

**TOWN OF APEX
TOWN COUNCIL RETREAT DAY 3
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2026
8:00 A.M.**

The Apex Town Council met for their Annual Retreat on Friday, February 13, 2026 at 8:00 a.m. at the Apex Town Hall located at 73 Hunter Street in Apex North Carolina.

This meeting was open to the public. Members of the public were able to attend this meeting in-person or watch online via the livestream on the Town's YouTube Channel. A link to view the recorded portions of the meeting is included below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHooHBpcLms>

[ATTENDANCE]

Elected Body

Mayor Jacques K. Gilbert (presiding)
Mayor Pro-Tempore Terry Mahaffey
Councilmember Arno Zegerman
Councilmember Edward Gray
Councilmember Shane Reese
Councilmember Sue Mu
Absent: None

Town Staff

Town Manager Randy Vosburg
Deputy Town Manager Shawn Purvis
Assistant Town Manager Demetria John
Assistant Town Manager Marty Stone
Town Attorney Laurie Hohe
Town Clerk Allen Coleman
All other staff members will be identified appropriately below.

[COMMENCEMENT]

Mayor Gilbert called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and turned the meeting over to Town Manager, Randy Vosburg, to begin the agenda.

[AGENDA REVIEW]

Town Manager Randy Vosburg thanked everyone for returning for day 3 of the Budget Retreat. He asked PRCR Director Craig Setzer for an introduction and then Chief Johansen for an update on an event from yesterday.

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Director, Craig Setzer introduced their new Assistant Director, Jamila Godfrey

Assistant Director Godfrey said she was happy to be here, and appreciated the warm welcome.

Town Manager Vosburg asked Police Chief Ryan Johansen to give an update on a recent event.

Chief Johansen gave an update on an incident that happened on February 12, 2026 where PD received reports of multiple cars being broken into at Beaver Creek Commons that involved a suspect's vehicle fleeing officers, which resulted in a crash involving a civilian at the intersection of South Hughes and Peters Street. He noted that the civilian had serious injuries but they were not life-threatening. He said electric and fire were on the scene quickly to help clean things up. He said two suspects are in custody facing 6 felony charges, and the third suspect has been identified and will likely be apprehended soon, but is not thought to pose any public safety risk.

Town Manager Vosburg told Electric Director Kathy Moyer that her team did a great job, and everything is back to normal on that side of things.

[LEGISLATIVE AGENDA REVIEW, BRAINSTORMING AND DEVELOPMENT]

Town Clerk Allen Coleman introduced Hampton Billips, Government Relations Director and Derrick Applewhite, Associate with Checkmate to go through the legislative agenda.

Mr. Billips gave the following presentation:
[SLIDE NO. 1]



1 **[SLIDE NO. 2]**

Our Team



Ches
McDowell



Nelson
Freeman



Hampton
Billips



John
Easterling



Kendall
Conger



Derrick
Applewhite

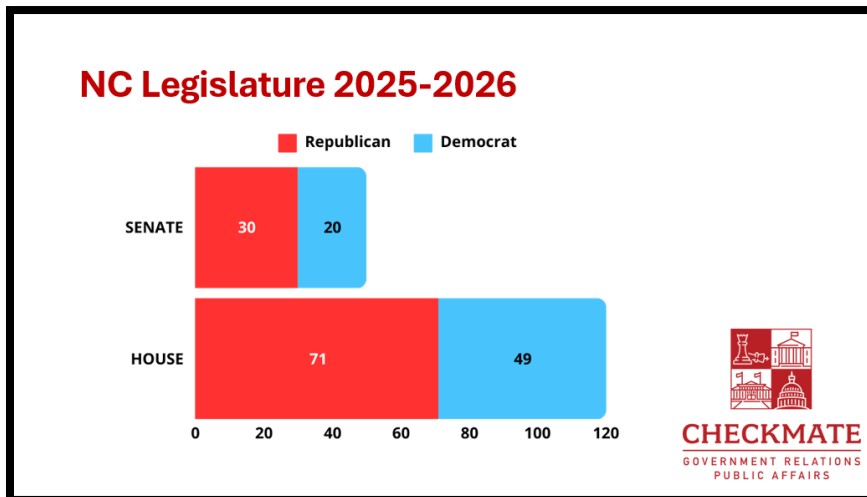


Lauren
Henderson



CHECKMATE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

2
3 **[SLIDE NO. 3]**



4
5 **[SLIDE NO. 4]**

Leadership in the General Assembly

House Leadership

- Speaker of the House – Destin Hall (R-Caldwell)*
- House Rules Chairman – John Bell (R-Wayne)*
- House Majority Leader – Brendon Jones (R-Columbus)*
- House Speaker Pro Tempore – Mitchell Setzer (R-Catawba)*

Senate Leadership

- Senate President (Lt. Gov.) – Rachel Hunt (D)*
- President Pro Tempore (Leader) – Phil Berger (R-Rockingham)**
- Senate Rules Chairman – Bill Rabon (R-Brunswick)
- Democratic Leader – Sydney Batch (D-Wake)*

*New to leadership position

**8th term in leadership position



CHECKMATE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
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1 **[SLIDE NO. 5]**

Additional Leadership Roles

- Representative Steve Tyson (R-Craven) – Deputy Majority Leader
- Representative Robert Reives, II – House Democratic Leader
- Representative Cynthia Ball – Deputy Democratic Leader
- Representative Karl Gillespie (R-Cherokee) – Whip
- Representatives Matthew Winslow (R-Franklin) and Jeff Zenger (R-Forsyth) – Conference Committee Chairs
- Representative Harry Warren (R-Rowan) – Caucus Joint Liaison
- Representative Heather Rhyne (R-Gaston) – Freshman Leader
- Representative Blair Eddins (R-Wilkes) – Freshman Whip



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3 **[SLIDE NO. 6]**

On the Horizon

- Primary Season (Berger vs Page)
- Budget Bill – Children’s Hospital
- Property Tax Discussion
- Homebuilders Bill
- Zoning/ETJ
- Down Zoning Repeal
- Hurricane Helene Funding
- Medicaid Funding



CHECKMATE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
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4
5 **[SLIDE NO. 7]**

On the Horizon

- Primary Season (Berger vs Page)
- Budget Bill – Children’s Hospital
- Property Tax Discussion
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1 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** asked if there may be an opportunity to work with
2 state House budget writers on a compromise that would redirect funding toward local
3 infrastructure projects supporting the hospital or funding projects in the Apex area, rather
4 than the Children's Hospital directly.

5 **Mr. Billips** said that is part of the conversations with the Senate staff and budget
6 writers and part of their job is to be creative to find solutions for Apex.

7 **Councilmember Zegerman** suggested looking at the budget numbers versus the
8 infrastructure requirements.

9 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said there was a lot of road repair that could be done
10 by NCDOT to support the Children's Hospital and support Apex.

11 **Councilmember Reese** said there is the toll portion of 540 that will lead to the
12 Children's Hospital and there will be a considerable number of people traveling this route,
13 and possibly that funding could be redirected to help with infrastructure. He said he would
14 be concerned that patients and families needing to access the Children's Hospital would have
15 to continue paying the tolls.

16 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** asked about the action on the budget after the
17 Primary.

18 **Mr. Billips** said there's many possibilities regarding the budget timing, he could see it
19 being over summer or after the General Elections, with spending bills in place in the gaps. He
20 said there will have to be a lot of money spent on Medicaid, which may push it toward the
21 later part of the year.

22 **Councilmember Zegerman** asked if there had been any discussions about alternative
23 funding sources for any reductions to property taxing power for municipal governments.

24 **Mr. Billips** said he had not seen any solutions being discussed at this point regarding
25 supplemental funding.

26 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** asked if the local tax discussions could focus on the
27 scenario of being able to charge transportation impact fees, and how that may reduce the
28 pressure on property tax rates for the town.

29 **Mr. Billips** said that it would be better for the town to hold firm on the property tax
30 stance and not give the appearance they are willing to cede any ground there.

31 **Mr. Applewhite** said the main priority is to ensure that Apex is able to sustain the
32 revenue for their budgets. He said things like impact fees aren't popular within the General
33 Assembly, but there are other options which may have more flexibility. He explained the
34 "payback" model for transportation funding and how it is a useful option, but said it could
35 come at the cost of reducing other funding sources like the STIP if it was expanded.

36 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that he assumed that the municipalities are well
37 represented in this tax discussion.

38 **Mr. Billips** said that it was well represented and noted that Julia Howard, a
39 longstanding member and the Chair of the Finance Committee in the House, was well versed
40 in the tax policy, and a former Mayor that is involved in these discussions. He said that
41 Checkmate has good relations with the organizations speaking on behalf of local
42 governments in these discussions, and they are working to keep their message unified.

1 **Town Manager Vosburg** said that from his experience in Florida, once local tax
2 exemptions begin it can take millions of dollars from local government on their ability to
3 property tax.

4 **Councilmember Zegerman** asked if there were alternative ways to achieve this goal
5 to give tax relief programs but lessen the impact on municipal revenues.

6 **Mr. Billips** said that the County Commission Association has done a great job of
7 taking all the bills that were introduced last year that had any impact on property taxes to the
8 Legislature with attached dollar amounts. He said that he could get that to Town Clerk
9 Coleman to distribute to Council.

10 **Councilmember Reese** asked if the urban/rural representation variable a part of the
11 tax relief program. He wondered if more rural areas may not see as much value in the
12 property tax they pay.

13 **Mr. Billips** said that he thought so because some of the highest property tax rates are
14 in some of the most rural counties in the state.

15 **Councilmember Reese** said exemptions for groups who may need additional
16 assistance sounds great, but this is something that has a downstream effect on municipality
17 funding.

18 **Mr. Billips** said it is understood that certain groups want to be helped, but each time
19 an exemption is made the tax burden shifts higher on everyone else.

20 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said there was tax exemptions for seniors considered
21 through the League of Municipalities and some of the urban and suburban communities
22 supported the proposal but there was opposition from the rural towns because the tax
23 exemptions would have much more impact on them.

24 **Councilmember Reese** asked if there was a legal way this could be needs based as
25 opposed to only being aged base.

26 **Mr. Billips** said not that he is aware of any at this time.

27 **Mr. Billips** said that property revaluations are required at least every 8 years, and if it
28 takes that full time there can be considerable sticker shock at the amount of increase. He said
29 there have been discussions to require more frequent revaluations based on county growth
30 to make increases more predictable and reduce the impact on residents.

31 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said the problem isn't the property valuation going
32 up, it is they don't all go up at the same rate and that rebalances the tax burden across the
33 population.

34 **Town Clerk Coleman** gave a time check of about 30 minutes.

35 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** asked if there may be a shift in support for the Home
36 Builder Bill.

37 **Mr. Billips** said that is to be determined and would be able to give more information
38 in November.

39 **Councilmember Reese** asked if it was possible for the Home Builder Bill to get
40 included in another bill.

41 **Mr. Billips** said typically it may but those that have been in opposition to this bill will
42 not want to see it swept into a bill that is slipped through.

Councilmember Reese asked about the pushback to the downzoning bill.

Mr. Billips said he wasn't sure they calculated the pushback against that properly and how negative it would be for rural communities, and there is large support for it to be reverted.

[SLIDE NO. 8]

Legislative Agenda Development

A Welcoming Community

- Identify and seek funding for outdoor recreational needs. (NC Parks Grants and direct grants)
- Support legislation that expands property tax exemptions to ensure seniors, disabled veterans, and others remain in their homes. (Several bills aimed at addressing this issue)
- Advocate for legislation that promotes opioid and other substance use prevention, intervention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery initiatives.* (Opioid Settlement Funds)



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*In Progress

Councilmember Zegerman asked if recreational needs could be presented in a way to be more about healthy communities and healthy living.

Mr. Billips said he could revise the agenda, although it had already been adopted. If possible, he would frame the item around health and community well-being and note that it was adopted last year. He said the agenda serves as the guiding document for a two-year period, and Council will draft a new legislative agenda at the beginning of next year to identify new priorities and determine which existing items to retain.

[SLIDE NO. 9]

Legislative Agenda Development

High Performing Government

- Promote legislation that would broaden the capabilities for providing electronic notices by local governments.*
- Identify and support legislation directed at initiatives related to reducing community violence and increasing public safety through non-traditional violence prevention. (S.L. 2025-93 Iryna's Law)
- Promote legislation to move all municipal elections to even-years reducing the costly burden to municipalities, and protect the ability for municipal elected officials to determine the election formats, districts, and other election matters.* (Several local bills filed/passed)



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*In Progress

[SLIDE NO. 10]

Legislative Agenda Development

Environmental Leadership

- Advocate for pollinator habitats and protection of native species. (HB 84 The Pollinator Protection Act)
- Support legislation that will protect energy consumers and improve reliability.*
- Promote efforts that prioritize clean water for our communities and provide funds for remediating the contamination in local water supplies.* (HB 569 PFAS Pollution and Polluter Liability)
- Oppose legislation that places limitation on local government regulations concerning tree removal. (Defensive win)

*In Progress



Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey asked what the reaction of the Senate passing Duke Power's increase that was passed on to the consumer, because it didn't seem to be very consumer friendly and was this decision impacted by Duke Energy's effective lobbying.

