



CITY OF FAIRFAX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING AGENDA
Wednesday December 4, 2024, 6:00pm
In Person Meeting

10306 Eaton Place, Training Room 115AB, 1st Floor, Fairfax, VA 22030

Commissioners Present:

Chair Mitchell Cho
Vice Chair Jeff Hermann
Treasurer Dawn McGruder
Secretary Soleymani
Commissioner Beth Young
Commissioner Kathleen Paley

Others Present:

Chris Bruno, CEO/Director, Economic Development Department
Nicole Toulouse, Senior Assistant Director, Economic Development Department
Matthew Easley, Assistant Director, Economic Development Department
Tara Borwey, Programs Manager, Economic Development Department
Brittany Jones, PR & Marketing Manager, Economic Development Department
Stephanie Gerson, Tourism Specialist, Economic Development Department
Tatjana Mara, Account Support Specialist, Economic Development Department
Jordan Locke, Economic Development Associate, Economic Development Department
Chris Kulp, Partner, Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP
Kyle Laux, Senior Vice-President, Davenport & Company LLC

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| 1. Call to Order | Chair Cho |
| a. Meeting called to order at 6:00pm. | |
| 2. Adoption of December Meeting Agenda [VOTE] | Commissioners |
| a. Secretary Soleymani motions. | |
| b. Vice- Chair Hermann seconds. | |
| c. Passes unanimously. | |
| 3. Closed Session [VOTE] | Commissioners |
| a. Secretary Soleymani motions. | |
| b. Commissioner Young seconds. | |
| c. Passes unanimously. | |
| 4. Reconvene Regular Meeting [VOTE] | Commissioners |
| a. Secretary Soleymani motions. | |
| b. Commissioner Young seconds. | |
| c. Passes unanimously. | |
| 5. Pathway Homes Presentation | Sylisa Lambert-Woodard |
| a. Pathway Homes (PH) was established in 1980 with the mission of addressing the needs of individuals who experience mental health conditions, substance use disorders, and co-occurring disabilities. The | |

nonprofit provides a range of services, including affordable housing, integrated healthcare, case management, and mental health support. Their approach focuses on offering wraparound services to help clients maintain housing stability and lead independent lives despite their challenges. With a portfolio of over 500 properties across Northern Virginia, Pathway Homes is the largest nonprofit provider of permanent supportive housing in Virginia. The organization has achieved remarkable success in helping individuals stay housed, avoid the criminal justice system, and reduce hospitalizations.

b. Relocation and New Project

- i. Due to the impending demolition of their current headquarters this organization is seeking to relocate to a new building at 1040 University Drive. The property, is currently zoned for commercial use, but PH has applied for a mixed-use zoning designation to transform it into a headquarters with affordable housing units on the upper floors. The new facility will include one-bedroom and efficiency apartments specifically designed for individuals with special accessibility needs. These units will feature universal design elements, allowing tenants to age in place, a growing need in the community. This project is a strategic effort to address the ongoing shortage of affordable housing in Fairfax City for individuals earning below 30% AMI.

c. Community Contribution

- i. The new headquarters and housing development aims to contribute to the local community in multiple ways. In addition to providing affordable housing for vulnerable populations, the project is expected to generate significant economic benefits, including job creation during construction and operational phases, as well as ongoing local spending. By staying within Fairfax City, Pathway Homes reaffirms its commitment to serving the local community and reinforcing the importance of inclusivity and diversity in the housing market. The organization's mission aligns with enhancing the city's housing availability and ensuring more equitable access to safe, affordable homes for all residents.

6. Mason Enterprise Center- Fairfax (15 mins w/ Q&A)

Center Director Hill

- a. Shares challenges in membership retention but has successfully maintained current members, with some new interest in business development and marketing support. A new website is set to launch in January to replace outdated technology and improve services, with final adjustments in progress.
- b. The Faculty Research Commercialization Program is being developed to support GMU and other local researchers in technology commercialization, with a focus on creating a partnership between GMU, Fairfax City, and MEC.
- c. Ongoing outreach efforts to attract international businesses, including collaboration with Enterprise Ireland and translations of marketing materials into Korean. A French tech company is considering MEC for a soft landing, with plans for an 18-month stay and a focus on video technology for enhanced audience engagement.

7. Conversation with representatives for Davenport (Fairfax City Financial Advisors) on the issuance of revenue bonds by the City's Economic Development Authority in the amount of \$54M for Capital Improvements

