

TUMWATER PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING
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CONVENE: 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Elizabeth Robbins and Commissioners Grace Edwards, Terry Kirkpatrick, Brian Schumacher, Meghan Sullivan, Michael Tobias, Anthony Varela, and Kelly Von Holtz.

Staff: Parks and Recreation Director Chuck Denney, Transportation and Engineering Director Brandon Hicks, Assistant Transportation and Engineering Director Mary Heather Ames, Planning Manager Brad Medrud, Communications Manager Ann Cook, Housing and Land Use Planner Erika Smith-Erickson, and Department Assistant Brittaney McClanahan.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: Approval of minutes was removed from the agenda.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS: There were no reports.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Medrud reported on the status of the update for urban forestry regulations. A new Washington Wildland-Urban Interface Code was enacted by the state to address wildfire hazards and the interface between rural and urban areas that could pose wildfire hazards. Staff reviewed the new regulations for comparison to the City's codes for tree protection, landscaping, and street trees. Staff identified a sufficient number of issues to pause the update process until the City receives the final Wildland-Urban Interface Code version due in October.

The state mandated code would have precedence over any local codes. Staff is discussing the new code with other jurisdictions and has met with Department of Ecology staff to determine how the code affects critical areas regulations. Another meeting is scheduled with staff from the Department of Fish and Wildlife to discuss habitat for animals and vegetation. Staff is also working with legislative staff to address other questions that may come into play. Following the release of the final Wildland-Urban Interface Code, it might necessitate some changes to the overall urban forestry amendments. Staff has completed draft ordinances for landscaping and tree preservation. The work program for the proposed amendments has been placed on hold at this time. Staff also briefed the Mayor and the City Administrator on the status of the updates, as well as all other stakeholders.

In response to questions about contact with the Legislature, Manager Medrud explained that the State Building Code Council proposed some changes in response to the Legislature's request in 2019 to examine the issue on a statewide level. The Council reviewed the International

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Wildland-Urban Interface Code that is also utilized by California and other states. The Council recommended some Washington-specific modifications to the code, which were forwarded to the State Legislature and subsequently adopted by the Legislature. A date for implementing the new code was first established as July 1, 2023 but was later moved to October 29, 2023. The code is one of many building codes recently updated.

Chair Robbins requested regular updates to the Commission. Manager Medrud verified the request. The next piece of information is new mapping of the proposed code changes to help guide the Commission.

Manager Medrud reported the proposed 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Process – Community Engagement Plan is scheduled for review by the General Government Committee. At the Commission's next meeting, a full schedule of the update for the remainder of the year will be provided as well as some materials to review.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no public comments.

FINAL DOCKET FOR 2023
COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN AMENDMENTS
– CAPITAL
FACILITIES PLAN: Manager Medrud introduced Brandon Hicks, Transportation and Engineering Director, Mary Heather Ames, Assistant Transportation and Engineering Director, and Chuck Denney, Parks and Recreation Director.

Director Hicks reviewed the proposed General Governmental and Transportation Capital Facilities Plans (CFPs) for 2024 – 2029. The lists include many projects with the review focused on new projects added during this current CFP cycle. Several new General Governmental CFP projects were not included in the meeting packet due to an inadvertent oversight. The additions are three new sustainability projects.

Director Hicks reported the City's Capital Facilities Plan is part of the Tumwater Comprehensive Plan and is comprised of a six-year coordinated plan of capital projects. Capital projects included in the CFP are typically for purchase, construction, replacement, addition, or major repairs to public facilities, as well as purchase of major equipment. For inclusion within the CFP, the cost of the project must exceed \$25,000 with a useful life greater than one year. Some examples of project types include large facility projects, streets, utility systems, bridges, parks, and fire trucks. The CFP is not a financial commitment but is used as a planning document to inform the budget process.

