

## Councilmember Questions – FY 2026 Budget Review

*The following questions reflect both broad topics and specific questions that Councilmembers would like to be answered from their review of the FY26 Proposed Budget. The questions are to be sorted according to each DCAO portfolio identified in the [FY24 ACFR Organizational Chart](#) (found on Page 20).*

*The Office of the Council Chief of Staff will receive Councilmember questions directly and compile them for response from the Administration. Questions not submitted to the Council Chief of Staff are not guaranteed a timely response.*

### **Revenues, Expenditures, Debts and Projections**

1. Can we get detailed revenue projections for the general fund in the FY26?

**Answer:** The FY 2026 Proposed Budget includes the Administration’s revenue projections for that fiscal year. A detailed Excel spreadsheet outlining the FY 2025 Adopted and FY 2026 Proposed Budgets—including all funds, cost centers, and accounts—was provided to the Council Chief of Staff’s Office on March 28, 2025.

2. Can we get a breakdown of the “Excess Revenues...”? (Section 2-11)

**Answer:** The figures in Section 2-11 are drawn directly from the FY 2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. To meet the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) requirements for the Distinguished Budget Award, the city must report the final year-end balance of the most recently completed fiscal year.

This section simply summarizes FY 2024 year-end results and has no impact on the Proposed FY 2026 Budget. There are no excess revenues included in the FY 2026 Proposed Budget.

3. Can we receive a high-level overview of what reductions were made in order to accommodate rising expenditures? Was it a broad reduction, or targeted by a standard metric?

**Answer:** There were no broad or across-the-board reductions. Instead, reductions were strategically targeted.

The first set of reductions involved the routine removal of one-time funding from the FY 2025 budget, affecting departments such as Emergency Communications, Social Services, the Registrar, Clerk’s Office, Mayor’s Office, Parks and Recreation, and the City Assessor.

The second set focused on select departments and resulted from operational improvements, organizational realignments, and the elimination of redundancies. Affected departments include Finance, Sheriff’s Office, Council Office, Council Chief of Staff Office, Inspector General, Human Resources, Public Works, Fire, Police, Budget, and the Chief Administrative Office.

Details for each department’s reductions are available on their respective budget pages.

4. What is the balance of our Downturn Reserve fund? Have we met our goal for maintaining 20% of the most recently adopted FY25 General Fund operating expenses? Would it be prudent to have more in the Contingency Reserve?

**Answer:** Per Ordinance 2024-168 (adopted June 24, 2024), the Downturn Reserve Fund includes both the Contingency Reserve and the Unassigned Fund Balance. As of June 30, 2024, the Contingency Reserve totals \$29.6 million, and the Unassigned Fund Balance totals \$139.9 million—for a combined reserve of \$169.5 million.

The reserve target is 20% of the most recently adopted General Fund operating budget, which is the FY 2025 budget. Currently, reserves represent 16.9% of that amount. Increasing reserves, when feasible, is considered a fiscally responsible practice.

#### **CIP general questions**

5. Can we get a spreadsheet of the table for Active CIP projects? (Section 8-111)

**Answer:** Please see included in the attachments the spreadsheet for active projects (Attachment 1).

#### **Digesting fund structures and Service & Account Codes**

6. For Special Funds, where can we find a breakdown of funding sources? (Section 5)

**Answer:** Please see included in the attachments a document providing the funding sources for each special fund. (Attachment 2).

7. Can we get the tables in Section 10 as spreadsheets?

**Answer:** Please see included in the attachments the spreadsheet for Section 10 tables (Attachment 3).

8. What do the Account Codes for “ADC FC FH Maint & Care” and “ADC FC Instit Main Care” mean? (Section 10-4)

**Answer:** These account codes are for:

- Aid to Dependent Children – Foster Care Foster Home Maintenance & Care.
- Aid to Dependent Children – Foster Care Institution Maintenance Care.

#### **Personnel & Compensation**

9. In general, does FTE count include public sector positions hired by the city or does it include contracted positions?

**Answer:** FTE counts include full-time and part-time positions. They do not include contracted employees.

10. What are the costs in Central Appropriations for “Implement of Collective Bargaining Agreement” actually paying for? (Section 4-176).

**Answer:** These costs represent operating expenses associated with implementing the collective bargaining agreements. They primarily cover labor management activities, training, turnout gear, facility cleaning, equipment and infrastructure, mental health assessments, cancer screenings, clothing allowances, and union business.

### **Mayor & Chief Administrative Officer**

11. We see they are cutting a DCAO position. Which position is that? (Section 4-6)

**Answer:** The position being reduced is the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO) for Operations. Half of the position was removed in the FY 2025 Adopted Budget in anticipation of a planned retirement in December 2024. With the retirement now complete, the remaining half of the position is being eliminated.

12. Reasoning behind the jump in salary for the Intergovernmental Affairs office while the number of personnel staid the same. (Section 4-38)

**Answer:** The previous incumbent was not eligible for certain benefits; however, the current employee is eligible for benefits such as group life and retirement which are calculated based on compensation.

### **City Council and Council Appointee Agencies**

#### **DCAO for Finance and Administration**

13. What is the reason for getting rid of the “Procurement Analyst (P-Card)” in the Procurement Department? (Section 4-46)

**Answer:** We are not getting rid of the Procurement Analyst (P-card) position. The position was reclassified to a Management Analyst position and is still working on p-card related activities. The P-Card program will have a total of three positions under that division, Program & Ops Manager Sr (P-Card Supervisor), Procurement Analyst, Senior and a Management Analyst.

14. Where can we find a breakdown of the services that Minority Business Development provides? (Section 4-43)

**Answer:** While each department page includes a high-level organizational chart, the services provided by Minority Business Development include:

- **Business Development Training Programs:** Consulting and coaching for current and prospective business owners.

