

**TUMWATER GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING  
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**CONVENE:** 8:00 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Michael Althausen and Councilmember Leatta Dahlhoff.

Absent: Councilmember Joan Cathey.

Staff: City Administrator Lisa Parks, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Assistant City Administrator Kelly Adams, Community Development Department Director Michael Matlock, Finance Department Director Troy Niemeyer, Water Resources and Sustainability Department Director Dan Smith, Deputy Director of Community Development Department Brad Medrud, Sustainability Manager Alyssa Jones Wood, Housing and Land Use Planner Erika Smith-Erickson, and Associate Planner Dana Bowers.

**APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES: GENERAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMITTEE,  
JANUARY 8, 2025 &  
FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

**MOTION:** Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Chair Althausen, to approve the January 8, 2025 and February 18, 2025 minutes as presented. A voice vote approved the motion.

**2025  
COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN PERIODIC  
UPDATE – CLIMATE  
ELEMENT,  
RESILIENCE SUB-  
ELEMENT:**

Manager Jones Wood briefed the committee on the Resilience Sub-Element of the Climate Element. A Climate Element, inclusive of a Resilience Sub-Element is now required by the Growth Management Act. Another requirement is consideration of environmental justice throughout the Climate Element.

Staff and Thurston County Emergency Management staff discussed the proposed actions to ensure no actions duplicate efforts. The sub-element includes adaptation actions, such as weatherizing and hardening homes and infrastructure, densely developing in low-risk areas rather than in high-risk areas, and improving and restoring habitat connectivity.

Three key terms included throughout the element include:

1. *Adaptation* is the process of adjusting to new climate conditions to reduce risks to valued assets (including, but not limited to people & property).
2. *Climate resilience* is the on-going process of anticipating, preparing for, and adapting to changes in climate to minimize impacts to natural systems, infrastructure, and communities.
3. *Passive survivability* is building to ensure that residences will

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remain at a safe temperature for occupants during loss of power to maintain regular body temperature.

Manager Jones Wood displayed a table reflecting both low and high emissions, and shared that global emission trends suggest planning based on a high emissions scenario. The Council adopted a resolution committed to meeting the Paris Agreement targets in 2021, limiting the increase in global average temperature to below 2°C, and striving to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Globally, the temperature is forecasted to increase by 3.3°C.

Within the high emissions scenario by 2100, Tumwater's average temperature from June through August would reflect an increase of 9.5°C and 52.2 more days of high temperatures with humidity. Annual precipitation is forecasted to increase by 5.1%, fire danger days would increase by 2040, and sea level would increase by 2.7 feet affecting Tumwater Historical Park.

Several maps were shared reflecting climate extreme heat days, prolonged drought conditions, and increases in wildfire days.

The Resilience Sub-Element includes more goals to prepare for climate change resilience. Both Thurston County and the City of Tumwater prepared an Emergency Management Plan, which supports efforts as well as the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Manager Jones Wood reviewed a series of goals in the Resilience Sub-Element and invited feedback and questions on any of the proposed goals.

- Goal CL-9: Ensure that buildings and energy infrastructure can accommodate renewable energy opportunities, keep the community safe, and can withstand and recover from extreme weather and natural hazards worsened by climate change.

Councilmember Dahlhoff cited ongoing and future construction of the North End Fire Station (T2), Tumwater Community Center, and the Public Works Operation and Maintenance Building. She asked how climate goals would be incorporated with those construction projects. Manager Jones Wood said back-up power would be incorporated in the Operations and Maintenance Building. The community center could serve as a resilience hub and if so, would need backup power; however, she is unsure of what has been included in the preliminary design. Staff is working on a solar plus storage feasibility assessment for both fire stations. It appears both stations would be good candidates with the Headquarters Fire Station a better candidate at this time because the T2 Station requires a new roof prior to installation of solar. Grants for solar

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have become available and likely would fund solar for the library building, which can accommodate solar and also serve as the City's only heating and cooling shelter.

City Administrator Parks said the community center design process in the conceptual design phase would include evaluating the feasibility and advisability of incorporating solar within the construction of the building.

Chair Althausen asked for additional clarification as to the definition of a resilience hub. Manager Jones Wood explained that resilience hubs are continuously open and serve the function of a heating or cooling shelter in addition to other services, such as distributing food and water to the community or providing charging for phones or cars. Most successful resilience hubs are located at existing community-based organizations and are typically utilized at a neighborhood scale. Libraries serve as a successful resilience hub as many community members visit the library for a variety of services. Successful resilience hubs are locations routinely serving a community daily.

- Goal CL-10: Increase preparedness for acute climate impacts and improve the resilience of Tumwater's people and systems against climate hazards.

Possible actions include outreach, providing a database of vulnerable residents needing a check-in post severe weather or climate event, and ordinances and training for staff to ensure all employees know how to operate during a disaster. All department directors will review the goals following the City's internal and public review process.

- Goal CL-11: Preserve, protect, and sustain cultural sites and resources in alignment with the values and needs of Tribes, traditional stewards, and frontline communities.

