

TUMWATER PLANNING COMMISSION
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CONVENE: 7:01 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Elizabeth Robbins and Commissioners Grace Edwards, Terry Kirkpatrick, Brandon Staff, Michael Tobias, and Kelly Von Holtz.

Absent: Commissioners Brian Schumacher and Anthony Varela.

Staff: Assistant Director of Transportation and Engineering Mary Heather Ames, Planning Manager Brad Medrud, Land Use and Housing Planner Erika Smith-Erickson.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: Manager Medrud advised of rescheduling the public hearing for the Development Code Housekeeping Amendments to December 12, 2023 after the joint meeting with the City Council.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS: There were no reports.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Medrud reported the joint session with the City Council has been scheduled at 6 p.m. on December 12, 2023. The Commission will receive two meeting notices for attending in person or remotely. The Commission is scheduled to meet following the conclusion of the joint meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no public comments.

ORDINANCE NO. O2023-002, FINAL DOCKET FOR 2023 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS: Planner Smith-Erickson recapped the series of briefings and questions about the Old Highway 99 Corridor Plan. She introduced Mary Heather Ames, Assistant Director of Transportation and Engineering.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick noted that the corridor plan appears to apply to the corridor beginning at 79th Avenue. The plan calls for expanding the highway to four lanes from 79th Avenue to 88th Avenue. He asked about the segment north from 79th Avenue to Tumwater Boulevard. Assistant Director Ames advised that the corridor plan is from 73rd Avenue to 93rd Avenue. The plan continues recent improvements completed from the recent Capitol Boulevard project. The plan recommends four lanes between 73rd Avenue and 88th Avenue and two lanes from 88th Avenue to 93rd Avenue. Tumwater Boulevard is located north of 73rd Avenue. A project completed approximately two years ago widened the highway to four lanes to the south of Tumwater Boulevard. The corridor study focused on the area south of those recent improvements.

Chair Robbins asked about the planning horizon for project improvements to serve additional growth in the area. Assistant Director

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Ames explained that the traffic analysis forecasted a planning horizon of 2040 for peak hour traffic (worst-case scenario).

Commissioner Tobias referred to the presence of endangered species in Tumwater. He asked about potential impacts to the Mazama pocket gopher, which inhabits the airport area. Manager Medrud replied that the Olympia subspecies pocket gopher and the Streaked Horned Lark have primary habitat in the area of the Olympia Regional Airport. Commissioner Tobias asked about any anticipated impact to both species because of the project. Manager Medrud replied that overall, the impacts would be minor; however, any construction project requires a gopher study. If gophers are present, the project requires a series of federal permits, or if the City's Habitat Conservation Plan has been completed, the plan provides for a federal incidental take permit.

Commissioner Staff asked about planned lighting along the corridor and potential impacts to airport operations. Assistant Director Ames replied that the plan did not address illumination in detail. The City would follow street standards for illumination as the corridor is improved. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has specific requirements for illumination, which would be considered as the plan is implemented.

Assistant Director Ames referred to a question concerning bike lanes. For the majority of the corridor, the plan calls for a dedicated bike lane on the southbound (airport side) with a multi-use path located on the northbound side of the corridor comprised of a 10-foot wide combined walking and bicycling path for northbound traffic. The southbound side of the corridor has limited opportunities for stopping with the lane used primarily by bicyclists commuting whereas the northbound side of the corridor has many opportunities to stop and visit local businesses. The northbound bicycle lane would be bi-directional.

Planner Smith-Erickson requested the Commission schedule a public hearing on the two proposed amendments on December 12, 2023.

MOTION:

Commissioner Von Holtz moved, seconded by Commissioner Tobias, to schedule a public hearing on December 12, 2023 for Ordinance No. O2023-002, Final Docket for 2023 Comprehensive Plan Amendments. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

**2025
COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN PERIODIC
UPDATE – LANDS
FOR PUBLIC
PURPOSES &**

Planner Smith-Erickson briefed Commissioners on two elements of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update - Lands for Public Purposes Element and the Utilities Element. The Commission is asked to review existing elements and consider specific issues and topics to address. Staff will review recent legislation on new requirements to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion within the update and the guidance

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UTILITIES: materials for updating the elements.

The State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires cities to demonstrate each element in the Comprehensive Plan meets the relevant 15 planning goals in the GMA. For both elements, the update focuses on urban growth goals to encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner, and ensuring public facilities and services necessary to support development are adequate for the next 20 years.

