



City FY 2026 Budget Work Session

**April 10, 2025
City Council Work Session**



Review from April 3rd Work Session

- ❖ Regional Comparative Tax Rates and Revenues
- ❖ Capital Improvement Program Reserves
- ❖ COLA and Regional Comparisons
- ❖ Outside and Nonprofit Agencies
- ❖ Departmental Budgets
 - Golf
 - Economic Development – StauntonBusiness.com
 - Grant Coordinator Position



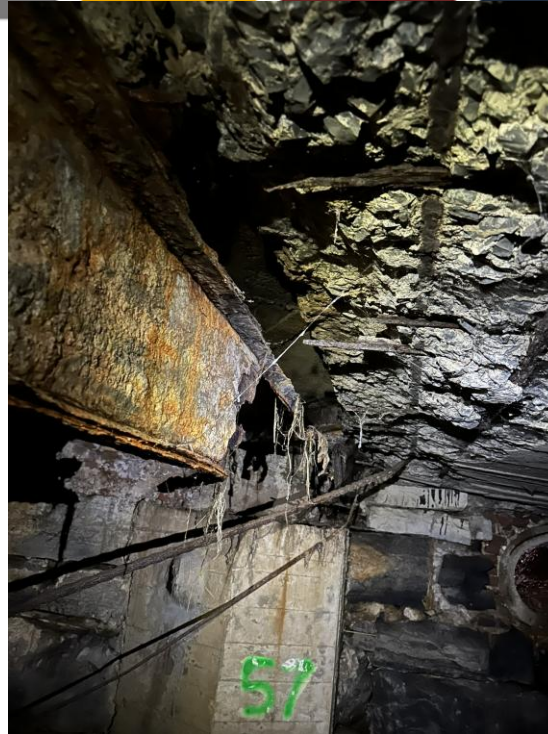
Real Estate Tax Rate Increase Proposal

Proposed Real Estate Tax Rate $\$.91/\100 assessed value to provide most flexibility to address critical and essential infrastructure investments

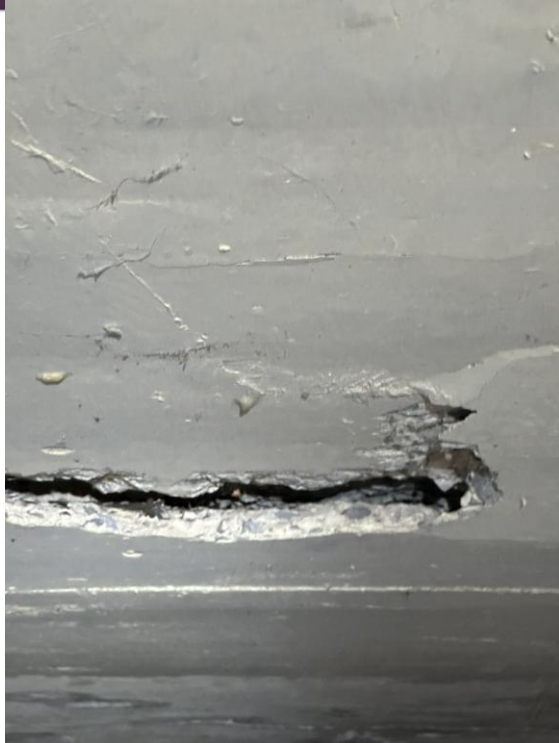
FY 2018 2-cent rate increase for Staunton High School renovation

“Recent events have demonstrated that those additional funds are more critical than ever and can build a path to address ongoing city infrastructure maintenance needs, starting with work that is required in the tunnels that run underneath downtown.”

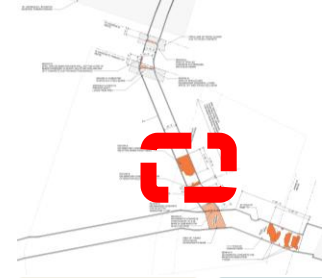
“Longer term, this is an opportunity for the city to consider and plan for more aggressive and proactive flood mitigation efforts as it relates to the creeks and tunnels that are underneath a core economic and business district.”



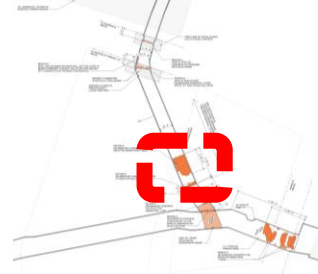
Severe
concrete spall
and rebar
corrosion near
Johnson Street
– full width
roof



Severe concrete
delamination
below Wharf
parking lot
and Byers Street



Severe concrete
delamination below
Wharf parking lot
access road



Severe concrete
delamination below
Wharf parking lot
access road

A horizontal decorative bar composed of several colored segments: purple, olive green, blue-grey, grey, yellow, dark red, dark blue, tan, teal, and dark green.

