commercial uses in residential districts, there is certainly an opportunity and potential issues. There are issues and opportunities for allowing neighborhood serving retail within residential areas and what zoning amendments could support that. With the Entrance Corridor Design Guidelines Study, I am looking at alleys and what we need to do in terms of the ownership of alleys, maintenance of alleys to support some of this infill development. It would be helpful if the alleys were more accessible. With the Downtown Mall, there have been some concerns raised that the development code does not provide the clearest guidance for what is the appropriate height and massing on The Mall. There might be an opportunity in the next year to develop a scope of work for some study to look at building height and massing on The Mall and come up with a clear vision. What are the right regulations in the development code to support that.

**Commissioner Schwarz** – With the small area plan, just a reminder that when this was originally discussed, it had to do with the intersection of Preston and Grady and the Preston Corridor. We have discovered that the whole neighborhood itself needs to be studied as a small area plan. Don’t forget that corridor was a reason for the desire for a study.

**Ms. Brown** – I see that as being something that we need to look at.

**Commissioner Yoder** – I like the annual review of the development code. It is a great idea to see how it is going and see what should be adjusted. Has the development code been in place long enough to where we could start to do a trend analysis on basic metrics like building permits issued, kinds of housing on a monthly basis before the old code and since the new code?

**Ms. Brown** – It does take a while for a code that has this magnitude of changes to take effect. We can report on trends. We are seeing a lot of interest. To date, we are not seeing a significant number of real applications. We have received several permits for accessory dwellings in areas where we weren’t seeing applications before. Beyond that, people are still trying to understand what is possible and identifying areas where there are questions about feasibility. That is what we are tracking. That is something over time we would be interested in reporting out.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – If I could suggest something we could do in the short-term with a more limited scope than that, the county produces a quarterly and annual report of how many units were made. I think they split it up into their comp plan areas. We could split it up into our planning neighborhoods. They split it up into single-family detached/attached, multi-family. Something that simple would be great to see as a product from the city. With five years of producing that, we could start to see trends.

**Commissioner Roettger** – I liked it when you mentioned thinking about the climate and resiliency as being folded in. I like the idea of a dashboard. People who are tracking it can see how long it takes. You can show how many affordable units. The climate thing was great. In many large organizations, there are all these different departments and getting funded in different ways. After we had the work session with the county, they had some great goals.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – The members of the school board are also interested in those metrics. They see changes happening. They know that they change enrollment capacity. Everyone wants more information. A member of the public

approached me about heights, which I see on the workplan. In the way that we think about considering context, when we look at setbacks in our development code, we could consider context in the way we regulate heights as well.

## **B. COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I had 2 meetings. One was the LUPEC last month. We covered Resilient Together. This morning, I had an MPO Tech meeting. The big things were SS4A (Safe Streets 4 All), which is underway. There are public sessions coming up I believe next week or later this week. There is that online survey. We are submitting our third consecutive Raise Grant application for the Rivanna River Bridge preliminary engineering. Two months earlier, we got a presentation from Bill Boyer at the RWSA about the full water supply plan. VDOT is starting a few STARS studies to create plans that become smart scale projects. One is Rt. 29 at the I-64 interchange. Another is at 29 north. The third is in conjunction with the city at Ridge-Main. That will be getting underway shortly.

