

CITY OF WILMINGTON
WILMINGTON CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING (PLANNING CONFERENCE)
MINUTES
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2026

The Council of the City of Wilmington held a special meeting on the above date at 9:00 A.M. at Halyburton Park, Halyburton Nature Center, 4099 South 17th Street, Wilmington, North Carolina to hold their Planning Conference.

Those present were: Mayor Bill Saffo, presiding; Councilmembers David Joyner, Salette Andrews, J.C. Lyle, Cassidy Santaguida, and Chakema Clinton-Quintana; City Clerk Penelope Spicer-Sidbury; City Attorney Meredith Everhart; and City Manager Becky Hawke. Mayor Pro-Tem Kevin Spears attended via video conference.

MAXIMIZING OPERATIONS FOR A BETTER CITY

Mr. Aaron Beckner, Assistant Public Works Director, gave an overview of terminology used in his presentation and stated that every five years we line our streets with a linear laser system that gives us an updated PCI score and was recently completed in February of 2025. He stated that the data was put in an asset management tool called Street Logics that gives us a map, decision tree, helps with rehabilitation costs, prioritizing repairs, and budget scenarios for annual paving plans. He stated that PCI was done by a company called Transmap and it is completed every five years. He stated that the average PCI in 2020 was 72 and length in miles was 398. He stated that the PCI did go up a little bit based off of the 2025 scan, and our center line miles have grown to 406 which equates to 908 lane miles.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Beckner stated that some potential funding scenarios moving forward show that if we continue to spend an average of \$5.0 million a year, our PCI score is likely going to go down, but our network has grown which means there will likely be more costs there. He stated that to maintain our PCI, we are looking at close to \$10.0 million a year in funding.

Ms. Becky Hawke, City Manager, stated that we are currently underfunding our paving program if we are looking to just maintain the current level of average conditions of our streets. She stated that if we do not allocate more funding to our streets, they will continue to dilapidate. She stated that this is a funding decision that we anticipate will come before Council whether that is an FY2027 budget or a future budget. She noted that it is ultimately a Council decision.

A lengthy question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Beckner stated that some of the treatment strategies they have been trying to implement is a neighborhood approach, specifically over this last five year cycle. He stated that one of the challenges has been defining a neighborhood boundary and identifying all the conditions and rehabilitation needs in that neighborhood. He stated that one treatment method known as rejuvenation is a chemical application applied to relatively new roads within the last five years and it is very cost effective.

Councilmember Santaguida inquired as to how often this treatment method should be applied to the street. Mr. Beckner responded that it's typically applied on a new or recently repaved street and then every five years.

Mr. Beckner stated that another treatment is known as slurry seal, a very thin overcoat for streets in relatively good condition. He stated that our Staff goes out and ground-truths every street and plan to ensure the appropriate method is being done. He stated that we saw an average PCI increase of about six points and an average cost per lane mile of \$30,000. He stated that micro-earthing is a thicker overlay treatment that triggers our ADA compliance requirement. Mr. Beckner stated that we also have concrete streets throughout town, which is primarily rehabilitation work.

Mr. Beckner stated that we do have several historic brick streets throughout town. He stated that there is a process of having to strip the asphalt off the

top to restore the missing bricks and they serve as a way of natural traffic calming. Ms. Hawke stated that the plan is to not uncover anymore brick streets within the current Capital Improvement Plan cycle.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Beckner stated that we started to receive funding for our dirt streets program in FY2023. He stated that we have about six miles of dirt streets in town but funding is limited and requires having to wait to build up funding to get the street converted. Ms. Hawke stated that without significant funding, it would be many years to get some of the streets paved that are being requested due to the length of them. She stated that some of those streets were annexed into the City and were not brought up to code before that.