Funds for Flood Remediation/Mitigation Ending

- ❖ FEMA announced the end of Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant
- ❖ Pre-disaster and hazard mitigation
- ❖ New focus on response and recovery, rather than reducing hazards and protecting communities in advance

❖ Staunton's Current Rate – \$.89/\$100 (Proposed \$.91)

- Waynesboro – \$.77 (proposed \$.89)
- Winchester – \$.83
- Lynchburg – \$.89
- Lexington – \$.92
- Charlottesville – \$.98
- Harrisonburg – \$1.01
- Roanoke City – \$1.22

Virginia Cities

Mean = \$1.03

Median = \$1.03

***Per 2024 Weldon Cooper Tax Report
(missing values have been updated
using municipal websites)***

Meals Tax Rate

❖ Staunton's Current Rate – 7%

- Roanoke – 5.5%
- Lexington – 6.0%
- Lynchburg – 6.5%
- Winchester – 6.5%
- Harrisonburg – 7.0%
- Charlottesville – 7.0%
- Waynesboro – 7.0%

Not much room for an increase. There are a few cities in the state at 8% and 10%. Each 1%=\$950,000

❖ Staunton's Current Rate – 6.7%

- Waynesboro – 6.0%
- Lynchburg 6.5% plus \$1 per night
- Harrisonburg – 7.0%
- Roanoke – 8.0%
- Lexington – 8.0%
- Winchester – 8.0%
- Charlottesville – 9.0%

*Additional Revenue
from Increasing
Staunton's rate to:*
7.0% = \$57,281
8.0% = \$248,218

Sales, Meals, & Lodging

	FY2026 PROPOSED BUDGET			
Virginia City	Sales Tax	Meals Tax	Lodging Tax	Total
Charlottesville	\$ 14,500,000	\$ 21,200,000	\$ 9,100,000	\$ 44,800,000
Harrisonburg	\$ 18,923,600	\$ 19,843,800	\$ 4,078,700	\$ 42,846,100
Winchester	\$ 12,800,000	\$ 12,400,000	\$ 1,434,000	\$ 26,634,000
Waynesboro	\$ 7,419,737	\$ 7,220,339	\$ 899,539	\$ 15,539,615
Staunton	\$ 5,999,522	\$ 6,750,000	\$ 1,300,000	\$ 14,049,522
Lexington	\$ 1,380,000	\$ 1,987,000	\$ 829,000	\$ 4,196,000

Personal Property Tax Rate

❖ Staunton's Current Rate – **\$2.90/\$100** →

- Waynesboro – \$3.25
- Harrisonburg – \$3.45
- Roanoke – \$3.45
- Lynchburg – \$3.80
- Lexington – \$4.25
- Charlottesville – \$4.40
- Winchester – \$4.80

*Only four other cities
in VA are below \$3.00
per \$100.*

*Additional Revenue
from Increasing
Staunton's rate to:*
\$3.25 = \$773,240
\$3.60 = \$1,546,481

Virginia Cities

Mean = \$3.83

Median = \$3.75

*Per 2024 Weldon Cooper Tax Report
(missing values have been updated
using municipal websites)*

Virginia Local Tax Rates 2024
UVA Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service
December 2024
(Missing rates obtained from municipal websites)

Virginia City	Real Estate Tax Rate
Manassas Park	\$ 1.41
Alexandria	\$ 1.35
Petersburg	\$ 1.27
Newport News	\$ 1.24
Norfolk	\$ 1.23
Portsmouth	\$ 1.23
Roanoke City	\$ 1.22
Colonial Heights	\$ 1.20
Richmond	\$ 1.20
Salem	\$ 1.20
Bristol	\$ 1.17
Hopewell	\$ 1.17
Hampton	\$ 1.15
Poquoson	\$ 1.14
Falls Church	\$ 1.12
Harrisonburg	\$ 1.10
Manassas	\$ 1.07
Suffolk	\$ 1.07
Chesapeake	\$ 1.03
Fairfax	\$ 1.03
Franklin	\$ 1.03
Martinsville	\$ 0.99
Charlottesville	\$ 0.98
Virginia Beach	\$ 0.97
Emporia	\$ 0.92
Galax	\$ 0.92
Lexington	\$ 0.92
Buena Vista	\$ 0.91
Norton	\$ 0.90
Lynchburg	\$ 0.89
Staunton	\$ 0.89
Covington	\$ 0.85
Danville	\$ 0.83
Winchester	\$ 0.83
Fredericksburg	\$ 0.77
Waynesboro*	\$ 0.77
Radford**	\$ 0.69
Williamsburg	\$ 0.62

