TOWN OF Herndon VIRGINIA

HERNDON TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION
Joint Work Session Minutes
Tuesday, February 17, 2026

1. Call to Order

Mayor LeBlanc called the February 17, 2026, Town Council and Planning Commission joint work session to order at 7:00 p.m. in Herndon Police Department Community Room, 397 Herndon Parkway, Herndon, Virginia.

Town Councilmembers in attendance: Mayor Keven LeBlanc, Vice Mayor Hedrick (remote participation); Councilmembers Cesar del Aguila, Kelvin Garcia (arrived at 7:11 p.m.), Michael T. Lloyd, and Alex Reyes.

Planning Commissioners in attendance: Chair Michael Romeo, Vice Chair Meron Yohannes, and Commissioners Andrew Beatty, Jay Donahue, Yung C. Kim, Stephen Mundt, and Samuel F. Richardson.

Councilmember Naila Alam was absent.

Staff present during the meeting: Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney; Scott Robinson, Director of Public Works; Brent Heavner, Chief Communications Officer; Lisa Gilleran, Director of Community Development; Collin Okoniewski, Economic Development Manager; Lauri Sigler, Deputy Town Attorney; Bryce Perry, Deputy Director of Community Development; David Stromberg, Zoning Administrator; Ahmad Zaki Sarfaraz, Comprehensive Planner; Jaleh Moslehi, Capital Projects Planner/Engineer; Amanda Kertz, Town Clerk; and Becky Skillin, Deputy Town Clerk.

Mayor LeBlanc stated, for the record, under Section 2.2-3708.3(D) of the Code of Virginia, and in accordance with Section 2-4 of the Town Code, the Chair received a request from Vice Mayor Hedrick to participate through electronic communication means in tonight's work session from Oklahoma, due to scheduled travel.

Mayor LeBlanc stated that a quorum of the Town Council was physically assembled at the meeting location, with four Councilmembers present in the Herndon Police Department Community Room, and a quorum of seven members of the Planning Commission was present.

With the concurrence of both bodies, Vice Mayor Hedrick was permitted to join the meeting to participate remotely that evening in accordance with the Town Code and State law at 7:05 p.m.

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Determination of a Quorum

Mayor LeBlanc noted for the record that there is a quorum, with four members of the Town Council physically present, and one member participating remotely, and seven members of the Planning Commission. Councilmember Alam was absent, Councilmember Garcia had not yet arrived.

Mayor LeBlanc and Chair Romeo provided welcoming comments to the Town Council and Planning Commission.

Amend the Agenda

By consensus of the Town Council and Planning Commission, the agenda was amended to move the Roadway Safety Action Plan Update to the first discussion item.

2. Discussion

a. Roadway Safety Action Plan Update (moved to the first discussion item)

Mayor LeBlanc recognized Mike Shindledecker, Transportation Engineer, who began the presentation of the Roadway Safety Action Plan (RSAP). He stated that the draft RSAP is being presented for Council and Planning Commission feedback in advance of anticipated adoption by the Town Council this spring. Mr. Shindledecker reviewed the background of the Plan, stating that the Town had successfully executed a grant agreement with the Federal Highway Administration and has retained a consulting firm in June 2025 to aid in the development of the Roadway Safety Action Plan. He introduced the Town's consultants, Amelia Martin, Senior Engineer, Kittelson & Associates, and Jeff Rigner, who summarized the project activities to date and introduced the elements of the RSAP.

Ms. Martin reviewed the draft plan, with emphasis on the potential engineering countermeasures to address pedestrian and intersection safety, along with non-engineering strategies such as education, communication, and analysis of gaps in the data. Public outreach efforts were described, which will include a second round of engagement, meetings with neighboring jurisdictions, and the availability of the Plan and feedback forms on the website.

Mr. Shindledecker stated that the plan supports the Town's movement toward a multimodal transportation network and will be a component of the Comprehensive Plan update, with annual reporting on progress and continued input opportunities. He referenced the recently adopted red light camera ordinance as an additional public safety tool.

There was discussion among the Council, Commission, and staff on the draft

RSAP, including:

1. Methods to expand outreach and improve public awareness of the RSAP.
2. Coordination and engagement with regional partners, including Fairfax County, Virginia Department of Transportation, and neighboring jurisdictions like Loudoun County.
3. Proposed countermeasures and safety tools being used or proposed in the RSAP.
4. Review of crash data trends, stoplight timing, and identification of priority safety locations.
5. Consideration of how weather events and major incidents may impact travel patterns.
6. Anticipated growth near Metro stations and along the Town's borders that will impact the traffic network.
7. Need for ongoing performance monitoring and annual evaluation of the plan's effectiveness, which will be tracked over a 12-year period.

