White Salmon Planning Commission Meeting
A G E N D A
November 12, 2025 – 5:30 PM
119 NE Church Ave and Zoom Teleconference

Meeting ID: 884 8681 7330
Call in Number: 1 (253) 215-8782 US (Tacoma)

Call to Order/Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

1. Meeting Minutes – July 23, 2025
2. Meeting Minutes – September 10, 2025
3. Meeting Minutes – September 24, 2025

Public Comment

Action Items

4. Finalize and approve the revised by-laws
5. Finalize and approve the revised mission statement

Discussion Items

6. Recap of protocols from the Joint Workshop on September 24, 2025
7. Discuss adding a Land Acknowledgment to Commission meetings
8. Discussion of commissioners making recommendations for code updates
9. Discuss the Draft 2026 Work Plan

Adjournment

File Attachments for Item:

1. Meeting Minutes – July 23, 2025

DRAFT

White Salmon Planning Commission
M E E T I N G M I N U T E S

July 23, 2025 – 5:30 PM
119 NE Church Ave and Zoom Teleconference

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commission Members:
Carl Trabant, Chair
Michael Morneault
Brendan Brown (Zoom)
Nate Loker
Excused:
Erika Price

Staff:
Rowan Fairfield, City Planner
Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk
Kelly Hickok, Legal Counsel

CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL

Chair Carl Trabant called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum of planning commissioner members was present. One member of the community attended the meeting via teleconference.

Moved by Michael Morneault. Seconded by Brendan Brown.
Move to excuse the absence of Commissioner Erika Price from the June 25 Planning Commission meeting.
MOTION CARRIED. 4-0
Morneault – Aye, Loker – Aye, Brown – Aye, Trabant – Aye.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. **Meeting Minutes – June 25, 2025**
2. **Meeting Minutes – July 9, 2025**

Moved by Brendan Brown. Seconded by Michael Morneault.
Motion to approve the meeting minutes from June 25 and July 9, 2025, as presented.
MOTION CARRIES 4-0.
Morneault – Aye, Loker – Aye, Brown – Aye, Trabant – Aye.

PRESENTATION

3. **Parliamentary Guide**

Planner Rowan Fairfield introduced a new parliamentary guide designed to help the Planning Commission operate more effectively, especially for new members. The guide includes a Robert's Rules "cheat sheet," step-by-step procedures for motions, sample language, the Commission's bylaws, and relevant municipal and state code provisions. Planner Fairfield noted the guides will remain in his charge and be brought to each meeting.

Commissioner Michael Morneault reminded members to use the correct phrasing "I move that" or "I move to" when making motions.

Chair Carl Trabant added that, while he initially found Robert's Rules overly formal, he has come to appreciate the structure and clarity it provides, noting that staff-prepared scripts and proposed motion language are useful tools with flexibility to adjust as needed.

PUBLIC HEARING

4. Unit Lot Subdivision (Continuation)

Chair Carl Trabant opened the continuation of the public hearing to review proposed Unit Lot Subdivision Ordinance, Chapter 16.66 – Unit Lot Subdivision at 5:37 p.m.

Discussion

Planner Rowan Fairfield reminded the Commission that testimony from the July 9 meeting remained closed unless it was formally reopened. The Commission was resuming the discussion phase with a line-by-line review of the approval criteria and review process sections.

Planner Fairfield walked through staff responses to commissioner and public comments, noting that a three-column chart in the packet (page 23) summarized feedback and would guide edits.

Discussion began with Section .060 (approval criteria). Planner Fairfield explained that site plan review was excluded because it does not apply to single-family homes or accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Commissioners agreed, confirming that existing zoning standards already cover setbacks.

Commissioners clarified that developers must provide services and that each unit lot must have a separate utility hookup under current code. Concerns about past sewer moratoriums were raised, but staff noted that Public Works determines current capacity. Commissioners supported simplified staff language on utilities, common areas, and Title 18 environmental requirements, agreeing that chapter-by-chapter references were unnecessary. They also agreed to omit criteria on "public use and interest" or nonconformities, since these are already addressed elsewhere in the code.

For Section .070 (review process), Planner Fairfield proposed streamlined noticing language, focusing on the public works director, fire chief, utility providers, and other officials as needed. A suggestion to require notifying applicants of outside agency comments and delays was discussed, but Planner Fairfield recommended leaving that process under Title 19. Chair Trabant noted that many concerns reflected the past absence of a city planner rather than issues with the ordinance.

With consensus to leave out the extra notification requirement, Planner Fairfield confirmed that staff would update the ordinance with the approved changes for recommendation to the City Council.

