

DRAFT MINUTES

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TOWN OF APEX TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2026 3:30 P.M.

The Apex Town Council met for a work session on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 3:30 p.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:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xs3shmk0tdU&t=3693s>

[ATTENDANCE]

Elected Body

Mayor Jacques K. Gilbert (presiding)

Mayor Pro-Tempore Terry Mahaffey

Councilmember Ed Gray

Councilmember Shane Reese

Councilmember Sue Mu - **arrived late**

Absent: Councilmember Arno Zegerman

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.

[CALL TO ORDER | PLEDGE OF ATTENDANCE]

Mayor Gilbert called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m., welcomed everyone, and led everyone in the pledge of allegiance.

[NEW INITIATIVES DEVELOPMENT]

Town Manager Randy Vosburg, introduced the New Initiative Development process, noting that the discussion had originally been scheduled for the Council Retreat but was

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1 postponed due to time constraints. He explained that the purpose of the work session was to
2 gather initial ideas and feedback from Council related to the Town’s strategic plan goal areas.

3
4 **Town Manager Vosburg** reviewed the proposed timeline for initiative development,
5 explaining that Council input that was collected during the work session would be combined
6 with feedback from the Town’s leadership team during a July workshop. Staff will then
7 synthesize the information, develop a list of potential initiatives, and present
8 recommendations to Council during the annual strategic planning session in September or
9 October in conjunction with the Strategic Plan refresh.

10
11 **Town Manager Vosburg** noted that initiatives without fiscal impacts could potentially
12 begin implementation as early as January 2027, while initiatives requiring funding would be
13 considered through the Fiscal Year 2027-28 budget process. He also discussed the recent
14 restructuring of Council committees to align with the Strategic Plan goal areas, which will
15 provide a framework for monitoring progress and reporting on future initiatives.

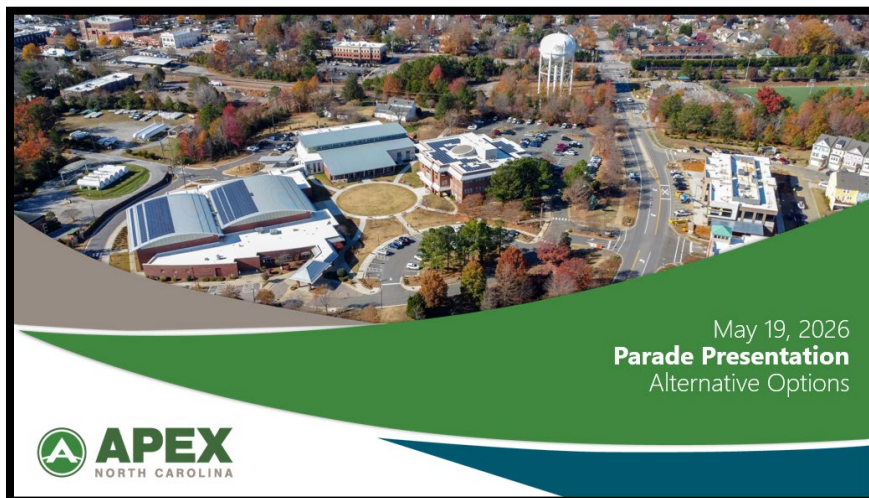
16
17 Council then participated in a facilitated workshop exercise focused on the Town’s strategic
18 plan goal areas. Council members rotated among five (5) discussion stations which were the
19 Town’s current strategic goal areas –Economic Vitality, Responsible Development, Welcoming
20 Community, High Performing Government, and Environmental Leadership. Staff recorded
21 Council feedback for further evaluation and development.