**Commissioner Schwarz** – At last month's BAR meeting, we had 2 significant projects that we looked at. One was a hotel at the Artful Lodger site. It was a proposed 6-story hotel. The BAR was fine with the massing. We did criticize it for the streetscape, the pedestrian experience, the materials, and the detailing. It was a preliminary discussion. The direction that it was going was that it was not going to be compatible with the district. They need to figure out ways to make the building materially fit better into the district. We also looked at a 13-story proposed test-fit building on the Violet Crown Theater site. This was not a designed building. It was more of a developer saying: 'How much mass can I put there?' It was a good discussion. Council allows us to limit the height of buildings on the Downtown Mall to within 2 stories of the prevailing height on the block. We are allowed a 25-foot step back. Those are our parameters from the ordinance. Our guidelines say that in commercial areas at the street front, the height should be within 130 percent of the prevailing average on both sides of the block. On that block, the prevailing height is 2 stories. Some of the comments were leading towards making it about 3 or 4 stories. When we are on the Downtown Mall, step back 25 feet, and then go up to 5 or 6 stories. Most of us were fine with allowing as much height as zoning would allow, but further back towards Water Street. It is not really a Mall building that is 13 stories, but a Water Street building that would be 13 stories. That is significantly cutting back from the buildable mass of what the developer proposed could be. There are many moving parts there. There are a lot of components that would have to go through the zoning code, such as 4 stories of parking with no active depth on the base of the building. I believe it is on our agenda again to continue that discussion.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – The School CIP Committee met. We talked about the Capital Improvements Plan. We listed a lot of concerns. There was a lot of pride in the successes from the Strategic Investment Program. Over the years, it has been successful. It has led to a lot of good projects. Things have changed. It is time for a reassessment. We talked about the lump sum. The money is not going as far as it used to. It is for things like painting and basic maintenance. Those costs keep going up. Solar was a major topic of concern. Staff were surprised that we were so concerned about it because we had not funded it. They said that if it was funded, it would proceed to build the way that roofs have. There needed to be funding to get the project done. There was general unanimity on that concern. There was general concern that we don't know where we are going. We have growth in the south. We don't have growth in the north. We have capacity in the north. We don't have capacity in the south. The School Board wants more information. They want us to communicate better on land use and education between Planning Commission staff and School Board.

**Commissioner d'Oronzio** – The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission met last week. There was nothing of excitement to disclose there. There is a lot of work happening on the Path Mobility Management, which is an assistance program priority pointed at rural people regarding satisfying transformation needs. People don't have cars. We are moving forward with several grants in that department. We are going to try to revisit getting some money to do some engineering on the bike-ped bridge over the Rivanna. Our costs are all

over the place. We are being told that we need to nail those down more securely. The HAC met on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Freas gave an update on staff's thinking on the landbank. They did not like the fundamental underlying principle that the HAC had suggested, which is that it be an independent body. City management wants to structure this as an authority with the idea that it could be spun out into an independent body in the future. There are problems with that that I am going to address with them. I am going to make some suggestions on that. We need to have the nonprofit stood up at the same time with the same boards. You can move it smoothly and you have a vehicle to accept donations into a nonprofit. There would be a 7-member board composed 4 at-large, a planning commissioner, a city councilor, and city manager/deputy city manager. There are going to be some governance concerns. The argument for doing this is to have the city have a closer hold on oversight over the tax dollars that go through the bank. I don't necessarily agree with that. The idea would be to stand both up, have a sunset of when its authority gets transferred over. It is important to have that entity, at least as a shell, sitting there. You can't make a tax-deductible donation to the City of Charlottesville, but you can with the landbank nonprofit. I have just said 'yes' to 11 meetings of CAHF Committee in January and February to process the applications.

**Commissioner Roettger** – I was with the Tree Commission last week. They are preparing the State of the Forest report to present to City Council. There is some interest in hiring a second urban forester that might work with NDS on private land. They have been working hard on that. I suggested that it would be great to have a work session together to go over questions about the new code and promoting planting of trees.

**Commissioner Yoder** – I attended my first meeting of the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee. There is some overlap between the committee that Commissioner Stolzenberg is on. One thing that was somewhat new that would interest the Planning Commission is that the MPO received a Safe Streets & Roads For All planning grant from the federal government. This program is funded by the bipartisan infrastructure law. It provides two types of grants: a planning grant or an implementation grant. A locality must have an approved safety action plan before they can get implementation funds. Completing this plan would allow the city, MPO, and other localities within the MPO region to apply for federal Safe Streets & Roads For All implementation money. Locally, the study has been called Move Safely Blue Ridge. They have been doing some public outreach. There is an online survey out there. They are taking a safe systems approach to identifying high injury corridors and intersections. They will be planning counter measures to improve those locations. They are planning to wrap up in the spring of 2025, which is the deadline for the grant program. This is a data driven process. It is going to help the city and help the region understand where we can invest our safety funds and make the biggest impact.

