

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING  
MARCH 25, 2025 Page 1**

**CONVENE:** 6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Debbie Sullivan and Councilmembers Peter Agabi, Michael Althausen, Joan Cathey, Leatta Dahlhoff, Angela Jefferson, Eileen Swarthout, and Kelly Von Holtz.

Staff: City Administrator Lisa Parks, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Assistant City Administrator Kelly Adams, Finance Department Director Troy Niemeyer, Fire Chief Brian Hurley, Community Development Department Director Michael Matlock, Acting Police Chief Jay Mason, IT Department Director Lance Inman, Water Resources and Sustainability Department Director Dan Smith, Parks and Recreation Department Director Chuck Denney, Recreation Manager Todd Anderson, Communications Manager Jason Wettstein, and Deputy City Clerk Tracie Core.

**RESOLUTION NO.  
R2025-007, COMMUTE  
TRIP REDUCTION  
PLAN UPDATE:**

Veronica Jarvis, Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC), briefed the Council on the update of the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Plan.

The CTR Program was established in 1991 by the state as part of the Clean Air Act to reduce congestion, air pollution, and fuel consumption. Large employers of 100 or more employees commuting during peak hours are required to develop strategies to promote sustainable commuting. All state agencies in the region are affected by the CTR Program.

Affected work sites encourage biking, walking, carpooling, and teleworking. Each work site has an assigned Employee Transportation Coordinator to coordinate the local CTR Program and tailor options based on the work site. The coordinator serves as a primary point of contact, coordinates a bi-annual survey, and completes program reporting.

The City adopted an ordinance as required by state law in support of the CTR Program.

Following the pandemic, a survey was completed with some questions revised to reflect the current work environment. Ms. Jarvis reviewed the survey results for Tumwater employees. Tumwater has always achieved a high carpooling rate that declined since the advent of teleworking in response to the pandemic. Approximately 35% of all participants in the region responding to the survey drive alone to work, which reflects a reduction from previous surveys.

The program also provides information on greenhouse gas emissions that is shared with City staff to assist the City in tracking its sustainability metrics for the City.

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**MARCH 25, 2025 Page 2**

Updates to the CTR local plan are required every four years. The state has granted several extensions. This update provides an opportunity to engage and collaborate on other City plans and integrates CTR into other planning documents of the City. The update process consulted with transit agencies, major employers, and other interested parties through comprehensive outreach over the summer of 2024.

Another element of the plan considers City projects included in the Transportation Plan that improves transportation options for commuters. Some projects are the Deschutes Valley Trail, Mottman Road Improvements, multimodal improvements, traffic calming projects, 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Pedestrian Improvements, Rural Road Shoulder Project, and Israel Road and Linderson Way Bike Pedestrian Improvements.

Councilmember Dahlhoff asked how the program tracks state agency moves and consolidations to provide more opportunities or choices to employees. Ms. Jarvis said she previously was employed with the Office of Financial Management (OFM) and worked in collaboration with the agency's facility planning group. Opportunities are available for collaboration between local governments and state agencies. One of the requirements of the CTR law for the Thurston region requires entities to notify the CTR Program if any work site moves. OFM leads the state's efforts to maximize state office space. The CTR Program offers support to employees to commute to work in sustainable ways.

Ms. Jarvis responded to questions regarding vanpooling. Many employees are vanpooling. With the advent of more return to work orders, Intercity Transit has provided some flexibility and offers a daily vanpool rate affording the opportunity to vary vanpool days.

Ms. Jarvis said the most difficult aspect of attracting participation in CTR is the ease of driving. Consequently, other alternative forms of transportation can often be more difficult. Promotions are offered to provide opportunities for employees to try another mode of travel. Employee Transportation Coordinators at each work site are responsible for informing new employees about the CTR Program and options for commuting to work. TRPC provides updates to all coordinators on upcoming presentations, the annual Bicycle Commuter Challenge, and any new transit connections. As many employees are commuting less, many inquiries are about options for traveling to Seattle for a day for a sports event, concert, or shopping. The program offers assistance for planning trips.

