



WEST VALLEY CITY

City Council Budget Retreat
February 20, 2026

THE WEST VALLEY CITY COUNCIL MET IN ELECTRONIC MEETING FOR THE ANNUAL BUDGET RETREAT ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2026 AT 9:07 A.M. AT THE UTAH CULTURAL CELEBRATION CENTER, 1355 WEST 3100 SOUTH, WEST VALLEY CITY, UTAH. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AND CONDUCTED BY MAYOR LANG.

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS WERE PRESENT:

Karen Lang, Mayor
Lars Nordfelt, Councilmember At-Large
Don Christensen, Councilmember At-Large
Tom Huynh, Councilmember District 1 (*electronically*)
Scott Harmon, Councilmember District 2
William Whetstone, Councilmember District 3
Cindy Wood, Councilmember District 4

STAFF PRESENT:

Ifo Pili, City Manager
Nichole Camac, City Recorder
John Flores, Assistant City Manager
Eric Bunderson, City Attorney
Colleen Jacobs, Police Chief
John Evans, Fire Chief
Jim Welch, Finance Director
Steve Pastorik, CED Director
Dan Johnson, Public Works Director
Jamie Young, Parks and Recreation Director
Jonathan Springmeyer, RDA Director
Sam Johnson, Strategic Communications Director
Craig Thomas, Community and Culture Director
Paula Melgar, HR Director
Tumi Young, Chief Code Enforcement Officer
Jake Arslanian, Facilities Director
Harold Moleni, Administrative Analyst
Lauren McPeak, Administrative Analyst
Abbey Smock, Finance
Niclas Hales, Finance

Jeanette Carpenter, Finance
Jessica Alvarez, HR
Ken Cushing, IT
Shaun Trujillo, IT

SIGNIFICANT TOPICS/PRESENTATIONS

John Flores, Assistant City Manager, opened the session by noting that the Council had begun this section of presentations the previous day, starting with Craig Thomas. He reminded the Council that this portion of the agenda is focused on upcoming initiatives, future planning efforts, and items staff are evaluating for the coming year, with the intent of providing updates and seeking Council input.

Boarding House Task Force

Steve Pastorik, CD Director, presented a PowerPoint Presentation summarized as follows:

- Task Force Members
 - o Jenni Barnett – Residential Rental Enforcement Officer
 - o Jody Knapp – Zoning Administrator/Enforcement Supervisor
 - o Tumi Young – Chief Code Enforcement Officer
 - o Eric Bunderson – City Attorney
 - o Lauren McPeak – Management Analyst
 - o Chris Weitz – Deputy Building Official
 - o Ashley Knight – Crime Analyst
- Creating Cases
 - o Complaints come from the Police Department, Building Inspections, the online service portal, and Business Licensing.
 - o Research is performed to find evidence.
 - o Properties with violations that aren't boarding homes are dealt with outside of the task force.
 - o Jenni pursues properties where boarding home evidence is found.
- Sources Used to Obtain Evidence
 - o Police reports and body cam footage
 - o On-line ads or listings
 - o County records
 - o Building permits
 - o Business licenses
 - o Code enforcement history

- Common Violations Found
 - o Work done without a permit and inspections
 - o Property being rented without a business license
 - o Typical code violations like parking, outside storage, inoperable vehicles, landscaping, etc.
 - o Individual rooms are rented out
- Challenges with Boarding Home Enforcement
 - o The use violations are inside the home, so it requires gaining access to the home to resolve.
 - o Cases take significant coordination with different City departments.
 - o It is time consuming gathering evidence, working through the violations, and getting compliance.
 - o Once compliance is obtained, the owner may revert back to a boarding home and avoid detection.

Councilmember Whetstone asked how often the task force meets. Steve replied every two weeks. Councilmember Whetstone stated that he would like to sit in on some of the meetings to get a better understanding of how they work.

Mayor Lang asked if this would address Airbnb's as well. Steve explained that enforcement efforts have primarily focused on boarding houses; however, the City also responds to other unlicensed rental situations. He clarified that short-term rentals, such as Airbnb properties, are permitted only if properly licensed. Similarly, renting out a basement or other portion of a home requires appropriate permits and approvals. If a property is being rented without the necessary licensing or compliance, the City will take enforcement action. Mayor Lang asked if an entire home can be used as an Airbnb, even if the owners do not live there. Steve clarified that if an investor purchases a home and rents the entire property as a short-term rental (such as an Airbnb), that can be permitted if properly licensed. However, if a single-family home is divided and rented as two separate units—such as renting one half long-term and the other half short-term—it would not be permitted unless the property is appropriately zoned (for example, as a duplex). He emphasized that the determining factor is not the length of the rental (short-term versus long-term), but rather how the property is being used. If the home is functioning as more than one dwelling unit without proper zoning or approvals, it would be considered a violation.

Councilmember Wood asked what the volume is for the Boarding Home Task force. Steve reported the number of monthly complaints received related to boarding

houses and similar violations: four in October, four in November, three in December, seven in January, and nine in February. He explained that each complaint is researched, and while some do not yield sufficient evidence to substantiate a violation, a case is opened and the matter is reviewed through the City's enforcement process. He clarified that enforcement is complaint-driven and that staff are not proactively searching neighborhoods for violations. However, some complaints originate internally from departments such as the Police Department.

Councilmember Huynh asked about the length of the enforcement process, noting that it can take several months to resolve a case. He inquired whether staff are studying or exploring ways to shorten the timeline and address these issues more quickly. Steve explained that the research and investigation phase does not typically take months; rather, the delay occurs during the compliance phase. Once sufficient evidence is gathered and a case is opened, the time-consuming portion involves bringing the property back into compliance. He provided an example in which tenants may be renting individual rooms under a lease arrangement. In such cases, the tenants are often not the responsible party; instead, the landlord is. Staff work to allow leases to expire naturally while requiring corrective action. Compliance may also involve obtaining proper permits and making physical modifications to the structure if unpermitted work was performed. It is this process of correcting violations and restoring the property to compliance that accounts for the extended timeline.

Councilmember Harmon asked how many boarding house cases involve situations where the property owner resides in part of the home. He noted that, in his view, it appears that most cases likely involve non-owner-occupied properties and requested clarification on how often the owner lives on-site. Steve responded that, while he did not have exact figures available, his impression is that Councilmember Harmon is correct. Based on the cases he has been involved with, most have involved investor-owned properties rather than owner-occupied homes. He noted that there may be some instances where the owner resides on-site, but the majority appear to be investment properties.

The Mayor and Council had no further questions or concerns.

John stated that the City is working on plans for a new fire training center and a police shooting range for officers. He noted that discussions have included the potential to design these facilities in a way that could also serve other departments, with the goal of

becoming a premier regional training hub. The vision is to develop high-quality facilities that neighboring police and fire agencies would look to as a leading example. John then invited Harold to provide an update on the project's current status and next steps.

