

Approved Minutes

Bend Planning Commission

Monday, August 11, 2025, 5:30 P.M. Regular Meeting



The hybrid meeting started at 5:35 P.M., in-person and online.

The public was invited to watch online at: www.bendoregon.gov/planningcommission

1. ROLL CALL:

- Margo Clinton – Chair
- Scott Winters – Vice Chair
- Bob Gressens
- Suzanne Johannsen
- John LaMotte
- Erin Ludden
- Nathan Nelson

Commissioners Present: All Commissioners were present except Suzanne Johannsen and Erin Ludden. Bob Gressens attended online.

2. **Staff Present:** Ian Leitheiser, City Attorney; Colin Stephens, Community Development Director; Renee Brooke, Planning Manager; Jonathan Taylor, Urban Renewal Manager.

3. VISITORS:

The Chair opened the floor for comments on non-agenda items. Attendees were encouraged to fill out a speaker slip and approach the podium, or raise their hand online, to provide comments.

No public comment was given.

4. QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING:

Public Hearing/Recommendation to Council – Site-Specific Tax Increment Finance Plan

Urban Renewal Manager, Jonathan Taylor – jtaylor@bendoregon.gov

Chair Clinton convened the hearing at 5:36 PM and asked the Commission if anyone had pre-hearing contacts, bias, prejudice, or personal interest. The Chair then asked meeting attendees if there was any challenge with respect to Commissioners' bias, prejudgment, or personal interest. No challenges were made.

Planning Manager Brooke explained the quasi-judicial procedural requirements of State law.

Urban Renewal Manager Taylor gave his [presentation](#) of the proposed urban renewal or tax increment finance (TIF) area. Mr. Taylor provided background of prior actions by the Bend Urban Renewal Agency (BURA) and the adoption of TIF areas for housing affordability and growth. Mr. Taylor gave an overview of public engagement and showed BURA's efforts have incentivized 16% of the City's 5-year housing goal within its first 6 months. He explained the Planning Commission's role pursuant to ORS 457.89 is to review whether the proposed Tax Increment Finance Plan conforms to the City of Bend's Comprehensive Plan and provide a recommendation to City Council. Mr. Taylor then outlined the steps for establishing the specific TIF plan before the Commission and the timeline of the next steps for notifications and the public hearing before City Council on October 1st. He described the proposed Emblem TIF site in southeast Bend at 61105 Ferguson Road as undeveloped, stagnant land with infrastructure deficiencies. Mr. Taylor provided the maximum indebtedness as rebates or program implementation of \$22 million, the plan term (26 years) and the proposed project of housing development and administration. He summarized the project with respect to the City's applicable Comprehensive Plan policies. The project will provide 20% of the proposed housing units at rental rates affordable to households earning 70-90% of Area Median Income (AMI).

Commissioner LaMotte asked staff to verify that this project is not bonded so funds kick in annually once built.

Mr. Taylor confirmed this and that there is no risk to the City if the applicant/developer does not certify their annual report. In that case, the collected TIF would go back to the taxing districts for that year.

Commissioner LaMotte asked how the System Development Charges (SDC) work

Mr. Taylor responded that the applicant is working with the City to identify what amount of system development charge assistance can be offered over the next 5 years. Will enter into a Promissory note and collect the rebate to pay it off.

Commissioner Gressens asked whether the up-front funds is a bank loan or City revenue bond.

Mr. Taylor answered that it is considered a revenue bond, but without the TIF, these projects would not occur and SDCs would not be generated. In that way, it is more of a promissory note for SDC deferral. It is an intent to pay on behalf of the developer using the rebate.

Commissioner Gressens asked who is indebted.

Mr. Taylor stated that it is BURA who would be indebted to the City to pay on behalf of the developer. BURA enters into a promissory note with the City to pay SDCs on behalf of the developer and repay SDCs from the tax generated with that rebate.

