



**CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
STAFF REPORT**

<b>Meeting Date:</b> May 18, 2026		<b>Subject:</b> Town Center Building Height Waiver Provision Project	
		<b>Staff Member:</b> Amanda Guile-Hinman, City Attorney Miranda Bateschell, Planning Director	
		<b>Department:</b> Legal, Community Development	
<b>Action Required</b>		<b>Advisory Board/Commission Recommendation</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing Date: <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance 1 <sup>st</sup> Reading Date: <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance 2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading Date: <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information or Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Information Only <input type="checkbox"/> Council Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Consent Agenda		<input type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Denial <input type="checkbox"/> None Forwarded <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
		<b>Comments:</b> N/A	
<b>Staff Recommendation:</b> N/A			
<b>Recommended Language for Motion:</b> N/A			
<b>Project / Issue Relates To:</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council Goals/Priorities: Goal 4: Communications & Engagement		<input type="checkbox"/> Adopted Master Plan(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

**ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL:**

Examine Development Code provisions concerning waivers to building height currently provided in the Town Center Zone (Wilsonville Code 4.132 (.06)D and 4.118(.03)A.8), review input from Town Center Building Height Waiver Task Force (“Task Force”), and provide feedback and/or questions for the Task Force to further consider.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This staff report provides an overview of the City project to review the waiver provision in WC 4.132(.06)(D), which offers applicants an opportunity to seek a waiver within two of the subdistricts of the Wilsonville Town Center relating to building ground floor floorplate and/or building height. Additionally, this staff report reviews the work of the Town Center Building Height Waiver Task Force thus far, which has explored various options to revise the waiver provision. Staff seeks input from City Council to provide back to the Task Force as it focuses on particular revisions to the waiver. Staff will provide the City Council's feedback and questions to the Task Force for its consideration at its May 19, 2026 meeting.

## **I. BACKGROUND**

### **A. Establishing the Task Force – Resolution No. 3244**

Resolution No. 3244 (attached hereto as **Attachment 1**) establishes the Wilsonville City Council's desire to review Town Center building height waiver provisions in the Wilsonville Code and to establish a limited duration task force to help recommend updates to the waiver provisions.

At its [February 19, 2026 work session](#), Council received background factual and legal information regarding the Wilsonville Town Center and related Town Center Plan and then deliberated whether to explore updated to the building height waiver language applicable to the Wilsonville Town Center.

At its [March 2, 2026 meeting](#), Council adopted Resolution No. 3244 (**Attachment 1**) to consider amendments to the Wilsonville Code that affect potential building heights for redevelopment in the Wilsonville Town Center. In particular, Resolution No. 3244 provides a process for Council to consider modification to building height waiver language within the Wilsonville Code that allows increased building height in the Wilsonville Town Center. The Resolution also called for establishing a limited duration task force to review options of possible updates to the building height waiver language in the Wilsonville Code.

### **B. Town Center Plan Overview**

The Wilsonville Town Center Plan presents a blueprint that will guide future development in Town Center through strategic actions (new projects, policies, programs or partnerships) in order to achieve the Wilsonville community's vision for Town Center. The City webpage with Town Center Plan information is available [here](#). The Town Center project team worked with the community at over one hundred meetings and events from 2017 through 2019, and through dozens of surveys and polls to formulate the various elements of the Plan. The community is passionate about the future of Town Center and has voiced a vision and plan for the next stage in Town Center's evolution.

The Town Center Plan guides development in Town Center to create the heart of Wilsonville – a vibrant, walkable destination that inspires people to come together and socialize, shop, live, and work. The Town Center Plan identifies parks, civic spaces, and amenities to provide year-round, compelling experiences. To promote the heart of Wilsonville, the Town Center Plan has several

components, including updates to the City Code to provide for mixed-use development, an “Emerald Chain” open space/park concept, multi-modal infrastructure to encourage bicycle and pedestrian accessibility, and economic development strategies. The Town Center Plan identified implementation measures, including parking strategies to ensure efficient and convenient parking for visitors, workers, and residents, infrastructure investments, economic development strategies, and regulatory actions (including adoption of updates to the Wilsonville Code).

