Website — Talking Points

Governance Committee · Item 4 · August Steurer, Web Administrator

> **Open with this**
>
> The site looks about the same as it did a year ago. That's accurate, and it was deliberate. Everything so far has been site prep — problems underneath that had to be fixed before a single new page could be built. **That phase is finished.** What starts now is design-build, and unlike site prep, the board and the committees are in it with me.

Site prep is done. Design-build starts now.

Site prep cleared the ground: recovered the domain, extracted the mail, got off abandoned software, replaced hidden code. Invisible by nature. Done.

Design-build means the structure is set and the rooms get fitted out with the people who'll work in them. Each chair tells me what their committee needs before their pages are finished — not style, function. **That answers "we don't know what's happening."** You won't be told afterward. You'll be in it.

What site prep found — none of it known going in

- **Two-thirds of the "website" wasn't website.** The account ran near 100 GB — but ~65 GB was email and stray backups stored inside web hosting. Auto-bumped 80 to 100 GB, 150 GB being pushed. Mail extracted to its own services; **the site itself is ~27 GB and moved on its own.**
- **Access to our own domain was lost to history.** It auto-renewed, so nothing lapsed — but no DNS record could be changed until a member dug the account out of years-old email. **Recovered, and now documented.**
- **A failed February restore silently deleted 421 uploaded files** from live pages. No error, no alert. **All 421 recovered and verified.**
- **565 of our 582 pages pulled content from whcouncil.net** — almost certainly the developer's old staging domain, never updated at launch. **Cleared to zero; that registration has since lapsed — caught in time.**
- **Our agenda plugin was abandoned by its developer four years ago.** Unsupported software handling our public records. **Replaced.**
- **Everything was styled by hand-written code outside the pages** — why only its author could change anything.

Every one was a dependency on something we didn't control. Site prep turned them into things the council owns.

Why nothing is visible yet

Divi 5 replaces hidden code with visible controls — what makes the site maintainable by someone other than its builder. The controls get set up first: colors, type, spacing, structure, defined once so every page inherits them. That's the next task. Build pages before it and we build them twice.

And the site was built for desktop. Divi 4 adapts pages to phones unevenly, varying by device and browser. Most people now read on a phone — the primary experience, not the edge case. Rebuilt pages are designed phone-first and adapted up.

What's coming, and who's in it

When	What	Who takes part
August	Design system + **site tree begun** — level-by-level map, overview first	**Board Q&A session — leads into the chair meetings**
Sept–Nov	Committee pages built out	**One-on-one with each chair: what does your committee need?**
Nov–	Meeting records, news, board pages, elections	Board reviews the directory and member pages

When	What	Who takes part
Jan		
Jan–Mar	Board workspace — agenda creation, uploads, forms	**15-minute walkthrough at your regular meeting**
Mar–Apr	Records moved into the new structure, final checks	Committees confirm their archives are right

What the chair meetings are for: the building is designed — that isn't reopening. Fitting out the rooms is. Each chair gets their pages drafted with generic copy that fits any committee, then marks what doesn't apply and what should replace it — the redlines are the requirements. Then fifteen minutes at your regular meeting so members can post their own material. No new meetings.

Scale: about 130 pages and screens from roughly 43 templates. The workspace is the larger half, and its whole purpose is **less work, better results** — including for the Treasurer: funding requests arrive through screens that apply the City's guidelines, so the form says no to ineligible requests instead of the Treasurer having to.

If asked

"Why not just hire someone?" Several hundred professional hours — more than our entire $25,000 annual allocation in one year. And we can't hand anyone a check: the City Clerk pays vendors after a full Board vote, on invoice, after the work.

"Other councils have good websites." I reviewed all 99. Most run thin City stub pages. About a dozen have real sites, most renting the same platform. Each good one is good at exactly one thing — Sherman Oaks publishes on schedule, West Hills tracks land-use cases with City case numbers. We're assembling what's scattered across six councils.

"Why not rent that platform?" We'd get their structure, not ours. Our document system, case tracking and workspace don't exist there and can't be added — and leaving later means rebuilding.

"How do we know it's progressing?" You'll see it in the workshops. Add a standing website report to a committee agenda and you'll have it in writing every month too.

"What if you're not available?" The honest weak point today — agendas post through a page one person can safely edit, and posting has a legal deadline. The rebuild removes that bottleneck and the walkthroughs spread the knowledge. A reason to finish, not to pause.

"Isn't this more work for us?" It's less. Posting an agenda today: write, email, rename, upload, hand-edit the master page, verify — six steps, two people. Afterward: fill the form, click post. The work already exists; it's just done by the wrong people in the wrong order.

The $1,000

I'm not asking the board to drop this. I'm asking to schedule it where it does real work.

Right now there's nothing to review. The site a reviewer would examine today is the one we're replacing. They'd spend the budget reading our specifications, then recommend the rebuild already underway. And the review cycle itself — Board vote, briefing, report, back to Governance — costs two to three months out of nine.

Budget it for after April 26, 2027, when the rebuild is done and the accessibility deadline has passed. Then it buys something real: an independent check that the finished site meets the standard — which I shouldn't certify myself — a written list of what still needs fixing, and what to improve next.

One note: engage an accessibility auditor, not general web support. Different discipline. Invoices must reach the City Clerk by June 1 to be paid in that fiscal year.

> **Close with this — the ask**
>
> Site prep is done; design-build starts now, with the committees in it. Three things: **adopt the eight functional goals** — the Board owns what the site is for, I answer for delivering it; **add a standing website report** for monthly visibility; and **schedule the outside review for after April 2027**, when there's a finished site worth paying someone to examine.

Draft Motion — Website Functional Goals

For the Governance Committee · to be forwarded to the Board

> **What this motion does, and what it deliberately does not do**
>
> It asks the Board to adopt **what the website must accomplish** — the outcomes, stated in plain language. It does not ask the Board to approve designs, software, page layouts, or method. Once the goals are adopted, building to them is administrative implementation, reported to the Board on a schedule. The Board holds the destination. The administrator answers for reaching it.

The motion

Justification

The Governance Committee has considered the condition and purpose of the council's website, and finds that:

- The website is the council's primary point of contact with more than 70,000 stakeholders, most of whom will never attend a meeting.
- The site was built as a bulletin board for posting notices, and functions as one. It does not tell a resident what the council is working on, what it has accomplished, or how to take part.
- Its recruiting page has advertised a Spring 2016 election for a decade, and the site was built for desktop viewing at a time when most residents read on a phone.
- Posting agendas and minutes currently depends on hand-editing a single page carrying roughly a thousand documents, which only one person can do safely — a dependency the council should not carry.
- Federal rule requires public-body websites to meet the WCAG 2.1 Level AA standard by April 26, 2027.
- Structural repairs to the site's hosting, domain, storage, and abandoned software are complete, and the council now needs an agreed statement of what the rebuilt site is for.