Staff received recent suggestions from the Squaxin Island Tribe that have not been incorporated concerning the tribe's access to forest foraging for culturally important food resources. Those edits will be included in a second draft of the Climate Element.

Councilmember Dahlhoff asked whether the City has developed an inventory of places and spaces that have a connection to tribes. City Administrator Parks responded that in lieu of inventories, the City is working to develop close working relationships with the Squaxin Island Tribe, Nisqually Indian Tribe, and the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis. She anticipates working with the tribes to incorporate inventory spaces and places the tribes would support.

- Goal CL-12: With climate, growth, and environmental changes in

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mind, identify and elevate the protection of key habitats, ecosystem services, and wildlife corridors.

Chair Althausen addressed the difficulty of the Comprehensive Plan speaking only to the broader goals for the protection of habitat lacking specific references to at-risk species, such as the pocket gopher. The issue speaks to ensuring the City protects endangered species within its boundaries. Manager Jones Wood noted that with the exception of identifying the Oregon spotted frog in the element, other species are not identified because of potential conflicts as some habitat conservation measures could conflict with other species.

Deputy Director Medrud added that state and federal listed species are addressed within the Conservation Element. References in the Resilience Sub-Element refer to the Conservation Element.

- Goal CL-13: Ensures that zoning and development decisions support compact urban development, prevents displacement, and fosters system-wide resilience, including a resilient local economy.

Manager Jones Wood said the goal is tied to the Housing Element and the Economic Development Element.

Councilmember Dahlhoff spoke to difficulties often encumbered by residents in complying with various codes and requirements. She suggested the possibility of including more flexibility. Several non-profits are encountering difficulties in the development process meeting specific codes as well as a local development that has encountered fencing issues. City Administrator Parks commented on the difficulty of those types of issues because many of the examples are specific to precise code provisions. While the Comprehensive Plan provides the policy overview, many problems involve codes, which staff can and has tracked for review by the Council. Other than the goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan enabling code language that enables flexibility, such as waiving a requirement, staff seeks guidance within the operating legal framework for adherence to development requirements. Councilmember Dahlhoff replied that it is important to ensure the elements afford the City some flexibility when issues arise surrounding the development of housing.

- Goal CL-14: Ensure that the local transportation system, including infrastructure, routes, and non-motorized travel modes, fosters connectivity and can withstand and recover quickly from climate impacts.

Councilmember Dahlhoff questioned whether the extension of Intercity

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Transit service on Old Highway 99 would assist the City in meeting its goals for climate and transportation. It is important for the element to address additional transit routes or accessibility for Old Highway 99 and the Black Hills High School area. Manager Jones Wood responded that the plan includes an assessment of the Capital Facilities Plan to ensure all modes of transportation are considered including excavation routes. Additionally, efforts with Intercity Transit are included in the Climate Element, as more transit would benefit the community. However, it is also important to recognize that there are some limitations with respect to deferring City greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled to another entity. It would be important not to create another problem should Intercity locations expand service to areas lacking population density,

Councilmember Dahlhoff acknowledged that there are infrastructure challenges with respect to a bus turnaround area near Black Hills High School that should be considered by the City. Manager Jones Wood replied that priorities could be revised in the Capital Facilities Plan, such as prioritizing ways of not creating obstacles for more transit.

- Goal CL-15: Protect and improve water quality and availability.
- Goal CL-16 Expand local food justice to address climate impacts and increase access to nourishing, affordable, culturally appropriate, and climate-friendly foods while expanding local use of composting.

Manager Jones Wood encouraged members to contact her to provide additional feedback or to answer questions.

**FOOD SYSTEM PLAN  
DEVELOPMENT  
UPDATE:**

Planner Bowers reported the Food System Plan addresses some food access issues within the community. She introduced consultant Rebeca Potasnik who is supporting the development of the Food System Plan.

Ms. Potasnik described the results of outreach and some surveys completed since the last update to the committee. Twenty-five interview sessions were conducted with 32 individuals. Additionally, there were several informal discussions with seniors during lunch at the Old Town Center. The survey was forwarded to 56 individuals using Survey Monkey with 25 responses to open-ended questions, inviting in-depth responses. Both in the surveys and during conversations, many people mentioned how pleased they were that the City was engaging in the work. Many of the individuals involved in the discussion were subject matter experts with many individuals wearing multiple hats. Initial themes and observations included:

- The food system is a complex web and not confined to city limits,

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- Tumwater's food system is impacted by other systems such as transportation and housing,
- Food assistance providers report demand for their services is increasing at a faster rate than the county's population growth,
- Robust, broad, regional collaboration is needed,
- Meatloaf is the most popular menu item served to seniors at Old Town Center,

Key challenges identified include:

- Rising food costs,
- Limited transportation access to local, healthy food,
- Insufficient infrastructure for cold storage and distribution and processing facilities,
- Potential impacts of federal budget cuts on programs that feed vulnerable populations,
- Unaffordability of land for new farmers,
- Insufficient emergency preparedness in response to climate change, a pandemic, and other situations,
- Lagging food rescue and composting initiatives,