22
23 *Councilmember Mu arrived at 3:46 p.m.*

24
25 **[PARADE LOGISTICS]**

26 **Special Events Manager Lisa Raschke** gave the following presentation:

27 **[SLIDE NO. 1]**



28

1 [SLIDE NO. 2]



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3 [SLIDE NO. 3]



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5 [SLIDE NO. 4]

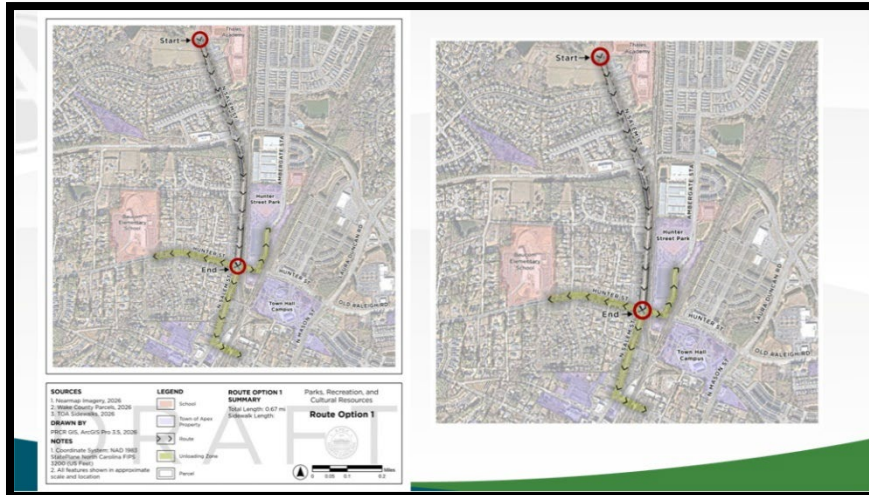


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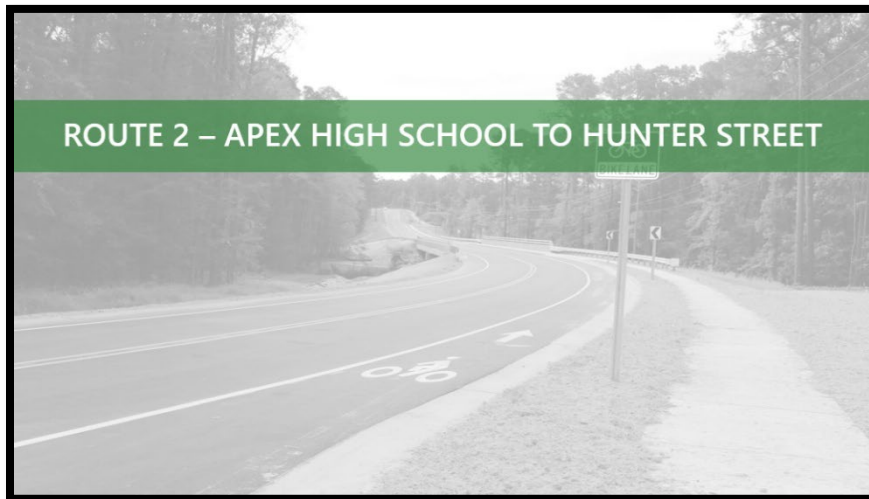
1 [SLIDE NO. 5]



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3 [SLIDE NO. 6]

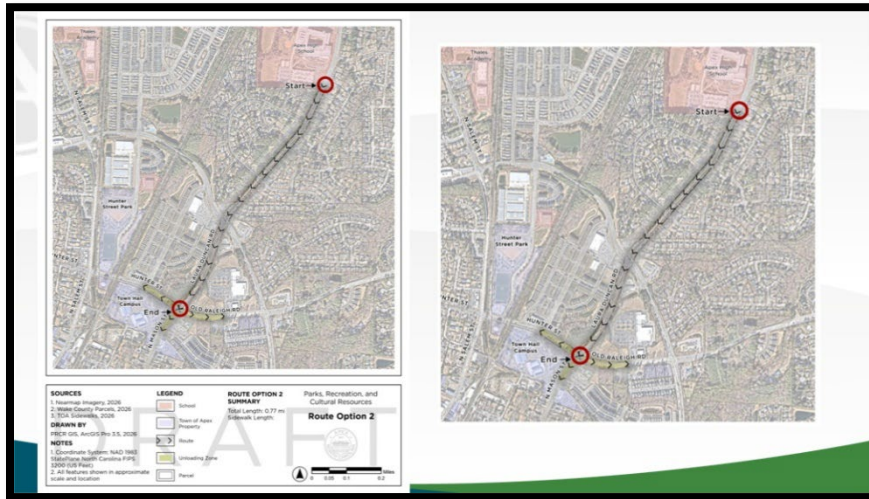


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5 [SLIDE NO. 7]