## C. UNIVERSITY REPORT

**Commissioner Joy** – Three capital projects were presented to the Board of Visitors. The first project that was presented was a 1030-parking space parking garage in North Grounds. That design was approved. It greenlights the construction of that to begin. It is a design-build delivery for that project. It is slated for completion in 2026. That sits in the northwest corner of Massie and Copeley Road, opposite the parking at John Paul Jones Arena and north of Palmer Park. The next project was a 750 to 800-bed student housing project. This sits at the westernmost parcels of the 14-acre Emmet-Ivy Corridor. Part of it abuts the Copeley Bridge. Another portion runs along Ivy Road. It sits to the west of the Karsh Institute of Democracy. That was presented for design review. That will go back to the Board in 2025 for its final approval. That is part of a larger discussion that is currently happening around second-year housing across Grounds. The last project was the schematic design review for the Center for the Arts. That was a preliminary review. Some of the programmatic highlights for this include a 1200-seat Performing Arts Center, the UVA Department of Music, art galleries that will show the combined UVA fine art collection along with traveling exhibits. The project has received generous donations to help get that project going. Additional state funding is necessary to proceed further in design and construction. There will be more to report on that as that takes shape with the General Assembly in the new year.

## D. CHAIR'S REPORT

**Chairman Mitchell** – No Report

## E. MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC NOT ON THE FORMAL AGENDA

No Public Comments

## F. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes – November 12, 2024
2. Site Plan – 2117 Ivy Road
3. Entrance Corridor – Barracks Road Shopping Center

**Motion to Approve – Commissioner d’Oronzio – Second by Commissioner Solla-Yates – Motion passes 7-0.**

## III. PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARINGS

*Continuing:* Until all public hearings are complete

*Format:* (i) Staff Report, (ii) Applicant, (iii) Hearing, (iv) Discussion and Motion

1. **Charlottesville Capital Improvement Program FY 2026-2030** - Consideration of the proposed 5-year Capital Improvement Program in the areas of Affordable Housing, Education, Public Safety & Justice, Facilities Management, Transportation & Access, Parks & Recreation, and Technology Infrastructure. A copy of the proposed CIP is available for review at: <https://www.charlottesville.gov/budget> Report prepared by Krisy Hammill, Office of Budget and Performance Management.

**Commissioner Schwarz – I am working on a couple PHA projects. I need to abstain from any discussion on affordable housing and voting on affordable housing.**

### i. Staff Report

**Krisy Hammill, Budget Director** – This is a public hearing on the CIP. My presentation does not contain any new information than what I presented to you before.

#### Next Slide – Overview

This is just an overview. I will give you an overview of the CIP tonight. I have included responses from feedback that you provided to the City Manager from your meeting in September. We will talk about what is next. There are resources for further information if you need it.

#### Next Slide – Summary

The 5-Year Plan includes just under \$186 million worth of projects for the city CIP. Looking at, just in terms of funds allocated in terms of priorities, we will note that education was first, affordable housing was second, and transportation & access came in third. That is based on an allocation of funds throughout this plan for the project. For this 5-year plan, we intend to bond about \$131 million with the rest being cash from the General Fund and some contributions from the schools. With prior year budget surpluses, we have those programmed in. That is the CIP contingency that is listed here in 27 and 29.

#### Next Slide – Funding the CIP-Revenues

With the CIP, it needs to be balanced. With what we plan to spend, we must have a way to pay for it. As noted, we are using bonds for most of the CIP. In addition to cash from the General Fund, we have a city policy that requires that we attribute at least 3 percent of the General Fund budget to the CIP as pay-go. We also have an additional financial policy that says, when we have a surplus, those funds go to the CIP. They are used for one-time expenses. Just prior to the last 2 fiscal years, where we had an unusual high surplus, we average between 5 and 6 percent pay-go in the CIP on an annual basis.

**Next Slide – Education**

This is just the breakdown of each of the individual groups. As we discussed at our last meeting, if there is a highlight, that means that there was a change made from the 5-year plan last year. If there is nothing noted here, the numbers did not change from the 5-year plan. The only addition is the funding in FY30 if that is applicable. In this case with the school HVAC, you will see it here and in the facilities groups. We are still working with staff on those numbers. They did request additional funding above and beyond what is here. We are working to get some further information on those. That is why these are highlighted in terms of just the recommendation. They are likely to change between now and the proposed budget.

