CITY OF FAIRFAX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING AGENDA
Wednesday April 2, 2025, 6:00pm
In Person

10306 Eaton Place, Training Room 115AB, Fairfax, VA 22030

1. Call to Order *Chair Cho*
2. Adoption of March Meeting Minutes **[VOTE]** *Commissioners*
3. Adoption of April Meeting Agenda **[VOTE]** *Commissioners*
4. Business Marketing Grant Check Presentation (10 mins) *Assistant Director Borwey*
5. Introduction of an Amendment to Section 7 of the EDA Bylaws Regarding Commissioner Attendance (proposed in paragraph 11) *Chair Cho*
6. Mason Enterprise Center-Fairfax (15 mins w/ Q&A) *Center Director Hill*
7. Finance and Operations Update (15 mins w/ Q&A) *Assistant Director Borwey*
    a. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget *Treasurer McGruder*
    b. Upcoming Staff Travel *Acting Executive Director on behalf of Assistant Director Easley*
    c. Chief Economic Development Officer Meeting – COG *Acting Executive Director on behalf of Director Bruno*
8. Fairfax City Restaurant Week Media Coverage Recap (15 mins w/ Q&A) *PR & Marketing Manager Jones*
9. Tourism Update (15 mins w/ Q&A) *Tourism Specialist Gerson*
    a. Tourism Strategic Plan Presentation
    b. Mural Update
10. NOVA Economic Development Alliance Update(5 mins w/ Q&A) *Assistant Director Borwey*
    a. RSA Conference
    b. NOVA EDA Brand Launch
    c. Leadership Team/Appointment/Employees
    d. Annual Contribution
11. New Business *All*
12. Public Comment (5 mins) *Public*
13. Adjourn *Chair Cho*

*****Next Meeting: May 14, 2025*****
6 pm, 10300 Eaton Pl. Fairfax, Virginia 22030
Subject to Change. Please Check gofairfaxcity.com for more information.

Fairfax City Economic Development Staff Report

Date: April 2, 2025

TO: Economic Development Authority Commissioners

THROUGH: Christopher Bruno, CEO/ Executive Director

FROM: Matthew Easley, Assistant Director of Operations and Finance

SUBJECT: Finance and Operations Update

ISSUE(S):

The FCED Finance and Operations team is responsible for overseeing administration, procurement, budgeting, spending, hiring, and maintaining a hospitable and equitable work environment. This report will serve to update on the FY26 budget and process.

FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET:

FCED F&O is collaborating with program managers, the director, and the city finance department to complete exercises related to the FY26 budget and City Council requests. The City Manager presented the initial budget proposal on February 25, 2025, to include an increase in the meals tax from 4% to 6%, as well as an increase in the real estate tax from $ 1.03 to $ 1.125, a $ 0.095 increase. The City Council has asked the City Manager to engage staff in budgetary exercises in an attempt to strike a balance between the tax rate and service delivery and the City budget must be balanced per federal law.

As part of this budgetary exercise, the City Manager has requested that FCED present a reduced budget of 19.17% or $248,802.

The Director has proposed cutting the following: Economic Development Initiatives funding, the Culinary Careers Collaborative, the Women's Empowerment Luncheon, the Women's Empowerment Grant, Lease Incentives for Fairfax Tenants (LIFFT) Façade and Interior Improvement Program (FIIG), the VA LOVE sign, and the ICSC Conference.

Reductions were also proposed for the following areas: Economic Opportunity Funding, Ribbon Cuttings, Mural Installations, Tourism Branding, PR and Marketing Ad Support, Marketing for divisions excluding Business Investment, International Partnerships, Conferences, and Professional Development.

This proposal is not final, and the FY2026 City Budget will not be adopted until early May.

FISCAL IMPACT: None currently.

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

ALTERNATIVE
COURSE OF ACTION: N/A

RESPONSIBLE STAFF/
POC: Matthew Easley, Assistant Director for Finance and Operations

COORDINATION: Director of Economic Development, FCED Treasurer, and City CFO/ Finance

ATTACHMENTS: None

Fairfax City Economic Development Staff Report

Date: April 2, 2025

TO: Economic Development Authority Commissioners

THROUGH: Christopher Bruno, CEO/ Executive Director

FROM: Matthew Easley, Assistant Director of Operations and Finance

SUBJECT: Operations and Finance Update

ISSUE(S):

The FCED Finance and Operations team is responsible for overseeing administration, procurement, budgeting, spending, hiring, and maintaining a hospitable and equitable work environment. This report will serve to update on any upcoming staff travel and economic development leads within the region.

