



TUALATIN CITY COUNCIL

OFFICIAL WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

FOR JANUARY 26, 2026

PRESENT: Mayor Frank Bubenik, Council President Valerie Pratt, Councilor Bridget Brooks, Councilor Maria Reyes, Councilor Cyndy Hillier, Councilor Christen Sacco, Councilor Octavio Gonzalez

Mayor Bubenik called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

1. *Clear and Objective Code Project Update.*

Planning Manager Teresa Montalvo and Associate Planner Madeleine Nelson presented an update on the Clear and Objective Code Project. Planner Nelson stated the purpose of the project is to audit and update the Tualatin Development Code to ensure compliance with state requirements for clear and objective standards. She stated the city received a grant to support the work and noted that state statute is intended to reduce discretionary decision making by requiring standards that are measurable and consistently applied. Planner Nelson shared that clear and objective standards provide for predictable interpretation of regulations, while state law still allows local governments to offer a discretionary review pathway as an alternative.

Planner Nelson provided examples comparing discretionary language with clear and objective language and described how the revised code would reduce ambiguity. She reviewed the project timeline, noting staff is currently in the code audit and concept development phase and will return to the Council in late spring with initial draft code language.

Planner Nelson stated the project consultant has completed a comprehensive code audit identifying sections of the Development Code requiring amendments to meet clear and objective standards. She summarized common issues identified in the audit, including conditional use requirements, the architectural review process, discretionary and undefined terminology, and access management standards.

Planner Nelson explained the existing two-track system of approval criteria, consisting of a Clear and Objective pathway and a discretionary pathway, with the applicant selecting which path to use. She described how each pathway functions and stated staff are evaluating whether to retain the two-track approach or move toward a single set of clear and objective standards with additional flexibility options. Planner Nelson asked the Council for direction on whether the two-track system should be revised to a single set of standards and, if retained, whether modifications to the two-track system should be considered.

Planner Nelson discussed the treatment of multifamily and retirement housing in residential zones. She stated the Development Code allows certain multifamily and retirement housing developments by right. Planner Nelson stated options for revision could include allowing smaller developments by right with standards or prohibiting such development in certain zones.

Planner Nelson stated the materials were reviewed by the Planning Commission and they expressed support for a staff level review process. She noted the Planning Commission showed

interest in developing an adjustment process and revisiting the two-track system, as the discretionary pathway is rarely used. Planner Nelson stated the Planning Commission supported regulating multifamily retirement housing in the same manner as general multifamily development and did not support adding multifamily or retirement housing as a by right use in the RL zone as part of this project.

Councilor Brooks asked for examples of when the discretionary track had been used. Planner Nelson stated that during her time with the city the discretionary track had not been used and staff were unable to identify examples dating back to 2015.

Councilor Brooks asked questions regarding retirement housing. Planner Montalvo explained that retirement housing units should be regulated similarly to multifamily housing developments.

Council President Pratt asked about the distinction between multifamily and middle housing. Planner Montalvo stated developments with five or more units are considered multifamily housing.

Council President Pratt asked whether conditional uses would still be allowed under a revised code structure. Planner Montalvo stated conditional uses are currently allowed in certain circumstances and would continue to be addressed within the code framework.

Councilor Gonzalez asked which elements of the proposed changes would add time and labor to the Planning Department. Planner Montalvo stated there would be initial staff work associated with transitioning away from the two-track system, but she did not anticipate additional ongoing workload.

Councilor Gonzalez asked how long it takes to process applications under each pathway. Planner Nelson stated the Clear and Objective track typically takes approximately three days, while the discretionary track can take several months.

Councilor Gonzalez stated his interest in removing barriers for applicants and reducing costs for developers.

Councilor Brooks asked for clarification regarding the discretionary track. Planner Montalvo provided additional explanation of how the discretionary review process functions.

Councilor Hillier stated it is important to ensure Architectural Review Board members are included in stakeholder engagement for this process. Planner Nelson shared the groups that are participating in the stakeholder process.

Mayor Bubenik asked about the process for adjustments and modifications and how those differ from the conditional use process. Planner Montalvo explained the varying levels of review and approval associated with adjustments, modifications, and conditional uses.

Councilor Gonzalez stated he would be interested in understanding how the banking and lending industry views the review process and suggested lenders' perspectives could be valuable. Planner Montalvo stated lenders were not included during the review phase.

Mayor Bubenik called for policy direction on the first and second policy question related to the revision on the two-track system. Council consensus was reached to agree with the Planning

Commission's recommendation to focus on an adjustment process for multifamily development for now with the option to expand it to other development types later.

Mayor Bubenik called for policy direction on the third policy question related to the revision of the TDC to allow certain multi-family and retirement housing developments by right (with limitations) or to prohibit them in lower-density residential zones.

Council President Pratt stated she has heard concerns related to balancing housing development with neighborhood impacts.

Councilor Brooks stated there is a need for commercial mixed-use development but emphasized the importance of maintaining residential compatibility.

Council consensus was reached to concur with the Planning Commission's recommendation to not add multifamily/retirement housing by right development in the RL zone within this project.

Planner Nelson stated staff would return in late spring with draft recommendations.

2. *Council Meeting Agenda Review, Communications & Roundtable.*

City Manager Sherilyn Lombos presented the Manager's Report. She stated a fire occurred at Tualatin Community Park that affected the Rustic Shelter. She stated she attended a Clean Water Services meeting where the agency's state and federal legislative agendas and budget were discussed. She stated she advocated keeping rate increases as low as possible. Manager Lombos also noted discussion of the Clean Water Services forensic audit and stated she felt confident representing the cities within Washington County. She stated that follow up actions related to the audit are underway and appropriate steps are being taken. Manager Lombos stated the Council Advance was successful and staff would return in February to finalize action items. She reported the City's budget process has begun and staff are actively working on budget development. She announced the retirement of Jackie Konen and stated the city is in the final stages of hiring a Volunteer Coordinator to fill the position. Manager Lombos stated the city would be going out to bid for the Linear Park project in Basalt Creek.

Councilor Brooks stated she attended the Chamber Titanium meeting and the Council Advance.

Councilor Sacco stated she attended the Council Advance and the Martin Luther King Jr. Day community event held in Tualatin.

Councilor Sacco requested the Council add a Transgender Day of Visibility proclamation to a March agenda. She clarified the distinction between Pride Month and Transgender Day of Visibility. Council consensus was reached to add the item to the agenda.

Councilor Reyes stated she attended the Core Area Parking District Board meeting.

Council President Pratt stated she attended a C4 Metro meeting.

Mayor Bubenik stated he attended the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation meeting, the Metro Mayors Consortium meeting, the Council Advance, and a community open house by Senator Merkley.

Mayor Bubenik stated he met with representatives from Lake Oswego, West Linn, and Sherwood to discuss the impacts of TriMet service cuts. He stated there was discussion among regional leaders about the possibility of submitting a joint letter to TriMet to express concerns and advocate for improved service considerations. Council consensus was reached to sign onto the letter.

Adjournment

Mayor Bubenik adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Sherilyn Lombos, City Manager

_____/ Nicole Morris, Recording Secretary

_____/ Frank Bubenik, Mayor