Mr. Beckner stated that some of the other improvements we do that comply with the ADA requirements are triggered by re-surfacing projects. He stated that the cost is about \$3,500 per ramp and that they have completed 555 with a backlog of 652. He stated that the sidewalk funding is a separate part of funding.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Beckner stated that contract costs have increased over the last several years. Councilmember Joyner inquired as to the amount of work that is being contracted out rather than done in-house. Ms. Hawke responded that we can do some analysis and it would be a fair analysis to complete as we can hopefully increase the budget to be as efficient as possible with the dollars we have. She stated that if we can get a competitive bid contracting often gets it, because once the job is done they are off payroll, benefits, etc. and we don't have to carry that cost year-round.

A lengthy question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Beckner stated that a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit is a federal permit program mandated at the state level that aims to manage stormwater runoff quality. He stated that phase one rolled out in 1990 to large municipalities and phase two was added for smaller municipalities in 1999. He stated we were issued a phase two permit in 2007 based on our population and are on a five-year cycle. He stated that we went through our first audit in 2023 and the deficiencies that were noted are being addressed.

Mr. Beckner stated that we would be moving to a phase one permit starting in 2026 based on our population, which is well over 100,000 people. He stated that both permits require a stormwater management plan. He stated there are six minimum control measures that are required as part of the permit to include public outreach and education, public involvement, the Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE), construction site runoff, post construction stormwater management, and solution prevention and good housekeeping. He stated that annual reporting is required by both phase one and two. Mr. Beckner stated that additional requirements for phase one are water quality monitoring and industrial inspections. He stated the steps we've taken to secure our phase one permit and that it was expected to be issued July 1, 2026, but it is delayed.

A lengthy question/answer and discussion period was held.

Council recessed the meeting at 10:25 A.M.

Council reconvened the meeting at 10:42 A.M. and Mayor Saffo did a roll call. All were present as mentioned above.

MAXIMIZING OPERATIONS FOR A BETTER CITY (CONTINUED)

Chief Ryan Zuidema, Wilmington Police Department, stated that the downtown camera program started around 2009 or 2010 and it utilized a combination of City-owned and privately-owned cameras. He stated that the City-owned cameras are

used both proactively and reactively and they have been used over the years to successfully identify and solve crime. He stated that camera technology is really important in minimizing the amount of time it would take to gather evidence needed to solve crimes. He stated that there are currently 24 locations of City-owned and operated government cameras.

Chief Zuidema stated that we have six current memorandums of understanding and five of those allow for full access to live view, to be able to keep recorded footage and to save it. He stated that one location allows for live view.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Chief Zuidema stated that license plate readers are almost an expectation of modern Police agencies now. He stated that high speed cameras capture images, specifically license plates, through the software optical care recognition (OCR) and compared against the list we generate. He stated that this technology can be utilized in all of our vehicles and built into the cameras is the license plate technology that can help identify things like stolen vehicles or if the vehicle is associated with a missing child case. He stated that the information can also be used for law enforcement and any misuse of that data for non-law enforcement purposes can be charged with a criminal offense.

Chief Zuidema stated that some of the cameras in the network are over ten years old, and with this type of technology the recommendation is seven years. He stated that across the City we have about 1,150 video cameras and 714 are in the downtown area. He stated that there are about twenty-five locations across the City where private cameras are in use and six of those are in the downtown area.

Chief Zuidema stated that a drone as a first responder allows us to pre-position and respond to any type of call we want. He stated that it allows us to have situational awareness and get to the line of sight quicker. He stated that drone technology can also tie-in with license plate technology. Ms. Hawke stated that the plan is currently being built so we do not have costs for it yet but we will first look to 2026 dollars to see what could be available to fund some of that, followed by FY2027 dollars or an implementation plan.

A lengthy question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mrs. Meredith Everhart, City Attorney, added that the drone program is a joint operation with the New Hanover County Sheriff's Office and the fire department.

