Minutes of the City Council Work Session of the Syracuse City Council, held on June 23, 2026 at 6:10 p.m., in a hybrid in-person/electronic format via Zoom, meeting ID 858 2273 4897, in-person in the City Council Conference Room at 1979 W. 1900 S., and streamed on the Syracuse City YouTube Channel in accordance with House Bill 5002, Open and Public Meetings Act Amendments, signed into law on June 25, 2020.

Present: Councilmembers: Andrea Brown (arrived at 6:17 p.m.)
Brett Cragun
Paul Watson
Abraham Pollard

Mayor Dave Maughan
City Manager Brody Bovero
Deputy City Recorder Marisa Graham

Excused: Councilmember Julie Robertson

City Employees Present:
Assistant City Manager Stephen Marshall
City Attorney Colin Winchester
Fire Chief Aaron Byington
Police Chief Alex Davis
Community and Economic Development Director Noah Steele
Public Works Director Robert Whiteley
Communications Specialist Kara Finley

The purpose of the Work Session was to receive public comments; receive report from the Victim Advocate; pre-application consultation with City Council, Rick Scadden of Blox Development; review proposed amendment to Syracuse Municipal Code (SMC) Section 8.10.170 pertaining to building permit issuance practices; discussion/review of possible amendments to Syracuse Municipal Code (SMC) Titles 4 and 10 to require recycling programs for multi-family residential communities; discussion regarding consideration to vacate a utility easement granted by Floyd Hamblin.; discussion/review of proposed Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between Daivs County cities and Davis County (Davis Stormwater Coalition).; discussion/review of proposed amendments to the Syracuse City Storm Water Management Program (SWMP); discussion/review of options for Park-and-Ride parking lot regulations; discussion regarding options of pursing “Just Serve” City designation; continued discussion/review of option to implement a Transportation Utility Fee; and discuss/review draft amendments to Syracuse City Recruitment and Retention Policy.

Public comments

Michael Christensen addressed the Council as a representative of Go Unite, a nonprofit focused on civic engagement serving Davis and Salt Lake County since 2021. Mr. Christensen highlighted the organization's 2025 accomplishments, including collecting approximately 95 large bags of trash from parks, coordinating 27 events, and engaging 88 to 200 volunteers. He also announced an upcoming free pop-up style community art event scheduled for July 22nd at the Syracuse City Library, where community members may showcase up to two pieces of their artwork.

Victim Advocate report.

A staff memo from the City Attorney explained the Syracuse City Victim Advocate Celeste Hopkins has prepared a presentation for the City Council regarding the Syracuse City Victim’s Services Program. An annual presentation is one of the requirements for receiving grant funding through the Victims of Crime Act.

Ms. Hopkins used the aid of a PowerPoint presentation to report on the number of victims served in Syracuse City in 2025; she explained that while the combined total of victims served across all three cities Syracuse, Clinton, and Sunset showed a slight overall decline, Ms. Hopkins explained that this was offset by a significant increase in the number of services provided per victim, indicating that individual cases were requiring more intensive support. Regarding service categories, Ms. Hopkins noted that information and referrals, emotional support and safety planning, and criminal justice assistance and advocacy all saw marked increases. Domestic violence remained the leading victimization category in Syracuse for the current fiscal year, followed by stalking and harassment, and child physical abuse and neglect. She noted that total victimization counts may exceed total victim counts because a single victim may be subject to multiple crime categories.

Ms. Hopkins closed with a positive reflection on the impact of the work, sharing the story of a domestic violence survivor who, on the morning of a follow-up interview, surprised Ms. Hopkins with roses as an expression of gratitude.

The Mayor and Council thanked Ms. Hopkins for her presentation.

Planning item D1: Application for pre-application consultation with City Council, Rick Scadden of Blox Development.

A staff memo from the Community and Economic Development (CED) Director explained that the City has received a request for a pre-application consultation. The request is from Rick Scadden of Blox Development. The purpose of this discussion item is to provide input about the development opportunity.

Community and Economic Development (CED) Director Steele introduced the pre-application consultation process, explaining that developers occasionally approach the City to gauge the Council's general disposition toward a potential rezone or project before committing resources to detailed engineering and design. He noted the subject property is located at the northwest corner of the city near the Shiners Bluff golf course, at the intersection of 193 and the West Davis Corridor.

Mayor Maughan invited Rick Scadden, the applicant to ask the Council questions regarding his proposed development. Mr. Scadden began by raising the topic of potential city boundary adjustments between Syracuse and West Point City, noting that the parcel is split between both cities. The Mayor firmly redirected the discussion, clarifying that a pre-application consultation is limited to land use discussion and is not a forum for boundary change negotiations. The Mayor noted that a boundary adjustment would require a separate agenda item and a formal county process.

Mr. Scadden then described his proposal to develop a multifamily residential project on the north side of SR 193, on the portion of the property that lies within or adjacent to Syracuse City limits. Councilmember Pollard stated that he could not support additional high-density housing in Syracuse, citing prior commitments made to the community regarding the strain such development places on city services and public resources. Councilmember Watson echoed this sentiment, indicating he would not have an appetite for a high-density rezone even if all the land were within Syracuse's boundaries.

