

AGENDA

PLANNING COMMISSION

October 23, 2025

5:30 p.m.

City Hall Council Chambers
313 Court Street, The Dalles, Oregon

Via Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82327794645?pwd=cld2UGhUb1BoVithR0tFUzZcWtXQT09>

Meeting ID: **823 2779 4645** Passcode: **001537**

Dial: 1-669-900-6833 or 1-253-215-8782

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Contact the City Clerk at (541) 296-5481 ext. 1119, or amell@ci.the-dalles.or.us.

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - A. June 5, 2025 Regular Planning Commission Meeting
 - B. August 21, 2025 Planning Commission and City Council Joint Work Session
6. PUBLIC COMMENT – During this portion of the meeting, anyone may speak on any subject that does not later appear on the agenda. Five minutes per person will be allowed.
7. PRESENTATION
 - A. Robert's Rules of Order: Amie Ell, City Clerk
8. DISCUSSION ITEM
 - A. Fall 2025 TDMC Updates and Hearings Officer Implementation
9. STAFF COMMENTS / PROJECT UPDATES

CITY OF THE DALLES

"By working together, we will provide services that enhance the vitality of The Dalles."

10. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS / QUESTIONS

11. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting conducted in a room in compliance with ADA standards.

Prepared by/
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department

MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

June 5, 2025
5:30 p.m.

City Hall Council Chambers
313 Court Street, The Dalles, Oregon 97058
Via Zoom / Livestream via City Website

PRESIDING: Cody Cornett, Chair (left at 5:34 p.m.), Carrie Pipinich,
Vice Chair

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Addie Case, Cody Cornett, John Grant, Steve Light, and
Carrie Pipinich

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Maria Peña and Nik Portela

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development Director Joshua Chandler, City
Attorney Jonathan Kara, Senior Planner Sandy Freund,
Planning Technician Paula Webb, Administrative Assistant
Crystal Sayre, Special Counsel Josh Soper

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cornett at 5:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Cornett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Grant and seconded by Pipinich to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried 5/0: Case, Cornett, Grant, Light, and Pipinich voting in favor, none opposed, Peña and Portela absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Light and seconded by Pipinich to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2025 meeting as presented. The motion carried 5/0: Case, Cornett, Grant, Light, and Pipinich voting in favor, none opposed, Peña and Portela absent.

It was moved by Grant and seconded by Case to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2025 meeting as presented. The motion carried 5/0: Case, Cornett, Grant, Light, and Pipinich voting in favor, none opposed, Peña and Portela absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING

ZOA 110-25 and CPA 56-25, City of the Dalles

Request: Recommendation to City Council for Adoption of Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Title 10 of The Dalles Municipal Code to Comply with FEMA's 2024 Pre-Implementation Compliance Measures (PICM) Mandate and Updated Floodplain Development Standards.

Chair Cornett recused himself due to a potential conflict of interest. He disclosed that his real estate license is held with Copper West Real Estate, which currently has several active listings in the area under discussion, including a land listing, a home under construction, a pre-construction home, and multiple commercial lots. He also noted involvement in a separate transaction within the nearby Columbia Shores area. While not personally listing the properties, he cited the brokerage's proximity to the project and recent public comments as reasons to avoid the appearance of a conflict. Chair Cornett left the meeting at 5:34 p.m.

Vice Chair Pipinich read the rules of a public hearing. She then asked if any remaining Commissioners had ex parte contact, conflict of interest, or bias which would preclude an impartial decision. Hearing none, Pipinich opened the public hearing at 5:38 p.m.

Director Chandler presented the staff report and presentation (Attachment 1), which proposes updates to the City's floodplain regulations to comply with FEMA's Pre-Implementation Compliance Measures (PICM). The amendments apply to all properties within the Urban Growth Boundary located in a Special Flood Hazard Area and are necessary to maintain the City's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Chandler explained that FEMA issued the PICM mandate in 2024 following legal action related to compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The City Council selected the Model Ordinance path in November 2024, meeting FEMA's December 1 deadline.

The amendments would replace outdated floodplain development standards, update terminology, establish new permitting and variance requirements, and introduce a no net loss standard for development in the floodplain. Chandler noted that the term "100-year floodplain" would be replaced throughout the code with "Special Flood Hazard Area."

He also addressed FEMA's ongoing update to the City's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). While preliminary maps were issued in 2023, the 1984 maps remain in effect until the new maps are finalized, expected in 2026. In anticipation of the changes, Ballot Measure 56 notices were sent to both currently mapped and future-impacted properties.

Chandler described “Option 2,” a compliance strategy developed with legal counsel that shifts the responsibility for ESA compliance to applicants, similar to the City's existing geologic hazard review process. This approach minimizes the City's administrative burden and legal risk, though FEMA has not formally approved it.

He concluded by outlining the adoption timeline, with a City Council hearing tentatively scheduled for July 14, and emphasized that timely adoption is critical to avoid jeopardizing NFIP eligibility. Staff recommended approval of the proposed amendments.

Commissioner Light asked which agency would be responsible for reviewing mitigation plans for ESA and BiOp requirements under Option 2, should that path be accepted by FEMA. Chandler responded that such reviews would ultimately fall under FEMA’s authority in the event of an audit. Under Option 2, the City's role would be limited to verifying that the required documentation had been submitted, without conducting substantive review.

Vice Chair Pipinich inquired about the typical number of floodplain-related permit applications processed by the City each year. Chandler stated that housing activity in floodplain areas has slowed overall, though Lone Pine remains a relatively active area. Based on the 1984 FEMA map, most homes in Lone Pine are within the mapped floodplain, though some have obtained Letters of Map Amendment (LOMAs). He estimated the City processes approximately two to four such permits per year in recent years.

Pipinich asked whether the types of professionals needed to prepare required mitigation documentation—such as reports from biologists—were readily accessible to developers. Chandler explained that staff would assist by providing references to qualified professionals, similar to the City's approach with geologic hazard studies. He noted the importance of offering multiple referrals to avoid favoritism. Special Counsel Josh Soper added that two categories of professionals would qualify under the requirements: (1) those meeting specific education and experience criteria, and (2) those already included on a pre-approved list maintained by ODOT.