Opportunities identified include:

- Myriad benefits to supporting the local food system including economic, environmental, climate, and health,
- Leveraging values-based, public purchasing policies,
- Elevating a broad range of well established, existing local food initiatives,
- Supporting community gardens and urban agriculture,
- Coordination among food assistance providers,
- Emergence of local food hubs,

Ms. Potasnik shared several quotes from the surveys on the importance of education, local purchasing, and loss of farmland,

Next steps include synthesizing key findings from subject matter experts, literature reviews, and assessing the current landscape and resources to assist in drafting goals and objectives for the Food System Plan, followed by prioritizing strategies and metrics. She invited questions and comments.

Councilmember Dahlhoff suggested framing of recommendations and priorities as low, medium, or high to assist the Council in directing efforts or establishing priorities.

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**UPDATE – HOUSING  
GOALS, POLICIES,  
AND  
IMPLEMENTATION  
ACTIONS:**

The update process included engaging with the community. An active housing stakeholder group comprised of developers, service providers, and non-profit providers received updates throughout the process. Staff is currently working on the technical element and has scheduled an internal review of the entire element over the next several months with the intent for the committee and the Planning Commission receiving an update in June.

Staff incorporated the Housing Action Plan within the Housing Element to avoid multiple plans addressing the same issues. Each goal, policy, and action includes an associated issue, such as affordability, remaining housed, or assistance to seniors, etc. The plan includes tracking the ease of implementation with respect to time, efforts, programming, and resources. The goals essentially address the importance of building more housing, retaining existing housing, and seeking opportunities to establish some form of permanent funding for affordable housing.

Councilmember Dahlhoff recommended replacing “citizen” throughout the document to reflect “resident.” Deputy Director Medrud advised that the language would reflect “resident” or “and others in the community.”

Councilmember Dahlhoff said she received comments from an individual who proposed several infill projects but was unsuccessful because of required buffers, sidewalks, and other development requirements. She asked whether the plan promotes or allows for infilling to avoid sprawl. Deputy Director Medrud said that as part of the Comprehensive Plan update, it may entail some allowances for flexibility in the code by emphasizing the direction of the code amendments. It is also important to discuss whether the goal is to ensure people can access transit from their housing by ensuring walkability. It is difficult to achieve that goal when some projects do not fund or address necessary improvements. The issue speaks to where City resources would be required to fill gaps to avoid burdening particular projects that may be providing another public benefit such as affordable housing.

Councilmember Dahlhoff questioned how staff is tracking all the updates and the applicability of whether updates are reviewed by the Council. She is aware of a project that has been delayed two years and another project delayed for three years. Her goal is avoid multi-year delays. Deputy Director Medrud admitted that there are no easy answers as the issue is complex. In many cases, staff is not aware of what may be occurring with a particular development, as there may be multiple reasons the developer elects not to check in with staff, such as financing issues. The preferable step is encouraging communication to provide staff with sufficient information to determine the issues before they become too burdensome and delay a project.

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Deputy Director Medrud encouraged members to provide feedback on the draft goals.

**CONTRACT  
APPROVAL FOR A  
12-YEAR  
MULTIFAMILY TAX  
EXEMPTION FOR  
THE YORKSHIRE  
APARTMENTS  
(TUM-25 0140):**

Deputy Director Medrud reported the City received an application for the Yorkshire Apartment project for the 12-year Multifamily Tax Exemption Program. The total number of units in the application is 240 with 48 units requested for the 12-year tax exemption to provide low and modern income households with affordable housing. The request is to place the contract on the Council's April 1, 2025 Consent Calendar with a recommendation to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign. Staff completed the administrative review of the application and deemed it complete and meeting criteria within the code.

**MOTION:**

**Chair Althausser moved, seconded by Councilmember Dahlhoff, to place the contract for a 12-Year Multifamily Tax Exemption for the Yorkshire Apartments (TUM-25-0140) on the City Council April 1, 2025, Consent Calendar with a recommendation to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign. A voice vote approved the motion.**

**SERVICE PROVIDER  
AGREEMENT WITH  
THE THURSTON  
REGIONAL  
PLANNING  
COUNCIL FOR  
TRANSPORTATION  
MODELING:**

Deputy Director Medrud reported the proposal is a service provider agreement with Thurston Regional Planning Council for transportation modeling in support of the update of the Transportation Plan as part of the larger Comprehensive Plan update. The request is to place the Service Provider Agreement with the Thurston Regional Planning Council for Transportation Modeling on the March 18, 2025, City Council Consent Calendar with a recommendation to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign.

**MOTION:**

**Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Chair Althausser, to place the Service Provider Agreement with the Thurston Regional Planning Council for Transportation Modeling on the March 18, 2025, City Council Consent Calendar with a recommendation to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign. A voice vote approved the motion.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Chair Althausser adjourned the meeting at 8:57 a.m.**