

DRAFT MINUTES
UMATILLA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting of Thursday, October 25, 2018, 6:30 p.m.
Stafford Hansell Government Center 915 SE Columbia Drive, Hermiston, OR

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COMMISSIONERS

PRESENT: Suni Danforth, Chair, Don Wysocki, Hoot Royer, Cecil Thorne, Jon Salter

COMMISSIONERS

ABSENT: Gary Rhinhart, Vice Chair, Tami Green, Tammie Williams, Molly Tucker Hasenbank

STAFF PRESENT:

Bob Waldher, Planning Director, Jacob Potterf, Planner/GIS, Tierney Dutcher, Administrative Assistant

TAC COMMITTEE

PRESENT: Steve Watkinds, Kari Christiansen, Matt Kenny, Brandon Seitz, Tamra Mabbott, Cheryl Jarvis-Smith, Paul Howland, Laura Buhl, Transportation Growth Management Program

PROJECT CONSULTANT: Darci Rudzinski, Angelo Planning Group

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NOTE: THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE MEETING. RECORDING IS AVAILABLE AT THE PLANNING OFFICE

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Danforth called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

MINUTES

Chair Danforth asked the Planning Commission to review the minutes from the July 25, 2018 hearing. Chair Danforth recommended replacing the word “worst” with the word “least” on page 3. Ms. Dutcher agreed to make the change in the final draft. Chair Danforth moved to adopt the minutes with the agreed upon edit. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wysocki. Motion carried by consensus.

**HIGHWAY 395 NORTH TRANSPORTATION & GROWTH MANAGEMENT
CODE ASSISTANCE PROJECT OVERVIEW**

This project is partially funded by a grant awarded to the Umatilla County from the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program. The TGM Program is a joint effort of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). The goals of TGM are to strengthen the capability of local governments to effectively manage growth and comply with the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (Oregon Administrative Rule 660-012-0000), to integrate transportation and land use planning, and to encourage transportation-efficient land uses that support modal choice and the efficient performance of transportation facilities and services. Specifically, TGM supports efficient use of land and resources; human-scaled, walkable communities; good connections between local destinations; and pedestrian, bicycle, and transit-oriented development.

The purpose of the project is to create standards for the U.S. Highway 395 North corridor between the cities of Umatilla and Hermiston to implement previous planning and studies, improve the corridor's aesthetics and function, improve multi-modal connectivity and transportation options within the corridor and between the cities of Hermiston and Umatilla, and provide safe access for all modes of transportation, including non-motorized transportation like pedestrians and cyclists.

Since the project started in 2015 it has been community driven by the land and business owners in the area. To meet the objectives of the TGM Program the committee has been interested in hearing what the public wants. The project timeline includes a community engagement plan for public outreach. The committee has worked to notify the public through public notice mailings, posters in public spaces, email communications, website information and radio advertisements. Additionally, the committee held an open Community Workshop in August 2018 which included a virtual workshop available on the website for those who prefer to review the information in writing, or were unable to attend the day of the workshop.

The goal of this joint work session between the Umatilla County Planning Commission and Highway 395 Technical Advisory Committee is to review the Final Evaluation Memorandum and Draft Code Amendments Matrix and provide feedback regarding the Code amendments recommended by the TAC.

WORK SESSION

1) CODE CHAPTER 152, RETAIL/SERVICE COMMERCIAL (RSC) ZONE, LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (LI) ZONE

**Recommended Amendment:
Modify use and design standards applicable to development along the Highway 395 corridor within the study area.**

To implement the new and modified use and design standards along Highway 395, the amendments will be largely limited to the RSC Zone. In order for requirements to be applicable to select LI zoned parcels along Highway 395, the LI zoned parcels subject to the standards will be described in text, under the LI Zone requirements.

Note that some of the recommended modifications explored in this table are more broadly applicable (i.e., on parcels without frontage on the highway) and are suggested for inclusion in other areas of the Development Code.