- **Goal setting:** Reviewing solicitations to set participation goals and identifying external spend opportunities matched to businesses.
- **Compliance Monitoring:** Annual review of contracts to assess compliance with minority participation goals.
- **Vendor Registration:** Recruiting and registering MBE/ESB firms and providing training on reporting requirements.
- **Financial Development:** Identifying external financial opportunities and administering city-funded loans and grants.

### **DCAO for Human Services**

15. Where can we find a breakdown of the services that the Office of Community Wealth Building provides? (Section 4-70)

**Answer:** Each department page includes a high-level organizational chart, but more specifically, the Office of Community Wealth Building (OCWB) provides the following services:

- **Career Services:** Job readiness training, vocational education, and career counseling to help residents secure living-wage employment. The East End Career Station serves as a hub for coaching, resume assistance, job placement, and skill development.
- **Richmond Resilience Initiative (RRI):** A guaranteed income pilot program providing direct financial support to working families to promote economic stability and long-term wealth-building.
- **Social Impact & Advocacy:** Community engagement efforts that ensure OCWB programs align with resident needs, strengthen partnerships, and promote economic mobility and social impact.
- **Wealth Building Initiatives:** Workshops on personal finance, credit repair, debt management, entrepreneurship, estate planning, life insurance, and homeownership to support financial independence.
- **Youth Engagement Services:** Formerly the Mayor's Youth Academy, this program supports youth ages 14–24 through career exploration, leadership development, and work-based learning opportunities.

16. Where can we find a breakdown of the services that Neighborhood and Community Services provides? (Section 4-73)

**Answer:** While each department page includes a high-level organizational chart, the services provided by Neighborhoods and Community Services include, but not limited to:

- **Homeless Services Coordination:** Oversees the regional inclement weather shelter contract with a third-party operator and leads prevention-focused efforts to promote housing stability, expand shelter access, and support long-term self-sufficiency.
- **Empowering Multicultural Youth & Families:** Programs provide mental health support, substance abuse prevention, and career development for Latino and multicultural youth.

- **Advancing Language Access & Equity:** Citywide language access planning, translation/interpretation services, and multilingual outreach ensure inclusive communication across services.
- **Community Engagement & Cultural Inclusion:** Monthly networking groups, multicultural festivals, and events like AfroFest celebrate diversity and strengthen partnerships with immigrant and refugee communities.
- **Legal & Civic Support Services:** Free legal clinics, notary services, and referrals connect residents—especially newcomers—with critical resources and information.
- **Older Adults & Disability Services:** Training, legal aid, job fairs, and enrichment programs support seniors and adults with disabilities in staying connected, safe, and informed.
- **Community-Based Outreach & Navigation:** Ambassadors and navigators serve as trusted liaisons, guiding residents through city services and amplifying community voices.
- **Children & Youth Services Coordination:** Initiatives like the Children’s Cabinet and Out-of-School Time programs enhance service alignment and quality for Richmond’s youth.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts:** Government-wide DEI initiatives and Human Rights Commission work to embed fairness and belonging across city operations.

#### **DCAO for Operations**

17. Where can we find a listing of the city’s current fleet, the age of each vehicle in the fleet, and the regulatory requirement and/or the OSHA requirement for each type of vehicle? (Section 8-95)

Answer: To be provided.

18. What is the plan for complete streets money? (Section 8-47)

Answer: Please see the breakout below:

- \$15.0 million – Milling, overlay, heat scarification and slurry program
- \$1.5 million – Speed tables, traffic calming, and traffic pole replacement projects
- \$3.0 million – Jahnke Road complete street project
- \$1.5 million – Sidewalk replacement and investment

#### **Enterprise Funds (Public Utilities, Cemeteries & Parking Mgmt)**

19. We need the budgets of the utilities, gas, storm water, wastewater and electric, especially the operating budgets.

**Answer:** Please see included in the attachments the spreadsheet for DPU Line Item FY26 Proposed Operating Budget (Attachment 4).

20. What is the budget for “Stores” in DPU? (Section 4-161)

**Answer:** Per the ordinance \$1,154,060

21. Why is the capital budget for the Gas Works going up by ~\$30 million this year? (Section 4-162)

**Answer:** This is mainly for gas main replacement. Gas main replacement consists of removing the existing section of pipe and inserting the replacement pipe. Currently the city is focusing on the cast iron metal pipe because it is susceptible to corrosion. The city is under a mandate to replace all cast iron by 2050.

### **DCAO for Economic and Community Development**

22. Where can we find a list of current and planned economic development projects that the Economic Development Department is overseeing and/or giving subsidies to? (Section 4-96)

**Answer:** Economic development projects receiving performance are listed in question 23.

23. Under Economic Development Incentives, what were the performance targets for these projects and what is the current status for those targets? (Section 4-176)

**Answer:** The following are the performance targets and status of the economic development incentives:

- **400 Hull Street, LLC (FY26: \$451,277)**
  - Approved by the city in FY 2019, the incentive was designed to induce the development of “The Current,” a mixed-use development that includes office, retail, and multifamily units located at 400-424 Hull Street in Manchester.
  - The Developer, 400 Hull Street, LLC, needed to complete the construction of the property and meet other requirements in the performance agreement, which included having 20% of the units designated affordable (up to 80% of AMI), creating publicly available parking spaces and electric vehicle charging stations in the new parking garage, and building new public space. After receiving its certificate of occupancy in July 2022 and meeting its other performance agreement requirements, it was eligible to receive its first grant in early FY 2024. The total construction cost of the development was over \$38.6 million.
  - To receive its annual payment, the developer must make full and timely payments to its real estate taxes and certify that it continues to meet its performance agreement obligations. Its yearly grant is equal to 80% of the incremental gain in real estate taxes.
  - The maximum cumulative incentive the company can receive over the 15-year grant period is \$4.5 million. Annually, the actual grant amount is dependent on tax actuals and

may vary from budgeted amounts. FY26 will be the third performance year. The company has received \$975,590 through its FY 2024 and FY 2025 disbursements.