CED Director Steele noted the property presents access challenges, with only a ride-in, ride-out access point from SR 193, and that the City's general plan designates the area for commercial use. The Mayor noted that residents in the adjacent neighborhood have previously expressed strong opposition to any road connection from that area through to SR 193. The consensus of the Council was that a multifamily project on this property would not be supported at this time.

Planning item D2: Proposed amendment to Syracuse Municipal Code (SMC) Section 8.10.170 pertaining to building permit issuance practices.

A staff memo from the Community and Economic Development (CED) Director explained that it has been the City’s practice to require that natural gas lines and electrical power lines be installed prior to the issuance of building permits within a subdivision. However, that requirement is not included in current SMC 8.10.170, which lists several building permit prerequisites. The oversight was brought to the City’s attention when a subdivision developer recently requested several residential building permits in a new subdivision in which natural gas lines and power lines had not yet been installed. It is recommended that SMC 8.10.170 be amended to conform to the City’s practice.

CED Director Steele reviewed his staff memo and presented a proposed text amendment to clarify that building permits will not be issued for new subdivisions until gas and electric utility infrastructure is in place. He explained that while this has been the City's standard practice, the existing ordinance language does not explicitly require gas and power as conditions for permit issuance. A recent dispute with a developer prompted staff to codify this practice.

The CED Director and Mayor facilitated a high-level discussion among the Council that centered around the consideration of whether the City should require that all essential utilities; including natural gas, electric power, water, and sewer be stubbed to the street level within any new development, even if individual homes do not connect to all utilities at the time of construction. Concern was raised that omitting infrastructure such as gas lines at the subdivision level could limit future homeowners' options and potentially create costly retrofits. Public Works Director Robert Whiteley noted that having gas and power installed prior to streetlights and street signs prevents damage to infrastructure during construction.

The Council felt comfortable with the proposed amendments and the Mayor directed staff to send this item to the Planning Commission, with a recommendation to revise the ordinance to explicitly require natural gas and electric power as part of the subdivision infrastructure prior to building permit issuance. The broader question of requiring all essential utilities to be made available at the street level in all new developments will be coupled with this amendment and reviewed by the Planning Commission simultaneously.

Discussion/review of possible amendments to Syracuse Municipal Code (SMC) Titles 4 and 10 to require recycling programs for multi-family residential communities.

A staff memo from the City Attorney explained that in February 2025, the Council implemented single-stream curbside recycling for all residences serviced by the City’s waste management contractor. The Council did not include multi-family residential communities at that time because the household waste from those residential units is collected and hauled away pursuant to private contracts. The proposed ordinance requires existing and future multi-family residential communities to implement a recycling program by January 1, 2027. The proposed ordinance also requires future multi-family residential communities to include recycling dumpsters within their site plans. The site plan provision (SMC 10.92.040(F)) was the subject of a public hearing before the Planning Commission on June 16, 2026. Following the public hearing, the Planning Commission voted to recommend the site plan provision to the City Council for approval.

City Attorney Winchester presented the proposed amendments addressing recycling requirements for multifamily residential developments. The proposal consists of two components; the first is a land use text amendment that has already been reviewed and recommended by the Planning Commission. It would require all future multifamily developments to include a site plan showing the location of an enclosed masonry receptacle area sufficient for both solid waste and recycling containers.

The second component addresses existing multifamily properties. Mr. Winchester proposed a compliance deadline of January 1, 2027, providing approximately six months for property owners to arrange recycling collection services. Requirements under this component include providing appropriately labeled recycling containers, ensuring at least weekly collection by a private contractor, and establishing an education program for both new and existing tenants regarding recycling practices.

The Council expressed general agreement with the proposed amendments. The Mayor indicated this item will move forward to the consent agenda at the July business meeting for the Council to take action on.

Consideration to vacate a utility easement granted by Floyd Hamblin.

A staff memo from Administration explained that in 1982, Floyd Hamblin granted an easement for sewer and storm drain that served the Ranchettes West Subdivision. In 2004 Tuscany Meadows Subdivision was built which allowed the sewer and storm drain lines to be relocated along Doral Drive. North Davis Sewer District filed a quit claim to vacate their interest in the utility easement, which gave full rights to Syracuse City. There is no city-owned storm drain in that easement, so the easement serves no purpose for public infrastructure. A letter was sent out to each property owner indicating the city's consideration to vacate the easement and inviting them to express any concerns. Responses received have been in support of vacating the easement.

Public Works Director Whiteley presented a request from Stan Hamblin regarding a 20-foot-wide utility easement that was originally granted for a storm drain and sewer line serving the Ranchettes subdivision. When the Tuscany Meadows subdivision was later developed, the drain lines were relocated. The sewer district subsequently quit-claimed the easement to Syracuse City, which has not maintained any infrastructure within it since. It is unclear whether an abandoned line remains in place, though the City has no maintenance obligation over it.

Mr. Whiteley reported that letters were sent to all affected parties and that responses received by phone or email were uniformly in favor of vacating the easement. City Attorney Winchester advised that state statute governs the process for vacating public utility easements, which may require a public hearing and proper noticing. Staff will review the applicable statutory requirements and coordinate with the City Recorder to determine the appropriate process and timeline. The Mayor concluded that staff would work on noticing this public hearing and this item will move forward to the July 14 business meeting.

Discussion/review of proposed Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between Daivs County cities and Davis County (Davis Stormwater Coalition).

