

**TUMWATER GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING  
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**CONVENE:** 8:00 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Michael Althausser and Councilmembers Joan Cathey and Leatta Dahlhoff.

Staff: City Administrator Lisa Parks, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Community Development Director Michael Matlock, Finance Director Troy Niemeyer, Water Resources and Sustainability Director Dan Smith, Transportation and Engineering Assistant Director Mary Heather Ames, Planning Manager Brad Medrud, and Housing and Land Use Planner Erika Smith-Erickson.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:  
GENERAL GOVERNMENT  
COMMITTEE, NOVEMBER 8  
2023 & DECEMBER 13, 2023:**

**MOTION:** **Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Councilmember Cathey, to approve the minutes of November 8, 2023 and December 12, 2023 as published. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**2025 COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE –  
TRANSPORTATION:**

Manager Medrud reported the update is the last element of review within the Tumwater Comprehensive Plan as part of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. The committee will transition in April to proposed amendments within the different Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. He introduced Transportation and Engineering Assistant Director Mary Heather Ames to provide an update on the Transportation Plan Element.

Assistant Director Ames reported the Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the City to demonstrate that each element in the Comprehensive Plan meets the relevant planning goals of the GMA. The GMA includes 15 goals that guide the development and the adoption of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. The goals were updated by the Legislature in 2023. A new goal adds a transportation goal of: “Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled, and are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans”. Achieving the goal will be accomplished through a combination of goals, policies, and actions within the Land Use Element and the Transportation Plan.

The City’s 2016 Transportation Master Plan provides the functional framework for Tumwater’s transportation vision. The City’s Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program informs decisions for

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achieving the vision.

General topics addressed during the update include:

- Diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice throughout the Comprehensive Plan (new)
- All elements, plans, and maps will be updated for internal consistency
- The updated Comprehensive Plan will be comprised of shorter individual Elements and Plans with a focus on simplified and updated goals, policies, and implementation actions with appendices of technical information
- A new Comprehensive Plan Goal and Policy Guide will be created for staff and policymakers, as well as a new User Guide for community members
- Development of a mutually agreeable Memorandum of Agreements between the City and tribes on collaboration and participation in the planning process

Topics addressed as part of the Transportation Plan update include:

- Update of maps
- Update of existing conditions and operations
- Update of planned improvements and future operations to 2045
- Update of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Update of the financial analysis
- Update transportation impact fees
- Update estimated traffic impacts to state-owned transportation facilities resulting from land use assumptions to assist the State Department of Transportation in monitoring the performance of state facilities, to plan improvements for the facilities, and to assess the impact of land-use decisions on state-owned transportation facilities
- Update land use assumptions used in estimating current and future transportation needs

Factored within the update of facilities and service needs is an inventory of air, water, and ground transportation facilities and services, including transit alignments and general aviation airport facilities, to define existing capital facilities and travel levels as a basis for future planning. Level of service standards will be reviewed for all locally owned arterials and transit routes to serve as a gauge to judge performance of the system. For state-owned transportation facilities, a review of level of service standards for highways will gauge the performance of the system. The review will identify specific actions and requirements for bringing into

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compliance locally owned transportation facilities or services that are below an established level of service standard, as well as updating forecasts of traffic for at least ten years based on the adopted Land Use Element to provide information on the location, timing, and capacity needs of future growth. The review will also identify state and local system needs to meet current and future demands.

The financial analysis update includes analysis of funding capability to judge needs against probable funding resources and a multi-year financing plan based on the needs identified in the Comprehensive Plan, the appropriate parts of which shall serve as the basis for the six-year street, road, or transit program required for cities and for public transportation systems. Should probable funding fall short of meeting identified needs, information will be included on how additional funding would be identified, or how land use assumptions would be reassessed to ensure level of service standards are achieved.

The Transportation Plan, the six-year Capital Facilities Plans for cities and for public transportation systems, and the ten-year investment program for the state must be consistent. A projection is required of state and local system needs to meet current and future demand.