Mr. Billips said that it was part of the negotiation with Duke Energy that ended the 2030 deadline and gave them more flexibility. He said the General Assembly viewed it as the need outweighed the cost.

[SLIDE NO. 11]

Legislative Agenda Development

Responsible Development

- Support opportunities to increase access to affordable housing, by expanding incentive programs and address concerns of large investors and corporate-owned housing. (Presidential E.O.)
- Support the expansion and continuation of the Community Opportunity Tax Credit.* (Earned House Speaker Pro Tem support)
- Advocate for legislation to fund and support mobility initiatives, including expansion of roads, bus, bicycle, and light rail systems to suburban areas.*

*In Progress



Director of Community Development & Neighborhood Connections, Marla Newman asked if there were an opportunity or any discussions for housing or community development tax credit expansions for supporting affordable housing.

Mr. Billips said this wasn't related to the Executive Order but may have been on the Community Opportunity Tax credit and other tax credits in other conversations, but the Senate is not big fans of tax credits.

Director Newman said she was thinking more at the state level.

Mr. Billips said there were conversations last year about the Opportunity Tax Credit and Mitchell Setzer who has been in these discussions was very supportive and possibly co-sponsored the original program and is now taking the lead on this. He said that he and Mr. Setzer have met and hopeful that this is something that is being negotiated.

Councilmember Reese asked if the transportation component included things like pedestrian improvements.

Mr. Billips said that it did.

[SLIDE NO. 12]

Legislative Agenda Development

Responsible Development Cont.

- Support the establishment of long-term funding streams that adequately address, water, sewer, stormwater, transportation, and other infrastructure needs.* (General Assembly priority)
- Advocate for and support the restoration of Down Zoning authority.* (SB 587 Clarify Nonconforming Uses)

*In Progress



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[SLIDE NO. 13]

Legislative Agenda Development

Economic Vitality

- Support efforts that ensure equitable distribution of sales tax.
- Invest heavily in infrastructure grants to provide capacity for siting new businesses and expansions to ensure robust recruitment and strong retention.*
- Promote legislation that would provide local revenue options beyond the property tax.* (S.L. 2025-39 P.A.V.E. Act)

*In Progress



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[SLIDE NO. 14]

Legislative Agenda Development - Partners

Partners

- North Carolina League of Municipalities – Statewide monitoring
- Electricities – Membership monitoring
- NC Economic Development Association – Relationship building and coordination
- American Planning Association - NC Chapter – Monitoring and expertise
- NC County Commissioners Association – Statewide monitoring

Checkmate GR works collaboratively to advance Apex's interests



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Councilmember Reese asked if these partners are regularly on Jones Street.

Mr. Billips said yes, except that American Planning Association does not have a registered lobbyist, but the Legislative Committee does pay attention to what's going on.

[SLIDE NO. 15]

Legislative Agenda Development - Framework

- **Clear, Concise, and Simple Priorities**
- **Include Policy Priorities, and Capital Needs**
- **Incorporate State Association Priorities**
- **Education and Engagement** – Community, Staff, Legislators
- **Strategic Goal Alignment** – Game Plan Apex
- **Credibility** – Council Adoption (March 24th)



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Councilmember Zegerman asked how Checkmate felt about the current Legislative agenda and priorities.

Mr. Billips said the Legislative agenda is great, and allows them to represent Apex's interests in all of the discussions they have with representatives and stakeholders in the legislature.

[SLIDE NO. 16]

Legislative Agenda Development - Prioritization

The “Peak” Prioritization Project

Outcome: Produce a focused, council-driven agenda with three top priorities, five secondary priorities, and a watch list.

1. Individual Prioritization (5 minutes)
2. Small Group Prioritization (10 minutes)
3. Whole Council Prioritization (10 minutes)
4. Reality Check and Wrap Up (5 minutes)



Mr. Applewhite asked Council to pair up for an exercise to create their 3 top priorities from the legislative as well as a secondary 5 after that, then they would come back to discuss.

After the paired discussions, the group came back together, and **Mr. Applewhite** asked Council to share one of their top priorities.

Councilmember Zegerman said equitable legislation and policy without any discrimination is a statement of the community.

Councilmember Mu said at the General Assembly level there is language used to stop affirmative action claiming it makes it equal for everyone, which is frustrating. She said it is used to get rid of resources for disadvantages and minority groups.

Councilmember Reese asked if the language from Legislation should be interpreted literally or as a statement of the Town’s values and priorities.

Mr. Billips said it was more the latter.

Councilmember Mu said it looks ideal but at the General Assembly it is used as an excuse.

Mr. Billips gave an example of House Bill 171 that says no DEI in State/Local Government, and that bill is sitting because the Governor’s veto was overridden by the Senate but not by the House. He said this is one bill that Apex would not be interested in becoming law so they can work to have it tabled.

Councilmember Mu said that the language seems perfect but they use it to stop DEI.

Mayor Gilbert asked if there were legislative priority or opportunities to support local government with additional funding for SROs to municipalities, he noted that often counties receive funding while municipalities do not.

Mr. Billips said that is a conversation that they are likely to be interested in having.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey said he understands currently they fund the high school level and so there is local funding but not middle schools or elementary schools, so if

1 they extended the funding to middle schools and elementary schools that would have an
2 impact.

3 **Mr. Billips** said that was correct and this could be labeled as "Safety" as a
4 comprehensive word on Apex's Public Safety front with SRO's and mental health funding to
5 put psychiatrists and psychologists in offices across the state for accessibility to those in
6 middle schools and elementary schools and this is important.

7 **Chief Johansen** noted that NC State Chief's Association is lobbying for recruitment
8 and retention initiatives which is related to this because the long-term recruitment/retention
9 problem is largely resolved by building relations with the youth.

10 **Councilmember Gray** said that one of the priorities is to support establishment of
11 long-term funding strategies to adequately address water, sewer, stormwater, transportation
12 and other infrastructure needs under responsible government with responsible
13 development.

14 **Mr. Billips** asked the groups of the top 3 priorities if there were any that they wanted
15 to swap or drop completely.

16 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said one priority under vitality was grants for
17 infrastructure and capacity expansion and asked for clarification on its general intent.

18 **Mr. Billips** asked if Council had good relationships with economic development
19 groups in Town.

20 **Council** noted that they did.

21 **Councilmember Zegerman** listed their top 3 priorities in no order: Affordable
22 Housing, Water and Sewer Infrastructure, and Equitable Legislation.

23 **Councilmember Mu** added another priority for legislation support for initiatives
24 related to reducing community violence and increasing public safety.

25 **Mr. Billips** asked Council members to move to secondary priorities.

26 **Councilmember Reese** asked if there are priorities that would be more favorable for
27 approval.

28 **Mr. Billips** said infrastructure (especially related to economic development) and
29 public safety are always easy sells and have higher chances of approval, and those would be
30 the top recommendation for the top priorities.

31 **Councilmember Zegerman** asked why those would be top priority because it seems
32 like they are already being done.

33 **Mr. Billips** said these do have statewide support and keeping these as high priority
34 would target the town to see any direct benefits and the most success.

35 **Council** kept the infrastructure and public safety in the top priorities.

36 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said funding was most important.

37 **Mr. Billips** said that is where value is provided.

38 **Mr. Applewhite** asked Council to mention some of their secondary priorities to
39 include.

40 **Councilmember Mu** said opposing legislation that places limitation on local
41 government regulations concerning tree removal.

1 **Councilmember Gray** said this is a broader topic and is more environmental
2 stewardship.

3 **Mr. Billips** said they would always try to take advantage of any opportunities for
4 funding they were presented with.

5 **Mayor Gilbert** said that supporting prevention and harm reduction initiatives are
6 important although they are difficult issues addressed.

7 **Councilmember Zegerman** said clean water was one of his group's priorities.

8 **Councilmember Gray** said his group agreed on clean water as well.

9 **Mr. Billips** said the EMC is going to announce what the ceiling for PFAS within the
10 next several months.

11 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that would put a burden on the water & sewer
12 treatment plants to treat. He said that Apex tests for PFAS now.

13 **Water Resources Director Jonathan Jacobs** said that Apex tests for the PFAS in
14 drinking water but not on the wastewater side because it is not regulated by the state so Apex
15 hasn't had to.

16 **Councilmember Reese** asked if there was any potential for grants.

17 **Mr. Applewhite** said that some of the preliminary amounts are in the billions and it
18 would have to be both state and federal efforts. He said they had the priority list if everyone
19 felt comfortable with it. He said the lists help understand the top prioritizations as they go
20 through the session when having conversations to pull from the list and beyond that if there
21 are opportunities that exist that are not on this list.

22 **Mr. Billips** said that this is a nimble relationship as much as it can be and that's why
23 they like to stay in the loop and talk to Town Clerk Coleman as regularly as possible because
24 as opportunities present themselves, they never want to miss an opportunity.

25 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said the main concern is the budget and there is
26 flexibility with how Apex's budget is spent and it doesn't matter where the money comes
27 from, the local money can be reallocated.

28 **Mayor Gilbert** asked if there were any issues with those who represent Apex not
29 being in alignment with the priorities the Town is adopting

30 **Mr. Billips** said not necessarily, and it is important for local support and that is why
31 they are here to communicate Apex's needs as they are articulated to those who are writing
32 the budget.

33 **Councilmember Reese** emphasized the importance of pursuing achievable
34 legislation to fund the Town and securing multiple smaller wins can be as effective than
35 focusing only on larger, less attainable initiatives.

36 **Mr. Applewhite** said Mr. Billips was excellent with appropriations and can find
37 opportunities for "small ball" wins.

38 **Councilmember Zegerman** said he appreciated the time and investment in this work.
39 He asked about the status of securing additional state and federal dollars for certain projects
40 and whether now was the appropriate time to provide input.

41 **Town Clerk Coleman** said that would be brought back to Council. He said they would
42 look at the CIP prioritizations from yesterday's session and would take this back for a broader

discussion with the Portfolio Directors to see if they have any insight and development and then this information will be brought back to Council.

Councilmember Zegerman said that it is important to see these drop out of the CIP because it's \$14 million, which is sort of false because of the infrastructure supports economic fatality and regional transits optimizations. He said there are projects coming that Apex has some financial help with.

Town Manager Vosburg asked Angela Reincke to talk about recreation funding in the past.

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Assistant Director Angela Reincke said in the past when the Town applied for recreation grants it was noticed that other agencies brought elected officials and spokespersons to advocate for the projects. She suggested if Mr. Billips and Mr. Applewhite have a relationship with the members of the trust fund that could help to increase Apex's visibility during future funding opportunities.

Mr. Applewhite said the grant applications can be challenging for communities like Apex when funding programs prioritize areas that have received less funding in the past. He noted that the General Assembly has created additional grant opportunities related to trails, outdoor recreation, and accessibility in Parks programs and offered to help identify potential programs and explore relationships with members to improve future grant opportunities.

Town Clerk Coleman noted that one of the things they are developing is more visibility with the Town's lobbyists across all departments in the Town, including a legislative work group for regular communication between department directors as well as the Town's lobbyists for direct input on how certain pieces of legislations are impacting not only the organization but what the give and takes can be during the negotiations.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey said it is important to try to expand the group and Council know legislation as an asset because legislative agenda is talked about and there should be representation for the home builders' textual bills filed every year with a voice from impacted town departments like Inspections and Permits and Planning.

[SLIDE NO. 17]

Appropriations Requests

Projects

- Old Raleigh Road Waterline Design
- Design and Construction of new spillway at Swift Creek.
- Wimberly Road Water Supply Vault
- Additional viable projects related to economic development



[SLIDE NO. 18]

Legislative Agenda – Implementation

- **Prioritization** – Facilitated
- **Council Adoption**
- **Legislative Breakfast**
- **Strengthen Relationships** - Local, State, and Federal
- **Government Relations Council Committee**
 - Join legislative Work Group – Apex, Cary, Holly Springs, and Morrisville (Western Wake)
- **Progress Monitoring**



[SLIDE NO. 19]



[BREAK - 10-MINUTES]

Mayor Gilbert announced a 5-minute recess at **9:49 a.m.**

Mayor Gilber reconvened the meeting at **10:00 a.m.**

[COMMUNITY SURVEY DISCUSSION]

Communications Department Director, Stacie Galloway introduced Noah Huber, Survey Analyst with Zencity and gave some background on the survey to enlighten the new Council members.

