SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FROM COFFEE CREEK FORM-BASED CODE FOCUSED DISCUSSIONS

Feedback about Process:

Many comments received about the timeliness and predictability of the land use review process were not specific to the two-track process in Coffee Creek, but to land use review in general, particularly related to pre-application meetings and completeness review.

Information provided by the City, from all Departments/Divisions, at pre-application meetings needs to be as detailed as possible to enable an applicant to design and prepare plans for land use review that meet applicable standards, as rework during site design is costly and causes delay. However, it can be difficult at the pre-application stage to provide detail about a particular site plan, because designs will evolve as requirements and standards are better understood during land use review.

Follow-up meetings post pre-application, which are offered by the City, need to happen more than they do as they are helpful to applicants. But these meetings add to review time to organize and coordinate schedules, so a balance is needed.

Applicants need detailed guidelines about rules and requirements so they have clarity about what they are trying to design. No clarity leads to no predictability and, thus, delay. However, applicants also need to spend time understanding what the City is trying to accomplish, so everyone is on the same page as early in the process as possible.

Getting from the pre-application meeting to application submittal can be challenging. This is particularly the case when an applicant modifies their original design to respond to staff input provided at the pre-application meeting and the revised design raises new questions or concerns about compliance with the standards.

It is critical for the applicant to have definite information at the front of project planning for pro-forma and financial commitments. Drastic changes to a site plan that may be needed before submittal for land use completeness review have ripple effects on project design. For example, while the design standards for Supporting Streets are intentionally flexible to accommodate the unique characteristics of each project site, this can be perceived by the applicant as ambiguous and open to interpretation and they may struggle to find an acceptable design solution. This affects speed to market, which is key in speculative building.

With respect to projects in Coffee Creek, the timeline has been reasonable for land use review. But cyclical rounds of review and needed adjustments in some cases were challenging and, in applicants' opinion, time consuming.

Applicants prefer a concrete estimate of timeline to approval and work backward from there to map out their project schedule. If the City provides a timeline estimate and there are delays, either on the applicant's part or in staff response, that prolong the process, this is frustrating for the applicant and has ripple effects on scheduling, cost estimating, budgeting, etc. If the City can answer the biggest question – How long will land use review take? – with certainty at the pre-application meeting, everyone benefits. Now that four projects have gone through the land use review process in Coffee Creek, it may be prudent to adjust the timeline estimate to reflect the experience.

Going to City Council first for annexation and Zone Map amendment as is allowed in Coffee Creek is a significant benefit for applicants, with respect to time savings, and the process has been fairly smooth and worked as anticipated.

After application submittal for completeness review, the land use review process in Coffee Creek was generally predictable and timely. Staff is a good partner and great to work with. At times, more detailed review during completeness from all Departments/Divisions could be helpful. In addition, City review and feedback to the applicant can lag when issues come up. It would be helpful in these instances for staff to mobilize around the issue in a timely manner so it can be addressed quickly and the project can continue to progress through the review process. Timely and frequent conversations are needed throughout the process.

Overall applicants feel staff works very hard to get to yes on applications in Coffee Creek. However, in applicants' opinion it is possible that predictability and timeliness could be improved with more communication with the applicant during completeness review, which could result in fewer incompleteness and compliance items. Also, applicants would prefer more conditions of approval in the land use decision, rather than trying to dial in an application before the decision is issued. Detailed reviews are helpful, but applicants question how many such reviews are enough before outstanding items are conditioned so the project can move forward in the process.

Predictability and timeliness could be improved if some latitude or flexibility was built into the land use approval that anticipates subsequent design changes at the construction permitting stage and either considers the changes substantially compliant or as Class 1 Administrative Review. Returning to the original approving body or going through subsequent Class 2 Administrative Review following approval adds significantly to the project timeline.

Feedback about Intent of FBC:

There appears to be a disconnect between some of the form-based code standards and development typologies described in the Pattern Book and actual development occurring in Coffee Creek. Of the four approved projects in Coffee Creek, three are large single- or two-tenant, speculative industrial warehouse distribution facilities with office endcaps, and one is a corporate headquarters with office, showroom, and manufacturing components. Except for the corporate headquarters, these developments do not fully match the envisioned typologies, which include a mix of uses and more than one building on a site, as well as multi-story office buildings. As a result, achieving fully compliant design, particularly with site design and building form standards, is challenging and resulted in requested waivers. If on-the-ground reality is not fully consistent with the vision for Coffee Creek development typologies but still desirable, does there need to be adjustment to some of the form-based code standards to better align them with market conditions and to anticipate what might come in the future?

The question was raised as to whether the intent of the form-based code is being met with development that has occurred to date, and what the City wants to set the stage for in the future. Now that four projects have gone through the land use review process, what do the next four projects want to be? It could be helpful to have an evolving Master Plan for Coffee Creek that adjusts as projects are constructed to see how they all work together. The Master Plan should be a living document and road map to the future that adapts and updates as the area evolves with development.

Feedback about FBC Standards:

Prescriptive standards can limit innovative design. If a proposed development does not follow Code verbatim, but is a desirable or creative design that the City would like to see developed, is there a path to approval or does the design have to be less or different just to meet the standards? It was suggested that flexibility is needed in the standards, within the administrative review process, to enable the ability to pivot and accommodate divergence, while still achieving the City's vision for the area.

Speculative building (e.g., Black Creek Group) is very different from build-to-suit (e.g., Precision Countertops). Designing standards that work for both types of buildings while not impossible is extremely challenging because of differing operational and site design needs. Speculative users have a list of desirable characteristics for a site and they want to check as many as possible off the list. The purpose of constructing a speculative building is to attract a high quality tenant by checking as many of the boxes as possible based on standards that work for the industry, while making Wilsonville the most desirable location for a prospective user when compared with the larger market.