- a. Kyle Laux from Davenport, alongside the City's CFO JC Martinez and Bond Council Chris Kulp, provides an overview of the City of Fairfax issuing \$53 million in public facility revenue bonds for capital improvements, including the W Sherwood Community Center, a new fire station, and other infrastructure projects.
 - b. The EDA serves as a conduit for the bond issuance, allowing the city to borrow at favorable fixed rates in the public credit markets. The bonds will be authorized by the City Council and are designed to fund essential capital projects. Interest rates are expected to be in the low 3% range for a 25-year term, favorable compared to initial projections of 5%.
 - c. A resolution for final approval will be presented at the January 8th meeting, with the bond issuance scheduled for January.
8. Discussion with Davenport (FCFA) on partnership between Town of Herndon and the City of Fairfax Economic Development Authority
- a. The Town of Herndon is working on a mixed-use development, including a parking deck, and seeks to partner with Fairfax City's EDA to access credit markets since Herndon does not have its own EDA.
 - b. Fairfax City's EDA will act as a conduit for issuing bonds, with a moral obligation pledge from Herndon backing the bonds. This partnership does not impact Fairfax City's credit rating or debt capacity. Fairfax City's EDA will receive a \$150,000 fee for its role, which is unrestricted and can be used for administrative costs or other projects.
- ~~9. Authorization for the Executive Director/CEO to execute a consulting agreement with HGIS LLC [VOTE]~~
- ~~10. Consideration to authorize the Executive Director/CEO to enter into an agreement with Fairfax City for the future acquisition of real property [VOTE]~~
11. Business Investment Update (10 mins w/ Q&A) Senior Assistant Director Toulouse
- a. LIFFT Grant Celebration and Reopening / Reporting
 - i. The city successfully closed the first round of funding for the LIFFT (Lift Incentive for Fairfax Tenants) program, providing grants to 20 businesses and generating over a million dollars in tax revenue. The final funding round has now reopened, with additional funds available for new applicants. This program will also contribute approximately \$3.3 million in rent to landlords in Fairfax City.
 - b. Partner Events
 - i. Discusses partnership with the Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation to host events aimed at connecting startups with federal funding opportunities. The Mason Enterprises Accelerate Breakfast Series, showcasing Fairfax City's role as a leader in scientific innovation, is scheduled for the near future. These events will help strengthen local economic hubs and connect businesses with new opportunities.
 - ii. The second annual Broker Breakfast will be on January 17, 2024, to educate commercial real estate professionals about the city's available programs and resources.
 - c. Subs for Subs

- i. The second "Subs for Subs" event is scheduled for February, following a successful first iteration. The program aims to foster partnerships between local businesses. The first event generated valuable connections, and the city plans to improve the matchmaking process using new software for better outcomes.

12. Operations/ Finance Update (10 mins w/ Q&A)

Assistant Director Easley

a. FY2024 Annual Report

- i. The fiscal 2024 annual report is currently being worked on, combining the calendar year 2023 report with the first half of fiscal year 2024. The design is in place, and the goal is to release the report by the start of the new fiscal year.

b. FY2024 Audit

- i. The fiscal 2024 audit is nearing completion, with additional resources allocated to ensure its prompt finalization. An amendment to the original agreement was signed to increase the fee by \$2,600 to expedite the process. The audit will be submitted to the city once complete.

c. MEC Organizational Consultant

- i. The MEC Organizational Consultant, Domenica, has been working closely with Eddie and his team, including Paula, to review the operations and responsibilities of the MEC of Fairfax. Phase two is focused on determining future options, with a special Economic Development Authority meeting scheduled for December 18, where findings will be presented for feedback.

d. FCED Holiday Outing

- i. The FCED holiday outing will take place at 6:00pm on December 5, 2024 at Earps Ordinary. All EDA members are invited to celebrate past and ongoing successes.

13. Programs Update (10 mins w/ Q&A)

Programs Manager Borwey

a. Marketing Microgrant [VOTE]

- i. The Marketing Microgrant program provides small businesses in Fairfax City the opportunity to receive up to \$5,000 for marketing services. Designed to help businesses grow, it will operate on a first-come, first-serve basis, with \$25,000 allocated for the initiative. The Executive Director seeks approval to move forward with the program, which aims to enhance local business visibility and engagement.

ii. Secretary Soleymani motions.

iii. Passes unanimously.

b. Small Business Saturday

- i. In partnership with the Old Town Fairfax Business Association (OTFBA) and the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, Fairfax City Economic Development supported Small Business Saturday with three welcome stations at Funky Flea, Fair City Mall, and Victorian Square. These stations featured shopping brochures with QR links, holiday treats, a photo booth, and a Flex Card giveaway, highlighting Fairfax City as a prime shopping destination while promoting local businesses. FCED also launched the Flex Card BOGO promotion, offering customers a 40% bonus value on Flex Card purchases, encouraging spending at participating businesses.

- ii. Newly appointed PR & Marketing consultants, Joy Riot, assisted with event outreach, including the creation of an event landing page, social media ads, and a press release.
- c. Culinary Careers Collaborative
 - i. The Town of Vienna Economic Development Department (ToVEDD) and FCED partnered to address workforce needs in the restaurant industry through the Culinary Careers Collaborative (CCC) program. This initiative offers resources and training for individuals seeking culinary skills and employment in the region. With approval from the Economic Development Authority (EDA), FCED and ToVEDD collaborated with the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association (VRLTA) and George Mason University (GMU) to develop an industry-aligned curriculum.
 - ii. The program includes three tracks: the Advanced Track (May 12–14 and 19–21), the Beverage Arts Track (Jan 6–8 and 13–15), and the Beginner Track (Jun 5–10). Classes will be held at GMU's Nutrition Kitchen and Dolce Vita's wine bar, with instructors and dates confirmed. PPR Strategies has been hired to handle the marketing efforts for the courses.