Pipinich asked whether other Oregon communities were taking similar approaches in adopting floodplain compliance measures. Chandler stated that communities have taken varied approaches. Some, such as Tillamook County, opted not to adopt any measures. Others are proceeding with the Model Code's Section 6. The Option 2 path was developed in consultation with attorneys and represents a legally sound alternative. Chandler emphasized the importance of maintaining community eligibility for flood insurance and noted that failure to act could put that at risk. Soper noted that some of the firm's other municipal clients are also in the process of adopting similar code updates, although few have finalized adoption at this point.

Public Testimony

Brad Nicholson, 3705 Klindt Drive, The Dalles

Mr. Nicholson emphasized the importance of balancing environmental compliance with practical implementation. He recommended the City provide technical support for applicants navigating the new requirements. He suggested Staff provide clearer guidance on the physical constraints permit process. He also suggested public workshops to improve community understanding.

Anne Anderson, 143 Southshore Avenue, The Dalles

Ms. Anderson expressed concern about the economic impact of the proposed floodplain regulations, particularly on smaller property owners. She urged the Commission to consider potential costs associated with engineering studies and permitting requirements. Ms. Anderson made a second comment later in the hearing. She proposed that the comparison to geo-hazard zones is not accurate as the current discussion is not about hazards. Director Chandler clarified that the application procedure parallels that of the geo-hazard zone, not that the floodplain will be treated as a geo-hazard zone.

Debbie Hendrickx, 3713 Klindt Drive, The Dalles

Ms. Hendrickx spoke in support of stronger protections for floodplain areas, referencing increased flood events and damage in the region. She encouraged the City to lead by example in implementing resilient development practices.

Kristin Stilton, 131 Southshore Lane, The Dalles

Ms. Stilton opposed adoption of the ordinance, citing inadequate notice and a lack of access to materials prior to the hearing, referencing her prior comment (Attachment 1). She expressed concern that, under the 1984 FEMA floodplain map, several Lone Pine lots are fully within the floodplain and would be unbuildable under the proposed “no net loss” standard. She questioned the practicality and clarity of the habitat assessment requirements, suggested a subdivision-wide Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA), and urged the City to delay adoption until more specific guidance is provided for affected properties.

Tom Peters, 115 East 2nd Street, The Dalles

Mr. Peters testified in opposition, stating that FEMA had not provided adequate outreach or scientific evidence justifying the changes. He questioned the accuracy of projected floodplain maps and called for a delay until new FIRMs are finalized. He also expressed concern about additional restrictions for properties near Mill Creek and the lack of clear FEMA maps, and urged a delay in adoption until the full BiOp is implemented.

Commission Deliberation

Vice Chair Pipinich opened Commission deliberations and invited final questions and comments.

City Attorney Kara asked Special Counsel Josh Soper to explain the potential consequences of inaction. Soper stated that failure to meet FEMA’s July 31, 2025 deadline could result in the City being removed from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), making flood insurance unavailable to affected property owners. While FEMA has not clarified whether it would enforce this consequence, the risk remains significant.

Several Commissioners, including Case, Light, and Grant, expressed concern over the lack of clarity from FEMA, the cost burdens of compliance, and the limited time remaining before the federal deadline. They acknowledged the difficulty of making a decision with incomplete information but also recognized that delaying action would not likely provide further clarity.

Pipinich emphasized that the Commission's role was to make a recommendation to City Council, and while the situation was far from ideal, the potential loss of access to flood insurance would have substantial consequences for property owners and future development.

Director Chandler and Senior Planner Freund clarified the distinction between the floodplain code amendments and FEMA's ongoing map update process. Chandler confirmed that development costs would increase due to the requirement for habitat assessments, and that the City's approach under "Option 2" was designed to comply with FEMA mandates while aligning with Oregon land use law.

The Commission briefly discussed whether other communities had subsidized habitat assessments for property owners. Chandler responded that the City had not explored this option, as it mirrored the City's existing approach to geologic hazard studies, where applicants bear the cost.

After further discussion, Commissioners agreed that delaying action would not resolve the uncertainties, and acknowledged that additional questions would remain regardless of timing.

RESOLUTION

Resolution PC 629-25: A Resolution of the Planning Commission Recommending City Council Approval of Zoning Ordinance Amendment No. 110-25 and Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. 56-25 to Adopt Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Title 10 of The Dalles Municipal Code to Comply with FEMA's 2024 Pre-Implementation Compliance Measures (PICM) Mandate and Updated Floodplain Development Standards

It was moved by Commissioner Light and seconded by Commissioner Case to adopt Resolution PC 629-25 to recommend approval of the proposed code amendments to City Council. The motion carried 4/0: Case, Grant, Light, and Pipinich voting in favor, none opposed, Cornett, Peña, and Portela absent.

STAFF COMMENTS / PROJECT UPDATES

Director Chandler reminded the Commission that the regularly scheduled meeting for June 19, 2025 will be canceled for the Juneteenth holiday. The next regularly scheduled meeting is to be on Thursday July 3, 2025.

Chandler mentioned that the Alford Subdivision will be moving forward as no notification was received from LUBA.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS / QUESTIONS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice Chair Pipinich adjourned the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Submitted by/
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department

SIGNED: _____

Cody Cornett, Chair

ATTEST: _____

Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department

DRAFT



City of The Dalles Planning Commission

THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025 | 5:30 PM

Hearing Details

Application: Zoning Ordinance Amendment (ZOA) 110-25 | Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) 56-25

Applicant: City of The Dalles

Properties Affected: All properties within the Urban Growth Boundary located within a Special Hazard Flood Area (SFHA)

Request:

Recommendation to City Council for Adoption of Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Title 10 of The Dalles Municipal Code to Comply with FEMA's 2024 Pre-Implementation Compliance Measures (PICM) Mandate and Updated Floodplain Development Standards.