**Next Slide – Facilities Capital Projects**

There are no real changes here, except for the HVAC. You will still see that the climate action is listed here at \$1 million a year and ending in 29. That is based on the 5-year commitment that was made with the plan last year.

**Next Slide – Public Safety & Justice**

If it is highlighted in green, these mean that the numbers have changed since last year. With the fire and EMS replacement numbers, we have moved those around. There is a large lead time on that equipment. We calibrated the timing of those and slightly adjusted the cost. With the police mobile data computers, we adjusted the price. We replace so many each year to keep from having to replace large numbers all at once. We adjusted for the cost of those.

**Next Slide – Transportation & Access**

There are many projects here. One of the big things here is new money to new sidewalks. We have gotten that money in this year. We had not done that until we were ready to move forward. We had a plan. Mr. Chambers has been here and presented his sidewalk priority list. We feel that this is a good path forward. The funding reflects that as well. Small area plans have slightly changed. With street milling and paving, we have just adjusted that. Over the last few years, there have been some issues in that. That is ramping back up. We like the funds that are here are reflective of the work that can get accomplished over these 5 years. The ADA Transition money is new this year. We are still working on the exact plan. This is to show our commitment to moving that transition plan forward. More plans and discussions will be coming forward to Council on the specifics of how those will be spent.

**Next Slide – Parks & Recreation**

The playground funds for renovations is an annual ongoing maintenance account. That got some increased funding. Some of the tree accounts, at the request of Parks & Rec, were reshuffled to reflect more where the funds were being spent. We added some money for the Downtown Mall Tree Management Plan. That plan is in the works or will be in the works. We will be coming back and asking for more funds once that plan produces some recommendations.

**Next Slide – Technology Infrastructure**

No new changes here. \$40,000 of that is for public education access fees that come to the city and must be used. We use those for the Channel 10 studio. In addition, the citywide IT strategic infrastructure is money that is set aside to help address IT needs that come up during the year. Sometimes it helps us supplant new software. That

stays the same. The voting equipment was in last year as well. That will all be replaced in 27. This is building up a balance to do that.

**Next Slide – Affordable Housing**

No changes here from the 5-year plan. I will note the Carlton Mobile Home Park, which was approved by Council, is an annual payment to our partners on that project. These are the numbers that have been submitted. We are still working forward to finalize those numbers. That is what we project right now on an annual basis.

**Next Slide – Planning Commission Review**

We are back to the questions that you had sent to Council from your meeting. With the things you wanted us to look at, the next slides are how we address those. I am happy to go back through those. I will pause here to see if you had any questions.

**Commissioner Roettger** – Under Transportation & Access, what is the SIA immediate implementation?

**James Freas, Deputy City Manager** – Last year, in our conversation on the CIP with Council, we did agree to expand that to be inclusive of implementation in all small area plan areas. Projects identified within or consistent with a small area plan can be funded by this account.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – I saw that there was an unfunded request for barriers for the Downtown Mall for events. Would that not be a CIP item? Was there a choice made to not make it one?

**Ms. Hammill** – With some of those, we are still working through. The list that I sent you were all the requests we received from departments. Some of those were still in the midst of working through the remaining art funding. There is an item that will be coming to Council. We have not yet made a decision. It is likely that some of those items may fall into the CIP. They may fall into an art category as well. We are not yet sure.

**Brennen Duncan, City Engineer** – We have had a lot of questions about the traffic signal replacement in different meetings as it relates to the budget. I wanted to go through the history of this. It has been in the works for 3 or 4 years. Some people may not have known about it or are now just finding out about it.