A staff memo from the Public Works Director explained that the interlocal agreement is updated every five years, which coincides with each new Utah pollutant discharge elimination system (UPDES) permit term. It allows the cities to work together as Davis County Storm Water Coalition to share resources in the effort to prevent pollution in the storm water. This agreement is required to implement the control measures of the storm water management program.

Public Works Director Whiteley explained that Syracuse City's five-year participation agreement with the Davis Stormwater Coalition is expiring and requires renewal. The coalition is a cooperative group of Davis County cities working together to satisfy the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state stormwater permit requirements, primarily through coordinated public messaging and education, because the renewal is structured as an interlocal agreement, it requires a public hearing prior to adoption.

The Council expressed support for the proposed agreement and the Mayor indicated this item would be on the next business meeting agenda for a public hearing and the Council can take action at that time.

Discuss/review of proposed amendments to the Syracuse City Storm Water Management Program (SWMP).

A staff memo from the Public Works Director explained that Syracuse City has updated the Syracuse City Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) in compliance with the Utah Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for discharges from small municipal separate storm sewer systems issued by the Utah Division of Water Quality. This general permit is issued in compliance with the provisions of the Utah Water Quality Act, Title 19, Chapter 5, UCA 2004 and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33USC). Updates to the SWMP are required each time the general permit is reissued. This permit is effective May 12, 2026 to May 11, 2031 when the permit will again be renewed. Permittees that are being renewed are given 180 days after the effective date to submit an updated SWMP to the division. The main purpose of the

SWMP is to provide a program that will improve the quality of storm water to the maximum extent practicable. These are achieved by setting measurable goals through six control measures. The control measures include the following:

- Public education and outreach on storm water impacts
- Public involvement / participation
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination
- Construction site storm water runoff control
- Long-term storm water management in new development and redevelopment
- Pollution prevention and good housekeeping for municipal operations

Public Works Director Whiteley reviewed his staff memo and reported that the City's state stormwater permit, issued under federal EPA authority, expired in May and has been renewed. As part of the five-year permit cycle, the City is required to update its Stormwater Management Program. A draft of the updated program was included in the meeting packet. Mr. Whiteley noted that public input is required, and a public hearing would satisfy that requirement.

The Council felt comfortable with the proposed amendments and the Mayor concluded that that this item will move forward to the July business meeting for a public hearing and a vote.

Discussion/review of options for Park-and-Ride parking lot regulations.

A staff memo from Administration explained that Syracuse City has received and reviewed concerns related to the use of City-owned park-and ride lots and related parking impacts on public roadways. A work group reviewed these issues and identified several areas where the City Council may wish to consider amendments to Syracuse Municipal Code Chapter 11.20. The purpose of this memo is not to recommend a specific regulatory approach, but to outline issues identified by the work group and present possible regulatory options for Council discussion and direction.

Issues Identified

The work group identified several recurring issues involving City-controlled park-and-ride lots and public roadways, including:

1. Commercial vehicles using park-and-ride lots for overnight parking, staging, or long-term storage;
2. Refrigerated commercial trucks or trailers operating refrigeration units overnight;
3. Vehicles, trailers, campers, or recreational vehicles being used for camping, sleeping, lodging, storage, or habitation;
4. Long-term storage of vehicles, trailers, campers, recreational vehicles, boats, or similar property in public areas;
5. The need to clarify or limit parking in park-and-ride lots during overnight hours;
6. The need to address recreational vehicles, camp trailers, boats, and similar equipment stored on public streets or rights-of-way; and
7. The possible need to update existing commercial vehicle parking regulations in residential areas.

Possible Regulatory Options

The City Council may wish to consider one or more of the following options as amendments to Chapter 11.20 of the Syracuse Municipal Code.

1. Prohibit Commercial Vehicles in City Park-and-Ride Lots

One option would be to prohibit commercial vehicles from stopping, standing, parking, storing, staging, or remaining in City-controlled park-and-ride lots unless expressly authorized by the City. This type of regulation could apply to commercial vehicles such as truck tractors, semi-trucks, semi-trailers, box trucks, dump trucks, flatbeds, tow trucks, cargo trucks, refrigerated commercial vehicles, refrigerated trailers, and similar vehicles. The Council could also consider exceptions for official City business, public utility work, emergency response, construction activity, transit operations, or other written City-approved purposes. This option would provide a clear standard for enforcement by prohibiting commercial vehicle use of park-and-ride lots generally, rather than limiting only overnight commercial parking.

2. Prohibit Overnight Parking in Park-and-Ride Lots

Another option would be to prohibit all vehicles from stopping, standing, parking, storing, or being left in a City-controlled park-and-ride lot during designated overnight hours. The work group report identified a possible overnight restriction from 12:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. This option would apply to all vehicles, not only commercial vehicles. It could help preserve park-and-ride lots for daytime commuter and public parking use while reducing overnight storage, camping, staging, or similar uses. A defined overnight restriction may also reduce enforcement ambiguity because enforcement would not depend on determining whether a vehicle has remained in place for a longer continuous period.

3. Clarify Prohibitions on Camping, Sleeping, or Habitation

The Council may also consider clarifying existing City Code provisions to expressly prohibit camping, sleeping, lodging, residing, or using a vehicle, trailer, camper, recreational vehicle, or similar conveyance for habitation in a City parking facility or park-and-ride lot, unless expressly authorized by the City. Possible language for discussion could include:

“No person may camp, sleep, lodge, reside, or use any vehicle, trailer, camper, recreational vehicle, or other conveyance for habitation in a City parking facility or park-and-ride lot, unless expressly authorized by the City.”

