Youtube Link

| October 8, 2026 Council Agenda Briefing | | | | |
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| **Item** | **Question/Request and who made by** | **Responsible Staff/ Dept.** | **CM/ ACM** | **Staff response/update** |
| Consent Agenda Items D+E, Rivertop Contracting | BH - How many staff members do we have in parks and recreation?<br><br>How many staff do we already have who handle landscaping/mowing/lawn maintenance, and why do we need to spend money on contracts? Provide information about the scope of the contracts? | D. Tyrell/APR | JD | Asheville Parks & Recreation employs 95 full-time and approximately 50 seasonal/part-time staff. Within the department, the Asset Management Division is responsible for physical maintenance, operating with 42 full-time staff divided across specialized operational areas.<br><br>- Mowing & Grounds: 6 FT / 1 PT<br>- Landscape: 4 FT / 1 PT<br>- Athletic Fields: 4 FT / 2 PT<br>- Cemetery Operations: 3 FT / 1 PT<br>- Custodial Upkeep & Cleaning: 6 FT / 4 PT<br>- Weekend Upkeep & Cleaning: 4 FT / 4 PT<br>- Heavy Construction & Equipment: 3 FT / 2 PT<br>- Skilled Trades (Carpentry, Welding, Masonry, Painting): 6 FT / 2 PT<br>- Planning & Development: 3 FT<br>- Management: 3 FT<br><br>These teams cover everything from Asheville App-reported emergencies to cemetery operations; only a small subset of this team is dedicated strictly to mowing and landscaping on any given day. To manage nearly 60 parks, over 500 acres of parkland, and miles of greenways, we use a hybrid approach of internal crews and third-party contracts. The hybrid approach started as early as 2011. Specialized contracts (e.g., Downtown and Riverfront corridors) cover high-volume and high-maintenance park needs. Internal staff focus on neighborhood parks, daily operations, rapid emergency repairs, skilled trades, cemetery duties, and system-wide facility maintenance. Contracted crews operate strictly within distinct geographic boundaries or perform specific task lists. Contractors |

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| | | | | handle routine maintenance in designated zones so our in-house team can address specialized system-wide needs. |
| PH Item B - Costco | ST: Information about what has changed since the first round. Requests a timeline of actions/data on the evolution of the Costco contract from beginning to present. | Chris Collins/PUD | BW | Staff has prepared this high-level overview of the major changes made to the Costco Conditional Zoning application site plan since the initial application was submitted. |
| PH Item B - Costco | KR: Are there any barriers to the issues with the roads/MSD/sewers that would hinder funding to move Costco forward? | CC/PUD | BW | The applicant is working with both NCDOT and MSD outside of the City approval process. The revised traffic impact study for this project was re-scoped and is currently in review by NCDOT. The applicant's representative will be able to provide more information on this process at the City Council hearing. MSD approved a sewer allocation request for this project on September 25, 2025, verifying capacity for this project. |
| Council Committees/PEDE | KR: Transit Mobile Fare App Update requested | AH | JD | Asheville Rides Transit - Mobile Fare Feasibility Memo |
| Downtown Service District Budget Amendment for Special Projects | MU: Can APD provide data to support correlation between CPTED lighting assessments/ action and crime reduction? | JS/APD | JD | APD conducts CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) surveys on individual properties fairly regularly and has seen positive results. In May, the City also completed a downtown lighting assessment that identified 47 outages, most of which have since been repaired; 7 inconsistencies; 6 dark areas, with one additional light installed; and 2 tree obstructions.<br><br>A recent (2025) study from Philadelphia states: "Our findings reveal a 15% decline in outdoor nighttime street crimes and a 21% reduction in outdoor nighttime gun violence following the streetlight upgrades. The streetlight upgrades may have |

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| | | | | contributed to 5% of the citywide decline in Philadelphia gun violence during the study period. Qualitative data also suggest that resident perceptions of safety and neighborhood vitality improved after new streetlights were installed."<br><br>This is particularly relevant because the study looked at 13,275 street segments and 34,374 upgraded streetlights, providing evidence that lighting can be a large-scale public-safety/environmental intervention, not just a small neighborhood project.<br><br>Source: MacDonald et al., Criminology & Public Policy (2025), “Can Enhanced Street Lighting Improve Public Safety at Scale?”<br><br>In addition to these assessments, City staff regularly engage with business owners and commercial districts throughout Asheville to hear concerns, identify challenges, and work collaboratively on solutions. This includes ongoing engagement with businesses in Biltmore Village, the River Arts District, West Asheville, and other commercial areas, as well as participation in business associations, boards, workgroups, and project-specific discussions. These relationships help the City better understand business community concerns, identify opportunities to address safety issues, and inform ongoing public safety and environmental improvement efforts. |
| Downtown Service District Budget Amendment for Special Projects | SS: Update requested on public safety community response - specifically, what happens when unhoused individuals refuse services; what are next steps? What is the next step when a community is not responsive to city actions/support? | EB/HCD HJ/AFD, REST, EC/APD | JD | If someone is not interested in services at the time, we continue to outreach that individual to build rapport, educate, encourage etc. until they are ready for services.<br><br>City staff is also collaborating with our court, county, and community partners to develop solutions and strategies that could be a significant step toward improving engagement with unhoused individuals, expanding access to treatment, and creating positive outcomes for the broader Asheville community. As those solutions are developed, staff will provide updates to the Public Safety Committee. |