If City elects to not fund SDCs then no debt. If we establish the Urban Renewal District, they pay taxes, then BURA rebates BURA's portion, about 80%. Most developers use towards net operating cost to provide affordability.

Commissioner LaMotte inquired about the 90% of area median income (AMI) levels.

Mr. Taylor provided a breakdown of required affordable units to be rent restricted to be met by developer to be funded by BURA.

Commissioner LaMotte inquired the reason for this coming to Planning Commission.

Mr. Taylor explained a TIF plan must meet the state statute, it must meet the Comprehensive Plan of the City and the economic development strategy of the City. We do not have an economic development strategy so we need to determine that it meets the blighted conditions in ORS457 and does the Commission find it in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

City Attorney Ian Leitheiser stated the Commission's role is to determine whether the TIF plan complies with the requisite elements of the Comprehensive Plan and make a recommendation to City Council.

Commissioner Winters inquired about the presentation of BURA's housing efforts and if there are strategies to spread the affordability range.

Mr. Taylor stated that the City's Housing Opportunities Made for Everyone committee is looking at various sources and incentives to do this but getting below 80% AMI is harder to achieve.

Planning Manager Brooke added that the chart just represents BURA's efforts with this program. We do have private developers providing affordable housing at a broader range of affordability levels with different funding sources.

Mr. Taylor provided further detail on the target 90% AMI, household size and current rents.

Commissioner Nelson stated this is most effective incentive tried by the City and wants to see broader income levels.

Commissioner Winters gave his experience with housing and stated he is looking forward to the new dashboard.

Chair Clinton opened the public testimony portion of the hearing. No public testimony was provided.

Chair Clinton closed the public hearing at 6:08 PM and the Commissioners deliberated.

Commissioner LaMotte commented he thinks this is great that we are thinking about housing comprehensively.

Commissioner Nelson commented this conforms to the General Plan.

Motion by Commissioner LaMotte to recommend that the City Council approve the Project Emblem Site-Specific Tax Increment Finance Plan based on draft findings that the plan conforms to the City of Bend Comprehensive Plan.

Second by Commissioner Nelson

Vote is unanimous. Motion carries.

5. WORK SESSION

5.1 Overview of Planning Commission Rules of Procedure

City Attorney Leitheiser gave a presentation on the Planning Commission Bylaws and rules of procedure. He also discussed Rosenberg's Rules of Order and provided copies to the Commissioners which is a modernized procedural guide.

Commissioner LaMotte asked for clarification on the Commissioner's role when attending City Council for an item the Commission recommended.

Mr. Leitheiser responded that the role is availability to answer questions that the Council may have regarding the Commission's recommendation.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The Planning Commission approved the April 28, 2025 and May 12, 2025 meeting minutes.

7. COMMUNICATIONS:

7.1. Reports From Planning Commissioners

No Commissioner reports.

7.2. Report From Planning Manager

Renee Brooke, Planning Manager, stated the next Planning Commission meeting on 8/25 will include a Waterway Overlay Zone application for the Fire Rock Bridge

removal. The PC's first meeting in September will include a work session of a large Development Code amendment package, which could be lengthy.

7.3. Report From Community and Economic Development Director

Colin Stephens, CDD Director asked Ms. Brooke to report on the status of OSU Master Plan amendment. The item was continued by Council to 8/20 for parties to resolve access issues for the BPRD property adjacent to the campus, which the Commission recommended. The oral testimony was closed on August 6th and Mr. Leitheiser added that Council kept the record kept open for written testimony until 8/13. Anyone who is a party can respond until August 19th before the record closes at 5 PM.

Commissioner LaMotte asked if this was the Innovation Park.

Staff responded that this is for the Master Plan but that it included the Innovation Park and allowing buildings up to 85 feet in height.

Director Stephens indicated that the Council should make a decision before the next Planning Commission meeting

Report From City Attorney

Ian Leitheiser, Assistant City Attorney, - no report.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Cathleen Carr