The Lands for Public Purposes Element includes: (1) Inventory of existing capital facilities owned by public entities; (2) Forecast of the future needs for such capital facilities; (3) Proposed locations and capacities of expanded or new capital facilities; (4) Lands for Public Facilities Element Maps showing the locations of the existing capital facilities owned by public entities; and (5) Essential Public Facilities and siting.

Capital facilities include:

- Transportation Systems
- Solid Waste Management (Landfill and Hazardous Waste)
- Sewage Treatment Facilities and Sanitary Sewer Systems
- Stormwater Systems and Facilities
- Water Systems and Facilities
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services
- Police Protection
- School Facilities (Tumwater School District and Olympia School District)
- Library Services
- City Facilities

Chair Robbins inquired as to whether school facilities only include grade school rather than a community college. Manager Medrud explained that the policies are intended to create the opportunity for siting schools. Schools, such as a university would fall under the category of “essential public facilities.” The City needs to allow for and accommodate for those types of land uses.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick asked whether the inventory of parks and recreation facilities within the element would be updated. Manager Medrud advised that the category of capital facilities apply to the Parks and Recreation Plan. Staff is considering options to accommodate an update, but it is unlikely to be accomplished as part of the Periodic Update process. Staff and City Administration are discussing options

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for updating the Parks and Recreation Plan.

2016 Capital Facilities maps in the element include:

- Sewage Treatment Facilities and Sanitary Sewer System
- Stormwater Systems and Facilities
- Water Systems and Facilities
- School Facilities, Library Services, City Facilities

The Lands for Public Purposes Element includes Essential Public Facilities that are difficult to site such as:

- Airports
- State Education Facilities
- Large Scale State or Regional Transportation Facilities
- Correctional Facilities
- Solid Waste Handling Facilities
- Inpatient Facilities
- Mental Health Facilities
- Sewage Treatment Facilities
- Emergency Communication Towers and Antennas

Manager Medrud added that in 2022, the Commission considered potential amendments to the section to address substance abuse facilities in the City and where the use could be located. Some facilities were approved by the Thurston County, which have since been annexed to the City. Some of those facilities wish to expand and the City needs to consider the possibility given current regulations that prohibit expansion. Language in the Comprehensive Plan for Essential Public Facilities is similar to the language in the regulations, which requires an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan when changes are implemented in the code. Part of the update process is intended to minimize including the code within the Comprehensive Plan.

Chair Robbins asked whether the City currently has all nine uses. Manager Medrud advised that the City does not have state education facilities other than the education facilities located at the Brewing and Distilling Center as part of South Puget Sound Community College, as well as any solid waste handling facilities. The LOTT Clean Water Alliance owns property within the City for future development of a satellite plant connected to the main plant. However, LOTT has since moved away from that particular model and the future use of the property is uncertain at this time.

Planner Smith-Erickson reported the City is required to establish a process or amend its existing process for identifying essential public

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facilities and the sites for those facilities. The current code includes the uses and zoning codes. The City must identify and site the expansion of essential public facilities.

The Utilities Element addresses the general location, proposed location, and capacity of all existing and proposed private utilities, such as natural gas, electricity, telephone, utility pipelines, cable television, cellular, and broadband internet. A utilities map of existing facilities is included in the element.

Some of the 2025 topics to address as part of the update for Lands for Public Purposes Element include:

- Address Organics Management Facility Siting (ESSHB 1799).
- Update inventory and projected needs for public buildings, facilities, and services over the 20-year planning period.
- Use the updated City and urban growth area 20-year population forecasts.
- Update provisions for protection of the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies.
- Allow expansion of the area in the City that would allow for essential public facilities such as inpatient facilities as part of Planning Commission's 2022 Comprehensive Plan amendment cycle recommendations.
- Group A water system plans must include climate resilience element if initiated after June 30, 2024.

Chair Robbins asked whether Organics Management Facilities mostly pertains to timber harvesting. Manager Medrud said the category applies to household waste rather than agricultural waste. Some commercial operations could be included as well as multifamily complexes.

2025 topics to address during the update of Update Utilities Element include:

- Include all electrical, telecommunication, and natural gas systems and make a good faith effort to gather information from them (E2SHB 1181)
- Update general location, proposed location and capacity of all existing and proposed gas, electric, cable television, and telecommunications to year 2045.
- Update wireless telecommunication facilities information as needed.
- Update the general location, proposed location, and capacity of all existing and proposed utilities.

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- Incorporate provisions of the updated 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan as appropriate
- Update Maps.