**Next Slide**

With most of our inventory, we have 75 traffic signals in the city. They are approaching the end of their useful life. Most traffic signals are anywhere from 40 to 70/80 years depending on the material, whether it is galvanized or painted. Most of our signals were put in the late 70s/early 80s. We are in that 40-year range. We are starting to notice the wear-and-tear on the signals. In 2021, we went to Council and you all to create a fund to start looking and assessing these. That was where this kind of fund was created. We hired a consultant to come in. They analyzed and did reports on all 75 of our signals. They did a test on the thickness of the material. They did visual inspections. That took about a year from 2021 to 2022. We came back with the first round of that. We have a lot of these that are in bad shape. We had one that had fallen over in this timeframe at Arlington and Emmet Street. This is most of our signals in the city. Of the 75, roughly 85 percent were deemed to be structurally deficient. Right now, we are focusing on the top 20.

**Next Slide**

Our approach going forward, depending on how you want to count it. We have Rugby-Preston and Rugby-Barracks are listed as 3. That is all one traffic signal because it is all one controller. These are the signals that we are prioritizing. We have broken this down into a 4-phase approach for different reasons. Just trying to get this many signals done at one time is difficult. Even if we could do all 20 in the same year, that means that when the next person comes through and has to replace signals, we have a whole bunch that are all become needing replacement all at the same time. We are now trying to spread it out slowly. The goal is to get this first

batch of 20 done and get on a cadence where we are addressing one a year, two every two years, or something like that. We will start spacing them out and we are still addressing them. Other than new signals that have gone in in the city, we have not done any replacements of signals in the city since they have gone in. It is deferred maintenance. The Publics Work Director say that he did not want to paint the poles anymore. Normally, we do regular painting every year. That is another reason why we are trying to go away from painted poles towards more galvanized. It does take time, staff, and resources away from the other duties that they are doing. That is the current approach.

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We have Timmons Engineering under contract for these first 21 intersections. Their notice to proceed was around January of this year. We are through about 60 percent of the design phase. We have looked at right-of-way needs, trying to reduce cost and schedule. They have given us pole designs ahead of the whole bid document. The poles are a long lead time item. If we put it out to bid, the contractor needs to order them. It can be anywhere from 6 to 12 months for those to be produced and get to the job site. It drags out the project. We have asked for these designs ahead of the rest of the plan set so we can order those ourselves with our own money. We are not paying contractor markup. We are going to store them at our site and the contractor will install them. That contract should go out to bid the end of the year or the first part of January for that first batch of 5 intersections. We have already begun purchasing cameras, controllers, and signal boxes. When we do have a contractor on board, they are doing the installation of all the stuff in the field. That is where it is and how it is going right now. We are anticipating that the plans will be 100 percent finalized. We will go out to bid in the spring of 2025.

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I broke this down more to understand how and why we need the money when we need it. Bidding usually happens in the Spring for larger construction projects, which does not line up well with our fiscal year with the money coming July 1. If we are only getting the money in July and then starting to bid stuff in July/August, you are almost delaying another whole season. We are asking for that money in July to be used in quarter 3/quarter 4 of the following year. It does not line up well. Without doing that, it means that the money is sitting there that much longer. For FY25, we do have about \$4.5 million in the budget right now. The master arm purchase that we are getting ready to do will take about \$500,000 of that. With Phase 1, the estimate right now is about \$1.8 million. That will draw us down to about \$2.5 million. We are asking for \$250,000 for FY26. When we go to bid in spring of FY26, we have that money, and we are not waiting on July before we can bid again. We don't know what the atmosphere is going to be for bidding. We have seen some high bids. This is our first batch of this. We want to make sure that we have enough there. It will also feed into future year requests like the \$2 million for 27 and the \$3 million for 28. Those are best guesses right now. As we start getting bids in, and we go through 1 or 2 of these rounds of bidding out these signals in batches, we will hopefully be able to hone in on a better number for those. Those may change from year to year. That takes us through the next 5 years. By the time we get to that 2030 fiscal year budget, we are hoping that these first 20 will be done. We will then be on more of a \$1 million a year, depending on construction costs in 2030. That will hopefully allow us to do 1 or 2 every year. That is where this came from and where it is going. There was no CIP for these large maintenance items for the traffic signal poles in the history of Charlottesville. We are starting from scratch and trying to catch up to get back on a cadence that is more manageable.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Is the problem their end-of-life primarily the poles and the mass arms?

