

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

PRESENT: Chair Michael Althaus 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 & Sustainability Director Dan Smith, Planning Manager Brad Medrud, Communications Manager Ann Cook, and Housing and Land Use Planner Erika Smith-Erickson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
GENERAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMITTEE,
JUNE 14, 2023:

MOTION: **Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Councilmember Cathey, to approve the minutes of June 14, 2023 as published. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

SERVICE PROVIDER
AGREEMENT
AMENDMENT TWO FOR
TREE AND VEGETATION
PRESERVATION CODE
UPDATE:

Manager Medrud reported the request is for a recommendation of approval to the City Council and scheduling the second amendment to the Service Provider Agreement for consideration at the Council meeting on July 18, 2023.

Manager Medrud advised that the updates of the Tree and Vegetation Preservation Code, Landscape Code, and the Street Tree Code have completed the first stage of the review involving community outreach, community conversations, and the gap analysis. Staff and the consultants completed drafts of proposed code language. During the drafting process, staff reviewed the new Washington Wildland Urban Interface Code, a new state requirement through the State Building Code Council for adoption by the City later in the year. Following analysis of the new requirements, it was clear there would be some significant conflicts between the three code updates and the new state requirements. Staff recommends placing the code updates on hold temporality until staff reviews impacts of the new requirements to the City.

DCG/Watershed is assisting staff through the update process. The consultant team is working with staff and with other jurisdictions to identify how they are addressing the new state requirements. The proposed amendment would facilitate and support that process. Staff anticipates completing the updates, but require additional time to review new state requirements. The proposed agreement

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incorporates some additional tasks and extends the term of agreement through mid-2024. Similar amendments for other consultants on the other codes will be presented as well.

Councilmember Cathey inquired about any pushback from any group or jurisdiction concerning the new requirements. Manager Medrud said the State Building Code Council is responsible for updating and maintaining all building codes in the state. The Building Code Council received direction from the Legislature to pursue changes in 2019. The Building Code Council reviewed the International Wildland Urban Interface Code and included some Washington-based amendments for consideration by the Legislature. The requirements are included in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). Some pushback has occurred following an initial review of the impacts of the new requirements. All jurisdictions are working on possible changes to ensure the requirements can be accomplished within an urban area.

Councilmember Cathey offered that the regulations appear to be more applicable to Eastern Washington than Western Washington. The Building Code Council's recommendations are excessive and the proposal is antithetical to the City's goals for clean air and tree canopies. Manager Medrud replied that although there are differences in terms of fire hazards in Eastern Washington, Western Washington is experiencing a level of fire hazard that should be addressed; however, the new requirements might not be the full extent of what should be addressed for Western Washington. Staff has been in contact with other jurisdictions to ensure there is a coordinated response to the new requirements.

Manager Medrud addressed questions about the WAC and how the City cannot adopt less restrictive requirements but could adopt requirements that are more restrictive than the WAC. He added that staff has been meeting with other state agencies about critical areas regulations because of the new state requirements and how critical areas regulations coexist with the new code. Department of Ecology representatives have indicated that for wetlands, the City will be required to ensure both sets of regulations are effective. A similar conversation is scheduled with staff from the Department of Fish and Wildlife to discuss similar issues and its effects on habitat because of potential conflicts.

Councilmember Cathey asked about the role of the Legislature with respect to the new requirements. Manager Medrud explained that the Legislature directed the State Building Code Council to address the issues and pursue administrative changes to update the WACs. He is not aware whether the Legislature must approve the changes.

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Councilmember Cathey said some discussions are indicative of the Legislature not pleased with the changes as the changes are too dramatic. Manager Medrud said the original adoption date was July 1, 2023. Staff was not surprised the implementation date was delayed because of current efforts on the state energy code.

Chair Althausen asked about the role of the Department of Natural Resources as the department produced the map of the City subject to the new requirements. He asked whether most of the issues would be resolved if the map was corrected. Manager Medrud explained that DNR completed mapping of the City in 2019 and 2020 in a large grain format. The map does not align with many existing conditions. Staff is completing a mapping exercise based on the new requirements. If the City has the ability to revise the mapping, the City could demonstrate how it plans to meet the requirements of the code.

