

**Planning & Zoning FY 26 Budget Line Item narrative** – LL, v. 1 (10.23.24)  
NPB edits (10/31/24)

***Unknowns at this point:***

- Any changes in staff positions, salary line items: unknown, to be determined by Selectboard
- Effect of continued downturn in construction activity: whether it will continue down, or perk up as interest rates level off & start to come down

***Expenses:***

**Salaries (ZA, TP, PZA):** These amounts are placeholders, assuming continuation of current staffing levels (40 hrs./week for ZA, 32 hrs. for TP; 30 hrs./wk for PZA). All 3 staff paid on an hourly basis, thus cost will be reduced by unpaid days off.

**Minute taker:** Assumes current rate of \$25/hr. remains constant, if current contractor continues. Bumped up projected based on YTD costs.

**Legal expenses:** Difficult to estimate; based on discretionary requests from PC and DRB for advice on pending decisions. Lower this year, but could be more next year, depending on appeals.

**Mileage:** Mostly for ZA to conduct site visits. Aaron charges less mileage than Keith did b/c he combines site visits more efficiently. That said, bumped up proposed to \$1,600 based on YTD.

**Telephone:** Predictable, based on use of 1 outgoing phone line + toll calls. Bumped up to \$1,000 based on YTD billing.

**Advertising:** Variable, based on # of DRB and PC hearings warned. Lower for YTD, but doesn't include unbilled ads from 1<sup>st</sup> qtr. Key unknowns: advertising for staff vacancy (i.e. Town Planner) & permitting volume.

**Equipment:** Nominal, for ZA site inspections

**Seminars/Meetings:** Tuition & fees for registering staff & Board members for professional trainings & conferences. (Lower in current year due to staff not participating in multi-day conferences.)

**Computer:** Zeroed out, due to all future upgrades being charged to town admin overhead.

**Supplies:** Paper for copier, filing supplies, pads, laminating film, etc. Costs have been going up.

**Membership:** Covers Town Planner's membership in VPA/APA. Resources shared w/ other staff. It also covers annual subscriptions of VT statutes on planning & zoning updates (legal books).

**Engineering/Septic Review:** Since Selectboard decided to terminate the town's role in wastewater permitting, this is much lower than historical cost. Amt. shown is for engineering related to new hookups &/or possible studies to expand or repair municipal system in West Village.

**Copier:** The P&Z copier sees heavy use by the Town Administrator & for occasional mass copying of newsletters and trail guides by the Senior Center and Trails Committee. So this line item (which reflects all the above) is not solely due to P&Z department use. Costs are generally stable, but may change due to the pending replacement of this copier with new equipment (lease expired).

**Planning Consultants:** For FY 26, we will apply for a \$20,000+ state planning grant to revise & update the Town Plan, with a required \$4,000 match amount if this grant is awarded early next year. (application not yet submitted; state hasn't yet opened RFP) This \$4,000 total represents the match if the town gets a \$20,000 municipal planning grant from the state for next year.

**Mapping/Training:** Except for special large-format map prints to update what we have, these services are provided at no charge to the town by the CCRPC mapping specialist. Cost is for laminating.

**Town Plan/Land Use Regs:** This is an approved fee-for service estimate from CCRPC for their assistance to the town in supporting updates to the LURs and Town Plan in 2025.

**Technical Review:** This is a place-holder for the possible cost of hiring qualified specialists to do engineering & habitat impact reviews for DRB projects, when the Board decides it needs an independent review of these impacts for any project. (This is a wash, though, because the town would bill the applicant for actual costs incurred to conduct these studies.)

**Intern stipend:** P&Z is hosting a UVM intern this fall, but are currently unable to provide a modest stipend for this work. Given no public transit to Charlotte, it seems appropriate to at least cover their gas \$\$.

### ***Revenues:***

**Building Permits:** For new construction that does not require a Board review. Permitting volume & revenues were low in 2023, but are trending up this year due to drop in loan interest rates.

**Subdivision applications:** This amount was folded into the DRB revenues, since the DRB is now responsible for reviewing subdivisions, site plan reviews, and conditional use projects.

**Septic applications:** Given the end of the town's delegated authority to issue wastewater permits effective 2.1.24, no new septic permit fees are anticipated in FY26.

**Certificates of Occupancy:** Tied to past permits that require a CO to close out. These always lag behind ZPs, due to typical delays in completing construction these days. (Many property owners don't follow through on this requirement w/o prodding, BTW.)

**Certificates of Compliance:** These are driven by volume of residential property sales, which have been steadier of late, but at a lower pace than during the pandemic.

**Highway Access Permits:** Tied to new home construction, also down this year. Assumes 15 next year, which would be a 50% increase from FY 24 volume.

**DRB:** Inclusive of permit fees for subdivisions, site plan reviews, and conditional use projects. Again, volume is lower this year, by a lot, which is a trend across the region.

**P&Z Grants:** We anticipate applying for a \$24,000 municipal planning grant, with a 20% match required if awarded. (this would reduce our net cost to \$4,000) The work will be throughout calendar year 2025. This line item shows anticipated drawing down about 60% of the \$20K revenue in FY 26. (The balance would be needed sooner, in the current fiscal year, but that is not shown as an expense because it wouldn't be incurred if we don't secure this funding.)

**Technical Review:** This is the revenue corresponding to the Technical Review expense cited above. (If it happens, should be a wash, as predicted expense should exactly match revenue.)