Action

Moved by Brendan Brown. Seconded by Michael Morneault.
Motion to reopen public testimony for the proposed Unit Lot Subdivision Ordinance, Chapter 16.66 – Unit Lot Subdivision.
MOTION CARRIES 3-1.
Morneault – Aye, Loker – Aye, Brown – Aye, Trabant – Nay.

Public Testimony

Chair Carl Trabant opened the Public Testimony Portion of the hearing at 5:55 p.m.

Peter Wright, Inside City Limits

City resident Peter Wright stated that he submitted written comments to staff earlier in the day but now acknowledged the public testimony portion was closed. He requested that his comments be entered into the record. Wright expressed overall support for the staff's proposed updates and suggestions. He recommended clarifying the distinction between site plan review and plat review, suggesting that site plan review focus on the development itself, while plat review address ownership divisions. He indicated this would help clearly separate the processes for development and property division.

Chair Carl Trabant closed the Public Testimony portion of the hearing at 5:56 p.m.

Discussion (Continued)

Commissioner Michael Morneault inquired whether Wright's comments were included in the meeting packet. Planner Fairfield confirmed they were not, as the public testimony portion had been closed, but offered to forward the comments to commissioners after the meeting.

Chair Carl Trabant recommended that commissioners review the comments to better understand the suggestions, noting that they may prompt one additional brief round of discussion or minor revisions.

Action

Moved by Michael Morneault. Seconded by None.
Motion to table the Unit Lot Subdivision Ordinance Public Hearing and continue it to the next meeting [on August 13, 2025].
MOTION FAILED.

Discussion

Commissioner Nate Loker asked whether the Commission should vote on the ULS now or wait to review Peter Wright's recent public comment. Planner Fairfield explained that the comment will be part of the official record for the City Council.

Chair Trabant and the Commissioners emphasized the need to review the comment before voting to avoid sending the ordinance back. Planner Fairfield clarified that the comment was submitted after the public testimony period closed. The Commission agreed it was important to ensure everything is accurate before forwarding the ordinance to the Council.

Moved by Michael Morneault. Seconded by Brendan Brown.
Motion to table the Unit Lot Subdivision Ordinance Public Hearing and continue it to the next meeting [on August 13, 2025].
MOTION CARRIED. 4-0
Morneault – Aye, Loker – Aye, Brown – Aye, Trabant – Aye.

Chairman Trabant closed the public hearing at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Carl Trabant, Chair

Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk

File Attachments for Item:

2. Meeting Minutes – September 10, 2025

DRAFT

White Salmon Planning Commission
W O R K S H O P   M I N U T E S

September 10, 2025 – 6:00 PM
119 NE Church Ave and Zoom Teleconference

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commission Members:
Carl Trabant, Chair
Erika Price
Michael Morneault
Brendan Brown
Nate Loker

Staff:
Rowan Fairfield, Planner
Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk
Shawn MacPherson, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL
Mayor Marla Keethler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. There were six members of the public in attendance in person and via teleconference.

City Planner Rowan Fairfield conducted roll call, confirming a quorum was present.

Presentation

1. **Rules and Responsibilities for Elected and Appointed Officials**
This joint workshop brought together members of the White Salmon City Council and the Planning Commission for training on rules, responsibilities, and ethical obligations of elected and appointed officials.

City Attorney Shawn MacPherson emphasized statutory requirements, the separation of legislative and executive roles, and the need for fairness and objectivity, especially in quasi-judicial contexts.

City Attorney MacPherson reminded members to operate strictly within their defined authority and avoid directing staff or signaling outcomes on matters that may later come before them. He stated that the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) applies broadly, including to email and text exchanges that involve a quorum; “serial meetings” can occur when separate messages collectively amount to deliberation.

OPMA Requirements: A meeting occurs whenever a quorum discusses city business, including through electronic communications. While passive receipt of information from the mayor or staff is permissible, members should not discuss substance among themselves outside a properly noticed meeting. Special meetings require stricter notice and adherence to listed agenda items.

Roles and Authority: Council’s work is legislative and policy-setting, including budget approval, while the mayor and administration manage day-to-day operations. Individual officials should not direct staff or step into executive functions, as this blurs accountability and can create inter-branch conflict. Staff have professional and legal duties that may extend beyond specific council directions; respecting these lanes supports sound governance and reduces risk.

Quasi-Judicial Proceedings: When acting in a quasi-judicial capacity, officials must remain objective and base decisions on adopted codes, procedures, and evidence in the record. Ex parte contacts should be avoided; potential conflicts of interest or bias must be disclosed; and members should abstain when appropriate. Public statements that could be construed as prejudging pending matters should be avoided. The hearing examiner system is intended to reinforce objectivity and consistency.