MOTION:

Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Chair Althausen, to schedule Amendment Two to the Service Provider Agreement for the July 18, 2023 City Council consent calendar with a recommendation of approval. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

**2025 COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE
PROCESS – COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT PLAN:**

Manager Medrud reported the proposal is the final version of the Community Engagement Plan for the Comprehensive Plan Update. The Planning Commission reviewed the plan. Next steps include implementing actions within the Community Engagement Plan.

Planner Smith-Erickson reported the Comprehensive Plan Update slogan is *“Balancing Nature and Community: Tumwater’s Path to Sustainable Growth.”* State law requires the City to establish a public participation program for updates to the City’s Comprehensive Plan and development regulations. The plan is a roadmap on how members of the community will be involved in guiding policies. The Comprehensive Plan articulates a series of goals, objectives, policies, actions, and standards outlining the City’s vision and future direction. The plan and process assists the City in interacting with the community and stakeholders. The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) serves as guidance for the public participation process with five levels of engagement identified. Public engagement spans open houses, websites, fact sheets, public comments, focus groups, surveys, public meetings, workshops, polling, citizen advisory committees, community representatives, stakeholders, and subject matter experts with diverse perspectives.

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Ten Community Engagement Goals include:

1. Provide information to enhance community understanding of issues
2. Seek early and continuous involvement from people who care about the Plan and the community
3. Offer opportunities for the community to provide feedback to staff, and appointed and elected officials
4. Develop an accessible, equitable, and engaging Plan
5. Make community-driven planning a priority
6. Highlight projects implemented since the last update
7. Use a flexible, phased approach
8. Integrate and consolidate goals from all elements of the Plan
9. Develop a Plan that is in an easy to read and in an understandable format
10. Rely on multiple communications strategies, tactics, and platforms to share information

Throughout the update, staff will use the IAP2 process to identify target audiences and stakeholders and will reach out to stakeholders and stakeholder groups (as listed in the staff report), utilize an email contact list, provide an updated webpage, social media, surveys, news releases, and open houses. The community will be notified of all public meetings, including open houses, briefings, worksessions, and hearings. The City Council and Planning Commission will receive updates throughout the community engagement process and the community will be notified of key meetings and open houses via the update webpage, social media, Tumwater On-Tap e-newsletter, and the City's email contact list.

Online community surveys will be available on the update webpage during 2023 to assess community priorities. Vision, goals, and policies in the current Plan serve as the starting point for survey questions. Community members will be notified of surveys via email, the update webpage, the City's social media platforms, and other outreach venues. During the 2016 update, a pamphlet was sent to the community requesting input on goals and visions. The City received 96 responses, which will serve as the basis for the surveys during this update process.

All materials associated with the update will be posted on the update webpage on the City's website. The update webpage includes a list of frequently asked questions, background summary, meeting information, staff introductions, interactive map of meeting location and times, visuals, and opportunities to sign up for email notifications. Staff will work with community partners to share updates and surveys and will issue news releases to advertise

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surveys, key open houses, and other important information.

Open houses will feature update topics with the community prior to the start of the adoption process. The goal of open houses is to meet people where they are and to ensure equity and diversity throughout the community. Information on open house dates and other key meeting dates will be distributed through news releases, social network blog, update webpage, social media platforms, and email contact lists. City staff will create interactive tools to engage involvement and interest such as pamphlets, displays, and comment forms.

Phase I of the community engagement process begins in summer 2023 through winter 2024. Staff will review visions, goals, and policies in the current Plan and prepares gap analyses of all elements of the Plan. Staff will review development regulations and prepare gap analyses of relevant chapters. The community and stakeholders will be introduced to the update process. The website launch date is anticipated to be in July 2023. The first public outreach meeting is tentatively scheduled in August 2023.

