

**Over the past year, I've spent a great deal of time evaluating this project, asking questions, and pushing for a more responsible financial plan. When this first came before this council in 2025, the numbers were difficult to support. We were looking at nearly \$4.8 million in annual operating and staffing costs, plus an additional \$3.3 million in debt service, with only about \$600,000 in projected revenue. That translated to a significant potential tax impact, and at that time, I could not support moving forward without a clearer path to sustainability. My concerns were never about the value of a community health center—they were about ensuring we could deliver it in a way that was financially responsible for our residents.**

**Since then, CMs McQuillen, Peterson and I have worked closely with our great staff to bring those costs down and create a more sustainable model, and I'm encouraged by the progress that's been made. We now have a cost-recovery approach that significantly reduces the projected shortfall and even has the potential for positive revenue under a market-rate scenario. Just as importantly, we received confirmation this week that the County is willing to share in key operating costs like front desk staffing and security when programs overlap. That partnership, combined with the cost reductions and ongoing focus on efficiency, gives me confidence that this project is now on a much stronger financial footing.**

**Because of that work, I am now able to support moving forward and I am excited that this long-awaited community health center can become a reality for our residents. As a resident said to me today, we're still getting our project and now it's more affordable**  
**- what a great outcome!**

Long version as referenced above:

*I am happy to share that our city staff has been working hard to focus on a cost-recovery model, and that is showing quite a bit of progress. In addition, they are*

*still working with the county to determine a more appropriate cost sharing model for some of the required staffing for the building.*

*At the April 22, 2025 council meeting, we were told the facility would require two full-time managers (opening and closing) and approximately 35–42 part-time staff positions, some benefited and some not. In addition, up to three positions in the Department of Public Works could be needed if the city maintains the building (see page 39 of that presentation).*

*At that time, projected operating costs were approximately \$2.7 million, with an additional \$2.1 million in staffing costs, for a total of \$4.8 million annually. In addition, the construction costs were anticipated to add another \$3.3 million in annual debt financing. These figures (at the calendar year 2025 rate of \$835,000 per penny on the tax rate), would have equated to an increase of 9.7 cents, just for this building. Anticipated revenue from memberships, programming, and rentals was about \$600,000. In October 2025, Council voted on the four special exceptions for the project. At that time, I voted against the motions, as I continued to have significant concerns about the financial aspects of the plan that had not yet been resolved.*

*More recent information shared at the February 10, 2026 meeting reflects a significantly different outlook. Staff identified cost reductions of approximately \$580,000 prior to the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP). Under the current cost recovery model, the projected annual shortfall is just over \$1.2 million, or approximately 1.36 cents on the calendar year 2026 real estate tax rate (\$884,000 per penny). Additionally, at market-rate pricing, the model shows a potential net positive revenue of \$683,000 (see pages 12 and 15 of that presentation).*

***These updated figures are markedly different from those presented in April 2025 and are more indicative of a potentially self-sustaining model that would primarily rely on real estate taxes for construction costs, currently projected at approximately 4.33 cents on the tax rate. While this is encouraging, the variation between projections reinforces the need for a clear and sustainable long-term financial plan. I think it's important to note that asking questions and raising concerns is not an indication of opposition to the project; it's part of my responsibility to ensure I'm representing our residents and making the most informed decision possible on their behalf.***

*I have had concerns about certain design elements, particularly the number of entrances, which can increase both staffing needs and long-term operating costs. I*

*believe this is an area where the city should continue working with the county to ensure costs are appropriately shared.*

*That said, with the design phase behind us, **my focus has been on minimizing operating costs and ensuring financial sustainability.** I want to be confident that we are delivering a project the community can be proud of, while also being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. **I have been pushing for a facility where taxpayer funds may be used for construction, but once that is complete, operations are fully supported through programming and revenue generation, and support from the county for shared staffing.***

*We just received an email this week (Monday, April 27 - [below in blue](#)) from our City Manager regarding the county's support for ongoing staffing. **This is great news, and it certainly makes the decision to proceed much easier. This is what I have spent the past year working toward and I'm happy it is now a reality!***

*We previously shared that the City and Fairfax County would continue working collaboratively on this project and would review costs, funding assumptions, and community benefits as part of the ongoing discussions.*

*Consistent with that commitment, we received communication from the County this morning confirming that it is willing to sharing certain operating costs associated with the Willard-Sherwood Health and Community Center. Specifically, the County has agreed in principle to participate in shared costs for reception/front desk staffing and security during periods when City and County programs are operating concurrently.*

*The County noted that providing clarity regarding the operating expense structure is important to Council's deliberations and stated that this commitment underscores our mutual interest in ensuring a well-supported facility for all residents.*



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