Rationale

Most of the parcels within the Study Area with highway frontage are zoned RSC. The Study Area includes all of the parcels zoned RSC within the County. Modifying the RSC base zone, therefore, directly addresses most of the parcels that have a direct impact on the look and functionality of this highway segment. The proposed approach is to identify desired requirements in the RSC Zone, and reference these requirements for LI zoned parcels fronting the highway.

Discussion

No feedback was provided by the group on this topic.

2) CODE SECTIONS [RSC]: 152.249(B) DESIGN REVIEW, [LI]: 152.305(B) DESIGN REVIEW

**Recommended Amendment:
Broaden Design Review requirement for improvements along the corridor within the Study Area.**

Currently, Design Review is only required for new construction or a change in use. However, some of the proposed site and design elements explored in this table could apply when the proposed project is limited to site improvements. For example, new lighting and landscaping standards could apply when a parking lot is reconfigured and/or repaved. The Design Review sections could also be clarified to include the level of redevelopment that would trigger additional site and design requirements.

Rationale

Many of the upgrades that will affect the character of the corridor are site improvements (not new or renovated buildings), such as landscaping, lighting, or circulation. Therefore, when a project is limited to site improvements with no new construction, it should be subject to the design standards.

Discussion

No feedback was provided by the group on this topic.

ZONING & DESIGN STANDARDS

3) CODE SECTION 152.303 CONDITIONAL USES PERMITTED; GENERAL CRITERIA

**Recommended Amendment:
Restrict “heavy” industrial uses on LI Zoned parcels with frontage on Highway 395.**

The following uses are proposed to be prohibited on parcels zoned LI in the Study Area that have frontage on Highway 395.

- Automobile wrecking yard
- Commercial gravel extraction and processing
- Junkyard
- Sand or gravel storage yard

Rationale

There is support for restricting more intensive uses fronting the highway. This change would restrict uses that are the most land intensive of the uses allowed in the LI Zone, as well as those that have the most impact on the aesthetics of the area.

Discussion

No feedback was provided by the group on this topic.

4) CODE SECTIONS 152.246 USES PERMITTED, 152.247 CONDITIONAL USES PERMITTED

Recommended Amendment:

Allow RSC uses on LI zoned parcels with Highway 395 frontage.

The following RSC uses are proposed to be permitted as Conditional Uses on parcels zoned LI in the Study Area.

- Automobile service station
- Automobile, truck or motorcycle repair shops or parts store
- Automobile, truck or motorcycle sales lot

Rationale

This change is consistent with the Highway 395 North Economic Development/Planning Study, which recommended a commercial use designation along the full frontage of the 395 corridor between Punkin Center Road and Bensel Road.

The character of development along the highway corridor is largely homogenous, with subtle or no distinctions between commercially zoned and industrially zoned properties. Allowing for the same commercial uses for parcels fronting the highway would result in more economic opportunity for industrially zoned land owners without a significant impact to the character or function of the corridor.

Keep in mind the project objective to, “recognize the importance of maintaining economically vibrant and livable downtowns in the cities of Hermiston and Umatilla, and not facilitate the creation of a highway commercial strip that could damage the vitality of those downtowns”. The proposed allowed uses would not typically be found in a downtown area, and therefore would not compete with the nearby downtowns.

Discussion

Include proposed automotive related uses in the LI Zone in the draft Code amendments

- Explore additional site design criteria for these types of uses on the corridor.
- Revisit expanding automotive uses (conditionally) on LI zoned parcels with the TAC.

Explore additional allowed uses that may be appropriate on the corridor that are not named in the RSC or LI Zones currently.

- Call centers, etc.

Review what the Economic Development plan suggestions regarding new commercial uses appropriate on the corridor.

- What else could be added to the allowed use or CUP list that won't compete with the downtown areas?

5) CODE SECTION [RSC]: 152.250 DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS (C)

**Recommended Amendment:
Implement maximum setback standards.**

For both RSC- and LI-zoned parcels, there is currently a 20 ft. minimum front yard setback, which increases to 40 ft. if there is parking in the front yard. There is no maximum setback standard.