Phase II is Plan Development beginning in winter 2024 through spring 2024. Feedback obtained during Phase I will be incorporated into the draft elements and regulations. Contact and engagement with community will continue. Staff will consult with the Historic Preservation Commission, Parks & Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, General Government Committee, Public Works Committee, and the City Council. Focus groups of technical experts will reviews elements, such as Transportation and Economic Development.

Chair Althausen asked about the identity of the technical experts. Manager Medrud said the experts include both staff and consultants who frequently work with staff teams.

Chair Althausen asked about the Regional Housing Council's (RHC) role within the update process. It is important for the RHC to have some alignment of its elements with local housing plans to ensure all bodies plan from mutual plans. Manager Medrud advised that the City would likely not have any consultant funds for the Housing Element but will utilize individuals staff has worked with on the technical team of the RHC to review policies for the Housing Element. State requirements for housing have changed dramatically. Other jurisdictions and Thurston County are updating comprehensive plans on the same timeline and under the same requirements.

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Planner Smith-Erickson reported Phase III, the legislative process, begins in summer 2024 with the Draft Plan comprised of draft versions of elements and regulations. The Draft Plan will be available to the community through the update webpage, social media platforms, and email contact list. The City's boards and commissions will develop recommendations to forward to the Planning Commission in June 2025. The Planning Commission will conduct a number of worksessions to review and discuss plan elements and regulations. Opportunities for joint sessions will be considered. The Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing to receive community comments on the Draft Plan prior to any recommendations by the Planning Commission.

The General Government Committee and Public Works Committee will hold briefings and worksessions to discuss the Planning Commission recommendation. The City Council will hold worksessions to discuss the Planning Commission recommendation with the adoption process culminating with the Council's adoption of the Plan and development regulations to meet the state deadline of June 30, 2025.

Councilmember Dahlhoff questioned the City actions of providing plenty of notices versus sparking action by community members to feel seen, heard, and respected. Manager Medrud said the City completed an extensive public engagement process for the urban forestry amendments. There was some turnout at each public meeting; however, attendance was similar with most participants attending because urban forestry was an important topic to them personally. Staff is outreaching to a variety of different groups to identify other outreach methods in addition to social media efforts. Staff will need to cultivate relationships with many groups in addition to noticing the meetings through various venues. Conversations will be necessary beyond the comprehensive plan to ensure community members understand how the comprehensive plan aligns with other important issues in the City. Staff continues to explore the best venues to accomplish those objectives.

Councilmember Dahlhoff noted the public engagement plan identifies specific public agencies while information on community members is vague. She recommended identifying community members with no internet or computer accessibility by location and identifying the demographics using each individual platform. Discussions on establishing a youth council could be another avenue, as well as the Thurston County Opioid Response Task Force or Tumwater HOPES. The update could provide an opportunity to collaborate with the school district and using the school's platforms to engage with guardians, parents, and youths.

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She asked whether those methods would be capable of tracking to avoid the City establishing duplicate processes. Manager Medrud said collaborating with the school district is important. All the recommendations will be pursued by staff. However, the City has limited resources and it will require considering ways to accomplish those various contacts by leveraging existing resources to achieve the biggest impact.

Manager Cook noted that the communications team and Planner Smith-Erickson have been working on strategies during the utilization of the IAP2 model for engagement. The City is utilizing the IAP2 model. Staff continues to review and breakdown stakeholder lists. Planner Smith-Erickson has some excellent ideas for outreaching, which will address issues associated with equity and age demographics, etc.

Chair Althaus commented that in addition to soliciting feedback from the community, the plan for disseminating the information, memorializing, and making it available to the community would be just as important, as well as including the City's boards and commissions as it will affect their input on the final Plan.

Councilmember Cathey said most members of the community have no knowledge of the City's Comprehensive Plan. It would be important to define and provide examples of the Plan and how the Plan is utilized by the City.

Councilmember Dahlhoff recommended framing the Comprehensive Plan differently to highlight new and different information versus standard baseline requirements.

Manager Medrud said that at the next meeting, the committee will receive an overview of the required update elements from the guidance the state provided to the City.

ADJOURNMENT:

With there being no further business, Chair Althaus adjourned the meeting at 8:51 a.m.