Liability and Ethics: City insurance generally covers officials acting within the scope of their roles. That protection can be jeopardized when officials exceed their authority or disregard legal advice; the Spokane example, resulting in a $1.2 million exposure, was cited as a caution. The code of ethics prohibits using one's position for personal gain, and members owe a duty of confidentiality for executive-session discussions and attorney-client-privileged communications.

Planning Commission Role: As the hearing examiner assumes more quasi-judicial work, the Planning Commission will focus increasingly on advisory responsibilities. Commissioners should flag code issues and recommend updates through staff, who can route items to the council agenda. This process preserves integrity and aligns with the Commission's evolving role.

Members are encouraged to contact the mayor or administration with ethics questions, proactively disclose potential conflicts ahead of discussions or votes, and continue proposing code updates through staff channels.

City Attorney Shawn MacPherson stated that annual refresher training will be scheduled to reinforce OPMA compliance, ethical standards, and role clarity.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Carl Trabant, Chair	Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk

File Attachments for Item:

3. Meeting Minutes – September 24, 2025

DRAFT

White Salmon Planning Commission
W O R K S H O P   M I N U T E S

September 24, 2025 – 6:00 PM
119 NE Church Ave and Zoom Teleconference

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commission Members:	**Staff:**
Carl Trabant, Chair	Rowan Fairfield, Planner
Erika Price (Phone)	Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk
Michael Morneault	Kelly Hickok, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL

Mayor Pro Tempore Jason Hartmann called the joint meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. There were five members of the public in attendance in person and via teleconference.

City Planner Rowan Fairfield conducted roll call, confirming a quorum was present. Planning Commissioner Brendan Brown and Nate Loker were absent.

Discussion Items

A. Review of the PC 2025 Workplan

Planner Rowan Fairfield presented the Planning Commission's draft 2025 work plan to the City Council and Planning Commission members, originally developed in May at the recommendation of the Interim City Administrator. Planner Fairfield stated that the plan captured near-term housekeeping, substantive code work, and an operational self-assessment focused on bylaws and clarifying roles and responsibilities.

B. The role of the Planning Commission (6:06 p.m.)

1. What is the Commission's authority from WSMC 2.20.020?

Planner Fairfield discussed the Planning Commission's authority as outlined in the White Salmon Municipal Code, Chapter 2.20.020. The code specifies that the Planning Commission is vested with powers set forth under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and additional powers and duties. These include holding public hearings and making recommendations to the City Council on subdivision applications, comprehensive plan amendments, and zone changes. The code also states that the City Council may refer matters to the Planning Commission for recommendations. It was noted that the code doesn't explicitly give the Commission authority to pursue its own ordinances.

2. How is work assigned to the Commission?

Members debated how work should be assigned to the Planning Commission. They discussed whether the Commission should only work on items explicitly directed by the Council or if they could set their own priorities. It was agreed that a balance was needed between Council-directed work and allowing the Planning Commission to leverage its expertise and interests. The idea of a work plan approved by the Council was seen as a way to achieve this balance.

3. How does the Commission Interact with Council's set priorities?

Members agreed that better communication between the Council and Planning Commission was necessary. Council decided to implement a system where the Planning Commission's work plan would be approved shortly after the Council's budget retreat, ensuring alignment with Council priorities. Additionally, members agreed to hold a mid-year joint check-in meeting and have the Planning Commission chair provide quarterly updates to the Council.

4. How does the Commission interact with other boards and committees?

Members mentioned the Planning Commission's unique position as a commission without a council member present, unlike other committees. This highlighted the need for improved communication channels between the Planning Commission and the Council.

C. How we move forward (6:45 p.m.)

1. How should new items be added (mid-year) to the Workplan?

The group decided that the work plan should be fluid, allowing for the addition of urgent items or shifting priorities throughout the year. They agreed that any significant changes or additions to the work plan mid-year should be discussed and approved during the joint check-in meetings or through the quarterly update process.

2. What can we do better in the next year?

Members discussed several improvements for the coming year.

First, they agreed to create a work plan extending through 2026, to be developed after the Council's budget retreat. They also decided to implement periodic joint meetings and updates to improve communication. Further discussion revolved around the need for better public engagement on planning issues, considering ideas like quarterly workshops or engagement sessions.

Finally, members agreed to develop a standardized format for Planning Commission recommendations to the Council, striking a balance between thoroughness and efficiency. This format will include links to meeting minutes and public testimony, allowing Council members to dive deeper into topics if desired. Planning staff and Commission chair also agreed to collaborate on creating a revised reporting format.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Carl Trabant, Chair

Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk

File Attachments for Item:

4. Finalize and approve the revised by-laws

PLANNING COMMISSION BY-LAWS & RULES OF PROCEDURE

City of White Salmon Resolution 2024-05-591 May 1, 2024

I. NAME

The official name shall be "The Planning Commission of the City of White Salmon."