The recommendation is to remove a required minimum setback and implement a maximum setback of 20 ft. Include an applicability statement to provide clear thresholds for when the setback standards apply (new construction, major remodels, etc.).

Rationale

Building setbacks and orientation can have a significant impact on aesthetic appeal and pedestrian and bicycle access and circulation. Buildings located closer to the street can create a more interesting and comfortable experience for pedestrians, as well as automotive travelers.

The recommendation to codify a maximum setback would ensure that future buildings are located closer to the roadway. By requiring a maximum setback of 20 ft., the County is encouraging parking to be shifted to the side of and/or behind buildings. As a result, landscaping and buildings will be the predominant elements when viewed from the street, creating a more aesthetically appealing character for the corridor.

Discussion

Revisit min/max setback standards with the TAC.

- Is a maximum setback requirement necessary?

Consider restricting parking at the front of buildings and increasing setback requirements to 40 feet.

Concerns regarding outdoor display areas in the setback.

- Automotive dealers and farm equipment

Discussion about “raising the bar” for new proposals that include requests for display areas in front of buildings/in the front set-back, by requiring specific standards.

Expressed need to better articulate/illustrate setback standards

Explore a different set of standards for auto and large equipment users.

6) CODE SECTION [RSC]: 152.249 DESIGN REVIEW

**Recommended Amendment:
Establish landscaping requirements.**

- Minimum landscape cover

- Minimum planting standards defining acceptable species/ size/ spacing of landscape plantings
- Minimum parking lot landscaping requirements

Also consider requiring:

- Minimum number of street trees
- Minimum tree cover/canopy
 - shade cover at maturity)

Rationale

Landscape design standards are essential in creating aesthetically appealing and pedestrian friendly development. Low-density development and paved areas account for much of the existing built environment. Enhanced landscaping in this corridor can be instrumental in visually enhancing the area.

Landscaping also provides shade, mitigates the urban heat island effect, and reduces water runoff. All landscaping standards will need to account for climate conditions and water availability.

Discussion

Xeriscaping should be required as part of the new landscaping requirements.

- Landscaping that reduces or eliminates the need for supplemental water from irrigation.

Trees can be required if selected from a prescribed list of species that can do well in the area.

- Include a good tree and planting list with the proposed code amendments.

Setback from the highway is important to consider.

- Snow plows and salt used on road in the winter.

Landscape requirements should be specific.

- Amount & location

Distinguish what types of landscaping will be allowed and prohibited ODOT right-of-way.

- Unified streetscape
- Trees and lighting
- Better achieved through a corridor plan?

7) **CODE SECTIONS [RSC]: 152.248 LIMITATIONS ON USES, [LI]: 152.304 LIMITATIONS ON USES**

Recommended Amendment: Modify screening standards.

The Umatilla County Development Code currently establishes basic standards for screening of outdoor storage and activities. The Code does not address the design or method of screening; fences, walls, berms, landscape plantings, etc.

Modifications would include:

- Refine the list of items that are required to be screened.
 - Since outdoor merchandise displays are common along the corridor apply different standards to difference types of merchandise
 - e.g. building materials vs. auto sales
- Establish screening design standard, which would include:
 - Types of screening permitted
 - Fencing, landscaping, etc.
 - Minimum requirements for amount of screening
 - Minimum requirements for landscape screens
 - Linear spacing, height, ground cover plants and/or natural materials
 - Minimum requirements for fence/wall screens
 - Height, materials, extent of sight obscuring

Rationale

Outdoor storage areas are prominent along the corridor. Refined screening standards can create more cohesive and organized screening throughout the corridor, which can result in improved aesthetics.

Where screening standards conflict with requirements for clear vision areas at driveways and intersections, screening would not be required in the clear vision area.

Discussion

Additional screening requirements were favored
Distinguish between inventory storage vs. merchandise display

- Definitions

Potential County Economic Development fund incentives to help improve existing businesses.

- Pro Build example, where the fence containing lumber storage is in ODOT right-of-way.

8) CODE SECTION [RSC]: 152.545-.548, SIGN REGULATIONS

Recommended Amendment:

Reduce the number of allowed signs.