- **Clayco (FY26: \$300,000)**

- Approved by the city in FY 2013, the incentive was designed to induce the development of Gateway Plaza, located at 800 E Canal Street and retain a major employer (McGuireWoods). Per the terms of the performance agreement, to be eligible to receive incentives the developer needed to complete construction of the new Class A Office building, which it did in 2015.
- Annually, the grantee receives a grant equal to a portion of new incremental BPOL and business tangible personal property revenue from businesses at the site. As each grant disbursement depends on tax actuals, it can vary from the projected budgeted amount. The project has received \$1.56 million between FY 2016-FY 2024, and it can receive no more than \$3M in total over the life of the agreement.

- **The Armory Fund (FY26 \$388,362)**

- In 2015, the Armory Fund LLC entered into a loan agreement with the EDA for \$2.3 million to rehabilitate the Leigh Street Armory to create a new facility for the Black History Museum & Cultural Center of Virginia of Richmond.
- The proposed funding would be transferred to the EDA to support the payment of the Armory Fund's loan. As this is not an economic development incentive, no corresponding performance agreement or associated measures exist. The terms of the funds would be managed by a separate grant agreement between the EDA and the Armory Fund LLC, which would be passed in FY 2026 by the EDA Board of Directors before receiving the funds from the city.

24. What is the plan for the CIP funding for "Equitable Affordable Housing Program"? (Section 8-27)

**Answer:** This is related to the \$50 million commitment the city did starting in FY 2024 for funding for Affordable Housing. The city will release a notice of funding availability to solicit projects.

### **Public Safety and Emergency Response**

*(e.g. Emergency Communications, Preparedness & Response, Police, Fire & Emergency Services)*

25. What is the job description for "Emergency Communications Manager"? For the 911 Call Center Operators, where are those jobs listed (FTEs)? Are they run by a private entity? (Section 4-56)

**Answer:** Please see included in the attachments the job description for the Emergency Communications Manager (Attachment 5).

The job title for the 911 Call Center Operators is Emergency Communications Officers and Emergency Communications Officers, Senior. It is important to note that the FTE count for the positions on Section 4-56 in only listing the General Fund allocated positions. In total, DECPR has 73 FTEs for ECO positions, all of which are DECPR/city employees. The FTE increase to the general fund is a movement of FTEs from the special fund due to revenues not keeping up with current personnel expense increases.

### **Judicial Branch**

*(e.g. 13<sup>th</sup> District Court Services, Adult Drug Court, Commonwealth Attorney, Circuit Court Clerk)*

### **Independent Agencies, Authorities, Partnerships**

*(e.g. Richmond Ambulance Authority, Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority, GRTC Transit, Economic Development Authority)*

26. Where can we find detailed budgets for the RAA? (Section 4-179)

**Answer:** Please contact RAA for their detailed budget.

### **Non-Departmental**

27. Why is the Eviction Diversion Program being managed by a third party instead of the city? What are the performance targets for this grant, operational costs, and how many evictions will the \$800k prevent? (Section 4-183)

**Answer:** The Eviction Diversion Program is managed by a third-party provider to ensure efficient service delivery and leverage their specialized expertise in housing stability, legal aid, and case management. These organizations have established community relationships and the capacity to respond quickly to tenant needs, which allows for a more effective and targeted approach. Managing the program externally also reduces administrative burden on city staff while ensuring compliance with funding requirements and program standards.

#### **Performance Targets:**

- Assist 150 tenant households with direct financial assistance to prevent eviction.
- Track the number of tenant households that receive court navigation services.
- Host, and or participate in Tenant and Landlord Outreach events, provide information on the type of outreach, community partners that were involved in the effort, and the number of individuals who attended or were potentially impacted by each event.
- Provide the number of tenants that are compliant with their landlord repayment plan at 90 days.
- Provide demographic data of the households served.
- Provide quarterly progress reports with details on the number of households served, rental payment roster, # of tenants attending educational classes, outreach efforts with the # of participants, # of individuals ineligible for services, # of referrals to other services.



- Provide a final report that details trends, lessons learned from diversion, best practices, and recommendations for improving the program.

Operational Cost:

- 25% personnel and administrative costs
- 75% direct client assistance (rent payments)

Evictions Prevented:

- Approximately 150 households

**Richmond Public Schools**

28. For RPS, will this general fund allocation cover Collective Bargaining agreements at current staffing levels? (Section 6)

**Answer:** Please contact RPS for a response.

29. Is the state allocation for 55 new ELL teachers included in the “State Revenue” line item? (Section 6-7)

**Answer:** Please contact RPS for a response.

30. Does the RPS budget include funding for the East End Music Festival?

**Answer:** Please contact RPS for a response..

**OCCOS Staff Reactions/Questions – FY26 Budget Review**

***We’ll use this document to track questions and note specific items in the proposed Budget Book that Staff want to explore further.***

**Revenues, Expenditures, Debts and Projections**

31. To what extent does this budget proposal prepare for impacts to federal funding that city Departments rely on for operational and personnel support?

**Answer:** As shared during the March 19, 2025, presentation to the Finance and Economic Development Standing Committee, the city is actively monitoring federal developments that may impact funding streams supporting department operations and personnel. Due to the uncertainty at the federal level, no adjustments have been made beyond routine updates based on historical trends. However, we remain vigilant and will respond accordingly if there is a material risk to federal funding sources.