Director Galloway and Mr. Huber gave the following presentation:

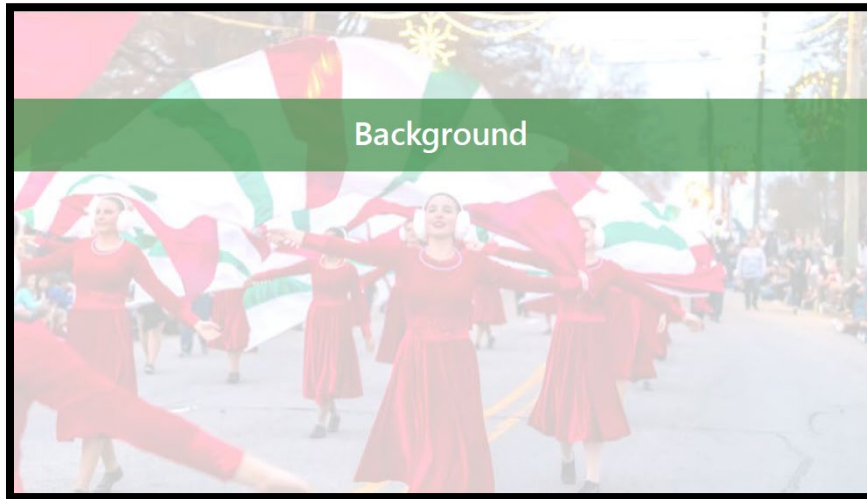
[SLIDE NO. 1]



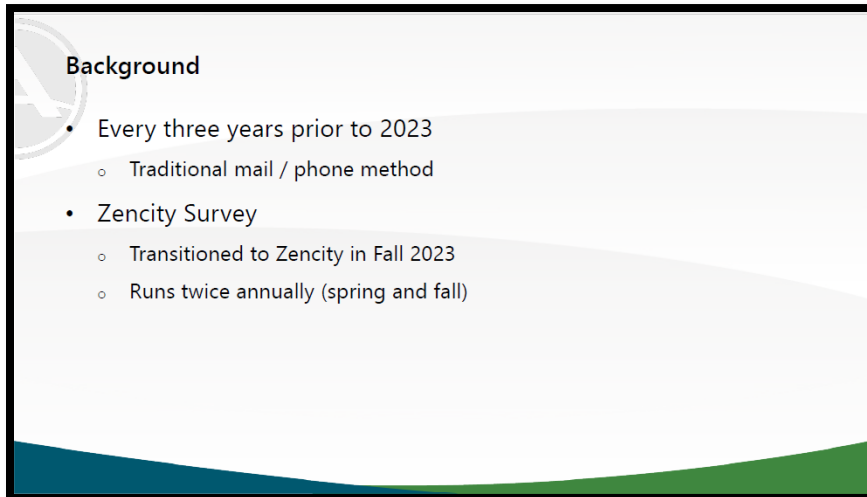
[SLIDE NO. 2]



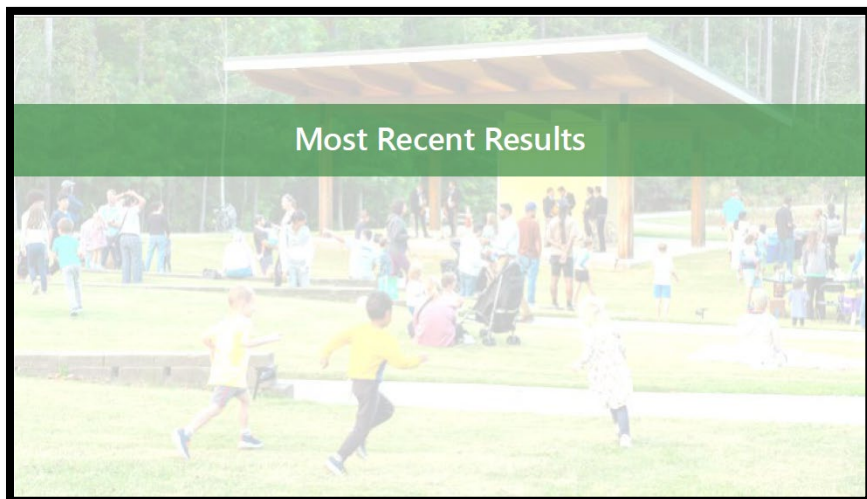
1 **[SLIDE NO. 3]**



2
3 **[SLIDE NO. 4]**



4
5 **[SLIDE NO. 5]**



6

1 [SLIDE NO. 6]



Apex, NC

Community Survey

September - November 2025

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01

2
3 [SLIDE NO. 7]



Survey Methodology

The current cycle of the web-based Community Survey collected survey data between September - November 2025. Respondents were digitally recruited (e.g., over social media, mobile apps, websites, and survey panels). These ads are targeted to residents, and responses are only included in the data when a local valid zipcode is provided.

Respondents who self-reported being under 18, who declined to provide any demographic information, or those who provided an invalid zipcode are excluded from the results.

405 valid respondents participated in the web-based Community Survey during this cycle.

Representation

Zensity ensures broad demographic representation in several ways:

Before data collection, Zensity employs national statistical data to establish response targets. These targets are defined based on race/ethnicity, age, and gender.

During data collection, we track the demographic composition of the survey responses in real time, comparing them to the predetermined targets. We fine-tune our distribution and advertising strategies as needed to target all demographic groups.

After data collection, Zensity employs an industry-standard statistical technique called rake weighting. This assigns a unique weight to each respondent based on their demographic characteristics. This method ensures that the distribution of these characteristics in the final weighted sample aligns with the community's overall demographics.

02

4
5 [SLIDE NO. 8]

Sample Composition

405 valid respondents

Key

- Unweighted demographics - What we collected, without adjustments
- Weighted demographics - Our sample, adjusted to be representative of the population
- Population demographics - The demographics of the 18+ population

* The "Other" category includes missing data, people who selected "prefer not to say", and other groups not defined in the census.

September - November 2025

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Age

Age Group	Unweighted (%)	Weighted (%)	Population (%)
18-34	19%	26%	26%
35-54	37%	44%	40%
55+	41%	28%	28%
Other*	2%	2%	2%

Gender

Gender	Unweighted (%)	Weighted (%)	Population (%)
Female	53%	51%	51%
Male	46%	48%	48%
Other*	1%	1%	1%

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Unweighted (%)	Weighted (%)	Population (%)
White	77%	89%	70%
Asian	7%	13%	14%
Black or African American	5%	6%	6%
Hispanic / Latino	10%	7%	7%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	2%	2%

03

6

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Councilmember Reese said that the margin or error of +/- 5% out of 405 survey ballots seems like a wide margin and doesn't seem credible.

Mr. Huber said that this is the industry standard when looking at community or municipality surveys and noted this is +/- 5% with a 95% confidence level and the 5% is the worst-case scenario and the maximum margin of error.

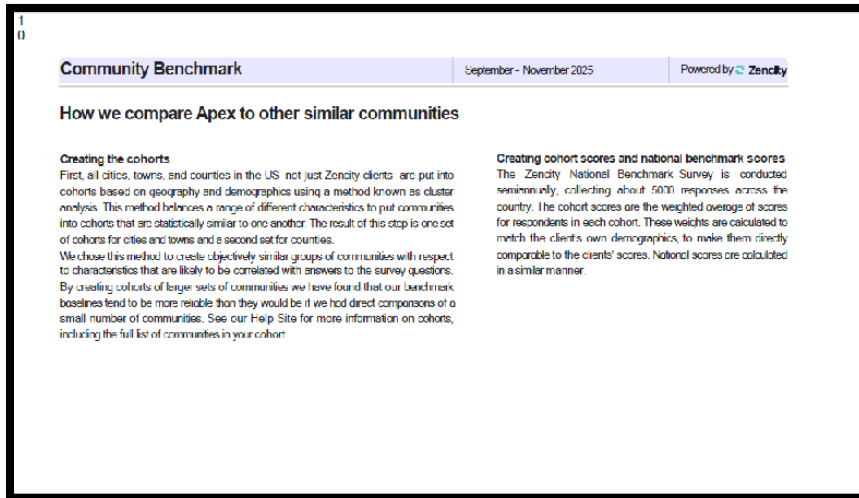
Councilmember Reese asked what could be improved to get it closer to the 4% margin of error.

Mr. Huber said that it would require a substantially large sample to get more precise than 5% and reiterated that 5% is the worst-case scenario.

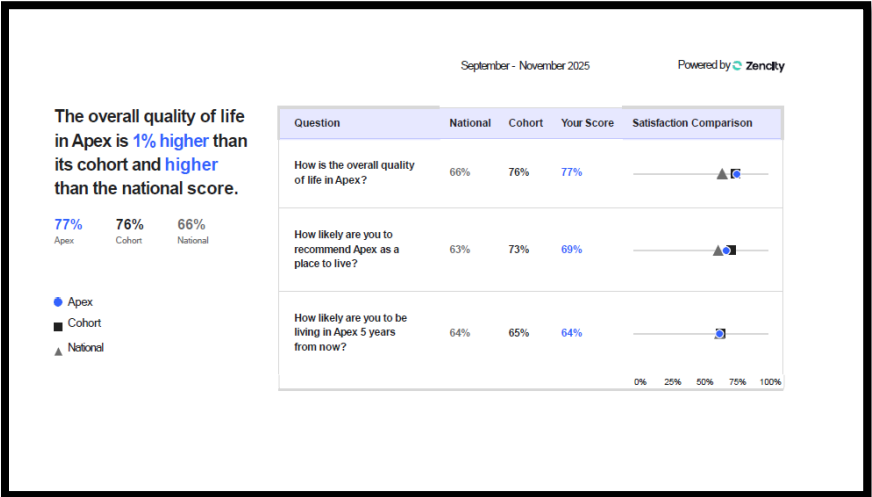
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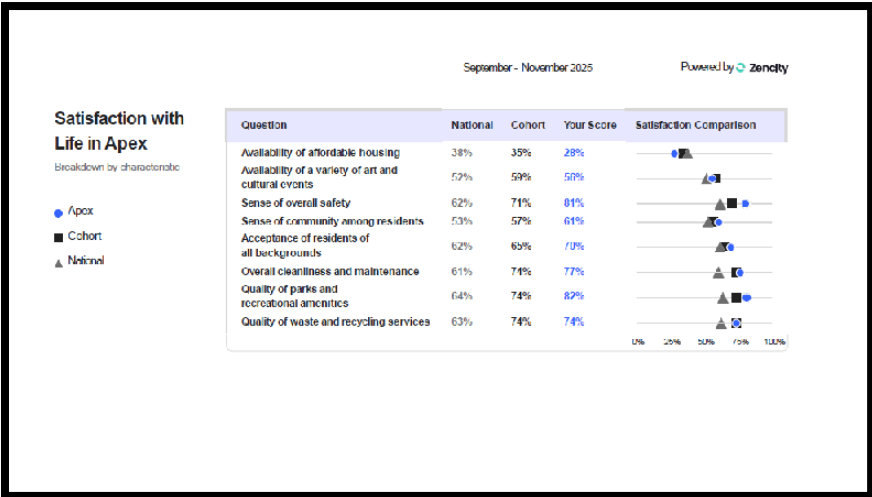
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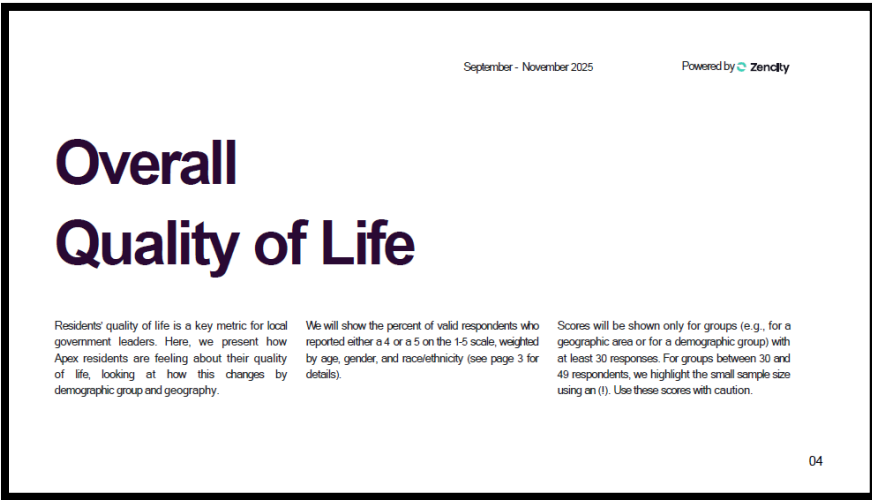
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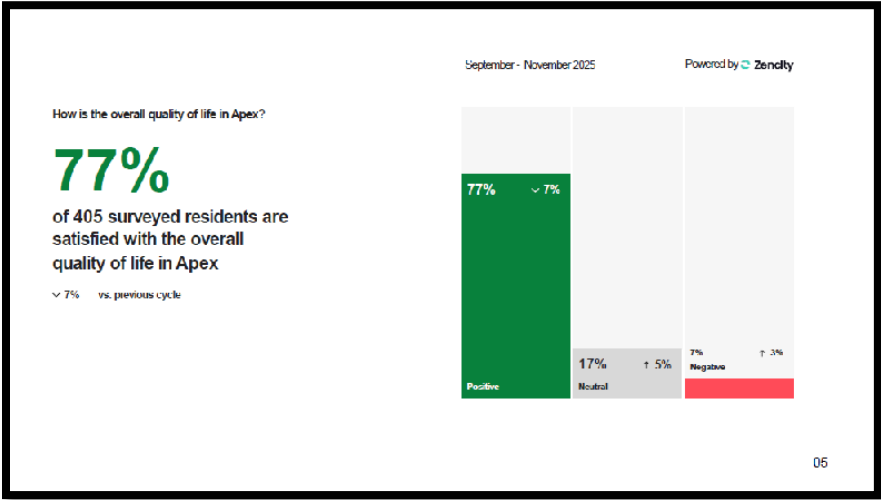
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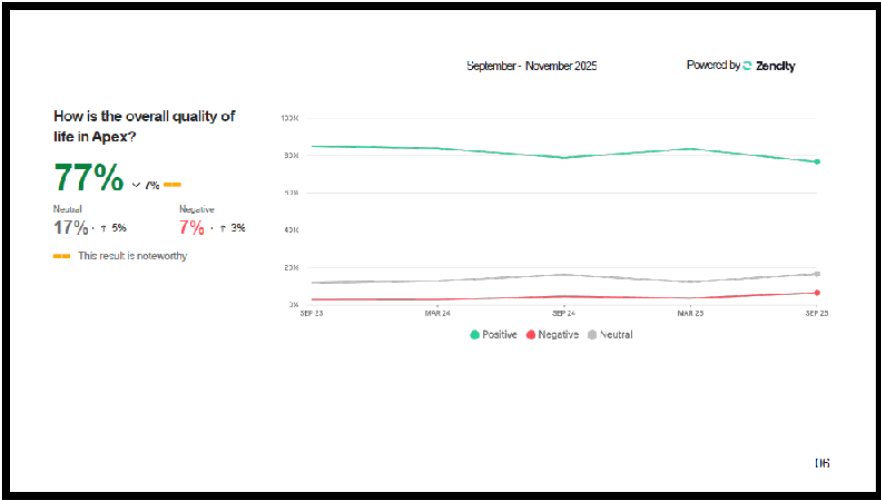
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3 [SLIDE NO. 18]