SERVICE UPDATE/PLANNED SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS/AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY-WIDE SERVICE

Mr. Mark Hairr, CEO, WAVE Transit, spoke to Council and stated that there are four divisions within WAVE transit, the regular fixed route system with ten routes, ride and bike road service, extensive systems shuttle at UNCW, and the ADA point service. He stated that the City is blessed with three maintenance stations and two passenger stations that are fully staffed. He stated that a Board was created through the interlocal agreement in 2020.

Mr. Hairr stated that for the last three years the major sources of funding are the annual federal grant which is \$5.2 million this year, the City of Wilmington subsidy which is \$1.9 million, and a state grant that we operate that will be around \$2.0 million this year. He stated that all of the costs and services are covered by the state. He stated that New Hanover County subsidy was \$3.93 million and in 2024 they added an additional \$750,000 in operating funding. He noted that the contract with the university is almost \$1.0 million.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Hairr stated that for the current fiscal year, overall the federal funding is more than 45%, state grants are 15%, the City is 13%, and the county is 8%. He stated that we don't have what's known as dedicated funding in the transit sector, so systems such as neighboring cities all have some sort of dedicated funding that goes into transit each year from sales tax initiatives or other fees. He stated that it creates a bit of a challenge to not have that guarantee of funding each year.

Councilmember Joyner inquired as to the mechanism those cities are using to leverage that revenue. Mr. Hairr responded that it's mostly through referendums and there was one in the Fall of 2022.

Mr. Hairr stated that the regular annual grant is \$5.2 million and that this annual appropriation from the federal government is usually about \$3.5 million and because of the pandemic funding left over and the transit funding being a year and a half behind, that is how the difference is made up. He stated that this year we are using 2024 and 2025 funding. He stated that we do get a little bit of what is called 53-10 for elderly and disabled related transit services that is just under \$400,000. He stated that we don't get much money for capital grants annually totaling around \$360,000 a year, federal and local money a year. Mr. Hairr stated that we have been able to tap into some competitive grants that are low emission grants because we operate CNG buses, we have an advantage in that competitive grant process. He stated that we were able to get over \$3.0 million in 2023 and were awarded just over a million last Fall. He gave an overview of some of the state assistance we receive as well and the rural areas where we receive some funding.

A lengthy question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Hairr stated that WAVE transit went through an extensive planning process recently and implemented a whole new fixed route system in January of last year. He stated that they implemented more frequent service, streamlined routes, and one way loops. He stated that they did increase the frequency on some of the main routes like College Road, Carolina Beach Road, and Market Street. He stated that a direct connection from downtown to Mayfaire has now been implemented.

Mr. Hairr stated that they saw an increase in the Ride Micro service and highlighted some of the most frequent routes transit customers utilize. He stated that last summer they were also able to replace all of their technology and recently purchased six new buses and four new ADA vans.

Mr. Hairr stated that they have a vision for the future including improvement reliability which would require additional funding. Ms. Hawke stated that they do anticipate the Board being supportive of the need to make this additional annual investment to be able to keep the current service at the level we're desiring and get the on-time performance and reliability. Mr. Hairr stated that phase two would be to expand out and run six to eight routes that start earlier in the day and run later at night. He stated that expanding to utilize an app service or re-loadable cards is also part of the vision. He stated that we do have federal flex funds that will be used to put in new shelters and benches this year.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Hairr stated that more frequency mid-term and additional corridors are also part of the vision for the future, and evaluating either lower fares or no fares at all. He stated that fare-free service would require about \$800,000 to cover the cost and the fare-free service would also be for the ADA service as well.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Mr. Hairr stated that bus bracket transit is a rail system that utilizes a dedicated lane but may be difficult with our street network with limited streets and the property adjacent to them, but could be something on the horizon. He stated that downtown shuttles and parking has the potential to form an interconnected downtown circulator system. He stated that having a development person that focuses only on outreach, building partnerships, working with employers at other organizations, and special initiatives would be a good addition.

Mr. Hairr stated that prior to 2020 there was more of a mix of representation on the Board but there were some financial challenges in the system that caused some major changes in the leadership of the system and the Board makeup. Councilmember Andrews added that everyone is there by virtue of their position and is a Board of bureaucrats. She stated that she does not feel like we are representing the ridership well on the Board.