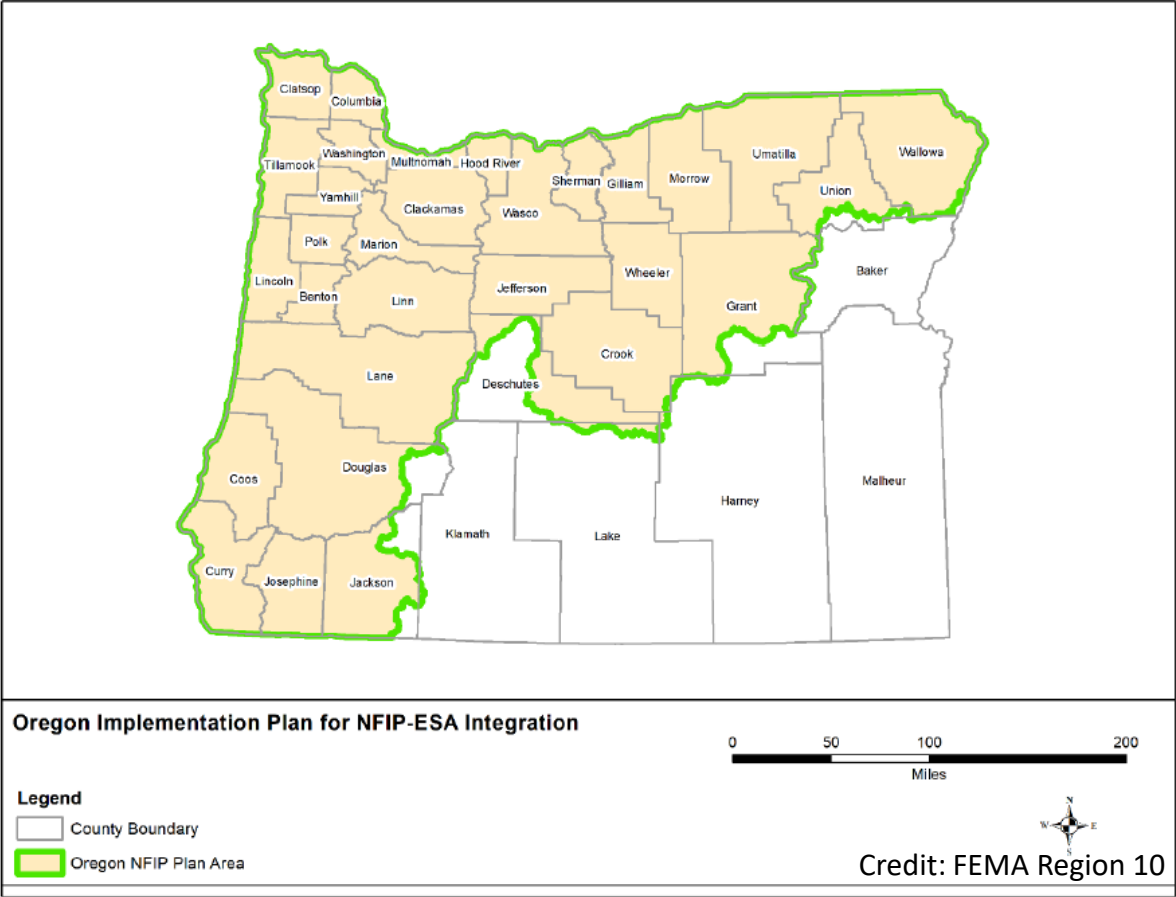
Purpose of Amendments

- Update local floodplain regulations to federal standards
- Comply with FEMA's 2024 Pre-Implementation Compliance Measures (PICM)
- Ensure continued participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

PICM Mandate

- July 2024: FEMA Region 10 issues mandate for compliance of “no net loss” standards by July 31, 2025
- Intended to ensure compliance with Endangered Species Act
- Mandate applies to 239 Oregon communities
- Communities required to choose 1 of 3 compliance PICM paths by December 1, 2024

PICM Mandate



PICM Mandate: Background

- 2009: FEMA sued for failing to consult National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on NFIP impacts to endangered species
- 2016: FEMA settles lawsuits; NMFS issues Biological Opinion (BiOp) identifying NFIP's threat to ESA-listed species and recommending mitigation
- 2023: FEMA sued again for delayed BiOp implementation
- 2024: FEMA announces Pre-Implementation Compliance Measures (PICM) to bridge gap until full BiOp implementation (targeted for 2027)

PICM Options

- Model Ordinance: Adopt ordinance integrating ESA requirements into local land use code
- Permit-by-Permit: Require floodplain development permits to include habitat assessment and mitigation plan demonstrating “no net loss”
- Prohibition: Ban all new development in designated floodplain areas
- November 25, 2024: City Council selected implementation of Model Ordinance

