

**TUMWATER PLANNING COMMISSION  
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**CONVENE:** 7:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Dennis Morr, Jr., and Commissioners Terry Kirkpatrick, Nam Duc Nguyen, Nancy Stevenson, Meghan Sullivan Goldenberger, and Patrick Zitny.

Excused: Commissioners Joel Hansen and Jessica Hausman.

Staff: Planning Manager Brad Medrud, Senior Planner David Ginther, and Recording Secretary Valerie Gow.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 27, 2018:** Commissioner Kirkpatrick requested the following correction to the March 27, 2018 minutes:

- On page 2, change the two references of “Department of Exterior” to reflect “Department of Interior.”

**MOTION:** **Commissioner Stevenson moved, seconded by Commissioner Kirkpatrick, to approve the minutes of March 27, 2018 as amended. Motion carried.**

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:** There were no changes to the agenda.

**NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATE:** The next meeting is scheduled for April 24, 2018.

**COMMISSIONER REPORTS:** There were no reports.

**MANAGER’S REPORT:** There was no report.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.

**DISCUSSION:**

**THURSTON REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL PRESENTATION:** Manager Medrud introduced Veena Tabbutt, Research & Data Director, Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC). Ms. Tabbutt briefed the Commission on the results of the agency’s carbon wedge analysis data collection effort.

Ms. Tabbutt reported TRPC serves as a regional planning agency and convener for land use, transportation, and other regional issues impacting all

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jurisdictions within Thurston County. TRPC is mandated by the state and federal government to administer transportation funding and transportation planning efforts.

The energy mapping and carbon wedge analysis project was initiated to help understand and identify greenhouse gas emissions related to transportation. TRPC also pursued a holistic evaluation to collect data on emissions from all sources.

One of the products was a map of energy sources for the Thurston County region. The second product was a carbon wedge analysis of current emissions and an evaluation of the effect a range of policy actions might have on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as well as other alternatives to meet energy goals.

*Commissioner Goldenberger arrived at the meeting.*

The energy flow map depicts the sources of emissions and end use of carbon emissions. Identified energy sources include hydro, renewables, nuclear, coal, natural gas, and petroleum. Petroleum is used in the transportation sector and natural gas is used to generate electricity for residential and commercial use. The other sources are used to generate electricity. End users were identified as residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation.

Puget Sound Energy generates electricity from coal and hydro sources.

Within the Sustainable Thurston Plan, regional policymakers adopted the following target for greenhouse gas emission reduction:

- Achieve 25 percent reduction of 1990 levels by 2020
- Achieve 45 percent reduction of 1990 levels by 2035
- Achieve 80 percent reduction of 1990 levels by 2050

The Thurston County Action Team (TCAT) developed estimates of county-wide greenhouse gas emissions for recent years, and projected back to estimate levels for 1990, which was established as the base level moving forward. Today, the region is not achieving the forecasted reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Using the base (1990) to project expected greenhouse gas emission to the year 2050 based on no action or “business as usual,” several scenarios produced the following conditions:

- No change in the fuel mix for electricity generation
- Building sector energy grows with population
- Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) grows with population
- No change in vehicle fleet mix
- No change in vehicle fuel efficiency.

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Chair Morr questioned whether the consultant team identified any of the indicators for documenting the increase from 1990 to present day. Ms. Tabbutt said specific indicators were not identified. However, the main driver is the increase in population within the region. Capita numbers are posted on the agency's website.

The carbon wedge analysis is a way of presenting the effects various policy actions have towards meeting greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. Essentially, different policy actions will help fill the 'wedge' between the 'no action – baseline' trajectory and the targets.

The wedge diagrams depict a series of laws and policies with some more specific than others are. Specific policies or laws, such as the Washington Energy Code have identified specific targets and reductions. An example of general or conceptual policies would be VMT targets for reducing vehicle miles traveled. No pathway has been implemented for VMT. TRPC plans to pursue additional analysis on VMT later in the year.

The information was derived from a model the consultant team developed. The team has developed similar models for other cities and regions across Washington.

The consultant team ran different scenarios of policy actions, including two alternatives for the mix of sources for electricity generation, and three scenarios for electric vehicle adoption to model different outcomes. For example, if more actions result in an increase in electric vehicles, overall emissions would not decrease if the energy source uses coal to generate electricity. However, if the source of energy was cleaner, such as generating electricity from renewables, electric vehicles would have more impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Ms. Tabbutt reviewed wedge analysis results of two of the modeling scenarios:

- A. Emissions abatement with electricity generation mix based on the Washington renewable portfolio standard (15% renewables by 2020)
- B. Emissions abatement with electricity generation mix based on the Deep Decarbonization Pathways study (more aggressive approach with higher infiltration of renewables in the future and less reliance on natural gas and coal).

Scenario B reflects the region achieving target emissions by 2035. Other areas of focus to help achieve goals include an examination of heavy trucks, building technologies, and more actions to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

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Next steps include analysis of VMT and joint efforts with the cities of Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, and Thurston County to develop a Climate Mitigation Plan for implementing actions the region can pursue to reduce emissions.