Of particular importance to this Task Force’s work, the Town Center Plan and related regulatory actions created four (4) subdistricts within the Town Center: Commercial Mixed-Use (C-MU), Mixed-Use (MU), Main Street District (MSD), and Neighborhood Mixed-Use (N-MU). The Main Street District represents the central hub of the Town Center. The other subdistricts transition from allowances for taller buildings adjacent to I-5 to smaller buildings adjacent to the residential area east of Town Center Loop East. Below is a map of the subdistricts, which is found in the Wilsonville Code:



Since the Town Center Plan adoption in 2019, the City commenced work on the implementation measures including adopting updates to the City Transportation System Plan (2020) and the Town Center Streetscape Plan (2021), designing the Town Center Gateway Plaza (2021), undertaking an infrastructure funding plan (2022), conducting a vertical housing development

zone (VHDZ) study and adopting the VHDZ (2022), creating a Town Center street naming policy and handbook (2024), and completing an urban renewal feasibility study (2024), which study is currently being updated at the direction of the City Council.

### **C. 2025 Town Center Outreach**

In Fall 2025, in response to City Council Goal No. 4: Communications and Engagement, the City created a *Let's Talk, Wilsonville!* questionnaire for the community and conducted three focus groups to better understand community members' excitement and concerns regarding the Wilsonville Town Center, the Town Center Plan, and urban renewal as a financing tool for Town Center infrastructure/development. A summary report from the City's consultants was provided at the December 1, 2025 Council meeting, which report can be found [here](#) and video of the presentation can be found [here](#), starting at the 3-hour mark. In that outreach, community members expressed concerns regarding the potential height of future buildings in Town Center and the possibility for them to feel too much like they belong in a big city. From this feedback, staff proposed to the City Council to consider re-examining the building height waiver provisions for Town Center in the Wilsonville Code.

## **II. BUILDING HEIGHT WAIVER PROVISION**

The current Town Center building height waiver provision in the Wilsonville Code is provided as **Attachment 2** to this staff report and the general waiver provision (referenced in the Town Center building height waiver provision) is provided as **Attachment 3** to this staff report. The provisions relevant to this project are highlighted. In particular, the current waiver provision in WC 4.132 allows buildings in C-MU and MU to waive building height requirements (meaning development can seek a waiver to only be one-story tall or seek a waiver to increase building height) and floorplate limitations (the square-footage of the floor area) if they meet the general waiver requirements in WC 4.118 and also select one item from each of Menu One and Menu Two to enhance the development. The building height waiver is not allowed in the Main Street District subdistrict or the Neighborhood Mixed-Use subdistrict.

Staff reviewed prior Planning Commission and City Council work sessions and meetings where discussions regarding floorplate and building height occurred. At the direction from Planning Commission, both Planning Commission and City Council considered drafts of the waiver provision. The Planning Commission's intent with the waiver provision was to provide flexibility for future development in Town Center. While previously provided to Council, for ease of access, these work sessions and meetings discussions can be found in **Attachment 4** to this staff report.

## **III. TASK FORCE MEETINGS**

Upon the establishment of the Task Force, it has met twice to begin work on this project. At the first meeting, held on April 15, 2026, City staff provided a high-level overview of the Town Center Plan and how the waiver provision was created and refined and also discussed the work that the Task Force would be undertaking. Information about the April 15, 2026 Task Force meeting is available [here](#).

At its second meeting on April 21, 2026, the Task Force reviewed drafts of different options for revising the waiver provision. **Attachment 5** is the packet of options and descriptive chart provided to the Task Force. Staff provide the following high-level overview of each Option.

- **Option 1:** Stays true to original language/intent where the waiver provides flexibility and the affordable housing bonus story is still available, but the language is updated to be explicit about limiting the increase in building height and closing any possible loophole in the citywide waiver provision.
- **Option 2:** Stays true to original language/intent where the waiver provides flexibility, but flexibility may involve a choice of either the bonus story for affordable housing or a waiver for an additional story, to prohibit any building from being 7 stories. Language is updated to be explicit about limiting the increase in building height and closing any possible loophole in the citywide waiver provision.
- **Option 3:** Reflects adherence to community's preference during the Town Center planning process for buildings of 3-5 stories, while maintaining flexibility and incentive for affordable housing, since those projects are harder to pencil. Stays true to an intentional choice at time of Plan. Language is updated to be explicit about limiting the increase in building height and closing any possible loophole in the citywide waiver provision.
- **Option 4:** Reflects adherence to community's preference during the Town Center planning process for buildings of 3-5 stories. Limits flexibility in C-MU and incentive for affordable housing. Language is updated to be explicit about limiting the increase in building height and closing any possible loophole in the citywide waiver provision.

An additional consideration for each Option was whether to limit the waiver in the MU subdistrict to only the areas west of the MSD subdistrict so that developments in the MU subdistrict adjacent to the N-MU subdistrict cannot seek the waiver to increase building height. Staff included this additional consideration for the Task Force to determine whether it furthers the vision for the planned land use in Town Center, with larger buildings nearer I-5 (the C-MU subdistrict), stepping down to the smaller buildings near the residential area to the east (the N-MU subdistrict).