*FY2026 Proposed rate is \$.89

**FY2026 Proposed rate is \$.82

Mean \$ 1.03
Median \$ 1.03

Virginia City	Personal Property Tax Rate
Buena Vista	\$ 5.85
Emporia	\$ 5.00
Falls Church	\$ 5.00
Portsmouth	\$ 5.00
Petersburg	\$ 4.90
Winchester	\$ 4.80
Alexandria	\$ 4.75
Franklin	\$ 4.50
Hampton	\$ 4.50
Newport News	\$ 4.50
Charlottesville	\$ 4.40
Norfolk	\$ 4.33
Lexington	\$ 4.25
Suffolk	\$ 4.25
Poquoson	\$ 4.15
Fairfax	\$ 4.13
Chesapeake	\$ 4.08
Virginia Beach	\$ 4.00
Lynchburg	\$ 3.80
Richmond	\$ 3.70
Danville	\$ 3.60
Manassas	\$ 3.60
Colonial Heights	\$ 3.50
Hopewell	\$ 3.50
Manassas Park	\$ 3.50
Williamsburg	\$ 3.50
Harrisonburg	\$ 3.45
Roanoke City	\$ 3.45
Fredericksburg	\$ 3.40
Salem	\$ 3.40
Waynesboro	\$ 3.25
Covington	\$ 3.08
Staunton	\$ 2.90
Bristol	\$ 2.60
Radford	\$ 2.44
Martinsville	\$ 2.30
Galax*	\$ 2.25
Norton	\$ 2.05

*Also has a Vehicle License Fee

Mean \$ 3.83
Median \$ 3.75

Water, Sewer, & Trash Expenditures

City Provided Utilities

Typical Family of 4 (9,000 gal of water per 2 month cycle)

				Bi-Monthly Utilities	Annual Water, Sewer & Trash
	Water	Sewer	Trash		
Charlottesville	114.42	118.83	\$ 47.25	\$ 280.50	\$ 1,683.00
Lexington	\$ 93.40	\$ 185.72	\$ -	\$ 279.13	\$ 1,674.75
Waynesboro	\$ 73.81	\$ 119.20	\$ 44.00	\$ 237.01	\$ 1,422.06
Winchester	\$ 82.06	\$ 124.48	\$ 24.00	\$ 230.54	\$ 1,383.24
Staunton	\$ 48.78	\$ 67.41	\$ 48.02	\$ 164.21	\$ 985.26
Harrisonburg	\$ 37.89	\$ 57.33	\$ 48.00	\$ 143.22	\$ 859.32



Overview of Combined Local City Expenditures

Estimated Annual Costs based on current rates

Assumptions 4/9/2025:

Typical Family of 4 (9,000 gal of water per 2 month cycle)

Home Value \$251,240 Median Home Value in Staunton

Personal Property Values \$30,000 (combined for two cars)

Staunton overall is one of the most affordable cities in our area based on combined real estate, personal property, and annual utilities.

	Real Estate	Personal Property	Annual Water, Sewer & Trash	Total Combined Costs
Charlottesville	\$ 2,462	\$ 1,320	\$ 1,683.00	\$ 5,465.15
Lexington	\$ 2,311	\$ 1,275	\$ 1,674.75	\$ 5,261.16
Winchester	\$ 2,085	\$ 1,440	\$ 1,383.24	\$ 4,908.53
Harrisonburg	\$ 2,538	\$ 1,035	\$ 859.32	\$ 4,431.84
Waynesboro	\$ 1,935	\$ 975	\$ 1,422.06	\$ 4,331.61
Staunton	\$ 2,236	\$ 870	\$ 985.26	\$ 4,091.30

City CIP Funding & Reserves

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- **Financial Management Policy**
 - Capital Improvement Plan Policy adopted January 25, 2018
 - Long term goal is to dedicate a minimum of 2.5% of total current General Fund revenues less transfer to other funds.
 - FY2025 contribution level was 1.7%.
 - FY2026 proposed level is 2.76%.
 - **CIP Reserves**
 - Allows the city to save for a larger project
 - Funds accumulate interest that can be appropriated
 - Funds can be transferred between projects with council's approval

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❖ Public Safety (all currently funded with carry over)

- \$615,091 - Fire Truck Reserve (FY2011)
- \$120,000 - Fire Department Self Contained Breathing App. (FY2022)
- \$40,000 - Fire Department Cardiac Monitors (FY2022)
- \$637,285 - Fire Station #1 Improvements (Restarted FY2026 at \$200,000 per year)
- \$0 - Police Department Relocation (new FY2026 proposed at \$150,000)

❖ **Public Works** (all currently funded with carry over)

- \$158,235 – Ineligible Paving (FY2011)
- \$193,935 – Public Works Equipment (FY2016)
- \$512,303 – Public Works Building Maintenance (FY2016)
- \$720,000 – Adaptive Traffic Control (FY2020)
- \$0 – *Infrastructure Repairs & Improvements (new FY2026 proposed at \$657,030)