Fire Training Center

Harold Moleni, Administrative Analyst, presented a PowerPoint Presentation summarized as follows:

- Current/Old Station 75
- New Station 75
- Cost to Build
 - o \$3.5 MILLION - \$4 MILLION
- Current/Old Fire Training
 - o Their objective: embarrass me (mission accomplished)
 - o My objectives:
 - Highlight the best fire department and training academy in the state.
 - Obtain first-hand look into the academy's challenges.
 - Document the current facilities shortfalls.
- We recorded hours of footage walking pointing out all the facilities flaws. I'll save you the time by summarizing...
 - o Location
 - Right next to residential
 - Multiple complaints due to smoke
 - It's an eyesore, it looks like a dump
 - o Classroom-Relo
 - Classroom-relo donated to the city 27 years ago. At the time, it was 20 years old.
 - Class sizes can grow to as many as 28 cadets. The group I joined had 16 and it was crowded. There is not adequate space.
 - 2 bathrooms. Women = 1 toilet. Men = 1 toilet, 1 urinal.
 - There are no showers. Cadets have to travel to multiple locations throughout the city to shower. The academy is a full day with dirt, sweat, fire, smoke. Sometimes they "shower" with the sink or not at all.
 - PT is done outside for the most part, on gravel. In the case of inclement weather, they move tables and chairs out of the way in the classroom and use the open floor. Again, very

- limited space and working out and having to sit in the musty room for the rest of the day is not ideal.
- Office space is limited, there is no conference room, storage space is full (we have brand new SCBA, \$6k a piece, sitting on a table in a box).
 - Kitchen
 - Lunch time is limited (probably because they for drive around the city to shower), meaning they barely have time to warm up a meal from home. Most will eat during class instruction in the same space they workout, drill exercises on dummies, take tests, all within a couple feet of the 2 bathrooms.
 - Current kitchen/dining is the size of a small house kitchen and shared by 20-30 people.
 - Appliances are old and 2nd hand. They're on their last leg. 1 stove, 1 fridge, 2 microwaves, 1 table, 2 chairs. Inadequate for the amount of people in these groups.
 - Training Tower
 - 20 years old, donated shipping containers welded together by some firefighters. Not up to any code.
 - It is not made to burn. Metal is warping and needing constant attention or replacement.
 - Floors and walls have collapsed. To a point where they no longer to full burns in the tower. They instead use burn barrels or artificial smoke. Both are non-realistic and ineffective.
 - There is no internal stairwell, which limits realistic scenario-based training.
 - Very limited repelling for tech rescue. Often having to go elsewhere to practice full repelling. Again, limiting factor for realistic scenario-based training.
 - Basement Prop
 - 15 years old, donated shipping containers welded together by some firefighters. Not up to any code.
 - Not meant to burn, metal is warping, floors caving in, repairs and replacements are constantly needed on walls, roofs, and floors.

- No air circulation, burns get too hot. We should not be burning there, but it's the only place to burn now that we can't burn in the tower because that was too unsafe.
- Not OSHA or NFPA approved. Huge liability.
- Turnouts
 - Turnouts are off-gassing harmful carcinogens from smoke/fire.
 - We do not have any storage space designed to safely store turnouts. We leave them outside under a tarp, or we store them in our garage bays, which is exposes anyone that enters.
 - Cadets are told to take these turnouts home, in a car that will likely trap those harmful gasses in the vehicle. They may even take them into their homes.
 - We do not have turnout specific washers and dryers, meaning they don't ever get cleaned.
 - This exposure creates even more liability.
- The Solution
 - Station 76
 - Updated Estimate: \$10,260,000
 - \$5.1 million for turnout locker room, bathrooms with showers, classrooms, mess hall, fitness/PT room, offices, conference room.
 - \$2 million for all-inclusive burn tower (basement, stairwells, repelling, live burns, etc.)
 - \$1 million for paving and parking
 - \$1.6 million for 4-bay garage
 - \$650k for storage space
 - Funding
 - Exploring revenue sources within fire.
 - Exploring a possible "Public Safety Bond"
 - The need is dire (liability, compliance, code)
 - Our fire department is the best in the state, we have a duty to provide them with adequate equipment and facilities so they can focus on what they do best.... saving lives.

Councilmember Whetstone asked what the proposed flow in and out of the new Fire Station 75 would be. Harold explained that the proposed site design would include a primary entrance and exit onto the main street. He noted that the garage bays are

planned as drive-through bays, allowing fire apparatus to pull in from one side and exit through the other. This configuration eliminates the need for backing in and improves efficiency and safety when vehicles are entering or leaving the facility. Mayor Lang asked how many acres the site of the new Fire Station 75 is. Harold replied 2 acres.

Councilmember Christensen asked if the same neighborhood complaints will occur with the new proposed training facility. Harold replied that there are no neighborhoods near the proposed site.

Councilmember Wood asked what types of training facilities other cities—such as Salt Lake City, Harriman, and Riverton—currently have. She also inquired whether, if those cities do not have comparable facilities, West Valley City could potentially make its proposed fire training center available for use by other departments on a rental basis. Chief Evans explained that many surrounding cities already send their firefighters to train with West Valley City. He noted that, aside from Unified Fire Authority’s facility located in Salt Lake City’s industrial area, there are limited training facilities available in the region. He stated that West Valley City’s training academy has hosted firefighters from multiple agencies, including South Jordan, West Jordan, Murray, South Salt Lake, and Draper. Over the past four years, each academy session has included participants from these neighboring departments, demonstrating existing regional reliance on West Valley City’s training capabilities.

Councilmember Wood asked if the City is compensated for this training. Chief Evans explained that when other cities participate in West Valley City’s fire academy, their compensation is provided in the form of instructors rather than direct payment. He noted that the City’s training division consists of only two full-time staff members, and academies require between six and eight instructors to operate safely and effectively. He emphasized that participating agencies provide personnel to help meet those staffing needs, ensuring adequate supervision and safety during training. He added that there may be additional opportunities for collaboration or expanded use of the proposed facility in the future.

Councilmember Wood asked if Cities like Provo or Ogden have training facilities. Chief Evans noted that, in addition to Unified Fire Authority’s facility, there is the Utah Fire and Rescue Academy near the Provo Airport, which is operated by Utah Valley University. He also mentioned that Ogden has a smaller training center. However, he indicated that within the Salt Lake Valley, training facility options are limited compared to the demand.

Councilmember Wood expressed concern that if West Valley City is investing approximately \$10 million in a new training facility that will be used by other municipalities, those agencies should also contribute financially. She questioned why other cities would benefit from the facility without sharing in the cost and suggested exploring options for cost participation or funding partnerships. Ifo acknowledged the concern and indicated staff would explore potential cost-sharing arrangements, including having participating agencies contribute to construction costs or prorating usage fees based on time or participation. Chief Evans also noted that a new 12-week academy is scheduled to begin March 10, further demonstrating the facility's regional use and demand.

The Mayor and Council had no further questions or concerns.

Police Shooting Range

Harold Moleni, Administrative Analyst, presented a PowerPoint Presentation summarized as follows:

- Rocky Mountain Tactical Training Range (RMTTR)
- Background
 - o Utah's growth
 - o Families, Entrepreneurs, Global Events choose UTAH
 - o With growth comes challenges, most important = SAFETY
 - o Law enforcement infrastructure has not kept up with growth
- The Need
 - o For our police department alone... 60 range days
 - o House bill 84 (2024) – "School Safety/Guardian Bill"
 - o Specific training requires specific space
 - o Outdoor elements
- Currently Available
 - o Murray PD Range (indoor)
 - o Miller training facility – POST (indoor)
 - o SLC PD Range (indoor)
 - o Lehi PD Range (indoor)
 - o LDS Church Security (indoor)
 - o Cottonwood Heights (indoor)
 - o UPD range (outdoor)
 - o Bountiful range (outdoor)
 - o Utah County Sheriff's Office Spanish Fork (outdoor)
 - o SLC airport (outdoor)