II. MEETINGS

A. Location

1. All meetings shall be held at White Salmon City Council Chambers located in the Fire Hall at ~~220~~ 119 NE Church Avenue, White Salmon, WA 98672, unless otherwise directed by City staff and appropriate notification to the media and public is provided.

B. Date and Time

1. The Commission will have one scheduled regular monthly meeting date upon which it will convene to do business as necessary in response to citizen or city council requests. ~~Regular m~~Meetings shall be held on the ~~first~~second Wednesday ~~after the first City Council meeting~~ of the month at 5:30 p.m.

C. Special Meetings and Workshops

1. Special meetings and/or workshops (outside of a regular meeting) may be held at the discretion of the Commission after consultation with City staff regarding availability. Workshops shall be held for the development of long-range plans, updating ordinances, and other work programs deemed necessary by the Planning Commission or City Council.

2. Action may be taken at a special meeting, provided that appropriate public notice requirements are met.

D. Joint Meetings

1. The Planning Commission will be available for joint meetings with the City Council at least once annually to gather information and generally discuss topics related to the development and growth of the City.

E. Meeting Notices and Agenda

1. Written notice of all regular and special meetings or workshops shall be provided a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting ~~date~~time.
2. An agenda of the matters to be considered by the Planning Commission at the meeting shall be available no fewer than five (5) days before the meeting.

F. Attendance

1. Commission members are expected to attend all regular and special meetings~~ in person~~.
2. Any member anticipating absence from an official meeting shall notify the Chairperson and City Staff in advance, as soon as possible after the need for absence is known.
3. Any absence may be excused by a majority vote of the Commission. Unexcused absences from three consecutive regular meetings shall be reported to the City Council for appropriate action.

G. Remote Attendance

1. Remote attendance shall be allowed via audio or video conferencing as allowed by law and subject to the conditions as set forth herein. There is no limit to the number of times a commission member may attend a meeting by remote attendance and no limit to the number of commission members who may participate by remote attendance in a meeting. Remote attendance by any member shall be considered an appearance towards a quorum. Remote attendance is for the benefit of the City of White Salmon and not for the benefit of an individual member or the membership as a whole.

   ~~i. Commission members shall notify the Chair of the Planning Commission (or Vice-Chair if the Chair is the member), on or before the day of the meeting that such member is unable to attend the meeting in person.~~

   ~~ii. Public hearings — Commission members must attend in person to vote on any matter at a public hearing unless remote attendance is excused by a majority vote of the Commission.~~

2. To participate in remote attendance, the member(s) must be able to hear everything that is spoken by any member(s) or individual (s) who are participating in the meeting, either in person or by remote attendance, and all members and individual(s) attending the meeting in person or remotely must be able to hear everything spoken by the member(s).

3. Remote attendance by commission members shall be announced by the Chair ~~or Chair pro tempore in the chair's absence~~ and reflected in the meeting minutes.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

A. Membership

1. The Planning Commission shall consist of five members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. All members shall live within the White Salmon Urban Area. At least three members of the White Salmon Planning Commission shall be residents of the City of White Salmon.

B. Election of Officers

1. The officers of the Planning Commission shall consist of a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson elected annually from the members of the Planning Commission by a majority vote of the members.
2. Any officer may be removed at any time by a majority vote of the Planning Commission, with the officer in question not voting and not present. Four members of the commission shall be present to have a vote.
3. A member of the city staff shall serve as secretary to the commission.

C. Duties of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

1. Chairperson: The Chairperson shall preside over the meetings of the Planning Commission and will exercise all the powers usually incident to the office. The Chairperson will work with the city staff to review meeting agendas. The Chairperson may create standing or temporary committees to examine, investigate, and inquire into subjects of interest to the Planning Commission. No standing or temporary committee shall have the power to commit the Planning Commission to endorse any plan or program.
2. Vice-Chairperson: The Vice-Chairperson shall, in the absence of the Chairperson, perform all duties of the Chairperson at a regular or special meeting. In the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, the members present may elect a temporary Chairperson to preside at the meeting.

D. Code of Conduct

1. It is the constant duty of each Commission member to maintain respect for each other, the staff, consultants, and the public. Likewise, the Commission

shall require corresponding respectful behavior from all persons who attend a meeting, whether in-person or via video.

