

# MEMORANDUM



Date: November 26, 2024  
To: Planning Commission  
From: Brad Medrud, Planning Manager

## 2025 Long Range Planning Work Program

The City Council approves an annual long range planning work program at the beginning of every year. The annual work program will guide all long range planning projects during 2025. The City Council and Planning Commission will discuss the draft 2025 work program at a joint work session on December 10, 2024. The joint work session will also be an opportunity for the City Council and Planning Commission to discuss general topics related to their roles on a range of community development issues.

The City Council, Planning Commission, community members, and City staff can propose projects for the annual work program. The proposed 2025 work program consists of projects budgeted for 3.30 FTEs.

More than half of the time budgeted for the proposed 2025 work program will be spent on the City’s 2025 Comprehensive Plan and Development Code periodic update, which is discussed in more detail below. Ongoing work on the Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan and with the Regional Housing Council on homelessness and affordable housing issues will take approximately twenty percent of long range planning staff time in 2025.

The City Council is expected to approve the 2024 work program on January 21, 2025.

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**Role of the Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission is an advisory body to the City Council with a wide remit. TMC 2.56.030 establishes the powers of the Planning Commission as set forth in Chapter 35.63 RCW.

The Planning Commission proposes and develops policy recommendations for consideration by the City Council, which includes work on the Comprehensive Plan and subarea plans, as well as special plans such as the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan, Tumwater Housing Action Plan, and Urban Forestry Management Plan.

In addition, the Planning Commission is involved in developing recommendations for amendments to regulations related to development, which includes the development code (TMC Title 16 *Environment*, Title 17 *Land Division*, and Title 18 *Zoning*). In the recent past, the Planning Commission has also reviewed amendments to sections of TMC Title 2 *Administration and Personnel*, Title 8 *Health and Safety*, Title 11 *Telecommunications and Telecommunications Facilities*, Title 12 *Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places*, Title 14 *Development Code Administration*, and Title 15 *Buildings and Construction* in support of the development code.

**Role of the City Council and Mayor**

The City Council serves as the City’s legislative body. This separation of powers is based on the traditional federal and state models in the United States. The City Council has the authority to formulate and adopt city policies and the Mayor is responsible for carrying them out. The City Council also has the authority to adopt budgets, approve contracts, and amend the Tumwater Municipal Code. The City Council relies on several advisory commissions and boards for support in making decisions. The General Government Committee considers recommendations from the Planning Commission before they go to the full City Council.

## Suggested Joint Work Session Discussion Topics

A short list of suggested discussion topics to consider during December 10, 2024, joint work session with the City Council is listed below.

- How has coordination between the City Council and Planning Commission gone in 2024 and what can be improved in 2025?
- What went well with the 2024 long range work program and what could be improved?
- Are there additional opportunities for collaboration between the City Council and the Planning Commission that should be considered?
- What are the City Council's main priorities for long range planning in 2025?
- Are there additional projects in 2025 to be considered? If so, what projects currently proposed can be delayed?
- If adjustments to the 2025 long range work program are needed, what projects have less priority?

If the Planning Commission has additional topics to consider, please let staff know.

## 2024 Accomplishments

Land Use and Housing Planner Erika Smith-Erickson completed work on the Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Thurston Region Update and the FP Floodplain Regulations Amendments, led Housing Element update work, staffed the Regional Housing Council, and worked on other work program items.

We were able to bring on Dana Bowers as our new Associate Planner in December 2024. For most of 2024, we were operating at two-thirds capacity and had to postpone work on a number of 2024 long range work program tasks. With Dana joining our staff and Alex Baruch continuing to provide support, we will be able to address the full scope of the proposed 2025 long range work program.

The Planning Commission, City Council, and staff completed the following items from the 2024 long range work program:

- 2023 Comprehensive Plan Amendments (Ordinance No. O2023-002)
- General Development Code Housekeeping Amendments (Ordinance No. O2023-012)
- FP Floodplain Regulations Amendments (Ordinance No. O2023-017)
- 2024 Community Development Block Grant
- Development Code Administration (Ordinance No. O2024-005)
- Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Thurston Region Update (Resolution No. R2024-001)

The following items are still ongoing from the 2024 long range work program and will continue in 2025:

- 2025 Comprehensive Plan and Development Code Periodic Update
- General Commercial Mixed Use Residential (Ordinance No. O2024-008)
- Urban Forestry Management Plan – Landscaping and Buffering Requirements Update
- Urban Forestry Management Plan – Street Tree Standards Update
- Urban Forestry Management Plan – Tree and Vegetation Preservation Regulation Update
- Thurston County Joint Plan and Code Title 22 – Tumwater Urban Growth Area Zoning Update
- Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan
- Equity Toolbox
- Food System Plan
- Managing Multifamily Tax Exemption Program
- Regional Housing Council