Suggested action

Therefore, the Governance Committee moves to recommend that the Board **adopt the following functional goals for the council's website**, and delegate implementation, sequencing, and technical method to the Web Administrator:

1. **A resident can see what the council is working on now** — current matters, in plain language, with their status.
2. **A resident can see what the council has accomplished and what it spent** — outcomes reported, grants awarded, and the council's budget and monthly expenditure reports published as a matter of course.
3. **A resident can find their representative and their committee** in under a minute.
4. **A resident with a concern has a clear path** from raising it to being heard at a committee.
5. **A resident or local organization can find how to take part** — attend, comment, apply to serve, vote, or apply for a Neighborhood Purposes Grant — with the path from interest to participation kept short and obvious.
6. **Every agenda, minutes, and record is posted on time, is findable, and is retained permanently** in accordance with City rules.
7. **Any trained board or committee member can post their own committee's material** without technical assistance.
8. **The site meets WCAG 2.1 Level AA by April 26, 2027**, and works on a phone and in Spanish.

and further, that the Web Administrator report progress against these goals to *[committee]* on a *[monthly / quarterly]* basis, and that each committee chair be consulted to identify their committee's unmet needs, so that the pages built for each committee support the work that committee actually does.

Recorded at the meeting

Moved: _____ Seconded: _____

Vote: ___ Aye ___ No ___ Abstain ___ Recuse Carried / Failed

Why these eight, and not a longer list

Each goal is written as a **result a resident experiences**, not a feature. That matters for three reasons.

It is checkable by anyone. A board member can open the site in a year and judge goal 3 without knowing anything about web development. A list of features could only be judged by someone who understands them.

It survives changes in method. If a better tool appears, the goals do not need reopening. Approving software or layouts would mean returning to the Board every time something is refined.

It draws the line in the right place. The Board decides what the website is for. How a page is constructed is administrative work; voting on it produces delay, not better pages.

> **Goal 5 is the one worth discussing**
>
> Engagement here means residents joining in — attending, commenting, applying to serve, voting in the election. That is a different function from publicizing grant opportunities, and the site has to do it deliberately or it will not happen. A council with an active board and no visible way to join stays the same size indefinitely. This goal is the recruiting engine, and it is the one most likely to change the council's own membership over the next two years.

What follows adoption

Chairs are consulted on needs, not design. The site's structure and appearance are settled and are not being reopened — that is the administrative half. Each chair instead receives their committee's pages drafted with generic copy written to fit any committee, and marks it up: what does not apply here, and what should replace it. Only a chair can answer that, and reacting to a concrete draft produces specific answers where open questions produce silence — the redlines are the requirements.

To borrow the construction framing: the building is designed and framed. These conversations are walking each room before the walls close, so the outlets go where the work happens — requirements-gathering on a chair's own committee, not an invitation to redesign the building.

Then a short walkthrough, fifteen minutes appended to a committee's regular meeting, so members can post their own agendas and news. No separate meeting is scheduled for this.

Then the standing report, so the Board sees progress against the eight goals on a fixed schedule rather than by exception.

> **What the board is actually being asked to trade**
>
> Today, posting a committee agenda takes six steps and two people: write it, email it, rename it, upload it, hand-edit the master page, verify the link. Afterward it takes two steps and one person: fill the form, click post. The objection that this is "more work" is worth answering with that count. The work already exists — it is simply being done by the wrong people, in the wrong order, with a single point of failure in the middle.

Report 1 — What Was Done

The whcouncil.org rebuild, January–July 2026 · prepared for the Governance Committee and the Officers

In one page

Bottom line: The public site looks almost the same as it did a year ago. That is accurate, and it was deliberate. What happened in the last six months was not visible work — it was the discovery and repair of serious structural problems that had to be resolved before any new page could safely be built, plus the design and specification work that lets the rebuild go quickly once it starts. The council now controls its own domain and DNS, sits on new hosting, has cut its hosted footprint from nearly 100 GB to about 27 GB, has recovered 421 lost files, has eliminated every dependency on a domain it no longer uses, and has a complete written specification for the site. None of that shows on the homepage. All of it had to happen first.

The five things worth knowing:

1. **Two-thirds of the "website" was not website.** The hosting account ran close to 100 GB — but roughly 65 GB of that was email (about 33 GB of old archives and 32 GB of active mail) plus stray backups, all stored inside the web hosting because nothing had ever been separated. The actual site was around 30 GB. Growth had already forced an automatic plan upgrade from 80 GB to 100 GB, another to 150 GB was being pushed, all four accounts sharing the server were above 90% full, and the page builder itself was stalling. The mail and backups were extracted, the transferable backup came down to about 6 GB, and the website — now about 27 GB — moved on its own. That work produced no visible change and was the precondition for everything else.
2. **Access to the council's own domain had been lost to history.** Registration renewed automatically, so it was never at risk of lapsing — but the account credentials had never been handed forward, and no DNS record could be changed. Recovering access meant a member searching years of old email until a message surfaced that led to the account and a workable password. That search cost real time, and until it succeeded the hosting move was blocked outright.
3. **A failed restore in February silently deleted 421 uploaded files** — documents and images referenced across the site, with no error shown. And the failure was not bad luck: the free backup tool splits a site into archive segments meant to stay under half a gigabyte, and with the site stuffed full of accumulated backups, segments swelled past 2 GB — beyond what the tool could reliably restore. The bloat corrupted the backup; the corrupted backup broke the restore; the broken restore lost the files. All 421 were recovered, replaced at their original paths, and individually verified.
4. **565 of 582 pages were pulling content from whcouncil.net** — in all likelihood the original developer's staging domain, whose links were never updated when the site went live. Traced to a single theme setting responsible for 547 of them. Now at verified zero, which matters: that registration has since lapsed.
5. **The accessibility deadline is April 26, 2027** — a federal legal obligation. Meeting it requires the rebuild, because compliance is a property of how a page is built, not something that can be added to a finished page afterward.

Why nothing appears to have changed

This is the fair question, and it deserves a direct answer.

A website rebuild has three stages: fix what is broken underneath, set up the design system, then build the pages. Only the third stage is visible to a visitor. Stages one and two consumed the last six months — stage one because the problems found were worse than expected, stage two because it is what makes stage three fast.

On the design system specifically. Divi 5 is substantially more capable than Divi 4. Where the old site required hand-written custom CSS to achieve almost anything — code that lives outside the pages, invisible to anyone who did not write it, and the direct cause of the maintenance problems this site has — Divi 5 exposes those same capabilities as controls. The result is a site a trained volunteer can maintain, with no hidden code.

The trade-off is that those controls have to be configured first. Setting up the variables, presets, and templates is front-loaded work that produces nothing a visitor can see, and then makes every page after it fast and consistent. Building pages before that setup means building them twice — and means re-creating exactly the hidden-CSS problem the rebuild exists to eliminate.

What has changed visibly, and it is small. Some default colors and the site header have been adjusted. No page has been rebuilt yet. That is the honest state of it.

A change of baseline. The current site was built for desktop viewing, and Divi 4 adapts those pages to smaller screens unevenly — results vary by device and browser rather than being reliably right. Most people now read news on a phone, which makes the phone the primary experience rather than the edge case. Every page in the rebuild is designed for phones first and adapted up to larger screens, so correct rendering is the design rather than the hope.