This approach would address habitation-related concerns while keeping the regulation within the City’s existing parking and public property framework.

4. Address Refrigerated Trucks Through Commercial Vehicle and Overnight Parking Restrictions

The work group discussed refrigerated commercial vehicles and trailers operating refrigeration units overnight in park-and-ride lots. One option would be to address this issue through broader commercial vehicle restrictions and overnight parking restrictions, rather than creating a separate refrigeration-unit or idling-specific regulation. Under this approach, refrigerated commercial vehicles or trailers would be prohibited because the vehicle or trailer itself would not be allowed in the park-and-ride lot, or because no vehicle would be allowed to remain in the lot during overnight hours. This may provide a simpler enforcement framework than focusing on whether a refrigeration unit is operating or whether a vehicle is idling.

5. Add or Amend Definitions

The Council may wish to consider adding or amending definitions in Chapter 11.20 to reduce ambiguity and support enforcement. Possible definitions could include:

City parking facility: Any parking lot, park-and-ride lot, parking area, off-street parking facility, driveway, access area, or other property owned, leased, operated, controlled, or maintained by Syracuse City and made available for vehicle parking or vehicle access.

Park-and-ride lot: A City parking facility designated, signed, intended, or commonly used for commuter parking, rideshare parking, transit access, carpooling, or similar public commuter use.

Commercial vehicle: Any vehicle, trailer, semi-trailer, truck tractor, vehicle combination, or similar conveyance used or maintained for business, trade, occupation, employment, transportation of property, transportation of equipment, delivery, hauling, or other commercial enterprise.

Overnight: The period between 12:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m.

Recreational vehicle: Motor homes, travel trailers, camp trailers, fifth-wheel trailers, truck campers, boats, boat trailers, off-road vehicle trailers, and similar recreational equipment.

6. Establish a 24-Hour Limit for Recreational Vehicles, Camp Trailers, Boats, and Similar Equipment on Public Roadways

The Council may also consider a related amendment addressing recreational vehicles and similar property parked or stored on public streets, roadways, shoulders, park strips, or rights-of-way. Possible language for discussion could include:

“No person may park, store, or leave a recreational vehicle, camp trailer, travel trailer, fifth wheel trailer, boat, boat trailer, utility trailer, off-road vehicle trailer, or similar recreational equipment on any public street, public roadway, public right-of-way, shoulder, or park strip for more than 24 consecutive hours.”

The Council may also wish to consider language preventing a person from moving a vehicle or trailer a short distance simply to restart the 24-hour period. Possible language could include:

“Moving a vehicle, trailer, boat, or recreational equipment from one location to another nearby location for the purpose of avoiding the 24-hour limitation shall constitute evasion of the parking restriction and shall not restart the 24-hour period.”

This option would allow limited short-term placement for loading, unloading, cleaning, preparation, or similar purposes while addressing extended storage on public roadways.

7. Update Commercial Vehicle Parking Rules in Residential Areas

The work group also discussed whether the City should revise existing commercial vehicle parking rules in residential areas. One option would be to eliminate any limited-time parking allowance for commercial vehicles in residential areas and replace it with an active loading or unloading standard. Possible language for discussion could include:

“No person may stop, stand, park, or leave a commercial vehicle on any public street, public right-of-way, shoulder, park strip, City parking facility, or public property located within a residential area, except while actively engaged in loading or unloading passengers, goods, materials, equipment, tools, or merchandise at a specific property or work site in the immediate area.”

Additional language could require the vehicle to be moved immediately after the loading or unloading activity is complete and could clarify that commercial vehicles may not be parked, staged, stored, or left in residential areas for driver rest, dispatch, convenience parking, overnight parking, fleet storage, business storage, or any unrelated purpose. This option would provide a more activity-based standard for enforcement.

8. Use Signage to Support Enforcement

The Council may wish to consider requiring or authorizing signage at park-and-ride lot entrances and other appropriate locations within each lot. Signage could identify the applicable restrictions and provide notice that violations may result in citation or towing. Possible sign language could include:

CITY PARK-AND-RIDE LOT

Passenger vehicles only.

Commercial vehicles are prohibited.

No overnight parking, 12:00 a.m.–5:00 a.m.
No vehicle storage, trailer storage, camping, or habitation.
Violators may be cited and/or towed at owner's expense.
Syracuse Municipal Code Chapter 11.20.

Policy Considerations

In reviewing these options, the City Council may wish to consider the following questions

- Whether commercial vehicles should be prohibited from park-and-ride lots entirely or only during overnight hours;
- Whether the proposed overnight restriction should apply to all vehicles or only certain categories of vehicles;
- Whether 12:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. is the appropriate overnight restriction period;
- Whether recreational vehicles, boats, trailers, and similar equipment should be limited to 24 hours on public roadways;
- Whether commercial vehicle parking in residential areas should be regulated through an active loading or unloading standard;
- Whether any exceptions should be included for City-authorized activity, public utility work, construction, transit operations, emergency response, or other public purposes; and
- Whether signage should be required before enforcement begins

City Manager Bovero reviewed his staff memo and facilitated a high-level discussion among the Mayor, Police Chief Davis, and the Council regarding the park and ride lots and street parking surrounding the lots. The Council discussed and reached a general consensus on the following policy directions:

Commercial vehicles should be prohibited from parking in the park-and-ride lots, with a limited exception for a resident special-use permit program. This permit would be available to Syracuse residents who drive large commercial vehicles as part of their trade and need temporary parking. Permitted vehicles would be subject to conditions, including a prohibition on running engines unattended overnight, which would effectively prevent refrigerated trucks from utilizing the permit. Recreational vehicles, boats, and trailers of any kind should be prohibited from the park-and-ride lots.