City Administrator Parks advised that the proposed resolution is scheduled for the Consent Calendar at the April 1, 2025 Council meeting.

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**MARCH 25, 2025 Page 3**

**SENIOR SERVICES FOR  
SOUTH SOUND  
PARTNERSHIP  
PRESENTATION:**

City Administrator Parks explained that the next three agenda topics are interrelated in terms of themes and ongoing conversations. She acknowledged Brian Windrope for sharing information about the services provided by Senior Services for South Sound and the potential opportunity to collaborate with the organization to expand services.

Brian Windrope, Executive Director, Senior Services for South Sound, presented information on the organization. The mission of the organization has not changed over the years and focuses on improving the quality of life for people as they age. Senior Services for South Sound was established in 1973. The organization serves Thurston and Mason Counties. In many circumstances, people often underestimate the services provided by the organization. Senior Services sponsors the Meals on Wheels program and congregate meals (hot meals) offered in many jurisdictions in Thurston County and Shelton. The organization serves the rural areas of the counties as well as the larger jurisdictions. The organization provides transportation for seniors who have no transportation alternatives to medical appointments and other urgent appointments. Intercity Transit's Dial-A-Lift program does not serve everyone with Senior Services filling the gap. The organization is volunteer-driven and staffed with over 400 active volunteers.

Senior Services operates the Olympia and Lacey Senior Centers. The Olympia Center space is shared with the Olympia Parks Department. The Olympia Center was built to serve seniors and the Parks Department and offers nutrition and other types of classes (fitness, academic, and art, etc.). The trips program offers local and other destination trips that are affordable. An inclusion program is offered for seniors with developmental disabilities to afford participation in activities at the Olympia Center.

The Virgil Clarkson Lacey Senior Center is named for former Lacey Mayor Virgil Clarkson. He promoted efforts to build a senior center in Lacey and pursued numerous sources of funding. The building was constructed primarily to serve only seniors. The building was expanded and requires further expansion. The center consistently serves over 100 people daily for lunch. Discussions are underway for a phase three expansion as the senior population in the City of Lacey continues to increase.

Senior Services provides nutrition services to seniors in Tumwater serving a daily hot lunch prepared in Olympia and provided at the Tumwater Senior Center. The organization also provides information on the Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA), a statewide program by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner guiding seniors through their Medicare options. Senior Services provides Meals on Wheels to Tumwater seniors, transportation services and tours, and the

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**MARCH 25, 2025 Page 4**

Home Share Program. Tumwater seniors frequently visit the Olympia Center for programming.

A new Tumwater Community Center would offer the ability to cook fresh hot meals on site with staff who are familiar with seniors in the community. Interconnections and relationships between seniors and staff are a major component of the service provided by Senior Services. The center could also include a welcoming and large lobby to host social time and other activities similar to the Olympia and Lacey Centers. The center could also host academic, fitness, and art classes, as well as support groups for seniors with Parkinson's disease, cancer survivors, and caregivers. It would be important to have a Brighter Days program within the center. The program helps people living with dementia, or other needs for supervised care, enjoy social interaction with others while providing respite for their in-home caregivers.

Mr. Windrope described the benefits of a multi-age center as it serves all age groups providing opportunities for intergenerational programming as well as intergenerational meals. An organization known as Grandpas United was formed after several grandfathers found themselves isolated and lonely. Together, they formed an intergenerational program offering volunteer opportunities for the benefit of young and old. Over the course of years of participating in the program, studies revealed brain size of the grandfathers had increased. The field of research around aging and social interaction is tremendous and important today.

Mr. Windrope presented space needs to consider at the new community center in support of Senior Services for South Sound:

- Dedicated commercial kitchen space with appropriate equipment to accommodate up to six employees/volunteers to prepare 1,000 meals each week
- A multi-purpose dining room for 100+ people as event space
- Comfortable and inviting lobby space for 50 or more individuals
- Multiple and flexible classroom spaces for up to 30 individuals
- Dedicated space for Brighter Days program for five days a week accommodating up to 20 people with associated office space and a restroom
- Several office spaces for nutrition and other activities.