And a change of purpose, not just appearance. The current site works as a bulletin board — a place agendas get posted. The rebuild is a magazine: laid out to invite reading, to let a resident follow an issue rather than merely locate a file, and to make what the council is doing legible to someone who has never attended a meeting. That difference drives nearly every structural decision in this report.

A platform decision came first. Divi 4 is genuinely poor to work in, and the original intention was to rebuild the site on a different page builder — one already in professional use elsewhere and better suited to this kind of work. Divi 5 changed that assessment. Staying on Divi avoided a full platform migration, preserved the existing license rather than buying a new one, and kept the council on software it already owns outright. Reaching that conclusion responsibly meant evaluating the alternative rather than assuming it, and then learning a substantially rewritten product — study, documentation, and testing that produces no visible output and has to happen before the first page is built correctly.

The other reason for the pace: the council's own working methods had to be written down before they could be built. How an agenda item is created, how an issue moves from raised to resolved, how a motion is recorded, how a document is named and retained, what a committee page must show — none of that existed in writing. It does now.

Part 1 — What we found

None of the following was known when this began. Each had to be diagnosed and resolved before the rebuild could proceed.

What was found	Why it mattered
The hosting account was near 100 GB — but ~65 GB of it was email and stray backups, not website	Too large to back up or transfer; migration was impossible until mail was extracted
Storage growth was triggering automatic paid plan upgrades — 80 GB to 100 GB already applied, 150 GB being pushed	An escalating cost the council was absorbing without anyone tracking why
All four accounts on the shared server were above 90% capacity	A shared-hosting condition affecting performance beyond our own account
The Divi Visual Builder was stalling	No page could be rebuilt at all until storage came down — the blocking issue behind the whole timeline
Domain account access had been lost to institutional history	Registration auto-renewed, so nothing lapsed — but no DNS change could be made until a member unearthed the account through years-old email, which blocked the hosting move and cost real search time
DNS was managed by the web host	Any hosting change would have taken down the website and every council email address simultaneously
whcouncil.net assets served across the live site	565 of 582 pages depended on what appears to have been the original developer's staging domain, never updated at launch and since lapsed
421 files silently lost in a February restore failure	Documents and images on live pages simply gone, with no error — traced to backup archives corrupted by the storage bloat itself, swelling past what the free tool could restore
Email archives consuming hosting storage	Years of mail had never been separated from active accounts
Backups writing large daily sets to the server itself, with no off-site copy	A backup that lives only on the server fails in exactly the scenario backups exist for
Divi 4 identified as the cause of site slowness	Established only after ruling out hosting, plugins, cache, and page content in turn
Host-injected plugins running invisibly	Vendor code from the old host still executing after migration, producing stale-cache behavior
The original agenda plugin was abandoned by its developer four years ago	Unsupported code handling the council's core public records, using an outdated naming convention and storing files outside the Media Library
The master "Agendas & Minutes" page is structurally unsustainable	One hand-built page carrying roughly a thousand documents across seventeen committees, with permanent retention required. It can only grow.
Plugin sprawl and an unconfigured mail	Two dozen-plus plugins, six vendor review banners, and a mail warning

What was found	Why it mattered
transport	meaning form notifications may not have been sending
Two copies of the custom plugin with identical version numbers but different code	Compared line by line to establish which was authoritative before any further development

Part 2 — What was fixed

Size, hosting, and ownership

- **The hosted footprint fell from near 100 GB to about 27 GB** — not by deleting anything, but by extracting what never belonged inside web hosting: roughly 33 GB of archived email, about 32 GB of active mail, and stray duplicate backups. The transferable backup came down to roughly 6 GB. This stopped the automatic plan-upgrade ladder, unblocked the page builder, and made migration possible at all. It is the single largest measurable result of the period.
- **Everything now lives where it belongs.** The website (~27 GB) on the hosting account, active email (~32 GB) on a dedicated mail provider, and the mail archive (~33 GB) on independent cloud storage. Duplicate backup sets that had accumulated in the wrong locations were removed. Nothing was discarded — it was distributed and de-duplicated, and no one service failing now takes the others with it.
- **Hosting migrated** by full account-to-account transfer, with no data loss. (A *further upgrade to a dedicated virtual private server is planned; the current plan is 100 GB, of which about 27 GB is in use.*)
- **Domain access recovered and secured.** A member traced the account through old email; credentials are now current, documented, and held by the council rather than by whoever happened to set it up.
- **DNS moved to the registrar** and rebuilt from scratch — 15 records including both mail-signing keys, mail routing priorities, sender policy, and authentication, each verified. The site can now change hosts without touching email, and change mail providers without touching the site.
- **Email separated into active and archive.** Active mail moved to a dedicated provider; the archive moved to independent cloud storage. This is where most of the storage reduction came from, and the archive is no longer hostage to a hosting decision.
- **Backups corrected and licensed.** The routine that was writing large daily sets to the server itself has been stopped, and the software upgraded to the licensed version built for sites this size — the free edition's segment limits are what corrupted the February backup in the first place. An off-site destination is configured but **not yet connected** — completing that authentication is an open item and remains the one gap in the recovery position.
- **PHP version pinned and documented.** The plugin stack requires PHP 8.1 and breaks on 8.2. Now written down for whoever comes next.
- **Host-injected vendor plugins removed.**
- **Post-migration incidents resolved,** including a first-day database outage (host-side, resolved by ticket) and stray migration archives consuming disk.

Content integrity

- **421 rescued files restored** to their original paths and individually verified reachable. A *small number of files from the early period of the current design remain unrecovered and are being tracked.*
- **Cross-domain references eliminated.** All 582 public pages crawled; 547 traced to one theme setting; remaining content-level references remediated individually; re-crawled to verified zero.
- **A structural discovery documented:** page content is stored as escaped JSON, which causes ordinary search-and-replace to report zero matches even when the content is there. Anyone maintaining this site needs to know that. It is now recorded.

Platform

- **Alternative page builders evaluated,** including one already in professional use elsewhere and better suited to this work than Divi 4.
- **Divi 5 adopted** after that evaluation — its controls replace the custom CSS that made the old site unmaintainable, which was the deciding factor. Staying on Divi avoided a full platform migration and kept the council on a lifetime license it already owns outright, with no recurring cost.

Part 3 — What was built

The visible site did not change. The specification behind it went from nothing to complete.

The document system — two plugins and a rescue. The council's agenda and minutes system had been running on abandoned software for four years, using an obsolete naming convention and keeping files outside the Media Library where nothing else could find them. Three pieces of work followed:

6. A custom plugin was built to **relabel the legacy files** — from both before and after the current site was created — and return them to the uploads library under a consistent convention.
7. A second, more capable plugin was then built to **handle documents going forward**: a guided three-step form that renames files to the required convention automatically, stores working source files in a protected folder, restricts deletion, and includes repair tools. It is live and in use.
8. That plugin now needs **further development to work correctly alongside the newer components** of the stack — known, scoped, and on the list.