The Task Force was divided into three groups of three to discuss each of the Options and asked the following prompts for each Option:

1. Discuss whether the Option meets the vision and/or components of the Town Center Plan.
  - a. In what ways does it strengthen the Plan vision?
  - b. Are there any concerns with the Option?
2. In what ways is this Option consistent or inconsistent with the original intent of the waiver provision (WC 4.132(.06)D.) to increase flexibility for development?

3. What additional follow-up is needed to better understand the practical implications of the Option?
4. Are there other options that should be considered?

After the small group discussions, the Task Force reconvened and reported on their feedback. Each small group's report-out is summarized below:

- Group 1: consensus was that Option 1 was too tall and not what the public can handle. The group looked at Option 2 with the asterisks (the limitation of increasing the building height east of the Main Street District). The group also discussed an "Option 5" of not allowing any building height waiver, but the challenge of having one building already approved for the additional story makes it difficult to have that building as a "unicorn" in Town Center.
- Group 2: one person liked Option 1 for its flexibility and not being too restrictive, but 2 others in the group thought Option 3 was best. They also liked the asterisks. They noted that if the City moved forward with Option 1, they should consider an escalation of the menu items, where a building with 2 additional stories would need to do more than one item from each menu. This group also discussed the menu items and "raising the bar" on them. The group discussed that some of the menu items would be easy to get and so should be revisited. The group like height being towards I-5.
- Group 3: the area of consensus was that, if there is more density, it should be closer to I-5, however, one member wanted to see an option of no increased building height waiver and only allow a bonus floor for affordable housing. Of the options presented, Option 2 was the most popular. Another "Option 5" was discussed in this group where west of the Main Street District (toward I-5), development could only seek a waiver to increase building height and not decrease building height, and east of the Main Street District (toward the residential area), development could only seek a waiver to decrease building height and not increase building height. This "Option 5" received some general support from members of the two other small groups.

Some other themes emerged from the feedback:

- Task Force members generally found 7 stories to be too tall and inconsistent with the vision of the Town Center Plan.
- Members liked the idea of the "asterisks" as part of the update to the waiver provision, where the area of the MU subdistrict east of the Main Street District (the area closer to Town Center Loop East and the residential area) would not be eligible for a waiver to increase building height.
- Some members found Option 4 too limiting.
- Some members favored Option 3, but the general group also discussed a the new "Option 5" from Group 3 where the MU subdistrict west of the Main Street District would only be

eligible for a waiver to increase building height (but not decrease to one story) and the MU subdistrict east of the Main Street District would only be eligible for a waiver to decrease building height.

- The Task Force also had discussion around the two menus that are part of the waiver provision. Task Force members are interested in further examining the menus and whether they should be updated to require more of developers who seek a waiver.
  - Staff noted that if the waiver menu items are further refined, an additional Task Force meeting may be necessary.

More information from the April 21, 2026 Task Force meeting can be found [here](#).

With this background and initial feedback from the Task Force, staff seeks input from Council to provide back to the Task Force as it continues to consider updates to the building height waiver provision. Questions for Council:

1. In contemplating a cap to limit building height to no more than six (6) stories (considering the waiver provision and the bonus floor for affordable housing provision), what do you want the Task Force to consider? Would you support this cap?
2. As the Task Force considers prohibiting properties in the MU subdistrict east of the Main Street District from seeking a waiver to increase building height, what should the Task Force consider? What is your feedback on this proposal?
3. Should the menu items in the waiver provision be revisited at this time? If so, what suggestions do you have for modifying existing items or adding items that either provide a community benefit or mitigate the additional scale of the building granted through the waiver (increased height, single-story height, or increased single-user footprint)?
4. What additional follow-up is needed for you to better understand the proposal for potential revisions to the waiver provision?
5. Are there other options or revisions that the Task Force should consider?

#### **IV. PROJECT TIMELINE**

Staff anticipates the following timeline to complete the work:

- April 15, 2026: First Task Force Meeting
- April 21, 2026: Second Task Force Meeting
- May 13, 2026: First Planning Commission Work Session
- May 18, 2026: First City Council Work Session
- May 19, 2026: Third Task Force Meeting
- Summer 2026: Additional Planning Commission and City Council Work Sessions
- Summer/Fall 2026: Planning Commission and City Council Public Hearings

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution No. 3244
2. WC 4.132
3. WC 4.118
4. Review of Planning Commission and City Council discussions on waiver language
5. Packet of Options for Task Force April 21, 2026 meeting