14. Public Relations and Marketing Update (10 mins w/ Q&A)

PR & Marketing Manager Jones

- a. Strategy Consultant Kickoff
 - i. The one-year anniversary of the marketing strategy creation was noted, with an update on the collaboration with Development Counselors International (DCI). DCI is working on a marketing and communications strategy that is expected to be delivered by the end of next month. Two kickoff calls have already taken place.
- b. NOVA EDA Marketing and Communications Committee Chair
 - i. PR & Marketing Manager Jones was recently appointed to the chair position of the NOVA EDA Marketing Communications Committee. The committee will be responsible for launching a new website and handling social media requests, especially for the NOVA EDA LinkedIn page. The committee will organize and support 10 events in 2025, including Selection USA, ensuring that all collateral and marketing materials are prepared.

15. Tourism Update (10 mins w/ Q&A)

Tourism Specialist Gerson

- a. Tourism Committee – Chair
 - i. The City Manager, Laszlo, has initiated the creation of a Tourism Committee with representatives from various departments, including Parks and Recreation, Cultural Arts, Transportation, Office of Historic Resources, and IT Marketing. Tourism Specialist Gerson serves as the chair, with Matthew Kaiser as the co-chair. The committee's first meeting focused on discussing the roles of each department in promoting tourism, particularly through programming and events.
 - ii. The Office of Historic Resources shared its role in managing the visitor center. The next meeting will focus on collaborating to market city events, although there is currently no dedicated website or social media for tourism.
- b. Tourism Advisory Board

- i. Established a Tourism Advisory Board composed of experts from the local hotel industry (Kristen Finra), Visit Fairfax (Barry Bigger, CEO), and the Office of Historic Resources (Susan Gray, Director). The board's purpose is to guide tourism initiatives, build partnerships, and help determine how Fairfax City can enhance its tourism efforts. The board will play a critical role in defining the city's tourism strategy and leveraging Visit Fairfax's resources.
- c. Amending the strategic work plan and potential commissioner roles
 - i. Discusses partnership with StreetSense to amend the Fairfax City Economic Development Strategic Plan to include tourism as a key element. The goal is to clearly define tourism's role in economic development and demonstrate how a destination marketing organization (DMO) can help generate demand across various sectors. This effort will involve ongoing discussions with the advisory board and other stakeholders to ensure alignment.
- d. Implementation timeline
 - i. The tourism development plan includes several phases: adding tourism to the economic development work plan, conducting a market analysis to understand visitor data, creating a tourism brand and website, and exploring the establishment of a DMO. There will be a focus on strengthening partnerships with Visit Fairfax to expand the city's tourism reach.

16. New Business

Commissioners

- a. A question was raised about the level of input the committee has on the Pathway Homes project, specifically regarding decisions related to the special exception required for the project.
 - i. It was clarified that the city council would make the regulatory decision, although the Economic Development Authority (EDA) may be asked for an opinion. The committee may also adopt a resolution in support, but this is not common practice. The EDA is encouraged to be familiar with the project in case future partnerships or collaborations arise.
- b. The building Pathway Homes intends to occupy will not displace tenants until their leases expire. The largest tenant, Senator Servo's law firm, has been consulted, and the city will help them relocate. It was emphasized that the firm remains committed to staying in the city. The building is valued at \$4 million, and the project could have a significant impact, though the outcome remains uncertain.

17. Public Comment (5 mins)

Public

- a. Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce- Doug Church
 - i. A suggestion was made to consider adding the chamber to tourism partnerships, emphasizing the chamber's role in connecting businesses and local resources.
 - ii. The success of introducing Pathway Homes to the community was praised, with recognition of their efficient, cost-effective operational model.
- b. Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce- Jennifer Rose
 - i. Excitement was shared about upcoming events, including the Legislative Affairs Breakfast featuring key local figures and the holiday business after-hours gathering with a lighthearted ugly sweater contest.

- ii. Efforts to submit grant reimbursement requests were acknowledged, and there was progress made toward future initiatives.
- c. SmarterGrowth- Bill Pitchford
 - i. A proposal was made to explore retail and walkability enhancements in Old Town Fairfax, inspired by a similar pilot program in Old Town Alexandria. The suggestion was to consider blocking off traffic to enhance pedestrian experiences and support local businesses.
 - ii. Shares details from call to integrate more walkable spaces in Old Town Fairfax, similar to initiatives in other local districts that support both retail growth and pedestrian movement.

18. Adoption of November Meeting Minutes **[VOTE]**

Commissioners

- a. Chair Cho motions.
- b. Vice- Chair Hermann seconds.
- c. Passes unanimously.

19. Adjourn

Chair Cho

- a. Meeting adjourned at 8:27pm.

*****Next Meeting: January 8, 2024*****

6 pm, 10300 Eaton Pl. Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Subject to Change. Please Check gofairfaxcity.com for more information.