This is the model for how the rest of the volunteer experience should feel: guided, plain-language, and hard to get wrong.

Brand and identity — complete, and worth explaining. The identity work was not a matter of taste. The previous mark was assessed against four specific problems.

First, and stated carefully: logos are exempt from the accessibility rules. The council is not out of compliance for using the current one, and this report does not claim otherwise. But the mark still has to do its actual job — identify the site and act as the way home — for every resident, and on that functional test it is weak in three ways:

- **On the navy header it is hard to perceive at all.** The green building shapes and the blue element are both low-contrast against a dark navy background. A low-vision resident may simply not see it.

- **It distinguishes itself by color rather than by shape.** For a resident with color vision deficiency it collapses into a single indistinct blob — the situation the "don't rely on color alone" principle exists to prevent.
- **It does not survive shrinking.** At favicon and mobile size it becomes an unrecognizable shape, which weakens the site-identity landmark people use to orient themselves.

The position to take is not that the current logo breaks the law, because it does not. It is that **logos are exempt, and a council whose purpose is inclusion should choose not to hide behind the exemption.**

The three remaining problems are about what the mark communicates:

- **It reads as commercial.** A cluster of buildings is the visual vocabulary of real estate and development. For a body whose most contested work is land use, a logo that looks like a developer's is the wrong signal.
- **It contains no people.** A neighborhood council is its residents. An identity showing only buildings describes the place and omits everyone in it.
- **It says nothing about Los Angeles or this district.** It could belong to any city in the country.

The replacement is built on the bird of paradise — the official flower of the City of Los Angeles — with people present in the mark. More importantly, it is the anchor of a system built to accessibility discipline rather than a drawing that sits outside one: no text inside the artwork, so the council's name is always live HTML that can be resized, recolored and read aloud; a defined small-size version so identity survives shrinking; a specified treatment for placement on dark backgrounds; and a function-based convention for alternative text.

The system around it is complete: a palette with contrast pairing rules that meet accessibility minimums, a two-typeface scheme, a three-tier variable structure so a color is defined once and inherited everywhere, permanent identifier codes for every committee so a rename never breaks the site, and a mapped icon set. Brand guidelines, a production one-pager, and print color specifications were produced and distributed to the board.

This describes design and accessibility standards, not a legal opinion; how the exemptions apply to the council specifically is a question for the council's governance advisor.

Document standards — complete. One manual covering every document the council produces, print and digital, with the WCAG 2.1 AA requirements that apply to documents mapped to specific production steps. This is what makes compliance achievable by volunteers: it turns a legal standard into a checklist.

Site architecture — specified. A 22-template plan covering every page type, with the individual committee page identified as the critical path — get that one template right and thirteen pages work at once.

Council process — specified. The agenda process, the issue lifecycle, case numbering in the City's own format, motion structure, roll-call vote recording per motion, and Community Impact Statement handling are now written down as a working system rather than institutional memory.

Peer benchmarking — complete. All 99 Los Angeles neighborhood councils in the EmpowerLA directory were surveyed to establish what good looks like and what the commercial alternatives are. The finding: most councils run thin City-provided stub pages, roughly a dozen maintain independent sites, and most of those rent the same shared vendor platform. Each strong site is strong at exactly one

thing — a document archive, a case tracker, a publishing cadence, an accessibility statement — and none combines them.

Software stack — selected and tested. Translation, calendar, accessibility scanning, accessible forms, performance, security, backup, media organization, editorial approval, and content fields. Each chosen against one test: *does what it produces survive the removal of the tool*? Nothing captive was adopted. That is a succession decision, not a preference.

What the site will do when it is finished

Not a redesign. A different kind of instrument.

- **A resident can see what the council is working on right now** — active cases, in plain language, with their current status.
- **A resident can see what the council accomplished** — outcomes reported, not just meetings held. Wins are currently invisible, which makes an active council look dormant.
- **A resident with a concern has a path** from "something is wrong on my street" to being on a committee agenda.
- **Every committee has its own page** carrying its own agendas, its own news, and its own cases — loading fast because it carries only its own material.
- **Posting an agenda becomes filling in one short form.** It then appears on the committee page, the archive, and the calendar automatically. Any trained volunteer can do it. Today it requires hand-editing an enormous page, which only one person can safely do.
- **The site is accessible** to residents using screen readers, magnification, or keyboard-only navigation — meeting the federal standard rather than hoping not to be noticed.
- **The site speaks Spanish, and can speak Farsi,** in one of the most multilingual districts in the Valley.
- **Every document is filed permanently and correctly** under City retention rules, and stays findable.

Report 2 sets out what remains, the compliance path, and the parts of the vision still being designed.

Prepared by the Web Administrator · Woodland Hills–Warner Center Neighborhood Council · Communications & Technology

Report 2 — What Remains

Scope, sequence, the vision, and the April 26, 2027 deadline · prepared for the Governance Committee and the Officers

In one page

Bottom line: Roughly 130–140 pages and screens remain to be built, from about 43 templates, on a nine-month runway to a federal deadline. The foundation work is finished. The next single task — setting the design variables and presets in Divi 5 — is the one that converts everything after it from slow to fast. The site does not need a diagnosis; it has one, in writing. What it needs is uninterrupted build time, five board decisions, and one session long enough to see the whole plan.

The deadline is real and specific. On April 20, 2026 the Department of Justice extended the ADA Title II web accessibility compliance date for entities serving 50,000 or more from April 24, 2026 to **April 26, 2027**. The standard is WCAG 2.1 Level AA. Scope and technical requirements did not change — only the date. (*Our earlier notes said April 24, 2027. That was wrong; April 24 is the date the original 2024 rule was published.*)

A pause does not pause the deadline. Nine months remain. Every month not spent building is subtracted from a fixed window, and the work does not compress.

The migration is already complete. The site is moved; the domain and DNS are recovered and under council control. There is no migration left to stop. What is underway is the page rebuild.

The rebuild does not disturb the live site. New pages and templates are built on hidden addresses, reachable only by direct link and invisible to the public, and go live only when finished and approved. Once the first templates exist, Officers can be given a preview link at any stage to see work before it is published. Reviewing and building are not in conflict.

What the current site does today

This section exists because the site does not look broken from the outside, and reasonable people have concluded it is basically fine. A short factual inventory of its actual condition:

- **The "Join" page — the one page whose entire purpose is recruiting residents — still advertises a Spring 2016 election.** It has been wrong for a decade.
- **All agendas and minutes route through one hand-built page** carrying roughly a thousand documents across seventeen committees. City rules require permanent retention, so that page can only grow. It gets slower and more fragile every month the council meets, and there is no reset.
- **The council's core records system ran on abandoned software for four years.** The original agenda plugin was discontinued by its developer; unsupported code was handling the council's public records.
- **A restore failure in February silently deleted 421 uploaded files** — documents and images live on public pages — with no alarm of any kind.