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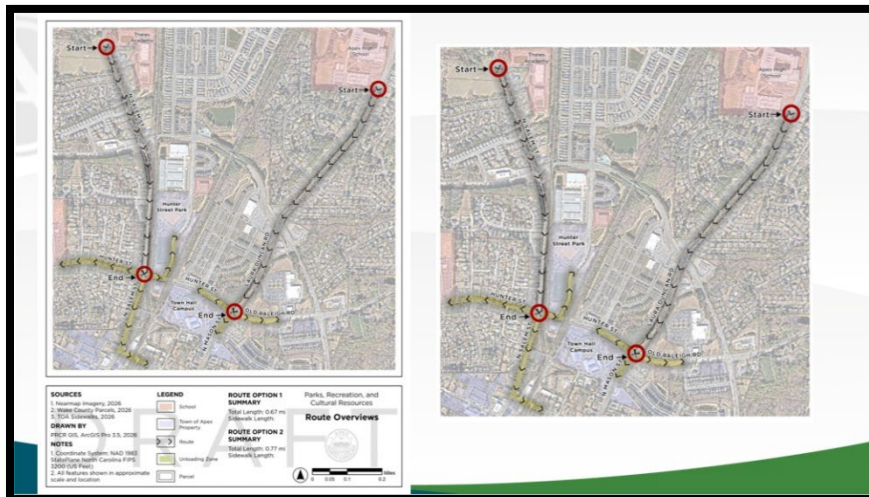
1 [SLIDE NO. 8]



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3 [SLIDE NO. 9]

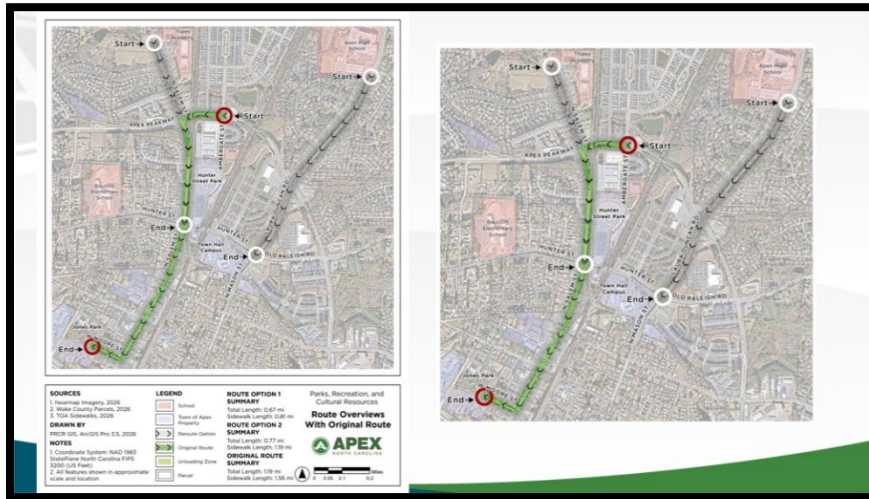


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5 [SLIDE NO. 10]



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1 **[SLIDE NO. 11]**



2
3 **[SLIDE NO. 12]**

PERMISSIONS

The Apex Rotary would need permission from the following:

- Thales
- Baucom
- Home Owners
- Businesses
- Church

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

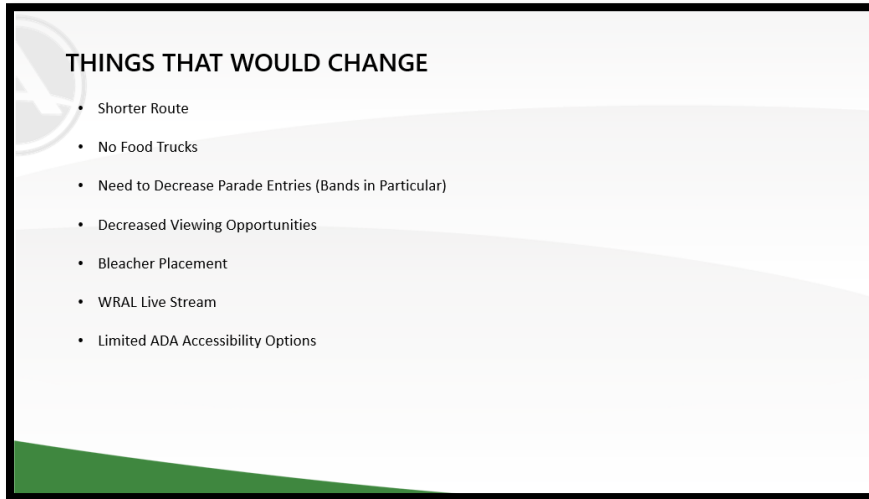
SEATING

There would be limited seating options due to:

- Sidewalks (ADA Accessibility)
- Ditches
- Plant Life
- Train Tracks
- Home Owners
- Businesses
- Church

6

1 **[SLIDE NO. 14]**



THINGS THAT WOULD CHANGE

- Shorter Route
- No Food Trucks
- Need to Decrease Parade Entries (Bands in Particular)
- Decreased Viewing Opportunities
- Bleacher Placement
- WRAL Live Stream
- Limited ADA Accessibility Options

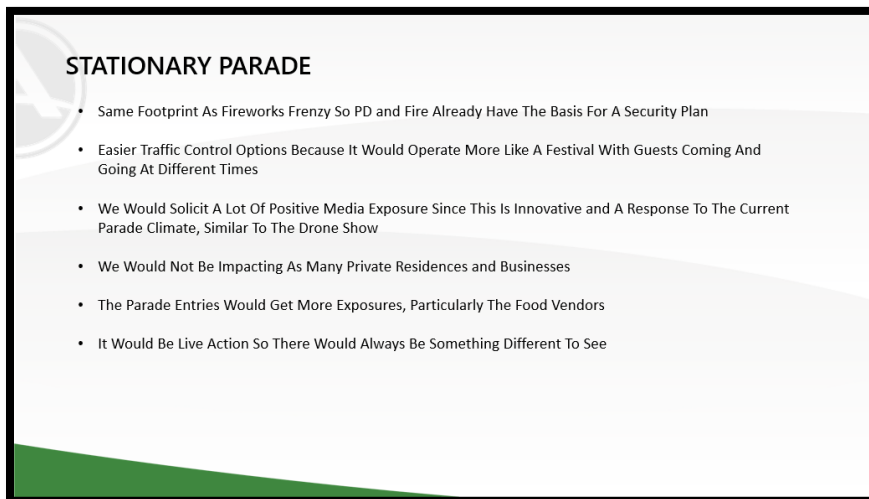
2
3 **[SLIDE NO. 15]**



SECURITY CONCERNS

- Blocking Private Home Access
- Fire/Police/EMS Would Have No Access to 166 Homes on Laura Duncan and 53 Homes on Salem Street
- Parking Options and Walking Opportunities for Guests
- Due to Limited Seating Options, Guests Sitting in Dangerous Areas
- Private Home Trespassing – Guests Sitting and Walking Through People’s Yards
- Raleigh Christmas Parade Court Case