32. What is the city’s strategy for increasing the proportion of annual revenues collected from economic growth, rather than predominantly relying on the strength of the housing market?

**Answer:** The city is focused on strengthening and diversifying its revenue base by supporting strategic economic development initiatives that drive business investment, job creation, and commercial activity. Efforts include targeted incentives to attract and retain businesses, investments in infrastructure to support mixed-use and commercial development, and support for small business growth, particularly in underinvested areas. Additionally, we are closely coordinating land use planning, workforce development, and transportation improvements to promote sustainable economic expansion that reduces reliance on residential real estate revenues over time.

### **CIP general questions**

33. Can we get a spreadsheet of the table for Active CIP projects? (section 8-111)

**Answer:** Please see included in the attachments the spreadsheet for active projects (Attachment 1).

Fleet management best practices

34. Are there required specifications, useful life considerations, and spare ratio requirements for each of the Departments receiving new fleet vehicles?

**Answer:** The replacement policy outlines the replacement strategy per type of vehicle and equipment.

35. What is the cost per vehicle? **Please answer the above for each department (Fire, Police, DPW).**

**Answer:** To be provided.

### **Digesting fund structures and Service & Account Codes**

#### **Personnel & Compensation**

36. Please provide a department-level breakdown of grant-funded positions, including when we plan to absorb certain positions in the General Fund and the estimated costs of those positions. (Section 7-2)

**Answer:** A breakdown of Special Revenue and Grant-funded positions by department can be found in the Personnel Complement, page 7-2. There is no plan to absorb additional positions into the General Fund currently.

37. Can you provide a breakdown of vacancies (including length vacant) for existing positions funded in the budget proposal?

**Answer:** To be provided.

### **Questions about the Budget Ordinance (Ord. 2025-057)**

**38.** Staff recommends striking language that is not germane to the adoption of a balanced budget.

**Answer:** These are germane to the budget for the following reasons:

- **Deadline for Budget Submission:** The amendment removes the specific time of day requirement that the proposed budget be submitted at 3:00 p.m. It continues to maintain the Council-approved submission date of March 27.

This change is directly related to the annual budget process. The timing of the budget submission can impact scheduling for briefings, public communication, and the legislative calendar. Including this amendment in the budget ordinance ensures that the procedural aspects of the budget process are aligned with current practices and allows for greater coordination between branches of government without requiring future code amendments for minor timing adjustments.

- **Non-Departmental Section** – This code section was removed in alignment with the mayor’s clearly communicated direction to revamp the city’s Non-Departmental funding process. The Proposed FY 2026 Budget no longer includes a Non-Departmental section, rendering the existing code language obsolete. A new process for allocating and managing these funds will be developed in collaboration with City Council and may be codified in the future or formalized through a standard operating procedure (SOP).

This change reflects the structure of the Proposed FY 2026 Budget and ensures consistency between code and the current financial plan. Including this amendment in the budget ordinance avoids confusion and aligns the legal framework with the Administration’s ongoing commitment to transparency, accountability, and program monitoring. It also reaffirms that the city will continue executing standard grant agreements and maintaining oversight, including site visits, as previously committed to in response to audit recommendations.

- **Refund of Payments Sections:** Sections 26-48 and 26-901 of the City Code were amended to remove the requirement for City Attorney approval in cases of refunds or exoneration of erroneous tax assessments. Per the Code of Virginia § 58.1-3990 The Commissioner of Revenue (Finance Director for the City of Richmond) has the sole authority to determine a refund.

This change is germane to the budget because it directly affects the administration of local tax revenues. Removing the City Attorney from routine refund processes streamlines operations, reduces delays, and improves customer service while maintaining appropriate fiscal oversight. Including this amendment in the budget ordinance ensures the tax collection and refund processes are efficient and aligned with state law, without imposing unnecessary procedural burdens delay financial reconciliations or impact year-end fund balances.

- **Public Access to Legal Opinions:** Section 2-110, which required written legal opinions from the City Attorney to be kept on file and made available for public inspection, is proposed for repeal. This change was made to protect attorney-client privilege and the confidentiality of legal communications for the administration, mayor, and city council members.

This amendment is germane to the budget because legal counsel plays a critical role in during the development of the budget, fund allocation, and personnel matters. Maintaining confidentiality in these legal opinions ensures the city can receive candid, protected legal advice without risk of disclosure that could affect negotiations, legal exposure, or policy deliberations. Including this change in the budget ordinance reinforces best practices for protecting privileged communication and supports the integrity of budget-related legal processes.

- **Advertising of Job Vacancies in Unclassified:** Section 2-1203 was amended to remove the advertising requirement in at least one newspaper of general circulation to match current practice.

It is rare in this day to advertise unclassified positions which are appointed positions, in a newspaper. Recruiting efforts are largely online through various social media applications and on the city's website.

The revised language maintains the core requirements for transparency, equal opportunity, and internal/external posting, while providing greater administrative flexibility to modernize recruitment strategies. The city's job postings always indicate that we are equal opportunity employer.

This change is germane to the budget as it supports efficient hiring practices, which directly impact the city's ability to fill funded positions in a timely manner. Flexibility in advertising methods can reduce recruitment costs, accelerate staffing of critical roles, and better align with current HR and budgetary priorities. Including this amendment in the budget ordinance ensures hiring procedures remain effective and responsive to operational needs without unnecessary delays tied to administrative approvals.