- **565 of 582 pages were loading content from whcouncil.net** — in all likelihood the original developer's staging domain, whose links were never updated when the site went live. The council no longer uses it, and its registration has since lapsed.
- **No DNS record could be changed** because access to the domain account had been lost to institutional history — recovered only after a member searched years of old email for a trail to the account.
- **Backups were being written to the same server they were meant to protect,** with no off-site copy.
- **The site was too large to move** — close to 100 GB — which is why the storage reduction had to come before anything else.
- **The page styling depends on hand-written custom code that lives outside the pages,** invisible to anyone who did not write it. This is why "just update the site" is not something another person can pick up and do.
- **The council once published a PLUM case schedule and no longer does.** Case listings with City case numbers and project descriptions are still on the site, dated 2018. Nothing structural stopped them — the page simply required someone to maintain it by hand, and hand-maintained pages decay. This is the clearest illustration of why the rebuild generates pages from records instead.
- **The site is not accessible,** against a federal deadline nine months out.

Every one of these is fixed or in hand. The point of listing them is that none of them were visible from the homepage — which is exactly why the last six months look like nothing happened.

What compliance actually requires

Accessibility is not a plugin. It is not an overlay widget — those are widely regarded as ineffective and have themselves drawn enforcement action. It is a property of how a page is constructed: heading structure that matches the visual hierarchy, contrast that meets a measured ratio, form fields with real labels, meaningful alternative text, keyboard operability, language tags. Every one of those is decided at the moment a page is built.

Which means **a page built the old way cannot be made compliant without being rebuilt.** That is the whole technical argument for the current approach, and why a fix list against the existing site is not an available option.

The scanning tool we run flags problems; it does not fix them. It is an inspector, not a remedy. It also does not look inside posted PDFs — those are governed by our document standards manual and checked separately.

The exceptions that make this achievable

Federal rule provides limited exceptions. Two matter enormously.

Archived web content is excepted if it meets all four conditions: created before the compliance date; retained exclusively for reference, research, or recordkeeping; not altered after archiving; and **organized and stored in a dedicated area clearly identified as archived**.

Preexisting conventional electronic documents — PDFs and office files already on the site before the compliance date — are excepted *unless currently used to apply for, gain access to, or participate in the council's services, programs, or activities.*

Applied here: our roughly one thousand historical agendas and minutes very likely fall under these exceptions. Current agendas do not — a current agenda is used to participate in a meeting, so it must be accessible.

The exception has to be earned by structure. It requires a dedicated, clearly-identified archive area; moving files into a folder for convenience does not qualify, and altering an archived file breaks the exception for it. The committee-owned archive design already in the rebuild plan is exactly what satisfies this. The architecture change is not only a speed fix — it is what makes the exception available to us, and it is worth about a thousand documents' worth of work.

One obligation survives: even for excepted content, an accessible version must be provided on request. That requires a documented process and a log.

The build: what remains

Face A — the public site

Mobile-first, for residents.

Group	Pages and templates	Templates	Pages
Orientation and identity	Homepage · About · Bylaws and Standing Rules · Join and recruiting · position descriptions and duties for area representative, at-large, youth and the five officer roles	4	8–12
Who represents you	Board directory · individual board member page (*template* × 31) · board map overview · seven area pages, at-large and youth	4	42
Committees	Committee gallery · committee overview with meeting gallery (*template*) · committee items and actions overview with item gallery and search (*template*)	3	11–15
The record	Meeting/event page carrying agenda, draft minutes, supplementary material and approved minutes (*template*) · open/closed item page with serial number (*template*) · CIS page and history · letters and communications · document find · Zoom recordings	6	4 + records
News and community	Community news gallery · general community news (*template*) · committee, board and community news and action (*template*) · community gallery · community event page with description, background and post-event (*template*) · calendar	6	3 + records
Finance	Finance overview — budget, Monthly Expenditure Reports, Treasurer reports (*record template*) · Neighborhood Purposes Grants — what they are, who qualifies, how to apply ·	3	2 + reco

Group	Pages and templates	Templates	Pages
and grants	awarded-grant page (*template*) showing recipient, purpose, amount and outcome		rds
Service and utility	Elections · City department directory (*scope decision below*) · search · 404 · global header · global footer	6	6+
Totals		**~32**	**~78–88**

Three points in that table carry more weight than their line count suggests.

The meeting is the record. The event page holds the agenda, the draft minutes, the supplementary material, and the approved minutes together as one thing with a date, rather than as loose files in a list. That single change is what retires the master Agendas & Minutes page — the page that today carries a thousand documents and can only grow.

Committee pages appear as committees activate. Twenty committee identifiers are reserved in the system; five to seven committees are currently active. Only active committees get pages. When a dormant committee stands up, its pages generate from the existing templates with no new build work, and when one goes dormant its record is retired rather than deleted, as public-records rules require. This is why the work is two templates rather than twenty pages — and why the count does not balloon every time the board reorganizes.

The committee templates are the critical path. Two templates must work for a committee with almost no activity and for PLUM with a great deal of it, without either looking broken. They are the highest-value work remaining, and the reason the design system has to be set first.

Beyond the fixed pages, these templates generate an unlimited number of record pages from the database — currently around 1,000 meeting documents, 30 cases, 19 Community Impact Statements, the news archive and its listings, and every event.

Two scope questions for the board, not yet decided:

City department pages. There are over thirty City departments, and some are being consolidated over the long term. A single directory page is one page's work. Individual review-and-referral pages carry a per-department cost to write and a permanent cost to keep accurate. **Recommendation: build the directory, then individual pages only for the departments residents actually contact** — likely eight to twelve — and add others on demand. Building all thirty-plus would be effort spent on pages nobody opens, and thirty-plus pages of City information going stale is worse than not having them.

Contact. Whether general contact and email routing lives in the footer or on its own page is undecided. Either works; it affects one page in the count.

Why finance screens are in the inventory, and not as decoration. The Monthly Expenditure Report itself is generated by the City Clerk's funding portal — the site never builds it. The Treasurer's real

work is upstream and continuous: submitting each claim with its invoice under the City's funding rules, fielding requests from members and committees, and being the one who has to say no when a request does not qualify. When the Board adopts the MER it validates those expenditures and receives the documentation as a PDF; the site's job at that end is simply to archive the adopted MER and its documentation to the meeting record and the finance page, permanently and findably.

The site's real contribution is at the front of the process, in two moves. **First, the funding guidelines go into the request screens.** An event, expenditure, or grant request is entered through a form that applies the City's rules as it is filled in — category, documentation, eligibility — so a request that cannot be funded is stopped by the form, with the reason, before it ever reaches the Treasurer. The Treasurer stops being the person who turns people down; the process does it, consistently and impersonally. **Second, every claim is recorded with its invoice and its authorizing motion at submission time**, so nothing is reconstructed later and the public finance page generates from records that already exist.

This is worth the board's attention for a blunt reason: **the Treasurer's workload is heavy enough that the position is hard to fill.** That is an officer-succession risk, and reducing the burden of a statutory office is a governance outcome, not a convenience. Publishing the full picture — budget, adopted MERs, and what each grant bought — is also the cheapest trust the council can buy: the page that answers "what do they do with the money" before anyone asks.

