

**Clear and Objective Feedback Group  
Meeting #2 – Wednesday, May 20, 2026**

**Staff:** Teresa Montalvo, Erin Engman, Madeleine Nelson

**Group Members:** Levi Levasa (Venture Properties, Incorporated), Ben Hemson (Home Building Association of Greater Portland), Seth Henderson (Level Development NW), Melissa Slotemaker (AKSEngineering & Forestry, LLC), Skip Stanaway (Tualatin Architectural Review Board Member)

- Introductions
- Review Project Purpose & Background
- Review Proposed Design Departure Language & Procedures
- Questions for Focus Group
- Review Policy Questions for Planning Commission & City Council

**TDC Chapter 33: Applications and Approval Criteria – TDC 33.020 – Architectural Review  
TDC 33.020(6):**

(6) Design Departures for Multifamily Development.

- (a) Purpose. Design departures are discretionary modifications to specific clear and objective design standards, allowing applicants to propose alternative design approaches while still meeting the intent of the standards. Departures are intended to provide flexibility in the application of design standards for multifamily development.
- (b) Applicability. Applicants for multifamily development may request one or more departures from the Clear and Objective Standards in TDC 73A.100.
- (c) Procedures. The approval criteria for a design departure requires the use of discretion, therefore applications are subject to the either Type II or Type III review, depending on the number of departures requested, pursuant to TDC 33.020(3)(e).
- (d) Approval criteria. For each requested departure, applicants must demonstrate that the following criteria are met:
  - (i) Granting the departure will equally or better meet the purpose of the standard;
  - (ii) Any negative impacts resulting from the departure are mitigated to the extent practical; and
  - (iii) If more than one departure is being requested, the cumulative effect of the departures results in a project that still meets criteria (i) and (ii), above.

**Questions for Focus Group:**

1. Does this language raise any concerns or uncertainties?
2. Are the proposed departure criteria sufficiently clear for applicants to understand what is expected?

**Group Response:**

Noted section (6)(d)(ii), with concern surrounding the language stating “negative impacts”. Noted the criteria could be considered subjective, or provide an opportunity for a community member/policy maker to make an open interpretation.

All of the approval criteria appear to be discretionary. The ambiguous language makes it harder to design projects, and he would prefer more clarity and rigid parameters. Concerned about weighing the positives to negative impacts. Understood that this perspective is coming from a developer and an architect may prefer the flexibility afforded in the language.

From the perspective of an architect, stated that there is a preference for creative flexibility. Including that true design goals and examples need to be listed to ensure quality elements are reinforced for the reviewer.

## TDC Chapter 32: Procedures - TDC 32.010 – Purpose and Applicability

Table 32-1—Applications Types and Review Procedures

Application/Action	Procedure Type	Decision Body*	Appeal Body*	Pre-Application Conference Required	Neighborhood/Developer Mtg Required	Applicable Code Chapter
<b>Annexations</b>						
• Quasi-judicial	TDC 32.260	CC	LUBA	Yes	Yes	TDC 33.010
• Legislative		CC	LUBA	No	No	TDC 33.010
<b>Architectural Review</b>						
• Architectural Review (except as specified below) (limited land use)	II	CM	CC	Yes	Yes	TDC 33.020
• Single Family Dwelling, Duplexes, Townhouses, Triplexes, Quadplexes, <del>and</del> Cottage Clusters, <del>and</del> <u>Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)</u> following Clear and Objective Standards  <del>Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) following Clear and Objective Standards</del>  • Minor AR including façade and landscape modifications	I	CM	Circuit Court	No	No	TDC 33.020
<b>Multifamily Structure:</b>						
• <u>Using Clear and Objective Standards</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>CM</u>	<u>Circuit Court</u>			
• <u>Requesting up to 4 Design Departures</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>CM</u>	<u>CC</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>TDC 33.020</u>
• <u>Requesting 5 or more Design Departures</u>	<u>III</u>	<u>ARB</u>	<u>CC</u>			
• Commercial Buildings 50,000 square feet and larger • Industrial Buildings 150,000 square feet and larger • <del>Multifamily Housing Projects 100 units and above for any number of units abutting a single family</del>	III	ARB	CC	Yes	Yes	TDC 33.020

### Questions for Focus Group:

1. Does reviewing up to four design departures through a Type II process seem like an appropriate threshold?
2. Are there any concerns with the proposed thresholds for design departures vs procedure type?