Planner Smith-Erickson reported the public comment period for the Hazard Mitigation Plan closed on November 17, 2023. Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) submitted the core plan and some draft annexes to the Washington Emergency Management Department for a 30-day review. After receipt of the plan with comments, the plan will be submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for a 45-day review.

Manager Medrud reported one comment from a Tumwater resident was included in the plan addressing how the community will understand the elements of the plan.

Planner Smith-Erickson reported some new requirements include special consideration for environmental justice in goals and policies (E2SHB 1181) in all elements and addressing Organics Management Facility Siting (ESSHB 1799).

Planner Smith-Erickson shared an illustration of the format for the Conservation and Utilities Elements. Staff is utilizing Department of Commerce Guidance Materials to assist in the update:

- Periodic Update Checklist for Fully Planning Cities (Commerce, March 2023)
- A Guide to the Periodic Update Process Under the Growth Management Act – Fully-Planning Counties & Cities (Commerce, 2022)
 - Commerce Periodic Update Materials, including:
 - Capital Facilities Planning
 - Capital Facilities Planning Guidebook (Commerce, October 2014)
 - Stormwater
 - Building Cities in the Rain: Watershed Prioritization for Stormwater Retrofits (September 2016)

Next steps include completion of the gap analysis by November 2023, a briefing to the General Government Committee on December 13, 2023, and to the Public Works Committee on January 18, 2024

Manager Medrud noted the Periodic Update survey is available on the City's website. A postcard will be mailed to all City residents on December 4, 2023. The City has received 160 survey responses to date.

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Commissioner Tobias commented on recent changes in technology with fewer people using landline telephones or subscribing to cable opting instead to livestream broadcasts. He asked about the plan's ability to account for required infrastructure to support an increase in various types of new uses such as cellular and streaming services. Manager Medrud said the plan is a high-level review of utility uses that could be sited in the City. The telecommunications chapter is very comprehensive. Overall, the review is at a higher level but accounts for future technology changes.

**2024 LONG RANGE
PLANNING WORK
PROGRAM:**

Manager Medrud reported the briefing and discussion would help guide staff in preparation of the joint work session with the City Council on December 12, 2023 to review the 2024 Long Range Planning Work Program.

The work program is prepared annually to guide the Community Development Department's work. It also serves as a way of prioritizing work items based on staffing capacity. The work program includes a section on many other projects (below the line) that lack the necessary resources to pursue. The process for establishing the work program enables the Commission to recommend projects to consider. The development of the work program is outlined in Section 18.60 of the Tumwater Municipal Code.

The proposed 2024 Long Range Work Program includes four main categories and associated projects:

- 1. Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket** - *Approximately 33% of all budgeted staff time. 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (continued from 2022-23)*
- 2. Development Regulation Amendment Docket** - *2025 Development Code Periodic Update, Urban Forestry Management Plan Amendments – Landscaping, Street Tree Standards, and Tree and Vegetation Preservation, and other Amendments (The urban forestry amendments are carried over from May 2023 when staff learned of the state's Wildland-Urban Interface Code. Efforts on the amendments ceased until staff reviewed how the new requirements might affect the City. It is likely efforts will restart on the three ordinances in March 2024.), 2024 Development Code Housekeeping Amendments and Thurston County Code Title 22 – Tumwater Urban Growth Area Zoning*
- 3. Other Planning Projects** - *Approximately 25% of all budgeted staff time. The Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is approximately 11% of all budgeted staff time. Work items*

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include Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan (continued from 2016); Equity Toolbox (continued from 2022-23); Food System Plan (new in 2024); Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (continued from 2022-23); Managing Multifamily Tax Exemption Program (ongoing); Code Enforcement (ongoing); and Permit Review Support, Public Inquiries, and other items.

- 4. General Management and Coordination** - *Approximately 20% of all budgeted staff time. Regional Housing Council is approximately 10% of all budgeted staff time.*
- a. General Coordination with Other Departments – Code Compliance Team, Traffic Team, Green Team, Stormwater Team, GIS Team, and other items (ongoing)*
 - b. General Coordination with Other Jurisdictions*
 - 1) Regional Housing Council (minimum 0.25 FTE per Memorandum of Understanding) (ongoing)*
 - 2) Work with the Port of Olympia, other cities, County, State, Tribes, Thurston Regional Planning Council, and Intercity Transit among others (ongoing)*
 - 3) Department Management (ongoing)*
 - 4) Training (ongoing)*

Staff hours are estimated at 1,800 hours equating to one-third of all dedicated staff capacity. Within in each category, individual projects are identified with an estimate of staff time needed to complete, who proposed the project, how they address City Council strategic priorities, and detail on the work required. The work program also accounts for an additional planner position in Long Range Planning.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick inquired about the remaining elements of the HCP that require such a high level of work. Manager Medrud replied that comments on the plan received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service require a substantial revision to the draft HCP to address those particular concerns. As part of the process, staff is identifying specific sources of funding in addition to development fees that may help support funding of the program, as well as reviewing different parcels for acquisition. The goal is to update the HCP by first quarter 2024 for resubmission to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Some elements of the following projects listed “below the line” may be addressed to include Aquifer Protection Standards Amendments, Autonomous Vehicle, and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure as part of the Development Code Update process.

