

APPROVED

CITY OF BREMERTON

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MAY 15, 2023

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Tift called the regular meeting of the Bremerton Planning Commission to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present

Chair Tift
Vice Chair Rich
Commissioner Flemister
Commissioner Mosiman
Commissioner Pedersen

Staff Present

Garrett Jackson, Planning Manager, Department of Community Development
Christina Raine, Project Assistant, Department of Community Development
Pat McGanney, Chief, Fire Department
Tom Wolfe, Chief, Police Department
Jeff Elevado, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation
Ned Lever, City Engineer, Department of Public Works and Utilities
Cami Apfelbeck, Water Utility Manager, Department of Public Works and Utilities
Chance Berthiaume, Stormwater Permit Coordinator, Dept. of Public Works and Utilities
Bill Davis, Managing Engineer of Utilities, Department of Public Works and Utilities
Gunnar Fridriksson, Stormwater Project Manager, Dept. of Public Works and Utilities
Vicki Grover, Transportation Project Manager, Dept. of Public Works and Utilities

Commissioners Excused

Commissioner Coviello
Commissioner Wofford

Quorum Confirmed

CHAIR CALL FOR MODIFICATIONS TO AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COMMISSIONER MOSIMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 17, 2023, AS PRESENTED.
VICE CHAIR RICH SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC MEETING

Call to the Public (public comments on any item not on the agenda)

Chair Tift invited comments from citizens. There were none.

Workshop: City Services Chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan for the 2024 Update

Mr. Jackson advised that the purpose of the workshop is for the Commission to consider public comments and provide staff with feedback on the revised Goals and Policies of the City Services Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. He reviewed that the State requires local jurisdictions to update their comprehensive plans to be consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA). The City plans regionally (King, Snohomish, Kitsap and Pierce Counties) via the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), which provides a guiding document for planning regional growth called Vision 2050. The City also plans with the

Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council (KRCC), which includes all jurisdictions within Kitsap County. The KRCC's Countywide Planning Policies guide development within Kitsap County. The City's Comprehensive Plan must address local needs, while also meeting criteria for KRCC, PSRC and GMA. He reminded the public that the City is forecasted to grow to just under 64,000 people by the year 2044, jobs are forecasted to increase to about 58,000. The updated Comprehensive Plan is meant to accommodate the rising population.

Mr. Jackson advised that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scoping notice was sent out to the public via postcard, and about 75% of the respondents indicated that population growth should be located in existing centers and high-density areas. The City has been implementing a "centers" approach since 2004. The intent is to condense populations and high-intensity uses into smaller, compact areas. Putting the most intense development standards for height, development coverage, etc. into smaller areas allows developers to make the most efficient use of City infrastructure. The more development is spread out, the more it costs to install and maintain infrastructure.

Mr. Jackson reviewed the various City services as follows:

- **Drinking Water.** The City's Drinking Water System serves about 2.3 billion gallons of drinking water each year to over 72,000 people. He shared a map of the service area, noting that it extends well beyond the jurisdictional boundaries of incorporated Bremerton. Not only does it include some urban growth areas (UGAs) associated with the City, it also goes nearly up to Silverdale into the Central Kitsap UGA. About 48% of the water use is by City residents, 25% by the Navy and 21% by residents in unincorporated areas. The City has a nationally-recognized water system, earning the 2017 American Water Works Association Exemplary Source Water Protection Award. The 2020 Water System Plan has been approved by the Department of Health after an extensive public review process. It will be available on the City's webpage shortly, as it is reviewed by the City Council for adoption.
- **Wastewater.** The wastewater system includes two wastewater treatment plants, 40 sewage pump stations, and 268 grinder pump stations. Since 1996, the City has reduced both the volume and frequency of sewer overflow events by more than 99%. As there are public concerns each time a sewer overflow event happens, it is important to convey the dramatic decrease that has occurred since 1996 when baseline numbers were established. The City's wastewater system received an Outstanding Performance Award in 2021 from the Department of Ecology.
- **Stormwater.** The stormwater system includes 96 miles of piping (from 4" to 84" in diameter), 4,488 catch basins and more than 70 stormwater quality treatment systems. The purpose of the Stormwater Plan is to maintain certification of the stormwater system through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit from the Department of Ecology. The draft Stormwater Comprehensive Plan is nearing completion and should find its way in front of the City Council this summer for adoption as an appendix into the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Police Department.** The Bremerton Police Department (BPD) was created in 1901, shortly after the City incorporated. It is one of 25% of the police departments in the State of Washington that are certified by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC), the statewide agency that insures there is a baseline of professional standards for police departments. The national average for officers is 2.4 per thousand. In 2022, the BPD was staffed at 1.4 officers per thousand and received over 44,000 calls for service.
- **Fire Department.** The mission of the Bremerton Fire Department (BFD) is to protect, educate and be leaders in the community while providing progressive life safety services. The current level of service (LOS) is for services to be provided six minutes after an emergency call has been generated. In 2022, the BFD responded to 60.7% more emergency calls compared to 2012, a rise of about 8% per year. The Fire Prevention Office saw a 400% increase in the number of construction/inspections; this is the team that reviews construction permits for International and Local Fire Code conformance.
- **Parks Department.** The mission of the Parks and Recreation Department is to enrich the lives of Bremerton citizens with aquatic, athletic and recreational opportunities for persons of all ages and providing safe and attractive parks and facilities for play, health and fitness, enjoyment and celebrations. The current Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan was adopted in 2020 and is available on the department's webpage. The next update will start in 2025. All the park-related comments received during the Comprehensive Plan update will be sent to the Parks Department