UPCOMING STAFF TRAVEL:

Operations staff will attend the Virginia Association of Government Procurement Annual Spring Conference in Portsmouth, VA, from March 30 to April 2. Procurement professionals from across the Commonwealth will gather to discuss best practices, share challenges, and develop strategies and solutions. Participation in this conference allows Assistant Director Easley to maintain certification as a Virginia Contracting Associate, enabling the Economic Development Authority to independently orocure goods or services up to $100k.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEADS IN THE DC METROPOLITAN REGION:

Director Bruno will participate in the University of Virginia's LEAD (Leading, Educating, and Developing) Program in Charlottesville, VA, from April 5 to April 11. This program offers an intensive learning schedule tailored for executive leadership in local government, featuring highly interactive sessions that combine concept learning, real-world applications, and peer discussions. It also provides a valuable opportunity to network extensively with fellow professionals, fostering collaboration and the exchange of best practices.

FISCAL IMPACT: The Virginia Association of Government Procurement Conference will cost ~$1,500. HR

Professional Development will cover the expenses for UVA LEAD.

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

ALTERNATIVE
COURSE OF ACTION: N/A

RESPONSIBLE STAFF/
POC: Matthew Easley, Assistant Director for Finance and Operations

COORDINATION: President/CEO

ATTACHMENTS: N/A

Fairfax City Economic Development Staff Report

Date: April 2, 2025

TO: Economic Development Authority Commissioners

THROUGH: Christopher Bruno, CEO/Executive Director

FROM: Brittany Jones, PR and Marketing Manager

SUBJECT: PR and Marketing Update

ISSUE(S):

The Fairfax City Economic Development (FCED) Public Relations and Marketing Team provides a comprehensive recap of Fairfax City Restaurant Week. Below, you'll find a detailed overview of the event's highlights, key updates, and overall impact, showcasing the success and enthusiasm generated throughout the week.

FAIRFAX CITY RESTAURANT WEEK MEDIA COVERAGE RECAP:

The FCED PR and Marketing division, in collaboration with the Programs team and Joy Riot, implemented a comprehensive media outreach strategy for Winter 2025 Fairfax City Restaurant Week. This effort included targeted pitching, press release distribution, and direct engagement with regional media outlets across TV, online, print, and radio. As a result, the campaign secured significant earned media coverage, increasing awareness of the event and its impact on the local business community.

FCED spokespeople—Christopher Bruno, Tara Borwey, and Brittany Jones—were featured in live news segments alongside participating restaurants, further positioning Fairfax City as a vibrant dining destination. Under the leadership of Tara Borwey and Brittany Jones, the PR efforts for Restaurant Week demonstrated the effectiveness of media relations in driving visibility and engagement. The attached presentation provides a detailed overview of media placements and audience reach.

FISCAL IMPACT: Included in FY25 budget.

RECOMMENDATION: None.

ALTERNATIVE
COURSE OF ACTION: None

RESPONSIBLE STAFF/
POC: Brittany Jones, PR and Marketing; Tara Borwey, Assistant Director of Programs

COORDINATION: Programs, PR and Marketing

ATTACHMENTS: Media Coverage PowerPoint Presentation

Fairfax City Economic Development Staff Report

Date: April 2, 2025

TO: Economic Development Authority Commissioners

THROUGH: Christopher Bruno, CEO/ Executive Director

FROM: Stephanie Gerson, Tourism and Placemaking Specialist

SUBJECT: Tourism Update

ISSUE(S):
This report serves as an update to the departments process in adding tourism as a 9th pillar to the Economic Development Workplan with guiding initiatives.

TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN:

FCED re-engaged Street Sense, a third-party consultant, to update the 2023 FCED Workplan by incorporating tourism as a ninth pillar and conducting an analysis of its economic impact on Fairfax City. Over the past few months, we have collaborated closely with Street Sense to assess the role of tourism in Fairfax City and explore how FCED can take the lead in future tourism initiatives.

In addition to holding bi-weekly internal meetings, we facilitated a comprehensive on-site visit for Street Sense, including meetings with various focus groups and key stakeholders. Following the site tour, Street Sense presented their initial findings in a virtual session with internal staff and focus groups.

Street Sense recently completed the amended FCED Workplan with tourism as an additional pillar and the tourism study. These will be presented and are attached below.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Tourism Strategic Plan was funded by the FY25 budget, with the main outcome demonstrating how tourism can be a short-term investment that can financially benefit the city in the long term.

RECOMMENDATION:
FCED recommends that the EDO adopt the amended FCED Workplan presented by Streetsense.

ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION:
N/A

RESPONSIBLE STAFF/POC:
Stephanie Gerson, Tourism and Placemaking Specialist

COORDINATION:
Chris Bruno, President/CEO

ATTACHMENTS: Please see attached

Fairfax City Economic Development Staff Report

Date: April 2, 2025

TO: Economic Development Authority Commissioners

THROUGH: Christopher Bruno, CEO/ Executive Director

FROM: Stephanie Gerson, Tourism and Placemaking Specialist

SUBJECT: Tourism Update

ISSUE(S):
This report serves as an update to the departments process in adding tourism as a 9th pillar to the Economic Development Workplan with guiding initiatives, the commissioning of a mural in Old Town Fairfax and an overview of the VTC Visitor Center Summit.

MURAL:

FCED has commissioned an artist, Bailey Sullivan, to paint a mural on the second floor of the Ellicott Building (10407 Main Street) in Old Town Fairfax. The painting of the mural will take place May 10th-17th. The bio and rendering for the mural are attached.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Tourism Strategic Plan was funded by the FY25 budget, with the main outcome demonstrating how tourism can be a short-term investment that can financially benefit the city in the long term. The mural

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

ALTERNATIVE
COURSE OF ACTION: N/A

RESPONSIBLE STAFF/POC:
Stephanie Gerson, Tourism and Placemaking Specialist

COORDINATION: Megan DeBois, Cultural Arts Manager; Brian Howell, Treasurer, Commission on the Arts

ATTACHMENTS: See artist deck attached.

Fairfax City Economic Development Staff Report

Date: April 2, 2025

TO: Economic Development Authority Commissioners

FROM: Christopher Bruno, CEO/ Executive Director

SUBJECT: Update on the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance Activities

Updates:

The Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance (NoVA EDA) is a trans-jurisdictional non-profit corporation established by the nine economic development agencies that each make up what is typically recognized as the Northern Virginia. This partnership was established following the successful attraction of Amazon's HQ2 project, and the proceeding coordinated proposals. Fairfax City Economic Development is a founding member of the NoVA EDA and has benefited immensely from its affiliation since 2018. This staff report provides an update on four items:

I. **RSA Conference.** Each year the NoVA EDA is selected to attend call-trips and conferences either on its own or with our partners at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), the state level economic development agency administered by an appointee of the Governor. These call-trips and conferences are funded in whole or in part by the NoVA EDA and support staff from the individual economic development agencies traveling on behalf of the NoVA EDA and their home jurisdiction. This year, FCED employee Brittany Jones will represent NoVA EDA and FCED at the annual RSA Conference, widely considered the largest and most influential cybersecurity conference in the world, during the week of April 28 in San Francisco. She will provide a high-level update following the event at the May 2025 EDA meeting.

II. **Brand Launch.** A core component of the NoVA EDA is to promote investment and business development opportunities throughout the region nationally and internationally. In addition to relationship cultivation and management, the NoVA EDA invests substantially in brand recognition and promotion. In 2025 the NoVA EDA, led by its marketing and communications committee (currently chaired by Brittany Jones of FCED) launched a new brand and website. The website, **novaeda.org**, educates visitors on key Northern Virginia business sectors, advantages of conducting business throughout the region, and connects employers with the regional talent and workforce community. The intellectual property associated with the NoVA EDA was properly registered with the USPTO and protected in March of 2025.

III. **Leadership Team/ Appointment/ Employees.** Each year the NoVA EDA directors select an executive committee from among the membership. This year the NoVA EDA selected: Patrick Small from the City of Manassas as Chair; Christina Wynn from Prince William County as Vice Chair; Ryan Touhill from Arlington County as Secretary; and Christopher Bruno from Fairfax City as Treasurer. Fairfax City's participation on the executive committee ensures that the NoVA EDA is representative of FCED priorities throughout the region. The executive committee is currently exploring options to grow the capacity of the NoVA EDA as an operational entity by determining whether full or part time staff is necessary to ensure efficient management. Staff would be funded by the NoVA EDA assessment collected from each jurisdiction (see below) and would be overseen by the corporate board of directors.

IV. **Annual Contribution.** The NoVA EDA is funded primarily by annual contributions from the nine member jurisdictions. The annual assessment for each jurisdiction is determined by each jurisdiction's population. For FY25, and anticipated for FY26, those assessments fall into ranges of $50,000 to $5,000. Fairfax City's contribution for FY25 and anticipated contribution for FY26 is $10,000. This minimal investment enables FCED, through the

NoVA EDA, to project the brand of Fairfax City far beyond our region, while leveraging the convening power of the NoVA EDA and research apparatus of the organization.

FISCAL IMPACT: Currently none; annual assessment of $10,000 provided by for budget request and adoption.

RECOMMENDATION: Receive staff updates.

ALTERNATIVE
COURSE OF ACTION: Table staff updates until May 2025 EDA Meeting.

RESPONSIBLE STAFF/
POC: Christopher Bruno

COORDINATION: Business Investment, Public Relations/ Marketing

ATTACHMENTS: None