4
5 **[SLIDE NO. 16]**

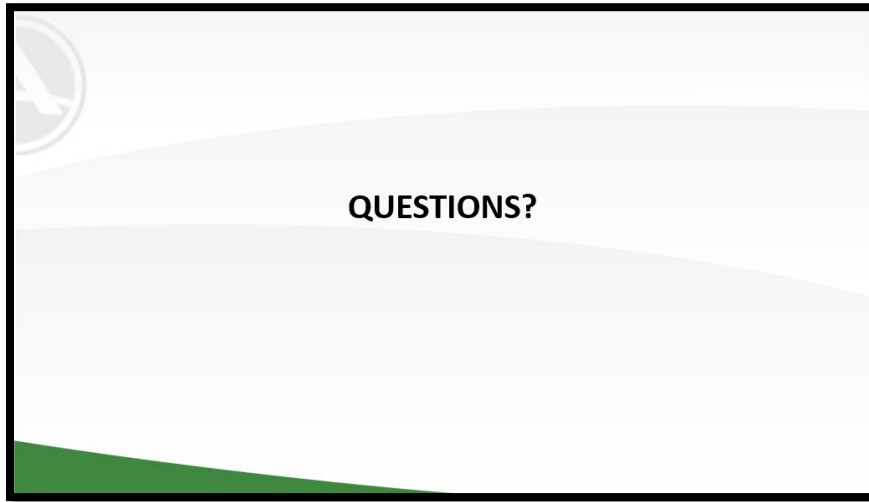


STATIONARY PARADE

- Same Footprint As Fireworks Frenzy So PD and Fire Already Have The Basis For A Security Plan
- Easier Traffic Control Options Because It Would Operate More Like A Festival With Guests Coming And Going At Different Times
- We Would Solicit A Lot Of Positive Media Exposure Since This Is Innovative and A Response To The Current Parade Climate, Similar To The Drone Show
- We Would Not Be Impacting As Many Private Residences and Businesses
- The Parade Entries Would Get More Exposures, Particularly The Food Vendors
- It Would Be Live Action So There Would Always Be Something Different To See

6

1 **[SLIDE NO. 17]**



2
3 **Councilmember Gray** asked if the parade had been considered as a town-sponsored
4 event versus a community-based event.

5 **Ms. Raschke** stated that the parade has been a Rotary Club event and fundraiser for
6 several decades, and therefore the concept being discussed had not previously been
7 considered.

8 **Town Manager Vosburg** said that the event operates as a partnership between the
9 Rotary Club and the Town. He noted that Rotary organizes and hosts the event and invests
10 significant effort into its planning, while numerous Town staff members also support the
11 event. He stated that continuing the partnership model is likely the best approach.

12 **Councilmember Gray** asked whether there were aspects of the event for which the
13 Town could take a greater leadership role, such as coordinating with Wake County Public
14 Schools or NCDOT regarding access points and logistics.

15 **Assistant Town Manager John** stated that many of the considerations are driven by
16 safety concerns and invited Lieutenant Stephen Best to discuss the two proposed route
17 options.

18 **Lieutenant Best** stated that while the Police Department could facilitate a parade
19 along either route option, it could not guarantee a safe environment for spectators along the
20 route. He explained that the options were presented with the understanding that neither is
21 ideal and emphasized that safety remains the primary consideration. He outlined several
22 obstacles in the scenarios that would affect the Town's ability to safely manage the event.

23 **Assistant Town Manager John** noted that the proposed changes would be
24 temporary and intended for this year only.

25 **Councilmember Gray** expressed appreciation for the evaluation of the various
26 scenarios and acknowledged the challenges associated with managing public safety
27 concerns and potential impacts to neighboring residents.

28 **Lieutenant Best** explained that a substantial portion of the proposed route contains
29 approximately 24 inches of usable space, roughly the width of a folding chair, creating
30 significant crowd management concerns.

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1 **Ms. Raschke** stated that a decision regarding the parade route should be made by
2 July 1 to allow adequate time for planning and for a public announcement in August. She
3 suggested that a stationary parade option may be the most feasible alternative given current
4 safety concerns. While acknowledging it is not a perfect solution, she noted it could provide a
5 safe and unique event experience.