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5
6 **Councilmember Zegerman** asked if there was qualitative data to give more information on the survey results and what drives the results of some of the questions.

7 **Director Galloway** said there are two ways, one is in the next cycle following up on the lower scoring questions and follow up on those, and at the end of the survey there are open-ended questions as to what the Town does well and what it can do better.

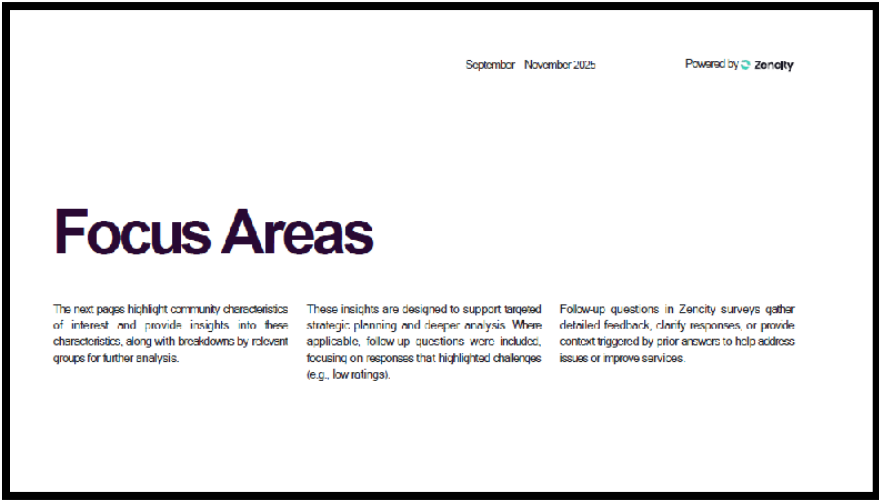
10 **Councilmember Zegerman** asked if there was analysis on that text.

11 **Director Galloway** said not yet but it's on the priority list.

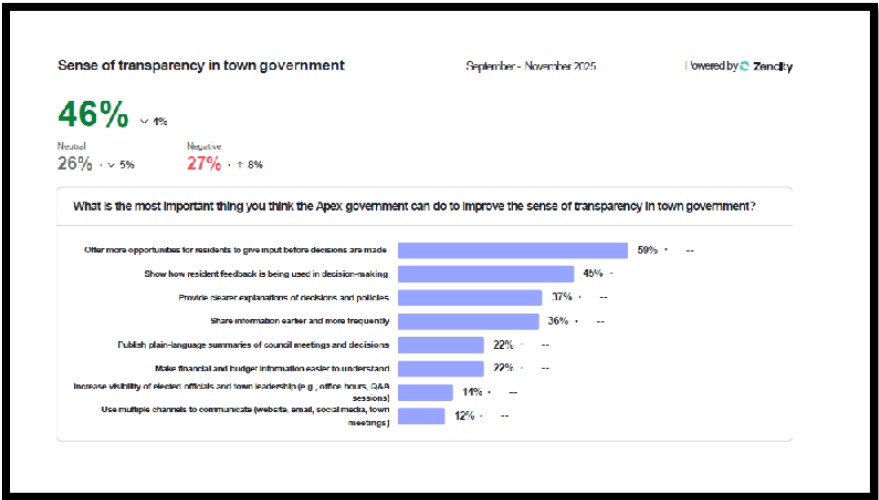
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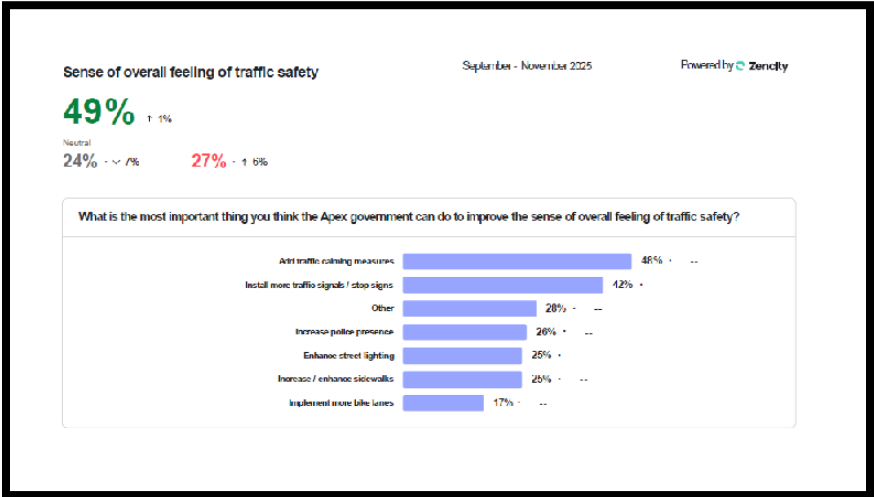
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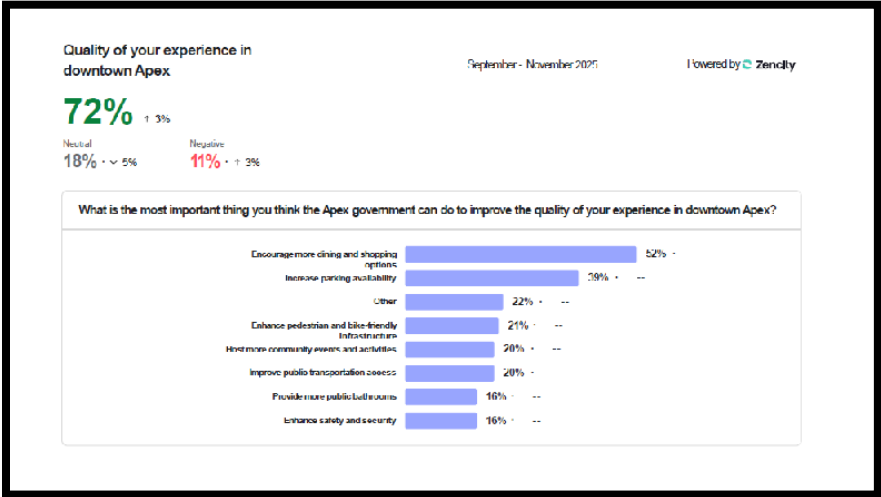
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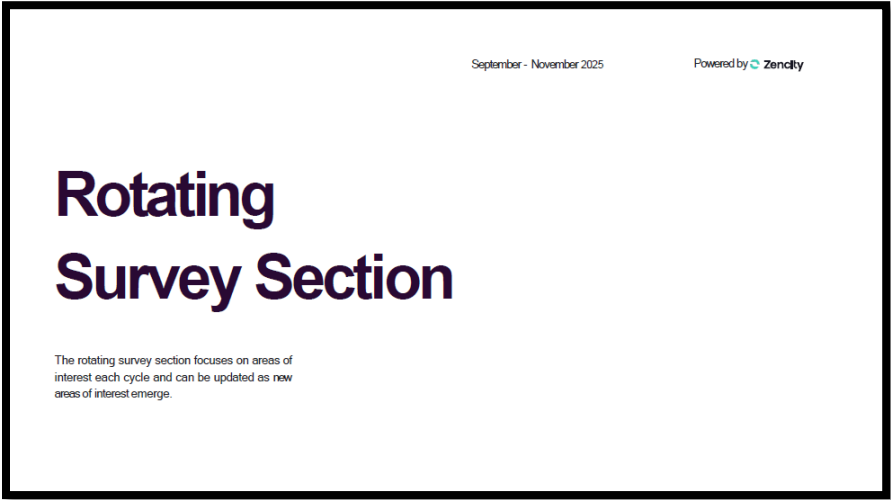
Councilmember Zegerman asked if the percentages were reflecting the comments received.

Director Galloway said she could get the number of responses back to Council.

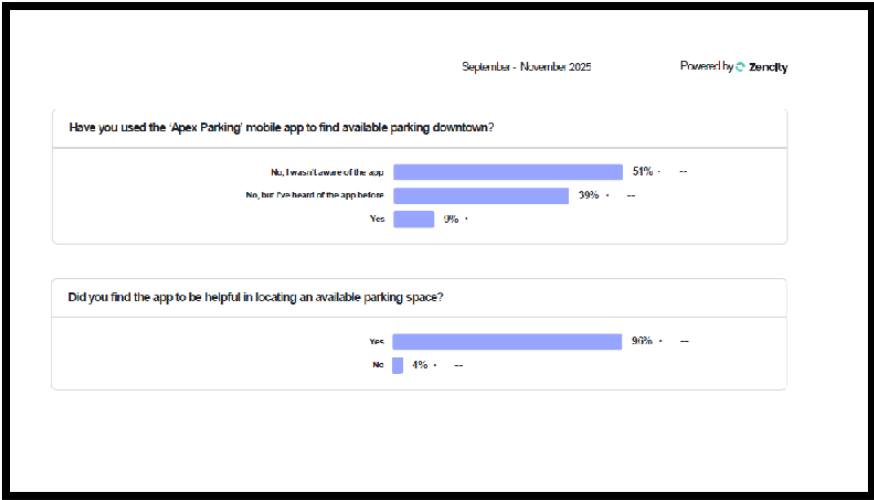
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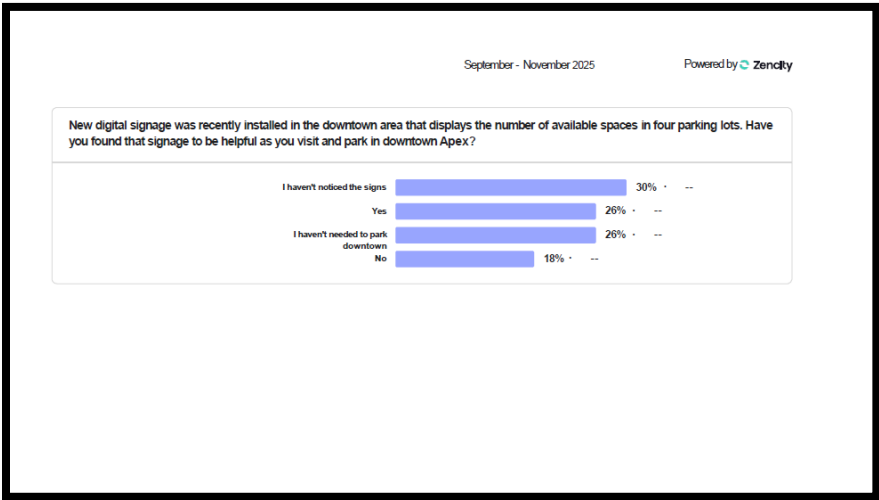
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[SLIDE NO. 27]



Councilmember Zegerman requested to get more qualitative data analysis to see any common responses.

