CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
Department of Transportation &
Environmental Services and the
Office of Performance Analytics

Towing and Storage Fees Ordinance Update

Discussion

- **To share the following two recommendations resulting from the March 26, 2024, Towing Advisory Board Meeting:**

1. To amend the trespass towing fee of $135 to $150, and

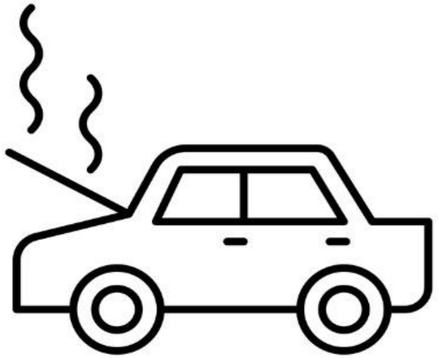
2. To increase the after-hours charge of $25 to $30.

Trespass Towing Fee

Charge to remove and tow a vehicle from private property, like an apartment complex parking lot, to another location

The City sets the fee as established by the State range of $135 to $150

Assessment is to take into consideration the fair market value



This excludes other kinds of towing, like an owner requesting a tow for a broken vehicle

Discussion

Current Trespass Fees

The City is **below** the state maximum for two fees and allows/regulates three fees.

	Tow	After Hours *(holidays, weekends, 7 p.m. to 8 a.m.; can be charged up to 2x)*	Fuel Surcharge	Storage *(after 24 hours, daily)*	Notify/Admin *(after 3 days)*	Hooked-Up, Not Towed *(drop fee)*
City	$135	$25	$20	$50	$75	$50
State Max	$135-$150	$30	$20	N/A	N/A	N/A
Difference	**($15)**	**($5)**	**$0**	**$50**	**$75**	**$50**

Discussion

Advisory Board Fee Actions

2015 Last Update

- Maximum fee for vehicles less than 7,500 pounds gross weight changed from $125 to $135.

2021 and 2024

- Vote to increase fee from $135 to $150 per private tow.
- Vote to increase after hours fee from $25 to $30 per private tow.
  - **Why:** State Law allows for up to $150 and to align with Fairfax County.

Towing Advisory Board recommendations were shared via Memo to CC.

Discussion

Fair Market Value Analysis

- **Under State code, City Council is required to take the fair market value (FMV).**
- **T&ES coordinated with the Office of Performance Analytics to conduct an analysis that included inflation, a comparison of fees in neighboring jurisdictions, market charges, and service demand.**
  - ❑ Comparator Rates
  - ❑ Trespass Tow Trends
  - ❑ Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
    - **DC Area:** goods, services, food, housing, transportation, medical care, and education.
    - **Transportation:** fuel, maintenance, insurance, transit fares, public and private transportation.