No habitation would be permitted in the park-and-ride lots. Council acknowledged the practical consideration that an officer encountering someone briefly sleeping in a vehicle could exercise discretion.

Personal vehicles would remain subject to the existing 48-hour parking limit, without an added time-of-day restriction. The Council acknowledged that some residents may have legitimate reasons for leaving a vehicle for a day or two, such as carpooling for a trip, and that the 48-hour rule provides sufficient enforcement authority for cases of extended, problematic parking.

On-street parking of large commercial vehicles was discussed in the context of residents who operate businesses from home. The Council affirmed support for language allowing commercial vehicles on public streets only while actively engaged in loading or unloading, which would provide immediate enforcement authority without burdening legitimate service work.

The Mayor concluded that staff had enough information to draft an ordinance and that this item will move forward to the July 14 business meeting.

Discussion regarding options of pursing "Just Serve" City designation.

A staff memo from Administration explained The JustServe City Program recognizes cities that demonstrate a commitment to volunteerism and community service. To receive the designation, the City would generally need to adopt and display a volunteerism proclamation and submit it to JustServe. The program also encourages cities to list volunteer opportunities on JustServe.org and recognizes outstanding community volunteers through the JustServe Hero Award. The attached JustServe materials provide additional detail on the designation process, program expectations, and potential future Global JustServe City Award criteria.

Alignment with City Mission and Key Results

The designation appears to align with Syracuse City's mission to provide quality, affordable services while promoting community pride, fostering economic development, and preparing for the future. It most directly supports the City-wide vision statement related to fostering "a strong sense of community pride, involvement, and public safety through improvements, events, and services." It also aligns with the City's targeted key result to seek out, actively recruit, and communicate with residents willing to volunteer skills and talents toward City initiatives and goals. While volunteerism would not replace core City services, the program could help connect residents with opportunities to support community events, parks and recreation efforts, beautification projects, emergency preparedness, neighborhood service, and other appropriate City or community initiatives

Potential Benefits

Possible benefits of pursuing the designation include:

- Providing a public statement of the City's support for volunteerism and civic involvement;

- Highlighting this tool to connect residents with local service opportunities;
- Supporting community pride and resident engagement;
- Strengthening partnerships with schools, churches, civic groups, nonprofits, and residents;
- Creating a formal framework to recognize outstanding volunteers;
- Supporting City goals related to volunteer engagement, public communication, and community-based service.

Use in City Publications

If the City receives the designation, it could be incorporated into City communications and branding materials where appropriate, including:

- City website and volunteer opportunity pages;
- Newsletters, utility bill inserts, and social media posts;
- Community event materials;
- Recognition of volunteer award recipients;

Any use of the JustServe logo or designation would be reviewed against the style guide provided by JustServe.

No direct application fee or significant direct cost has been identified. The primary impact would be staff time to coordinate the proclamation, communication, volunteer listings, and recognition efforts.

City Manager Bovero reviewed the staff memo and presented the Just Serve City designation program, explaining that it requires the passage of a resolution affirming the City's support for volunteerism and the recognition of volunteers, followed by active participation in the Just Serve platform for volunteer recruitment and recognition efforts. Mr. Bovero noted that Syracuse City already performs many of the program's qualifying activities, such as posting volunteer opportunities on Just Serve and recognizing exceptional volunteers. The designation would serve primarily as a public signal of the City's commitment to civic volunteerism and aligns with recently adopted key performance indicators.

The Council showed support for this item and the Mayor concluded that this item will be on the consent agenda at the July business meeting.

<u>**Continued discussion/review of option to implement a Transportation Utility Fee.**</u>

A staff memo from the Public Works Director explained that the City Council discussed the transportation utility fee at the May 26 work session. The notes from that meeting are included in this factual summation below. During the previous work session, the council requested more information about commercial categories and the possibility of using different subcategories based on business type and traffic generation. Below is the chart from our transportation utility fee analysis study. There are approximately 110 commercial businesses split into three categories based on square footage of building space

Table 4: Example Monthly Fees Scenario Comparison

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	
Pavement % Poor	25%	20%	15%	10%	
Pavement % Good	Under 50%	55%	60%	Over 65%	
Additional Funding from TUF	$ -	$ 500,000	$ 1,250,000	$ 2,000,000	
Total Pavement Funding	$ 1,500,000	$ 2,000,000	$ 2,750,000	$ 3,500,000	
	Potential Monthly Fees				Units
Single Family	-	$3	$7	$10	9,853
Multi-Family (Per Unit)	-	$2	$5	$8	1,279
Commercial <5k	-	$35	$88	$141	48
Commercial 5-10k	-	$106	$264	$423	28
Commercial >10k	-	$211	$529	$846	34
Institutional	-	$42	$106	$169	37

If the Council wanted to calculate the fee based on traffic impact, one option would be to use a simple four-tier system as follows:

- **Low trip commercial** - professional offices, financial institutions, real estate, accountants.
- **Medium trip commercial** - general retail, sit down restaurants, medical offices, gyms, personal services.
- **High trip commercial** - grocery stores, convenience stores, hotels, fast food restaurants, big box retail.
- **Industrial** – manufacturing, warehouses, distribution centers, contractor yards.

