TOWN OF Herndon VIRGINIA

Town Council Work Session
Agenda Item 2.a.

Agenda Item: **Urban Forestry Briefing**

Meeting Date: September 9, 2025

Category: Discussion

Prepared by: Nick Maletta, Arborist/Landscape Architect

Description:
Previously, during the September 17, 2024, work session, staff provided updates on several activities included in the town's Strategic Plan, during which the Council received a briefing on the urban forestry program. During this session, the Town Arborist will provide an update on the program and progress made since last September's presentation. The current status of the program, as well as several highlights from the past year and future challenges, will be presented.

Background:
The Town Arborist will provide an update on the current status of the arboriculture program, recent advances, current efforts, and likely future steps. With the street tree survey now completed, staff focus has turned to the completion of the town's first urban forestry management plan. Successful grant applications are providing additional resources to assist with the development of the urban forestry management plan, a study of the town's existing tree canopy coverage, and short- and long-term opportunities for increasing the tree canopy. In addition, ongoing grants continue to fund new tree planting and tree maintenance. Necessary and preemptive tree removal also continues as a priority to ensure the safety of the community. A tree donation program is being developed to help fund the tree planting effort.

Timing Impact:
This briefing item is before the Town Council as part of the work plan to regularly brief Council on the status of activities included within the Strategic Plan. While this activity is included within the Strategic Plan under Environmental and Economic Sustainability Goal 6, it was not prioritized as part of the town's two-year work plan as discussed during the January 2025 retreat. However, staff has continued to make progress with available funds and resources in moving forward with the development of an urban forestry management plan, which is an ongoing effort to ensure that the town's natural assets remain healthy, and that increases in tree canopy benefit all residents of the town. Any future service level changes regarding urban forestry should be considered as part of the annual budget process and in alignment with the urban forestry management plan, once completed.

Strategic Focus Area:
Environmental and Economic Sustainability

Fiscal Impact:
The town's urban forestry program is funded through the general fund, and supplemented with grant dollars when available. Some funding will be spent on initiating the tree donation program. The actual initial cost has not been determined at this time. Any future service level changes to this program should be considered as part of the town's annual budget process.

Legal Impact:
N/A

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

Attachments:
1. Presentation