- **Residency Requirements for Certain Officers and Employees:** Section 2-1204 was amended to modernize the City's residency policy for key leadership positions. The update refines the definition of "principal residence," clarifies which roles are subject to the requirement, changes the reasons by which a waiver is provided by moving the rationale away from invasive personal waivers to a more business need case. Waivers may be considered based on factors such as recruitment challenges, specialized expertise, emergency response impact, or extenuating circumstances. The requirement that applicable employees establish residency within 12 months remains, with appropriate acknowledgment at the time of appointment.

amended to modernize the city's residency policy for key leadership positions. The update refines the definition of "principal residence," clarifies which roles are subject to the requirement, and provides a structured, transparent process for granting residency waivers. Waivers may be considered based on factors such as recruitment challenges, specialized expertise, emergency response impact, or extenuating personal circumstances. The requirement that applicable employees establish residency within 12 months remains, with appropriate acknowledgment at the time of appointment.

This change supports the city's ability to recruit and retain highly qualified candidates for critical leadership roles—positions that directly influence the management and execution of the city's budget. Flexibility in residency requirements is especially important for roles funded in the FY 2026 budget that require hard-to-find skillsets. Including this amendment in the budget ordinance ensures that the City's hiring policies are aligned with operational and fiscal priorities, and that leadership vacancies do not hinder service delivery due to rigid or outdated residency mandates.

#### **Mayor & Chief Administrative Officer**

##### **CAO FTE Adjustments: Section 4-4 (LED)**

39. Removes 1 DCAO FTE and Reclassifies another (Does this mean we do not intend to have a DCAO for Operations?)

**Answer:** See Question # 11.

40. The reclassification creates a new Senior Deputy CAO (identify role/duty of the re-classed FTE?)

**Answer:** This is not creating a new position, an existing DCAO position was reclassified to a Senior DCAO.

##### **Intergovernmental Affairs (LED)**

41. FTE – the proposed FY2026 Updated Personnel Expenditures (\$83,573) appears to be "high" for 1 FTE? What is the "breakdown" of the \$83,573.

**Answer:** See question #12.

##### **RVA311**

42. What will the 5 additional FTEs accomplish? Give us anticipated outcomes (more than # of requests received and closed).

**Answer:**

- Three customer care representatives have already been added, allowing RVA311 to extend hours to 7 PM M-F and 9-1 on Saturdays, as well as giving the call center the capacity to implement callbacks, so that callers do not need to wait on hold and will be called back when it is their turn in queue.

- Two business systems analysts will be added:
  - One will support the RVA311 system to allow additional enhancements (greater functionality and additional request types) and redundant administration of the system. Currently, the CSR Technology Manager is the only person in the city who can administer the system, which creates a single point of failure for the intake of citizen requests.
  - The second will support Contact Center operational technology support for CSR, DPU and DSS, to enable improved administration of call center software and design additional enhancements to call center capabilities, automated telephony capabilities, call flow, IVR and call routing enhancements, after call surveys, improved staff scheduling and technical support.

43. Tell us about the impact of FY25's \$1 million additional investment beyond shortening of response time? How has this investment improved the translation of 311 requests to departments? In doing so, how has this allowed the city to complete these responses? How has this investment impacted other agencies need for responding to constituent needs?

**Answer:** CSR received \$750,000 in additional funding in FY25

- Funding has been used for
  - RVA311 extended hours, callback implementation, and will be used for the hiring of the two BSAs mentioned above which are currently in recruitment.
  - Marketing of 311 to raise awareness within the community.
  - Consulting/staff augmentation for the Fulfillment Improvement program, launching in April 2025 to support departments in improving SOPs, processes, training, and Service Level Agreements to improve fulfillment and communication on resident requests which can be incorporated into departmental performance management.
    - Funding will also be used for technology enhancements to enable improved fulfillment as they are identified and prioritized.

44. When we see recurring issues with Dept response, what triggers further investigations?

**Answer:** Unclear what is being asked.

#### **City Council and Council Appointee Agencies**

45. How might the auditor and the transformation manager (Sec. 4-3) work together to more fully access broader strategic initiatives and provide a fuller picture of fiscal systems (both revenues and expenditures)?

**Answer:** The Transformation Manager and the Internal Auditor serve distinct but complementary roles in advancing accountability and strategic alignment across operations.

While the Internal Auditor remains focused on independent assessments of risk, compliance, and internal controls, there may be opportunities for coordination where audit findings intersect with broader strategic initiatives or performance improvement efforts led by the Transformation Manager. Any such collaboration would respect the auditor's independence while supporting the City's commitment to continuous improvement and addressing prior audit recommendations in a holistic and informed manner.

#### **DCAO for Finance and Administration**

ARPA Spending Plan includes "Small business grant applications support and outreach."

46. What are the operational details and information required to enable the CCOS office to determine if this funding meets the priority request of CM.

**Answer** – Council adopted the ARPA spend plan which did consist of the "Small Business Grant Support and Outreach", the operational details include:

- **Standardized Application & Eligibility:** A clear, equitable application process was established. Eligible applicants were required to operate within city limits, demonstrate COVID-related hardship, and submit supporting documentation. Per the ARPA worksheet, the City obligated \$1.0 million for small business grants.
- **Selection & Evaluation:** A committee reviewed applications using a structured rubric focused on need, potential impact, and readiness for recovery. Awards were based solely on scoring and documentation.
- **Strategic Planning:** Selected businesses worked with Strategic Advisors to develop tailored recovery plans. Grants supported implementation of these plans, linking funding directly to business goals.
- **Oversight & Compliance:** Legal review ensured compliance with ARPA and other regulations. Funds were distributed via the EDA following approval, with grantees required to report on spending and outcomes.

47. What is the plan to continue supporting this effort in the future?

**Answer:** \$1.0 million was obligated in ARPA funding for the small business grant program. While no additional ARPA funds are available, City Council has allocated an additional \$1.5 million for future grants and loans to small businesses. The Office of Minority Business Development (OMBD) is currently finalizing the structure and guidelines for this upcoming initiative.