And the NPG pages are recruitment for partners, not paperwork. A Neighborhood Purposes Grant needs an applicant — a local 501(c)(3) or public school — and applicants cannot apply for what they cannot find. The public side explains what NPGs are, who qualifies, and how to apply, and shows every awarded grant with its recipient, purpose, and outcome; each award is also a news story, feeding the same pipeline as everything else.

The internal path matters as much as the public one. **An NPG application routes to the responsible committee chair**, who checks it for compliance and agendizes it — so the intake form's job is to arrive at the chair complete: required attachments present, eligibility questions answered, nothing to chase. From there it follows the same track as any other item: chair review, agenda, motion, Board vote, outcome — and the award links back to the motion that approved it, which is exactly what the Treasurer's package needs on the other end. The eligibility chain closes the loop: the council can only award NPGs if its MERs are current and its Treasurer and second signer are eligible — so the grant pages and the finance pages are one system, and the awarded-grants page doubles as proof the council's own house is in order.

Face B — the board workspace

Desktop-first, for board members and volunteers. Entirely new, hidden from the public until activated. This is the larger half of the build, and the part nobody sees.

Its purpose can be stated in five words: less work, better results. Every screen in this table exists to take a task volunteers already do — posting a document, writing an item, requesting funds, reviewing a grant — and make it shorter, harder to get wrong, and compliant by construction. Face A is what residents get. Face B is what the board gets, and it is the half that determines whether serving on this council gets easier or stays hard.

Group	What it covers	Screens
Submission and production	Meeting document upload · **agenda creation** · **compliant PDF generation** · agenda items · cases and issues · news posts · events · motions · CIS drafts · letters and communications · roster and profile updates · stakeholder requests · accessible-format requests	13–15
Treasurer and grants	Funding request intake — event, expenditure, and NPG requests arrive through screens that apply the City's funding guidelines, so ineligible requests are stopped by the form rather than by the Treasurer · expenditure record — each claim logged with its invoice and its authorizing motion at submission time, ready for the Clerk's portal · NPG routing to the responsible committee chair for compliance review and agendizing, then tracking through Board vote to outcome · approved-MER filing — the Board-adopted MER and its documentation PDF archived to the meeting record and finance page in one step	5–6
Assembly and action	Eligible-items queue · agenda builder · roll-call vote recording · minutes preparation · approval queue · publishing	6
Records and directories	Case records · internal document search · committee rosters · board directory maintenance · archive management	5
Coaching pages	One alongside each form family: writing an agenda item · writing a motion · writing a CIS · plain language · alt text and images · naming and filing a document · wording that satisfies the Brown Act · roll-call procedure	8–10
Training and orientation	New board member · committee chair · web contributor · accessibility basics · house style · document standards · how the pipeline works · help index	8
Administration	Workspace home · settings · permissions · activity log	4
Total (estimate)		**49–54**

These are the least settled figures in this report, deliberately so. The public pages are specified because their content is known. The workspace screens are estimates: what a volunteer actually needs from a form is discovered by watching volunteers use it, not by designing it in advance. The count will move as testing narrows it — some screens will merge, others will turn out to be two. That uncertainty is a property of building tools for people rather than a gap in the planning.

The agenda and PDF creation pages are the compliance workhorses. A meeting agenda is both a legal notice and, once posted, a document that must meet the federal standard. Building both in one guided path means the volunteer fills in fields and a correctly structured, properly tagged document comes out the other end — rather than someone hand-formatting a Word file and hoping. This is the difference between compliance being a skill every board member must acquire and compliance being a property of the tool.

Why the coaching and training pages are not optional. Volunteers are not trained in accessible authoring, plain-language writing, or legally sufficient agenda wording, and cannot reasonably be expected to become so. There are only two ways to get a conforming result out of an untrained contributor: train every contributor, forever, as the board turns over — or **build the standard into the form**, so the compliant outcome is the automatic one. The form requires alternative text because the field is required; heading structure is correct because the template sets it; the exported document is properly tagged because the export path does it. The coaching page beside it explains the *why* in one screen, for the person who wants it.

This is the single largest reason the rebuild is more than cosmetic, and the reason the workspace is bigger than the public site.

Moving existing records into the new structure

This is internal reorganization, not a data transfer. Nothing moves in from another system and nothing moves out. The council's existing records stay where they are and are re-filed so the new pages can find them — each document attached to the meeting it belongs to, each case given a serial number and a status, each letter placed in its own record type. Today these exist as files in a list; afterwards they are records the site can assemble into pages on its own.

Work	Volume
Meeting documents attached to their meetings	~1,000 entries, bulk-import assisted
Cases given serial numbers and open/closed status	~30
Community Impact Statements as their own record type	19
Letters and communications separated from CIS	to be counted
Archive area established and identified per the federal exception	one-time structural task
Spanish translation pass	site-wide

Total remaining: roughly 78–88 public pages, 48–52 workspace screens, and about 43 templates — plus the record pages the templates generate automatically.

The vision — including the part the board has not yet seen

The board has been given this in fragments and has never had a session long enough to see it whole. That is a real gap, and it belongs on a future agenda in its own right rather than inside a fifteen-minute item. The shape of it:

What other councils actually do. All 99 Los Angeles neighborhood councils listed in the EmpowerLA directory were surveyed. *How this was compiled: it is a review of each council's published website — desk research on public pages, not site audits or interviews — first conducted in June 2026 and re-checked on July 27, 2026. Sites change, and anything cited here should be re-confirmed before being relied on.* Five findings:

- **Most councils have no real website.** The majority run thin stub pages provided by the City.
- **Roughly a dozen maintain independent sites.**
- **The independent sites span a wide technical range** — some are basic hand-coded HTML, some are plain WordPress, and the better ones use advanced page builders such as Elementor or Divi layered over WordPress.
- **Most of the strong ones rent the same shared vendor platform** — a centrally operated service used by Sherman Oaks, Mar Vista, Studio City, South Robertson, Bel Air–Beverly Crest, and West Hills, among others. One peer council's published budget documents list $2,400 per year for that service.
- **Each of the strong sites is strong at one thing, and only one.** Sherman Oaks publishes a monthly newsletter without a gap — July 2026 back through December 2025, each posted within days of the month's start — and maintains an agenda request form and a dedicated accessibility page. West Hills, our direct neighbor, tracks land-use cases on its PLUM committee page with City case numbers linked into the Planning Department's case system, Letters of Determination posted as dated documents, and the council's own response letters to City Planning. Mar Vista has a genuinely good per-committee document archive. Del Rey tells community-impact stories well. **None of them does all of it, and none approaches what is planned here.**

One finding deserves its own paragraph, because it changes the picture. Sherman Oaks is the most conspicuously well-run site in the survey and it has an accessibility page — but that page commits the council to WCAG 2.0, which is the previous version of the standard, and its text explains that visitors should be able to "easily shop online" and use "our smartphone apps." It is retail boilerplate dropped into a government site.