Mr. Windrope shared information on the different partnership models with the City of Olympia and City of Lacey for each senior center. Senior Services believes in the potential of serving more seniors with high-quality offerings in the future as the City proceeds with construction of the new community center. He invited questions from the Council.

Councilmember Cathey shared her respective experience of taking

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING  
MARCH 25, 2025 Page 5**

advantage of lunch, donating items, or volunteering for the organization. She asked about the status of the organization's boutique. Mr. Windrope said the boutique is thriving and offers the best quality clothing at low cost. The boutique known as Budd Bay Bargains is located on the agency's second floor.

Councilmember Jefferson inquired about the status of rental assistance by the organization following their previous conversations about rental assistance services for seniors. Mr. Windrope said the rental assistance program continues to encounter funding struggles. However, the Home Share program is the lowest cost housing option for all age groups in Tumwater. The program collaborates with community homeowners to provide rooms for rent of approximately \$500 a month.

Mr. Windrope reported that approximately 55% of the organization's funding is from federal sources under the Older Americans Act passed in 1965 by President Johnson. The Act has continued to receive bipartisan support since 1965 and funds the nutrition program and the transportation program with donations filling the gap. The main challenge today is the concern about ongoing federal support for the organization, as well as for Social Security and Medicare. The stress of the current political environment is affecting both staff and seniors who are served. Today, the main challenge is increasing awareness of what the organization provides so more people can take advantage of services.

Mayor Sullivan thanked Mr. Windrope for attending and sharing information as the topic is important in terms of the needs of seniors in the City.

Councilmember Cathey commented on the benefits of the organization's pet assistance program. Mr. Windrope said Senior Services distributed \$75,000 last year to help seniors take care of pets.

**COMMUNITY CENTER  
DESIGN PROJECT  
UPDATE:**

City Administrator Parks reported that staff is working with the designers to ensure time is available to consider a partnership with Senior Services for integration within the design of the community center. The presentation in January forecasted a final recommendation to the Council in April. The consultant team is producing a revised scope of work to include additional time to develop additional programming alternatives as well as programming that would facilitate a partnership with Senior Services of South Sound, as well as including some ideas offered by several Councilmembers for the facility. Another pending decision is selecting the location of the center. The community center project requires additional time to ensure development of the right design for the center. In-depth conversations will be scheduled with the Council on programming alternatives and the site location to inform future decisions on the design.

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING  
MARCH 25, 2025 Page 6**

Councilmember Althaus stressed the importance of ensuring the community center design considers activities and functions for all age groups as well as seniors.

Councilmember Dahloff recommended following up with the Boys and Girls Club and other youth venues to learn about needs to ensure a full spectrum of consideration in terms of facility space and needs.

Director Denney said staff is aware of each organization's programs and needs. The City funds the summer employment program through a stipend to the Boys and Girls Club and to Tumwater Fresh to enable youths to volunteer and learn different skills. Staff will follow up with the Boys and Girls Club about scheduling and the rates of participation.

Director Denney emphasized the public process the City has undertaken through community meetings and a community survey. The steering committee has been active in compiling the results of the meetings and the survey and working with staff and the consultant team on what the community center should include and what needs should be addressed. A major component of the facility will focus on revenue generation to support operational costs of the facility. Designing the center that incorporates multi-use space used differently throughout the day will be important because many of those spaces will charge rental fees.

**WSDOT  
HEADQUARTERS  
BUILDING UPDATE:**

City Administrator Parks reported the site of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Headquarters Building located off Capitol Boulevard is one of the City's brownfield redevelopment projects. The site is under consideration as a location for the new community center. However, the site is environmentally contaminated, which speaks to the cost and time to mitigate.

Last year, the City obtained an Integrated Planning Grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology funded by the state's Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). The act funds and directs the investigation, cleanup, prevention, and redevelopment of sites that are contaminated by hazardous substances.

The grant amount was \$200,000 with no match requirements. Approximately 75% of the grant is allocated for site environmental investigations and 25% will be used for planning and implementation strategies. The City hired a consultant firm to complete the first phase of the environmental assessment comprised of researching historical documents, records, and photographs with no physical testing or on-the-ground investigation during the first phase of environmental assessment.

