



# Minutes of the Arlington City Council Workshop

Council Chambers  
110 East 3rd Street  
Monday, January 26, 2026

**Councilmembers Present:** Heather Watland, Rob Toyer, Yvonne Gallardo-Van Ornam, Michele Blythe, Nathan Senff, Tim Abrahamson, and Leisha Nobach.

**Council Members Absent:** None.

**Staff Present:** Mayor Don Vanney, Paul Ellis, Jim Kelly, Kris Wallace, Amy Rusko, Jen Haugen, Ameresia Lawlis, Peter Barrett, and Chelsea Brewer.

**Also Known to be Present:** Kathy Vanney, Randy Nobach, Stephanie Abrahamson, Kim Casteel, and others.

Mayor Don Vanney called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, and the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call followed.

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mayor Pro Tem Michele Blythe moved to approve the agenda as presented. Councilmember Leisha Nobach seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote.

## **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

None.

## **WORKSHOP ITEMS – NO ACTION WAS TAKEN**

### **Ordinance Approving Lindsay Subarea Plan and Establishing a Planned Action**

Community and Economic Development Director Amy Rusko reviewed an ordinance MJS Investors, in partnership with the City of Arlington, initiated the community planning process for the Lindsay Subarea. The process developed a vision, plan, and implementation strategies for the subarea. The process addresses planning elements such as future land use, transportation, environmental stewardship, parks and trails, utilities, and public services. The Lindsay Subarea Plan articulates a long-term vision that reflects the subarea's unique character, identifies critical infrastructure and service needs, and outlines strategies to advance citywide goals and community priorities. The plan establishes a clear framework to shape the subarea into a peaceful, connected community by cultivating spaces that support well-being and welcome all who call it home.

The Planned Action Ordinance was developed under RCW 43.21C.440 and associated SEPA rules in WAC 197-11 based on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Future proposals consistent with the Planned Action Ordinance, subarea plan, and development regulations will have a streamlined environmental review and permitting process.

The Lindsay Subarea Plan includes development standards that address zoning designations, permissible uses, density and dimensional standards, street design standards, parking standards, landscaping standards, building design, pedestrian access, trails, parks, open space and neighborhood amenities.

The City proposes adopting a Lindsay Subarea Plan and Planned Action Ordinance. These documents will provide the groundwork for continued, coordinated, and efficient growth of the neighborhood. The subarea plan was developed for consistency with the Growth Management Act, County-Wide Planning Policies, and the City of Arlington Comprehensive Plan.

The Lindsay Annexation was completed in 2022 under Ordinance 2022-003, officially bringing Lindsay into the City of Arlington, where it is now one of the neighborhoods within the Hilltop Subarea. In November 2023, Ordinance 2023-016 amended AMC Section 20.44.032 Subarea Plans. This amendment reflected community priorities identified through the 2024 Comprehensive Plan engagement process and emphasizes the importance of coordinated land development through subarea planning. In 2024, MJS Investors, in partnership with the City, initiated the community planning process for the Lindsay Subarea. In December 2025, City Council approved a Development Agreement with MJS, Investors vesting critical area stream buffers and regulations, park requirements, 79th Avenue dedication and creek crossing, utility infrastructure improvements, cost recovery/latecomers' agreements, phased development, modifications process for the conceptual site plan, and terms of agreement. Discussion followed with Ms. Rusko answering Council questions.

### **Ordinance Amending Arlington Municipal Code Chapter 2.52 Planning Commission**

Community and Economic Development Director Amy Rusko reviewed an ordinance. The proposed amendments to AMC Chapter 2.52 Planning Commission include updates to modernize the commission through regulations that provide order, efficiency and functionality.

The regulations of this chapter were implemented 83 years ago, with approximately half the sections updated 31 years ago and additional updates 17 and 10 years ago. This chapter is in desperate need of updates to include current practices and regulations to ensure a modern and functional Planning Commission. Discussion followed with Ms. Rusko answering Council questions.

### **Ordinance Repealing Arlington Municipal Code Chapter 2.104 Design Review Board**

Community and Economic Development Director Amy Rusko reviewed an ordinance repealing Arlington Municipal Code Chapter 2.104 Design Review Board.