Councilmember Mu asked if the survey was online or in the neighborhood communities.

Director Galloway said the survey was done digitally.

Mr. Huber said the survey came from multiple sources, mainly on the internet with advertisements and on social media. He said the metadata is used to make sure they are residents of Apex, and additionally ask for zip code in the response.

Director Galloway said there is opportunity to run the survey as a separate data set for the general community but that information wouldn't be factored into the presentation and the report that is provided but would give additional data points.

Councilmember Zegerman asked what could be done to have more participation in the survey. He recommended going back to marketing.

Director Galloway said there are ways to bring more awareness for this survey like texts. She said there were several other surveys for the Town going around during this cycle as well.

Town Manager Vosburg said there are challenges in the current way residents are given surveys to take, as individuals may be more inclined to take the survey if they have issues they want to bring versus if they are satisfied.

Councilmember Zegerman said adding a link to the utility billing or billing portal may encourage residents to take the survey. He cautioned Council about overreacting to the results with the limited sample size that required good data points.

Town Manger Vosburg said the trends are noticeable and some of these trends were anticipated.

Councilmember Mu said that not everyone uses social media and suggested having a booth at big events and using volunteers or staff to pass around flyers.

1 **Councilmember Zegerman** suggested using iPads to conduct the survey at the
2 events.

3 **Councilmember Mu** suggested the Senior Center to get these surveys.

4 **Councilmember Reese** asked what the next steps and the budgeting was for 2026-
5 2027 and when would Apex renew with Zencity.

6 **Director Galloway** said she would have to check.

7 **Councilmember Reese** said there was concern with the survey, as he does not have
8 any confidence in Zencity's methodology with the +- 5% margin of error.

9 **Councilmember Zegerman** said the survey's sample size was likely enough for
10 statistical significance, but he was worried more about the .5% response rate.

11 **Director Galloway** asked Councilmember Reese if the concern was with the number
12 of respondents or the margin of error.

13 **Councilmember Reese** said it was really both. He said the methodology of how they
14 capture the respondents in the first place made it a low-quality poll.

15 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that obtaining responses has become harder with
16 new methods of polling.

17 **Councilmember Reese** said there are pollsters who have adapted to that.

18 **Councilmember Zegerman** said that the 5% margin of error with a 95% confidence
19 rate, which is just a statistic, but the bigger issue is the self-selection of participation.

20 **Councilmember Gray** said that reason that the survey is used isn't for its scientific
21 depth or its overall robustness, because the self-selection would lead to it being taken by
22 active survey takers. He said the purpose of the survey is to give Council more of the data
23 points as conversations begin so the big issues are identified. He said these numbers are not
24 being used for legislation but this is being used for Council and staff conversations for more
25 understanding of the "blind spots".

26 **Councilmember Reese** asked what the cost of the survey was.

27 **Director Galloway** said about \$15,000

28 **Councilmember Reese** said a professional pollster can do that for \$15,000. He said
29 that he wants to be able to point to a survey and have confidence that it is up to a high
30 standard.

31 **Councilmember Gray** said when Apex does those sorts of polls there is a different
32 polling process based on needs and the subject matter expert. He said the point is that
33 Zencity is for conversations and gives a base line to look for the gaps.

34 **Councilmember Reese** asked about exploring new vendors.

35 **Town Manager Vosburg** said they would look at the contract.

36 **Director Galloway** noted that having the same platform does help to check if this
37 survey is matching up with other surveys in the Town and in neighboring communities that
38 use the same vendor.

39
40 **Town Manager Vosburg** recommended moving up the Hot Topic Lightning Round
41 session on the agenda prior to the Initiatives Development - Brainstorming session because

1 there may be items that come out of the Hot Topic Lightning Round that would feed into the
2 initiatives.

3 **Mayor Gilbert** asked when the unfinished business be brought back.

4 **Town Manger Vosburg** said that would be under the Hot Topic Lightning Round and
5 include Yard Waste, Commerce Street and the expansion of the Streetscape project.
6

7 **[HOT TOPICS LIGHTNING ROUND - ELECTED]**
8

9 **Town Manger Vosburg** asked staff to come and talk about Commerce Street.
10

11 **Director of Transportation and Infrastructure Development Department, Chris**
12 **Johnson,** revisited the previous day's discussion regarding the Commerce Street project and
13 provided updated cost estimates. He explained that the project is estimated at approximately
14 \$1.5 million, including roughly \$500,000 for right-of-way acquisition, with the remaining costs
15 related to construction. Based on discussions with staff and Council, he noted that Water
16 Resources is comfortable leaving the existing water line in place because it is in good
17 condition, eliminating the need for replacement. He also stated that Council had generally
18 expressed support for removing the proposed parking improvements serving private lots,
19 reducing the scope of work to primarily roadway resurfacing and maintenance along the
20 alley. He added that Council may also wish to consider whether to install two parking spaces
21 or instead extend the hardscape. He further noted that staff had identified an undersized
22 stormwater pipe along Saunders Street that collects runoff from Salem Street, which may
23 need to be included in the project to improve drainage and prevent water from backing up
24 into the stormwater system. He concluded by requesting Council's direction on how to
25 proceed with the project.

26 **Town Manger Vosburg** asked if Council agreed on the removal of the parking spaces
27 for this project.

28 **Council** was in consensus to the removal of parking spaces to proceed with the
29 Commerce Street Project.
30

31 **[SLIDE 1]**



[SLIDE 2]

Options for Commerce Street Project

- **Option 1** - Proceed with acquisition and finalize construction contract (as designed)
 - Significant impact on project budget
 - May result in more condemnations
 - Needs budget adjustments - Salem Streetscape bid award reduced downtown project fund balance
 - *Future building expansion might affect new hardscape*
- **Option 2 (Staff recommendation)** - Reduce project scope and acquisition needs
 - Replace waterline and resurface existing alley/parallel parking only (retain existing services to buildings)
 - Add parking spots at Town parcel only
 - Remove parking acquisition on private lots and remove rear building hardscape
 - Remove utility easement acquisition and conduit for future private electric/communication service relocation
 - *Decreases project budget while still addressing critical public infrastructure needs*
- **Option 3** - Cancel or delay the project
 - Remove or defer all items, including right of way and TCE acquisition
 - Defer water line replacement and street resurfacing to a later date (*street/utility conditions will continue to worsen over time*)

Town Manger Vosburg asked Council if there were any preference regarding the two parking spaces versus extending the hardscape.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey stated that his overall preference was to proceed with **Option 3**, with several modifications. He suggested that roadway resurfacing could either be incorporated as a change order to the Town's FY2026 resurfacing contract or deferred to the FY2027 resurfacing program. He also supported deferring replacement of the water line, consistent with the previous discussion. Additionally, he suggested that if improvements are needed in the area as part of another future project, those costs could be shifted to that project rather than included in the current proposal. He indicated that this approach would allow the current project to be removed while still preserving the opportunity to extend the hardscape and complete related improvements through future projects as appropriate.

Councilmember Zegerman recommended Option 3. He expressed support for extending the hardscape near the small park area rather than constructing the two parking spaces, noting he did not believe the additional parking was necessary given the nearby

1 parking available within the downtown district. He also stated that he did not believe
2 resurfacing the alleyway should be a priority at this time.

3 **Town Manger Vosburg** asked for clarification from Councilmember Gray regarding
4 the water line. He said that staff had determined the water line issue there wasn't an imminent
5 need to replace it but eventually may need to be.

6 **Councilmember Gray** asked if it would be 5, 10, or 15 years before it would need to
7 be replaced.

8 **Director Johnson** said that cast iron water lines don't have to be replaced regularly.

9 **Director Johnson** said Palmer Street resurfaced in 2003 and that the street may be
10 worse than the water line. He suggested patching the road at some point if it doesn't get
11 resurfaced.

12 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that he has had prior conversations with property
13 owners regarding the proposed project and noted that the response from property owners
14 differed from what he had anticipated. He said that in other parts of the Town, property
15 owners have requested that the Town assume ownership and maintenance responsibilities for
16 private roads due to the associated maintenance costs. In this case the property owners
17 expressed concerns about the Town taking over the roadway. He also referenced discussions
18 with the Town Attorney regarding potential legal considerations, including whether the Town
19 may have a potential prescriptive easement rights associated with the existing water line or
20 roadway, noting that additional legal review may be necessary to determine the Town's
21 interests.

22 **Councilmember Gray** said it sounded like the biggest concern from Council is the
23 maintenance.

24 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said the biggest concern is paying the owner.

25 **Director Johnson** said that this street doesn't have a dedicated right-of-way but has
26 been maintained by the town over time.

27 **Councilmember Gray** asked if the prescriptive rights were just for the water line.

28 **Town Attorney Hohe** said the prescriptive rights included both water and the
29 pavement.

30 **Councilmember Mu** asked if this included the streetscape.

31 **Town Attorney Hohe** said not on Commerce Street that there wasn't anything beyond
32 the asphalt pavement and the existing water line.

33 **Mayor Gilbert** asked Councilmember Reese if he was supportive of this approach
34 given the comments made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey.

35 **Councilmember Reese** encouraged a collaborative approach with property owners
36 regarding the Commerce Street Project, noting that the area's location within the historic
37 district requires consideration beyond a typical private roadway. He emphasized the
38 importance of balancing property owner interest within the Town's goals for downtown
39 economic development, maintaining community character, and supporting small businesses.
40 He expressed support for moving forward with Option 3 while continuing communication
41 and collaboration to achieve improvements that benefit both the public and property owners.

1 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** agreed and wanted to address his belief on the public
2 private road.

3 **Councilmember Mu** expressed support for the continuing the Town's downtown
4 improvement efforts and noted that Commerce Street could become one of the few
5 remaining areas without similar enhancements. She said that the property owners may
6 become more supportive of the project as downtown improvements continue and suggested
7 that a collaborative approach would provide benefits to both property owners and taxpayers
8 while helping reduce project costs. She supported Option 2.

9 **Councilmember Gray** liked the idea of Option 2 but didn't like the idea of giving up
10 the town's right for ownership.

11 **Town Attorney Hohe** said that the acquisition costs being discussed were related to
12 improvements beyond the Town's existing maintenance responsibilities. She explained that
13 the costs were driven by the proposed enhancements such as the hardscape, catenary lakes,
14 pavers, underground utilities, and other aesthetic improvements intended to enhance the
15 appearance of the area.

16 **Councilmember Gray** stated that he believed property owners who currently oppose
17 the acquisition may become more supportive as downtown improvements continue.
18 However, he expressed concern about the relinquishing or compromising the Town's position
19 regarding rights-of-way and property acquisitions, noting that, from a philosophical
20 standpoint, he preferred Option 2.

21 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that, after reducing the scope of the project, the
22 distinction between Options 2 and 3 largely centered on whether the remaining
23 improvements should proceed as a standalone project or be completed through change
24 orders associated with other Town projects. He reiterated his preference is Option 3, with the
25 understanding that staff could evaluate which improvements, such as hardscape
26 enhancements, could be completed through future change orders rather than as part of a
27 separate project.

28 **Councilmember Reese** asked whether, if Council selected Option 3, the remaining
29 improvements would be addressed through a formal process or informal process. He
30 requested clarification on whether those items would be handled later through change
31 orders or would require additional Council direction.

32 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that staff would typically proceed with the
33 remaining improvements if appropriate, and, if a change order became necessary, would
34 bring it back to Council for consideration. He noted Council would have the opportunity to
35 approve or deny any future change order at that time. He asked about the stormwater drain
36 on Saunders Street.

37 **Director Johnson** said the remaining improvements would occur within the existing
38 public right-of-way. He explained that staff would need to further evaluate the area to identify
39 any potential utility conflicts and determine whether the work could be completed through
40 simple removal and replacement or would require additional improvements, such as upsizing
41 storm water pipe. He noted that the existing stormwater line extends toward the Police

1 Department, meaning any necessary pip replacement could require evacuation along that
2 route.

3 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** asked whether replacing the stormwater pipe would
4 require excavation extending all the way to the area in front of the Police Department.

5 **Director Johnson** suggested that staff consider including the stormwater pipe
6 upsizing as a potential change order. He noted that staff would evaluate whether the work
7 could be completed without delaying the Salem Street improvements due to scheduling and
8 construction impacts. He explained that it may be possible to complete the stormwater work
9 after the streetscape project is finished.

10 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** asked about the sidewalk improvements on Saunders.

11 **Director Johnson** provided an update on sidewalk improvements associated with the
12 Saunders-Hinton sidewalk project. He explained that the project will require roadway impacts,
13 including excavation and additional work at the intersection. He noted that staff plans to defer
14 full resurfacing in that area due to anticipated construction impacts, with temporary patching
15 to address existing pavement issues until the sidewalk project is completed, after which the
16 area can be resurfaced.