The CFP includes five primary funds separated by utility and non-utility

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projects. The non-utility CFPs include Transportation and General Governmental projects. Non-utility projects are funded from a variety of sources to include the general fund, grants, utility taxes, real estate excise taxes, impact fees, Metropolitan Park District, Transportation Benefit District, and other funding sources. Utility projects are funded primarily through rates and new development. Stormwater projects also receive grants.

Some projects are included within the CFP if grant revenue is obtained for a specific project. Projects could also be added based on projected significant development for completion prior to new development based on mutual benefit. Some projects are added for major facility or equipment needs, such as building renovations or fire truck purchases. Other projects are requested by the Council or staff or are projects based on requests from the City's advisory boards and commissions.

Director Hicks encouraged Commissioners to review the materials and provide any comments to staff. Dan Smith, Water Resources and Sustainability Director, is scheduled to review projects in the Utility CFPs at a future meeting.

Both the Transportation and the General Governmental CFPs include 65 projects totaling \$160 million over the six-year planning horizon.

Chair Robbins inquired about the status of the City's taxing authority for different types of rates and the possibility of increasing some rates to the maximum level allowed by law. Director Hicks advised that utility taxes are not near the allowable level; however, it is important not to raise rates too quickly. The City's tax rates are lower than neighboring cities. In terms of the number of projects within the CFP, the limiting factor is staff capacity. Adding more projects at existing staffing capacity would not be prudent.

Commissioner Edwards asked about the comparison of this year's list of projects compared to previous years. Director Hicks advised that most of the projects are larger and require more resources. The City is undertaking more park projects than in its history. Additionally, park projects require more time to complete.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick asked about the status of the City's debt service and plans for paying down debt. Director Hicks replied that the City carries a low level of debt. Much of the debt is internal debt between different funds. Some of the debt is speculative because the City does not currently have funding for a required and needed project. Compared to most agencies, the City's debt status is excellent. Prior to assuming any debt, the City identifies a dedicated funding source and

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ensures the source meets the requirements of the debt service. A major source of projected debt in the General Governmental CFP is for the new Operations and Maintenance Facility anticipated at \$40 million. A large portion of the funding source will be from external sources.

Director Hicks reviewed the 39 projects included in the General Governmental CFP. The projects support programs and activities provided by the City. Major funding sources include utility tax, grants, parks impact fees, bonds, debt, levies, and other miscellaneous sources. Five of the projects to be removed include Fire Station T1 Improvements, Deschutes River Flood and Erosion Study, Craft Beverage Startup Facility, and the Arts Project (replaced with Arts Program and not included in the CFP). In the future, 1% of construction costs will be earmarked for arts.

Commissioner Varela asked whether the golf course generates revenue for the City or whether the golf course generates funds to operate and improve the golf course. Director Denney said the golf course does not generate a profit and is operated similar to a City park. However, the golf course does generate revenue. In 2022, the golf course generated approximately \$1.4 million with operating costs of approximately \$2 million to include debt service when the City purchased the golf course, as well as site improvements in 1996. The bond debt will be paid in full in 2025. Some funds from that point will be earmarked to reinvest in the golf course. The City owns the restaurant building with equipment and furnishings. The City leases the restaurant. The golf course costs less to operate than Pioneer Park, which generates very little revenue but requires extensive staffing resources and equipment. The golf course is utilized for many community events in addition to golf. The course provides opportunities to many in the community who do not play golf.

Director Hicks reported the last project to be removed is participation in the Regional Housing Project, which should not have been included in the CFP; however the City continues to participate in the program.

