



# RVA First District

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## The City's Check Registry

There has been plenty of discourse recently around the city's inability or unwillingness to produce a detailed check registry to provide transparency into the city's spending. Public pressure by a fellow Council Member has finally sparked some movement by the administration, which recently [released its plan to relaunch an altered version of the payment registry](#).

The check registry has been something I have also been hounding the Mayor about during our meetings. The inability of our Finance Department to perform many of its required functions, including producing what should be standard reports, is a well-known and years-long problem. So I understood that getting the process back up would be yet another Finance Department improvement project, among a long list of others. The question has been - which improvements to prioritize first?

Much like our new head of DPU has laid out a ten-year prioritized plan for modernizing his department, I asked the Mayor's team to give us a plan and timeline for meeting the registry requirements, along with other Finance Department milestones. While I understand the need to balance transparency with privacy (particularly for non-city employees and citizens) and to avoid overburdening Finance Department staff, I believe their recent proposal aggregates and eliminates too much information. This may have been the result of a rushed proposal due to outside pressure, but I believe it hurts their credibility. I don't support a plan that keeps so much information from being proactively published.

I think it's reasonable to expect that publishing the check registry efficiently and effectively will take time to implement, and I'm willing to collaborate with the administration regarding the timeline necessary to deliver an effective check registry program - however, I do not believe that we should accept a watered-down version as a substitute.