17 **Director Jacobs** explained that the Saunders Street stormwater issue was identified
18 during the Salem Street project construction review process, which determined there was a
19 pre-existing downstream deficiency due to an undersized pipe based on current and
20 historical service conditions. He noted that, because the Salem Street project was not adding
21 additional impervious surface, staff chose not to delay that project and instead planned to
22 incorporate the stormwater improvements as part of the broader Saunders Street project. He
23 explained that, with the potential reduction in scope of the current project, the stormwater
24 improvement becomes a separate consideration. While the pipe does need to be upsized, he
25 noted that it is not an immediate critical need and staff can continue coordinating with
26 Transportation and Infrastructure Development to determine the appropriate approach.

27 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** suggested that the stormwater improvements could
28 potentially be considered as part of future sidewalk improvements or other planned work
29 along Commerce Street.

30 **Director Johnson** said that the Town could consider including Commerce Street resurfacing
31 through a change order with the existing resurfacing contract. He explained that this
32 approach could be more cost-effective due to the efficiencies of the Town's current
33 resurfacing contract.

34 **Councilmember Zegerman** said that the resurfacing work could potentially be
35 deferred and completed in a future year, such as one or two years from now, if needed.

36 **Director Johnson** said the Town typically prioritizes resurfacing projects based on
37 pavement condition scores, and noted that this area currently has a lower priority score.

38 **Councilmember Reese** asked for clarification on whether the discussion also
39 included the option of using the two parking spaces versus preserving the area as additional
40 public space.

41 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** made a motion to adopt Option 3.

1
2 **Councilmember Reese** stated that downtown has an extremely limited amount of
3 available real estate, that downtown is consistently one of the top reasons people identify for
4 choosing to live in the community. He expressed the opinion that the Town should minimize
5 public space opportunities within the two available areas. He noted that Saunders Street has
6 been well received and suggested that the Town should prioritize preserving and enhancing
7 public space in those locations.

8 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** shared an additional observation regarding the
9 concern of having mix of public and private spaces within the area. He stated that having a
10 combination of public spaces and private parking spaces may not function effectively unless
11 the spaces are organized under the same category or purpose.

12 **Councilmember Reese** added that another motivation behind his position was the
13 importance of maintaining affordability and accessibility within the Town. He shared an
14 example from the campaign season where he reflected on a comment regarding his son
15 enjoying downtown amenities, including purchasing ice cream and using community spaces.
16 Council Member Reese stated that the feedback caused him to consider the privilege
17 associated with having discretionary money to spend downtown and reinforced his belief that
18 public spaces provide opportunities for residents to enjoy downtown without the expectation
19 of spending money. He emphasized that maximizing public space and preserving accessible
20 community areas is important and that he would advocate for every available square foot that
21 supports those opportunities.

22
23 A **motion** was made by **Mayor Pro-Tempore Reese** and seconded by
24 **Councilmember Zegerman** to adopt Option 3; by converting the two existing spaces into
25 public space as an extension and incorporation into the surrounding public space area.

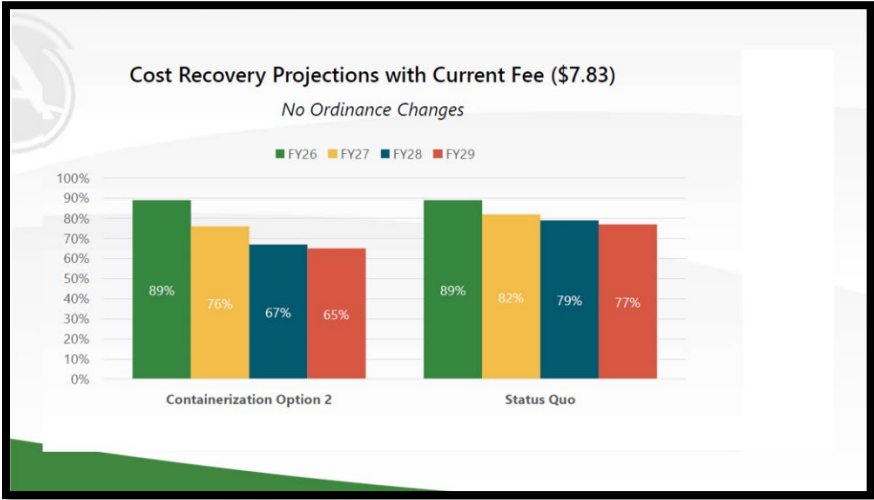
26 **VOTE: UNANIMOUS (5-0)**

27 **Town Manger Vosburg** invited up John Mullis to come forward to provide an update
28 and discuss the Town's Yard Waste Program.

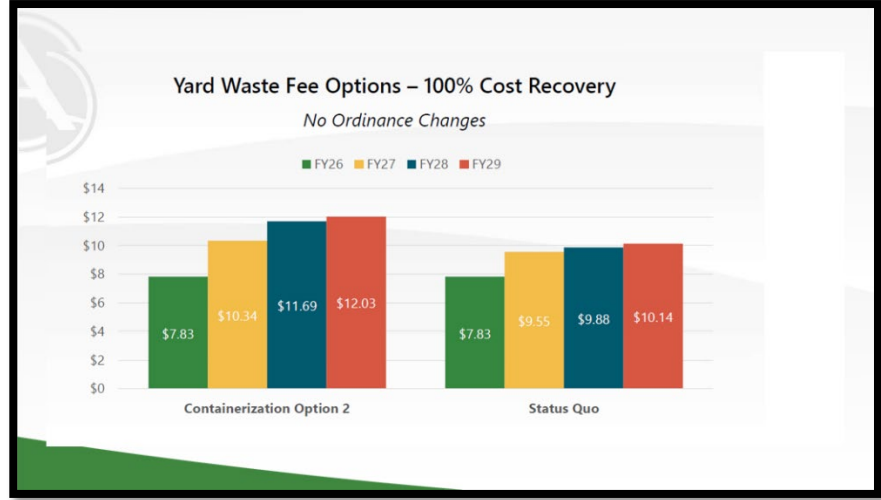
29 **Director of Public Works, John Mullis**, introduced the Yard Waste Program and
30 stated that staff would begin with the status quo model, as requested from Council Members.
31 He introduced Mariah Maheswaran to begin the discussion with the budget information.

32 **Budget Performance Analyst, Mariah Maheswaran** stated that she would address
33 questions raised during the previous discussion regarding the potential transition to
34 privatization versus maintaining the current status pro model for the Town's Yard Waste
35 Program.

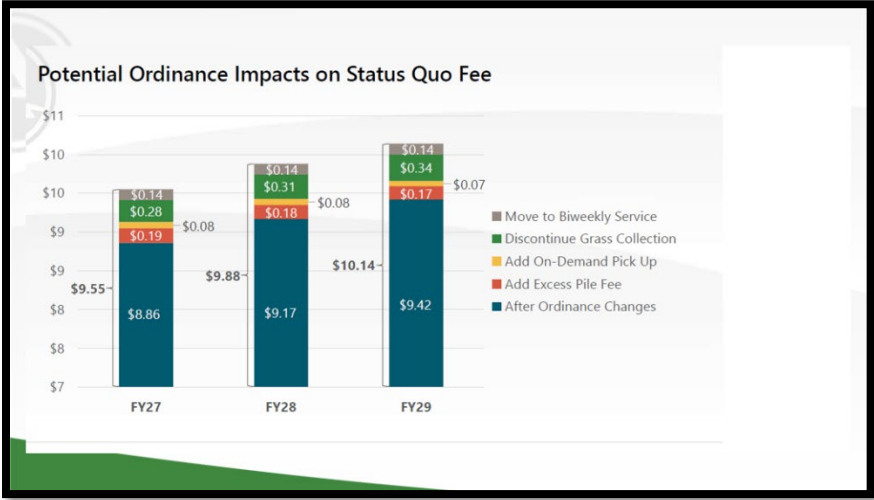
1 [SLIDE 1]



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3 [SLIDE 2]



4
5 [SLIDE 3]



6

1 **Councilmember Zegerman** asked about the long-term projections beyond the three-
2 year timeframe presented. He acknowledged that precise numbers were not available but
3 stated that, based solely on the current information, maintaining the status quo appeared to
4 be the more favorable option for residents because it would save approximately \$25 annually
5 while maintaining the existing level of service. However, he noted that the larger
6 consideration was the long-term sustainability of the current service model and asked how
7 staff anticipated costs would change over an extended period of time.

8 **Director Mullis** responded to Council Member Zegerman's question and stated that
9 the long-term sustainability of the program was the primary reason staff presented multiple
10 options for Council's consideration. He explained that the proposed containerization model
11 provides opportunities to collect additional data and evaluate efficiencies once implemented.

12 **Director Mullis** noted that staff has continued reviewing the operational assumptions
13 and, based on comparisons with peer communities such as Holly Springs and discussions
14 with the Fleet Manager, believes the number of automated side-loader (ASL) trucks needed
15 may be reduced from five to four. He explained that the reduction would impact the capital
16 costs associated with vehicle replacement over the eight-year cycle and contributes to the
17 difference in projected rates between options.

18 **Director Mullis** discussed the importance of understanding actual resident
19 participation, including cart set-out rates and the amount of material placed at the curb. He
20 stated that current projections assume an approximately 80% set-out rate; however, if
21 participation is lower and material volumes are less than anticipated, the Town may be able to
22 reduce operational needs, including collection demands and equipment usage

23 **Director Mullis** emphasized that implementing the program would allow staff to
24 better evaluate and adjust operations over time. He highlighted that the technology being
25 deployed, including automated cart tracking and AI camera capabilities, will provide
26 additional information regarding set-outs, pile sizes, and collection efficiency. He noted that
27 tonnage reduction remains one of the larger unknowns but stated that staff believes the
28 proposed model provides opportunities to fine-tune the program and maximize efficiency.

29 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that the discussion regarding containerization n
30 was not solely focused on potential cost savings. He stated that, while financial considerations
31 are important, the conversation also involves the long-term sustainability of the program,
32 including improving neighborhood aesthetics, and overall community appearance. He noted
33 that large brush piles can impact the look and feel of neighborhoods and added that
34 reducing the number of collection trucks in residential areas in another consideration. He
35 stated that the containerization model appears to address multiple concerns beyond financial
36 impacts.

37 **Councilmember Zegerman** said there appeared to be a two-step approach and
38 suggested that eliminating the grass area could be completed as a separate alteration.

39 **Ms. Maheswaran** said that the budget analysis focused on the next three years
40 because of the many variables that could affect long-term projections. She said the program
41 would continue to incur capital costs over time, including the replacement of vehicles and
42 equipment associated with containerization. She noted that the anticipated long-term

1 efficiencies would come primarily from reducing the need to add personnel as the town
2 grows and additional collection points are added.

3 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that his prior understanding was that the
4 transition would result in operational savings, including potential reductions in staffing needs.
5 He noted that while there may be long-term capital costs associated with the change, the
6 Town would still need to continue replacing trucks and addressing those costs over time.

7 **Mr. Mullis** explained that the Town would continue to offer leaf collection service
8 under the proposed approach. He noted that while some communities, such as Raleigh and
9 Greensboro, have transitioned to containerized collection due to the scale and volume of
10 their operations, he did not believe the community would support eliminating the current leaf
11 collection service. He stated that if all leaf material were placed into containers, the Town
12 could potentially eliminate the need for five trucks and reduce associated capital costs.
13 However, he explained that with a proactive replacement plan, the existing leaf collection
14 trucks are expected to have a longer useful life because they are only operated
15 approximately three to four months each year. He also emphasized that the proposed
16 approach would allow the Town to continue providing leaf collection while improving
17 efficiency. He stated that the goal is to provide a high level of service through an on-demand
18 collection model while maintaining cost efficiency for the community. **Councilmember**

19 **Zegerman** asked for clarification regarding the projected costs associated with the transition.
20 He noted that there would be an initial "bubble cost" related to the purchase of new trucks
21 and asked how much of the projected cost represents that initial investment versus the
22 ongoing steady-state cost once the fleet transitions to a normal replacement schedule

23 **Mr. Mullis** said that the 10-year capital plan addresses the anticipated replacement
24 costs associated with maintaining the fleet. He noted that while the specific trend may not be
25 shown in the current materials, the long-term capital replacement needs have mapped out
26 and may require an additional slide for clarification. He explained that the 10-year plan
27 provided in the handout outlines the capital costs needed to maintain operations. He stated
28 that the remaining uncertainty is the useful life of the existing leaf collection trucks and when
29 replacements will be required. He noted that if the trucks are already nearing the end of their
30 useful life when the transition begins, that could create a challenge. He added that the Town
31 is working to maintain the current replacement schedule while implementing the
32 containerization plan. He acknowledged that the initial costs are more front-loaded but stated
33 that the costs are expected to decrease significantly over time.

34 **Councilmember Zegerman** said that there are existing challenges with yard waste
35 operations that are separate from containerization. He noted that the Town cannot continue
36 the current practice mixing grass with other materials and transporting it to the facility, and he
37 acknowledged the potential impacts to residents if grass collection were changed. He stated
38 that, with regard to containerization, the goal is not primarily cost savings but rather mitigating
39 long-term risks associated with landfill availability becoming more limited for the Town.