The update includes a pedestrian and bicycle component to include collaborative efforts to identify and designate planned improvements for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and corridors that address and encourage enhanced community access and promote healthy lifestyles, consider approaches that increase physical activity, describe any existing and planned transportation demand management strategies, such as high occupancy vehicle lanes or subsidy programs and parking policies, an analysis of future funding capability to judge needs against probable funding resources, and a multi-year financing plan based on needs identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

The update will describe intergovernmental coordination efforts, including an assessment of the impacts of the Transportation Plan, land use assumptions on the transportation systems of adjacent jurisdictions, and how the Plan is consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan and identify lands useful for public purposes such as utility corridors, transportation corridors, landfills, sewage treatment facilities, stormwater management facilities, recreation, schools, and other public uses. The Plan will identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas, including lands useful for trails. The Plan will be updated as needed on the process

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or criteria for identifying and locating essential public facilities in coordination with the update of the Lands for Public Purposes Element. Demand-management strategies will be updated as well as information on pedestrian and bicycle components to include collaborative efforts to identify and designate planned improvements for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and corridors that address and encourage enhanced community access and promote healthy lifestyles.

Staff will review revisions to enable some form of Intercity Transit turnarounds on Littlerock Road and Old Highway 99 for future transit services, update and include information from the Thurston Thrives Walkability Study, Intercity Transit studies, and the Old Highway 99 Corridor Study, allow active transportation facilities, transportation demand management, or public transportation services to meet concurrency, incorporate equitable implementation, estimate multimodal level of service impacts to state transportation facilities, add impact fee revenue for bike and pedestrian facilities, provide multimodal level of service and needs forecasts for arterials, transit routes, and active transportation facilities, afford priority to the greatest multimodal safety benefit to each category of roadway users, include Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan, and provide funding analysis to include state transportation facilities.

Assistant Director Ames reviewed the format and content of the current Transportation Master Plan.

To assist with the update, the Department of Commerce has provided some guidance materials for updating the Transportation Plan. The next step of the update is hiring a consultant to assist in the update of the Transportation Plan.

Assistant Director Ames invited comments and questions from the committee.

Councilmember Cathey cited the new requirement to incorporate environmental justice within plans, goals, and policies and asked for some examples of how the new requirement would be reflected in the update of the Comprehensive Plan. Assistant Director Ames advised of the importance of ensuring there is equitable access to services and not focusing efforts in areas that are considered either higher or lower income but ensuring all areas of the City are equally and equitably served. For example, access to transit is important; however, transit is only effective if people are able to access transit service. Sidewalks and walkable routes are needed throughout the City for access to transit by all in the community.

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Additionally, the City adopted an ADA Transition Plan in the 1990s. The recently completed plan amendment includes an inventory of all sidewalks in the City and locations where sidewalks fail to meet standards. The information will be utilized as part of the update. The information is utilized by staff to design sidewalk projects as well as inform paving projects.

In response to comments about the need for expanded transit service in the City, Assistant Director Ames described a recent meeting with Intercity Transit staff and the discussion for extending transit service in areas of the City currently not served by transit. During meetings with Intercity Transit staff, the subject of expanded transit service is always a topic of discussion.

Manager Medrud added that as of December 28, 2023, the City received 786 responses to the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update survey. The survey closed on January 9, 2024. The response rate is the highest the City has experienced for a project. Additionally, a community open house on the Comprehensive Plan update is scheduled on Wednesday, January 31, 2024 at 7 p.m. at the Fire Station Training Room with a remote option available as well.

**2024 LONG RANGE  
PLANNING WORK  
PROGRAM:**

Manager Medrud reported the request is to schedule the proposed 2024 Long Range Planning Work Program on the Council's consent calendar at the January 16, 2024 meeting.

Manager Medrud invited any questions remaining unanswered from the joint City Council and Planning Commission worksession on December 12, 2023 on the work program.