2. Conflict of Interest: Commission members are expected to comply with RCW 42.23.070.

3. Appearance of Fairness: Commission members are expected to comply with RCW 42.36.

4. Ex Parte Communication: Commission members are expected to comply with RCW 42.36.060.

IV. OPERATIONS AND CONDUCTING BUSINESS

A. Quorum

1. A quorum is required for the Planning Commission to conduct business. It shall consist of at least three Planning Commission members of record at the call for a vote on a question. If members leave during the course of a meeting, reducing the attendance below three members, the quorum will have ceased. Action shall be by majority of those present and voting, when those present constitute a quorum, at any regular or special meeting of the Planning Commission.

B. Motions and Voting

1. All members of the Planning Commission may make and vote on motions to recommend approval, approval with conditions, or denial of any development proposal or amendment to a long-range plan or city ordinance. All motions shall be made in the affirmative. For matters requiring a public hearing, motions may be accompanied by an oral statement, by the person making the motion, of reasons and findings supporting the motion. This statement may include reference to any part or all of the planning staff's report and to testimony or evidence submitted at the hearing.

2. Motions addressing development proposals ~~may~~can be acted on by a majority of the Planning Commission present at the time of a vote on the question, provided there is a quorum present. Recommendations for approval on amendments to the text or maps of long-range plans and city ordinances require an affirmative vote by a majority of the Planning Commission.

3. Planning Commission members must be present to vote on motions; proxy votes are not ~~valid votes~~allowed. A tie vote means the motion fails. A member may abstain from voting.

4. Where not otherwise specified in these rules of procedure, the meetings of the White Salmon Planning Commission and the manner of conducting business shall be governed by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

V. WORKSHOPS

A. Workshops shall be held for the development of long-range plans, updating ordinances, and other work programs deemed necessary by the Planning Commission or City Council.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES

A. Rules of Procedure for Legislative Hearings

1. Chair – Opens the hearing:
2. Initial Presentation:
    - i. Staff
3. Chair – Opens the hearing for public testimony:
    - i. Proponents (those testifying in support or neutral).
    - ii. Opponents (any party in opposition to the application).
    - iii. City staff rebuttal and/or clarifications.
4. Chair – Closes the public testimony portion of the hearing.
5. Chair – Asks the Commissioners if there are questions for staff or for other persons who testified.
6. Commissioner proposes a motion.
7. Another Commissioner seconds the motion, and then the Chair states the motion to the assembly.
8. Chair – Calls for deliberation and/or discussion of the motion.
    - i. Discussion must be confined to the motion before the commission.
    - ii. If there is no further discussion, the Chair calls for a vote on the motion and restates the motion.
9. Chair – Closes the hearing upon a motion being passed by a majority of the Planning Commission.

Note: Each member of the public is limited to three (3) minutes per person for public testimony. At the onset of the meeting, the Chair has the authority to increase the per-person time for public comment at his or her discretion based on the nature and attendance of the meeting. The Chair may use his or her discretion to accept additional testimony or evidence after the close of the public testimony portion of the hearing, providing that all members of the public who gave previous testimony are still present. The Chair should reopen the public testimony portion of the hearing and may limit the testimony to a specific issue and timeframe.

The Planning Commission is the hearings body. It gathers information and makes recommendations, and does not make decisions. The recommendations, together with all the information and testimony from the hearing (record), are sent to the City Council, which then makes a decision based on the record.

B. Rules of Procedure for Quasi-Judicial Hearings

i. Chair – Opens the hearing with the following:

ii. The case number, applicant name, and address of the property;

iii. Identify that the applicable approval criteria are addressed in the staff report.

iv. Explain how to testify (name, address, and relevancy to approval criteria)

v. Ask Planning Commission Members of any conflict of interest or ex-parte contact.

vi. Ask for any public challenge to the partiality of any member.

vii. Summarize the sequenced events to be followed at the hearing as follows:

2. The hearing begins in the following order

i. Staff presentation

ii. Applicant presentation

3. Chair – Opens the hearing for public testimony:

i. Proponents (those testifying in support or neutral).

ii. Opponents (those testifying in opposition).

iii. Applicant rebuttal

iv. City staff rebuttal or clarifications

   v. Applicant's closing argument.

4. Chair – Closes the public testimony portion of the hearing.
5. Planning Commission deliberates on the case. They may question staff or the applicant.
   i. Commissioner proposes a motion.
   ii. Another Commissioner seconds the motion, and then the Chair states the motion to the assembly.
   iii. Chair calls for deliberation and/or discussion of the motion. (NOTE: Discussion must be confined to the motion before the commission).
   iv. If there is no further discussion, the Chair calls for a vote on the motion and restates the motion.
6. The Chair closes the hearing (stating, "This hearing is now closed.") upon a motion being passed by a majority of the Planning Commission.