New projects added include:

- Prairie Mitigation Land Acquisition (City will pursue grants & acquisitions will be dependent upon availability of grants over the six-year CFP)
- Golf Course projects related to the NPDES Permit for stormwater management:
 - Golf Course Maintenance Shop Stormwater Improvements to treat water discharged directly to the Deschutes River

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- Golf Course Fueling Station Renovation will likely require replacement to satisfy requirements of hard cover over fueling station and concrete surface
 - Golf Course Stockpile Covers to cover soil and other materials to avoid degradation of materials
- City Hall Parking Lot Expansion to be expanded at the current public works yard following relocation to the new Operations & Maintenance Facility
- Fire Station T2 Improvements – kitchen remodel
- City Participation in a regional animal control facility (placeholder). Project costs and the City's contribution have not been determined
- Energy & Water Efficiency Upgrades – project is based on completion of an investment grade audit detailing of water and energy use by the City and areas of projected savings and the cost of improvements
- City Hall and Library Solar Installations – City is seeking grant opportunities to add solar arrays and battery storage on City Hall and the Tumwater Library roofs
- Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations (EVC) – City is pursuing grants to install EVCs at Pioneer Park, Tumwater Historical Park, and Overlook Park

Commissioner Kirkpatrick referred to the community center project and indicated the information reflects that the only action during the six-year plan is acquisition of land in 2024. He asked about the City's coordination with the City of Olympia to join Olympia to build an aquatic facility. Director Denney said staff continues ongoing discussions with the City of Olympia staff. The City of Olympia is receptive to collaborating with Tumwater to construct an aquatics facility. The City of Tumwater participated in the planning process with the City of Olympia to identify community need for an aquatics facility. A joint facility requires a central location for access from the two cities. One ideal site would be the brewery property; however there are too many issues related to development and the environment. Staff from each jurisdiction continue to discuss options, as well as options with the YMCA and considering sites with a variety of other partners.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick cited a recent article in the *Seattle Times* about drowning as the major cause of death of children between the ages of 3 and 11. He asked about the possibility of the Parks and Recreation Department introducing some type of swimming program. Director Denney advised that unless a facility exists, the department is unable to offer a swimming program. Limited choices locally include the Valley Athletic Club and local YMCAs. The Evergreen State College closed its pool to the public. The region has limited swimming

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options for children.

Commissioner Schumacher asked whether the golf course has considered electrification of its equipment rather than spending funds to improve the fueling facility. Director Denney explained that the current pumping system was installed in 1969. The project requires replacement of the entire system to bring the system up to current codes. Golf and turf maintenance has not transitioned to the use of electrical equipment with some companies experimenting with electrical mowers or robotic mowers operated by GPS. Most of those ventures into the field have been experimental and will require some time before the golf course could transition from gasoline and diesel to electric

Director Hicks reviewed new projects included in the Transportation CFP. The projects support multimodal programs, preserve and improve function and safety of the existing transportation infrastructure, and provide capacity necessary to accommodate growth related to planned land use. Major funding sources include utility tax, real estate excise tax, arterial street gas tax, grants, transportation impact fees, mitigation fees, and the Transportation Benefit District. Of the 26 projects in the CFP, five of the projects are considered reserve projects to take advantage of potential grant opportunities. Three existing projects in the CFP will be removed. They include the Capitol Corridor Design, 93rd Avenue & Case Road Roundabout, and Capitol Boulevard and Linwood Avenue Roundabout. New projects added include:

- Percival Creek Fish Passage Barrier Removal Project – the project is the transportation portion of the entire project. The City was able to obtain a substantial grant of approximately \$2 million to include some transportation improvements
- Dennis Street Roundabout – listed as reserve project in the last CFP and advanced to the planned list
- Trosper Road Capacity Study – only for the short segment between Littlerock Road and Interstate 5. The project is dependent upon the change in traffic patterns from improvements by the Capitol Boulevard/Trosper Road Improvement project. Staff anticipates some improvement in the road segment because of fewer cars anticipated along the segment.

Director Hicks outlined the future review process of the CFPS with a public hearing scheduled by the Planning Commission. The Public Works Committee may receive an additional review if there are changes to any projects. The City Council will review the CFPs during a worksession followed by action by the Council later in the year.