Councilmember Stevenson referred to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) \$500,000 study of Interstate 5 between Exit 99 and Exit 116. The study speaks to developing mid- and long-term strategies for the corridor and identifying potential improvements to the US 101/I-5 interchange. She is interested in considering improvements to the Custer Way overpass as part of the study and envisions improvements to the overpass to promote the connectivity of the City of Tumwater by implementing landscaping improvements on the bridge similar to other improved overpasses in other parts of the state.

Ms. Tabbutt shared that TRPC staff is working with WSDOT to scope the extent of the study. The focus would likely begin at the north end of the interstate. The initial request was for a \$5 million study because of the improvements planned along the interstate near Joint Base Lewis McChord likely pushing vehicle congestion south and impacting the Nisqually Bridges and the freeway corridor through Thurston County.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick questioned the measurement of greenhouse gas emissions as a ton, as the measurement is a weight. For example, a ton of steel is much smaller in volume than a ton of water. Ms. Tabbutt said the conversion tables speak to conversion to tons and does not speak to the measurement of weight versus volume.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick asked about any considerations to explore electrification of the rail system. The European rail system is mostly electrified eliminating the use of diesel and resulting in a tremendous reduction in carbon emissions in Europe. Ms. Tabbutt said TRPC is not heavily involved in rail issues as the state oversees rail.

Commissioner Zitny mentioned he was able to attend a presentation from Puget Sound Regional Council on transportation issues the region is facing over the next 20 years. One major concern is the corridor from The City of DuPont to Snohomish forecasted to receive over one million people. Over 1,500 people are moving to King County each week. Recent funds expended on freeway infrastructure are forecasted not to improve traffic issues but stabilize existing conditions. He works for a federal agency as a hiring official and he is encountering more applicants from Thurston County seeking to work in King and Pierce Counties. He asked whether the region is involved in any long-term planning to address transportation.

Mr. Tabbutt acknowledged the issue is multifaceted as it also speaks to

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housing affordability and availability of jobs. The state is addressing the influx of new residents. She is a member of a Buildable Lands Steering Committee, which is having similar discussions about future growth. The issue is complicated because it speaks to the need for more livable wage jobs in the region to reduce the number of northbound commuters. Forecasting trends completed by TRPC reflect a very high number of commuters.

Commissioner Goldenberger asked whether the wedge containing VMT accounts for population growth. Ms. Tabbutt confirmed the information is benchmarked to include population growth.

**BRIEFING:**

**URBAN FORESTRY  
MANAGEMENT  
PLAN, ORDINANCE  
NO. O2018-005:**

Manager Medrud updated the Commission on the status of efforts for development of the Urban Forestry Management Plan.

Current efforts include a series of surveys of the community, businesses, and City staff about their understanding and feelings regarding urban forestry and trees. The community survey is scheduled for release on April 20 via the City's website using Survey Monkey as the survey tool. The employee survey will be released at the same time. Staff is exploring a long list of methods to communicate the survey to the community. Commissioners Kirkpatrick and Morr volunteered to post a notice for their respective homeowner associations.

The Tree Board, consultant, and staff continue to work on the format of the inventory of trees and vegetation resources on public land. Inventorying of private land will depend on aerial photos. The Public Works Department has a computerized asset management tool ("Lucity") with a specific module that could be used for trees in public areas. The module aligns with the goals of the plan to populate data for ongoing maintenance and care of trees, as well as providing information for development of the Urban Forestry Management Plan.

Following discussions with the City's Volunteer Coordinator, approximately 30 individuals have been identified to assist in inventorying efforts beginning in late May and June. All volunteers will be trained prior to inventorying trees in the City.

Documents from the Tree Board's discussion are posted on the City's website. Survey questions are undergoing a final update. The updated schedule has been posted on the website.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick commented that he anticipates a majority of the City's urban forest is not in public ownership. If the City does not inventory those areas, the City will lack information on the extent of urban forest in the

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City. Manager Medrud explained that the inventory of private properties would rely on aerial photography, recognizing issues associated with accessing private properties. Part of the process includes establishing a baseline of existing conditions with a timeline to review conditions in increments of 5, 10, or 15 years, etc., to assess conditions and the extent of any canopy losses or gains.

Chair Morr asked about the timing of the surveys for the homeowners association. Manager Medrud advised that the notice would be transmitted by the end of the week. He also plans to send the notice to all members of the Tree Board and the Planning Commission.

**WAREHOUSE  
DISTRIBUTION  
STANDARDS,  
ORDINANCE NO.  
O2017-023:**

Planner Ginther referred to a table of the proposed changes.

Recent changes include the addition of new definitions for cross-dock facilities and motor freight terminals, which tend to generate higher volumes of truck traffic and have received the most opposition from the Council. New definitions are included for warehousing accessory to another use to ensure clarity in terms of the type of warehousing. Another new definition is warehousing nondistribution.

A warehouse distribution center was defined several years ago. However, the definition was deemed too broad. The draft includes some refinements to the definition as well.

With the elimination of the Business Park zone district, another change speaks to deletion of language specific to that zone district.