   Note: Each member of the public is limited to three (3) minutes per person for public testimony. At the onset of the meeting, the Chair has the authority to increase the per-person time for public comment at his or her discretion based on the nature and attendance of the meeting. In the event the Chair uses his or/her discretion to accept additional testimony or evidence after the close of the Public Testimony portion of the hearing, the Chair should reopen the Public Testimony portion of the hearing and may limit testimony to a specific issue and timeframe.

VII. AMENDMENTS

1. The By-laws and Rules of Procedure of the Planning Commission of the City may be amended at any meeting of the Planning Commission by a majority vote of the entire membership. Any amendments approved by the Planning Commission must also be approved by the City Council before they become effective.

VIII. PERIODIC REVIEW

1. These By-laws and Rules of Procedure of the Planning Commission of the City of White Salmon are subject to periodic review and should be reviewed by the commission annually.

PLANNING COMMISSION BY-LAWS & RULES OF PROCEDURE

City of White Salmon Resolution 2025-##-### MM DD YYYY

I. NAME

The official name shall be "The Planning Commission of the City of White Salmon."

II. MEETINGS

A. Location

1. All meetings shall be held at White Salmon City Council Chambers located in the Fire Hall at 119 NE Church Avenue, White Salmon, WA 98672, unless otherwise directed by City staff and appropriate notification to the media and public is provided.

B. Date and Time

1. The Commission will have one scheduled regular monthly meeting date upon which it will convene to do business as necessary in response to citizen or city council requests. Meetings shall be held on the second Wednesday of the month at 5:30 p.m.

C. Special Meetings and Workshops

1. Special meetings and/or workshops (outside of a regular meeting) may be held at the discretion of the Commission after consultation with City staff regarding availability. Workshops shall be held for the development of long-range plans, updating ordinances, and other work programs deemed necessary by the Planning Commission or City Council.
2. Action may be taken at a special meeting, provided that appropriate public notice requirements are met.

D. Joint Meetings

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E. Meeting Notices and Agenda

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2. An agenda of the matters to be considered by the Planning Commission at the meeting shall be available no fewer than five (5) days before the meeting.

F. Attendance

1. Commission members are expected to attend all regular and special meetings.

2. Any member anticipating absence from an official meeting shall notify the Chairperson and City Staff in advance, as soon as possible after the need for absence is known.

3. Any absence may be excused by a majority vote of the Commission. Unexcused absences from three consecutive regular meetings shall be reported to the City Council for appropriate action.

G. Remote Attendance

1. Remote attendance shall be allowed via audio or video conferencing as allowed by law and subject to the conditions as set forth herein. There is no limit to the number of times a commission member may attend a meeting by remote attendance and no limit to the number of commission members who may participate by remote attendance in a meeting. Remote attendance by any member shall be considered an appearance towards a quorum. Remote attendance is for the benefit of the City of White Salmon and not for the benefit of an individual member or the membership as a whole.

2. To participate in remote attendance, the member(s) must be able to hear everything that is spoken by any member(s) or individual (s) who are participating in the meeting, either in person or by remote attendance, and all members and individual(s) attending the meeting in person or remotely must be able to hear everything spoken by the member(s).

3. Remote attendance by commission members shall be announced by the Chair and reflected in the meeting minutes.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

A. Membership

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B. Election of Officers

1. The officers of the Planning Commission shall consist of a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson elected annually from the members of the Planning Commission by a majority vote of the members.

2. Any officer may be removed at any time by a majority vote of the Planning Commission, with the officer in question not voting and not present. Four members of the commission shall be present to have a vote.

3. A member of the city staff shall serve as secretary to the commission.

C. Duties of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

1. Chairperson: The Chairperson shall preside over the meetings of the Planning Commission and will exercise all the powers usually incident to the office. The Chairperson will work with the city staff to review meeting agendas. The Chairperson may create standing or temporary committees to examine, investigate, and inquire into subjects of interest to the Planning Commission. No standing or temporary committee shall have the power to commit the Planning Commission to endorse any plan or program.

2. Vice-Chairperson: The Vice-Chairperson shall, in the absence of the Chairperson, perform all duties of the Chairperson at a regular or special meeting. In the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, the members present may elect a temporary Chairperson to preside at the meeting.

D. Code of Conduct

1. It is the constant duty of each Commission member to maintain respect for each other, the staff, consultants, and the public. Likewise, the Commission shall require corresponding respectful behavior from all persons who attend a meeting, whether in-person or via video.