**Mr. Duncan** – Primarily. We have replaced signal heads. We are in the process of doing a lot of the controllers to bring those up to date. The large items here are the signal poles themselves.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Are we replacing the signal heads?

**Mr. Duncan** – We are not only doing the signal poles like these intersection improvements. We are doing ADA, if there are improvements that need to happen. When we do an intersection, we are doing an intersection, and it is done with everything that we can possibly do with it.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Are there VDOT funds that this might be eligible for? A few years ago, we had the Cville Signals Revenue Sharing item.

**Mr. Duncan** – The one that was previously on there was done as a revenue share. It was left over from the 29 Solutions project. That was more looking at the technology side of it and not necessarily the signal pole side of it. This is going beyond that. Usually, there are no VDOT funds for maintenance activities. Replacing signal poles generally falls under a maintenance activity. We might be able to go after funding for some of it. For the most part, it is on us to replace the poles themselves.

**Commissioner Joy** – I was curious if this opportunity of putting in new infrastructure, there has been discussion around some more advanced coordination of the signaling to deal with the traffic demands. Is that effort and technology being considered when the new arms and new poles are being installed?

**Mr. Duncan** – Hopefully by the end of the year, we will have our central system. It is basically the “brain” of the traffic. We have not had a modern one for several years. That will allow us to do a lot with the kind of intelligent transportation stuff. The new controllers we are getting are compatible with that. The plan is to implement a lot of the flashing yellow arrows that you see across Virginia right now. Our old controllers and old signals couldn’t even do that. Everything we are doing is to modernize and replace the old.

**Commissioner Yoder** – Some of the signals now don’t detect bikes. When you replace them, are you going to update the vehicle detection so that they do detect bikes.

**Mr. Duncan** – Yes. We are doing a redundancy so it will be camera systems and the traditional loops so that we can do both bikes and pedestrians. It allows us to get a lot more data for use. We will be able to track how many times people push the pedestrian button. It will give us vehicle counts at the signals without having to hire someone to go out there and perform the vehicle counts. It is modern infrastructure.

**Commissioner Schwarz** – You said that you are going to get the “brains” for the system by the end of this year. Does that mean that work can start before all these signals are replaced?

**Mr. Duncan** – Yes. We have already put some of the controllers in the city. Not all our signals are old. We have some newer signals. Even with the old poles, we can still update some of the controllers. We have started doing that. Once we get the contract finalized, it is about a 9-month implementation to get everything on the backend installed. We will start seeing the fruits of that in the fall of next year.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Will we get transit signal priority with the new system?

**Mr. Duncan** – There will be the availability to do transit priority. We have already started those discussions with Garland and CAT about where and when and how we are going to do that. The new system will be able to do it.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Are there other items of deferred maintenance that you are suddenly going to drop \$20 million on expenditures?

**Mr. Duncan** – Not that I am aware of.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – Can we eliminate some signals, stop signs, etc.?

**Mr. Duncan** – We will look at them when we do it. A lot of our traffic signals are on corridors that have 8000 to 10,000 vehicles a day. Stop signs don't work at those. We will look at the possibility of doing roundabouts. With a lot of our intersections, we have limited right-of-way. We are not trying to do a smart scale project where we are obtaining right-of-way. We are trying to work as much with these projects in the footprint that we have available to us. I do not anticipate that many would go away.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – Could we save our poles with ballards?

**Mr. Duncan** – Possibly. A lot of times we have narrow sidewalks. Putting those in becomes an ADA issue as well. It is not the standard our current poles have. It is not as robust as the VDOT standard. Our old poles are just 4-bolt poles. Most of the VDOT poles are 8-bolt poles. They are still an active standard that we can use that is more of a 6-bolt pole. We are going to go with that so that they will be more robust than our old poles but hopefully not as large and imposing as most of the VDOT poles that we see.

## ii. Public Hearing

**Fritz Knave** – I had a couple of questions. In the traffic signal category, what sort of things are not going to be bought/not going to be provisioned that are the interesting/state-of-the-art things that are potentially being offered in this area? If the systems are so flexible that in the future, you will be able to easily modernize and extend the capabilities of the system. What sort of things in the CIP are oriented towards climate resilience as we see increasing changes? What kinds of investments are being anticipated for climate resilience as we go forward?