A lengthy question/answer and discussion period was held.

Council recessed the meeting for lunch at 12:51 P.M.

Council reconvened the meeting at 1:10 P.M. and Mayor Saffo did a roll call. All were present as mentioned above except Mayor Pro-Tem Spears.

MAXIMIZING COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS & OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION/ENGAGEMENT

Mrs. Everhart stated that a public record is defined in the statute as all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, etc. that is maintained by any agency of North Carolina government for its subdivisions which includes any of its elected officials. She stated that public records and public information compiled by the agency, which includes the City, is the property of the people. Therefore, it is a policy of the state that citizens should be able to obtain copies of the public records or public information free or at minimal cost unless otherwise specifically provided by law. She stated that basic concepts for public records apply to all records made or received in connection with the transaction of public business. She stated that it does include all types of records and a less exception applies if it is a public record and in North Carolina. She stated that if there is ever a question, state government is going to err on the side of something being public. She stated that there are exceptions that prohibit an agency from releasing a record except under specified conditions, or non-public records, and in that case, it's not a public record with no right of access. She stated also that criminal investigations are not public records. Mrs. Everhart stated that whether a public record is public or not is determined based on its content, not its location. She also stated that we cannot enter into a non-disclosure agreement to prevent access to a public record. She stated that records related to the transaction of public business are public, anyone can request access, and they don't have to say who they are or the reason for wanting them. She stated that we don't have any specific authority that the request be in writing but most clerk's offices will create a form for people to fill out their request.

Mrs. Everhart stated that the requirements for retention for public records are governed by the state division of archives and history in the government records branch. She stated that the City gives us our own records retention schedule to adopt and we try to update it at least every five years. She stated that the form in which the records are provided is based on how they initially requested them. She stated that if we do not have access to provide a record the way they requested, we do not have to create something in order to fulfill the request the way they've asked. She stated that there is no specific timetable applied to public records and it will vary depending on the type of request. Mrs. Everhart stated that personnel records are not considered public records requests either, but there are certain things within a personnel record that could be a public record. She stated that for criminal records, only the first page of the Police report and the arrest report can be released as a public record. Mrs. Everhart stated that if a request has to do with a legal situation or legal advice then it is not going to be a public record. It does exempt communications from an attorney to a public body when communications involve coming against a public body in which an act or judicial action or administrative proceeding to which the public body is a party. She stated that it also exempts trial preparation materials and documents that include mental compressions or legal theories. She stated that Section 132-1.3 states that settlement documents in any suit or legal proceeding are open to the public and the only exception is if the court specifically states that it does not need to be disclosed. Mrs. Everhart stated that we cannot produce tax records that contain information about the taxpayer's income or receipts including privilege license, occupancy taxes, prepared food taxes, and cable franchise taxes. She stated we do not maintain medical records as we are not HIPAA providers. Mrs. Everhart stated that closed session minutes are protected so long as inspection would frustrate the purpose of closed session. She stated that records involving security, including cybersecurity, and contract bid and construction diaries, are not available until the bids are open and contracts are awarded. She stated that economic development records are not generally provided to the public until the project has been announced.

Mrs. Penny Spicer-Sidbury, City Clerk, added that if someone wants to make a records request today they can either submit a form online or come to the office to complete a records request form or call and the Clerk's office can complete the form for them. She stated that when someone submits a form online it automatically drops into the system, assigns it a number, and we can start tracking it. She stated that this process works much faster. Mrs. Spicer-Sidbury stated that she reviews all requests, disperses them to the appropriate department(s) that may have the records and provides a copy of the request to the Deputy City Manager that oversees the respective department(s). She stated that email requests go to I.T., herself, and the attorney's office and certain emails are reviewed. She stated that requestors are informed that the process will take 2-4 weeks and we do try to fulfill requests quickly, but it is becoming a huge process for the Clerk's office. Mrs. Spicer-Sidbury stated that most of the requests that are receive are so large now that we have to download them on a flash drive for a fee of \$20.