### Group Response:

Questioned if design departures require a separate departure for each façade?

- **Staff:** At this time, staff have not explored this question. Highlighted this could be a good question to bring to the attention of the Planning Commission.

Suggested it would be helpful for projects that have modified appeal requirements to have those listed in the table (i.e. – only the applicant has appeal rights).

Questioned why the threshold of 4 departures was suggested? Considered that 4 departures would be more than sufficient.

- **Staff:** Current multifamily design standards have 12 design standards. Consultant suggested providing relief to 1/3 of the existing standards.

Historically, how many variances have been applied for in multifamily projects?

- **Staff:** Tualatin has not experienced high levels of multifamily development. Staff noted a previous variance for the Plambeck Gardens site for height restrictions and parking areas.

Questioned which standards would the departures be applicable (ex – walkways, engineering standards, etc?). Are there still other avenues for flexibility?

- **Staff:** The design departures are being piloted for the multifamily design standards specific to TDC 73A.100. Minor variances and variances are still an option. In the future, design departures may be applied more broadly.

Group consensus to revisit the proposed thresholds after reviewing the proposed multifamily design standards next Tuesday, 6/2.

### Policy Questions for Planning Commission/City Council:

#### Housing Types and Procedural Review (TDC Chapter 32)

- Multifamily Architectural Review: Revisit the review type for larger multifamily projects (currently 100+ units, and abutting SFR zone)
  - Current code:
    - Multifamily ≤ 100 units: Type II AR
    - Multifamily 100+ units: Type III AR
  - Issue: Can't apply Type II or III if following C&O standards. Can require notice, but no hearing; only applicant can appeal. (I'll refer to this "modified" Type II as Type IIx)
  - Proposing a "Size-Based Distinction" with a 20 unit threshold
    - < 20 Units → Type I
    - 20+ Units → Type IIx

### Group Response:

Questioned why the 20-unit threshold was proposed?

- **Staff:** The threshold aligns with the public involvement noticing/procedural requirements under state law (House Bill 4037, 2026 legislative session) .



## Clear and Objective Feedback Group Meeting #3 – Tuesday, June 2, 2026

**Staff:** Teresa Montalvo, Madeleine Nelson

**Group Members:** Levi Levasa (Venture Properties, Incorporated), Ben Hemson (Home Building Association of Greater Portland), Seth Henderson (Level Development NW), Kayla Zander (Carleton Hart Architecture)

- Review Proposed Multifamily Design Standards & Questions
- Revisit 5/20 Focus Group Questions

### TDC 73A.100: Multifamily Design Standards

#### (1) Private Outdoor Areas.

(a) Purpose. To ensure that each multifamily dwelling unit has access to an outdoor area for recreation and relaxation that is adequately sized, and located, with features that ensure privacy for ground level outdoor areas.

(b) Standards. Multi-family/Multifamily uses must provide private outdoor area features as follows:

##### (i) Ground Level Dwelling Units.

(aA) A separate outdoor area of not less than 80 square feet must be attached to each ground level dwelling unit; and

(bB) The private outdoor area must be separated from common outdoor areas with walls, fences or shrubs by a minimum 4-foot high fence, wall, or evergreen hedge.

#### (2) Balconies, Terraces, and Loggias. Multi-family uses must provide balconies, terraces, and loggias features as follows:

(a)ii) Upper Level Dwelling Units. A separate outdoor area of not less than 48 square feet in the form of balconies, terraces, or loggias must be provided for each unit located above the ground level.