## iii. Discussion and Motion

**Mr. Duncan** – A lot of the old technology was server based. You would have it on site. You bought it and that is what you had. The whole market is moving towards more of a subscription-based service. That is what we are going with. As new technology comes in, per the supplier that we are going with, we would have that ability to tap into that. With a lot of the current technology that is out there, we will be able to do that with the system that we are getting. I don't think there is anything that we are prohibited from with the system that we are going with. Is there more? Sure. Does it infringe on civil liberty stuff where you are tracking the Bluetooth of people? We are not going that route right now. I know that some places do that where it has a Bluetooth reader at every intersection, and you can get individual devices so you can see how vehicles are moving throughout town. That technology is out there. We are not using it. We are not planning to use it. That would probably be the only technology that I know of that we are not planning to use. With the transit signal priority, we are not going to be implementing it right away. We are making sure that technology is there. We can implement it as something that we are looking at.

**Ms. Hammill** – To follow up on the climate question, in the CIP last year, we added, for the first time, \$5 million (a million a year for climate action initiatives). This budget has \$4 million of that left. In addition, for all the maintenance items, we are looking at more efficient/more modern ways of doing things to help address the climate and in areas when we can. Transit is a big initiative.

**Commissioner Joy** – The City Manager mentioned at the last meeting that a balanced budget is ultimately what he must deliver. If there are shifts and changes from this, does it come back?

**Chairman Mitchell** – This is the last time we are going to look at it.

**Commissioner Roettger** – The only possible amendment or recommendation would be having some money set aside for affordable housing emergencies that come up that are not 5 years in the making.

**Motion to Approve CIP – Commissioner Solla-Yates – Second by Commissioner d’Oronzio – With the following amendments:**

**Commissioner Solla-Yates – Increase funding for a strategic housing fund as CIP or ongoing funding for a land bank. Second by Commissioner d’Oronzio. Motion passes 6-0 with 1 abstention (Commissioner Schwarz).**

**Commissioner Solla-Yates – Create funding for city schools’ comprehensive facility plan. Second by Commissioner d’Oronzio. Motion passes 7-0.**

**Commissioner Solla-Yates – Increase funding for city and schools solar PV program or pursue other agreements. Second by Commissioner d’Oronzio. Motion passes 7-0.**

**Commissioner Solla-Yates – Increase funding for schools maintenance lump sum projects. Second by Commissioner d’Oronio. Motion passes 4-3.**

**Commissioner Yoder** – There are many items here for the school budget. How do the school budget requests make it into the CIP? Are they making these requests earlier in the process? Why are we bringing this up at the last minute?

**Chairman Mitchell** – One of the reasons is that Commissioner Solla-Yates only just went to one meeting.

**Commissioner Yoder** – Did the schools put in a lot of budget requests that were not approved? Is that a fair statement?

**Ms. Hammill** – A lot of the accounts that you see in the CIP are annually funded accounts that this schools CIP committee works with city staff. They contract with the city to do their contract work to decide how they would like to spend those funds. The funds that are allocated in the CIP are in addition to the funds that are also allocated in the General Fund to the schools. We work in conjunction with them. We have added the pre-school at \$30 million and Buford at \$90 million. We maintained the level funding in all the other ongoing accounts for schools as well. It is up to that CIP committee to prioritize the things that they want to see in the CIP and to move forward appropriately.

**Commissioner Yoder** – I am uncomfortable with having several amendments on the schools. It seems like it speaks to something earlier in the process that should have happened that didn’t happen.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – The schools make a budget request of their own. I don’t know that it is our responsibility to go through every CIP item of theirs. For big items, those are the things on our ‘plate.’

**Commissioner d’Oronzio** – Are we giving their submission a second ‘bite of the apple?’ Are they feeling that they are underserved at this point? Are the priorities that they presented x months ago have changed?