2. Conflict of Interest: Commission members are expected to comply with RCW 42.23.070.

3. Appearance of Fairness: Commission members are expected to comply with RCW 42.36.

4. Ex Parte Communication: Commission members are expected to comply with RCW 42.36.060.

IV. OPERATIONS AND CONDUCTING BUSINESS

A. Quorum

1. A quorum is required for the Planning Commission to conduct business. It shall consist of at least three Planning Commission members of record at the call for a vote on a question. If members leave during the course of a meeting, reducing the attendance below three members, the quorum will have ceased. Action shall be by majority of those present and voting, when those present constitute a quorum, at any regular or special meeting of the Planning Commission.

B. Motions and Voting

1. All members of the Planning Commission may make and vote on motions to recommend approval, approval with conditions, or denial of any development proposal or amendment to a long-range plan or city ordinance. All motions shall be made in the affirmative. For matters requiring a public hearing, motions may be accompanied by an oral statement, by the person making the motion, of reasons and findings supporting the motion. This statement may include reference to any part or all of the planning staff's report and to testimony or evidence submitted at the hearing.

2. Motions addressing development proposals can be acted on by a majority of the Planning Commission present at the time of a vote on the question, provided there is a quorum present. Recommendations for approval on amendments to the text or maps of long-range plans and city ordinances require an affirmative vote by a majority of the Planning Commission.

3. Planning Commission members must be present to vote on motions; proxy votes are not allowed. A tie vote means the motion fails. A member may abstain from voting.

4. Where not otherwise specified in these rules of procedure, the meetings of the White Salmon Planning Commission and the manner of conducting business shall be governed by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

V. WORKSHOPS

A. Workshops shall be held for the development of long-range plans, updating ordinances, and other work programs deemed necessary by the Planning Commission or City Council.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES

A. Rules of Procedure for Legislative Hearings

1. Chair – Opens the hearing:
2. Initial Presentation:
    i. Staff
3. Chair – Opens the hearing for public testimony:
    i. Proponents (those testifying in support or neutral).
    ii. Opponents (any party in opposition to the application).
    iii. City staff rebuttal and/or clarifications.
4. Chair – Closes the public testimony portion of the hearing.
5. Chair – Asks the Commissioners if there are questions for staff or for other persons who testified.
6. Commissioner proposes a motion.
7. Another Commissioner seconds the motion, and then the Chair states the motion to the assembly.
8. Chair – Calls for deliberation and/or discussion of the motion.
    i. Discussion must be confined to the motion before the commission.
    ii. If there is no further discussion, the Chair calls for a vote on the motion and restates the motion.
9. Chair – Closes the hearing upon a motion being passed by a majority of the Planning Commission.

    Note: Each member of the public is limited to three (3) minutes per person for public testimony. At the onset of the meeting, the Chair has the authority to increase the per-person time for public comment at his or her discretion based on the nature and attendance of the meeting. The Chair may use his or her discretion to accept additional testimony or evidence after the close of the public testimony portion of the hearing, providing that all members of the public who gave previous testimony are still present. The Chair should reopen the public testimony portion of the hearing and may limit the testimony to a specific issue and timeframe.

    The Planning Commission is the hearings body. It gathers information and makes recommendations, and does not make decisions. The recommendations, together with all the information and testimony from the hearing (record), are sent to the City Council, which then makes a decision based on the record.

B. <u>Rules of Procedure for Quasi-Judicial Hearings</u>

i. Chair – Opens the hearing with the following:

ii. The case number, applicant name, and address of the property;

iii. Identify that the applicable approval criteria are addressed in the staff report.

iv. Explain how to testify (name, address, and relevancy to approval criteria)

v. Ask Planning Commission Members of any conflict of interest or ex-parte contact.

vi. Ask for any public challenge to the partiality of any member.

vii. Summarize the sequenced events to be followed at the hearing as follows:

2. The hearing begins in the following order

   i. Staff presentation

   ii. Applicant presentation

3. Chair – Opens the hearing for public testimony:

   i. Proponents (those testifying in support or neutral).

   ii. Opponents (those testifying in opposition).

   iii. Applicant rebuttal

   iv. City staff rebuttal or clarifications

   v. Applicant's closing argument.

4. Chair – Closes the public testimony portion of the hearing.

5. Planning Commission deliberates on the case. They may question staff or the applicant.

   i. Commissioner proposes a motion.

   ii. Another Commissioner seconds the motion, and then the Chair states the motion to the assembly.

   iii. Chair calls for deliberation and/or discussion of the motion. (NOTE: Discussion must be confined to the motion before the commission).

iv. If there is no further discussion, the Chair calls for a vote on the motion and restates the motion.

6. The Chair closes the hearing (stating, “This hearing is now closed.”) upon a motion being passed by a majority of the Planning Commission.