- Fruit Heights – Davis County (outdoor)
 - Camp Williams (outdoor)
- Why West Valley City?
 - We're the best
 - Added police presence
 - Law enforcement hub in underserved community
 - Location, location, location
 - We fill a state-wide need, but we are in control
 - We are DOERS
- Pricetag
 - "State-of-the-art" – Built right, built to last, non-obsolete
 - \$14-15 million to build from the ground up
 - Opportunity cost of using WVC-owned land (scarce)
- Granite School District
 - Redwood Elementary campus vacancy
 - Relocation of Granite PD headquarters
 - HB-84 "School Safety/Guardian Bill"
 - Partnership opportunity?
- Granite
 - RMTTR at their HQ
 - Preferential scheduling
 - SRO support
 - HB-84 assistance
- WVC
 - Retrofit – cut costs in half
 - Build on someone else's land
 - Proactive approach to school safety (SROs and HB-84)
- Retrofit Updated Costs
 - \$7.5 MILLION TOTAL
 - Simplified Breakdown:
 - \$2 million building addition
 - \$3 million range build
 - \$2.5 million retrofit adjacent space
- Funding Options
 - State
 - Larry H. and Gail Miller Foundation
 - Federal
 - Bond
- Support

- Senator Curtis and Representative Maloy
- Letters of support from several state legislature
- Letters of support from 13 police chiefs
- Letters of support from the Miller Foundation and Granite

Mayor Lang asked if outside funding has been looked at for the Fire Training Center as well. Harold responded that the City does need to pursue regional participation and funding partnerships. He explained that fire academies typically run for approximately 12 weeks, which limits how many departments can be accommodated at one time compared to police training, which can be scheduled more flexibly. He agreed that the facility should be considered a regional training center and stated that staff will explore additional funding contributions from participating cities.

Councilmember Huynh expressed support for the proposed training facility, stating he believes it is a great idea that would benefit both the community and the City. He commended the detailed presentation and appreciated the funding options that were outlined, particularly given current budget constraints. He noted that the proposed City contribution represents a relatively small portion of the overall project cost and that potential participation from state, federal, or other funding partners would make the project even more advantageous. He indicated his personal support for moving forward with the project.

The Mayor and Council had no further questions or concerns.

Road Projects

Dan Johnson, Public Works Director, presented a PowerPoint Presentation summarized as follows:

- CIP Project Selection Process
 - Project selection is based on:
 - Data
 - Data
 - ...and more Data!!!
 - How projects are evaluated
 - Each project is entered into a standardized evaluation spreadsheet model
 - Multiple data sources are used to identify needs, risks, and public benefit

- Projects are scored and ranked using objective criteria
- 343 potential projects have been evaluated in the current plan
- Pavement Condition Assessment
 - Cyl | Platform
 - AI-powered street scanning system that evaluates pavement condition and provides a numeric health score of each street segment.
- 2026 Asphalt Overlay
 - Asphalt Overlay on the following roads
 - 2700 West- 4700 South to 4100 south
 - 4100 South - 7100 West to 6400 West
 - 4100 South- I-215 to Redwood Road
 - Including Bridge Deck Preservation work on the 4100 South/I-215 Bridge
 - Speed Humps on the following roads
 - Deno Drive
 - Meadowbrook Drive
 - Laurel Canyon Drive
 - Glowing Sky Drive
- 5900 West Extension
 - Parkway Blvd to Beagley Road
 - New Construction
- 4000 West Improvements
 - 4700 South to 4100 South
- 3900 South Improvements
 - Redwood Rd to Jordan River
 - Joint project with Taylorsville
- 7200 West Reconstruction
 - 4100 South to 3500 South
 - Joint project with Magna City
- Other Upcoming Projects
 - City Hall Parking Lot
 - 6800 West Reconstruction – 3620 South to 3500 South
 - Centennial Park Signal – 5600 West 3240 South
 - 3500 South Safe Sidewalk – 7040 West to 6935 West
 - 4100 South Pavement Preservation – 4000 West to 6000 West
 - 6000 West Bridge – UT&SL Canal
 - Dartmouth Bridge – UT&SL Canal
 - 5400 West Canal Bridge – UT&SL Canal

- 5400 South Improvements & Overlay – 4700 South to 4100 South
- 6400 West Overlay – 4365 South to 4100 South

Councilmember Harmon asked if the overhead power will be moved under on the 4000 West project. Dan stated that the City could pursue the proposed improvement if directed by the Council, but emphasized that the primary constraint is funding. He noted that the Lancer Way project cost approximately \$1.5 million for half a mile, and a similar improvement along 4000 West would likely exceed \$3 million. He explained that expanding this approach citywide would require a policy-level decision by the Council regarding funding priorities. Ultimately, he stated that while the project is feasible, it comes down to available financial resources. Mayor Lang stated that she would rather explore the option now, rather than later.

Mayor Lang asked whether the entrance sign on 3900 South will remain in its current location or be relocated as part of the upcoming improvements. Dan responded that the entrance sign will need to be relocated. He stated that staff have identified a couple of potential new locations for it and that the relocation will be coordinated as part of the project.

Councilmember Huynh asked staff to review the City Hall parking lot project and compare it to a nearby project located around 4100 South and Redwood Road, which he noted was completed for approximately \$1 million. He commented that the referenced project appeared well done and suggested it could serve as a comparison point when evaluating potential improvements to the City Hall parking lot. He asked staff to study the differences in scope and size between the two projects. Dan responded that the City received approximately 13 bids for the project, with proposals ranging from about \$1.1 million to \$1.7 million. He noted that several bids clustered in the \$1.1 to \$1.2 million range, indicating strong market competition. Based on the number of bids and the pricing spread, he stated that the City secured a very competitive market price for the project.

Ifo noted that while Dan moved quickly through the spreadsheet, the project evaluation process behind it is highly detailed and comprehensive. He explained that after reviewing the criteria with Dan and John, he was impressed by the extensive rating system used to prioritize Capital Improvement Projects (CIP). Ifo stated that, unlike some cities that rely solely on software to generate project lists, Dan's team has developed a system that incorporates approximately 100 data points to evaluate and rank projects before making recommendations. He emphasized that while final approval always rests with the Council, projects brought

forward have already gone through a thorough and structured evaluation process. He added that this system is particularly helpful when responding to residents who question why certain streets are improved before others. The criteria account for both reconstruction and long-term maintenance planning, such as slurry seals that may follow major improvements. Ifo stressed that the data-driven approach ensures consistency and fairness in project selection and reflects significant effort by Dan and his department.

Dan outlined several of the data points used in the City's Capital Improvement Project (CIP) prioritization process. He explained that projects are evaluated based on roadway classification (major, minor, collector), speed limits, and pavement condition. The analysis also includes school route rankings and active transportation usage, incorporating Strava heat map data to identify where cyclists and runners frequently travel. Additional criteria include alignment with the City's active transportation plan, traffic accident history (including pedestrian-related incidents), drainage system condition, the presence of aging infrastructure such as corrugated metal pipes beneath roadways, and overall traffic volumes. Dan added that the evaluation also considers coordination opportunities with private development projects and the potential for future development that could elevate a roadway's priority. He emphasized that these factors collectively inform a comprehensive, data-driven approach to project selection.