Following discussion, Mr. Shindledecker and the consultants advised that they would update the plan based on engagement results prior to adoption and bring the final draft back to the Planning Commission and Town Council for review and adoption. Staff was requested to maintain ongoing public feedback tools and reporting mechanisms.

b. Herndon 2050 Comprehensive Plan and Market Study and Economic Development Strategy - Project Update

Mayor LeBlanc recognized Lisa Gilleran, Director of Community Development, who provided introductory remarks and introduced the Town's Comprehensive Planning consultant team. Ms. Gilleran provided an overview of the Herndon 2050 Comprehensive Plan and the accompanying Market Study and Economic Development Strategy in advance of the consultants' initial briefing to the Town Council and Planning Commission.

Members of the consultant team introduced themselves and outlined their roles in the planning process, which included: Brie Hensold, Founder and Principal Planner and Jill Dixon, Project Manager, Agency Landscape + Planning; and Dan Hodge, Cambridge Econometrics.

Ms. Hensold stated that the 2050 Comprehensive Plan and the accompanying Market Study and Economic Development Strategy will establish a shared vision, goals, and policy framework to support a thriving, inclusive, and resilient future for the Town. She noted that the effort represents a full rewrite of the Town's long-range policy document and will include Early Action Plans for Downtown and the

Metro area.

Ms. Dixon reviewed the project schedule and public engagement strategy, which will include stakeholder interviews, community meetings, and targeted outreach. She stated that the first major waves of public engagement are expected to begin in the spring.

Mr. Hodge provided an overview of the Market Study and Economic Development Strategy, including an assessment of economic conditions, real estate trends, fiscal dynamics, regional competitiveness, and industry patterns. Initial data collection and stakeholder outreach efforts are underway, with additional technical analysis and engagement planned in the coming months.

There was discussion among the staff, Council, and Commission about the Comprehensive Plan process and the accompanying MSEDS, including:

1. Strategies for expanding community engagement, including participation at major Town events and outreach at everyday community locations.
2. Coordination with regional organizations and economic development partners, Mayor LeBlanc suggested outreach to the Committee for Dulles and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission.
3. Review of comparable jurisdictions and redevelopment experiences, including the City of Manassas.
4. Questions regarding stakeholder outreach to developers and business sectors.
5. Discussion of office market challenges, commercial vacancies, and residential demand trends.
6. Consideration of long-term economic positioning and target industries for recruitment.
7. Questions regarding project timeline realism and milestone coordination with Council and Commission.
8. Discussion of placemaking opportunities, downtown identity, wayfinding, and trail connections.
9. Interest in fiscal comparisons with nearby jurisdictions and additional regional data sources.
10. Consideration of long-term plan maintenance and handling of future Comprehensive Plan amendments.

The consultants were asked to follow up on several items, which included:

1. Further analyze real estate trends related to office and residential space.

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2. Review economic planning with the Town's financial consultants at Davenport.
3. Apply lessons learned from previous planning efforts to the formation of the early action plan process.
4. Include property owners along Herndon Parkway as participants in the stakeholder interviews.
5. Consider the zoning designation of office space that is no longer feasible for that use.

The Comprehensive Plan is expected to be a multi-year process. The formal initiation of the project will be brought before the Town Council in the near future.

c. Housing Study Update

Mayor LeBlanc recognized Lisa Gilleran, Director of Community Development, who provided opening comments on the Housing Study Update. Key topics of tonight's discussion will include community input, data analysis, findings and recommendations. Ms. Gilleran also noted that staff is monitoring several bills currently before the General Assembly that may affect affordable housing regulations. She then introduced the Town's consultants, Melanie Thompson, Senior Housing Consultant, and Ashley Sharpley, Project Manager, with TPMA.

Ms. Thompson and Ms. Sharpley provided an overview of the study's methodology and results, including:

- Analysis of the Town's housing supply.
- Review of development trends and the age of the housing stock.
- Results from the community-wide public survey.
- Stakeholder interviews and engagement findings.
- Market and demographic data analysis.

Ms. Sharpley stated that housing projection data indicates that the majority of future residential units in the Town will be multifamily, primarily concentrated in the Metro area. She noted that this trend could result in a gap for residents seeking homeownership opportunities. The study emphasized the importance of addressing "missing middle" housing types, including starter homes and downsizing options.