Mrs. Spicer-Sidbury advised Council that NextRequest is a public records software company that works under the umbrella with CivicPlus who does our land development code and regular code. She stated that it operates similar to how we already do requests except when there are duplicate requests they can be generated quickly by using an index that is housing the initial requests. She stated that it will take four to eight weeks to get the software through NextRequest set up and running and the systems will need to be merged at some point.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Ms. Lauren Edwards, Communications Director, stated that her department oversees a whole host of communication strategies starting with strategic communications, briefing documents, media relations and public information, brand management and visual identity, internal communications and employee engagement, community engagement and public participation, and visual platforms and content governance.

Ms. Edwards stated that prior to establishing this working group there were 72 people who had access to our website. She stated that they minimized those numbers, trained the people who had access to it, and established standards and templates that were part of the re-brand effort. She stated that since the re-brand effort with the new federal government mandate around ADA digital requirements, we are required to be fully accessible by the end of April. She stated that their department has been in partnership with I.T. as it has been a large undertaking. She stated that they have been using a dashboard called Siteimprove that marks what is and isn't accessible and the remediation for that effort has been on-going for about four months. She stated that she thinks we are at 97% accessibility for our digital spaces and we will hit the goal of being fully accessible by the end of April.

Ms. Edwards stated that her department is running the GTV8 channel at all public meetings, as well as, showing support to make the space look and feel like the City of Wilmington, especially in regard to moving into a community engagement space. She stated that crisis and emergency management communications is another wish list item to make more requests. She stated that currently they oversee alert media as well.

Ms. Edwards stated that there are external channels they manage as well to include the website, dashboards to include community engagement and projects for engineering. She stated that they are working to make that a more transparent process for the public so they can understand casing of certain projects and planning efforts. She stated that in regard to social medial platforms we are seeing annual growth of about 20% and it is probably the fastest way information is being spread. Ms. Edwards stated that recording of all public meetings and Did You Know campaigns can be found on YouTube. She stated that our current digital newsletter, The Wilmington Current, comes out every Monday and is a short window look into what the City is up to. She stated that our printed newsletter is distributed twice a year in the Spring and Fall and is more editorial style. All these external channels have specific audiences around them. Ms. Edwards stated that a person can subscribe to email marketing based on topics they are interested in. She stated that this is an area she is excited to build upon as we

go into community engagement. She stated that One City emails have now been implemented that point people to City Net for the central hub of information. Ms. Edwards stated that we have kicked off Town Halls with Ms. Hawke's arrival to the City which have provided great opportunities to engage with the workforce and have created a positive shift with Ms. Hawke responding to a lot of questions from Staff on how to better the work experience. She stated that dates of interest are sent out every single Friday with a more casual approach than a public service announcement and our media partners have come to expect that. She stated that formal press releases are done as well.

Ms. Edwards stated that in regard to public engagement the thing that is missing is the thread of "One City" of Wilmington and not just a specific department or person. She stated that the intent is for public engagement to feel less siloed, more consist in our interaction, and that it look and feel the same. She stated that Boards, Commissions, and Committees are a great way for the community to get plugged in, as well as Wilmington 101. She stated that with Wilmington 101 there are 29 folks that are walking through the program currently. She stated that the annual resident survey helps inform trends and large-scale public feedback and she hopes the community engagement efforts help support that larger-scale effort.

Ms. Edwards stated that as far as goals, they really want people to experience the "One City" approach, centralize information, and align engagement activities with communication and marketing efforts. She stated that they will be looking at consistent public-facing opportunities when they're looking at communication. She stated that some of the most important things are having a centralized public engagement calendar, being proactive versus reactive, leaning into an educational approach, engaging our City partners, intentional customized solutions for unique audience and projects, shared partnership opportunities, and collective multi-departmental support.