Mayor Lang asked about previous bike lanes in the Lake Park area near Neil Armstrong Elementary, noting that when parking increased along the roadway—particularly near nearby apartments—the bike lanes appeared to disappear or fade. She inquired whether the City plans to reinstall bike lanes in that area and whether no-parking restrictions might be considered to preserve space for cyclists. Dan responded that he did not immediately recall marked bike lanes on that specific segment and noted that some of the roads in the area include wider sidewalks that can accommodate bicycle use. Mayor Lang expressed interest in restoring the area as a safer and more comfortable route for cyclists, particularly given its quieter, neighborhood setting near the school. Dan responded that it was a good question and something staff could review further. He noted that areas near schools can present unique challenges, particularly related to parking and drop-off traffic. After clarification that the parking concerns were primarily associated with nearby apartments rather than the school itself, Dan stated he would need to look into the specific conditions and history of that roadway before providing a definitive answer. He acknowledged that while school pick-up and drop-off periods can be congested, cyclists are typically aware to avoid those peak times.

The Mayor and Council had no further questions or concerns.

WVC is Me

Harold Moleni, Administrative Analyst, presented a PowerPoint Presentation summarized as follows:

- 2026 City Theme: “WVC IS ME”
 - o WVC IS ME is a city-wide declaration that West Valley City is defined not by assumptions or old narratives, but by the people who live, work, and serve here. Our city is built from powerful stories and cultures that come together to form one shared identity. This initiative exists to strengthen pride in our city, celebrate our diversity while also unifying our people in purpose, and inspire ownership in the future we are building together. West Valley City is not just a location – it is its people.
- The Plan
 - o Assembled a WVC IS ME team
 - o Current/established city events will be branded as WVC IS ME
 - o Introduction of new events geared towards our purpose
- Timeline of new “WVC Is Me” Specific Events
 - o March 14th – City-Wide Scavenger Hunt
 - o March 26th – Family Fitness Center – Community Night
 - o May – Graffiti Wall Drop Party
 - o July 4th – Games, Fireworks, Ariel Photo
 - o August – Back 2 School Event and Concert (Day Won)
 - o October – Trunk Party and Haunted House (Day Won)
 - o December – Christmas Festival
 - Christmas Express
 - Tree Lighting Ceremony
 - Firetruck Santa Route
- What we need from you (Council and Staff)
 - o Follow along... literally follow our socials. It’s free.
 - o Help spread the word.
 - o Our team will be contacting you for help on specific events.
 - o Show up when you can, not because you “have to”. Be with the people. (Graffiti wall)
- Ifo-isms
 - o “The key is to fall in love with the city that you serve.”

- “Complete your tasks, and when you’re done with your tasks... ask yourself: ‘what can I do to make West Valley City a better place?’”
- WVC is me
 - *“I’m keeping my eyes on the people, that’s the prize.” -Common*

Councilmember Christensen expressed appreciation for the City’s social media efforts but noted that he does not rely heavily on social media for information. He stated that he primarily reviews the City Council calendar and suggested that events and initiatives be clearly included there. He requested that calendar entries include brief explanations rather than one-line titles, so Councilmembers understand the purpose and context of the event before attending. He shared that he has attended events at the Cultural Center without knowing what to expect beforehand and emphasized the importance of providing sufficient detail so Councilmembers can better prepare and engage.

Harold responded that the City Manager’s Office has been exploring the development of a centralized, universal calendar that would provide more detailed information about City events. He acknowledged that improving event communication is a need not only for Councilmembers but also for residents, who often may not be aware of what is happening in the City. He explained that staff are researching options for a system that would automatically compile and populate events from various departments into one central calendar. Harold thanked Councilmember Christensen for the feedback and indicated staff would continue working to improve clarity and accessibility of event information.

Councilmember Wood expressed support for the City’s outreach efforts and acknowledged the demographic likely being reached through social media. However, she emphasized the importance of ensuring communication strategies also include residents who do not use social media. She noted that some community members—particularly older residents—may rely on other forms of communication and should not be overlooked. She encouraged staff to continue expanding outreach efforts to include a broader range of age groups and interests, and to provide clearer descriptions of events so all residents feel informed and invited. She stressed the importance of inclusive messaging so that individuals of all ages, including older residents, feel comfortable participating in City events and initiatives.

Harold responded that expanding engagement beyond social media is an area the City will continue to improve. He emphasized that broader outreach is important

and acknowledged the need to better connect with residents who may not engage digitally. He also encouraged Councilmembers to assist by leveraging their personal networks and community relationships to help invite and inform residents about City events. Harold noted that public perception does not always reflect reality, and increased education and communication are key to building unity and ensuring residents feel included and informed.

The Mayor and Council had no further questions or concerns.

John thanked all staff who presented during the retreat, noting that they had a limited timeframe to prepare their materials. He expressed appreciation not only for the presentations but also for the ongoing work completed throughout the year. He stated that the purpose of the presentations was to demonstrate how staff have aligned their efforts with the Council's previously identified focus areas and priorities. John emphasized that the direction provided by the Council the prior year was taken seriously, and staff worked diligently to implement those priorities, which was reflected in the updates shared over the two days.

The Mayor and Council adjourned for a break at 10:55 AM.

The Mayor and Council reconvened at 11:17 AM.

Abby Smock, Finance, presented a PowerPoint Presentation summarized as follows:

- Last years 5 strategic objectives
 - o Community, Prosperity, Attractiveness, Reputation, Diversity
- What you cared about most last retreat...
 - o Housing Quality and Placement
 - o Public Safety and Services
 - o Financial Sustainability
 - o Fair Access and Opportunity
 - o Zoning and Land Use Decisions
 - o City Identity and Perception
- Last year Prosperity and Attractiveness showed up the most across Council priorities, with Community, Diversity, and Reputation closely tied and often overlapping
- Action we took that aligned to strategic objectives...
 - o Capital and Infrastructure investments

- Approvals for water line upgrades, road projects, sewer expansion, and facility improvements
- Public safety enhancements
 - Fire station repairs, safety equipment purchases, dispatch contracts
- Housing and zoning actions
 - Rezones, land use amendments, code clarifications to streamline development
- Economic Development
 - Business license updates, incentive agreements, park usage permits, and fee structures
- Administrative Operations
 - Budget amendments, internal code corrections, procedural easements, and policy updates
- Civic Engagement and Events
 - Community event sponsorships, holiday displays, neighborhood grants, and outreach
- Strategic Planning and Image
 - Policy documents, city branding, strategic budget priorities, council planning
- This FY, Community and Prosperity showed up most across approved actions with Council
- Council approvals FY 2025-2026 mostly focused on Development and Purchases within the city

Ifo stated that the intent of the session was to make the discussion less structured than the previous year and instead provide an open forum for dialogue. He explained that with all department leaders and staff present, the goal was to give Councilmembers the opportunity to share their interests, priorities, and objectives. He emphasized that staff were available to answer questions and primarily intended to listen and gather direction from the Council.

COUNCIL OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

Councilmember Whetstone

1. Prioritize Police/Public Safety

Councilmember Whetstone expressed appreciation for Chief Jacobs' public safety presentation and stated his belief that West Valley City has one of the best police departments in the state. He referenced his participation in the Citizens Academy and ride-alongs, noting that he has been consistently impressed with the department's professionalism and operations. He highlighted the Real-Time Crime Center as an effective "force multiplier," describing it as an innovative tool that improves safety, enhances investigations, and increases response effectiveness without requiring proportional increases in staffing. He noted that documented gang presence in West Valley City remains higher than in many other areas of the state and acknowledged the unique challenges posed by crime activity originating both within and outside the City. While overall crime is trending downward, he observed that West Valley City's crime rates remain higher than some peer cities.

Councilmember Whetstone stated that maintaining current funding may allow the City to sustain existing performance levels, but if the goal is to become "best in class," additional investment may be necessary. He suggested expanding the Real-Time Crime Center through additional analysts, increased camera partnerships, and stronger regional coordination. He also raised concerns about officer workload, noting that officers in West Valley City appear to handle a significantly higher call volume than those in some neighboring cities. He expressed interest in reviewing staffing sustainability, recruitment, and retention efforts to preserve progress made in public safety.