### Questions for Focus Group:

1. What feedback do you have on the proposed 4-foot height standard?

### Group Response:

Discussed that any design requirements are going to increase building costs and increase rent. Requiring outdoor areas requires extra land and can take away from increased unit counts. Noted additional insurance costs for projects requiring balconies.

Questioned where the 4-foot height requirement originated. Stated the preference would be to have a range provided for the 4-foot high fence, wall or evergreen hedge. The 4-foot requirement doesn't align with other fencing heights throughout a project and could increase cost. Noted that having different fence heights has a financial impact on affordable housing as they can't buy one fence to meet all needs (screening, fall protection)

- **Staff:** This could be an example where an applicant could request an exception under the proposed design departure process.

Noted intergenerational multifamily projects do not trend toward wanting privacy separation for entrances.

Noted that the state does not want balconies, had to request exceptions for the Plambeck Gardens project. The patio (80 sf)/balcony (48 sf) dimensions are difficult to design when considering stacking units.

(32) *Private Entry Areas.*

*(a) Purpose. To ensure that individual ground floor entries provide: a sense of privacy for residents, a transition from public to private space, and visual separation from on-site parking areas.*

*(b) Applicability. These standards apply to main entrances that provide direct access to ground floor dwelling units in a multifamily development.*

*(c) Standards. Multi-family uses must provide eEntry area features must be provided as follows:*

*(a) A private main entry area must be provided as a private extension of each dwelling unit;*

*(b) The entry area must be separated from on-site parking areas and public streets with landscaping, by at least two of the following features:*

*(A) A wall or fence that is at least 18 inches and no more than 36 inches high.*

*(B) Landscaping with a width of at least 3 feet, measured perpendicular to the parking area or street, and provided along the length of the entry area. The landscaped area must be planted with an evergreen hedge or shrubs that will reach a mature height of at least 36 inches. Landscaping must meet the planting standards of TDC 73B.070.*

*(C) One canopy tree that is at least 1.5 inches in diameter, or at least 4 feet in height when planted, and that will achieve a mature canopy spread of at least 10 feet. Trees must meet the planting standards of TDC 73B.070. An existing, retained tree may be used to meet this standard.;*

*(D) Individual private outdoor area of at least 48 square feet designed so that a 4-foot by 6-foot dimension will fit entirely within it. This outdoor area may be used to meet the standard in subsection (1)(b)(i), above, provided it is at least 80 square feet in size, change of grade, low fences, or walls;*

*(e) i) The entry area must be a minimum of 24 square feet in area for each dwelling unit; and*

*(d) iii) The entry area may be combined to serve more than one unit as determined by the City.*

**Questions for Focus Group:**

1. Any concerns/feedback on the proposed menu of entry features?

**Group Response:**

Supported the clarifying language under section (b) Applicability.

Stated the landscaping and canopy tree options proposed in (B) and (C) could be an issue with onsite parking/spacing requirements.

Noted the wall or fence requirement in (A) provides a range that could be applied to other standards. Noted that this height requirement differs from TDC 73A.100(1) Private Outdoor Areas.

**Staff:**

Questioned if anyone had examples of design features that work well as options for private entry areas?

- **Group:** Stoops, (others mentioned ADA concerns with stoops), screen walls

45) Shared Outdoor Areas.

(a) Purpose. To ensure that multifamily development provides shared outdoor areas that are usable, safe, and accessible, and that support a range of active and passive recreational opportunities for residents year-round.

(b) Applicability. These standards apply to multifamily development with 12 or more dwelling units.

(c) Standards. Multi-family/Multifamily uses must provide shared outdoor area features as follows:

(a) Outdoor areas must provide year round shared outdoor areas opportunities for both active and passive recreation;

(b) The total amount of shared outdoor area must be a minimum of:

(i) Three hundred square feet per dwelling unit; or

(ii) Four hundred fifty square feet per dwelling unit for 55-and-older communities/Retirement Housing Facilities.