That is not a criticism of Sherman Oaks, which is doing more than almost anyone. It is the state of the field. **The April 26, 2027 deadline is coming for all 99 councils, and on the evidence of their published sites, essentially none of them is ready for it** — including the ones that have thought about accessibility enough to publish a statement. This council is not behind its peers on accessibility. It is at roughly the same place they are, with one difference: it has a plan and a deadline it is building toward.

Two conclusions follow, and both matter.

Nothing in this plan is speculative. Every component of it already exists somewhere and demonstrably works — the committee document archive, the case tracker with file numbers and status, the regular publishing cadence, the accessibility statement. What is proposed is assembling in one place what is currently scattered across six councils. This is standard work, not experimental work; the resident-first structure it uses is ordinary current practice in civic web design, and the pattern our current site uses — the body's own name, a mission statement, and a list of notices — is the pattern that practice moved away from.

What $2,400 a year actually buys, since the figure is easy to misread. It is not the cost of having a website managed. At professional rates it is roughly one hour a month — enough to keep a platform running and absorb the occasional request. It does not cover posting agendas and minutes, writing or publishing news, building pages, or accessibility work on documents. Those either stay with volunteers or are billed on top. The figure is a floor, not an average.

And there is a cost that never appears on an invoice. Every task handed to an outside vendor has to be described, queued, reviewed, and corrected. For a council posting eight to fifteen documents a

month against a 72-hour legal deadline, explaining each one to someone outside the organization routinely costs more volunteer time than doing it would. Hiring does not remove volunteer labor from the process — it converts doing the work into managing someone who does the work, and for small, frequent, deadline-bound tasks that is the more expensive of the two. This is the part of contracting that is invisible until you are inside it.

There is a commercial option, and it should be named honestly. The council could rent the shared platform its peers use. What that buys is a competent, maintained, conventional council website.

What it costs is control. On a rented platform the council gets what the developer offers and nothing else — features arrive when they serve the vendor's whole customer base, so what this council can do is limited by what other councils need. Our meeting-documents system, the frozen committee codes, the case pipeline with serial numbers, and the board workspace do not exist there and could not be added. The content lives inside someone else's product, which makes leaving genuinely difficult later: moving to another provider means rebuilding, because what was built is not portable. The council would be renting permanently.

Building our own means the opposite trade — more work now, and the freedom to build for this council's actual needs rather than the average of ninety-nine. That is a legitimate choice either way and the board is entitled to make it. But it is a choice between a site like everyone else's and the one described here. It is not a cheaper route to the same place.

The spine of what is planned is a single pipeline. Every substantive matter follows one path: raised as a news post, tracked as a numbered case, placed on a committee agenda, moved by committee motion, acted on by the Board, reported back out as a news post. One record carries it the whole way. Build that once and the agenda workflow, the issue pages, the committee news feeds, the social posts, and the homepage all run off it. The site stops being a filing cabinet and becomes an account of what the council is doing.

Three capabilities complete it. **All three are designed but not built, and each needs a board decision first.**

1 · Finding issues before they find us. Today the council learns about a development application, a Council File, or a permit when a member happens to notice it — usually after the comment window has closed. That is the weakest link in the chain, because the council's influence depends entirely on knowing early. *Designed:* automated monitoring of the City's own filing sources — Planning case filings, case-notification lists, the Early Notification System, Council Files, zoning records, building permits — filtered to our boundaries and delivered to the relevant committee chair as a short plain-language brief with a link to the source. The chair decides what is worth agendizing. Nothing publishes on its own.

2 · Turning what a chair knows into a usable item. The hardest part of agendizing something is not the decision, it is the writing: description, requested action, background, cost, documents, in neutral language, by a posting deadline. *Designed:* two doors to the same record. A member fills the item form directly, guided field by field — or provides what they actually have, a narrative or notes or a forwarded email, and AI fills the form from it. Either way **a person reviews and approves before anything posts.** Two guardrails are built in, not optional: an agenda item is a legal notice, so the chair approves the wording and the AI never decides what gets agendized; and where a question touches the Brown Act or the bylaws, the system explains and cites while a human rules. It makes the 72-hour deadline easier, not riskier, because items accumulate continuously instead of being assembled the night before.

3 · News and social without a second writing task. Every issue is already written up twice — when raised and when resolved — and those are exactly the two moments worth broadcasting. *Designed:* the social caption is drafted from the news post that was already written and approved, and one publishing action sends it to every channel with a link back to the issue page. The approval on the news post covers the social post. For the volunteer it becomes a glance and a click. The council currently looks dormant online because publishing is work; this removes the work.

What is not decided: where this operating layer runs, what it costs, and who maintains it. None of that is settled and none of it is being presented as settled. It should come to the board as its own item with a proposal, a cost, and a named maintainer. It is deliberately last: none of it matters until the pipeline underneath exists.

Sequence to April 26, 2027

When	Work
August 2026	**Design variables and presets in Divi 5** — the immediate next task, and the one that makes everything after it fast — **plus the site tree begun**: a level-by-level map of the site's pages and the process each supports
Aug–Sep 2026	Global header, global footer, homepage, standard content template
Sep–Nov 2026	**Individual committee page template** (critical path), committee overview, board members
Nov–Dec 2026	News, Community Impact Statements, City Resources, events, contact, search, 404
Dec–Jan 2027	Record templates and the case engine
Jan–Feb 2027	Workspace forms, coaching pages, training pages
Feb–Mar 2027	Existing records moved into the new structure; archive area established under the exception
Mar–Apr 2027	Independent accessibility audit, remediation, translation, final verification

The site tree is the presentation piece. A site this size does not fit legibly on one page, so the tree is a set: an overview sheet showing the major branches, then level breakdowns — separate sheets wherever differentiation is needed. The overview and top levels come first; deeper sheets fill in as the build reaches them, so the full set may extend past August. It is the material for the full-plan board session (Decision 5) — a structure members can point at and question — and the board's questions frame the chair conversations that follow.

The chair consultations work from a draft, not a blank page. Each chair receives their committee's pages populated with generic copy written to fit any committee — then marks what does not apply and suggests what should replace it. Reacting to something concrete produces specific answers where

open questions produce silence; the redlines are the requirements. The generic version also means no committee waits on another: every chair starts from the same baseline on their own schedule.

Nine months, fully committed, no slack. Achievable at the current pace **if the pace continues.**

What the council can and cannot do when it buys services

This is worth setting out plainly, because the rules a neighborhood council operates under are not the rules a business operates under, and the difference is not obvious.

The council has no checkbook. Neighborhood council funds are held and disbursed by the Office of the City Clerk, not by the council. To pay a vendor, the Funding Program requires a Board Action Certification showing that the **full Board** — not the Officers, not the President — approved the expenditure, together with an invoice. The vendor performs the work first and is paid afterward by the City. There is no deposit, no retainer, and no engaging someone on a handshake. Requests not submitted by June 1 do not process in that fiscal year.