40 **Mr. Mullis** said that the grass is an emerging concern and emphasized the importance
41 of operational efficiency. He explained that eliminating grass collection would be a
42 sustainability decision that would allow the Town to better manage yard waste operations. He

1 noted that containeration would capture approximately 31,000 piles of smaller yard debris, in
2 addition to grass clippings for most residents. He explained that removing grass from the n
3 stream would reduce the likelihood of exceeding permit requirements at the disposal facility
4 for woody materials, which could result in higher disposal costs if material had to be
5 transported elsewhere. He stated that discussions with service providers indicated that a
6 mixture of wood and weeds, without grass, would be less likely to create permit issues and
7 could continue to be disposed of locally. He said the community and political considerations
8 associated with eliminating grass collection but stated that doing so, along with biweekly
9 containerized collection, would improve long-term sustainability and operational efficiency..

10 **Councilmember Gray** asked whether the plan included the need for additional
11 equipment.

12 **Mr. Mullis** said their equipment needs were included, with the exception of any future
13 decisions related to the transfer yard on Perry Road. He noted that the packet included the
14 10-year Capital Plan.

15 **Councilmember Gray** said that, even with the projected growth, the plan appears to
16 provide a net cost savings to the Town.

17 **Mr. Mullis** said that the project implementation costs include 80% of anticipated
18 setup costs and noted that discussions had occurred regarding reducing the \$450,000 f
19 capital allocation. He emphasized rates haven't been raised since 2019 and that Apex
20 currently has a negotiated a 2.5% cap for GFL for two years on trash and recycling, providing
21 an opportunity to evaluate rates during implementation.

22 **Ms. Maheswaran** clarified that, over the long-term, both options would help
23 stabilizerates as the program is fully implemented. She explained that capital costs would be
24 allocated over 6 years, depending on the equipment needs, which would assist in rate
25 stabilization.

26 **Councilmember Mu** asked about container sizes and expressed concern that
27 residents have varying amounts of grass waste, with some potentially needing additional
28 collection options.

29 **Mr. Mullis** said the administrative challenge is establishing a consistent rate structure
30 but noted flexibility could be provided for special circumstances. He explained that certain
31 properties, such as e townhomes with shared common areas, could opt out of receiving a cart
32 while continuing to pay the associated fee, and additional service could be addressed on a
33 on a case-by-case basis.

34 **Town Manger Vosburg** said the primary decision points for Council were
35 containerization and discontinuation of grass collection and requested direction on how to
36 proceed.

37 **Mr. Mullis** said the recommendation was bi-weekly for the yard waste collection.

38 **Councilmember Zegerman** said that communication would be critical and
39 recommended implementing grass collection first to allow residents time to adjust before
40 introducing containerization.

1 **Mr. Mullis** stated that this approach aligns with the proposed timeline, which includes
2 a 20-month communication period. He noted that grass elimination would begin July 1st
3 2026, following the grass season, and containerization is anticipated to begin March 6, 2028..

4 **Councilmember Gray** said he was in support for allowing education period before
5 full implementation, stating that it would provide residents with additional time to adjust and
6 help avoid confusion if the policy changed immediately on July 1.

7 **Director Mullis** stated that eliminating grass collection is the most important action
8 the Town can take to reduce disposal costs. He explained that once grass collection ends, the
9 remaining mixture of leaves, sticks, and other woody debris can continue to be disposed of
10 locally, resulting in a significant reduction in tonnage and associated costs.

11 **Councilmember Zegerman** suggested that July 1, 2026, be treated as a policy
12 change date with education period, including outreach materials and resident notifications,
13 rather than an immediate enforcement date.

14 **Councilmember Reese** said the prioritization would be around education and asked
15 how similar programs had been implemented in other municipalities.

16 **Mr. Mullis** stated that staff would work with HOA boards and Communications on
17 outreach efforts and noted that lessons were learned from implementations in Raleigh and
18 Holly Springs. He encouraged Council involvement in communicating the changes to
19 residents.
20

21 **Councilmember Zegerman** made a **motion** to direct staff to begin the process of
22 eliminating grass collection, with an anticipated effective date of July 1, 2026, and to
23 implement containerization beginning July 1, 2028, to align the major policy changes with
24 the Town's fiscal year.

25 **Mayor Pro-Tem Mahaffey** clarified that there are three separate components:
26 elimination of grass collection, implementation of containerization, and biweekly yard waste
27 collection.

28 **Mr. Mullis** clarified that Option 1 proposed implementing containerization on March
29 6, 2028, following two budget cycles, and asked whether that timeline was consistent.

30 **Councilmember Zegerman** clarified that he was proposing to begin the grass
31 collection elimination policy on July 1, while allowing for an extended transition and public
32 education period during which grass would continue to be collected with notification to
33 residents before full implementation.

34 **Councilmember Reese** asked about enforcement options for improper disposal of
35 grass.

36 **Director Jacobs** said that his team in Water Resources is addressing these items
37 currently..

38 **Councilmember Mu** said she preferred to purchase additional vehicles and delaying
39 containerization due to the cost and the possibility that not all residents would need
40 containers.

41 **Town Manager Vosburg** said that service options could be considered, grass
42 disposal remains a long-term challenge due to limited disposal options.

1 **Assistant Town Manager Stone** said that staff could explore offering a paper bag
2 grass pickup option for residents. He said that the service would be more expensive because
3 the grass would require separate collection and transport to Raleigh for disposal, and any
4 associated costs could be a passed through to the resident requesting this service.

5 **Mr. Mullis** said that one of the reasons staff is recommending the elimination of the
6 grass collection is that Raleigh is already understaffed and experiencing processing
7 limitations. He explained that, because the Town does not have its own processing facility, it
8 relies on outside disposal options, creating operational risk if those options become
9 unavailable. He added that Raleigh is currently accepting grass, bt disposal and
10 transportation costs are approximately \$70 or \$80 per ton.

11 **Town Manager Vosburg** requested clarification on the proposed timeline, noting
12 there had been discussion about a July 1 date while also avoiding implementation during the
13 middle of the grass season. He asked whether the intent was to begin the implementation
14 process on July 1 rather than discontinue grass collection on that date.

15 **Councilmember Zegerman** said the intent was to begin the process on July 1,
16 coinciding with the effective date of the new UDO amendment, while allowing for a
17 reasonable grace period. He explained that grass collection could continue on a limited basis
18 during the transition as a courtesy while residents adjust to the new policy before full
19 elimination of grass pickup.

20 **Councilmember Mu** suggested establishing designated pickup days for residents
21 who need grass collection, such as a specific day each week, with residents required to
22 request pickup in advance. She noted that this approach could improve efficiency by allowing
23 staff to collect multiple requests in a single route rather than making separate trips to
24 individual locations.

25 **Mr. Mullis** said that a designated pickup day would not be the most efficient
26 approach because collection routes are organized by service zones, with trucks already
27 operating throughout those areas.. He said that additional or off-cycle pickups could be
28 accommodated through an on-demand service with an associated fee, which would need to
29 be established. He sstated that the proposed program would be likely provided by the type
30 of flexibility Councilmember Mu described.

31 **Councilmember Mu** clarified that she was suggesting a scheduled, area-based
32 pickup model similar to existing collection routes, where residents could request service if
33 needed and pay an associated pickup fee. She noted that residents with smaller amounts of
34 yard waste may not need the service, while those with larger amounts could request
35 collection on designated days for their area.

36 **Mr. Mullis** said that this sounds like it fits the bi-weekly model for pickup.

37 **Town Clerk Coleman** asked for clarification for the motion. He said the direction
38 discussed included initiating the elimination of grass collection, communication and an
39 effective date for the grass collection change, and implementation of containerizationas a
40 separate action, and the bi-weekly pickup schedule.

1 **Councilmember Zegerman** clarified that the biweekly pickup schedule should be
2 combined with the containerization implementation, which would occur approximately two
3 years after the elimination of grass collection.

4 Director Mullis asked does staff start bi-weekly pickup now.

5 **Councilmember Zegerman** said no.

6 **Councilmember Mu** said yes.

7 **Councilmember Gray** said start by having a motion on grass first.

8
9 A **motion** was made by **Councilmember Zegerman** to direct staff to initiate the
10 phased elimination of grass-only collection, effective July 1, 2026, and to implement
11 containerization beginning July 1, 2028. During the transition period, Town staff will continue
12 to collect grass on an as-needed basis as a courtesy prior to full discontinuation.

13 **VOTE: Motion died, failing to receive a second.**

14
15 A **motion** was made by **Councilmember Zegerman**, seconded by **Councilmember**
16 **Gray**, to direct staff to begin immediate communication with the public regarding the Town
17 Council's intent to eliminate grass collection effective July 1, 2026, with enforcement to be
18 carried out at the discretion of the Town Manager or their designee.

19 **VOTE: 3-2, with Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey and Councilmember Reese dissenting.**

20
21 A **motion** was made by **Councilmember Zegerman**, seconded by **Mayor Pro-**
22 **Tempore Mahaffey**, to direct staff to evaluate the feasibility of transitioning all other yard
23 waste to a containerized collection system, with an effective date of July 1, 2028.

24 **VOTE: UNANIMOUS (5-0)**

25
26 A **motion** was made by **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey**, seconded by
27 **Councilmember Reese**, to transition to biweekly yard-waste collection and to direct staff to
28 begin immediate public communication of this change. The proposed effective date is July 1,
29 2026, with the Town Manager authorized to adjust the start date as necessary to
30 accommodate operational feasibility and ensure appropriate communication to residents.

31 **VOTE: UNANIMOUS (5-0)**

32
33 **Town Manager Vosburg** stated that the remaining question regarding excess rates
34 may not be addressed during the current discussion. He recommended that staff review and
35 process the information discussed and bring the item back to Council for further
36 consideration as soon as possible.

37 **Mr. Mullis** thanked Council.

38
39 **[NEW INITIATIVES DEVELOPMENT - BRAINSTORMING]**

40 **Town Manager Randy Vosburg** said staff was recommending the deferral of this item
41 to allow for more time to finish the other presentations. He said this item would be deferred
42 to a future work session.

1 **Town Manger Vosburg** said the other remaining item for discussion was the potential
2 expansion of the streetscape project, which had been brought forward during the initiative
3 discussion but was not addressed at the previous meeting. He asked Council whether they
4 wanted to discuss the item further or provide direction regarding potential funding.

5 **Mayor Gilbert** asked about time that was available and agenda items left.

6 **Town Manger Vosburg** said the remaining items for discussion, including the
7 initiatives discussion, Council policy development brainstorming, and the scheduled
8 facilitator session at 12:00 noon. He suggested that the initiatives discussion could be
9 deferred to a future meeting, noting that the initiatives would likely not impact the current
10 budget cycle. He acknowledged the importance of gathering new initiatives within the
11 addition of a new Council seat but recommended pausing the discussion and bringing the
12 item back at a future work session.

13 **Council** provided verbal consensus to bringing back the initiatives at a further work
14 session.

15 **Town Manager Vosburg** asked whether Council wanted to discuss the streetscape
16 project during the current meeting or defer the discussion to the further initiatives'
17 discussion.

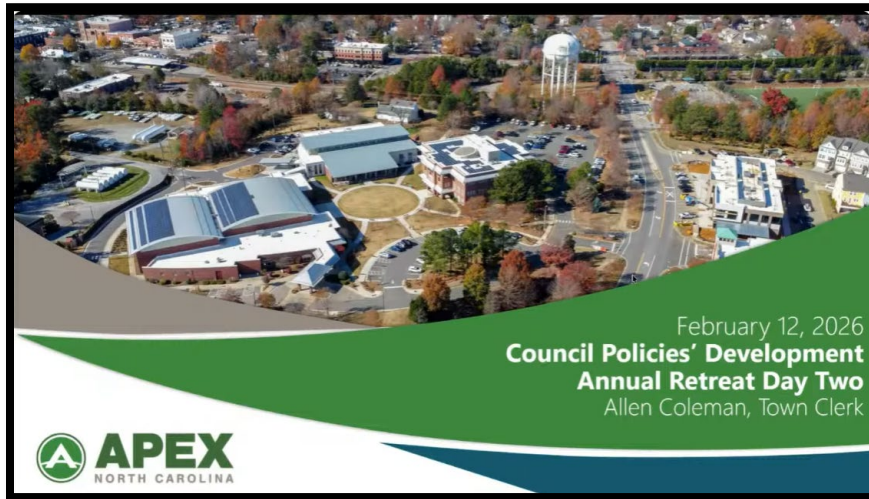
18 **Council** agreed to hold the discussion of the streetscape project for the future
19 initiative's discussion.

20 **Town Manager Vosburg** stated that the remaining items were lunch and the Council
21 Policy Development discussion. He noted that additional time was needed to prepare lunch
22 and asked Town Clerk Coleman to lead in the Council Policy Development.