Manager Medrud invited feedback and suggestions on the work program.

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Commissioner Staff commented on the lack of electric vehicle charging stations in the City of Tumwater. More electric vehicle charging stations along the I-5 corridor within the City might attract more tourism to the City. He would prefer moving the item above the line or seeking federal funding or tax reductions. Manager Medrud agreed the demand is increasing. Internally within City facilities, the City is installing charging stations with three stations located at City Hall. State legislation requires jurisdictions along the I-5 corridor to identify and allow for the development of electric vehicle charging stations in particular areas. The City currently meets state requirements; however, discussions are worthy of pursuing to determine if code or policy changes are necessary to support the infrastructure. Charging stations are likely a coordination project with the City's climate position.

Commissioner Staff offered that the Tumwater Craft District would be an ideal location for rapid charging stations because of its close proximity to the interstate. Manager Medrud added that new state requirements for charging stations include multifamily and other large uses of a specific percentage.

Chair Robbins inquired as to the possibility of securing some grant funds to move charging stations above the line. Manager Medrud said any grant funds would be part of the process; however, any charging project would need to be clarified to justify any requests for grant funding. Staff is currently managing up to seven grants, which requires time and capacity.

Commissioner Staff asked whether staff has approached any of the major retailers about the possibility of installing charging stations. Manager Medrud offered to follow up with staff.

Discussion ensued on existing charging stations at the Tumwater Safeway and the difference between slow and rapid charging stations. Most motorists prefer rapid charging stations.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick asked whether mitigation land would also serve to satisfy the state requirement for more open space. Manager Medrud said the City is working on a legislative funding request for funds the state has allocated for carbon sequestration to include prairies, which would serve to support conservation of prairie lands for gophers and other species as well as for carbon sequestration.

Chair Robbins asked about the possibility of promoting more opportunities for events or the possibility of design competitions for architects or engineers involving students and businesses competing for design or engineering awards to assist the City in pursuing goals for

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sustainability and type of development envisioned for the City. She cited the University of Washington's Sustainable Engineering Group and The Evergreen State College Center for Sustainability and Environment as a source of students, faculty, and potential professional contacts to assist the City in projecting the desired image the City envisions. Manager Medrud responded that the suggestion speaks to the efforts Sustainability Coordinator Jones Wood is pursuing. The issue also supports the development of the Climate Element in terms of how the City could support those types of activities.

Manager Medrud referred to the upcoming joint work session with the Council as an opportunity for the City Council and Planning Commission to discuss the draft 2024 work program as well as general topics related to their roles on a range of community development issues. A list of discussion topics to consider during the joint work session include:

1. What went well with the 2023 long range work program and what could be improved?
2. If adjustments to the 2024 long range work program are needed, what projects have less priority?
3. How well was coordination between the City Council and Planning Commission in 2023 and what could be improved in 2024?
4. Are there additional projects in 2024 to consider? If so, what projects currently proposed could be delayed?

Commissioner Kirkpatrick suggested that many of "below the line" items would likely be included as part of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update while acknowledging that the review might not be at the desired level of detail. Some dedicated staff hours for "below the line" items could be reduced if some are captured as part of the Periodic Update.

Chair Robbins cited her interest in the first topic of what has gone well and how the City can build on those successes.

In response to questions about the source of documents, Manager Medrud described how to access the City's website and the pages to visit to obtain desired information. Staff established a webpage for the Periodic Update to house all materials.

Discussion ensued on the goal of avoiding surprises for both the City Council and the Planning Commission and the importance of maintaining coordination and collaboration with the Council.

Manager Medrud advised of the possibility of canceling the December 26, 2023 meeting. Commissioner Von Holtz advised that she would be

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unable to attend the joint meeting with the Council on December 12, 2023.

NEXT MEETING

DATE:

The next meeting is scheduled on December 12, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. with the City Council followed by a separate Commission meeting at approximately 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Tobias moved, seconded by Commissioner Kirkpatrick, to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
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