Limit the amount of wall mounted signs permitted on buildings along the corridor and clarify under what circumstances free standing signs are permitted.

Rationale

While it is important for business to have signage that can be read by passing motorists, too many signs and inappropriate placement can contribute to visual clutter and blight and can degrade the pedestrian environment.

There are currently a number of non-conforming signs along Highway 395 and addressing some of the aesthetic issues related to signs is a code enforcement issue. There is an opportunity to modify existing sign requirements to prohibit unlimited signage, while at the same time continuing to meet the needs of businesses on the corridor.

Discussion

Revisit off-premise sign requirements

- Off-site business sign must be co-located with the host business's sign

Regulations for removing signs when sites become vacant

9) CODE SECTION [RSC]: 152.249 DESIGN REVIEW, [LI]: 152.305 DESIGN REVIEW

Recommended Amendment: Require parking lot lighting.

The code currently does not require lighting in parking lots. Establish a requirement for lighting in parking lots. Reference existing Development Code for restrictions on types of lighting used to minimize light pollution and spillover for CUPs. Modify requirements include design review as well.

Rationale

Lighting enhances safety and comfort of parking lots. It can also enhance the overall attractiveness of the corridor. Standards for lighting will reference the County's lighting standards to reduce glare, spillover, and light pollution.

Discussion

Parking lot lighting requirement tied to a clear and objective standard

- Type of lighting based on number of stalls, etc.

Keep standard easy to implement for staff.

Existing lighting standards, currently applied only to CUPs, will apply for all development in the corridor.

10) CODE SECTION 152.562 ADDITIONAL OFF-STREET PARKING & LOADING REQUIREMENTS

Recommended Amendment: Establish a minimum bike parking requirement.

Currently, there are no requirements for bike parking. Create a minimum number of required bicycle parking spaces based on square footage of buildings or percentage of vehicle parking.

Bicycle parking spaces provided in addition to the minimum can receive points in the Design Points System (Table 2, Page 10).

Rationale

Providing bicycle parking encourages more active transportation use along the corridor.

Discussion

No feedback was provided by the group on this topic.

11) CODE SECTIONS [RSC]: 152.249 DESIGN REVIEW, [LI]: 152.305 DESIGN REVIEW

Recommended Amendment: Establish a requirement for window area.

There is no minimum requirement for the percentage of a building's façade that must be covered with windows. Create a standard for minimum percentage of window coverage on street-facing facades/building elevations. Window coverage above the required minimum will receive points in the Design Points System (Table 2, Page 10).

Rationale

Windows or glass doorways create visually interesting façades and open up views to merchandise, people, and activity.

Discussion

No feedback was provided by the group on this topic.

12) CODE SECTIONS [RSC]: 152.XXX DESIGN POINT SYSTEM (new section), [LI]: 152.305 DESIGN REVIEW (Reference section in RSC zone)

Recommended Amendment: Establish a design points system.

See Table 2 for a list of proposed building and site design features that a development can choose from in order to meet overall standards for high-quality design. Every development would need to achieve a certain number of points. The required number of points is to be determined.

Include an applicability statement to provide clear thresholds for when the point system applies (new construction, major remodels, etc.).

Rationale

Many design features have been discussed and favorably received as potentially improving the aesthetics of the Highway 395 North corridor. However, there has been little enthusiastic support for requiring these features as part of new or redevelopment in the area. The potential for additional regulations to increase development costs has been cited as one deterrent to endorsing additional requirements. The use of a design points system is a “mix and match” approach that provides flexibility in implementing design features.

