Town Council and Planning Commission
Special Joint Work Session
Agenda Item 2.a.

Agenda Item: **Herndon 2050 Comprehensive Plan and Market Study and Economic Development Strategy - Project Update and Visioning**

Meeting Date: July 8, 2026

Category: Discussion

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Description:
This is an update on the Herndon 2050 Comprehensive Plan (Herndon 2050) and the accompanying Market Study and Economic Development Strategy (MSEDS). During the joint work session, the consultant team, Agency Landscape + Planning and Cambridge Econometrics (CE), will provide an overview of project progress, summarize findings from the Existing Conditions and Visioning phases, and present the results of public engagement activities completed to date.

This includes draft vision statements, emerging goals, and key themes developed through technical analysis, public engagement, and stakeholder outreach efforts completed to date. The consultant team will also discuss emerging themes, opportunities, and challenges identified through technical analysis, stakeholder outreach, community engagement, and Planning Commission input.

The session will focus on reviewing and discussing the draft vision framework for the comprehensive plan, including community aspirations, economic development priorities, growth and redevelopment opportunities, transportation and connectivity themes, and other “big ideas” that will guide the next phase of plan development. No formal action is scheduled.

Staff and the consultant team will seek feedback and affirmation of the overall vision and direction of the project before advancing into scenario development, policy recommendations, and implementation strategies.

Background/Timing Impact:
The Herndon 2050 Comprehensive Plan and accompanying market study were formally initiated in late 2025 and are currently progressing through Phase 3: Visioning and Future Plan Development. The project is organized into five major phases, including: (1) project initiation and background research, (2) existing conditions and technical

analysis, (3) visioning and future plan development, (4) draft plan preparation, and (5) plan finalization and adoption. The overall effort is anticipated to conclude in early 2028 with adoption of the final Comprehensive Plan and associated implementation framework.

Since project kickoff, staff and the consultant team have completed substantial technical analysis related to land use, housing, transportation and mobility, utilities and infrastructure, environmental conditions, community facilities, demographic trends, and economic and market conditions. Concurrently, the MSEDS effort has advanced analysis of Herndon's commercial real estate trends, regional competitiveness, workforce characteristics, fiscal conditions, and economic positioning within Northern Virginia. These analyses establish the baseline conditions that will inform future land use scenarios, redevelopment strategies, transportation investments, economic development initiatives, and long-term policy direction.

The project team has also completed an extensive public engagement effort that included a joint Town Council and Planning Commission work session, one-on-one meetings with members of the Town Council and Planning Commission, stakeholder interviews, community surveys, interactive mapping exercises, pop-up outreach events, and meetings with the Staff Technical Committee and the Downtown and Metro Area Early Action Plan (EAP) Committees. The engagement activities were designed to gather input on community priorities, opportunities, concerns, and aspirations for Herndon's future.

During the consultant team's May 27–28, 2026 site visit, findings from the Existing Conditions and Technical Analysis phase were presented to the Staff Technical Committee and Planning Commission. The consultant team also facilitated visioning exercises with the Planning Commission and the Downtown and Metro Area EAP Committees to identify community values, opportunities, challenges, and priorities for the future of Herndon.

Work on the Downtown and Metro Area EAPs is underway. Initial committee meetings and SWOT analysis exercises have been completed for both planning areas, and staff has compiled feedback regarding redevelopment opportunities, transportation connectivity, and economic vitality. This work is being coordinated with the broader Herndon 2050 effort to ensure consistency between the EAPs and the townwide vision.

Input collected through technical analysis, stakeholder interviews, committee discussions, public outreach activities, and community surveys has now been synthesized into draft vision statements, big ideas, and emerging goals for both Herndon 2050 and MSEDS. These materials will serve as the foundation for future land use scenarios, economic development strategies, transportation recommendations, and implementation actions.

This joint work session provides an opportunity for the Town Council and Planning Commission to review project progress, discuss the draft vision framework, and affirm

the overall direction of the project before the consultant team proceeds into the next phase of work.

The Planning Commission continues to serve as the primary steering body for the project, consistent with its responsibilities under the Code of Virginia and the Town's adopted project work program. The Town Council will continue to receive updates at key milestones, provide policy guidance throughout the planning process, and ultimately consider adoption of the completed plans. Public engagement remains a central component of the project as Herndon 2050, the MSEDS, and the Early Action Plans move toward development of draft recommendations and implementation strategies.

Timing Impact:
The project was formally initiated in November 2025 and is anticipated to take about 26 months, going through early 2028. The MSEDS element of the project is anticipated to be completed within the first year of the process. Completion of Herndon 2050 and Town Council consideration of adoption are anticipated in early spring 2028.

Strategic Focus Area:
Secure and Interconnected Community
Environmental and Economic Sustainability
Good Governance
Thriving Community

Fiscal Impact:
Funding for the Herndon 2050 Comprehensive Plan and Market Study and Economic Development Strategy was included in previous and current fiscal year budgets.

Legal Impact:
Preparation and adoption of a comprehensive plan is required under the Code of Virginia, Section 15.2-2223, which establishes the statutory basis for long-range planning by local governments.

Staff Recommendation/Next Steps:
This is a discussion item; staff has no recommendation.

Attachments:
None