The repeal of AMC Chapter 2.104 Design Review Board proposed to remove the chapter in its entirety. The city now has design standards instead of guidelines with the Development Design Standards, Mixed-Use Development Regulations, and in adopted subarea plans. In addition, there are multiple state regulations that limit design review board involvement for certain types of projects. These state laws include RCW 36.70A.030, RCW 36.70A.630, RCW 36.70A.635, RCW 36.70A.815, RCW 36.70B.120, and RCW 58.17.145.

The City currently utilizes the Planning Commission as the Design Review Board. Recent state regulations and the conversion of design guidelines to design standards in 2018, with updates in 2022 and 2024 have resulted in the development of strong design standards where the Design Review Board does not provide the same oversight that was once necessary to ensure compliance. Discussion followed with Ms. Rusko answering Council questions.

**Quarterly Community and Economic Development**

Community and Economic Development Director Amy Rusko reviewed the 4th quarter report.

**Construction Funding Agreement with the Public Works Board**

Public Works Director Jim Kelly reviewed the construction funding agreement with the Public Works Board.

Staff is requesting authorization to sign Public Works Board Funding agreement for the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Expansion Project.

The City of Arlington has been seeking funding for the final phase of a multi-year project to expand the Arlington water treatment filtering capacity to meet its available water rights at Haller South Wellfield. This final phase entails construction of an expansion onto the City's existing water treatment plant.

Staff applied for funding through the Public Works Board in 2025 and the City of Arlington has been selected for a \$10,000,000.00 low interest loan for this project. Staff are now requesting authorization for the mayor to sign the funding agreement. Discussion followed with Mr. Kelly answering Council questions.

**Title VI Language Access Plan (LAP)**

Public Works Director Jim Kelly reviewed the Title VI Language Access Plan (LAP).

Title VI Language Access Plan (LAP) complies with WSDOT Title IV Plan and USDOT Standard Title VI/Non-Discrimination Assurances.

Compliance with federal non-discrimination policies and laws are required for the City to receive federal transportation funding. Entities that receive federal financial assistance are required under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d) to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to their programs and activities regardless of race, color, or national origin.

Since WSDOT is Arlington's Certifying Agency, we comply with the WSDOT Title VI Plan. The city is now required as part of this process to have a Language Access Plan in place assuring that we will continue to comply with their Title VI Plan and certify to the federal government that we will comply with the USDOT Standard Title VI/Non-Discrimination Assurances. Discussion followed with Mr. Kelly answering Council questions.

**Utilities and Transportation Quarterly Report**

Public Works Director Jim Kelly reviewed the 4th quarter report.

**Monthly Financial Report**

Finance Director Shelby Burke reviewed the December 2025 Preliminary Close Financial Report.

**ADMINISTRATOR AND STAFF REPORTS**

None.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

None.

**COMMENTS FROM COUNCILMEMBERS**

Councilmember Yvonne Gallardo-Van Ornam attended a ribbon cutting for Skookum Brewery's new ownership. Hubb's Pizzeria, formerly Hubb's Pizza and Pasta is reopening under new ownership. The library has great family events.

Councilmember Tim Abrahamson did a police ride along with Sgt. Olson's team and enjoyed the time he spent.

Councilmember Michele Blythe thanked Paul Ellis for a great retreat last Friday.

**COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS**

Councilmembers had nothing to report this evening.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**REVIEW OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

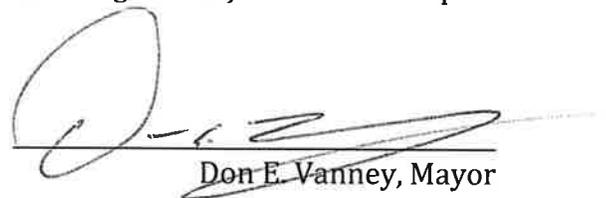
Councilmembers discussed and agreed to put items 2 and 3 on the consent agenda for the February 2 Council meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.



Don E. Vanney, Mayor