Table 2 - Draft Design Points System

Design Criteria	Possible Points		
	0	1	2
Building Design Features			
Weather Protection (may include awnings, covered porches, building overhangs, or other weather protection; must extend at least 4 feet in horizontal distance from the building wall and be constructed of durable materials in order to qualify)	No weather protection at entrances or windows.	Weather protection provided over the primary building entrance.	Weather protection provided over all building entrances and required ground floor window areas.
Use of Natural Siding Materials including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Masonry, which includes natural and natural-looking stone, and rusticated brick or split-faced, colored concrete blocks. Wood board siding or wood shingles. Fiber cement boards or fiber reinforced extruded composite boards are also acceptable provided they have the appearance of natural wood. 	Little to no use of natural materials (less than 5 percent of street wall area, excluding area dedicated to windows).	5 to 50 percent of both total building facade area and street wall area covered with natural siding materials (excluding area dedicated to windows).	Over 50 percent of both total building facade area and street wall area covered with natural siding materials (excluding area dedicated to windows).
Window Coverage/Area	Window coverage meets base requirement.	50 to 60% of the area of the façade and street facing walls covered w/ windows.	Over 60% of the area of the façade and street facing walls covered w/ windows.
Building Articulation	No building articulation features.	1 of the following treatments on street facing façade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Change in the roof or wall plane (4 ft. minimum) b) Projecting or recessed elements c) Varying rooflines at 4 ft. minimum 	2 of more of the following treatments on a street facing façade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Change in the roof or wall plane (4 ft. minimum) b) Projecting or recessed elements c) Varying rooflines at 4 ft. minimum d) Visible and prominent

		d) Visible and prominent entrance (large entry doors, porches, protruding or recessed entrances).	entrance (large entry doors, porches, protruding or recessed entrances).
Architectural Features – Massing (Top-Middle-Base)	No architectural features.	Clear display of “Base”, “Middle” and “Top” massing – distinction between sections with change of color.	Clear display of “Base”, “Middle” and “Top” massing – distinction between sections with change of materials.
Site Design Features			
Bicycle Parking	Minimum required bicycle parking.	10% to 20% additional bicycle parking spaces provided beyond base requirement and at least half of all bike parking spaces are covered.	More than 20% additional bicycle parking spaces provided beyond the base requirement and at least half of all bike parking spaces are covered.
Trees	Number of trees meets base requirement.	10% above base requirement for on-site trees. Must be a tree species found in the [reference list].	20% above base requirement for on-site trees. Must be a tree species found in the [reference list].
Additional Landscaped Area	Little or no additional landscaped area provided (less than 5% of gross lot area beyond base requirement).	5% to 10% additional gross lot area landscaped beyond base requirement.	More than 10% additional gross lot area landscaped beyond base requirement.
Plant Selection	Number of plant species meets base requirement.	3 or more distinct plant species included in landscaping.	5 or more distinct plant species included in landscaping.
Outdoor Lighting	Outdoor Lighting Requirement – parking lot lighting.	1 point may be assigned for one of the following outdoor lighting features: 1) Pedestrian walkway lighting 2) Accent lighting on structure	2 points may be assigned for both of the following outdoor lighting features: 1) Pedestrian walkway lighting 2) Accent lighting on structure

Discussion

Discussion regarding the concept of a County Design Points System.

No negative comments regarding the types of design features shown in Table 2.

Concern regarding making development requirements too difficult/burdensome, thereby discouraging redevelopment and new development.

Discussion around appropriate point value for each element in the system.

- Number of points to require through incorporating self-selected (by applicant) design elements into a project or development proposal.

Suggestion to consider adding Electric Vehicle Charging Station to Table 2.

Building materials, articulation, and architectural features (elements in Table 2) will be difficult for the County to regulate because the Structural Permit and enforcement is out of a State office.

ACCESS & CIRCULATION

13) CODE SECTION 152.018 – ACCESS MANAGEMENT & STREET CONNECTIVITY

Recommended Amendment:
Modify access management requirements to improve safety and enhance mobility along Highway 395.

Currently, the only required conditions for a joint access driveway are “adjacent commercial and office uses that are major trip generators.” All other uses must provide joint access driveways “where feasible.” Major trip generators are defined as exceeding 400 trips per day. The threshold for requiring a joint access driveway should be lowered for properties fronting Highway 395 and it should be applicable to industrial uses, as well as commercial and office uses.