Applicants want to look at the form-based code and understand what is required. This necessitates that the standards be crystal clear, so that project planning and site design is predictable and there are not gray areas.

Standards that speak to operations are of primary importance from the applicant's perspective and need to be "all dialed in", then the form-based code overlays "desired features" (landscaping, connectivity, etc.) to get what is desired. When they are inflexible or do not make sense operationally, standards cannot be achieved and waivers are needed to enable what operationally works. If the standards that speak to operations are right, it facilitates the process and does not hinder achieving a predictable result. The standards should be reviewed with an eye to allowing more latitude or a higher threshold without requiring a waiver for those that address operations.

<u>Driveway Width</u>

Limiting the driveway width from a Supporting Street to a maximum of 26 feet with adjustment is problematic. There should an allowance for a wider driveway, at least 40 feet wide, to accommodate large truck movements entering/exiting a site. A narrower driveway is fine for passenger vehicles and smaller delivery trucks. Other factors that affect driveway width include such things as restricted access to/from a supporting street, angle of approach, etc.

<u>Parking Location and Design on an Addressing Street</u>

Location and design of passenger vehicle parking is dictated by where loading docks are located - rear, front, side, or cross – characteristics of site, size and orientation of building, etc. With a front load building, it is rare not to see parking in the front. Smaller sites also usually prefer to have parking in the front of the building. This is important to operations, security, and accessibility for employees and customers.

A secure truck court and yard is a high priority need for industrial users. Separating truck and passenger vehicle traffic is essential for safety. Limiting parking, in both number and who can park there, at the front of the building makes achieving separation challenging. If parking is not at the front, then the truck court likely will be on the front, which is less desirable from an aesthetic standpoint.

Allowing 20 spaces maximum with adjustment at the front of a building is extremely limiting. It was suggested that the ratio of allowed parking on an Addressing Street should be adjusted based on the square footage of the building, thus allowing more parking at the front for a larger building size.

Many large industrial users do not have visitors and customers, but do have a large number of employees, particularly in office areas, which are at the front of the building. Some spaces at the front of the building, therefore, should be available for use by employees and not limited to ADA, visitors and customers.

Retaining Walls

Large, flat industrial buildings result in the need to have more and/or taller retaining walls. This is especially true when it is necessary to meet grade on multiple streets around a site. Requirements should be tied to characteristics of an individual site, rather than a uniform standard. Making grade to a street is a key determinant of wall design. In addition, more topography results in the need for more walls. Because walls are very costly, drivers (cut/fill, cost, topography, etc.) will naturally limit their height.

Perhaps consider a proportional approach based on the slope of a site or height as a function of overall cross-slope of a site based on a project that already has been constructed, such as Black Creek Group.

If a retaining wall is not visible from an Addressing Street and primarily visible from the interior of a site, why does it matter what the wall looks like?

The requirement for horizontal offset is problematic. It is prudent to look at aesthetics of a retaining wall, because construction materials vary substantially. However, it may not be possible to integrate the offset or stepped design in landscape areas within the limited constraints of a site.

Entry Canopy Height

A lower entry canopy height than the required 13.5 feet minimum with adjustment makes more sense. Twelve (12) feet is preferable from a functionality standpoint. Standard storefront systems have a natural break at 12 feet. Better weather protection and pedestrian scale is achieved at 12 feet.

Interior ceiling height is typically dropped to 9-10 feet, but a height matching a 12-foot canopy gives a more open feel to the interior and allows better interior/exterior integration. If there is a mezzanine (second story office, not storage mezzanine), the ceiling is usually at 9 feet for first floor, which makes 12 feet problematic.

Building Massing and Base, Middle, Top Dimensions

The overall building massing standard with base, middle, top dimensions probably hinders design and is not productive. Design can be scaled well without the dimensional requirements. The standard results in prescriptive design, causing overall design aesthetic to suffer. The same effect can be achieved with a variety of materials. An alternative methodology is needed that gets the desired “high quality” design.

Requirements for dimensional (recede, project) definition of base and top, rather than just visual, is difficult to achieve with poured slab concrete tilt-up buildings. Allowing applicants to make some trade-offs, such as using graphic treatments, that accomplish the intent of a physical off-set have the same effect from a distance. Paint schemes and reveals are more effective in adding variety and dimension.

Can the standard be adjusted to achieve the same visual interest and variety desired, but in a less prescriptive way? The standard product today is much more interesting and aesthetically pleasing and driven by a market that demands quality. The standards should be flexible and adaptable as the market changes now and in the future.

Landscape Buffer Areas on Addressing and Supporting Streets

Are landscape buffers between a building and/or parking and the public right-of-way necessary? Buildings in urban areas are right up to the street. Is Coffee Creek trying to achieve a suburban model with ample landscape buffers or a more urban aesthetic?

Street Typologies

Street typologies do not align with the Transportation System Plan (TSP) and Engineering Design Manual. This results in negotiation with Engineering staff about street design, leads to confusion, and can make redesign necessary. Required infrastructure design under the streets also needs to be calibrated.

Requiring a Supporting Street, in a public easement, on the edge of an industrial site can make truck circulation more difficult because they are circulating on a public way with other vehicle types. This can put a site at a disadvantage because a large part of the site is reserved for connectivity rather than site circulation.

Agglomeration of sites would help achieve envisioned development and spread the cost burden of Supporting Street infrastructure more equitably across owners/developers.