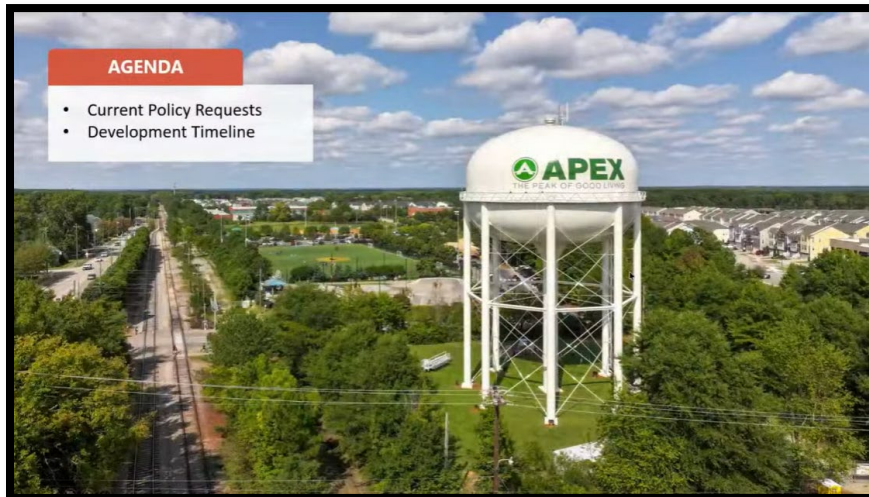
23
24 **[COUNCIL POLICY DEVELOPMENT]**
25

26 **Town Clerk Allen Coleman** lead in the Council Policy Development session. He said
27 the purpose of the discussion was to ensure Council was aligned regarding policy requests
28 brought forward by various members.
29 He led the following presentation:

1 [SLIDE NO. 1]



2
3 [SLIDE NO. 2]



4
5 [SLIDE NO. 3]



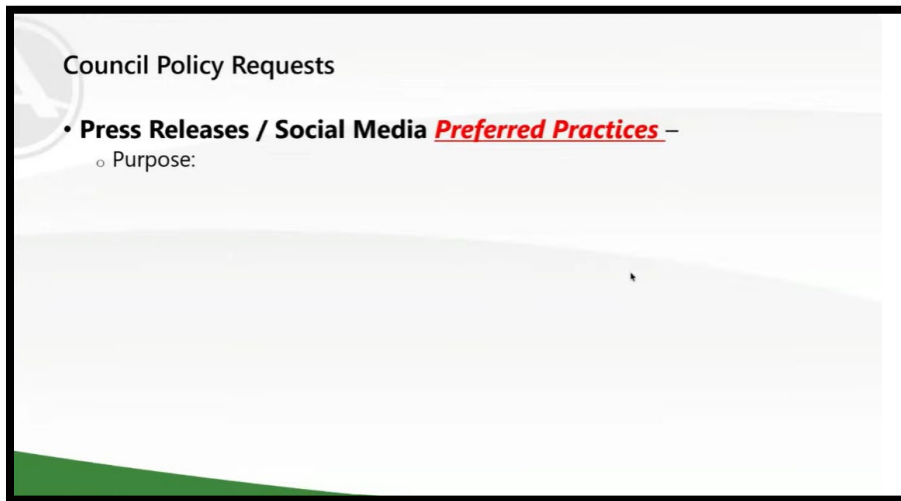
6

1 **Councilmember Zegerman** asked whether Council wanted to discuss or provide
2 input on each policy item individually and sought clarification on the process moving forward.

3 **Town Clerk Coleman** said this is for information for the Council. He explained that the
4 purpose of the discussion was to ensure Council was aligned on the requested policy items
5 before staff invested additional time in developing them. He requested feedback on any
6 policies Council did not support moving forward with and clarified that the discussion was
7 intended to be informational. He noted that staff wanted to confirm direction before bringing
8 the items back for further discussion at a future work session.

9 **Town Manager Vosburg** said the intent was for Council to provide direction on
10 whether to move forward with developing or not developing specific policies during the April
11 work session.

12
13 **[SLIDE NO. 4]**



14
15 **Councilmember Zegerman** stated that the request was primarily intended to address
16 potential liability concerns related to personal social media pages that may appear to
17 represent official Town communications. He explained that the goal is to provide clarity
18 regarding when statements or content posted on personal pages could be perceived as
19 official positions of the Town or create unintended liability.

20 **Town Attorney Hohe** stated that creating a policy regulating individual Council
21 Member's personal social media pages could be challenging. She said that individual
22 members speaking on personal social media accounts do not have authority to bind the
23 Town to decisions, but acknowledged that residents may perceive those communications as
24 representing the Town. She suggested that a more effective approach would be to place a
25 policy statement on the Town's website clarifying that Council Members and the Mayor are
26 speaking in their individual capacities and not on behalf of the Town Council or the Town of
27 Apex, rather than attempting to monitor or restrict personal social media activity.

28 **Councilmember Zegerman** stated that he understood the challenges associated with
29 creating such a policy but believed additional guidance would be beneficial. He noted that
30 there have been instances where statements made by individual members of a governing

1 body could create potential obligations or liability for the entity they represent. He
2 emphasized the need for best practices regarding social media use to help avoid unintended
3 issues. He suggested that, in addition to a statement on the Town's website clarifying that
4 members speak in their individual capacities, Council could adopt preferred practices
5 encouraging members to reference that statement on their personal pages when
6 appropriate. He noted that the intent would not be to restrict First Amendment rights but to
7 establish guidelines for appropriate online conduct and communication.

8 **Town Attorney Hohe** clarified that she was not suggesting an elected official could
9 never create liability for the Town through social media or other actions. She said that actions
10 by elected officials could potentially result in legal claims against the Town, regardless of
11 whether those claims ultimately have merit, and agreed that addressing potential concerns
12 through appropriate guidance could be beneficial.

13 **Councilmember Zegerman** stated that his original request was focused on
14 establishing guidance and best practices for elected officials' use of social media and noted
15 that this was the intent behind his initial request. He added that he was unsure whether other
16 Council Members had expressed similar concerns.

17 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that a social media policy would be reasonable
18 but clarified that the intent would be to establish best practices rather than enforceable
19 "guardrails". He said the importance of distinguishing between a policy providing guidance
20 and restrictions on individual actions.

21 **Councilmember Reese** stated he supported the intent of the policy and believed
22 Council Members should voluntarily adopt the principles on behalf of the Town. He said that
23 the goal should be to clearly distinguish between communications made in an official
24 capacity, informal communications, and campaign-related communications. He said that
25 transparency, collaboration, and maintaining public trust are important and that establishing
26 clear expectations that would benefit the Town.

27 **Councilmember Mu** asked whether the Town could establish a formal statement
28 clarifying that Council Members' personal social media accounts, including those that may
29 reference their elected position, do not represent the Town as a whole. She suggested that a
30 statement or policy could clarify that communications made through personal social media
31 accounts are made in an individual capacity and not on behalf of the Town.

32 **Town Clerk Coleman** stated that the discussion centered on establishing best
33 practices that Council Members could voluntarily commit to and support as a group. He
34 explained that such practices would require mutual commitment among Council Members
35 rather than a mandatory requirement. He noted that the distinction between adopting best
36 practices and creating an enforceable policy is where the discussion becomes more complex.

37 **Town Attorney Hohe** explained that the challenges with a social media policy would
38 involve attempting to prohibit Council Members from making certain statements or requiring
39 specific statements to be made, and those areas could raise First Amendment concerns. She
40 said that a social media policy could address other important topics, including recognition
41 that social media posts may be subject to public records laws and business. She added that
42 policies could also address appropriate practices for managing or restricting content on

1 official business-related posts. She said that the topic is complex and that, while elected
2 officials have First Amendment rights, they also have a responsibility not to infringe upon the
3 rights of others.

4 **Councilmember Reese** asked about establishing clearer guidance regarding when
5 Council Members are acting in an official capacity, including the appropriate use of Town
6 identifiers, such as wearing a Town of Apex pin. He said that having clearer distinctions would
7 help build trust within the community by identifying when she is speaking as an elected
8 official versus in a personal capacity. She emphasized the importance of making a good faith
9 effort to clearly distinguish personal opinions and activities from official Town representation.

10 **Town Manager Vosburg** said the consensus of Council is a policy.

11 **Town Clerk Coleman** said the sentiment is heard and there will be a policy brought
12 back.

13 **Councilmember Zegerman** emphasized the importance of including legal guidance
14 in any social media best practices, particularly regarding issues such as deleting comments
15 and other activities that may have legal implications. He stated that the goal is to ensure
16 Council Members understand applicable legal requirements and avoid actions on personal
17 social media accounts that could create unintended legal or public trust concerns.

18
19 **[SLIDE NO. 5]**



[SLIDE NO. 6]



Councilmember Reese asked if other municipalities had been looked at to see what they had.

Town Clerk Coleman said yes and policies do exist.

Councilmember Reese asked if other municipalities were aligned or a wide variance.

Town Clerk Coleman said in general it ultimately depends on the tolerance level and consensus of the elected body. He said that there appeared to be alignment among Council Members regarding not providing Town support during campaign season.

Councilmember Reese asked if this pertained to just for the members on the ballots.

Town Clerk Coleman believed it was just the candidates that are on the ballot.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey asked how the policy development process would work and whether staff would present Council with a list of policy options for consideration and direction before drafting specific policies.

Town Clerk Allen Coleman explained that staff would research policies and practices from other communities and present Council with a range of approaches for consideration. He noted that staff would also provide historical information, such as expenditures related to office hours and community events, to help Council evaluate whether current practices should continue. He stated that the policies would be presented by topic, with Council providing direction on each component before staff prepares draft policies.

Town Manager Vosburg noted that Council could consider establishing an allocated budget for individual Council Members' office hours or similar activities, with members having discretion over how those funds are used within the approved allocation.

1 **[SLIDE NO. 7]**

Council Policy Requests

- **Public Forum / Public Hearing Policy–**
 - **Purpose:** North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS) § 160A-81.1, requires that municipal governing boards provide for public comment **only once** a month, however, the Apex Town Council has chosen to provide this opportunity at **each** regular business meeting. In addition, this statute allows the Apex Town Council to adopt reasonable rules which govern the conduct of the public comment period, including rules to maintain order and decorum. The is not intended to limit the content of the speakers message but are instead to ensure that this part of the Meeting Agenda is conducted in a civil, orderly, and efficient manner.
 - **Purpose of Revision:**
 - Clarify process for participation – e.g. handouts, posters, written comments, etc.
 - Ensure 1st Amendment Rights

2
3 **[SLIDE NO. 8]**

Timeline for Consideration

- **February – March 2026**
 - Development and Collaboration – Attorney, Clerk, and Manager
- **April 21, 2026 – Town Council Work Session**
 - Policy Review and Discussion
- **June 23, 2026 Regular Town Council Meeting**
 - Policy Adoption

4
5 **Councilmember Zegerman** asked Town Clerk Coleman to do some research into
6 whether other municipalities have governance policies for elective bodies that Apex has not
7 yet considered and to identify any additional policy topics that may be beneficial for Council
8 to review. .

9 **Town Clerk Allen Coleman** said yes, he will do some additional research on
10 governance policies used by other municipalities and counties to identify any additional
11 policy topics for Council's consideration. He said that while some policies may be unique to
12 larger or district based governments, the proposed policy topics address many of the
13 foundational areas currently needed as the Town continues to grow. He stated that staff would
14 bring any additional recommendations back to Council for review.

15 **Town Manager Vosburg** said it was a good job and its lunchtime.

16
17 **Mayor Gilbert** announced the meeting was in recess at **12:00 noon**.
18

Mayor Gilbert reconvened the meeting at **12:42 p.m.**

[TEAM BUILDING]

Associate Professor of Public Administration and Government, Mr. John Stephens, facilitated a discussion among the six elected members focused on strengthening working relationships among members of the elected body. Discussion included shared expectations for communication, collaboration, professionalism, mutual respect, and effective governance.

Members discussed the importance of maintaining productive working relationships, recognizing differing perspectives and approaches, communicating directly and respectfully, and working toward consensus where possible. The discussion also emphasized keeping the interests of the Town and community at the forefront of Council deliberations and interactions.

Additional discussion centered on the respective roles of the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Councilmembers; communication following Council decisions; coordination on matters of shared interest; and opportunities to strengthen trust, teamwork, and organizational effectiveness.

The Council also discussed the importance of clear and consistent communication between the elected body and Town leadership in support of effective governance and administration.

No formal action was taken.

[WRAP-UP AND ADJOURNMENT]

With no further business being presented to the Town Council, **Mayor Gilbert** adjourned the meeting at **3:14 p.m.**

Jacques K. Gilbert
Mayor

Allen Coleman, CMC, NCCCC
Town Clerk to the Apex Town Council

Submitted for approval by Town Clerk Allen Coleman and approved on _____.