Rationale

The public has expressed strong concerns regarding safety along the corridor. Proposed modifications to access management requirements could improve the safety of the corridor. Note that Highway 395 is classified as an arterial roadway. Section 152.018 applies to “all arterials and collectors within the County and to all properties that abut these roadways.”

Discussion

Potential future planning projects focused on Highway 395 (the “public realm”)

- Future County TSP update, potentially focused on active modes
- ODOT-initiated corridor study.

14) CODE SECTION 152.018 – ACCESS MANAGEMENT & STREET CONNECTIVITY

Recommended Amendment:
Establish street connectivity standards.

Establish standards in preparation for future development and street improvements in the areas east and west of Highway 395.

New standards for:

- Maximum block size/street spacing standards
- Limits on cul-de-sacs and access way requirements
- Future street plan and connectivity requirements

Rationale

Street connectivity standards ensure that proposed developments do not preclude the creation or extension of streets where they are needed to ensure street connectivity and mobility in the area.

Developing a more robust local roads system over time, with improved or new roadways will provide alternatives to highway travel for short trips. This will increase travel efficiency, decrease conflicts related to exiting on/off the highway, and will enhance mobility throughout the area. As proposed, requirements are not limited to development proposals on parcels with Highway 395 frontage.

Discussion

No feedback was provided by the group on this topic.

15) CODE SECTIONS <NEW> COMMUNITY DESIGN STANDARDS or [RSC]: 152.249 DESIGN REVIEW [LI]: 152.305 DESIGN REVIEW

Recommended Amendment: Establish pedestrian circulation standards.

Create a new criterion for on-site pedestrian circulation, including:

- Purpose statement
- Applicability statement (all new developments and major expansions/remodels)
- Define and require a “safe, direct and convenient” walkway system between primary building entrances and all adjacent parking areas and/or sidewalks (where sidewalks not yet built to the public rights-of-way, accommodating space for future sidewalk and other pedestrian related streetscape elements).
- Vehicle/walkway separation standards
- Walkway marking, paving, width

Rationale

Pedestrian circulation standards promote more pedestrian activity along the corridor and create a safer and more comfortable experience for pedestrians.

Discussion

No feedback was provided by the group on this topic.

Project Consultant, Darci Rudzinski, Angelo Planning Group, stated that the next step will be for the Consultant to finalize the Code Amendments Matrix and develop draft Code Amendment Text. The draft Code Amendment Text will be reviewed by the TAC in December and presented to the Planning Commission in February 2018.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Danforth Adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tierney Dutcher, Administrative Assistant

ATTACHMENT: Recommended Actions from Attendees

1. Include proposed automotive-related uses in the LI-zone in the draft code amendments, but explore additional site design criteria for these types of uses on the corridor. Revisit expanding automotive uses (conditionally) on LI parcels with the TAC.
2. Explore additional allowed uses that may be appropriate on the corridor that are not named in the RSC or LI zones currently. Cited example was call centers.
3. Revisit minimum/maximum setback standards with the TAC. There was not consensus on whether or not a maximum setback requirement was necessary. There was little discussion on restricting parking in the front of buildings (which increases the setback to 40 feet). There are concerns regarding outdoor display areas in the setback – especially for automotive dealers and farm equipment.
4. Require Xeriscaping as part of the new landscaping requirements. Trees can be required, if selected from a prescribed list of species that can do well in the area. Setback from the highway is important, considering that salt is used in the winter. Landscape requirements should be specific regarding amount and location.
5. “Raise the bar” for proposals that want display areas in front of buildings/in the front setback by requiring specific standards.
6. Re: additional screening requirements, distinguish between/define inventory storage and merchandise display. Explore County economic development fund incentives to help improve existing businesses.
7. Revisit off-premise sign requirements; consider Umatilla’s requirement that the off-site business sign has to be co-located with the host business’s sign.
8. Tie parking lot lighting requirements to a clear and objective standard (e.g., type of lighting based on number of stalls) that is easy to implement for staff. Existing lighting standards, currently applied only to conditional use permits, will apply for all development in the corridor.
9. Consider adding EV charging station to Table 2.