6 **Assistant Town Manager John** noted that after an incident occurred in Raleigh, they
7 moved to a stationary parade.

8 **Ms. Raschke** noted that the Town has made sure to always have staff members
9 certified to drive within large groups of people to avoid safety incidents like that.

10 **Lieutenant Best** said that Apex's fireworks display was one of the few traditional
11 shows held in the area due to the use of drone shows elsewhere. He stated that communities
12 have successfully embraced alternatives to traditional events and suggested that a stationary
13 parade could offer a similar opportunity.

14 **Mayor Gilbert** thanked staff for prioritizing safety and confirmed that any changes
15 being considered would be for one year.

16 **Ms. Raschke** stated that they had done lots of work and improvements in planning
17 and security for the event downtown, it just won't work out this year.

18 **Town Manager Randy Vosburg** stated the importance of providing an event that
19 residents can enjoy. He noted that an earlier decision would allow staff to begin working with
20 the Rotary Club to address planning needs, downtown considerations, and other logistical
21 concerns.

22 **Ms. Raschke** stated that staff is willing to be flexible and wants to ensure that an event
23 can still be offered to the community.

24 **Mayor Gilbert** said that's the reality, and safety is the most important thing.

25 **Councilmember Gray** asked whether additional route options utilizing NCDOT
26 roadways had been considered.

27 **Lieutenant Best** explained that staff evaluated roadways based on whether they met
28 operational and safety requirements, including railroad crossings, roadway grades, and other
29 physical constraints, whether they were maintained by NCDOT or not.

30 **Councilmember Gray** stated that it is important to communicate to the public that
31 staff explored all available options during these unusual circumstances and that any
32 modifications would be temporary.

33 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** asked why other route options had been deemed
34 unsuitable.

35 **Lieutenant Best** explained that the proposed staging area at Thales was the most
36 northern location that met operational needs for staging space, vehicle organization, and
37 access. He noted that other routes lacked sufficient staging areas, sidewalks, or safe roadway
38 conditions, and presented challenges related to traffic operations, railroad crossings, steep
39 grades, and impacts to businesses and neighborhoods. He added that closing a grocery
40 store parking lot for staging purposes was not considered appropriate.

41 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that the Town of Zebulon had utilized a similar
42 parade format for several years.

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1 **Ms. Raschke** stated that staff had recently begun discussing the stationary parade
2 concept and was presenting the idea to Council as an initial conversation. She offered to
3 contact Zebulon to learn more about its experience and report back to Council.

4 **Lieutenant Best** clarified that the stationary parade concept would include decorated
5 floats remaining in designated locations for viewing, while marching bands and performers
6 would travel between activity areas such as Town Hall Campus and Hunter Street.

7 **Councilmember Reese** stated that Council is considering alternative parade formats
8 due to construction timelines not being completed before the Christmas parade. He
9 emphasized that the changes are intended to be temporary and that the goal remains to
10 return the parade to downtown in future years. He thanked staff for their efforts and
11 expressed concern about maintaining a connection to downtown businesses and economic
12 activity. He also noted that it was difficult to envision a stationary float experience compared
13 to a traditional parade.

14 **Ms. Raschke** explained that a stationary format could include dance performances,
15 animals, informational exhibits, and food trucks located throughout the event area. She noted
16 that downtown businesses have historically benefited from events held on the Town Hall
17 Campus, as attendees often visit downtown establishments afterward. She added that
18 opportunities exist to encourage visitors to continue into downtown following the event.

19 **Councilmember Reese** stated that downtown should not be secondary to the parade
20 experience and suggested it should serve as a continuation of the event.

21 **Councilmember Mu** asked for additional details regarding the stationary parade
22 concept.

23 **Ms. Raschke** described the concept as similar to a museum or zoo experience, with
24 attendees moving between exhibits and entertainment areas.