Commissioner Tobias inquired about status of a project at Linwood

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Avenue and Second Avenue as the intersection serves to connect both sides of the City and is a location that has been prone to many accidents. Director Hicks identified the project included in the CFP. The City received grant funding and plans to construct a non-circular roundabout, the region's first roundabout-style configuration. The project includes pedestrian and bicycle improvements along a major portion of Linwood Avenue.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick questioned the funding source of diverted utility tax of \$369,000, as it appears the City is forfeiting the tax for several years. Director Hicks advised that the amount is for a debt service payment for an internal loan from the Water Fund to pay off Phase 1 Improvements for the Brewtower. Because of the pandemic, the capital campaign to pay for Phase 1 improvements to the brewtower did not materialize.

Director Hicks reported the reserve project of Tumwater Boulevard and Henderson Boulevard Intersection Improvements was added to address congestion at the intersection; however, the City experienced a drop in vehicle trips because of the pandemic with some locations experiencing a decrease by 60%. Eventually, vehicle trips will return and the addition of the project is in anticipation of that need. The project would move the signals, widen the road, and improve turn lanes to manage traffic flow. The ideal improvement at the location would be a roundabout; however, addition study would need to occur on the preferred option. Including the reserve project enables the City to seek grant funds.

The Bishop Road Extension project is necessary to address the ongoing development of multifamily housing on undeveloped sites in the location. Developers would be responsible for construction of some of the improvements. The Bishop Road project requires the City to acquire and complete the extension of Bishop Road to complete that portion of the transportation network. The City has some funds allocated from a special assessment of a parcel to fund approximately three-quarters of the project cost.

The last reserve project is a Littlerock Road and 77th Way roundabout. The project is speculative in preparation of future single family and multifamily housing development occurring in the area.

PRELIMINARY DOCKET FOR 2023 ANNUAL HOUSEKEEPING AMENDMENTS:

Planner Smith-Erickson reported staff has identified housekeeping amendments to the development code. The amendments are minor in nature. The City's code establishes the process for housekeeping amendments similar to Comprehensive Plan amendments. Staff prepared a Preliminary Docket of proposed amendments for review by

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the Planning Commission for a recommendation to the City Council for inclusion of the amendments within the Final Docket. Following approval of the Final Docket, staff prepares an ordinance for consideration by the Planning Commission and the City Council in the fall.

Planner Smith-Erickson reviewed the four proposed amendments:

1. Manufactured Home Parks - Required Open Space – amendment clarifies required open space requirements for manufactured home parks exempt from subdivision or divisions of land. Currently, language is not included in the code.
2. Undergrounding Utilities Requirements – the amendment clarifies new and existing utilities to include electrical power, telephone, cable, television, fiber optics, and other transition lines to be installed underground and establishment of an appeal process through the Engineering Services Manager
3. Town Center Mixed Use Subdistrict First Floor Uses – amendment clarifies specific uses allowed on the first floor, as current language is unclear as to the uses allowed.
4. Building Heights Over Sixty-Five Feet for Specific Industrial Uses – amendment adds a conditional use permit process to exceed 65 feet in height.

The next steps include a briefing to the General Government Committee on the proposed amendments at its August 9, 2023 meeting for a recommendation to the City Council for consideration at its September 5, 2023 meeting. The Planning Commission is scheduled to receive a briefing on the Final Docket at its October 24, 2023 meeting followed by a worksession on November 14, 2023, and a public hearing on November 28, 2023. The Council is scheduled to consider adoption of the Final Docket of Housekeeping Amendments on February 6, 2024.

MOTION:

Commissioner Kirkpatrick moved, seconded by Commissioner Edwards, to recommend the General Government Committee move all items in the 2023 development code housekeeping preliminary docket forward for review as part of the final docket. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

**NEXT MEETING
DATE:**

The next meeting date is scheduled on July 25, 2023.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Tobias reported he would unable to attend the next the

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July 25, 2023 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: **Commissioner Sullivan moved, seconded by Commissioner Tobias, to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 p.m. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
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