This would create 7 categories in total:

1. Single-Family Residential
2. Multi-Family Residential
3. Low Commercial

4. Medium Commercial
5. High Commercial
6. Industrial
7. Institutional

Assistant City Manager Marshall reviewed the staff memo and presented an updated approach to the Transportation Utility Fee structure. In response to prior Council questions, staff proposed categorizing businesses into four tiers based on traffic impact; low, medium, high, and industrial, rather than a flat square-footage-based calculation. This methodology would more equitably distribute the fee based on actual trip generation.

The Council discussed the need for a defined appeal process should a business dispute its assigned category and agreed that such appeals should be directed to a hearing officer rather than the Council itself.

Public Works Director Whiteley recommended updating the existing transportation study to formally support the new tiered methodology, using the ITE Trip Generation Manual as the technical standard. Staff estimated this process would take approximately 90 days.

Mayor Maughan directed staff to proceed with updating the study, with a clear intent to move forward with implementing the fee. The Mayor concluded that once the study is complete the Council will be able to review that at a future work session meeting.

Discuss/review draft amendments to Syracuse City Recruitment and Retention Policy.

A staff memo from City Manager Bovero explained that as discussed in the annual budget retreat, this item is aimed at re-evaluating Syracuse City's Recruitment and Retention Policy. While the catalyst for this re-evaluation is the growing concern over the policy's affordability, particularly in light of personnel costs outpacing City revenue growth and the resulting structural deficit in the General Fund- the primary intent of this discussion is twofold:

1. Review the importance of having a well-balanced policy, particularly regarding competitive compensation and budget affordability.
2. Begin discussing some concrete proposals in "bite-size" sections, so the Council can adequately consider each part of the policy during the meetings. **This discussion will primarily focus on Sections 2.C.2 and 2.C.3 of the policy to discuss competitive wage scales and benefits.**

Revisiting the Purpose and Goals of the Policy

The current policy aims to:

- Attract and retain the best talent possible in a competitive market;
- Minimize inefficiencies associated with high employee turnover and lack of knowledge or talent;
- Provide a stable and transparent system of employee career advancement;
- Reward performance over tenure;
- Benchmark compensation and benefits regularly to remain competitive in the market.

Section 2.C.2 Discussion: Level of Compensation

The policy establishes a market-based compensation framework intended to help Syracuse City remain competitive while also accounting for the City's fiscal condition. Wage scales are generally tied to benchmark comparisons with other cities and entities, with different adjustment standards depending on the City's financial circumstances. Here is a summary of the proposed changes to this section of the policy:

1. Setting the Wage Scales and Wages: Under the policy, wage scales are adjusted based on the agreed "market wage", which in the current draft is
   a. Average of the top 3 for non-supervisory positions
   b. Average of the top 4 for supervisory positions

The wages are adjusted to the same 'market' level as the wage scale unless the financial conditions dictate that the city is in a budget situation that calls for a reduced amount. The categories in the draft are: Normal Year, Constrained Year, Severely Constrained Year, or Emergency Year.

Analysis: This change aims to create a responsiveness to the cost of city services (in the form of employee wages) based on the City's financial situation from year to year.

Difference Between Wage Standards

The current draft lowers the standard for 'market wages' from the average of the top 3 for all positions to average of the top 3 for frontline positions only, and average of the top 4 for supervisory positions. It is estimated that in a normal year, this would realize a budget savings of approximately $90,000 in the next fiscal year.

In a Constrained Year or Severely Constrained Year, the benchmark wage adjustments would drop further to achieve an estimated savings of between $200,000 to $250,000. There is still real concern that lowering the standard to these levels increases the risk of the City losing in wage competition and creating a situation where a significant tax increase will be needed to regain a competitive position in the future. This has been the experience of some nearby entities recently. The Council asked to see an estimate of the budgetary impact if the standard were adjusted from average of the top 3 to average of the top 4 for all positions. The estimated difference is a savings of $180,000 in a Normal Year.

Concerns with Private Sector Raises

The Council also previously discussed the sensitivity with wage increases versus the recent experience of the private sector. The following represents a summary of the data, which was assisted by Ai in the research:

Prompt: Using data pertaining only to private sector employees, not government employees, what is the average wage increase amount in the USA for private sector employees from 2020 to 2025. Use reputable sources only. If possible, break out the different averages by the different private sector categories.

Response: Using BLS Current Employment Statistics data via FRED, the average hourly wage for U.S. private-sector employees increased from about $29.36/hour in 2020 to $36.44/hour in 2025. That is a $7.08/hour increase, or 24.1%, equal to about $1.42/hour per year over five years.

This is nominal average hourly earnings, not inflation-adjusted. It covers private nonfarm payroll employees only, excludes government employees, and excludes benefits, irregular bonuses, retroactive pay, and employer payroll taxes. FRED identifies the source as the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, with monthly, seasonally adjusted dollars-per-hour data from the CES establishment survey.

