



# Richmond City Council

*The Voice of the People*

*Richmond, Virginia*

**December 1, 2025**

## **To the members of Richmond City Council:**

This memorandum provides an overview of accomplishments and priorities during my first six months as your Council Chief of Staff. Over the past six months, I've focused on building a structure and team capable of providing Council with strategic support, enhanced research capacity, and improved coordination with City Administration.

### **Office Restructuring**

I hired Julie Caldwell as Deputy Chief of Staff to manage internal operations and staff support, allowing me to focus on serving as your liaison with the Mayor, CAO, and City Administration. This structure enables me to dedicate time to strategic coordination and ensuring your priorities move forward effectively.

I'm planning to hire two additional policy analysts to dedicate one analyst to each standing committee. This will strengthen Council's capacity through enhanced committee preparation and research, improved legislative drafting, more comprehensive boards and commissions support, and the ability to conduct in-depth analysis on complex policy issues.

We have two additional positions to fill, and I'd like your input on how these roles can best serve Council. Whether you need additional public information support for communications and district engagement, dedicated constituent services capacity, or other specialized roles, your feedback will determine how we structure this capacity.

### **Major Deliverables**

- Led the Budget Review Task Force collaboratively with Administration, producing reforms including moving budget submission to March 11th and enhanced public engagement frameworks.
- Strengthened transparency practices by ensuring adequate public review time for legislation and, when appropriate, posting draft legislation online early.
- Coordinated legislative priorities for the 2026 General Assembly session with Two Capitols Consulting and the City's Director of Intergovernmental Affairs.
- Improved coordination and communication processes between Council and Administration.

Office of the City Council  
Chief of Staff



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## Current Priorities

- **FY 2027 Budget Development** - Coordinating December 4th priority-setting meetings with Mayor and CAO facilitated by VML, ensuring Council has enhanced engagement throughout the budget process consistent with Task Force reforms. We're developing improved work session formats, expanding public hearing opportunities, and establishing structured processes and standard operating procedures to ensure deliberate and orderly consideration of the budget.
- **Policy Team Development** - Completing team buildout and establishing monthly meetings between each Council member and the full policy team to strengthen communication and responsiveness to your individual needs. We're also developing standard operating procedures to ensure consistent, high-quality support across all Council operations. These structures emphasize accountability and will help us deliver the reliable, professional service Council deserves.
- **Performance Management Enhancement** - Our entire office is participating in the new HR-led Performance Management Pilot through NEOGOV to enhance staff development and accountability.
- **General Assembly Session Coordination** - Managing Richmond's legislative agenda through the 2026 session in partnership with Two Capitols Consulting and the City's Director of Intergovernmental Affairs.

## Request for Input

I welcome your constructive feedback on how our office can best assist you. This six-month update serves as a prime opportunity for you to provide guidance on how to best support Council's work. As we structure our team going forward, please share what gaps you're experiencing and where you need more support. Your input will directly shape how we build this office to serve you most effectively and will guide me and staff as we work to meet your needs.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve Council in this capacity and look forward to continuing to build an office that effectively advances your priorities and serves the residents of Richmond.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**RJ Warren**

Council Chief of Staff

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