

**MINUTES**

**COLUMBIA GATEWAY URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY BOARD MEETING**

February 17, 2026

5:30 p.m.

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

- PRESIDING:** Dan Richardson, Chair
- BOARD PRESENT:** Jill Amery, Walter Denstedt, Scott Hege, Kristen Lillvik, Timothy McGlothlin, Bets Stelzer, Marcus Swift, Ben Wring
- BOARD ABSENT:** None.
- STAFF PRESENT:** Urban Renewal Agency Manager and Economic Development Officer (EDO) Jacob Anderson, Community Development Director (Director) Joshua Chandler, City Attorney Jonathan Kara, Community Development Analyst Ann Moorhead, Administrative Assistant Crystal Sayre

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Board Member Wring led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved by Wring and seconded by Amery to approve the agenda as prepared. The motion carried 9/0; Amery, Denstedt, Hege, Lillvik, McGlothlin, Richardson, Stelzer, Swift, and Wring voted in favor, none opposed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Amery and seconded by Wring to approve the minutes of January 20, 2026, as submitted. The motion carried 6/0/3, Amery, Lillvik, McGlothlin, Richardson, Swift, and Wring voted in favor; Denstedt, Hege and Stelzer abstained due to absence at the prior meeting.

**PRESENTATIONS**

A. University of Oregon Sustainable City Year Program

Community Development Director Joshua Chandler introduced Megan Banks, Director of the University of Oregon Sustainable City Year Program (SCYP), along with Community Development Analyst Ann Moorhead. Director Chandler explained that Staff have been

exploring opportunities to leverage university partnerships to help advance existing City and Urban Renewal initiatives that currently exceed available staff capacity.

Ms. Banks provided an overview of SCYP, describing it as a year-long partnership model connecting university coursework with real municipal projects. Through existing academic classes, students complete applied research and planning work addressing community needs while gaining professional experience.

She noted that since 2014 the program has completed more than 300 projects across Oregon communities of varying size and geography. Participating cities would identify priority projects aligned with adopted goals, after which faculty and students are matched to those projects.

Examples shared included:

- Downtown revitalization and tourism branding strategies;
- Transportation and active mobility planning;
- Economic development and market analysis studies;
- Community identity and marketing initiatives.

Ms. Banks emphasized that the program expands municipal capacity by allowing multiple academic disciplines to work simultaneously on City priorities, often producing work products that would otherwise require consultant contracts.

Director Chandler outlined Staff's preliminary work plan consisting of approximately fifteen potential projects tied directly to ongoing City initiatives, including:

- Housing Production Strategy implementation;
- Downtown market and retail analysis;
- Historic preservation ordinance and design standard updates;
- Economic development programming;
- Urban Renewal revitalization goals.

Estimated program costs total approximately \$195,000, with a proposed Urban Renewal Agency participation of up to \$65,000. Staff are pursuing State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) grant funding to further offset costs.

Board Member Wring requested clarification regarding examples of projects anticipated under the program and how they would relate specifically to Urban Renewal activities.

Board Member Hege asked detailed questions regarding program costs, funding structure, and how expenditures compared to hiring staff or participating in other internship programs. He expressed concern about ensuring Urban Renewal funds remain focused on district-related outcomes rather than broader City initiatives.

Board Member Amery stated she supported university partnerships but indicated she would prefer reviewing a more defined project list to confirm consistency with Urban Renewal Plan requirements and statutory limitations before committing funding.

Chair Richardson summarized Board interest in additional information and indicated the topic would return for further discussion following refinement of potential projects.

**B. Shayna Newsome – Downtown Care Team**

EDO Anderson introduced Shayna Newsome, owner of Various Artists LLC, explaining that the proposed Exterior Refresh Pilot evolved from internal discussions regarding strategies to reduce visible building deterioration downtown and encourage property owner reinvestment.

After consultation with the City Attorney regarding liability considerations, City staff developed a pilot incentive model allowing property owners to voluntarily participate while maintaining flexibility in contractor selection.

Ms. Newsome presented her professional background in production design, restoration work, and façade rehabilitation. She described observing numerous downtown buildings experiencing deferred maintenance, including peeling paint, water intrusion, and minor structural deterioration that could lead to larger repair costs if left unaddressed.

Using the Canton Wok building as an example, she provided a condition assessment identifying:

- Cracking and delamination of façade materials;
- Water damage and substrate exposure;
- Structural deterioration at lower façade elements;
- General cosmetic decline affecting streetscape appearance.

She proposed phased work including cleaning, repair, waterproofing, priming, and repainting, emphasizing preventative maintenance and cost efficiency. Ms. Newsome noted she would offer discounted labor rates and focus on smaller repair projects often overlooked by traditional contractors.