Ms. Edwards stated that they expect more consistent engagement opportunities, strong internal coordination, clear strategic campaigns that align with Council's goals, and proactive communication tools.

Ms. Edwards inquired to Council regarding ideas around holding a community Town Hall and also said that if they are receiving a lot of feedback about things, to inform the department so they can be a centralized support system for them.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Councilmember Clinton-Quintana inquired if Wilmington 101 was free and if we have considered putting it on YouTube. Ms. Edwards responded that it is free and she thinks it would be great to try to duplicate the content and experience from Wilmington 101 and have it housed in a digital space. She stated that we are limited in capaCity with the in-person events. She stated that she is not in favor of a recording of Wilmington 101, but rather building up a well-curated digital space. She stated that the goal this year is to make Wilmington 101 less academic and more hands-on. Ms. Edwards stated that Wilmington 101 largely informs much of the content that her office does.

Councilmember Santaguida stated that there may be ways to expand on that and create a Wilmington 201 that takes a particularly hot topic and presents it to the community in different parts of town. She stated that any opportunity that we can take advantage of to help people understand that it really is "One City".

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Ms. Mary Vigue, Deputy City Manager, stated that the notion of "One City" should allow for things like a centralized phone system so when calls come in, they are funneled through a call operator to the appropriate department based on the inquiry. She stated that we need to move away from the siloed departmental approach that only assists a call if it is pertinent information related to that specific department.

Ms. Kara Spencer, Assistant to the City Manager for Legislative and Community Affairs, stated that Council received word that Governor Stein will be in town

on Thursday with Secretary Reid Wilson making a major announcement at the water treatment plant.

Ms. Spencer thanked Council for doing a good job of addressing Wilmington's concerns and advocating for them at the Legislative Breakfast. She stated that Senator Michael Lee requested to be a part of the property tax reform group for the Senate side because he sees the City and municipality side of that issue. She stated that he is going to be an advocate for us when it comes to property tax. She stated that when it comes to interbasin water transfer, Ken Waldroup showed our draft bill and we received a positive response from our delegation stating that they wanted to be a part of it. She stated that Representative Davis has already handed that off to the House Attorneys and they are checking it for constitutionality and data. She stated that we are hoping to get a vehicle for it during this short session. However, it is tricky to introduce bills at this point because they must have a cost type to them this late in the session. Ms. Spencer stated that she is hopeful.

Ms. Spencer stated that we are working with the Council of Governments (COG) to put together a 72-line letter of local matters to help people reconsider that interbasin water transfer effort. She stated that from a budgetary standpoint we are hopeful that will happen.

Ms. Spencer stated that when the budget is approved, she will be interested to see if Senator Lee's provisions come through related to increasing the film cap, and the money for Broad Street.

Ms. Spencer stated that a grant should always be submitted with letters of support from Wilmington's executive leaders as it adds more value. She stated that when departments are sending out invitations to legislators, she is happy to send them out on behalf of the City of Wilmington through Legislative Affairs.

Ms. Spencer stated that there will be six Council members and Staff representing the City of Wilmington at the upcoming National League of Cities Conference. She stated that there will be a series of events not associated with the conference that Council will be participating in that will include local zoom calls with press and local media outlets. She stated that Mayor Saffo will be visiting the White House in the afternoon on Monday to discuss FEMA and disaster recovery through his association and leadership of the Metro Mayor's Coalition. She stated that there will be a group dinner with Governor Stein's Chief of Staff, Jim McCleskey, after the conclusion of the official conference agenda on Monday. She stated that on Tuesday they will be participating in a private tour of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Ms. Spencer stated that the NC Leadership reception will be on Wednesday and there will be meetings on the Hill with David Rouzer consisting of a private briefing on disaster recovery reform, as well, a private tour of the Speakers Office and U.S. Capitol. She stated that Council and Staff will also be having lunch in the U.S. Capitol with Baker Elmore, the head of federal affairs nationally for Duke Energy. She stated that then there will be a joint meeting with Senators Thom Tillis and Ted Budd followed by elected leaders invited to EPA headquarters for a high-level meeting.