Private-sector category	2020 avg hourly wage	2025 avg hourly wage	Increase	% increase	Avg increase per year
Total private	**$29.36**	**$36.44**	**$7.08**	**24.1%**	**$1.42/yr**
Goods-producing	$29.98	$37.20	$7.22	24.1%	$1.44/yr
Private service-providing	$29.21	$36.27	$7.06	24.2%	$1.41/yr
Mining and logging	$34.54	$40.31	$5.77	16.7%	$1.15/yr
Construction	$31.65	$39.70	$8.06	25.5%	$1.61/yr
Manufacturing	$28.75	$35.45	$6.70	23.3%	$1.34/yr
Trade, transportation, and utilities	$25.23	$30.97	$5.75	22.8%	$1.15/yr
Wholesale trade	$32.37	$38.73	$6.36	19.6%	$1.27/yr
Retail trade	$20.84	$25.46	$4.62	22.2%	$0.92/yr
Transportation and warehousing	$25.32	$31.55	$6.23	24.6%	$1.25/yr
Utilities	$43.56	$52.54	$8.98	20.6%	$1.80/yr
Information	$43.79	$52.59	$8.80	20.1%	$1.76/yr
Financial activities	$37.84	$47.57	$9.73	25.7%	$1.95/yr

Private-sector category	2020 avg hourly wage	2025 avg hourly wage	Increase	% increase	Avg increase per year
Professional and business services	$35.11	$44.26	$9.15	26.1%	$1.83/yr
Private education and health services	$28.51	$35.59	$7.09	24.9%	$1.42/yr
Leisure and hospitality	$17.11	$22.84	$5.73	33.5%	$1.15/yr
Other services	$26.59	$33.07	$6.48	24.4%	$1.30/yr

2. Responding to Positions with Recruitment & Retention Issues: Except during an Emergency Year, positions that consistently experience weak applicant pools or high turnover for competitive reasons may receive wage adjustments at no less than the Constrained Year standard. The Council also retains the ability to adjust wage scales and wages at any time to address competitiveness or labor market issues.

Analysis: As the level of compensation goes down in Constrained and Severely Constrained years, it can make a bad situation worse when it comes to positions that are already in a tight labor market. This can be catastrophic to city services. This provision provides some protection to ensure the city has a higher chance of staying competitive for these positions, even during a financially difficult year.

3. Career Progression: The policy distinguishes between advancements, promotions, and annual merit increases.

An advancement recognizes an employee's increased skill, knowledge, or capability. These are generally used for frontline, non-supervisory positions and may include movement to a higher title within the wage scale, such as Maintenance Worker I to Maintenance Worker II. Employees who qualify for an advancement receive an increase to at least the minimum of the new wage scale, but not less than a 5% increase.

A promotion involves movement to a higher position with significantly increased responsibilities or supervisory duties. Employees who are promoted receive an increase to at least the minimum of the new wage scale, but not less than a

10% increase. The Council previously inquired about what other cities offer for advancements and promotions. We have reached out to our benchmark cities to get that information. As of Wednesday, June 17th, the following responses have been received:

City	Advancements	Promotion
Syracuse City	5% or bottom of wage scale	10% or bottom of wage scale
Kaysville City	5% or bottom of wage scale	5% or bottom of wage scale
Layton City	*Public Safety*	10% or bottom of wage scale
	5% 1st, 8% 2nd advancement	
	Non-Public Safety: 5%	10% or bottom of wage scale

The policy also continues the City's merit-based compensation approach. Syracuse City does not use automatic step increases or cost-of-living increases based solely on time in service. Instead, annual merit increases are tied to employee performance and improvement.

Analysis: While benchmarking wage ensure the city pays the market rate for a position, the opportunity for an employee to progress through a career is through merit increase, advancements, and/or promotions. The current draft has annual merit increases at 33% of the annual sales tax growth rate. Since sales tax can be volatile, the Council may want to consider smoothing it over the average of 2 or 3 years.

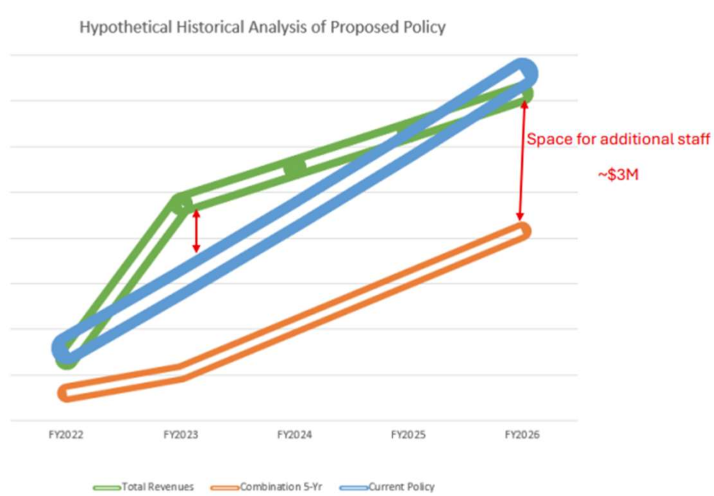
Section 2.C.3 Discussion: Competitive Benefits Policy

The policy requires the City's benefits package to be reviewed with the City Council every four years. The purpose of this review is to determine whether adjustments are needed to keep the City competitive with benchmark cities and entities.