**Commissioner Solla-Yates** – There was excitement of my presence.

**Commissioner Solla-Yates – Reduce funding for school improvement priority projects in the out years not yet programmed. Second by Commissioner d’Oronzio. Motion passes 4-3.**

**Commissioner Stolzenberg – Create a line item for Safe Routes to School improvements at the requested amount. Second by Commissioner Solla-Yates. Motion passes 7-0.**

**Commissioner Schwarz** – Is that already ‘baked’ into one of these line items in the CIP?

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – It does not have a line item. There are new sidewalks line items. That is not specifically Safe Routes to School. Arguably, Neighborhood Transportation Improvements could be redirected towards that instead of other neighborhood transportation improvements.

**Commissioner Schwarz** – These are the small projects they did when we expanded the bus routes?

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – Yes. They are trying to harden them from paint and plastic to concrete. They have 41 projects identified.

A woman was recently killed on Elliott Avenue. The city was able to deploy funds from other accounts for what I would call urgent transportation improvements to fix that intersection and at other high priority intersections around the city that it is currently identifying. I understand that out of the surplus of this year funds, the City Manager plans to ask Council to allocate money into an account.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg – Identify sustainable funding for urgent transportation improvements in out years as a line item. Second by Commissioner d’Oronzio. Motion passes 7-0.**

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – According to the City Manager presentation, there will be \$99 million allocated for affordable housing in CIP projects alone. As you recall, we passed an Affordable Housing Plan that recommended \$100 million over 10 years. One million a year of that was intended to be for administrative capacity. OCS (Office of Community Solutions) has scaled up its capacity. Close to \$2 million is the tax abatement program, which has also been scaled up. The remainder was meant for active subsidies like the ones in the CIP. It is not a bad thing that we have exceeded our goal. My concern is that we still have no defined process for competitive granting of major CIP, LI HTC subsidy awards. All \$99 million is programmed to specific projects. None have gone through any sort of competitive or application process. I would suggest that we create a line item for general, large budget affordable housing expenditures. This might be like the one Commissioner Solla-Yates discussed earlier. I would also suggest that at least Friendship Court Phase 4 bookmarked funding should be put in that category. City Council made a commitment to redevelop Friendship Court. Everyone who lives in Friendship Court will be housed in new housing as part of Phases 1 through 3. The PHA has not planned Phase 4. It is entirely conceptual. We don’t know what it is. I don’t see that it is part of Council’s original commitment to redevelopment. That would be a good start to have them go through a new process for identifying recipients of these funds.

**Chairman Mitchell** – I am having trouble figuring out how this is different from Commissioner Solla-Yates’ motion.

**Commissioner d’Oronzio** – I think that I see the distinction. Commissioner Solla-Yates is looking for a strike fund. This is something we will have in place. We don’t even have to fund it every year. We have \$3 or \$4 million sitting in it. It is a strike fund. It is available for that purpose. Looking at Westhaven in 28/29, we have \$5 million out. With these larger scale projects that are planned for, I think a ‘bucket’ that says Affordable Housing Programs TBD of splitting them out this way. You can have one line item for out year affordable housing projects. We can figure out how that is allocated.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – We know we are going to give X million in FY30 to affordable housing projects. What those projects are should go through some sort of process to weigh them against each other.

**Commissioner d’Oronzio** – As we get closer to those dates, the CIP will start to reflect that more precisely as we get there.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – OCS has started the process by asking that if there is a big thing, go talk to OCS about it. There is still no process like the CAHF for small housing investments that those expenditures go through. I would propose that we move late year expenditures into a lump sum account and establish a process to distribute it.

Would you like 2 motions: one that we should have such an account and one that we should move funding for more than 3 years out into that account?

**Commissioner Roettger** – I would not vote on taking the funding out given that they have already made plans for that funding or at least that tied to Phase 1, 2 without discussion. I would vote for having a new process to do that in future years after the ones that are already on paper.

**Commissioner Stolzenberg** – **Create a line item for large affordable housing expenditures with a competitive program for selection for the out years. Look to start funding in FY 2031. Second by Commissioner d’Oronzio. Motion passes 6-0 with one abstention (Commissioner Schwarz).**

**Motion to Approve the CIP with the above amendments (bold) passes 6-0 with one abstention (Commissioner Schwarz).**

#### **IV. PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS**

*Continuing:* until all public hearings and action items are completed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 PM.