48. How many years were the grant commitments, one-time, renewal for 1 year, etc?

**Answer:** The ARPA-funded grants were a one-time funding opportunity and were not renewable.

49. Will there be a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for Richmond Retirement System (RRS) retirees in FY26?

**Answer:** The FY26 Proposed Budget does not include a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for Richmond Retirement System (RRS) retirees.

50. **Domestic Partnership Study:** The Department of Human Resources committed in the FY2025 Budget to conducting a study on providing healthcare for domestic partners. The study outcomes must be reported by January 1, 2025. Has the study concluded? What action is the administration taking to address this priority request of City Council?

**Answer:** The study was concluded and sent to city council members in December 2024. Adding domestic partner benefits increases the healthcare costs for the city and all employees on the health insurance plan. Rates for healthcare costs are shared by all. Changes or the addition of benefits will impact all employee premiums not just the added category. Because the federal government provides that healthcare is tax-free to the eligible employee and family but does not recognize domestic partners nor provides this tax-free benefit to domestic partners, there is a material tax impact to the employee receiving this benefit and the city.

It is projected that adding this benefit may increase claims by \$10.0 million. As such these costs must be factored into the health premium rates for all employees and the city. Additionally, this would increase the workload on staff to administer this plan along with its different tax structure. Council member Abubaker requested a survey be sent to employees to assess the interest in adding this benefit. The Department of Human Resources is crafting a survey that will ask the question.

51. **Meals tax:** In 2025 the Virginia Restaurant Association proposed legislative amendments to address issues with Richmond's meal tax, including limiting late fees and improving taxpayer notifications. How has the Department incorporated staffing or operational changes to address this proposal?

**Answer:** Will need clarification on the question. Which General Assembly bill that passed are you referring to?

## **Budget & Strategic Planning (LED)**

52. Grant Management - oversees citywide grant applications – list/description of citywide grants processed in FY2025 – results of application – amount of funding received – one-time/continuous - Can we get FY25 now and in the future **can we get a quarterly report to Finance Committee?**



**Answer:** The city has recently acquired a new Grants Management System, which is currently being implemented. This system will serve as a centralized platform to track all grant applications, awards, and outcomes citywide. We are actively onboarding departments to ensure all new grant applications are entered into the system and are also working to capture existing grants to create a comprehensive inventory.

While a complete report for FY 2025 is not yet available, we are building the foundation to provide this level of reporting moving forward.

53. New FTE – Transformation Manager – role/duties indicated on Section 4-4 is very vague/general. The office currently has 3 Senior Managers (identify roles?)

**Answer:** Related to the Transformation Manager, in the Mayor’s Message/Transmittal Letter in the very front of the Budget Document clearly indicates that, “This position is designed to support the administration in developing and implementing a new strategic plan for the city. This role will lead efforts to align department goals with citywide priorities, working collaboratively across departments to ensure the strategic plan is actionable, measurable, and reflective of community needs.”

“A core focus of this role will be the update and revision of performance measures and key performance indicators (KPI’s) to track progress. By building a robust performance management framework, the Transformation Manager will assist with providing clear metrics to assess the city’s operational effectiveness and long-term impact. This investment continues the commitment to accountability, continuous improvement, and results-oriented governance.”

The Department’s three other Senior Manager roles are each distinct and essential to supporting the city’s strategic, financial, and operational goals. The department oversees budget development, monitoring, and grant coordination across approximately **49 departments and agencies within the General Fund, as well as 11 total funds citywide**, making strong leadership capacity critical to delivering on our responsibilities.

- **Senior Managers – Budget Policy and Development (2 positions):** These two senior managers oversee the development, monitoring, and analysis of the City’s \$2+ billion operating and capital budgets. They manage staff responsible for preparing and analyzing departmental and citywide budget submissions, conducting revenue projections, overseeing personnel budgeting, supporting City Council and public budget processes, and developing financial policy recommendations. These roles are central to ensuring accurate forecasting, fiscal stability, and transparent resource allocation.
- **Senior Manager – Grants Division:** This role leads the citywide grant function, overseeing application coordination, compliance, reporting, and risk management. With the acquisition of the new Grants Management System, this manager is also responsible for system implementation, training, and reporting across departments.

54. Reason for elimination of city Economist?

**Answer:** The city Economist position has not been eliminated—it has been strategically realigned under the Department of Finance. This change ensures the role has appropriate access to sensitive financial and tax data necessary for accurate forecasting and analysis, which requires reporting directly to the Director of Finance.

#### **DCAO for Human Services**

55. We see 11 new FTEs for Ambassadors and Ambassador Supervisors. Do the Supervisors manage specific portfolios? Why are 3 supervisors needed for 8 FTEs?

**Answer:** While the FY 2026 budget reflects 11 FTEs for Ambassadors and Ambassador Supervisors, these are not technically new positions. The Ambassador Program was previously supported through contracted services and funded as an operating expense in FY 2024. During FY 2025, these roles transitioned from contract positions to permanent city employees and are now reflected appropriately as full-time positions in the budget.

The structure includes one Lead Supervisor who provides program oversight and coordination, and two Supervisors, each responsible for managing a team of four Ambassadors. This ratio allows for effective day-to-day supervision, scheduling, quality control, and coverage across shifts and geographic areas. While the Ambassadors currently serve citywide, having multiple supervisors ensures adequate support, especially as the program responds to real-time service needs, coordinates with departments, and continues to grow in visibility and impact.

#### **DCAO for Operations**

56. How many lane miles of paving are planned for streets rated as “Satisfactory” or better? What is the cost of this?

**Answer:** DPW plans to pave approximately 180 lane miles in FY 2026. Costs vary between \$10 per square yard to \$23 per square yard. 180 lane miles equates to roughly 1.1 million square yards.