The engagement is a public record. A publicly funded review, its scope, and its deliverable are all public. A report commissioned this way is not an internal document for the Officers; it is a council record.

And the work itself has constraints a commercial site does not. Permanent retention of every agenda and set of minutes under City rules. Brown Act posting deadlines and wording requirements. Community Impact Statement routing. Draft and approved minutes as separate permanent records. Federal accessibility conformance. A contractor supplies web skill and does not supply any of that; teaching it costs more than the web skill does.

That is the actual difficulty of this project, and it is worth stating plainly. The web construction is the commodity half — it can be bought, and thousands of people can do it. The half that determines whether the result is usable is knowledge of how a neighborhood council actually operates, and that half is not for sale. What is being built here is council procedure expressed as software. Every form, every record type, and every workflow in the plan is a governance rule made operational.

Which is why the specific proposal to hire an HTML developer would be the worst available outcome. A hand-coded site means every agenda posting becomes a service call to the developer; no volunteer can update anything; accessibility has to be hand-maintained on every page forever; and the council owns a site it cannot operate. That is not hypothetical — it is precisely the position the council is in right now with the abandoned agenda plugin, and undoing it is a large part of what the last six months were spent on.

Board members who work in regulated industries will recognize the structure of the alternative. There is a written standard (WCAG 2.1 Level AA). There is a documented procedure for meeting it (the document standards manual). There is process control rather than reliance on operator skill — forms that produce a conforming result regardless of who is filling them in. And there is third-party verification, because an organization cannot certify its own conformance. That last piece is the one thing here genuinely worth buying.

The outside-review question

What $1,000 buys. At $100 to $200 per hour, five to ten hours.

What that has to cover. The written specification for this site was counted rather than estimated. Fifteen specification documents in the project archive — document standards, template architecture, agenda process, issue lifecycle, item wording, motion and CIS structure, PLUM case reporting, grant qualification, translation, the single-agenda-page analysis, the link audit, the communications assessment, and the plugin specification — total roughly 26,700 words, or about 53 pages at standard density. The brand and identity documents add 25 designed pages. That count excludes the officer briefing, the print colour specification, the development path, the automation planning set, the plugin's own reference documents, and these two reports; it also counts only current versions, not the superseded drafts each went through. **A conservative total is 100 to 120 pages, alongside about 2,600 lines of plugin code** — another fifty pages if printed.

Reading and absorbing that is realistically eight to twelve hours on its own. **The budget does not cover the reading.** A reviewer who skips it will assess the site as it appears today, which is the pre-rebuild site, and will recommend in substance the rebuild that is already underway and already documented.

And the reviewer's hours are not the only cost. Briefing someone into this council's particular situation — its records rules, its committee structure, its deadlines, what has already been decided and why — is volunteer time that comes out of the same nine months. The invoice shows one number; the council pays two.

For scale. Contracting out the remaining work — roughly 40 templates, 75-plus public pages, 45-plus workspace screens, plugin development, accessibility remediation, restructuring the existing records, and training — runs to several hundred hours of professional time. Against a total annual council allocation of $25,000 for all purposes combined, purchasing this rebuild is not available at any realistic budget. Doing it in-house is not a preference; it is the only version that exists.

Where outside money is genuinely well spent

Recommendation: commission a scoped, independent WCAG 2.1 AA baseline audit rather than an open-ended review —

- a conformance report against WCAG 2.1 Level AA on a defined sample of page types,
- an Accessibility Conformance Report or equivalent written finding,
- a re-test after remediation.

That is a real deliverable at that price, it produces a document the board can hold, it does not require the auditor to understand the council's process design, and it protects the council against a federal obligation. Best timed for Q1 2027, when there are rebuilt pages to audit — auditing the pre-rebuild site would only document what this report already states.

Qualification criteria, whether the contractor named in the motion or another: demonstrated WCAG 2.1 AA audit experience with public-sector clients, familiarity with the Title II rule and its exceptions, ability to test PDF conformance, and WordPress/Divi familiarity. Prior support work on this site is helpful but not sufficient — accessibility auditing is a distinct discipline from web support.

On stopping work

- **There is no migration to stop.** It finished. The site is moved; the domain and DNS are recovered.
- **A pause stops the build, not the clock.** April 26, 2027 does not move.
- **This is the worst available moment to pause.** The next task is the design variables — the one piece of work that makes every page after it fast. Stopping immediately before it pays for the pause twice: once in months lost, once in the slower method every later page would otherwise have avoided.
- **Some work cannot pause regardless.** Security updates, backups, agenda and minutes posting, and accessibility obligations already in force continue independently of any rebuild decision.
- **Review and continued work are not mutually exclusive.** The written specification exists now and can go to the Officers immediately. Once the first templates are built, a preview link can be added to it.
- **The review cycle itself costs months.** An expenditure requires a Board vote, so nothing can be engaged before the next Board meeting. The reviewer then has to be briefed and do the work, produce a report, present it to the Officers, return to Governance, and go back to the Board. Two to three months is a realistic floor. Against a nine-month runway that is a quarter to a third of the remaining time — spent while the design system, the one task that makes every page after it fast, sits untouched.

Decisions for the board

Kept deliberately short. Operational and technical matters are administrative and are not brought here — obsolete components have already been removed, and licensing already in hand needs no further action. What follows is funding, policy that carries legal weight, and scheduling.

#	Decision	Type	Why it needs the board
1	**Domain holdings.** The whcouncil.net registration has lapsed. It can be recovered if acted on before the second half of August. Separately, **whwcnc.org** may be the more useful domain to hold, since it matches the council's initials. Options: recover .net and redirect it, acquire whwcnc.org, do both, or do neither.	Funding	Registration costs money, however little, and abandoning a domain the council once used is a decision with a public-facing consequence
2	**Adopt an archived-content policy** — which documents are archived, where they live, and how an accessible version is provided on request.	Policy	This is what makes the federal accessibility exception available. Without it, roughly a thousand documents fall back into scope
3	**Adopt a records-versioning principle** — that draft minutes, approved minutes, revised documents, and any supplemental material presented to the public are each distinct public records, retained separately and never superseded by one another.	Policy	The records system has to model version distinction to be complete, and that modeling should follow an adopted rule rather than an administrator's judgment

#	Decision	Type	Why it needs the board
4	**Establish a standing website report** — a recurring item on an existing committee's agenda.	Scheduling	There is no Communications or Technology committee, and one is unlikely to be staffed: the required knowledge is not present on the board, and members are reasonably reluctant to take responsibility for work they cannot evaluate. A recurring report needs no technical expertise to receive, creates a written record, and routes decisions to a vote on a schedule instead of by exception. If a working group is wanted, an **ad hoc** group with a defined end date, open to stakeholders rather than board members only, is far likelier to attract relevant skill
5	**Schedule a full session on the plan** — the pipeline, issue detection, and AI-assisted drafting.	Scheduling	The board has never seen it whole and cannot fairly be asked to back what it has only seen in fragments

Prepared by the Web Administrator · Woodland Hills–Warner Center Neighborhood Council · Communications & Technology