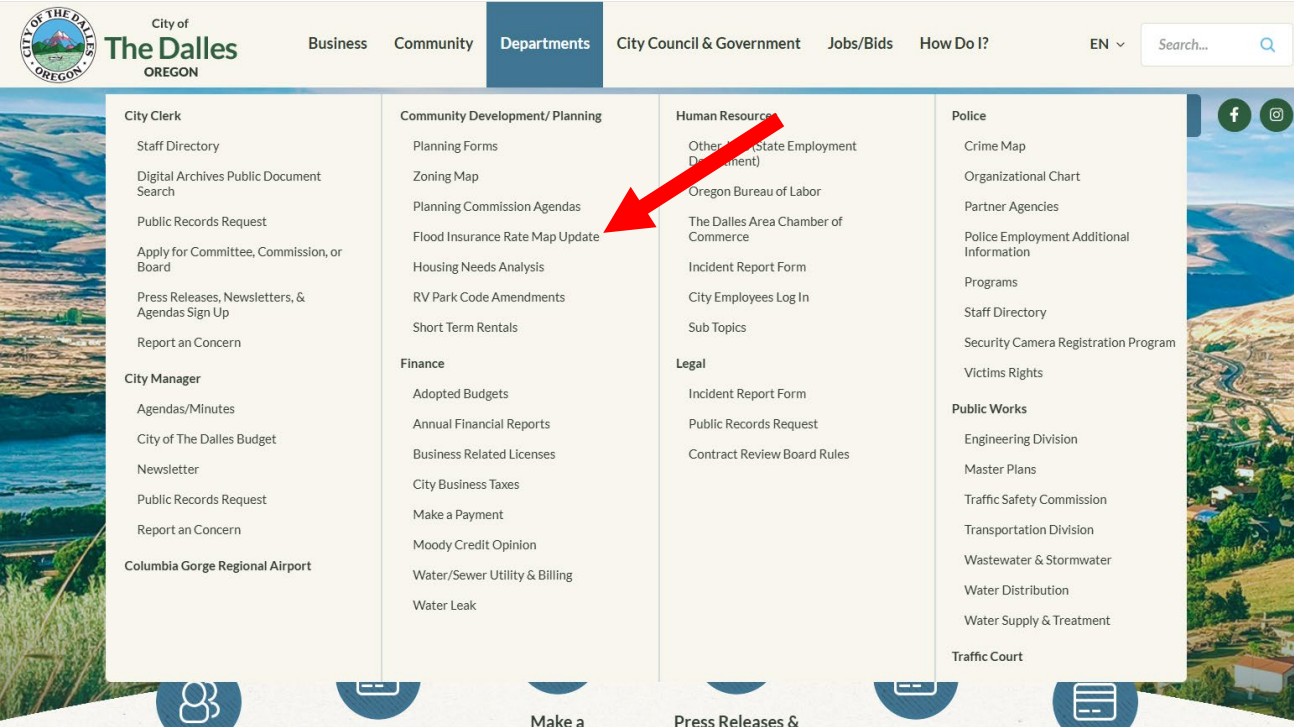
Model Ordinance

- FEMA's regulatory template for floodplain standards
- 2020: Issued Model Ordinance providing guidance for community regulations
- 2024: Issued revised Model Ordinance adding Section 6 for "no net loss" standards
- Per FEMA: *"the ordinance was revised to ensure that the implementation of the NFIP-ESA integration "no net loss" standards avoids or offsets adverse impacts on threatened and endangered species and their critical habitat"*

FIRM Updates

- Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) from 1984 still in effect
- FEMA began map updates in 2014
- Preliminary maps issued in 2023 w/ 90-day comment/appeal period
- Public feedback led to further revisions
- New Preliminary maps to be reissued mid-2025 for second 90-day comment/appeal for changes to Mill and Chenoweth Creeks
- Final FIRM expected in 2026
- **1984 FIRM remains in effect until new maps are finalized**

FIRM Updates



Step 1

Flood Insurance Rate Map Update

WASCO COUNTY'S FLOOD MAP HAS BEEN UPDATED AND IS READY FOR REVIEW.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) worked with the state of Oregon, the cities of The Dalles, Dufur, Mosier, and Maupin and the town of Shaniko to update the flood map in our area; an update to original flood maps developed in 1984 and 1989. This updated map better shows the risk of flooding in Wasco County and will help your community better understand its flood risks. This way, you can make informed decisions about how to protect yourself against damage and loss. Visit the following link to learn more the flood map update: <https://arcg.is/1j1yyX> This link provides narratives, videos, and maps to describe the flood study update, find points of contact, and answer key questions (like flood insurance.) Through this site, property owners and community residents can learn about the flood mapping process, what the changes mean for them, and information about the National Flood Insurance Program. Residents can also learn who to contact if they need more support. At this time, the updated flood map is "preliminary." This means that it is in draft form and open for public review and input. Once FEMA addresses all comments and appeals on the map and your community adopts it, the new map will go into effect. You can also ask for a flood map for your property by emailing PropertyIDMap@starr-team.com.

Flooding is the most common and costly natural disaster in the United States. Studies show that the high-risk areas on flood maps have a 26% chance of being flooded at some point during a 30-year mortgage. Learn more about the costs of flooding and flood insurance on the Flood Smart website at www.floodsmart.gov.

Stay informed and check back periodically as this page will be updated as the project progresses. Please contact the Community Development Director Joshua Chandler at jchandler@ci.the-dalles.or.us for any additional questions.

