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# City Council Work Session May 18, 2026

**DATE AND TIME:** Monday, May 18, 2026, 5:00 PM

**Members Present:**

Mayor Mike Fuesser  
Mayor Pro Tem Ed Brown  
Councilmember Matt Hickey  
Councilmember Marion Ramsey

Councilmember Stephanie Jarrett  
Councilmember Charles Brewer  
Councilmember Kellie Harrold

**Members Absent:**

**Staff Present:**

City Manager Dalton Pierce  
Municipal Clerk Amy Craig  
Planning Director Alex Moore  
Parks & Rec Director Chris White  
Police Chief Brian Trail  
HR Manager Rosetta Daniels  
Planner II Lauren Hebert

Utilities Director Matt Kennedy  
Finance Director Jeff Wilkins  
Capital Program Manager Sarah Ramirez  
Community Engagement Director Becky Mestas  
Public Works Director Davy Broom  
Fire Chief Mike Regal  
Business Operations Specialist Ashley Putnam

**Participants:**

Brenda Bolduc, YAES  
Andrea Radford, Stewart, Inc

**Others Present :**

(See Sign-In Sheet)

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**1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Mike Fuesser

- Mayor Mike Fuesser called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

**2. PRAYER**

Mayor Pro Tem Ed Brown

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Mike Fuesser

**4. PRESENTATIONS:**

4.1 York Agricultural and Education Society

Ms. Brenda Bolduc, Comptroller of Yorkville Agricultural and Education Society Board, presented an overview and update regarding the proposed acquisition and redevelopment of York Place, a 120-acre property with 16 existing buildings, including a gym, dining hall, chapel, homes, and multipurpose facilities. The organization’s vision is to preserve the historic and agricultural character of the property while creating a sustainable community hub focused on agriculture, education, recreation, tourism, and economic development. Proposed uses include a farmers market, early childhood center, after-school programs, senior and adult education, agritourism, conference space, and expanded 4-H programming. YAES has secured a purchase agreement with the Episcopal Diocese, raised approximately \$4million toward the \$6.5million project, and requested City partnership support for potential infrastructure improvements, demolition assistance, or fee waivers. Council inquired about property conditions, and Ms. Bolduc stated

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assessments are underway, with immediate concerns including roof replacements, gym floor repairs, and restroom upgrades to prepare the site for public use.

## 4.2 Downtown Master Plan

Andrea Radford, Stewart Inc., presented the draft Downtown Master Plan, which was developed alongside the Comprehensive Land Use Plan update beginning in January 2026. Ms. Radford reviewed feedback gathered through stakeholder meetings, surveys, and public input sessions, noting recurring priorities including retail and restaurants, farmers markets, sidewalk and parking improvements, historic preservation, family-oriented activities, improved accessibility, and broader downtown development beyond Congress Street. The plan focuses on improving walkability, increasing downtown housing opportunities, encouraging infill development, and creating a more vibrant and pedestrian-oriented downtown district. The proposed framework includes streetscape improvements along Congress, Liberty, and Roosevelt Streets, expanded outdoor gathering spaces, upgraded lighting, additional street trees, enhanced pedestrian connectivity, and the creation of destination spaces such as City Market plaza, pharmacy plaza gathering space, and pollinator garden. The plan also identifies catalyst redevelopment sites for mixed-use buildings, apartments, and town homes intended to support downtown businesses and increase residential density near downtown. The presentation further outlined strategies for shared parking, downtown support zoning updates, façade grant expansion, economic development incentives, public art, and future programming opportunities. Ms. Radford reviewed potential funding sources, including grants, tax incentives, and public-private partnerships, while emphasizing that implementation would occur over multiple years through phased projects and capital improvements planning. Council discussed the conceptual redesign of the City Market parking area and noted that future parking expansion would likely need to occur before portions of the lot could be converted into gathering spaces. Staff clarified that the proposed changes would likely be implemented in phases over several years. Additionally, Council discussed the Bailey Bill tax incentive program, with staff explaining the City already utilizes the program and that York County is currently evaluating broader countywide participation and administration of the incentive.

## 4.3 GoGOV Platform

Community Engagement Director Becky Mestas presented information regarding the proposed GoGOV communication platform, which staff is considering as a replacement for the City's current CodeRED emergency notification system. Ms. Mestas explained that while CodeRED is limited primarily to emergency alerts, GoGOV would provide broader community engagement tools, including a branded mobile application, push notifications, service requests, utility alerts, event notifications, park and recreation updates, and easier access to City services and contact information. The platform would integrate with the City's website and social media accounts to allow consistent messaging across multiple platforms. Also, the app could eventually support additional features such as online bill payment, departmental communications, and reporting concerns such as water leaks or sidewalk issues directly through the application. Council discussed the platform integration with calendars, website accessibility, and social media synchronization. Staff noted the system would improve communication accessibility for residents using mobile devices and provide a more modern communication approach beyond traditional emergency notifications. Ms. Mestas advised the annual cost for GoGOV would be \$4,680 plus approximately \$400 annually for emergency text and voice notification credits, compared to the City's current \$3,745 annual cost for CodeRED.