57. How much of the paving budget is typically used to repave after planned or emergency utility work? Or is this covered by contractor services on a project basis?

**Answer:** DPW projects consist of approximately \$5 million in final restoration work performed by DPU each year from its major Gas and Water replacement projects. The same costs as above apply because we also perform this work under our paving contracts.

#### **Enterprise Funds (DPU, Parking Mgmt, Cemeteries)**

58. Do Richmond rate payers contribute to the expansion of gas lines to serve customers in surrounding counties? (8-101)

**Answer:** The city does an internal calculation to determine if a project will have a net positive value to the utility, if it passes then no cost is recouped from the developer/county. If there is negative value, then the developer/county pays the difference to bring the net to zero.

59. Identify contributions made by other localities to DPU for water service. How is this money used for infrastructure needs and improved service delivery?

**Answer:** Each county must pay a commodity and capacity charge. The commodity is for the water itself and the capacity is for the infrastructure needed to deliver the water to said customers.

#### **DCAO for Economic and Community Development**

60. Can the proposed Rental Inspection Program be administered using the proposed personnel increases to PDR? (4-107)

**Answer:** This will depend on the size of the districts that city council creates. If we adopt something that contains more than three hundred (300) dwelling units, then we will likely require additional Property Maintenance / Code Enforcement inspectors.

61. What is the plan for the additional 6.5 Planners and 4 Program & Operations Supervisors within PDR? (4-107)

**Answer:** The additional positions are needed to process the increased workload.

Planners:

- Two (2) positions in Land Use and Zoning Administration are dedicated towards increased workload for zoning cases, including zoning enforcement – specifically short-term rentals.
- One (1) position in LUZA is for high-level legislative zoning entitlement work.
- Two (2) positions in Planning and Policy are dedicated towards fulfilling increased requests for maps, data, and spatial analysis that inform our decision-making. They will also work on implementation on the new zoning ordinance, a required update to Richmond 300, and continued small-area strategic land-use planning.
- One (1) position will be added to authentiCITY studio to assist with Commission of Architectural Review activities.
- The other half (0.5) position is to adjust for HUD-funded Section 106 review activities.

Program and Operation Supervisors were added to relieve several managers who were supervising more than ten (10) employees. Two (2) are for our Building Plan Review team in the Bureau of Permits and Inspections. One (1) is for the Permit Intake team in the Bureau of

Permits and Inspections. One (1) is for the Division of Land Use and Zoning to assist with managing ministerial zoning entitlements.

62. How does this budget accounting for planned analysis and implementation following \$5.5 million purchase of the Southside Altria site? “allowing the city to create a new signature park in Southside, establish another east-west travel route along its southern edge, and conduct a market study to determine the best uses for the remaining acreage”

**Answer:** Efforts are underway for a necessary market study, community engagement processes, and initial planning activities. These steps are essential to determine the best uses for the site and to develop detailed implementation strategies.

63. What other plans are in place to encourage holistic economic growth in Southside with a focus on the three major corridors (Hull, Midlothian, Richmond Hwy.)?

**Answer:** How we zone these areas with the new code is critically important and provide the most opportunities for desired development – by right. We will be working with GRTC on land-use planning activities along the proposed N-S Pulse Rapid Transit. We will be further discussing Southside strategies during the required update of Richmond 300. Additionally there will be planning staff dedicated to the development of Southside.

### **Public Safety and Emergency Response**

*(e.g. Emergency Communications, Preparedness & Response, Police, Fire & Emergency Services)*

#### **Police (LED)**

64. FTE – Crime Analyst position is reduced from 13 FTE to 7 FTE – impact to operations?

**Answer:** The 6.0 FTEs reduced from the Crime Analyst position were replaced with 6.0 FTEs of Capital City Intelligence Analysts. There is no impact to operations, as all 13.0 FTEs will continue to support sworn operations. The two teams of analysts fulfill two unique, but complementary, functions of crime data analysis and real time crime intelligence.

65. FTE – Police Officer position is reduced from 509 FTE to 449.8 FTE – impact to operations?

**Answer:** The reduction from 509 to 449.8 FTEs reflects a rightsizing based on current staffing levels and historical recruitment trends. The Police Department has not been able to fully staff all authorized positions in recent years, and this adjustment aligns the budget with realistic hiring capacity. There is no anticipated impact to operations, as the revised FTE count still allows for hiring above current staffing levels. We will continue to monitor recruitment progress and work with the Chief to restore positions if operational needs change.

66. This appears to reduce the authorized FTE – comments indicate the FY2026 provides an accurate depiction of hiring ability. (Section 4-65)

## **Fire (LED)**

67. FTE – Does the 300 FTE allow for the amount of FTE needed to operate with reduced OT expense

**Answer:** No. Overtime will be reduced with the addition of the 72 firefighters from the SAFER grant. However, overtime will still exist because the follows a 24-hour shift schedule which includes mandatory overtime. The city will be conducting an analysis on how to modify the shift schedule to minimize overtime.

68. FTE – What does Fire Recruit represent 2 new FTE from FY2025 (appears to be new positions)?

**Answer:** The FY 2026 General Fund Budget includes 72 SAFER positions. These 72 positions were previously funded through the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) federal grant. This includes 70 Fire Fighters and 2 Fire Recruits.

69. FTE – What does Program and Operations Supervisor represent 2 new FTE from FY 2025?

**Answer:** Departments have the authority to reallocate positions with the Department Human Resources to better manage their workload, personnel, and address service needs during the fiscal year. In this example, the Program and Operations Supervisor total FTE increased but there are decreases elsewhere.