Ms. Thompson defined affordable housing and workforce housing and discussed housing costs in Herndon as related to household income and the percentage spent on housing. She mentioned that a key finding of the community feedback survey was that overcrowding was a concern among respondents. It was possible that the data point was also being underreported.

Ms. Sharpley discussed the term 'cost-burdened' and its relationship to a household's ability to afford essential expenses. She reviewed opportunities to partner with Fairfax County on an affordable housing program, including entering into a memorandum of understanding (MOU), similar to an agreement that the Town of Leesburg made with Loudoun County. Fairfax County expressed willingness to oversee policy administration, with the Town responsible for enforcement responsibilities.

Ms. Sharpley reported that relatively few accessible dwelling units (ADUs) have been constructed since the Town's update to that ordinance in 2021. She thought that lack of awareness and costs may be limiting ADU development. She offered several strategies to encourage ADUs, including development of pre-approved plans and working with a firm or architect to assist interested homeowners.

Ms. Sharpley reviewed the implementation of Phase Two for this project, which includes an analysis of the existing zoning ordinance, drafting text amendments and related policies, and possible development of an MOU with Fairfax County to assist with affordable housing. She indicated that completion of this phase is expected to take approximately 12 months, with some variations expected in that timeline.

There was discussion among the Town Council, Planning Commission, staff, and consultants regarding the Housing Study Update, including:

1. Clarification of affordability thresholds and cost-burden definitions, including the percentage of household income spent on housing and how cost burden may affect essential workers.
2. Housing projections and methods used to estimate future housing demand and unit needs.
3. Overcrowding concerns raised during community outreach and how overcrowding impacts parking, transportation, and public safety, in addition to housing conditions.
4. The distinction between naturally occurring affordable housing and dedicated affordable housing units, and whether additional multifamily construction would improve affordability.
5. Potential ways to strengthen coordination with Fairfax County regarding affordable housing programs.
6. Whether the Herndon Transit Oriented Core (HTOC) and Transit Related Growth (TRG) areas should be reevaluated for current housing demand and future growth conditions.
7. The age of the Town’s housing stock and whether maintenance costs, deferred repairs, and reinvestment needs may impact affordability.

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8. Broader disparities between income levels within the Town and challenges associated with reaching households experiencing affordability pressures or overcrowding.

Following discussion, the consultants advised that they would continue refining and distributing the final Housing Study report. Phase Two would begin to include the steps outlined above.

3. Roundtable

Commissioner Richardson: no comments.

Commissioner Kim: no comments.

Councilmember Lloyd: thanked staff for planning the meeting and preparing the presentations.

Commissioner Beatty: echoed Councilmember Lloyd's comments thanking staff for coordinating the joint work session.

Vice Chair Yohannes: emphasized the urgency to improve housing affordability and to advocate for opportunities that increase affordable housing. She appreciated the opportunity for communication, community engagement, and evaluation of redevelopment opportunities.

Councilmember Garcia: no comments.

Commissioner Donahue: stated that there was a lot of work to be done on these important projects.

Councilmember Reyes: no comments.

Commissioner Mundt: echoed comments thanking staff for coordinating this meeting and expressed thanks to his colleagues for their participation on these topics that are important to the community.

Councilmember del Aguila: echoed his colleagues' comments and expressed appreciation to Mayor LeBlanc and staff for organizing this meeting. He stressed the importance of the work session and stated that he looks forward to addressing these matters in further detail in the future.

Chair Romeo: commented on the professionalism and knowledge demonstrated during the presentation and noted this is an important opportunity to advance the planning process. Emphasized the importance of maintaining the project schedule and continuing coordinated review by both bodies.

Vice Mayor Hedrick (remotely): echoed his colleagues' comments and expressed

appreciation to staff facilitating remote participation. Stated he was primarily listening and found the discussion helpful in identifying key housing and planning issues facing the Town.

Mayor LeBlanc: thanked the Council, Planning Commission, consultants, and staff for their participation. He asked staff to coordinate additional joint meetings of the Planning Commission and Town Council whenever feasible. Mayor LeBlanc also wished attendees a Happy Lunar New Year.

Scott Robinson, Director of Public Works: no comments.

4. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor LeBlanc adjourned the February 17, 2026, Town Council and Planning Commission joint work session at 10:51 p.m.

Amanda E.M. Kertz
Town Clerk

Minutes approved by Town Council: _____

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