Step 2

FIRM Updates

Wasco County, Oregon Flood Map Update



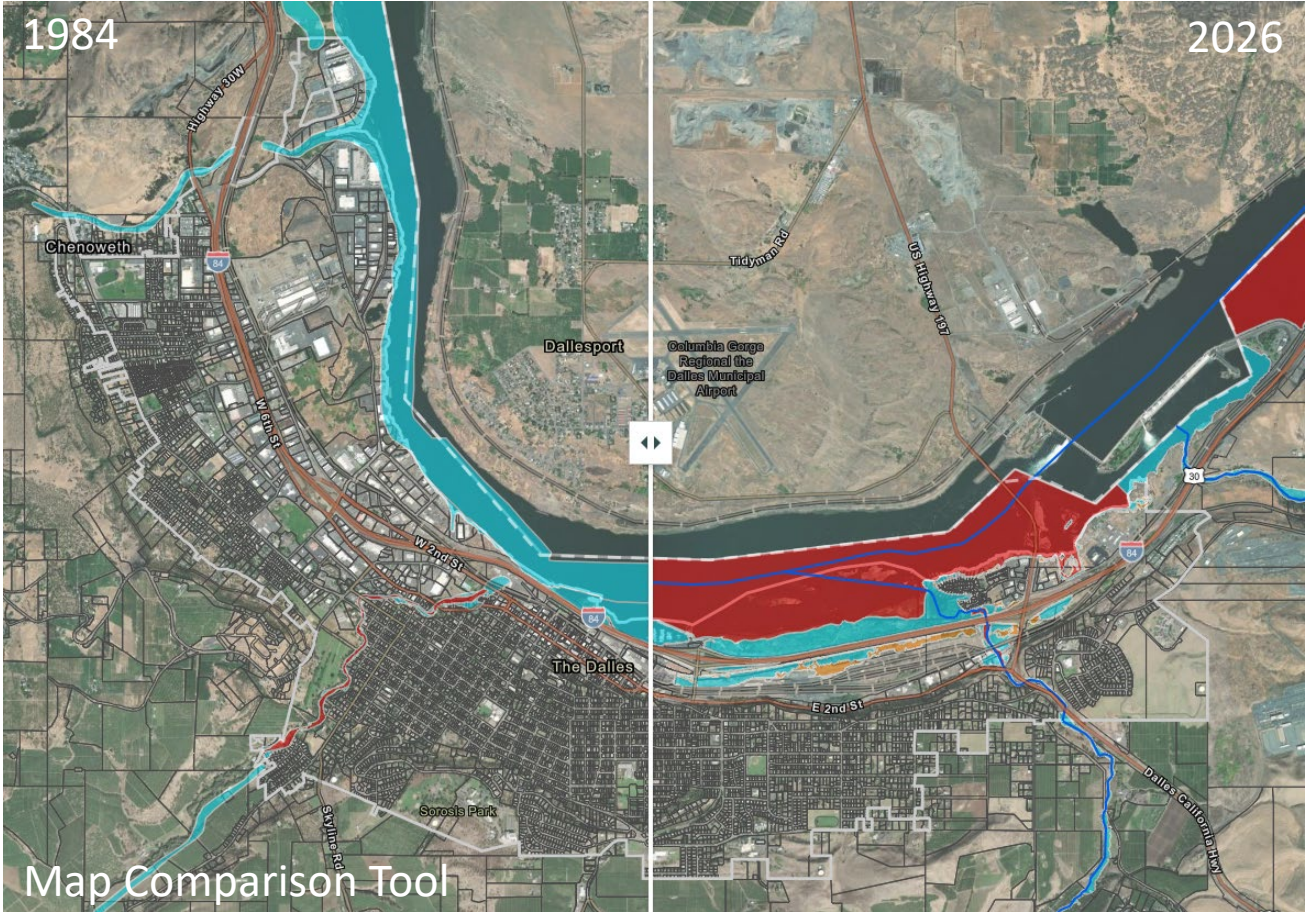
Wasco County, Oregon Flood Map Update

Flood risk for Wasco County, Oregon has been updated and is now available for your review.

FEMA Region X Mitigation
May 20, 2025

[Flood Map Update](#) [Am I at Risk to Flooding?](#) [Flood Study and Engineering](#) [Floodplain Management](#) [Flood Insurance](#) [State Resources](#) [Contacts](#)

FIRM Updates



Noticing

- May 1, 2025: Submitted proposed amendments to DLCD
- May 15, 2025: Notified FEMA Region 10 of proposed amendments
 - *No comments received from either agency*
- May 16, 2025: Ballot Measure 56 Notices
 - 1984 mapped properties (required by State law)
 - 2026 mapped properties (provided for future awareness)
 - *Multiple general inquires received following notices*
- May 21, 2025: Issued in Columbia Gorge News
- May 29, 2025: Planning Commission Packet Distributed

Overview of Proposed Amendments

THE DALLES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- Updates to:
 - Goal 5 Policies
 - Goal 7 Implementation Measures
 - Goal 9 Policies
 - Goal 11 Policies

THE DALLES MUNICIPAL CODE

- Updates to:
 - Chapter 10.2 *Definitions*
 - Chapter 10.3, Article 3.070 *Variances*
 - Chapter 10.5, Article 5.130 *Stream Corridor District*
 - Chapter 10.6, Article 6.170 *Density*
 - Chapter 10.8 *Physical and Environmental Constraints*
 - Chapter 10.12 *Recreational Vehicle Parks*

Overview of Proposed Amendments (TDMC)

- Repeals outdated provisions
- Establishes new permit requirements
- Requires mitigation plan for "no net loss" conducted by a qualified professional
- Updates enforcement & review criteria
- Updates terminology (e.g., "100-year floodplain" → "SFHA")
- Adds new variance procedures for SFHA
- Elevation certificate requirements and clear determination of BFE

“No Net Loss” Standards

- Part of the PICM update to FEMA’s Model Ordinance
- Introduced with limited coordination with Oregon agencies
- Conflicts with Oregon’s “clear and objective” residential development standards
- Key Concerns:
 - Risk of regulatory takings claims
 - Impacts on housing production
 - Unfunded mandate burdening local governments

“No Net Loss” Standards: “Option 2”

- City worked with Beery, Elsner & Hammond LLP for legal consultation on “no net loss” standards
- Goal: Maintain FEMA compliance while upholding Oregon land use law
- Regulatory Path Chosen: new “Option 2”
- Shifts compliance burden from City to applicants
- Applicants must demonstrate ESA & BiOp compliance via four defined pathways
- City verifies documentation—not responsible for environmental analysis
- Similar process in TDMC for geologic hazard study requirements for development in Geohazard Zones

“No Net Loss” Standards: “Option 2”

- Advantages
 - Aligns with Oregon legal standards
 - Minimizes City’s financial and administrative burden
 - Maintains FEMA’s conservation goals
 - Reduces LUBA appeal risk
- Challenges
 - FEMA has not yet formally approved Option 2
 - Future federal rule changes may affect compliance
 - Increased applicant costs could impact housing affordability

Next Steps

- June 2025: Staff to prepare “How-To” for SHFA development
- *July 14, 2025: City Council hearing to consider adoption of amendments*
- *July 28, 2025: Additional City Council hearing (as needed)*
- *July 31, 2025: PICM Deadline*
- *2026: FIRM update*
 - *This may impact the requirements for various SFHA properties depending on their location in 1984 vs. 2026 maps*

Commission Alternatives

1. ***Staff recommendation: Move to recommend to the City Council the approval of Comprehensive Plan Amendment 56-25 and Zoning Ordinance Amendment 110-25, adopting amendments and findings attached herein.***
2. Move to recommend to the City Council the approval of a modified Comprehensive Plan Amendment 56-25 and Zoning Ordinance Amendment 110-25, after adopting any changed amendments or findings discussed at the regular June 5, 2025, Planning Commission meeting.
3. Decline adoption and provide additional direction.



City of The Dalles Planning Commission

THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025 | 5:30 PM

MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION and CITY COUNCIL
JOINT WORK SESSION

August 21, 2025

5:30 p.m.