Phase 2 of the assessment uses the results of Phase 1 and performs

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**MARCH 25, 2025 Page 7**

targeted physical testing, analysis, and investigation. The Phase 1 environmental assessment has been completed. Staff and the consulting team have been collaborating with WSDOT. As the previous owner of the site, WSDOT is responsible for cleanup of contamination. WSDOT is working to clean up the site as it transitions the property from its asset inventory. WSDOT and the City's consulting team will work on Phase 2 of the environmental assessment on targeted investigations on the site to avoid duplicative efforts and to maximize the amount of information about the environmental contamination on the site.

City Administrator Parks displayed a graphic from the Phase 1 environmental assessment reflecting known conditions of the site based on the desktop investigation. The site was developed by WSDOT in the late 1930s and closed in 2021. The site includes administrative offices, vehicle maintenance facilities, laboratory testing, storage, carpenter shop, sign shop, radio shop, and storage of hazardous materials. The areas of potential contamination have been identified based on the information. The types of potential contamination include coal, several underground storage tanks containing fluids, transformers, in-ground hydraulic hoists in several buildings, storage of fluorescent light ballasts containing PCBs, a septic tank and drain field, paint booth, an unpermitted landfill, and lead-based paint and asbestos materials.

Phase 2 testing will be completed by WSDOT and the City's consultants based on the Integrated Planning Grant requirements.

The consultant team is focused on information the City needs to assess potential risks for redevelopment of the site and future environmental liabilities and construction challenges. The primary outcome is a risk assessment and mitigation summary report identifying the nature of environmental contamination, associated cleanup requirements, challenges for redevelopment, and mitigation necessary to minimize any risks. Estimates of the cost will be completed along with costs associated with acquisition and redevelopment by either the City or developer.

Councilmember Dahlhoff asked how the environmental assessment accounts for the other two proposed sites for the community center. City Administrator Parks advised that the other two proposed sites for the community center are not as encumbered with environmental concerns as there is no identified environmental contamination on the sites with the exception of the brewery warehouse site. The warehouse site includes many challenges from public infrastructure availability and the cost to redevelop. The level of available information indicates the site would be challenging to redevelop. The other site located on the New Market Industrial Campus is a vacant site that was considered by the Secretary of State for the new State Archives and Library Building. However, pocket gophers are present on the site, which creates other challenges.

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**MARCH 25, 2025 Page 8**

Councilmember Dahlhoff commented on the need for a similar level of detail for all three locations. She prefers not eliminating the warehouse location without the benefit of further discussion as to the mitigation requirements and the timelines.

Councilmember Althaus commented that since the WSDOT is a state-owned property, the state should be responsible for cleanup of the site. He asked whether the MTCA serves as the first step for the state to fulfill its cleanup obligation. City Administrator Parks affirmed that the state has the obligation to mitigate the site. However, if mitigation is completed by WSDOT, which has the obligation, the process could be extended. Under MTCA, the end use of the site dictates the level of cleanup and the mitigation methods. The goal is to clean up the environmentally contaminated site to convert the site for more beneficial uses.

Councilmember Agabi noted that the information reflects that approximately 85% of the entire WSDOT site is contaminated to some extent. As previously shared, the level of cleanup is necessary to meet the needs of the potential new use on the site. Should the Council determine the WSDOT site as the location of the new community center, he believes the City lacks the resources and funds to clean up the site for placement of a community center. The site would require intense efforts to mitigate the site for reuse. Many of the chemicals on the site have an active shelf life from 50 to 80 years, which speaks to the degree of cleanup that would be required.