EDO Anderson explained that the Exterior Refresh Pilot program is intended to function as a gateway incentive, encouraging property owners to begin improvements that could later transition into larger Urban Renewal Incentive Program projects.

Chair Richardson thanked Ms. Newsome for bringing forward the proposal and asked clarifying questions regarding how the program would function in practice and how property owners would participate.

Board Member Wring confirmed that participation would not require use of a specific contractor and that property owners could select any licensed provider when utilizing Urban Renewal funding.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Cody Cornett, 1509 East 13<sup>th</sup> Street

Mr. Cornett introduced the newly established Park Foundation of The Dalles, a 501(c)(3) formed to raise public funds for parks and recreational improvements.

He discussed the Mill Creek Greenway project, noting cost increases since original grant awards and suggesting Urban Renewal consider additional funding to close the gap. He described the Greenway as a potential “bookend” to downtown improvements and expressed the Foundation’s interest in partnering with the Agency on fundraising.

Board Members discussed ODOT funding status and acknowledged the proposal as informational.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **A. Urban Renewal Ideas Matrix**

EDO Anderson presented a matrix compiling Board-submitted ideas for potential Urban Renewal investments. He noted projected available funding between \$4–7 million through Agency expiration, depending on final project costs.

He requested:

1. Additional Board-submitted ideas within one week.
2. Scheduling a workshop to refine and prioritize projects consistent with Urban Renewal goals.

Chair Richardson summarized Staff's request for additional project ideas and scheduling of a workshop to further evaluate potential Urban Renewal initiatives. Board Members indicated general agreement with submitting ideas and participating in a future workshop discussion.

### **B. Lewis and Clark Internship**

EDO Anderson reported that the City successfully secured two interns through the Lewis & Clark College internship program, describing the placements as high-value opportunities to advance economic development initiatives at minimal cost.

*Evan Stover – Downtown Market Analysis*

Mr. Evan Stover, a senior Economics student, presented his internship project focused on evaluating whether downtown The Dalles functions primarily as a "pass-through" community or as a destination.

He described conducting:

- Downtown business inventory analysis;
- Peer city comparisons with communities such as Hood River and Pendleton;
- Retail leakage and surplus evaluation;
- Identification of gaps in entertainment, retail diversity, and visitor-oriented uses.

Mr. Stover emphasized the importance of converting existing restaurant and visitor activity into longer stays by expanding complementary business types and experiences.

Board Member Stelzer commented that Mr. Stover's outside perspective provided valuable insight and compared the exercise to viewing a business through a first-time customer's experience.

Board Member Denstedt discussed the importance of identifying a defining attraction or theme capable of drawing visitors intentionally to The Dalles, noting examples such as recreation or cultural destinations in comparable communities.

Chair Richardson thanked Mr. Stover and encouraged continued collaboration with Staff and the Board as the project develops.

*Jazmin Contreras – Latino-Owned Business Strategy*

Ms. Jazmin Contreras, a senior Economics and Data Science student and Columbia Gorge native, introduced her internship project focused on developing a Latino-Owned Business Strategy for the City of The Dalles.

Ms. Contreras explained that the project emerged from discussions with Staff identifying an opportunity to better support Latino entrepreneurs and expand inclusive economic development efforts. She noted demographic and workforce trends within the region indicate growing Latino participation in the local economy, creating an opportunity for targeted business development strategies.

Her work will combine economic analysis, data research, and community engagement to better understand barriers and opportunities for Latino business ownership. Anticipated project components include:

- Identifying existing Latino-owned businesses and economic sectors represented locally;
- Evaluating access to business resources, financing, and technical assistance;
- Assessing challenges such as language access, permitting navigation, and outreach gaps;
- Reviewing successful programs from comparable communities;
- Developing policy and program recommendations to encourage entrepreneurship, business retention, and long-term economic participation.

Ms. Contreras noted that the project will also inform broader City economic development initiatives, including marketing and recruitment strategies connected to the Columbia Gorge Regional Airport business park.

EDO Anderson stated that the internship represents an opportunity to better align economic development programs with the full diversity of the regional workforce while generating data-driven recommendations for future City initiatives.

Board Member Swift recommended that Ms. Contreras connect with Blanca Flores, noting she previously organized a grassroots Latina small business roundtable that had generated strong participation and ideas within the community.

Board Member Wring encouraged examining historical trends of Latino-owned businesses within the Urban Renewal District, including businesses that had operated downtown but later closed. He suggested comparing longevity, challenges, and reasons for closure with broader downtown business patterns to better understand barriers to sustained business success and downtown longevity.

Chair Richardson thanked Ms. Contreras for her presentation and invited continued collaboration as the project progresses.

**ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Second Amendment to the Incentive Program Grant Agreement with TD3rd, LLC for the Basalt Commons project (523 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street)

Economic Development Officer Anderson presented a request to approve a Second Amendment to the Incentive Program Grant Agreement and Development Funding Agreement

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with TD3rd, LLC for the Basalt Commons project. Anderson explained the amendment would extend agreement expiration dates by six months to allow completion of remaining financing, intergovernmental coordination, and construction readiness steps.

Anderson reported the project continues to demonstrate forward progress. He noted confirmation had been received from BOLI (Bureau of Labor and Industries) indicating the project would not trigger prevailing wage requirements, eliminating a major uncertainty affecting project feasibility. Remaining milestones include final financing approval, confirmation of construction costs, County consideration of a proposed property acquisition arrangement, and completion of permitting steps necessary to begin construction.

Staff recommended approval of the extension, stating the Agency has historically supported the project and that the extension would allow a final determination of project viability within the requested timeframe. Anderson explained the Agency's primary consideration is the opportunity cost of holding funds rather than additional financial exposure.

Mary Hanlon, Hanlon Development / TD3rd, LLC, thanked the Board for considering the extension request. She reported the development team recently received positive updates and continues working through remaining barriers, many of which are outside the developer's direct control. Hanlon stated the project team remains committed to moving forward and anticipates breaking ground if financing and partner approvals proceed as expected, noting the six-month timeline is ambitious but achievable.

Chuck Gomez, owner of the Granada Theater, 221 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, testified on behalf of himself and neighborhood residents living near the project site. Mr. Gomez stated that while he recognizes the City and Agency have invested considerable effort into the Basalt Commons project, members of the surrounding neighborhood remain concerned about continued extensions of Urban Renewal funding commitments.

Mr. Gomez also expressed ongoing concerns regarding the Basalt Commons building design, including building height, potential obstruction of Columbia River views from nearby residences, and perceived impacts to the downtown Historic District. He stated neighborhood residents believe repeated extensions signal insufficient project progress and encouraged the Board to consider whether additional time should be granted without clearer evidence of construction commencement.

Mr. Gomez further questioned the level of financial commitment demonstrated by project partners, suggesting the Board evaluate whether sufficient "skin in the game" exists before extending Agency support. He stated he was speaking on behalf of multiple residents who submitted a signed letter included in the meeting packet.

Chair Richardson thanked Mr. Gomez for his testimony and closed public comment.

Board Member McGlothlin requested clarification regarding project progress since the previous meeting and asked Staff to outline remaining milestones necessary to confirm viability. He inquired whether the City continues to experience a housing deficit and asked whether approval of the extension would create additional financial risk for the Agency. McGlothlin also asked whether the developer had failed to meet obligations or whether alternative developers were positioned to advance housing projects.

EDO Anderson responded that Staff continue to observe forward movement and emphasized that remaining steps largely depend on external timelines such as lender review and partner

decisions. He stated the Agency's risk relates primarily to opportunity cost rather than additional expenditure and reiterated that the project addresses identified community housing needs.

Board Member Denstedt requested clarification regarding the County's role and whether bank financing depended on County action. Anderson explained he could not speak on behalf of the County but identified the County decision as one of the remaining key milestones while noting the City and Agency had completed actions within their authority.

Board Member Amery asked why Staff requested a six-month extension when several milestones were expected within three months. Anderson explained the additional time allows construction initiation and fulfillment of agreement payment conditions, avoiding the need for another administrative extension.

Board Member Stelzer asked whether Staff anticipated further delays beyond the requested timeframe. Anderson stated the project is approaching a "go or no-go" stage and indicated recent regulatory and entitlement progress suggests feasibility should be determined within the extension period.

Board Member Hege clarified the County's potential involvement, explaining the County is considering a property acquisition and leaseback arrangement rather than providing grant funding. He stated County action had been delayed pending regulatory confirmation and anticipated consideration in the near future.

City Attorney Kara confirmed that Board Member Hege had no conflict requiring recusal following disclosure of the County's potential involvement.

Anderson added that while the Agency's total investment is significant, the per-unit Urban Renewal contribution compares favorably to other housing incentive programs and represents an efficient investment in downtown housing production.

It was moved by Hege and seconded by Swift to authorize the Agency Manager to enter into the Second Amendment to the Incentive Program Grant Agreement with TD3rd, LLC for the Basalt Commons project. The motion carried 8/1; Amery, Hege, Lillvik, McGlothlin, Richardson, Stelzer, Swift, and Wring voted in favor, Denstedt opposed.