(c) Gazebos and other covered spaces are encouraged may be used to satisfy this requirement but are not required;

(d) Shared outdoor areas must be separated from all entryway and parking areas with a landscaped transition area measuring that is a minimum of ten feet wide. The landscaped area must meet the "B" standard of Table 73B-4 and the planting standards of TDC 73B.070;

(e) Shared outdoor areas must have controlled access be separated from adjacent public streets, off-site areas, and as well as from on-site parking and entrance areas with by a minimum 4-foot high fence, wall, or landscaping/evergreen hedge; and

—(f) The shared outdoor area standard does not apply to any development with less than 12 dwelling units.

(g) Publicly accessible plazas or other pedestrian amenity spaces provided pursuant to TDC 43.315(3) or 43.315(3) shall count toward meeting the shared outdoor area requirements in this subsection.

56) Children's Play Areas.

(a) Purpose. To ensure that multifamily development provides safe, usable, and appropriately scaled outdoor play areas for children that support active recreation and contribute to overall site livability.

(b) Applicability. These standards apply to multifamily development with 12 or more dwelling units, except for Retirement Housing Facilities.

(c) Standards. Multi-family/Multifamily uses must provide children's play area features as follows:

(a) The children's play area must be a minimum of 150 square feet per dwelling unit;

(b) The children's play area must provide a separation from all entryway and parking areas with a landscaped transition area measuring that is a minimum of ten feet wide. The landscaped area must meet the "B" standard of Table 73B-4 and the planting standards of TDC 73B.070;

(c) The children's play area must have controlled access to shared outdoor areas from off-site as well as from on-site parking and entrance areas with be separated from adjacent public streets, off-site areas, and on-site parking areas by a minimum 4-foot high fence, wall, or landscaping/evergreen hedge; and

(d) The children's play area must provide a usable floor surface (material such as lawn, decks, wood chips, sand and hard surface materials qualify); and

(e) The children's play area must include at least two different children's play amenities/equipment approved for use in a public playground.

(f) The children's play area standard does not apply to:

—(i) Duplexes and townhouses;

—(ii) Fifty five and older communities; and

—(iii) Any development with less than 12 dwelling units.

### Questions for Focus Group:

1. Staff are considering increasing the applicability threshold for Shared Outdoor Areas and Children's Play Areas from 12 units to 20 units. What feedback does the group have on this proposal?

### Group Response:

Staff: Noted this change is proposed to address future infill development and reduce barriers for smaller multifamily projects.

Overall supported the proposed change in applicability threshold from 12 units to 20 units for Shared Outdoor Areas and Children's Play Areas.

Mentioned that these standards reflect garden style multifamily development and might not take into account other styles of multifamily development such as high-density high rise. Noted that these changes to these standards could be incorporated in future downtown revitalization project.

Asked for consideration of one bedroom style product that might not have the need for children's play areas.

Suggested incorporating covered/indoor play areas reflective of Oregon's rainy climate.

### (67) Storage.

- a) Purpose. To ensure that each multifamily dwelling unit is provided with functional, secure, and accessible enclosed storage space sufficient to accommodate residents' typical household and seasonal items.

(b) Standards. Multi-family/Multifamily uses must provide storage features as follows:

- (a) An eEnclosed storage areas s-are is required for each unit.
  - (iA) Garages alone do not satisfy the storage requirements. An enclosed storage area meeting the size requirements of subsection (ii) may be located within the garage of the-an individual unit. Enclosed storage areas may also be located within a commonly accessible shared garage, within the dwelling unit, or in a shed that is attached to a ground floor unit.
  - (bii) Each storage area must be a minimum of six feet in height and have a minimum floor area of:
    - (iA) 24 square feet for studio and one bedroom units;
    - (#B) 36 square feet for two bedroom units; and
    - (##C) 48 square feet for greater than two bedroom units.