## **Emergency Communications, Preparedness & Response (LED)**

70. FTE – request an organization chart to distinguish which FTE relate to the various divisions - Emergency Management, Emergency Communications, Radio Shop and Technology

**Answer:** Please see attachments: organizational chart for DECPR (Attachment 6).

71. Adjust One-time support Costs (\$900,000 reduction) - did the improvements and upgrade to the computer aided dispatch (CAD) and 911 consoles occur in FY2025? If not, why?

**Answer:** Funding was included in the FY 2025 budget for the CAD upgrade, logging recorder upgrade, and 911 console upgrade. The CAD upgrade and logging recorder upgrade are currently in progress. The 911 console upgrade plan was developed and scoped with a vendor; however, the cost estimate exceeded the budget for this project. Additional funding for the project was not requested in FY 2026, so the one-time funding has been removed.

## **Judicial Branch**

*(e.g. 13<sup>th</sup> District Court Services, Adult Drug Court, Commonwealth Attorney, Circuit Court Clerk)*

### **13<sup>th</sup> District Court Services Unit (LED)**

72. Has 1 FTE with a \$114,311 Operating Budget – please provide the allocations of operating budget?

**Answer:** This breakdown can be found in the attachment provided for the Section 10 Tables on the Department and Account tab.

73. Has 4 reporting units (Juvenile Intake Services, Juvenile Probation, Parole Supervision, Monitoring) - provide how 1 FTE is servicing the reporting units?

**Answer:** The city funds only one FTE, but there are several other state employees who assist with the work and units.

**Juvenile Domestic Relations Court (LED)**

74. Has 1 FTE with a \$164,713 Operating Budget – please provide the allocations of operating budget?

**Answer:** This breakdown can be found in the attachment provided for the Section 10 Tables on the Department and Account tab.

75. Has 3 reporting units (Adult, Family & Criminal Support, Children Services, Substance Abuse Intervention) - provide how 1 FTE is servicing the reporting units?

**Answer:** The city funds only one FTE, but there are several other state employees who assist with the work and units.

**Independent Agencies, Authorities, Partnerships**

*(e.g Richmond Ambulance Authority, Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority, GRTC Transit, Economic Development Authority)*

76. What is the status of GRTC's FY 2026 budget?

**Answer:** We do not know the specifics of GRTC's FY26 budget. The city's FY 2026 contribution/subsidy is \$9,447,339 which is an increase of \$171,714 above the adopted FY 2025 budget.

77. Does GRTC plan to continue fare free service?

**Answer:** GRTC's zero-fare service has been a key component of improving access and equity in public transportation across the region. While long-term funding for the program is still being evaluated, conversations are ongoing among regional partners to explore options for sustaining fare-free service. The city remains committed to supporting equitable mobility and will continue to work closely with GRTC and other stakeholders as next steps are determined.

**Non-Departmental contributions**

78. We would like to receive the rankings and scores for Non-Dept organizations receiving contributions.

**Answer:** To be provided. However, these are Mayor’s working paper used during budget deliberations and information will likely be redacted.

## **Richmond Public Schools**

### **Additional Questions Received Directly by Councilmembers**

79. (Robertson) – Please provide details on the Trauma Healing Response Network. How services will be impacts? What are the groups and amount per group? What is the reporting process?

**Answer:** The Richmond Henrico Health District (RHHD) serves as the Trauma Healing Response Network’s (THRN) operating agent, while the Richmond Behavioral Health Foundation (RBHF) is the network’s fiscal agent. RHHD identify THRN partner organizations, determine funding allocations for the partners based on activities and services provided to families impacted by gun violence. There are 53 partners that provide services ranging from mental health services, parenting and grief support, mentoring, food programs and gun safety education. A reduction in funding would impact the services levels by these organizations. It would also have an impact on new and developing initiatives—a mobile app that would streamline real-time reporting; Safe Zones initiative (designed to build community) and the development/implementation of the Foundation and Community Healing Curriculum. RHHD uses the RedCap reporting system where partners input their monthly data.

With regard to, “What are the groups and amount per group?” Please see attachments: Attachment 7.

80. (Robertson) – What lands the city purchased – Mayor – Phillip Morris – others, source of funds, additional city investments, and plans and uses of lands purchased?

**Answer:** Below are the purchases in the last three years:

- Mayo Island
  - Under ordinance 2023-0124 the City purchased approximately 14.5 acres for \$14.9 million January 2024 with \$7.4 million coming from the Stormwater Utility Fund and \$7.5 million coming from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. The ordinance was approved in January 2023. The land is to be used for green space and passive recreational uses. The FY 2026 CIP budget includes \$16 million for the demolition, stabilization of the island, and the beginning improvements to the property. The demolition is requirement of the state grant received by the city to purchase the property.
- RACC Animal Shelter
  - Under Ordinances 2024-251 and 252 the city transferred \$2.0 million from the Commerce Road Improvement project, which received additional state funding which freed up the previously allocated G.O Bond funding, to be used for the Office of Animal Care and Control to purchase the properties at 2310 West Cary Street and 2311 Herbert Hamlet Alley to create an Animal Care and Control Adoption Center on November 12, 2024.

- Altria Site
  - Under Ordinance 2024-264 the city purchased 96 acres of land now known as 2100 Walmsley Boulevard on March 27, 2025, from Philip Morris USA for \$5.5 million. The city used funds from \$10.0 million CIP Southside Economic Development project established in FY 2025. The property will be used for a 45-acre park, approximately 6.6 acres of right of way for the extension of Walmsley Boulevard from Commerce Road to Richmond Highway and the balance of the acreage - approximately 44 acres for economic development purposes. The city will conduct a market analysis to determine best and highest uses before issuing an RFP for future development. \$4.0 million has been set aside for the demolition of the Altria Operations Center which is scheduled to occur later this year from funds allocated in Ordinance 2024-274.