### **Proposed 2025 Long Range Work Program**

Attachment B is the draft 2025 long range planning work program. The 2025 work program is divided into five parts:

1. Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket
2. Development Regulation Amendment Docket
3. Other Planning Projects
4. General Management and Coordination
5. Below the Line Projects

Under each of the five parts, individual projects are identified with an estimate of staff time needed to complete, who proposed the project, how they address City Council strategic priorities, and detail on the work required. For more details on individual projects, please see Attachment B *Draft 2025 Long Range Planning Work Program*.

1. **Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket** – Discussed further below.

*Approximately 37% of all budgeted staff time.*

- a. 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – Discussed further below (Continued from 2024)
- b. Thurston County Joint Plan Update and County Urban Growth Area Swap Amendment (Continued from 2024)

## **2. Development Regulation Amendment Docket**

*Approximately 22% of all budgeted staff time. 2025 Development Code Periodic Update is approximately 10% of all budgeted staff time.*

- a. 2025 Development Code Periodic Update – Discussed further below (Continued from 2024)
- b. Urban Forestry Management Plan Amendments (Continued from 2022-23)
  - i. Landscaping
  - ii. Street Tree Standards
  - iii. Tree and Vegetation Preservation
- c. Other Amendments
  - i. General Commercial Mixed Use Residential Amendments (O2024-008) (Continued from 2024)
  - ii. Multifamily Tax Exemption Update (New in 2025)
  - iii. Thurston County Code Title 22 – Tumwater Urban Growth Area Zoning (Continued from 2022)

## **3. Other Planning Projects**

*Approximately 23% of all budgeted staff time. The Habitat Conservation Plan is approximately 10% of all budgeted staff time.*

- a. Annexations (New in 2025)
- b. Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan (Continued from 2016)
- c. Equity Toolbox (Continued from 2022-23)
- d. Energy Performance Rating Program (New in 2025)
- e. Food System Plan (Continued from 2024)
- f. Managing Multifamily Tax Exemption Program (Ongoing)
- g. Rental Housing and Registration Program (Ongoing)
- h. As well as Permit Review Support, Public Inquiries, and other items (Ongoing)

## **4. General Management and Coordination**

*Approximately 18% of all budgeted staff time. Regional Housing Council is approximately 9% of all budgeted staff time.*

- a. General Coordination with Other Departments – Traffic Team, Green Team, Stormwater Team, GIS Team, and other items (Ongoing)

b. General Coordination with Other Jurisdictions

- 1) Regional Housing Council (minimum 0.25 FTE per Memorandum of Understanding) (Ongoing)
- 2) Work with the Port of Olympia, other cities, County, State, Tribes, Thurston Regional Planning Council, and Intercity Transit among others (Ongoing)
- 3) Department Management (Ongoing)
- 4) Training (Ongoing)

**5. Below the Line Projects**

*These are projects that would be considered if the projects in the first four parts are completed, and staff time is available.*

### **Growth Management Act and the Periodic Update**

In Washington State, the Growth Management Act requires fast-growing cities and counties to manage their population growth by developing a comprehensive plan and keeping it updated.

Every ten years under the Growth Management Act, the City must conduct a periodic update of its Comprehensive Plan and related development regulations to ensure they comply with the Growth Management Act and respond to changes in the City since the last periodic update in 2016.

### **Tumwater Comprehensive Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan establishes the outline for managing the City's policymaking and investment decisions for the next 20 years from 2025 to 2045.

The Comprehensive Plan addresses where development will occur, at what intensities, and concurrent with required infrastructure improvements.

The Comprehensive Plan's goals, policies, and implementation actions are the foundation for how the City addresses future public and private development, directs spending for capital facilities improvements, and how development impact fees and other development charges are collected.

### **Tumwater Development Regulations**

The City's development regulations translate the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan into the zoning, land division, and environmental codes that private and public landowners must follow to build on and develop property in the City. Zoning is a planning practice of classifying land as regulated zones for designated purposes to create suitable land use patterns, by various types of similar uses, or by design standards, e.g., form-based codes, to meet the goals and vision identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

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The City's development regulations adopt the City's Zoning Map which establishes the location and boundaries of the zoning districts that allow for specific uses and intensities. The City's Zoning Map is based in turn on the land uses and intensities identified in the Citywide Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan.