25 **Town Manager Vosburg** said that while candy would not be thrown from moving
26 floats, participants could distribute candy at their displays and have greater interaction with
27 attendees.

28 **Ms. Raschke** stated that staff is mindful of the Rotary Club's expectations and
29 planning efforts. She explained that the alternative route options could require limitations on
30 attendance or parade entries and remain contingent upon receiving necessary approvals.
31 She also noted concerns regarding participant pick-up and traffic management at the
32 conclusion of the event.

33 **Councilmember Mu** asked whether the proposed changes would apply only to this
34 year's parade.

35 **Ms. Raschke** confirmed that the changes are intended only for this year and that staff
36 anticipates returning to the traditional parade format in future years. She acknowledged that
37 the alternatives may not be ideal but are intended to accommodate a typical number of
38 parade entries while maintaining safety.

39 **Mayor Gilbert** asked whether representatives from Rotary had been consulted.

40 **Ms. Raschke** stated that staff had informed Rotary that route options were being
41 presented to Council but had not discussed specific alternatives pending Council's direction.

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1 **Mayor Gilbert** asked whether Council would have an opportunity to make the final
2 decision on the parade format.

3 **Ms. Raschke** confirmed that Council would be brought back the item for further
4 consideration and stated that staff could also gather information from Zebulon regarding its
5 experience with a stationary parade format.

6 **Assistant Town Manager John** stated that the longer it takes to make a decision
7 regarding the parade format, the more important clear and effective communication with the
8 public will become.

9 **Town Manager Vosburg** stated that staff wants to ensure the process is handled in a
10 respectful and appropriate manner.

11 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** asked whether elements of the traditional parade,
12 such as marching bands, could still be incorporated into downtown, depending on the
13 condition of the area at the time of the event.

14 **Lieutenant Best** explained that one concept considered would allow marching bands
15 to perform along different streets in a manner similar to a parade in an area.

16 **Ms. Raschke** stated that staff remains open to additional ideas and feedback
17 regarding the event format.

18 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** thanked staff for presenting alternative options and
19 emphasized the importance of gathering input from stakeholders. He stated that Council
20 would establish a decision timeline in advance of the August planning activities.

21 **Ms. Raschke** stated that discussions with stakeholders and Rotary representatives
22 would continue and that staff would bring feedback and additional information back to
23 Council.

24 **Mayor Pro-Tempore Mahaffey** said that the stationary parade concept felt more like a
25 festival-style event and noted that there could be advantages to that format. He also
26 observed that parade participants invest significant time and effort into designing and
27 building floats and suggested gathering feedback from vendors and Rotary representatives
28 as part of the evaluation process.

29 **Assistant Town Manager John** noted that because Ms. Raschke would be unavailable
30 for the June 16 Work Session, Police staff could present the item to Council.

31 **Lieutenant Best** stated that he would also be unavailable on June 16.

32 **Town Manager Vosburg** stated that staff would ensure the item is presented to
33 Council at the June 16 Work Session regardless of staff availability.

34 **Ms. Raschke** asked whether stakeholder feedback should be directed through her for
35 compilation, then passed to Administration.

36 **Town Manager Vosburg** stated that stakeholder feedback and additional information
37 could be presented to Council during the June 16 Work Session.

38 **Councilmember Reese** expressed concern about the proposed route options from a
39 safety perspective, noting that a single emergency response could significantly disrupt
40 parade operations and create challenges for public safety.

41 **Ms. Raschke** agreed and noted that the concern is heightened given the large
42 number of attendees expected at the event.

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1 **Mayor Gilbert** thanked staff for their work and presentation.

2

3 **[ADJOURNEMENT]**

4

5 **Mayor Gilbert** adjourned the meeting at **5:15 p.m.**

6

7

Jacques K. Gilbert

8

Apex, Mayor

9

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

12

13 Submitted for approval by Apex Town Clerk Allen Coleman

14

15 Minutes approved on _____ of _____, 2026.

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17

18