City Administrator Parks responded that the intent of the MTCA is to perform a site investigation and environment investigation with the nature and extent of the environmental contamination further refined. Other requirements are necessary to complete Phase 2 for the environmental assessment work. Following some clarity of where contamination is located, the type, and the extent, the information will inform the required cleanup remedy based on the end use of the property. There are different types of cleanup methodologies for treating contaminated groundwater and soil. The MTCA considers how redevelopment of a contaminated site will dictate the cleanup remedy. The cost of cleanup of the site is unknown at this time because the cleanup methodologies have not been identified. Typically, remedial action grant programs for cleanup are a 50%/50% match. In this instance, if the City were able to secure a remedial action grant, 50% would be provided by the grant and 50% would be from WSDOT (as the previous owner). Because the location has been identified as a brownfield site, additional resources are available that could assist in funding development of the community center. The consultant team's work is focused on understanding the components that the City would



**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**MARCH 25, 2025 Page 9**

need if the site should be the location of the new community center in addition to providing information for any future redevelopment of the site by a developer.

City Administrator Parks reviewed a sample of a Risk Assessment and Mitigation Summary Report. She cited some of the components of the report:

- A map identifying environmental and site conditions
- A description of some level of certainty if contamination exists
- Identification of mitigation for different sources of contamination
- Evaluate the level of future risk associated with any mitigation

City Administrator Parks shared a draft scenario with a timeline identifying community center project activities, environmental contamination, and transactions between the City and WSDOT for moving forward with a development scenario. Part of the environmental work includes mitigating risks to include various agreements and consent decree (issued by a court offering the highest level of protection against future risks associated with environmental contamination).

Mayor Sullivan added that the brewery site received a \$500,000 EPA grant. All three proposed community center sites are encumbered with different issues ranging from contamination, pocket gophers, or location.

Councilmember Dahlhoff conveyed appreciation for the information as it changes her perspectives each time new information is provided. The information helps to define the priorities and a realistic timeline because of the many different factors. She is appreciative of the extra time for being thoughtful and intentional to enable the Council to define the top priorities for the community today and in the future.

Councilmember Cathey agreed to the importance of the conversation because each Councilmember's perspective of each site is different. The option is attractive to her personally on many different levels to include creating a City center. She asked whether the WSDOT site would support the regional conversation on an aquatics center. City Administrator Parks advised that a basic foundational criterion for the community center regardless of its site is to ensure adequate room for an aquatic facility.

Director Denney said City staff worked with the City of Olympia staff and several legislators to pass the second Public Facilities District project for the region. An agreement would be necessary by July 2026 between the entities signifying the goal of a regional aquatics center. The City of Olympia is currently interested in moving forward; however, siting has been difficult because the site would need to serve both communities if

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING  
MARCH 25, 2025 Page 10**

both cities agree to partner. The City of Olympia is seeking a replacement of its Parks Department Director who recently left to take another position in Tacoma. He anticipates continuing discussions with the City of Olympia when the new director is hired. An aquatics center could be accommodated on the WSDOT site. An illustration was prepared of an aquatics center on the site as an alternative.

City Administrator Parks advised that work on the brewery site under the EPA grant has suffered some setback because of changes in federal staff and federal government uncertainties. The brewery redevelopment project includes a Planned Action EIS, which is included on the 2025 Long Range Work Plan. Assistant City Administrator Adams is managing the project. The budget includes funds to contract with a consultant to assist in the development of the Planned Action EIS, which is intended to be a regionally collaborative process to evaluate uses that could be sited on the brewery properties, as well as an analysis of potential uses of the property with respect to the availability of public infrastructure. The owner of the brewery property is interested in redevelopment of the properties; however, barriers exist because of the lack of public infrastructure to support any type of use and the unknowns associated with environmental contamination.

**MAYOR/CITY  
ADMINISTRATOR'S  
REPORT:**

City Administrator Parks reported on the successful outcome of the recent Transportation Open House. More than 40 people attended the event. An online Transportation Open House is available from March 20, 2025 to April 2, 2025.

On April 9, 2025, the Green Business awards will be presented at the Thurston Chamber of Commerce annual meeting.

The Parks and Recreation Department is releasing information on upcoming activities and events. The Water Resources and Sustainability Department is releasing a water newsletter.

City Administrator Parks thanked Director Hicks and Acting Police Chief Mason, as well as several staff members for presenting information at the recent Tumwater Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

Mayor Sullivan warned of the potential of inclement weather in the next day. City staff is preparing for the potential of any weather-related events.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Mayor Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 7:54 p.m.**