City Hall Council Chambers
313 Court Street, The Dalles, Oregon 97058
Via Zoom / Livestream via City Website

PRESIDING: Planning Commission Chair Cody Cornett
Mayor Rich Mays

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Addie Case, John Grant, Steve Light, Carrie Pipinich

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Maria Peña, Nik Portela

COUNCIL PRESENT: Tim McGlothlin, Ben Wring, Scott Randall, Dan
Richardson, Rod Runyon

STAFF PRESENT: Director Joshua Chandler, City Manager Matthew Klebes,
City Attorney Jonathan Kara, Economic Development
Officer (EDO) Jacob Anderson, Planning Technician Paula
Webb, Administrative Assistant Crystal Sayre

CALL TO ORDER

The Joint Work Session of the Planning Commission and City Council was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Cornett. Mayor Rich Mays participated in leading the session.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Cornett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Wring and seconded by Richardson to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried 10/0; Case, Cornett, Grant, Light, Pipinich, McGlothlin, Wring, Richardson, Runyon and Randall voting in favor, none opposed, Peña and Portela absent.

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DISCUSSION ITEM

A. City of The Dalles Economic Opportunities Analysis

Director Chandler reviewed the background of the Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA). He noted the City's last full EOA update occurred in 2007, with minor updates in 2011. An update effort in 2018–2022 was not adopted, largely due to debate over whether Google-owned lands should be classified as “developable.” Chandler emphasized that new data and significant changes in development patterns required a comprehensive revision.

Chandler introduced the Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG) consultant team (Matt Hastie, Ayreann Colombo, and Jessa Miller) and summarized the role of the Project Advisory Committee, which included representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Adventist Health, agricultural interests, Port of The Dalles, Wasco County, local Realtors, Nch'i Wana Housing, the School District, and local businesses.

Consultant Presentation

Matt Hastie provided an overview of the EOA process, explaining how employment trends, land demand, and buildable land supply are analyzed to update Comprehensive Plan policies. He noted the importance of current data for land use decisions, grant applications, and economic development strategies.

Ayreann Colombo summarized updated demographic and economic trends:

- Regional economy had diversified since 2000.
- Employment in The Dalles had grown 1.2% annually since 2020.
- Oregon Employment Department projected 0.9% growth (2023–2033), adding approximately 50 new service jobs.
- Median age in The Dalles was trending younger, improving workforce potential.
- Three scenarios were modeled: (1) OED baseline forecast, (2) population-to-labor force ratio, and (3) target industries (manufacturing, construction, supportive services).
- Land demand was highest under the target industry scenario, especially for industrial acreage.

Jessa Miller presented the Buildable Lands Inventory (BLI):

- Methodology included classifying lands by development status and removing constraints such as slopes, wetlands, stream buffers, easements, and floodplain.
- Adjustments were made for committed sites (hospital, community college, Superfund areas) and unique Google employment densities.

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- Findings indicated 202 acres of net buildable employment land, but distribution by site size was inadequate.
- No large parcels greater than 60 acres were available, limiting opportunities to recruit larger employers.

Matt Hastie outlined draft Comprehensive Plan amendments:

- Seven proposed goals were identified: expand/diversify economic base; grow/attract skilled workforce; strengthen downtown/community destinations; ensure economic readiness and resilience; grow the green economy and technology innovation; strengthen regional integration and infrastructure; support cultural, creative, and experiential economy.
- Policies were paired with clear implementation measures.
- Recent Advisory Committee input included recognition of healthcare as a key industry, hospital relocation support, riverfront amenities, and strategies to reduce downtown vacancies.

EDO Anderson explained the restructured format of goals, policies, and implementation measures. He emphasized that goals and policies serve as guidance for applicants, while implementation measures provide directives for staff.

COUNCILOR AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS / QUESTIONS

Mayor Mays asked whether the City faced repercussions from the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) for not adopting the 2021–22 draft EOA. Consultant Hastie confirmed that while adoption is not on a strict timeline, outdated information makes it harder for cities to make informed land use decisions and pursue grant opportunities. Mayor Mays said in the past the Gorge Commission had used the classification of Google-owned lands to argue against an expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary. He emphasized the importance of ensuring that wording in the new EOA reflects the City's interests.

Councilor Runyon questioned why vacant buildings downtown were not reflected in the Buildable Lands Inventory (BLI). He expressed concern that the City continually looked toward developing new sites rather than reusing existing structures. Runyon suggested exploring incentives or penalties to address vacant storefronts, citing tax breaks and redevelopment programs in other communities. Director Chandler explained that state rules require the BLI to evaluate bare land, not existing vacancies, but noted that some cities adopt “dark windows” ordinances to encourage owners to activate empty buildings.

Runyon further stated that the City should word the EOA “to our advantage, not the State’s and certainly not the Gorge Commission’s,” and requested that findings clearly differentiate between long-term “buildable” capacity and short-term “available” land supply.

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Councilor Wring commented on the employment forecast tables, noting that the data highlighted a “configuration problem” in The Dalles. He observed that while total acreage appeared adequate, the shortage of medium-sized parcels limited opportunities for small businesses to grow into medium enterprises. Wring suggested that the City explore strategies and incentives to improve lot configuration and better serve business transitions.

Commissioner Pipinich raised concerns about language in the draft document referencing Dallesport as a potential outlet for regional employment growth. She stated that such references did not reflect community feedback and were problematic because the City lacked control over land use, governance, and infrastructure across the river. Pipinich requested that the language be revised to reflect those challenges.

Mayor Mays agreed with Pipinich, reiterating that the Gorge Commission and Friends of the Gorge frequently cited Dallesport’s potential as a reason to block UGB expansion in The Dalles. He emphasized that while Dallesport development might generate some retail traffic, it provided no benefit to the City’s property tax base and should not be treated as a substitute for local employment land.

Mayor Mays asked for clarification on “committed sites” versus “developed sites.” Consultant Miller explained that “committed” properties (such as the hospital and community college) may contain undeveloped acreage but are reserved for non-employment uses, whereas “developed” properties have little to no capacity for additional development.

