



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28TH, 2026
HELD VIA ZOOM & IN PERSON AT CITY HALL

Planning Commission Members Present: Tom Sahlberg (Chairperson), Joe Mann, Jim Baumker, DG Garcia, Charlie Jencks, and Gene Heuschel.

Adjunct Member(s) Present: Troy Mullenix

Staff Present: Amy Mullerleile, Lance Mueller, and Kathy Cummings

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m.

Roll Call: A quorum of members was present. A motion to excuse Commissioner Phil Folyer was made by Commissioner Mann, seconded by Commissioner Jencks. The motion was carried unopposed.

Commissioner Sahlberg asked that everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Sahlberg made a motion to change the order of the meeting agenda to move Planning Commissioner's Reports to the General Business. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baumker and carried unanimously.

Commissioner's Reports: Commissioner Sahlberg emphasized the Planning Commission meeting priorities and goals and reminded the commission to complete the Open Public Meeting Act training and to keep discussions within the appropriate scope and responsibilities.

Review of Agenda: Commissioner Jencks motioned to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Commissioner Mann. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Commissioner Jencks to approve the January 14th meeting minutes, seconded by Commissioner Heuschel. The motion passed unanimously.

Workshops:

Climate Resiliency Plan: Staff clarified that although the agenda labels this presentation as climate resiliency, the focus of this presentation is transportation resiliency, which is part of the climate chapter in the comprehensive plan. Consultant John Phillips with Parametrix, presented an overview of the city's transportation resiliency plan, with emphasis on wildfire evacuation routes. The overview included the methodology of the assessments of the routes including criticality and vulnerability. A memo with all the information will be provided to the commission at the next Planning Commission meeting. Questions and discussion followed between the commissioners and the consultants.

Transportation Network Analysis: Staff provided a brief background and the 2nd update to the draft Transportation Network Analysis. The presentation provided the latest changes to the mitigations and language clarifications of the draft. The importance of the data within this draft was discussed amongst staff and the commission. Commissioner Mann motioned to recommend that City Council adopt the 2025 Liberty Lake Network Analysis Update, seconded by Commissioner Baumker. The motion passed unanimously.

Preemptive State Law for Infill Housing – Conversion of Commercial Buildings to Multi-Family: Staff provided a general overview of this new state mandate that is to be adopted by June 30, 2026, or pre-emption will occur. This law will only be applicable to existing buildings within the zones where multi-family is permitted. Discussion amongst staff and the commission ensued. Code language will be brought to the Planning Commission for review at a future workshop.

Citizen Comments: None.

Secretary's Report: Staff stated that there will be updates to the existing planning commission calendar schedule and minor changes to the full and final Transportation element that will be brought to the next planning commission meeting. Also, there was an application received for the vacant adjunct position that will be reviewed with the mayor, and they will interview the applicant next week.

Commissioner Baumker asked about the development code allowance of data centers within the city. It was determined that there is a difference between a data center and a data storage center. The acting director will check to see if the code addresses either of these. This conversation continued and led to questions of water supply and how this impacts growth and development within the city.

Adjournment: Commissioner Mann motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Jencks. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.