Analysis: In addition to comparing benefit levels with benchmark organizations, the City would evaluate whether other benefit options could help distinguish Syracuse City in recruitment and retention. This gives the Council flexibility to consider benefits that may improve the City's competitiveness beyond wages alone.

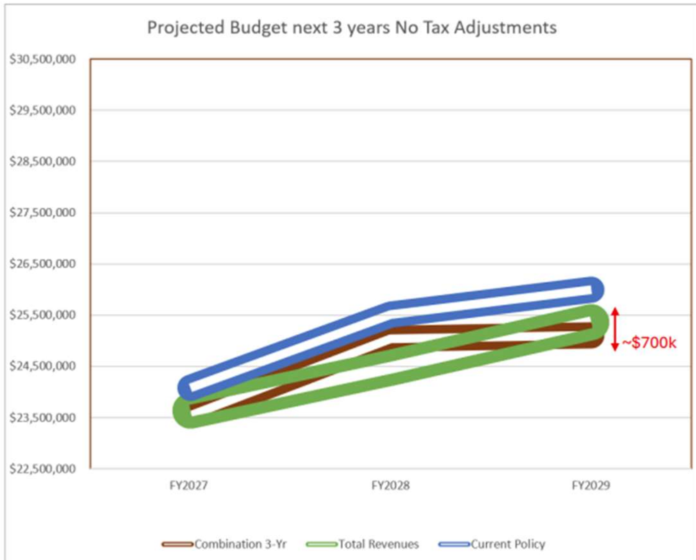
Budgetary Analysis

The Council requested some budgetary estimates on how the proposed policy would impact the City financially. Below are hypothetical graphs of how the current draft policy would have played out from FY2022 to FY2026, a projection of FY2027 to FY2029 without any tax rate adjustments, and a hypothetical with a 10% increase between FY2027 and FY2029.

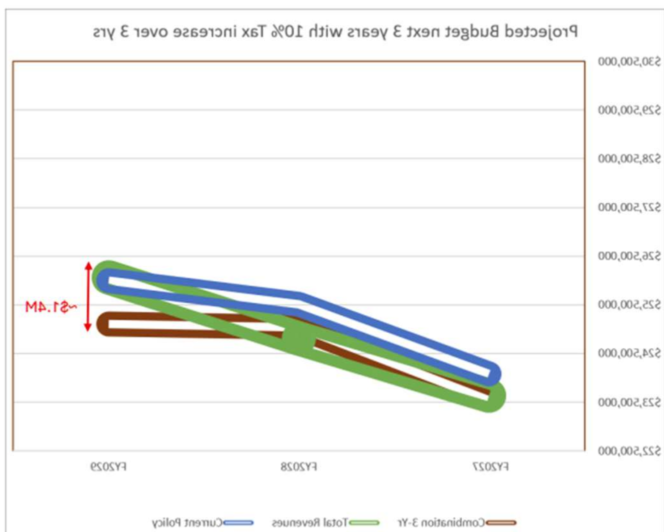


Assumptions:

1. FY22 tax increase was 16.74%
2. FY23 tax increase was 33.54%
3. No tax increases FY24 through FY26
4. No additional staff included in costs



Assumptions:
1. $800k additional sales tax in FY27, includes Costco but not area around Costco
2. $1M reduction in cost in FY29 due to bond payoff
3. Wage competition remains high
4. No additional staff included in costs



Assumptions:
1. $800k additional sales tax in FY27, includes Costco but not area around Costco
2. $1M reduction in cost in FY29 due to bond payoff
3. Wage competition remains high
4. No additional staff included in costs

City Manager Bovero reviewed his staff memo and presented draft amendments to the City's compensation and retention policy. The core proposed change adjusts how the City benchmarks its wage scales: non-supervisory positions would be set at the average of the top three comparable cities, while supervisory positions would be set at the average of the top four. Under constrained or severely constrained budget years, the benchmarks would drop further, to the averages of the top four and five respectively, yielding projected savings of $200,000–$250,000 in those years. In a normal year, the proposed structure represents approximately $90,000 in savings compared to a flat top three benchmark.

Mr. Bovero addressed a prior question from Councilmember Watson regarding setting all positions at the top four average, noting this would yield approximately $180,000 in savings annually but expressed concern that it could compromise the City's ability to attract lateral hires, particularly in the police department, where the average officer experience has been declining due to a wave of retirements and a recent reliance on academy graduates.

Mr. Bovero presented three financial projection models spanning fiscal years 2027–2029: one assuming no tax adjustments, one including a hypothetical held-rate property tax scenario, and a retrospective model showing how the policy would have performed since 2022. All three models suggested a plausible path to a structurally balanced general fund by fiscal year 2029, particularly given anticipated new sales tax revenue from commercial development near the Costco site and the expiration of the fire and police station bond payment in fiscal year 2029, representing approximately $1,000,000 in cost reduction.

The Council expressed strong support for the proposed policy direction. Councilmember Watson commended staff for the thoroughness of the analysis and acknowledged the shared responsibility between taxpayers and City employees in achieving fiscal sustainability. The Mayor commended City Manager Bovero for his extensive research and preparation, crediting his experience as essential to developing the proposal.

The Mayor concluded that this item would move to the July business meeting for the Council to take action on.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Dave Maughan Mayor	Cassie Z. Brown, MMC City Recorder

Date approved: July 14, 2026