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VII. AMENDMENTS

1. The By-laws and Rules of Procedure of the Planning Commission of the City may be amended at any meeting of the Planning Commission by a majority vote of the entire membership. Any amendments approved by the Planning Commission must also be approved by the City Council before they become effective.

VIII. PERIODIC REVIEW

1. These By-laws and Rules of Procedure of the Planning Commission of the City of White Salmon are subject to periodic review and should be reviewed by the commission annually.

File Attachments for Item:

5. Finalize and approve the revised mission statement

Planning Commission Mission Statement

~~We~~ The Planning Commission Believes:

- Property owners and residents of White Salmon deserve high-quality, professional community planning services. This includes comprehensive attention to land use, zoning, density regulations, community growth, environmental quality, and the overall enhancement of the community's quality of life.
- Land use policies and management practices within the White Salmon Urban Growth Area ~~should~~ shall align with the city's established goals, objectives, and planning principles.
- City ordinances ~~should~~ shall be regularly updated to ensure they support sound land use and community development practices while complying with Washington State Land Use Law.
- A proactive annexation program ~~should~~ shall be implemented to incorporate properties contiguous to White Salmon, with the goal of expanding the city's tax base. This program ~~should~~ shall consider the capacity of the city's utilities and street infrastructure to handle the growth.
- Fiscal policies and decisions must ensure that adequate resources are allocated to meet the department's mission and achieve its goals effectively.

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File Attachments for Item:

6. Recap of protocols from the Joint Workshop on September 24, 2025

★ PLANNING COMMISSION PROTOCOLS ★

Developed in the September 17, 2025 Joint Session

- Create 2026 PC Work Plan (which can encompass the rest of 2025)
  - Be realistic on time frames.
    - Remember that subdivisions and other applications may be submitted. Such applications have statutory time limits and must be prioritized.
    - Subdivisions, etc, do not put them on the Work Plan.
  - The Work Plan is fluid, and new items may be added throughout the year. However, if they are not explicitly a Council priority, then they should be approved by Council as an amendment to the work plan.

- Present the draft Work Plan to Council after their budget retreat and priorities are set for the new year.

- Hold Council / Commission joint meeting at mid-year to check-in.
  - Any changes to Work Plan: new items, shifted timelines
  - Progress report

- PC Chair to give quarterly updates to the Council
  - Any changes to Work Plan: new items, shifted timelines
  - Progress report

- Staff and PC Chair to create a standardized reporting format for PC recommendations that go to Council.
  - Include chronological links to the relevant meetings pages, which will include the minutes and the recordings.
  - Summary of major points of discussion or disagreement
  - Summary of public comments and links to full comments
  - Supporting documents such as technical data or analysis, maps, etc
  - Final motion and vote outcome, including reasoning for any dissenting vote

File Attachments for Item:

9. Discuss the Draft 2026 Work Plan

Annual Work Plan ~~2025~~ 2026 DRAFT

White Salmon Planning Commission

Goal 1: Approve the meeting minutes at the very next meeting

Goal 2: TBD

Activity 1: Proposed Ordinance for Unit Lot Subdivisions			
Item	Notes	Timeline	Who
~~City Council Public Hearing~~	~~Council remanded the proposed Ord. back to Planning Commission.~~	~~May 21, 2025~~	~~Council~~
~~Staff revisions~~	~~Revisions for consistency and organization of sections (nothing substantive)~~	~~Before June 25~~	~~Staff~~
~~Planning Commission workshop~~	~~Check staff's revisions, then affirm or change as needed.~~ ~~Discuss substantive issues, revise the "Purpose" statement, and more.~~	~~June 11 and June 25~~	~~Commission & staff~~
~~Staff revisions~~	~~Based on PC's directions~~	~~Before July 2~~	~~Staff~~
~~Planning Commission public hearing~~	~~Public hearing for the revised Ordinance~~	~~July – August~~	~~Commission & staff~~

Activity 2: Operational review of the Commission			
Item	Notes	Timeline	Who
~~Review & revise the bylaws and other documentation~~	~~Especially with regards to the date & frequency of the PC meeting. Would be a business item on a PC agenda.~~	~~August or September~~	~~Commission~~
~~Define the role and responsibilities of the PC~~	~~Clarify questions like: Does PC only take direction from Council? Can PC set its own priorities for research or proposed ordinances?~~	~~August or September~~	~~Commission~~
Activity 3: Explore the possibility of shared utilities			
Item	Notes	Timeline	Who
Basic research memo	Questions like: what other jurisdictions allow shared utilities, and why does that work for them (or not)? What are the pros and cons? What would it take if WS wanted to explicitly allow them?	October to December	Staff
PC Workshop ?	tbd	tbd	Commission
Activity 4: TBD			
Item	Notes	Timeline	Who