In closing, he emphasized that residents measure safety not by crime statistics, but by whether they feel safe where they live, shop, and raise their families. He suggested that continued investment in effective and innovative public safety strategies would support that goal.

Mayor Lang agreed and stated that one of the most common questions she has received since WestFest has been whether the event will be safe to attend in the future. She referenced the shooting that occurred near Granger High School during WestFest when it was located there and acknowledged the impact it had on public perception. She shared that after previously attending WestFest with her children when they were younger, the incident discouraged her from returning. She expressed appreciation for the officers' response last year, noting that they recognized the situation quickly and responded promptly, though they narrowly missed preventing the incident. She acknowledged that police

presence and intelligence efforts were in place and credited officers for their actions.

Councilmember Christensen acknowledged Mayor Lang's concerns and agreed that public perception of safety is critical. He noted that while the Police Department responded quickly and appropriately, the lingering question for residents is whether they feel safe attending large community events like WestFest. He emphasized that beyond operational readiness and officer presence, the City may need to focus on communication and visible security measures to help reassure the public. He suggested that restoring confidence may require not only strong public safety planning but also proactive messaging so residents understand the precautions in place.

Councilmember Wood stated that public safety appears multiple times on her priority list. She emphasized that residents want to feel safe in everyday situations—whether shopping, filling up their gas tank, walking on trails, or attending community events. Councilmember Wood shared that while she personally feels safe, she recognizes that some residents do not, and that fear can limit participation in community activities. She expressed support for visible police presence, acknowledging the associated cost but emphasizing its value in providing reassurance. She concluded by stating that public safety efforts should focus not only on high-profile incidents like WestFest, but also on maintaining a strong, everyday presence that supports residents' sense of security.

Nichole Camac, City Recorder, noted that a closed session regarding WestFest security has been scheduled for March 10, 2026.

Councilmember Don Christensen

1. **Support Public Safety**

Councilmember Christensen shared that he has participated in the Citizens Fire Academy twice and noted that even at that time, the training facility was outdated. He expressed support for building a modern, state-of-the-art training facility, emphasizing the importance of providing high-quality resources for police and fire personnel. He referenced Unified Fire's facility and acknowledged the value of having strong regional training infrastructure. He stated that investing in updated facilities would not only improve training but also demonstrate leadership and commitment to public safety.

Councilmember Christensen also expressed support for the Police Department shooting range and drew a comparison to Washington, D.C., where he observed that a visible and coordinated public safety presence contributes significantly to a sense of security. He suggested that visible officer presence at community events can provide reassurance to residents.

Councilmember Christensen emphasized that public safety should remain a top priority in budget discussions. He noted that while many initiatives are important, if something is working—particularly in the area of safety—the City should consider investing further to strengthen it. He concluded by reiterating that how the City allocates its resources sends a strong message about its priorities, and that continued investment in public safety supports both real outcomes and public confidence.

Councilmember Cindy Wood

1. **Public Safety**

Councilmember Wood noted that as warmer weather approaches, she anticipates renewed concerns from residents about safety on trails, including issues such as motorbikes traveling near pedestrians. She referenced previous discussions with Chief Jacobs and questioned whether additional staffing may be necessary to ensure adequate coverage and help residents feel secure. Councilmember Wood shared additional concerns related to neighborhood safety, specifically referencing juveniles riding small motorbikes and four-wheelers through residential streets. She noted that these incidents are often short-lived and difficult to address, as the riders leave before officers can respond and pursuit may create additional risks. She suggested that increased police presence, including unmarked units, could help deter this type of activity and identify repeat offenders. She reiterated that additional staffing and funding may be necessary to provide that level of coverage.

She also connected safety concerns to ongoing boarding house enforcement, stating that residents often feel uneasy living next to overcrowded homes. She acknowledged that some neighbors may be reluctant to report violations and expressed uncertainty about how to better identify unreported cases. Additionally, Councilmember Wood expressed concern about short-term rentals, particularly Airbnbs, noting that frequent turnover of unfamiliar individuals can create discomfort for nearby residents. While she recognized that regulatory options may be limited, she stated that short-term rentals

are among the uses that cause her the most concern from a neighborhood stability and safety perspective.

2. Parks

Councilmember Nordfelt expressed support for potentially acquiring Carl Sandberg Elementary as a CRC. Councilmember Wood expressed concern about the proximity of Carls Sandburg Elementary with Fassio Park. She stated that some parks have not been maintained well and questioned whether it makes sense to pursue additional park space when existing parks are not fully maintained or completed. She emphasized that parks remain a high priority for her and referenced the upcoming parks study, stating she is eager to review its findings to better understand overall needs and priorities. Councilmember Wood indicated that the City should focus on finishing and properly maintaining current park assets before expanding further, and she raised questions about how park-related decisions fit into the City's broader priorities and available resources.

Mayor Lang asked if there is enough programming needed for more open space or if providing more open space will enable more programming. Jamie Young, Parks and Recreation Director, responded that the situation involves balancing both maintenance and expansion needs. She explained that the City is currently limited in expanding recreational programming due to a lack of available field space. As a result, the City must turn away groups each year, including soccer, rugby, and lacrosse organizations, because there are not enough fields to accommodate demand. She noted that utilizing or improving existing properties could help address these needs without requiring the City to acquire and develop entirely new land. In her view, this approach could provide a more immediate solution to meet programming demand while also making productive use of City-owned property.

Mayor Lang asked if Fassio Park is programmed. Jamie clarified that neighborhood parks are typically designed for passive use and do not include restrooms, which limits their ability to support organized programming or larger gatherings. She explained that these parks are intended for nearby residents who can return home if restroom access is needed. Regarding Carl Sandburg, she noted that if the City were to use school sites for programming or as Community Resource Centers (CRCs), restroom access would need to be addressed. One option would be to coordinate use of school facilities, but if that were not feasible, temporary solutions such as portable restrooms could be utilized. She acknowledged that porta-potties are not ideal but may serve as a practical option if programming were expanded at those locations.

Councilmember Wood reiterated that parks remain a key priority for her, particularly in terms of maintenance, upkeep, and completing parks that were previously acquired or set aside but remain unfinished. She referenced properties that were purchased years ago and questioned why development has not yet occurred. She specifically mentioned Newton Farms, noting that although it is a newer acquisition compared to other properties, it has become highly visible and is frequently brought up because it appears unfinished and sits along a well-traveled corridor. She expressed concern about the appearance of these sites and indicated that the Council will need to determine whether and when to move forward with development or renewed planning efforts.

Councilmember Whetstone asked a follow-up question regarding funding for the fire training facility. He inquired whether, if additional grant or foundation funding becomes available after the City has already bundled or committed local funds—such as bonding or allocated match dollars—the City would be able to apply that new funding toward reducing the overall financial burden. Specifically, he questioned how previously committed funds interact with later-awarded state, federal, or foundation dollars, and whether those external funds could offset bonded amounts or otherwise reduce the City's financial exposure, based on how similar funding has been structured in past projects.