Mayor Mays sought confirmation that Google-owned properties must remain in the inventory under state rules, even if not realistically available for other users. Hastie confirmed this, explaining that state methodology requires inclusion unless deed restrictions or statutory exclusions apply. Director Chandler added that the wording could be refined to better distinguish “developable” from “available.”

Councilor Wring asked whether reclassification of Google parcels would significantly change the total acreage. Hastie estimated a reduction of approximately 45 acres if Google parcels were removed, noting that employment density assumptions had already been discounted.

Councilor Runyon and Mayor Mays both stressed the importance of refining the language to prevent overstated land capacity from being used against the City in future UGB expansion requests.

Councilor Wring reiterated that site configuration, rather than sheer acreage, was the City’s most pressing challenge. He stated that without adequately sized parcels, businesses may be forced to leave The Dalles as they grow, undermining local economic development.

Commissioner Pipinich concluded by requesting that staff ensure future drafts explicitly address these concerns, especially with respect to Dallesport references and Google-owned lands, so that the final document accurately reflects community needs and avoids misinterpretation by regional regulators.

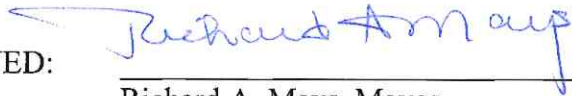
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ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cornett adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

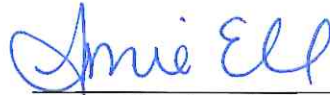
Submitted by/
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department

SIGNED:



Richard A. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Amie Ell, City Clerk

SIGNED:

Cody Cornett, Planning Commission Chair

ATTEST:

Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department

THE MAIN MOTION PROCESS

In formal meetings, presenting a motion follows a structured process to ensure clarity and order. Before starting, members must obtain permission to speak from the chairperson or presiding officer. The process then follows these steps:

1

Member makes a clearly worded motion to take action.

- “I move...”
- All motions are recorded in the minutes

2

Motion must be seconded.

- “I second the motion...”
- A second allows discussion to occur; it does not signify approval
- A motion without a second does not move forward

3

Chairperson restates the motion.

- “It has been moved by... and seconded by... that...”
- Provides any needed clarity

4

Discussion / Debate occurs

- Maker of the motion begins the discussion, Chairperson facilitates
- Amendments may be offered - return to step 1 to amend a motion:
“I move to amend the motion by...”

5

Chairperson closes discussion and states the question / asks for vote

- “The question is on the adoption of the motion that...”
- Motion repeated word for word

6

Chairperson provides voting directions

- “Those in favor of the motion say aye”;
- “Those opposed, say no”

7

Chairperson announces the result of the vote

- “The ayes have it, and the motion is adopted”
- “The noes have it, and the motion is lost”
- Recorded in the minutes

AVOIDING COMMON ERRORS



Speaking Without Recognition:

Members must not address others to debate or make a motion without first being recognized by the chair. This rule prevents chaos and confusion by ensuring only one person speaks at a time.



Unclear Motion Phrasing:

When making a motion, members must clearly state the desired action, use correct language, and enunciate properly to avoid misunderstandings.



Not Seconding a Motion:

Going directly into debate without seconding a motion is a common error. Without a second, the motion cannot proceed.



Irrelevant Discussions:

Discussions should remain focused on the motion at hand and avoid straying into unrelated matters.



Failing to Take Proper Votes:

It should be clear what members are voting on, and results should be confirmed afterward to avoid confusion.



CITY of THE DALLES

313 COURT STREET
THE DALLES, OREGON 97058

(541) 296-5481 ext. 1125
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: October 23, 2025

To: The Dalles Planning Commission

From: Joshua Chandler, Community Development Director

ISSUE: Fall 2025 TDMC Updates and Hearings Officer Implementation

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of tonight's discussion is to preview potential amendments to The Dalles Municipal Code (**TDMC**) Titles 10 and 11, discuss the implementation of the Hearings Officer model, and gather Planning Commission feedback and policy preferences to guide staff in drafting an ordinance and findings for a future legislative hearing.

TDMC Title 10 establishes the framework for land use and development within the City's Urban Growth Boundary, by implementing the goals and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Both TDMC and the Comprehensive Plan are living documents that are periodically updated to reflect changes in Oregon law, improve clarity/consistency, and respond to evolving needs of the community.

Over the past several years, Community Development Department staff have compiled an extensive list of proposed amendments to improve the efficiency, clarity, and functionality of the TDMC. This list is loosely ranked by complexity and time commitment, and serves as a guide for Planning Commission agendas. At any time, the Planning Commission or City Council may request additional focus on items from this list or propose new priorities based on higher-need issues arising from community input, legislative changes, or emerging planning challenges.

DISCUSSION:

This meeting focuses on proposed updates to TDMC Title 10 Land Use and Development Code and the phased implementation of a Hearings Officer system, along with associated Planning Commission restructuring. The proposed amendments improve Code clarity, consistency, and usability, ensure compliance with state law, streamline review processes, and provide clearer guidance for applicants and staff. Collectively, these updates support predictable development outcomes and advance community goals such as affordable housing and downtown revitalization.

The discussion is organized into three main sections:

1. **Section A: *Title 10 Code Amendments*** addresses technical and substantive updates to housing standards, procedural and administrative processes, code maintenance, parking requirements, safety and design requirements.
2. **Section B: *Hearings Officer Implementation*** details the Hearings Officer system, its review process, and impacts on Commission operations.
3. **Section C: *Planning Commission Structure and Procedural Updates*** addresses updates to Planning Commission governance, meeting structure, and alignment of bylaws and the Comprehensive Plan with the Hearings Officer system.