Councilmember Dahlhoff asked whether it is realistic to receive an update on the conflicts surrounding the City's work on urban forestry amendments. Manager Medrud said he optimistically believes the City will complete the amendments this year. The next step in the process with the State Building Code Council is a public hearing on the proposed state amendments. In November, staff met with officials from the State Building Code Council and offered some specific recommendations regarding the map, defensible space, and several other issues. Following that discussion, Building Code Council members accepted the recommendations for further consideration. Following the Building Code Council's scheduled February 2024 public hearing on the code, staff should have more information regarding the City's recommended changes to the proposed amendments. The Building Code Council is scheduled to adopt the Wildland and Urban Interface Code in March, which has not been changed. By March, staff should have information on state requirements to enable staff to move forward on any proposed

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urban forestry amendments for the City.

**MOTION:**

**Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Councilmember Cathey, to recommend scheduling the annual work program for approval on the consent calendar at the January 16, 2024 City Council meeting. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**CONTRACT WITH THE  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMERCE FOR THE 2025  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
PERIODIC UPDATE  
MIDDLE HOUSING  
PLANNING GRANT:**

Manager Medrud said the contract is one of three proposed contracts with the Department of Commerce to assist the City with the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. The first grant addresses middle housing specific to the Development Code. The grant amount is \$75,000 and enables staff to address recent state changes in state law for middle housing. The grant will assist the City in meeting state requirements for duplexes, triplexes, and quads, as well as other types of housing that would be allowed in all single-family neighborhoods based on recent changes by the Legislature.

Councilmember Dahlhoff asked whether the grant would afford an opportunity for the Council to address some concerns conveyed about tax incentives. Manager Medrud explained that the grant is focused only on details of the new regulations. In terms of other incentives, staff is aware of the need for some changes to ensure the incentives are easier to apply, such as housing and density bonuses for affordable housing. However, the multifamily tax exemption program merits a separate effort because the issue is much more complex.

Councilmember Cathey inquired as to any current resources dedicated to working on the multifamily tax exemption program. Manager Medrud advised that the program is currently active. The ordinance included a sunset date to end the program effective in 2026 unless the Council acts to continue the program. At this time, no staff resources have been scheduled to evaluate the program. Applications for the program are administered through the City's development process with the Council reviewing the contract for conditional approval. No applications have been submitted at this time. However, three existing projects that received conditional approval must be completed within a three-year period following approval. Two projects are nearing completion with the status of the third project uncertain at this time.

Councilmember Cathey said she was hoping for a Council discussion about the program because there are some strong feelings within the community concerning the program. Manager Medrud acknowledged the concern. Unfortunately, resources are

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dedicated to state mandated work items before undertaking a comprehensive review of the program.

Chair Althauser added that during the Council's upcoming retreat, an opportunity might arise during the Council's discussions on priorities and goals.

**MOTION:**

**Councilmember Cathey moved, seconded by Councilmember Dahlhoff, to recommend placement of the contract on the January 16, 2024, City Council consent calendar to authorize the Mayor to sign the contract with the State Department of Commerce for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Middle Housing Planning Grant. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**CONTRACT WITH THE  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMERCE FOR THE 2025  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
PERIODIC UPDATE  
PLANNING GRANT:**

Manager Medrud reported the second contract is specific for the periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan and affords more flexibility as to how the funds are utilized. The grant of \$125,000 is based on the size of the community. The funds will be utilized to fund the Transportation Plan update to offset the costs of a consultant for technical assistance and updates of data within the Economic Development Plan. Staff is scheduled to issue Request for Proposals for both consultants following the Council's approval of the contracts.

Manager Medrud reported the last contract is specific to climate change. Staff is working with the Department of Commerce on the details of the contract.

**MOTION:**

**Councilmember Cathey moved, seconded by Councilmember Dahlhoff, to recommend placement of the contract on the January 16, 2024, City Council consent calendar to authorize the Mayor to sign the contract with the State Department of Commerce for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Periodic Planning Grant. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Chair Althauser adjourned the meeting at 8:34 a.m.**