### Questions for Focus Group:

1. Staff are considering eliminating the storage requirements for multifamily development. What feedback does the group have on this proposal?

### Group Response:

Generally noted, most jurisdictions don't have additional storage requirements for multifamily.

Group consensus did not have an issue with eliminating the storage requirement, understanding developers would provide storage in response to the current market of renters.

Stated the proposed storage room dimensional requirements can pose an issue for accessibility/mobility. Noted that 6 ft height requirement doesn't meet building code for clearance.

Noted the provisions do not provide flexibility for caged lockers or alternative methods of storage.

Mentioned the City of Bend used to have similar storage requirements to accommodate the storage of outdoor recreational gear and believe that they have since been eliminated.

Noted City of Gresham has recently revised their storage requirements as a reference.

**(78) Walkways.**

**(a) Purpose.** To ensure that multifamily development provides safe, accessible, and clearly defined pedestrian circulation that connects building entrances with on-site destinations and the public right-of-way.

**(b) Standards.** ~~Multi-family~~ Multifamily uses must provide walkways as follows:

- (ai)** Walkways must be a minimum of six feet in width;
- (bij)** Walkways must be constructed of asphalt, concrete, pervious concrete, pavers, or grasscrete;
- (eiii)** The walkways must meet ADA standards applicable at time of construction or alteration;
- (div)** Walkways must provide pedestrian connections between ~~the~~ main building entrances and other on-site buildings, common areas, parking areas, postal delivery areas, accessways, and sidewalks along the public right-of-way; and
- (ey)** Walkways through parking areas must be visibly raised and of a different appearance than the adjacent paved vehicular areas.

(89) Accessways.

(a) Purpose. To ensure that multifamily development provides safe, direct, and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent residential and residential properties, public spaces, and transportation facilities.

(ab) When Required/ Applicability. Except as provided in subsection (d), a Accessways are required to be constructed when a multi-family/multifamily development is adjacent to any of the following:

(i) Residential or commercial property on which:

(A) There is an existing accessway or walkway that is located in a public right-of-way or public access tract or easement; or

(B) There is a planned accessway or walkway, as identified in the Tualatin Transportation System Plan;

~~(ii) Commercial property;~~

(iii) Areas intended for public use, such as schools and parks; and

~~(iv)~~ Collector or arterial streets where transit stops or bike lanes are provided or designated.

(bc) *Design Standard.* Accessways must meet the following design standards:

(i) Accessways must be a minimum of eight feet in width;

(ii) Public accessways must be constructed in accordance with the Public Works Construction Code;

(iii) Private accessways must be constructed of asphalt, concrete, pavers or grasscrete. Gravel or bark chips are not acceptable;

(iv) Accessways must meet ADA standards applicable at time of construction or alteration;

(v) Accessways must be provided as a connection between the development's walkway and bikeway circulation system;

(vi) Accessways must not be gated to prevent pedestrian or bike access;

(vii) Outdoor Recreation Access Routes must be provided between the development's walkway and bikeway circulation system and parks, bikeways, and greenways where a bike or pedestrian path is designated; and

(viii) Must be constructed, owned and maintained by the property owner.

(ed) *Exceptions.* The Accessway standard does not apply to the following:

(i) Where a bridge or culvert would be necessary to span a designated greenway or wetland to provide a connection, the City may limit the number and location of accessways to reduce the impact on the greenway or wetland; and

(ii) Accessways to undeveloped parcels or undeveloped transit facilities need not be constructed at the time the subject property is developed. In such cases the applicant for development must enter into a written agreement with the City guaranteeing future performance by the applicant and any successors in interest of the property being developed to construct an accessway when the adjacent undeveloped parcel is developed. The agreement recorded is subject to the City's review and approval.

### Group Response:

Stated it would be helpful to clarify if accessways should be provided to existing developed property or undeveloped property.