Jim explained that bond funds are typically structured for specific project purposes and must be used in accordance with the bond agreement. While bond proceeds are restricted to the defined project categories, the City can structure bonds with varying levels of flexibility. Greater flexibility—such as earlier call dates or anticipated paydowns—generally comes with slightly higher interest costs. He noted that grant funds are also project-specific and must be used for their intended purpose if awarded. However, if grant funding becomes available after bonds are issued, the City may be able to use those funds to offset general fund contributions or potentially pay down bonds once they become callable. In some cases, bonds can be structured with the intent to pay down a portion early if anticipated funding materializes, though that flexibility carries a cost. Regarding timing, staff indicated they are attempting to coordinate potential funding sources before moving forward with bonding to avoid unnecessary borrowing. They acknowledged that market conditions are relatively stable and not highly volatile, but also noted that it can be difficult to secure outside funding after a project is already financed and underway. Waiting to better align grant opportunities with bond issuance may reduce the total amount borrowed, though it could delay the project. Overall, the discussion highlighted the tradeoff between moving forward quickly with bonding versus waiting to confirm external funding sources in order to minimize long-term costs.

The Mayor, Council, and staff discussed next steps related to parks funding and capital improvements. Ifo noted that while some funding sources, such as the SAFER grant for firefighters, are already in motion and the City is moving forward regardless, direction is still needed on parks and related amenities. Ifo indicated that bonding could provide an opportunity to address multiple park improvements at once—including aging playground replacements and deferred maintenance—rather than tackling projects incrementally. It was noted that maintaining 40-year-old playground equipment is increasingly difficult due to lack of replacement parts and growing liability concerns, making full replacement a more practical long-term solution. A preliminary estimate suggested that fully developing and upgrading existing parks could cost in the range of approximately \$80 million, prompting Councilmembers to request a review of the forthcoming parks master plan study before making decisions. Several Councilmembers emphasized the importance of reviewing the study, establishing clear priorities, and determining community appetite before pursuing a bond.

The Council discussed the possibility of structuring park improvements over time—potentially through phased bonding aligned with expiring debt obligations—to minimize tax impacts. However, it was also acknowledged that residents may prefer to see improvements completed more quickly rather than waiting for incremental funding. Overall, there appeared to be general agreement that parks are a priority, with further discussion and direction to follow after review of the parks master plan update.

3. City Maintenance

Councilmember Wood reflected on last year’s strategic priorities—particularly prosperity, image, and reputation—and emphasized that community perception continues to be a significant concern among residents. She noted that during the General Plan meetings with both the Planning Commission and community members, “image” consistently emerged as a key issue. Residents expressed interest in elevating neighborhoods and improving overall appearance. While acknowledging that the City cannot dictate how individual homeowners maintain their yards, she emphasized that neighborhood pride and visual quality remain important to the community.

Councilmember Wood stressed that City maintenance plays a critical role in setting that standard. She shared concerns about inconsistent infrastructure upkeep in her neighborhood—specifically deteriorating streetlight poles with peeling paint—contrasted with newer installations on nearby streets. She indicated that while the City has invested in corridor improvements such as 3500 South, 4100 South, and

4700 South, ongoing maintenance must match those investments to sustain the elevated image. She referenced positive improvements at Centennial Park and along major corridors, including the shift away from billboard-style signage toward monument-style signage, as examples of efforts that enhance visual appeal. However, she emphasized the importance of consistency across the City—not just in high-visibility areas.

Councilmember Wood stated that if the City expects residents to maintain and elevate their properties, it must also hold itself to the same standard. She suggested identifying targeted, achievable improvements each year—whether related to lighting, sidewalks, parks, or general infrastructure upkeep—to demonstrate commitment to neighborhood pride. In closing, she expressed that while image improvements may be difficult to quantify, continued investment in maintenance and visible enhancements can foster community pride, strengthen reputation, and reinforce the message that West Valley City is committed to elevating its neighborhoods citywide.

Mayor Lang recalled that in previous years the City faced similar concerns about maintaining its own properties to the same standard expected of residents. She noted that at that time the City hired two additional employees specifically assigned to maintaining City-owned property, including weed control and general upkeep. However, she questioned whether those positions are still dedicated to that purpose and whether the current staffing levels are sufficient. She acknowledged that if those employees are already fully occupied with routine maintenance, it may be difficult to expand their responsibilities to include additional aesthetic improvements, such as repainting aging streetlight poles or addressing other visible infrastructure issues. Mayor Lang emphasized the importance of ensuring that City property is properly maintained, both to model the standard expected of residents and to support broader efforts to elevate neighborhood image and community pride.

Mayor Lang asked if there is a need for more employees. Dan clarified that while the City is addressing some streetlight needs, there are still areas that have not yet been fully touched. He explained that repainting deteriorated poles is a viable and relatively cost-effective option, but it competes with other priorities within the streetlight budget. Currently, the City allocates approximately \$300,000 per year for streetlight capital improvements, which primarily funds new installations and larger replacement projects. An additional \$100,000 per year is dedicated to maintenance, much of which goes toward repairing underground electrical issues. A significant challenge involves older fiberglass poles installed in neighborhoods decades ago. Many of those systems were constructed without conduit, meaning that when wiring fails or poles are damaged—often from vehicle strikes—it becomes extremely difficult to locate and

repair breaks in the line. Because there is no protective conduit, crews often must trace the conductor manually, which is time-consuming and costly. As a result, much of the maintenance funding is consumed by restoring functionality rather than aesthetic upgrades like repainting poles. Dan indicated that fully modernizing these older systems—such as installing conduit and upgrading infrastructure—would require a more substantial capital investment beyond current annual allocations.

Dan clarified that regarding City-owned property maintenance, the City does have resources dedicated to upkeep. He explained that there is a small crew assigned to maintenance efforts, along with a temporary seasonal hiring budget that allows the City to bring on high school or seasonal workers during peak growing months. These crews focus heavily on right-of-way maintenance, particularly weed control. One of the biggest challenges they face is timing, since weeds across the City tend to grow at the same time in early spring, which can temporarily overwhelm available staff. For larger mowing and landscape areas, the City often contracts the work out because it is generally cost-effective and prevents full-time employees from being pulled away from core public works responsibilities. Dan emphasized that while resources are not unlimited, maintenance is not being neglected. He welcomed feedback from the Council on priority areas, especially during peak maintenance season, so staff can better focus their efforts where concerns are highest. Regarding dead trees in the right-of-way, Dan noted that staff are working with the Parks Department to identify trees that need to be removed and determine replacement options. Funding is a factor, but the issue is actively being reviewed rather than ignored. Overall, he conveyed that systems and personnel are in place, though seasonal workload demands and budget limitations affect how quickly visible aesthetic issues such as weeds, dead trees, and aging infrastructure can be addressed.

4. Sunset Hills/Diamond Summit

Councilmember Wood shared that some areas of the city – specifically Sunset Hills and Diamond Summit – seem to feel disconnected from West Valley City. She explained that residents in those neighborhoods have expressed that they do not feel fully part of the city, and in some cases even identify more with neighboring communities, noting that one resident pointed out having a West Jordan zip code. She acknowledged that other areas may feel similarly overlooked and that this sense of disconnect can contribute to low civic engagement, including low voter turnout. She emphasized that making contact and showing presence matters, and she plans to make a greater effort this year to attend neighborhood events such as Night Out gatherings. She suggested that additional participation from Councilmembers and staff could help strengthen relationships in those areas. While recognizing that some residents may not actively seek city involvement, she noted that consistent outreach

and attention can build connection over time. Councilmember Wood tied this concern to broader discussions about the city's image and community identity, asking how West Valley City can continue building a stronger sense of inclusion so that all neighborhoods feel seen, valued, and part of the larger community.

