

MINUTES

CITY OF FORT COLLINS • BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS



Planning & Zoning Commission REGULAR MEETING

[March 25, 2026 – 6:00 PM](#)

[Council Chambers, City Hall 300 Laporte Ave](#)

[Also via Zoom](#)

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 PM

ROLL CALL

- Board Members Present – Adam Sass (Chair), Russell Connelly (Vice Chair), Shirley Peel, York, Ted Shepard
- Board Members Absent – Julie Stackhouse and Kent Bruxvoort
- Staff Members Present – Frickey, Kidwell, Myler, Yatabe, Mapes, Mounce, Gilchrist

AGENDA REVIEW

Clay Frickey, Planning Manager, provided a review of the agenda.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

2. LAND USE CODE AMENDMENTS: TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITIES LEGISLATION

DESCRIPTION:

This is a request for a recommendation to City Council on proposed Land Use Code changes implementing an administrative approval process for multi-unit developments under 5 acres in size in designated Transit Centers. Transit Centers are newly designated areas intended to implement the requirements of State House Bill 24-1313, Housing in Transit Oriented Communities. This is the first phase of designating Transit Centers in Fort Collins that aligns with the existing boundary of the Transit Oriented Development Overlay Zone. Additional Transit Center designations are anticipated later in 2026 in additional areas of the community.

STAFF: Ryan Mounce, City Planner

**APPLICANT/
OWNER:** City of Fort Collins
PO Box 580
Fort Collins, CO 80522

Staff Overview

Ryan Mounce, City Planner, stated this item relates to the Commission providing a recommendation to City Council regarding a package of Land Use Code changes that will further the City's compliance efforts with recent State legislation, House Bill 24-1313, otherwise known as the Housing and Transit Oriented Communities, or TOC, Bill. Mounce summarized the legislation noting it seeks to ensure that communities that have access to existing or future high-frequency transit are developing and supporting a transit-rich environment around those stations and routes in terms of development capacity. He stated there are four key elements to the Bill: communities must develop a housing opportunity goal which sets a benchmark for zoning or dwelling unit capacity based on the size of transit areas in the community, local jurisdictions must then designate transit centers that allow multi-family development through an administrative approval process, communities must implement affordability and displacement mitigation strategies, and communities must partake in ongoing reporting.

Mounce stated the City is already in compliance with the affordability and displacement mitigation component and has already completed its housing opportunity goal; therefore, the proposed Land Use Code changes are related to designating local transit centers. He noted local transit centers need to be located generally within either ½ mile of a rail station or ¼ mile of high-frequency bus routes. Transit centers must also support at least 15 dwelling units per acre and must be approved through an administrative process with no public hearing requirement for multi-family projects under five acres in size.

Mounce commented on the discussions with the Commission and Council and noted a phased rollout to transit center designations has been selected as the best option. He stated this item relates to the first phase, which is limited to areas within the existing transit-oriented development overlay zone. He noted there are five zone districts that meet the transit center requirements in terms of density: Community Commercial, General Commercial, Downtown, Employment, and High-Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood. Mounce stated there will be some additional community conversation and engagement around the potential for transit center designations in other corridors later this year.

Mounce discussed the legislative requirements and associated Land Use Code amendments, which include adding a new transit center definition which will be accompanied by a map illustrating the geographic boundaries of the transit centers, changes related to the multi-unit dwelling project process for those projects five acres in size or less within transit centers to Basic Development Review, and changes to the appeal procedures for those types of developments. Mounce noted some additional consistency edits were also made.

Mounce noted there have been discussions about whether it might make sense to change or alter the notification procedures and requirements, whether it may make sense to have an internal administrative appeals process in lieu of the previous appeals process, associated updated guidance to subarea plans and policies, and alignment with upcoming State legislation.

Commission Questions

Commissioner Shepard asked what City position would be the decision-maker. Mounce replied staff would still review projects, though there would be no public hearing, and the Planning and Development Services Director would be the decision-maker.

Commissioner Shepard asked if a project could be appealed, hypothetically, to the City Manager. Brad Yatabe, Assistant City Attorney, stated there is an issue of interpretation for the administrative review process in the legislation. He stated his reading is that a project cannot go to a public hearing before an elected or appointed body or official. He stated there is an existing process for an administrative appeal to the City Manager. He also noted DOLA's guidance is that an appeal could go to a 'Board of Adjustment,' which is akin to the Land Use Review Commission.