**B. Resolution 26-001 Exterior Refresh Pilot**

EDO Anderson presented *Resolution 26-001, A Resolution Establishing an Exterior Refresh Pilot as a Component of the Urban Renewal Incentive Program*. Anderson explained the program was developed in response to prior Board discussions regarding incremental "small wins" in downtown revitalization and opportunities to encourage visible improvements with minimal administrative burden.

The proposed pilot would allocate up to \$100,000 in Agency funds, providing reimbursement of up to \$7,500 per property for eligible exterior refresh activities. Anderson emphasized the program is intended to function similarly to the Incentive Program but with simplified requirements, no lien component, and reimbursement issued upon completion of approved work. He stated the program is designed to create visible improvements that demonstrate Urban Renewal investment while encouraging broader participation in downtown revitalization efforts.

Chair Richardson confirmed the \$100,000 allocation represents a small portion of the Agency's available funds and would not significantly impact overall budgeting capacity.

Anderson affirmed that property owners would remain responsible for selecting contractors and managing projects and that the Agency would not engage in contractor selection.

Board Member Lillvik confirmed the program operates as a reimbursement model rather than an advance payment system. Anderson affirmed that reimbursement would occur only after eligible work is completed and documented.

Board Member Hege requested clarification regarding projected Agency funding over the remaining life of the Urban Renewal District. Anderson explained the distinction between current budgeted funds and projected revenue through Agency sunset, noting that the \$100,000 allocation is de minimis relative to long-term projected capacity.

Board Member Stelzer asked how Staff intends to market the program to downtown business and property owners and noted that building ownership is often separate from business tenancy. She inquired whether the City maintains adequate contact information for property owners.

Anderson stated Staff intends to conduct direct outreach, leverage interns currently working on downtown business inventories, and distribute informational materials broadly. He noted parcel records provide ownership information and stated Staff would develop marketing materials to support outreach efforts.

Board Member Amery offered to assist with identifying property owners and contacts.

Board Member Denstedt noted that County records identify building ownership information.

Board Member McGlothlin suggested technology tools may assist in locating ownership and contact information.

Chair Richardson indicated support for creating a one-page informational flyer for Board Members to distribute during community interactions.

It was moved by Hege and seconded by Denstedt to approve "Resolution 26-001, A Resolution Establishing an Exterior Refresh Pilot as a Component of the Urban Renewal Incentive Program", as prepared. The motion carried 9/0; Amery, Denstedt, Hege, Lillvik, McGlothlin, Richardson, Stelzer, Swift, and Wring voted in favor, none opposed.

#### C. Resolution 26-002 Updating the Agency's Local Contract Review Board Rules

City Attorney Jonathan Kara presented *Resolution 26-002, A Resolution Updating the Columbia Gateway Urban Renewal Agency Local Contract Review Board Rules (Effective February 18, 2026) and Establishing a New Fee*. Kara explained that the Agency is required under Oregon law to maintain contracting rules governing procurement of goods, services, and public improvements.

He stated the proposed update modernizes the Agency's rules to align with recent changes in Oregon public contracting thresholds and mirrors revisions adopted by the City Council. Kara explained that inflation and statutory updates have increased allowable informal contracting thresholds, and the proposed amendments reflect those state-authorized adjustments.

Kara emphasized the resolution does not alter the Agency Manager's existing requirement to obtain Board approval for procurements exceeding \$100,000 and does not change spending authority for grant programs. Rather, it increases flexibility for smaller procurements and aligns the Agency with prevailing statewide standards.

Chair Richardson characterized the item as primarily a housekeeping and modernization measure and invited questions from the Board.

Board Members asked no substantive policy questions and indicated general understanding of

the updates as administrative in nature.

It was moved by Swift and seconded by McGlothlin to approve "Resolution 26-002, A Resolution Updating the Columbia Gateway Urban Renewal Agency Local Contract Review Board Rules (Effective February 18, 2026) and Establishing a New Fee", as prepared. The motion carried 9/0; Amery, Denstedt, Hege, Lillvik, McGlothlin, Richardson, Stelzer, Swift, and Wring voted in favor, none opposed.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS / QUESTIONS**

Board Member Hege asked about scheduling a workshop to review the Urban Renewal Ideas Matrix. Chair Richardson suggested holding the discussion during the next regular Urban Renewal Board meeting.

Chair Richardson expressed appreciation for Board Members' service and engagement in Agency matters.

EDO Anderson reminded Board Members to submit additional matrix ideas within one week.

**ADJOURNMENT**

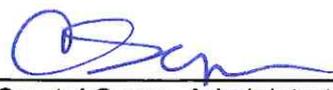
Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

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*Meeting conducted in a room in compliance with ADA standards.*

Submitted by/  
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant  
Community Development Department

SIGNED:   
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Dan Richardson, Chair

ATTEST:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant  
Community Development Department

