

# McQuillen Statement on Willard Sherwood Project

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 29, 2026

After Raising Cost Concerns, McQuillen Supports More Affordable Willard Sherwood Plan

FAIRFAX CITY, VA – Rachel McQuillen is supporting the revised Willard Sherwood project after previously raising concerns about long-term costs, citing improved financial clarity, reduced impact on taxpayers, and a stronger commitment to affordability for Fairfax City residents.

McQuillen emphasized that community input played a critical role in shaping a stronger outcome.

“I want to start by acknowledging the residents who took the time to engage on this project, especially around affordability. Those concerns were real, consistent, and they mattered.”

When the project previously came before the Fairfax City Council, McQuillen evaluated each request individually with a focus on long-term financial impact.

“Ultimately, I voted against three of the four requests and supported one. That was intentional.”

Her vote reflected support for the project’s vision while signaling the need for stronger financial clarity before moving forward.

“But I could not support the others at that time because we did not yet have sufficient clarity around long-term operating costs or a defined financial strategy to sustain them.”

At the time, projected costs raised concerns about long-term sustainability.

“We were looking at an estimated additional 1.2 million dollars in annual operating costs without a clear cost recovery model or detailed options to offset that burden.”

“My vote was meant to signal that concern clearly. It was not about stopping the project. It was about making sure we fully understood the financial commitment we were making on behalf of our residents before moving forward.”

Drawing on her experience in public education, McQuillen emphasized the importance of evaluating major decisions through both a family and fiscal lens.

“As someone who has served on the School Board, I look at every major decision through the lens of how it supports families and the long-term health of our community.”

Following additional analysis and engagement, the updated proposal reflects a stronger financial structure with a reduced burden on residents and greater clarity around long-term operations.

“And I want to recognize my colleagues, including Councilmember Stacy Hall and Councilmember Tom Peterson. It’s those tough questions, raised by Council and by residents, that led to a stronger financial outcome. That’s exactly how this process should work.”

“What we have before us now reflects that work. The financial structure has been improved, the burden on residents has been reduced, and we have a clearer understanding of how this project will operate over time.”

“Importantly, that was not achieved by reducing the services this facility will provide. This project still supports families, provides space for childcare and community programming, and ensures that residents of all ages have access to safe, modern facilities.”

Looking ahead, McQuillen emphasized the need for stronger financial planning early in the process.

“We need earlier financial clarity, clear funding strategies, and a stronger understanding of long-term operating costs from the beginning.”

“I could not support this project when those questions were unresolved. I can support it now because those concerns have been addressed, and the outcome is more responsible for our residents.”

“That is the standard we should continue to apply, invest in our community, but do it in a way that our families can afford and sustain over time.”

Rachel McQuillen

Council Member

[Rachel.McQuillen@Fairfaxva.gov](mailto:Rachel.McQuillen@Fairfaxva.gov)

City of Fairfax

10455 Armstrong St.

Fairfax, VA 22030-3630

703-385-7855 CH

703-810-0334 C

TTY:711

[www.fairfaxva.gov](http://www.fairfaxva.gov)