A. Title 10 Code Amendments:

1. Clear and Objective Housing and Land Use Standards

- a. Section 10.5.010.020 – Residential Care Facilities
Proposed amendments allow Residential Care Facilities serving up to 15 residents in Low Density Residential zone, consistent with other residential districts under state law. Related amendments update definitions and requirements for similar care facilities.
- b. Section 10.3.080 – Adjustments
Proposed amendments implement the mandatory adjustment provisions under SB 1537, establishing a ministerial review process and clarifying approval criteria. The updates streamline minor housing-related adjustments, align adjustment applications standards with state law, and improve procedural clarity.
- c. Article 10.5 – Affordable Housing Provisions
Proposed amendments incorporate state affordable housing requirements, allowing affordable housing on publicly owned, nonprofit, or religious-owned lands within the UGB, regardless of current residential zoning. Related provisions require compliance with clear and objective standards and recorded long-term affordability covenants.
- d. Section 10.7.020.040(D) – Parking Exemptions (Downtown Parking District and CBC-2)
Proposed amendments revise parking exemptions in the Downtown Parking District and CBC-2 zones, changing “may be exempt” to “shall be exempt” to establish clear and objective standards that support downtown redevelopment and adaptive reuse.

2. Procedural and Administrative Revisions

- a. Hearing Officer Implementation
Proposed amendments establish a Hearings Officer system; further details are provided in **Sections B and C** below.
- b. Section 10.3.020 – Procedures and Noticing
Proposed amendments revise administrative noticing requirements, clarify application and public hearing procedures, update appeal processes, and implement the Hearings Officer system, all to align with state law and ensure consistent, transparent procedures.

3. Code Maintenance and Internal Consistency

a. Section 10.2 – Definitions

Proposed amendments update definitions for various care facilities, incorporate recent Director interpretations of “Kitchen” and “Cooking Facilities,” and implement the Hearings Officer system.

b. Permitted Use Tables – Bed & Breakfast Vacation (BBV)

Proposed amendments remove outdated BBV references following the adoption of Short-Term Rental (STR) regulations, eliminating redundancy and ensuring consistency between TDMC and current STR standards.

c. Section 10.10.060(K) – Roadway Classification Standards

Proposed amendments update roadway classifications to align with the City’s Transportation System Plan (2017), ensuring consistent development and review standards.

4. Safety and Design Standards

a. Section 10.6.010.050 – Fencing in Front Yard Setbacks (Schools)

Proposed amendments allow fencing up to six feet in height within front yard setbacks on school properties, while ensuring vision clearance at driveways is maintained. This standard aligns with existing fencing at many school sites, enhances safety and security, maintains pedestrian visibility, and balances security needs with neighborhood design.

B. Hearings Officer Implementation

The Hearings Officer implementation process builds on prior discussions with the Planning Commission and City Council in April 2025. Staff proposes a phased approach to ensure a smooth transition and allow sufficient time for both staff and the Commission to adjust to new processes, coordinated with the adoption of related Title 10 and Title 11 amendments, Comprehensive Plan amendments, and Planning Commission Bylaws.

- **Operational Framework**

The Hearings Officer would be an impartial, contracted land use attorney responsible for reviewing applications that go beyond administrative decisions, including administrative appeals such as Site Plan Reviews, Conditional Use Permits, Adjustments, Partitions, Subdivisions, and Home Business Permits, as well as quasi-judicial actions like Conditional Use Permits, Variances, Zone Changes, and any escalated administrative applications. Legislative actions, such as TDMC and Comprehensive Plan amendments, would remain under Planning Commission and City Council purview. The Hearings Officer model has been successfully used in several Oregon jurisdictions, providing efficient, impartial, and legally compliant review. Staff consulted with local and regional professionals to inform its potential implementation.

- **Selection and Rollout.**

The Hearings Officer will be selected in accordance with the City’s adopted Local Contract Review Board rules for contracts and agreements. The selection process is

expected to take one to two months in early 2026. Full implementation is anticipated by April 2026, marking the start of Hearings Officer-led hearings. Until that time, the Planning Commission may continue to oversee quasi-judicial applications and administrative appeals as needed.

- **Public Participation**

Public involvement is a key component of the Hearings Officer system. Hearings Officer meetings will remain open to the public to ensure transparency. Public hearings will be scheduled during traditional times, with virtual participation options also provided. Consistent with previous discussions with the Planning Commission, all Hearings Officer meeting packets and decisions will continue to be shared with the Commission, allowing additional time to discuss projects in greater detail during regularly scheduled Commission meetings.

C. Planning Commission Structure and Procedural Updates

- **Title 11 Code Amendments**

Title 11 will be amended to reduce Planning Commission meetings from twice monthly to once monthly. Beginning in January 2026, regular meetings will be held on the first Thursday of each month, focusing on legislative items, study sessions, and work sessions, while Hearings Officer meetings will occur on the third Thursday of each month. This schedule aligns with the historical schedule timeline, resulting in minimal change for the public. Meetings that fall on holidays will be rescheduled as needed. In addition, attendance requirements for Planning Commission members will be adjusted to reflect the reduced meeting frequency.

- **Planning Commission Bylaws Updates**

The Planning Commission Bylaws will be updated to incorporate Hearings Officer responsibilities, revised meeting schedules, and procedural coordination, providing clear operational guidance for Commissioners.

- **Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

The Comprehensive Plan will be updated to reflect changes in Planning Commission authority and the delegation of certain land use responsibilities to the Hearings Officer, ensuring consistency with Title 11 and Planning Commission Bylaws and providing clarity on roles and responsibilities for staff and the public.

Next Steps (Informational and subject to change):

The tentative schedule for advancing the proposed code amendments and implementing the phased Hearings Officer system is outlined below. Following Planning Commission review and City Council adoption of the amendments, the City will implement the reduced meeting schedule, update bylaws and the Comprehensive Plan, and proceed with the Hearings Officer selection process. Once selected, the Hearings Officer will begin reviewing applicable land use applications, providing an additional mechanism for quasi-judicial and administrative appeals while ensuring transparency and procedural consistency.

- **November 24, 2025** – City Council: Title 11 amendments

- **December 18, 2025** – Planning Commission: Code amendment adoption
- **January 12, 2026** – City Council: Final code amendment adoption
- **February–March 2026** – Hearings Officer selection process
- **April 2026** – Begin using Hearings Officer for applicable land use cases

BOARD ALTERNATIVES: Staff requests Board insight at the October 23 meeting to ensure alignment with these amendments before following through with the complete adoption process.