Noted that some commercial uses on adjoining property might not be supportive of residential access onto their site and can create dead ends or "accessways to nowhere".

Stated they haven't seen accessway requirements in other jurisdictions and wanted to know the reasoning behind having the standard in the first place.

- **Staff:**
  - Clarified the intention for bicycle and pedestrian connection to desirable spaces and transportation facilities without having to fully leave the development through the main entrances.

Commented that the only differentiation between "accessways" and "walkways" are an additional two feet of sidewalk width.

- ~~(910) Carports and Garages. Multi-family uses may provide Carports and Garage features as follows:~~
- ~~(a) Purpose. To ensure that garages and carports are visually integrated with primary multifamily buildings, thereby supporting a cohesive and coordinated site design.~~
  - ~~(ab) Standards. The form, materials, color, and construction must be compatible with the complex they serve. Where Garages or Carports are provided, they must use the same colors or materials as the primary buildings on site.~~
- ~~(1011) Safety and Security.~~
- ~~(a) Purpose. To ensure that multifamily development incorporates features that enhance resident safety, and security, including adequate lighting of common areas and clear building identification for efficient wayfinding and access by emergency services.~~
  - ~~(b) Standards. Multi-family Multifamily units must provide safety and security features as follows:~~
    - ~~—(a) Private outdoor areas must be separated from shared outdoor areas and children's play areas with a minimum 4-foot high fence, wall, or landscaping;~~
    - ~~(bi) An outdoor lighting system that achieves a minimum lighting level of 0.5 foot-candles and a maximum of 2 foot-candles on all shared walkways, accessways, and common outdoor areas. Lighting must be shielded to minimize glare on abutting properties, does not produce direct glare on adjacent properties and without shining into residential units, public rights-of-way, or fish and wildlife habitat areas; and~~
    - ~~(eii) Building identification must be provided consistent with the Oregon Fire Code.~~
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### Questions for Focus Group:

1. What feedback do you have on the proposed outdoor lighting system?

### Group Response:

No concerns about the proposed lighting standards.

Clarified that carports and garages remain optional features for multifamily projects.

~~(4112)~~ Service, Delivery and Screening.

~~(a) Purpose. To ensure that multifamily development facilitates efficient mail delivery and adequately screens utility and mechanical equipment to enhance site appearance and compatibility with surrounding development.~~

~~(b) Standards. Multi-family/Multifamily~~ uses must provide service, delivery, and screening features as follows:

~~(ai)~~ Provisions for postal delivery must be made consistent with US Postal Service regulations-  
~~conveniently located and efficiently designed for residents;~~

~~—(b) Pedestrian access from unit entries to postal delivery areas, shared activity areas, and parking areas; and~~

~~(eii)~~ Above grade and on-grade electrical and mechanical equipment such as transformers, heat pumps and air conditioners must be screened with sight obscuring fences, walls or ~~landscaping: evergreen hedges at least 4 feet in height.~~

**Group Response:**

Noted that (i) provided guidance that provisions must be consistent for US Postal Service regulations. Asked which jurisdiction takes screening priority over utility equipment such as Portland General Electric.

Highlighted separation requirements for some mechanical equipment would require screens to have additional setbacks and be of nonflammable material. Noted that landscaping sometimes is not achievable due to utility requirements.

Noted at times screening requirements can look more invasive than the equipment being concealed.

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• Industrial Buildings 150,000 square feet and larger						
<del>• Multifamily Housing Projects 100 units and above for any number of units abutting a single family</del>						

### Questions for Focus Group:

1. Does reviewing up to four design departures through a Type II process seem like an appropriate threshold?
2. Are there any concerns with the proposed thresholds for design departures vs procedure type?

### Group Response:

After walking through the multifamily design standards, the group felt reviewing up to four design departures through a Type II process would be an appropriate threshold.

Requested clarification on whether departures require a separate design departure for each façade?