## 5. DISCUSSIONS:

### 5.1 Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) Ordinance

Planning Director Alex Moore presented the proposed Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) Ordinance, explaining that the City currently relies on SCDOT for traffic studies and lacks its own ordinance requiring TIAs for development projects. The proposed ordinance would establish thresholds based

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on trip generation and dwelling units, categorizing projects into Tier 1 or Tier 2 reviews. Tier 1 projects would require only a conceptual assessment, while Tier 2 projects would require a full traffic impact analysis, including evaluation of future traffic conditions, safety concerns, multimodal access, and potential mitigation measures such as turn lanes or roadway improvements. Staff explained the proposal would involve using a consulting traffic engineering firm, potentially Bolton & Menk, to act as an extension of City staff during the review process, with developers paying the consultant directly for TIA preparation and review. Staff noted the ordinance had been reviewed by Bolton & Menk, SCDOT, Longleaf, and the York County Transportation Planner. Council discussion primarily focused on concerns regarding requiring developers to use a specific engineering firm. Several members expressed concern about fairness, potential monopolization, bypassing normal bid procedures, and limiting developers' ability to choose their own traffic engineer. Alternatives discussed included allowing developers to select their own engineer while requiring review by the City's consultant, creating a rotating pool of approved consultants, or incorporating the work into the City's existing engineering services contracts. Council generally agreed the ordinance itself was needed, but additional discussion regarding the consultant structure and review process would continue prior to first reading.

### 5.2 FY25-26 Budget Amendment Check-In

Finance Director Jeff Wilkins presented an overview of the proposed FY25–26 Budget Amendment, explaining the goal is to reallocate funds, address unexpected needs, reduce debt, and position the City for future projects. Mr. Wilkins stated the amendments would increase the operational budget by approximately \$658,540 and increase the Enterprise Fund by approximately \$195,000. He emphasized the City's goal of improving financial stability while preparing for future infrastructure needs.

### 5.3 FY26-27 Budget Updates

#### A. Departmental Budget Requests

City Manager Dalton Pierce provided an overview of departmental budget requests and ongoing FY26-27 budget planning. Key items discussed were fire and police requests include staffing needs tied to Station #2 and grant-funded positions. Public Works staffing and equipment needs were discussed due to continued City growth and infrastructure demands. Utility operations are being restructured into more proactive water and sewer crews, with additional technician and locator positions requested. Police capital requests include marked and unmarked vehicles, body cameras, car cameras, radios, and an SRO vehicle. Staff is exploring a full Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and zoning ordinance rewrite to align with the Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Master Plan. Parks and Recreation requests focus on field maintenance equipment and ongoing athletic field improvements. Public Works capital requests include a new truck, mast arm replacements at Liberty and Congress Streets, a street sweeper, and a knuckle boom truck. Utility capital requests include wastewater treatment plant improvements, truck replacements, manhole rehabilitation, and equipment upgrades. Mr. Pierce stated staff continues monitoring projected revenues, utility usage, and drought conditions while preparing the proposed budget for June discussions.

#### B. Employee Health Insurance

City Manager Dalton Pierce discussed exploring a self-funded employee health insurance model with assistance from the City's insurance broker, RCH, and Pareto Health. Mr. Pierce explained the goal is to better manage rising healthcare costs and avoid larger annual premium increases from traditional providers. The proposed model would include shared risk pooling and stop-loss protection, cost management tools and group captive participation, and greater predictability for future healthcare expenses. Staff plans to bring representatives to a future meeting for a full

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presentation if Council wishes to continue exploring this option. Mr. Pierce emphasized that any future plan would need to maintain or improve employee healthcare benefits.

### 6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Pro Tem Brown made a Motion to leave Regular Session and go into Executive Session to Discuss Matters Related to the City Manager's Performance Evaluation, which was Seconded by Councilmember Hickey. With no Discussion, the Motion was adopted unanimously by the members in attendance.

Councilmember Hickey made a Motion to leave Executive Session and enter into Regular Session, which was Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Brown. With no Discussion, the Motion was adopted unanimously.

### 7. UPON RETURNING TO OPEN SESSION, COUNCIL MAY TAKE ACTION ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilmember Brewer made a Motion to increase the base pay by 8%, including the COLA, for the City Manager, and give him a \$15,000 grossed up or net bonus after taxes, and increase his car allowance to \$7,500 from \$7,000, which was Seconded by Councilmember Hickey. With no Discussion, the Motion was adopted unanimously.

### 8. ADJOURN

Mayor Pro Tem Brown made a Motion to Adjourn, which was Seconded by Councilmember Hickey. With no Discussion, the Motion was adopted unanimously. The Meeting Adjourned at 7:03pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy H. Craig, MPA  
Municipal Clerk