Mayor Lang asked how zip codes can be changed to reflect West Valley City. Craig responded that in the past, efforts were made through the City's website and outreach to correct addressing issues by submitting updates to Google. He noted that the process involved sending address information to Google for review and correction, but acknowledged that the platform is not always easy to work with. He mentioned that several residents had previously participated in those efforts to try to resolve discrepancies. He added that address verification can also involve coordination with the post office, indicating that multiple entities may need to be engaged to fully correct mapping or mailing inconsistencies.

Councilmember Wood discussed concerns raised by residents in areas such as Sunset Hills and Diamond Summit who feel disconnected from West Valley City, noting that some homes carry a West Jordan zip code (84081), which contributes to confusion about city identity. She explained that in some neighborhoods, one street may be in West Valley City while the next is in West Jordan, further reinforcing that disconnect. She clarified that the concern is not necessarily how addresses appear online, but rather residents' perception that they are not fully part of West Valley City. Staff acknowledged the unique boundary challenges and suggested exploring opportunities to hold more City events in those areas to increase engagement and visibility. Councilmember Wood agreed that hosting events there could help strengthen community connection and reinforce inclusion within the City.

Councilmember Lars Nordfelt

1. Property Tax Resolution

Councilmember Nordfelt referenced a recent presentation regarding property tax increases tied regularly to inflation. He noted that the Council had not yet made a formal decision on the matter and stated that the retreat setting would be an appropriate time to discuss it further and provide direction to staff on whether to move forward with a resolution.

Mayor Lang stated that staff reviewed the matter and advised that, procedurally, the Council cannot bind or obligate future City Councils to a standing commitment, such

as automatic property tax increases tied to inflation. She noted that while the current Council could express intent or adopt a policy framework, it could not legally commit future Councils to that action.

Councilmember Nordfelt clarified that he was not proposing a binding policy, but rather a procedural resolution expressing the Council's intent to consider regular property tax adjustments tied to inflation. He acknowledged that under Utah's Truth in Taxation requirements, the Council would still need to formally vote each year to approve any increase, similar to the annual judgment levy process. He stated that adopting a resolution outlining this intent would provide consistency and sustainability in long-term budgeting. He contrasted property tax with sales tax and income tax, noting that those revenue sources naturally increase as prices and wages rise, without requiring additional legislative action. In contrast, he observed that property tax revenues do not automatically grow with property values, limiting the City's ability to keep pace with inflation and rising costs. He emphasized that property tax is the City's most stable revenue source and suggested that implementing predictable, incremental increases would help avoid large periodic adjustments. He characterized the approach as proactive and fiscally responsible, arguing that smaller, regular increases aligned with inflation would better support long-term budget sustainability and provide greater stability for both residents and future Councils.

Jim stated that over the past approximately 15 years, the City's average annual property tax increase has been about 2%. He compared that to inflation metrics over the same period, noting that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) averaged approximately 2.1% and the Municipal Cost Index (MCI) averaged about 2.4%. He explained that while the long-term average has been relatively modest, there have been some years with larger increases, including adjustments of 10%, 7%, and 2%. He also referenced earlier significant increases, including a 65% increase in one year and an 18.6% increase in 2011–2012. Jim concluded that although the City's historical property tax increases have generally been moderate, they have not fully kept pace with inflation over time.

Mayor Lang expressed support for Councilmember Nordfelt's suggestion and stated that once the City receives the updated parks master plan—along with Dan's capital improvement planning for roads—the Council should evaluate overall capital needs comprehensively. She indicated that the City could either bond for major capital improvements and adjust property taxes to cover the associated debt service, or establish a structured funding mechanism that provides steady, predictable revenue. Her preference was to avoid continually falling behind and relying on occasional windfalls to address deferred needs. Mayor Lang suggested that adopting a strategic,

incremental approach to tax adjustments could allow the City to systematically fund capital improvements over time, rather than waiting to address large gaps after they accumulate.

Councilmember Whetstone stated that he would prefer a more informal approach rather than adopting a resolution that automatically places property tax increases on the agenda each year. He expressed appreciation for Finance bringing forward projected expenditures and identifying potential future shortfalls, but indicated he would rather retain flexibility to discuss increases as needed rather than creating an expectation of automatic annual adjustments. He also raised concern about potential reaction from the state legislature. He noted that lawmakers have already discussed adding additional “guardrails” or limitations on local governments’ ability to increase property taxes. He suggested that adopting a formal resolution signaling annual increases could draw unwanted attention and potentially prompt stricter statutory limits. In response, it was noted that current law already requires voter approval for increases above 5%, and some municipalities have considered smaller annual increases to avoid larger periodic adjustments. However, Councilmember Whetstone reiterated that a formal resolution could invite heightened scrutiny or unintended legislative consequences.

Councilmember Nordfelt stated that he supports establishing an annual practice of proposing a property tax increase aligned with the Municipal Cost Index (MCI), or a comparable measure of inflation. He suggested that if the MCI exceeds a certain threshold, the Council could consider a lower percentage increase. He emphasized that the City would still be required to hold a Truth in Taxation hearing and formally vote on any increase each year, but that the stated intent would be to maintain a sustainable and predictable revenue source through property tax. He indicated that clear and thoughtful messaging would be important, and expressed confidence that a reasonable, consistent approach would be understood by the public.

Mayor Lang noted that members of the business community have expressed concern about large, unexpected increases from other taxing entities, including a recent 14% county increase. Mayor Lang suggested that a consistent annual adjustment by the City would provide greater predictability for businesses and residents, allowing them to better plan their budgets. He concluded that a modest, steady increase could help maintain long-term fiscal sustainability while avoiding larger, more disruptive adjustments in the future.

Mayor Lang clarified that West Valley City controls only one line item on a resident's total property tax bill. She noted that the City's portion—often approximately \$600 to \$700 per year—is less than many homeowners' association fees, yet it funds police, fire, roads, sidewalks, parks, and other core services. She emphasized that improved messaging about what residents receive for that amount could help the public better understand the value provided. She also referenced ongoing discussions at the state level regarding potential legislation that would place additional restrictions on how property tax revenue may be used, including proposals that could limit depositing property tax revenue into capital improvement (CIP) funds for future projects.

Councilmember Huynh acknowledged the rationale for modest, inflation-based property tax increases and the importance of maintaining financial stability. However, he expressed concern that incremental increases—such as 3% annually—function primarily as short-term “band-aid” solutions and do not position the City to undertake transformative economic development projects. He referenced the example of bringing Costco to the City, noting that significant financial capacity was required at the time to support relocation of an elementary school and facilitate redevelopment. He emphasized that large-scale projects require substantial financial strength, whether through bonding or larger revenue increases, and that without adequate reserves or incentive capacity, the City may struggle to attract major commercial investments.

Councilmember Huynh compared West Valley City's position to cities such as Harriman and Riverton, which have successfully attracted retailers like Trader Joe's. He suggested that incentive packages often play a role in those decisions and expressed concern that West Valley City may lack sufficient financial flexibility to compete for similar opportunities. He clarified that this is not a reflection on the City's Community and Economic Development Department, but rather a matter of available resources. He concluded by stating his belief that the City should pursue strategies to strengthen its overall financial position in order to attract and support significant economic development projects. In his view, relying solely on small annual tax increases may not provide the level of funding necessary to meaningfully elevate the City's long-term economic competitiveness.

After further discussion, a majority of the Council agreed to add the resolution to the next City Council meeting for consideration.