Changes to the use tables incorporate the new definitions and address where those uses would be allowed.

Manager Medrud added that cross-dock facility and the motor freight terminal would be permitted uses up to 50,000 square feet and not allowed if the facility is more than 50,000 square feet (size of an average grocery store).

Planner Ginther said the draft also separates the warehouse nondistribution facility of 200,000 square feet to those larger than 200,000 square feet. The use was added to the use table within the Industrial zone districts.

Another change in the use table for Industrial zones for warehouse distribution centers require centers larger than 200,000 square feet to be subject to specific requirements in Chapter 18.42.110 (new section). Instead of being a conditional use (Chapter 18.56), a list of requirements was included in Chapter 18.42.110. Warehouse distribution centers smaller than 200,000 square feet are also subject to the requirements.

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Planner Ginther reviewed the requirements and location criteria for warehouse distribution centers, which are similar to the prior code.

Chair Morr asked whether the I-5/93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue area is designated as Heavy Industrial zoning. Manager Medrud said the area is zoned Light Industrial. Chair Morr referred to references to Heavy Industrial areas. Manager Medrud said the Heavy Industrial area is located off Black Lake Boulevard near the rock quarry.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick asked whether a map of the truck access routes is included in the ordinance. Planner Ginther advised that the ordinance does not include a map of truck access routes. Commissioner Kirkpatrick spoke to his previous request for a map only to discover that the City has no map of truck routes in the City. He asked how the routes are designated and whether public input is solicited prior to designating a route. Planner Ginther affirmed he would follow up on the questions.

Manager Medrud added that the City's Transportation Plan includes a list of designated truck routes in the City. The list has not been updated since the recent annexations. Staff will follow up with a more definitive answer.

Manager Medrud said the essential changes for warehouse distribution centers are the removal from the conditional use process and allowed as a permitted use but subject to much of the same criteria for conditional uses.

Planner Ginther advised that the Commission would likely have a public hearing on the proposal in May.

**WORKSESSION:**

**SIGN CODE  
REVIEW,  
ORDINANCE NO.  
O2017-007:**

Planner Ginther updated the Commission on current activities surrounding changes to the sign code. A business roundtable was recently convened. The Thurston County Chamber of Commerce and the Tumwater Chamber of Commerce, as well as a representative from Kaufman Construction attended. Kaufman Construction owns many buildings throughout the City and the urban growth area.

The feedback centered on temporary signs, such as A-boards and feather flags. Theresa Kaufman shared that the company spent \$20,000 on a monument sign for one building. However, the tenant insisted on the use of an A-board sign. Occasionally, tenants experience the loss of the signs, which can cost upwards of several hundreds of dollars. Feedback on feather flags from the Tumwater Chamber of Commerce acknowledged spending funds on feather flags for all members for the Small Business Weekend event. The Chamber was not aware feather flags are not allowed, which generated

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conversations surrounding how local businesses are small businesses and typically are unaware of the regulations as they lack the staff and resources to investigate all requirements in the City. Representatives pointed out how small businesses encounter extra challenges.

Several of the representatives spoke to the issue of working in all three cities and the importance of alignment of the codes between the cities. Although the sign codes are different in each of the cities, staff reviews all local codes. For example, the City of Olympia is considering an allowance of feather flags within a specific geographic area. Participants advocated for allowing feather flags. If allowed for a limited basis, the participants encouraged allowing them throughout specific periods instead of one specific period to enable a greater use of the sign.

Both chambers offered to survey members about temporary signs by sending a questionnaire. Results of the survey will be communicated to the City.

Manager Medrud noted that the chamber's survey results would align with the City's efforts to amend the code.

Another suggestion offered was more education on the sign code, such as improving FAQs on the City's website, more mailings, and more emails to assist small businesses. The City should expend more efforts to let businesses know what is allowed and not allowed.

Commissioner Zitny offered that an opportunity to provide information on the sign code could be provided to businesses when seeking a new or renewal of a business license. Planner Ginther said a welcome packet with the business license is a good idea and affords an opportunity to educate new businesses.

Commissioner Nguyen supported including more pictures and diagrams on the website. He asked about the status of staff working with the cities of Lacey and Olympia. Planner Ginther said he is in contact with staff from the City of Olympia. The City of Lacey has completed its update of the sign code.

Manager Medrud shared that the other jurisdictions identified specific issues to address. The City of Lacey was able to complete its process while the City of Olympia started its process in conjunction with the City of Tumwater's efforts but that work on the "Missing Middle Housing" discussion diverted staff resources. Staff continually seeks opportunities to work with the other jurisdictions. However, efforts are sometimes not in alignment.

Planner Ginther reported that initially, staff had planned to rely on the Planning Commission for residential input; however, the Mayor was able to solicit nine volunteers to participate in a residential roundtable meeting

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scheduled later in the month.

Several Commissioners expressed a desire to attend the meeting while acknowledging the importance of not attaining a quorum. Planner Ginther advised that the Commission would be contacted on the date and time of the meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Goldenberger moved, seconded by Commissioner Stevenson, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.**

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