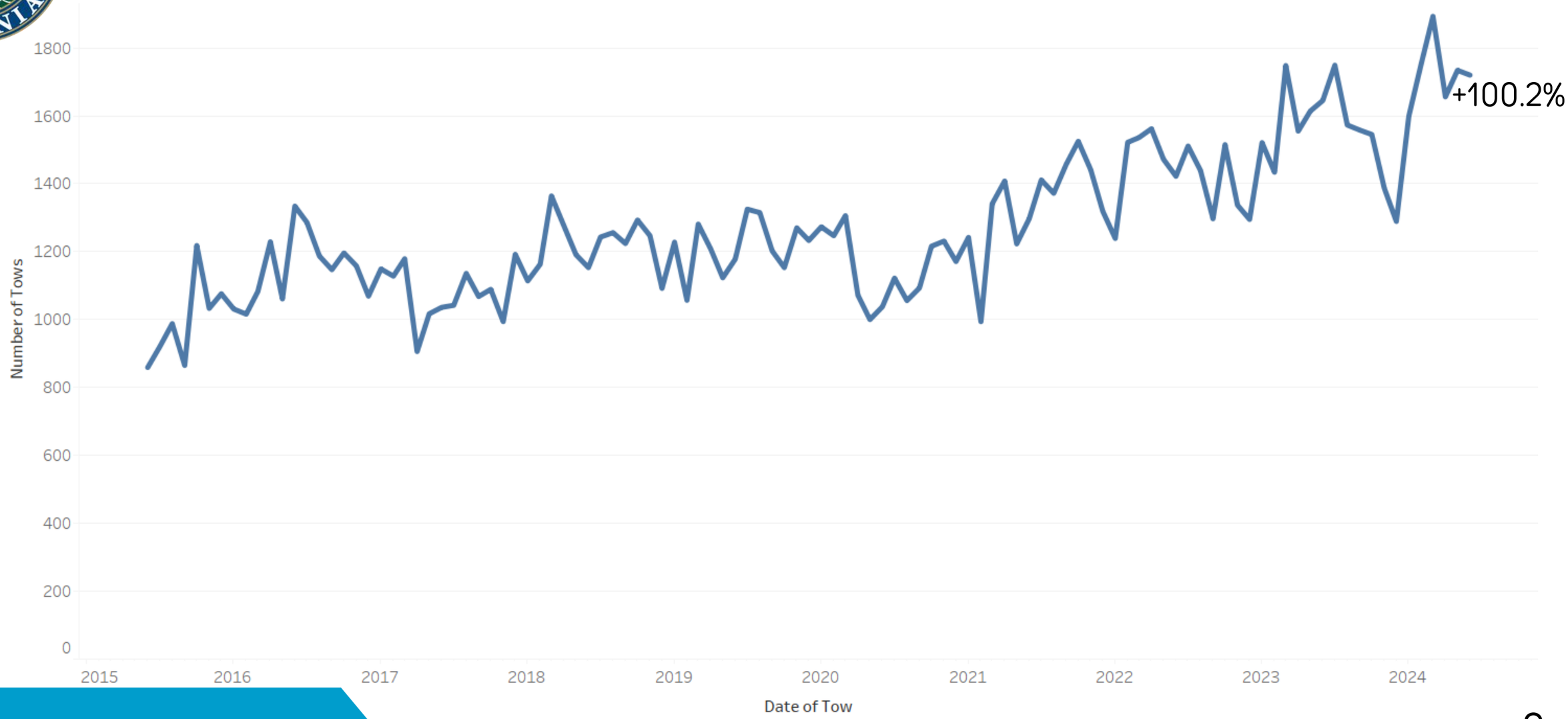
Discussion

Comparator Rates

Comparator Agency Towing Rates for Private (Trespass) Tows in Planning District 8			
Jurisdiction	**Hookup and Initial Towing Fee (GVWR of 7,500lbs or less)[2]**	**Towing between 7 p.m. and 8 a.m.**	**Towing on any Saturday, Sunday, or Holiday**
City of Alexandria	$135	$25	$25
Arlington County	$135	$30	$30
City of Falls Church	$135	$25	$25
City of Fairfax	$150	$30	$30
Fairfax County	$150	$30	$30
City of Manassas	$150	$30	$30
City of Manassas Park	$150	$30	$30
Loudoun County	$150	$30	$30
Prince William County	$150	$30	$30

Discussion

Trespass Tow Trends



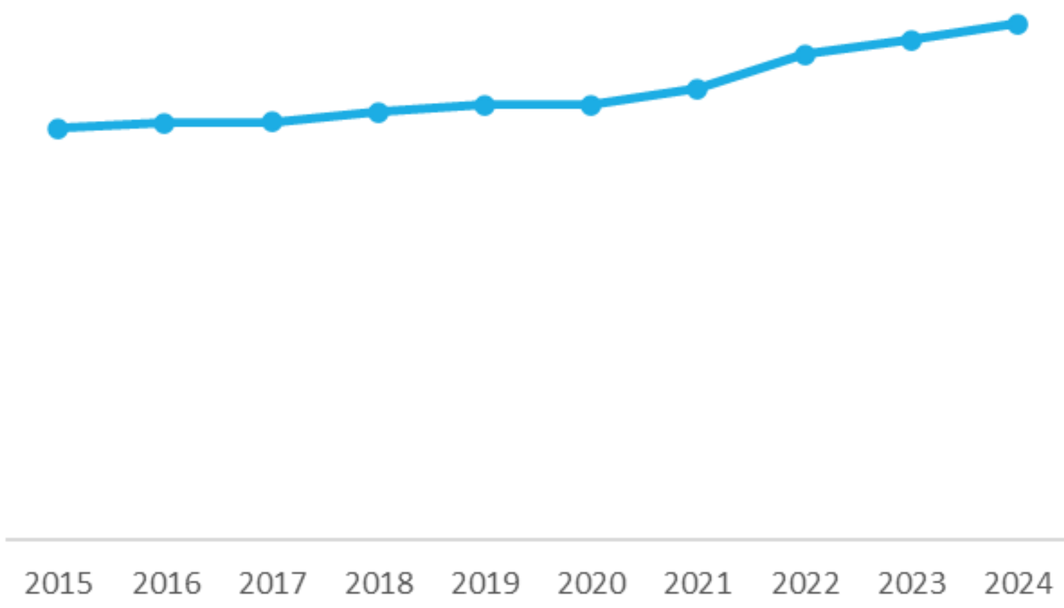
Discussion

APD Data for private towing (initiated by private companies, typically on private property).

