

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL

Held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026

DISCUSSION: Large Unfunded Capital Needs

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Council Chambers via Zoom.

In attendance were: Councilmembers Frankie Santos Fritz, Amy E. Knesel, Jenni A. Pompei, Silke I. Pope, Kristen L.K. Weaver, and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan.

Councilmember Danielle P. McKinney was absent due to travel.

City Staff: Josué Salmerón, City Manager; Timothy George, Assistant City Manager; Rick Bowers, Police Chief (virtual); and Gizelle Alvarez, Constituent Services Coordinator.

Others present included Bill Orleans and others.

Greenbelt City Council Work Session

The Greenbelt City Council held a work session to discuss unfunded capital needs, reviewing over \$65 million in identified projects and prioritizing high-priority items totaling \$8.7 million. The council approved funding for several key projects, including improvements to the youth and recreation centers, while discussing various infrastructure upgrades and funding sources, including grants and legislative support. The conversation also covered police vehicle replacements, museum projects, and streetlight improvements, with the council acknowledging budget constraints while working to prioritize essential repairs and replacements.

Unfunded Capital and Vehicle Needs

The council held a work session to discuss unfunded capital needs, with over \$65 million in identified projects and significant vehicle replacements. Staff presented a list of unfunded projects, organized by priority areas and cost categories, including high-priority items totaling \$8.7 million. The council discussed the need to plan for vehicle replacements, as a large number of police vehicles require replacement soon. They also noted two approvals for a youth center replacement project, which the city manager expressed excitement about. The session aimed to identify urgent needs and provide direction to staff as they move forward with budget planning.

Prioritizing Capital Projects for 2027

The council discussed the unfunded Capital Projects Fiscal Year 2027, focusing on the city-wide wayfinding project which they considered moving up to high priority due to its potential to drive traffic to Roosevelt Center. They reviewed several projects, including the armory site which may need demolition due to high rehabilitation costs, and discussed the need to spend grant funds for the Greenbelt Station trail and museum projects soon to avoid losing them. The council received approval for two projects under the Federal Ear Mark Program, including \$1.5 million for the youth center roof replacement and \$250,000 for the Springhill Lake Recreation Center Expansion.

Infrastructure Projects Funding Approval

The council discussed several infrastructure projects and funding sources. They received approval for \$1.5 million in funding from both the House and Senate, with Congressman Van Hollen and Senator Alsobrooks as key supporters. The council reviewed multiple projects, including the Youth Center roof replacement, boiler replacement, community center repairs, elevator replacements, and bridge improvements. They also discussed the Schrom Hills Park field lights and pavilion project and the Greenbelt Museum. The council noted that while they had secured some funding for these projects, they would continue to pursue additional funding sources to complete all necessary repairs and improvements.

Museum Funding and Infrastructure Projects

The council discussed funding for a museum project, with \$300,000 already secured and a goal to raise an additional \$360,000. They agreed to consider hiring a capital fundraiser and planned a site visit to review the building's condition. The council also addressed ongoing issues with streetlights, including a \$113,000 bill in arrears, and discussed the need to acquire and convert lights to LED technology. They decided to write a letter to the Public Utility Commission to compel PEPCO to move forward with the project. Finally, they reviewed plans for various other projects, including pool coating, Buddy Attic Park Trail amenities, and armory development, with a focus on remediation work.

Infrastructure and Wayfinding Projects

The council discussed several infrastructure projects, including a \$12.5 million Cherrywood Lane Complete and Green Streets Retrofit and a \$2.5 million Springhill Lake Center addition, which could accommodate over 3,000 square feet of multipurpose spaces. They also reviewed a citywide wayfinding project with an estimated implementation cost of \$300,000, which received support from local business leaders. Dan Gelotti, representing the Greenbelt Co-op Supermarket, emphasized the need for better signage to promote the Roosevelt Center as a thriving destination, while Kim Kash from the Greenbelt Business Alliance highlighted the importance of unified efforts among merchants to enhance the center's visibility and appeal.

Historic Spaces Grant Strategy Discussion

The council discussed grant opportunities for historic spaces, with a focus on maximizing the impact of available funds through strategic matching of state, county, and city funds. They explored ways to increase visibility for the Roosevelt Center, including potential collaborations with Beltway Plaza and the creation of gateway signage similar to that of other local centers. The group also considered the effectiveness of existing promotional efforts, such as the farmers' market banner, and discussed the possibility of a work session to align efforts across different entities.

Capital Projects Priority Review

The Council reviewed a list of unfunded capital projects, including facade improvements, traffic calming interventions, and various infrastructure upgrades. They discussed the need to prioritize

short-term projects, with the Facade Improvement Grant being identified as a key priority due to its annual nature. The Council also addressed concerns about sidewalk gaps along Crescent Road and the need for potential repairs to stormwater systems near Greenbelt Lake. They agreed to further explore the feasibility of creating a contiguous sidewalk from Roosevelt Center to Kenilworth, though challenges with GHI property easements were noted.

City Project Priority Planning

The council discussed several priority projects for the city, including the Greenbelt Station Trail, museum project, Schrom Hills Park field lights, indoor pool coating, and wayfinding signage. They agreed to prioritize projects that have already secured funding or are at risk of losing grants. The council also discussed the need for a more structured process to prioritize unprogrammed projects and gather public feedback. Mayor Pro Tem Weaver suggested using a text message survey service to gather broader community input on project priorities. The council acknowledged the need to balance funding across different parts of the city and consider long-term capital budgeting processes.

Capital Projects and Funding Review

The council discussed the city's capital improvement projects and funding challenges. They reviewed a list of priority projects, including roofs, boilers, elevators, and bridge improvements. The city manager explained that while some projects have funding, others like the armory site demolition may require borrowing money, though there is limited room for new debt due to existing liabilities. The council agreed to review the project list further and consider ranking projects by funding thresholds rather than just priority order. They also discussed police vehicle replacements, with Chief Bowers noting that many vehicles are reaching high mileage but are still serviceable, though some may need replacement sooner due to age or mileage.

Police Vehicle Budget Constraints

The council discussed the police department's vehicle replacement needs, with Chief Bowers explaining that while 15 vehicles need replacement, the budget of \$360,000 might only cover 6 vehicles, primarily due to high costs of EV and hybrid vehicles after the loss of tax credits. The council agreed to prioritize vehicle replacements while acknowledging budget constraints, and decided to wait for data on the performance of their first EV vehicle before ordering more. The meeting also covered snow removal efforts and sidewalk clearing enforcement, with the city continuing to address icy conditions while being lenient with senior citizens and those with mobility challenges.

The meeting ended at 10:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonita Anderson
City Clerk