Councilmember Scott Harmon

1. Pop up Vendors

Councilmember Harmon raised concerns regarding enforcement of the City's regulations on pop-up vendors, particularly during weekends when the activity appears most prevalent. He referenced prior communication encouraging Councilmembers to report violations but questioned whether enforcement is realistically occurring during high-activity periods, such as holidays. He noted that on Valentine's Day, vendors appeared on nearly every corner, sometimes multiple vendors per intersection, often operating with canopies and tables. He asked whether enforcement efforts are limited to areas observed and reported by Councilmembers or whether police officers proactively address violations during routine patrols. He expressed concern that without consistent enforcement, vendors may simply operate unless specifically reported. Councilmember Harmon further questioned whether additional weekend staffing or dedicated enforcement coverage may be necessary, emphasizing that if the City intends to meaningfully regulate pop-up vending, resources must align with that goal.

Councilmember Wood asked if staff should also relook at increasing food truck permits. Mayor Lang stated that she would not be in favor of that due to the impact it could have on brick and mortar restaurants. Councilmember Whetstone stated that he would like to look at that because the number was set so long ago. Councilmember Wood stated that she would like to see a map of the current locations of the licensed food trucks.

Upon inquiry regarding mobile vending trucks, Steve explained that enforcement is complicated by state law. The legislature requires municipalities to recognize business licenses issued by other jurisdictions, meaning vendors licensed in one Utah city can legally operate in another without obtaining a separate local license. As a result, West Valley City cannot impose a cap on the number of vendors or refuse operation solely because they are licensed elsewhere. He noted that this limits the City's ability to restrict traveling vendors, since they may lawfully operate under reciprocal licensing provisions. Concerns were raised about whether maintaining permanent vendor permits while also allowing traveling vendors could increase overall vendor presence, but Steve emphasized that the City does not have authority to limit the number of state-recognized license holders. It was clarified that Salt Lake County issues health department permits for legitimate food vendors. Vendors who are properly licensed must comply with county health regulations, including food handling and storage requirements. However, questions remain about vendors who leave equipment or structures overnight and whether those situations comply with City code. Steve acknowledged frustration that the legislature has not provided

municipalities with clearer authority to regulate or cap mobile vending activity and indicated that staff could provide additional information regarding permanent permits and where they are currently operating.

After further discussion, the Council requested that staff look into options for weekend and holiday coverage.

2. Olympics/ Maverik Center

Councilmember Harmon suggested that, with the upcoming Olympics, the City should consider focusing revitalization efforts around 3500 South and the Maverik Center area to prepare over the next several years. He proposed exploring projects that would “spruce up” the corridor and improve connectivity and traffic flow, particularly given the challenges experienced during major events at the arena. As a creative concept, he suggested reaching out to The Boring Company to explore the feasibility of constructing a tunnel connection between the Maverik Center and Valley Fair Mall (the city’s downtown area). He referenced the underground transit loop developed by The Boring Company in Las Vegas as an example of how such infrastructure could shuttle visitors efficiently between destinations. Councilmember Harmon indicated that while the idea was conceptual, improved connectivity—whether through a tunnel, shuttle system, or enhanced pedestrian access—could benefit not only Olympic events but also other large-scale events hosted at the arena. He emphasized that improved circulation and alternative transportation options could help alleviate congestion and enhance the visitor experience in West Valley City’s event district.

Mayor Lang

1. Sign Violations

Mayor Lang raised concerns regarding a commercial truck being used as a mobile electronic billboard, parked in a lot across from Harmons near 4000 West and approximately 4616 South. She referenced a previously adopted City ordinance prohibiting the use of commercial vehicles as stationary advertising platforms when parked within the City. She stated that she has observed the vehicle on multiple Tuesday evenings after City Council meetings. The truck is reportedly illuminated like an electronic billboard and advertising for Boost Mobile, a business not located near that parking lot. On a prior occasion, she contacted staff but was unable to intercept the vehicle. Most recently, she parked nearby, photographed the truck, and followed it to obtain the license plate number. She noted that once the driver became aware of her presence, the billboard display was shut off and the vehicle left the area. Mayor Lang asked whether other Councilmembers or staff had observed the truck operating

elsewhere in the City or if it was being moved to different locations to avoid enforcement. It was indicated that staff intends to issue a citation, and no additional sightings were reported at that time.

Mayor Lang also raised concerns regarding a developer placing advertising signs in the park strip along 3500 South for lots being sold west of the City. She stated that Legal has advised her that signs placed within the public right-of-way may be removed without legal consequence. Although she avoids removing campaign signs to prevent any appearance of impropriety, she indicated she has considered taking down these development signs in hopes that repeated removal would discourage continued placement. She noted that the signs are typically installed on Saturday mornings and removed by Saturday evenings, limiting their duration but still violating City code. Mayor Lang asked whether staff is actively monitoring or enforcing against these types of temporary right-of-way signs and confirmed that, under City ordinance, no signage is permitted within the public right-of-way except for authorized regulatory signs (e.g., traffic control signage). She suggested that weekend enforcement, potentially coordinated with vendor or code enforcement staff (as discussed previously), may be necessary if this pattern continues.

Councilmember Wood discussed concerns raised by residents in areas such as Sunset Hills and Diamond Summit who feel disconnected from West Valley City, noting that some homes carry a West Jordan zip code (84081), which contributes to confusion about city identity. She explained that in some neighborhoods, one street may be in West Valley City while the next is in West Jordan, further reinforcing that disconnect. She clarified that the concern is not necessarily how addresses appear online, but rather residents' perception that they are not fully part of West Valley City.

Staff acknowledged the unique boundary challenges and suggested exploring opportunities to hold more City events in those areas to increase engagement and visibility. Councilmember Wood agreed that hosting events there could help strengthen community connection and reinforce inclusion within the City.

2. My Hometown

Mayor Lang inquired about the status of the My Hometown program, specifically asking whether there are plans to expand the program this year or if the focus will remain on refining and improving the current structure before pursuing further growth. Craig responded that staff is planning to expand outreach efforts into the southeast corner of the city, focusing on completing outreach in areas that have not yet fully participated in the My Hometown program. He noted that there are approximately 13 months

remaining in the current cycle to continue building awareness and engagement in those neighborhoods. He noted that Magna is also working to form a My Hometown program.

Councilmember Huynh

Councilmember Huynh stated that all his concerns and topics had already been discussed and he had nothing further to add.

In closing discussion, the Mayor and Council reflected on the need to better reach older residents through City communications. There was lighthearted discussion about social media platforms, with members joking about needing outreach for the “45-plus crowd” and referencing reactions at home to the City’s Instagram presence. While acknowledging the importance of engaging younger residents through platforms like Instagram—described as future leaders and long-term community members—Councilmembers emphasized that established residents often rely more on Facebook or other traditional channels. The consensus was not to abandon newer platforms, but to broaden outreach so communication efforts effectively reach both long-time residents and younger audiences. The overall takeaway was that the City should continue expanding its communication strategy to ensure all demographics feel informed and included, rather than focusing on a single platform or age group.


*Note for the record: The Mayor and Council adjourned for a lunch break at 12:05 PM.
The Mayor and Council reconvened at 1:07 PM*

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Upon motion by Councilmember Harmon all voted in favor to adjourn.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS OF THE WEST VALLEY COUNCIL, THE ANNUAL BUDGET RETREAT MEETING OF FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2026 WAS ADJOURNED AT 2:21 PM BY MAYOR LANG.

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true, accurate and complete record of the proceedings of the Annual Budget Retreat Meeting of the West Valley City Council held Friday, February 20, 2026.



Nichole Camac

Nichole Camac, MMC
City Recorder