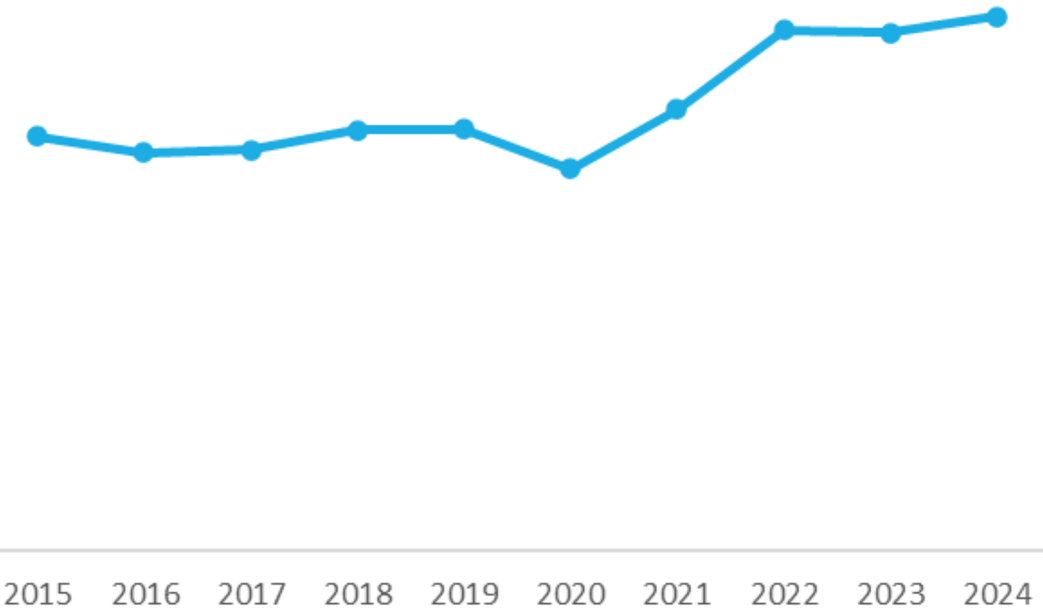
Bureau of Labor Statistics

Inflation has increased since the City last set the towing fee in June 2015.[5]

DC area inflation increased by 25%



Transportation inflation in the DC area increased by 29%



Discussion

Trespass Fee Analysis

In all instances, the City's towing fees either **match the majority** of neighboring jurisdictions **or are lower**

Neighboring jurisdcitions: Fairfax Co., Prince William, Arlington, Falls Church

Hooked, up but not towed
$50 in **3/5** jurisdictions, incl. City

Fuel Surcharge
$20 in **all** jurisdictions

Notify/Admin
$75 in **2/5** jurisdictions, incl. City*

*Arlington does not assess/ Falls Church data was unavailable

Storage
$50 in **all but Falls Church**

Towed
$150 in **3/5** jurisdictions, excl. City

After Hours
$30 in **3/5** jurisdictions, excl. City

Discussion

Staff Recommendations

That City Council:

1. Receive and approve the proposed ordinance to amend the trespass towing fee of $135 to $150 and increase the after-hours charge of $25 to $30; and

2. Schedule it for a second reading, public hearing, and final passage on Saturday, November 16, 2024.

Appendices

“Trespass Fee Scenario”

Trespass Fee Scenario

To understand how this may affect someone, the Towing Advisory Board ran four scenarios:

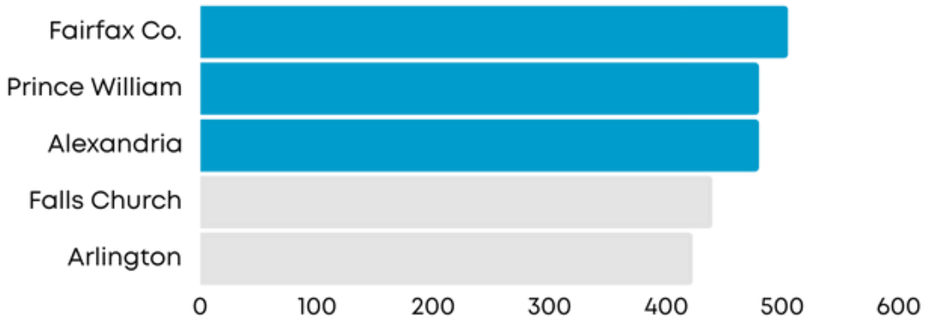
Scenario	Tow	After Hours *(holidays, weekends, 7 p.m. to 8 a.m.; can be charged up to 2x)*	Fuel Surcharge	Storage *(after 24 hours, daily)*	Notify/Admin *(after 3 days)*	Hooked-Up, Not Towed *(drop fee)*	Total
Hooked-up but not towed						$50	**$50**
Towed on Monday at 1 p.m.	$135		$20				**$155**
Towed on Saturday at 9 p.m.	$135	$50	$20				**$205**
Towed on Saturday at 9 p.m. and stored for 5 days	$135	$50	$20	$200	$75		**$480**

Trespass Fee Scenario

When fees are stacked, the City is still **aligned** with or **lower** than its neighbors

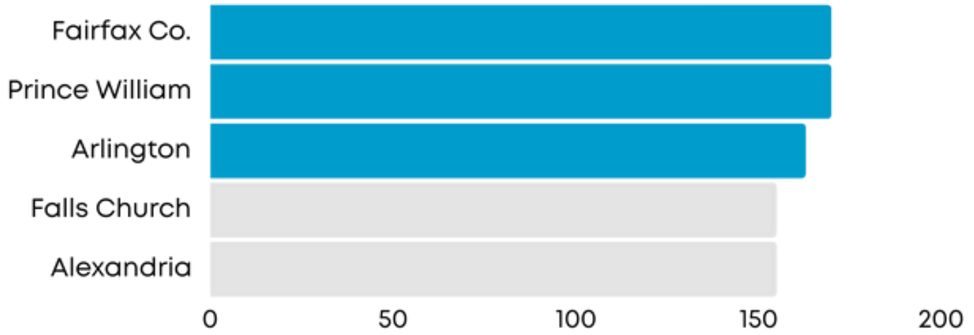
Towed Sat at 9 p, Stored 5 Days

Alexandria is aligned



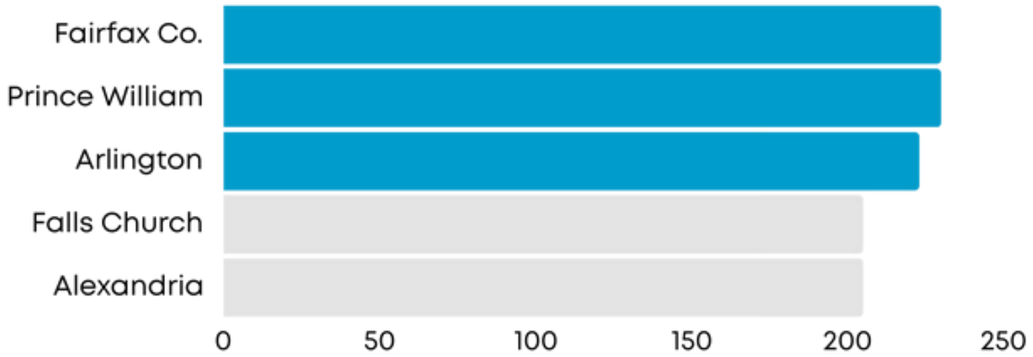
Towed Monday at 1 p

Alexandria is low



Towed Sat at 9 p

Alexandria is low



Trespass Towing Fee

- The trespass towing fee is a charge to remove and tow a vehicle from private property. (apartment complex, parking lot, or another private location)
- A trespass tow may occur because a vehicle has no parking permits, an expired parking permit, expired plates, or similar issues.
  - This excludes other kinds of towing, like a vehicle owner requesting a tow for a broken vehicle.
- The City sets the fee as established by the State.
- The Towing Advisory Board recommends reviewing the City's trespass towing fee.

Discussion