Ms. Spencer stated that the next conference is CityVision 2026 with the League of Municipalities in Raleigh, NC.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

Ms. Spencer stated that Council needs more reliable data so they can make better decisions and talk knowingly about our communities' makeup, needs, and the gaps in where we are and where we want to be. She stated that as members of the North Carolina League of Municipalities and the NC Metro Mayors, we are going to be a part of the North Carolina group that can access the database being created to help serve municipalities like ours. She stated that Tableau is the medium to which all this data is going to be given to us.

Councilmember Joyner noted that he did not see the LGBTQ status on the list. Ms. Spencer stated that she looks forward to getting everyone's thoughts and feedback in relation to the list provided of data to ensure they come through in the final request.

Ms. Spencer stated that under the current contract with Tableau, the database will not do everything for us and Council may want to consider the value of additional data points.

A question/answer and discussion period was held.

CITY MANAGER'S CLOSING REMARKS & NEXT STEPS

Ms. Hawke stated that she wants to get some reflections from Council after the last day and a half of the planning conference. She thanked Staff for the tremendous output that occurred on a short timeline for this event and specifically recognized Tracy, Michelle, and Kimberly, from the City Manager's Staff for handling a lot of the logistics for the conference. She also acknowledged I.T. for their support as well.

Ms. Hawke stated that she and Staff will take the notes and datapoints from the conference and will triangulate it into a list of follow-up items to ensure it is reflective of what they all thought the takeaways were.

COUNCIL REFLECTIONS

Mayor Saffo stated that we are taking the philosophy of the City to another level in a lot of ways in order to be in the top quintile from a governmental point of view, and the need to spend money to get there. He stated that this will consist of the possibility of other annexations and funding sources like food and beverage taxes. Mayor Saffo stated that he wants to be fair to everyone but the demands for this City continue to grow and a lot of people come here because of what we built here.

Councilmember Joyner thanked everyone for their contribution to the planning conference as this was the first time that informative conversations drove the budget instead of the other way around.

Councilmember Andrews thanked Ms. Hawke and stated that without her we wouldn't be re-organizing the City and trying to find efficiencies. She stated that this is so much more high-level and interactive as the pieces fit together.

Councilmember Clinton-Quintana thanked Staff for all the work they put into the planning conference. She stated that even though downtown is the catalyst for growth, she hopes the same mindset and consideration will be given to other parts of town and organizations when needs arise. She stated that she is excited for everything, especially from a marketing standpoint and is grateful to each department for the work they are doing.

Councilmember Lyle thanked everyone and admired the talent that Staff has in how they put together the planning conference the way they did. She stated that it's about the taxpayer being given a higher level of service so that they're as proud of our City as the rest of us.

Councilmember Santaguida stated that she appreciated the time and energy that went into the planning conference and that as we come back from year to year to do this, it's a reflection of the things that were said, what's changed since the last conference, are we moving in the direction that we want to, and that it becomes more of a refresh then working from a blank slate. She stated that a lot of what was discussed is going to require quite a bit of investment and we need to think about the return on the investment. She stated that one of the other things she is passionate about is the strategies we're going to put into place to avoid displacement. She stated that it's important to get creative in the ways we can look at revenue opportunities at every level. Councilmember Santaguida stated the importance of collaborating with Staff and ranking the priorities and putting them into categories. She stated that after this planning conference, she feels much more equipped to serve the City.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mayor Saffo gave some brief closing remarks.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at
3:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Penelope Spicer-Sidbury, CMC/MMC/NCCMC
City Clerk

**THE ABOVE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS. THE
ENTIRE PROCEEDINGS ARE RECORDED ON TAPES 1, 2, AND 3, AND ARE INCLUDED
AS PART OF THIS OFFICIAL RECORD.**