Commissioner Peel expressed concern about the State overriding the City's planning process. Clay Frickey, Planning Manager, replied that the City has made some changes to the Land Use Code to permit more of this type of housing throughout the community per policy direction. He stated these changes are designed to provide alignment with the State Statutory requirements to allow the City to stay eligible for funding for various projects.

Commissioner Peel asked if the changes would place an undue burden on City staff. Frickey replied that this would not be a large change for staff in terms of review standards.

Commissioner Shepard asked if notice of these projects will be provided. Mounce replied that the standard notification procedures, including signage and mailings to adjacent property owners, will remain.

Commissioner Shepard asked if a neighborhood meeting would be voluntary or mandatory. Mounce replied that neighborhood meetings can still be requested or required by the Director.

Commissioner Shepard stated that this could cause a perception that the City is giving something up without getting much in return. He noted the City already does a lot of Basic Development Review projects, and they are still required to meet standards. He stated the changes do provide a process incentive for these types of projects. He suggested developing enhanced architectural standards to counterbalance the process incentive and help guard against ubiquitous or homogeneous development, though he admitted that would be difficult. He encouraged staff to be cognizant of the building and project compatibility purpose statement and general development standards when reviewing these projects.

Chair Sass asked if the Commission would be out of bounds in recommending a local appeal process. Yatabe replied that the Commission could make that comment.

Chair Sass supported pushing for some local appeal process to prevent someone from having to go through a State process.

Public Participation

Nicole Neely expressed concern about the lack of public hearings and asked if there could be projects that occur without any public notification.

Christine Duke expressed concern about the lack of public hearings, particularly as the City staff works for the community. She stated the City should never have the authority to approve projects without community input or hearings.

Kidwell noted there was a written comment submitted by Philip Siefken after the packet deadline which she read into the record. The comment expressed concern about any development along the Centre Avenue corridor, including parcels at higher elevations due to increased runoff from roofs and parking lots. The comment also stated the Centre Avenue corridor does not need to be included to meet the State requirements and requested the highly-sensitive area be omitted from the recommendation.

Staff Response

Mounce clarified that while the public hearing requirement would be eliminated for these types of projects, community input will still be important and possible during the staff review process. He noted notification will still occur via signage and mailings to adjacent property owners, and neighborhood meetings could still be required. He stated the key differences are that the decision-maker would change from either a Hearing Office or the Planning and Zoning Commission to City staff, and there would be no public hearing, which is in alignment with the State legislative requirement. He also stated that a certain number of places in the community need to be found to enact this, and currently this first phase shows that happening in the transit-oriented development overlay zone where there is existing policy guidance for this type of development.

Mounce stated the Centre Avenue corridor is not currently part of the first phase; therefore, if it is designated, it would come later this year after additional engagement and conversation. He also noted none of the development standards change, including those related to floodways, and stated the State legislation allows communities to exempt certain parcels from their housing opportunity goal calculations, which has been done for the Centre Avenue area covered by some of the natural hazards.

Commission Deliberation

Commissioner Shepard suggested placing more street names on the maps and making them larger in scale.

Commissioner Peel asked if a local appeal process would be possible given the State legislation. Chair Sass replied that the language seems to preclude an appeal to an elected or appointed body or individual. He also suggested neighborhood meetings should possibly be required for these types of projects.

Commissioner Shepard concurred.

Commissioner York concurred there should be an internal appeals process.

Yatabe noted there is some room for interpretation, and reiterated DOLA's interpretive guidance, which included a disclaimer, was that appeals could go before a 'Board of Adjustment,' which is typically an appointed body.

Commissioner Shepard commented on the ambiguity of that guidance and encouraged staff to close the loophole.

Chair Sass encouraged staff to recommend to Council a local appeals process.

Councilmember Shepard and Chair Sass expressed support for a neighborhood meeting requirement to allow for more community engagement.

Mounce stated clarification as to what projects the Commission would like to see a neighborhood meeting requirement for.

Chair Sass stated he would prefer to simplify the process by requiring neighborhood meetings for all projects within transit centers, not just for those projects that would have been Type II reviews.

Commissioner York made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Peel, that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend that the City Council adopt Land Use Code amendments as presented with the comments that City Council direct staff to develop an internal appeal process and to develop a neighborhood meeting process for the types of projects that would have that requirement eliminated under the new standards. This decision is based upon the agenda materials, information presented during the work session and this hearing, and Commission discussion. Yeas: Connelly, Shepard, York, Peel, and Sass. Nays: none.

THE MOTION CARRIED.

DRAFT