### **2025 Periodic Update**

On a ten-year cycle, the City is required by the state to conduct a Growth Management Act periodic update of its Comprehensive Plan and development regulations. For the current cycle, the City is required to complete the periodic update by December 31, 2025.

The updated Comprehensive Plan will address diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the Plan and incorporate many state-required changes addressing affordable housing, climate change, transportation, and other topics.

The projected housing need from 2025-45 is **9,192 new dwelling units** with the majority being multifamily developments with five or more units.

Based on the projected housing need, the **City and its urban growth area are expected to grow in population from 28,707 in 2020 to 50,676 by 2045**. The Comprehensive Plan is required to show how the new population and housing will be accommodated.

The addition of more people, housing, and jobs will result in a greater need for public services maintained by the City from roads, sidewalks, and bike lanes, to police and fire services, to water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater facilities, parks and recreation facilities, as well as the staff required to maintain those services.

It is expected that the periodic update will result in increased density throughout the City to meet state requirements for housing, climate mitigation, and conservation of federally protected species. In turn, this will require revisions to how transportation, public utilities, and park and recreation facilities will be funded through impact fees and Capital Facilities Plan projects to meet state concurrency requirements.

Under state law, the periodic update process is the time where the City Council and the community have the greatest ability to provide input on how and where development of the City occurs.

### **Comprehensive Plan and Development Code Periodic Update Schedule**

#### **Phase II – Completing Plan Development – Winter 2025**

- 1) Periodic Update Drafts – Staff and consultants complete work on the draft Comprehensive Plan Elements, Plans, and maps and the Development Code – *Winter 2025*
- 2) Complete Individual Comprehensive Plan Element and Plan and Development Code Discussions and Work Sessions – *Winter 2025*
  - a) Community Stakeholders

- b) Planning Commission
- c) General Government Committee and City Council
- 3) Complete Draft of Periodic Comprehensive Plan and Development Code Updates – Staff and consultants complete draft of the Comprehensive Plan Elements, Plans, and maps and the Development Code – *Spring 2025*

### Phase III – Legislative Process – Spring 2025 – December 31, 2025

- 1) SEPA and Commerce Review – *Spring 2025*
- 2) Public Adoption Meetings – *Spring through Winter 2025*
  - a) Planning Commission
  - b) City Council
- 3) Submit Notice of Adoption to Commerce – *Fall 2025*

## Resources Needed

### Staff

The periodic update is expected to require the following staff resources:

- 1) Community Development Department
  - a) Planning – The periodic update process is expected to require 1.6 FTE in 2025.
- 2) Executive Department
  - a) Executive - – The periodic update will require staff time from the Executive Team to support the periodic update.
  - b) Communications Team – The periodic update will require staff time from the Communications Team to support the actions identified in the Public Engagement Plan.
  - c) Economic Development – The minor periodic update of the goals and strategies in the Economic Development Plan and coordination with the Economic Development Manager and a consultant to update the data workbook is expected to require 5% of one FTE in 2024 and 2025.
- 3) Transportation & Engineering Department
  - a) Transportation – The major periodic update of the Transportation Plan will require staff time from the Transportation & Engineering Department Director and Transportation Manager and coordination with a consultant to update the Transportation Plan and prepare the Climate Element.
  - b) GIS Team – The periodic update will require staff time from the GIS Team to support the periodic update.



- 4) Water Resources & Sustainability Department – The preparation of the new Climate Element and the periodic update of the Lands for Public Purposes Element and Conservation Element will require staff time from the Water Resources & Sustainability Department Director and from the Water Resources & Sustainability staff, including the Sustainability Coordinator.
- 5) Parks & Recreation Department – Work on a major periodic update of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan was not funded as part of this periodic update process.

## Consultants

The periodic update is expected to require the following consultant resources for the following:

- 1) Economic Development Plan – Minor update of Plan was completed in 2019.
- 2) Transportation Plan – Major update of Plan was completed in 2016.
- 3) Climate Element – New state requirement.
- 4) Middle Housing – New state requirement.

## Funding

The periodic update is primarily an internally funded annual work program task. The City has been awarded a Washington State Department of Commerce grant for \$125,000 to update the Transportation Plan and Economic Development Plan. The City has been awarded a Washington State Department of Commerce grant for \$75,000 to address the new state middle housing requirements. The City has been awarded a Washington State Department of Commerce grant application for \$500,000 to develop a Climate Element and the supporting implementation actions. All the state grants end on June 30, 2025.