**Proposed funding source is a general fund transfer.*

❖ Community Development

- \$1,068,459 – Sidewalks (FY2014)
- \$200,004 – Brick Sidewalks (FY2015)
- \$800,000 – Greenways (FY2017)
- \$586,318 – Bike & Pedestrian (FY2020)
- \$574,522 – *West End Revitalization (FY2024)
- \$452,222 - *Uniontown Improvements (FY2024)
- \$0 – Housing (new FY2026 proposed to start at \$30,000)

**Currently the West End Revitalization and the Uniontown Improvements reserves are the only two funded with a general fund transfer. Remaining reserves depend on carry over funding.*

❖ Recreation, Parks, Library, & Cultural

- \$574,522 – *Public Library Improvements (FY2024)
- \$3,414,484 – Parks & Rec Public Use Facilities Fund (FY2024)
- \$0 – Parks & Rec Equipment (new FY2026 proposed at \$100,000)
- \$0 – Golf Cart Replacement (new FY2026 proposed at \$60,000)

**Currently the Public Library Improvements reserve is the only one funded with a general fund transfer. Remaining reserves depend on carry over funding.*



❖ **General Government** (funded with carry over funds)

- \$195,020 – IT Equipment Reserve (FY2024)

FY2026 Proposed Cost of Living Adjustments

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- ❖ Staunton City – 3% COLA
- ❖ Staunton Schools – 4% COLA (potential bonus proposed)
- ❖ Augusta County – 4% COLA & Merit
- ❖ Harrisonburg – 4% COLA
- ❖ Waynesboro – Inc to 87% of Living Wages (\$2.6M)
- ❖ State of VA – 3% (plus a bonus for many positions including teachers)

- ❖ *“The wage a full-time worker must earn on an hourly basis to help cover the cost of their family’s minimum basic needs.”*
- ❖ Gaining popularity as the standard for wage and compensation studies
- ❖ Some companies & localities are voluntarily adopting policies or initiatives to pay a living wage
- ❖ Specific by locality

Staunton →

	1 ADULT			
	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
Living Wage	\$21.17	\$35.82	\$44.20	\$57.01
Poverty Wage	\$7.52	\$10.17	\$12.81	\$15.46
Minimum Wage	\$12.41	\$12.41	\$12.41	\$12.41

Source: Amy K. Glasmeier, “Living Wage Calculator,” Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2025. Accessed on April 8, 2025 from <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/51790>.



Unfunded Outside Agency Requests

Outside Agencies –
Unfunded Requests
\$167,375

OUTSIDE AGENCIES	FY 2026 REQUESTED	FY 2026 PROPOSED BUDGET	Unfunded
EXISTING O/S AGENCIES			
Shenandoah Community Capital Fund	25,000	15,000	10,000
Historic Staunton Foundation	45,000	40,000	5,000
Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library	10,000	5,000	5,000
Shenanarts	4,000	3,000	1,000
Virginia Cooperative Extension - 4-H	5,125	5,000	125
NEW REQUESTS FOR FUNDING			
New Directions	45,000	-	45,000
Arcadia	30,000	-	30,000
Waynesboro Area Refuge Ministry (WARM)	26,250	-	26,250
ARROW Project	25,000	-	25,000
Shenandoah Valley Small Business Develop	10,000	-	10,000
YMCA	10,000	-	10,000
Unfunded Outside Agency Requests			\$ 167,375

Golf – Proposed FY2026 Budget #'s

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❖ \$310,000 - Budgeted Revenues for Golf

❖ \$161,119 - Budgeted Expenditures for Golf

- Golf is part of the General Fund, therefore, excess revenues stay in the General Fund to help with overhead costs.
- Golf cart replacements cannot be added to Golf's proposed budget without finding the additional revenue to support the expenditures or reduce expenditures elsewhere.

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Economic Development Website

\$ 39,760

www.StauntonBusiness.com

- ❖ Staff would support an alternative proposal to fund **\$11,000** for content creation and to use the city's current platform for website.

Grant Coordinator Position

- ❖ Would not recommend at this time
- ❖ While the process is currently decentralized, new staff being hired possess these skill sets
- ❖ Assistance from PDC when that's possible
- ❖ Have already started to focus more of our efforts on grants

Discussion Points

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- Real Estate Tax Rate
- What is removed from the proposed budget if an \$.89 real estate rate is desired by council?
- Grants Position
- Outside Agency Funding (\$50k Council fund)
- City department items? Website?
- Any other item?

FY 2026 Budget at www.ci.staunton.va.us/budget

Hardcopies of the budget can be viewed in the City Manager's Office and the Library

Contact City Council at CityCouncil@ci.staunton.va.us or 540.332.3810

Budget Work Sessions

April 24

Scheduled Budget Adoption

April 24



www.ci.staunton.va.us/budget



CityCouncil@ci.staunton.va.us