APPROVED

to inform them in their future PROS effort. He shared two maps showing the City's current LOS for parks, advising that the standard LOS is a ten-minute walk to City parks and a two to five-mile drive to community parks.

- **Schools.** Three school districts serve the City's young people, and the boundaries for each district do not follow the jurisdictional City limits. The Bremerton School District serves about 4,400 students, The Central Kitsap School District serves over 11,000, and the South Kitsap School District serves nearly 10,000.
- **Puget Sound Energy.** Puget Sound Energy provides electricity to the City of Bremerton. Demand forecasts have risen from 1.2% average annual growth in 2021 to a current level of 1.8%. PSE aspirational goals are to meet net zero methane emissions by 2022, coal free by 2025, carbon neutral electric system by 2030, and 100% clean electricity by 2045.
- **Cascade Natural Gas.** Cascade Natural Gas expects growth to continue to rise at 1.1% annually, but this could potentially be curtailed by building code provisions that limit natural gas usage for commercial and residential buildings.
- **Telecommunications.** Common private providers in the City include Comcast, T-Mobile and Century Link. The public provider is Kitsap Public Utility District. Outreach is ongoing with telecommunication providers, and they have received one comment from Lumen.

Mr. Jackson advised that four public comments have been received, all of which are posted on the website. He provided a brief overview of each one as follows:

- **Jane Robelowski** thinks that infrastructure improvements should be throughout the City and not just in centers.
- **Caelum Roberts** supports reducing auto dependency and making biking and walking safer.
- **Chris Carlson, representing Buckingham Properties,** supports allowing multifamily structures within the low-density residential zone. The Buckingham Property is over 200 acres. In a previous comment the Ueland Tree Farm, owners of 440 acres, previously requested that multifamily development be allowed in the Low-Density Residential Zone.
- **Lara Lant, representing Lumen,** is letting the Planning Commission know that the fiber they provide will not only help the City technologically, but also from a green infrastructure standpoint.

Mr. Jackson announced that the April winners for the Yeti City of Bremerton Tumbler are Michelle Moshay and Lori Knapton. He reminded those present in the audience and participating online that people who provide public comments will automatically be entered into upcoming drawings. Two winners will be selected every month.

Mr. Jackson announced that City staff attended the Bremerton Community Farmers Market to let citizens know about the Comprehensive Plan update. Staff will also attend the Armed Forces Festival on May 20th.

Again, **Mr. Jackson** said the orders of the day are for the Planning Commission to consider public comment received at the workshop and provide staff with feedback on the revised goals and policies as they appear in the packet.

Mr. Jackson invited a number of Bremerton City Staff to share brief updates with the Planning Commission:

- **Pat McGanney, Fire Chief** announced that the City Council has approved the Police and Fire Departments to put a levy lid lift on the August ballot for public safety staffing. Hopefully, this will enable them to maintain the current level of public service to the citizens of Bremerton.
- **Tom Wolfe, Chief of Police** reported that, currently, the Police Department is operating at a little less than 1.4 officers per thousand. They saw the lowest crime rates when the department was at 1.8 officers per thousand in 2007. As Chief McGanney reported, they will present a levy lid lift on the August ballot, which will enable them to get the officer ratio up to a sustainable level. This will be needed to keep up with the growth and other changes that are occurring in the City.

APPROVED

- **Jeff Elevado, Parks and Recreation Director** said the department manages a little over 300 acres, approximately 38 parks, facilities, green space and viewsapes for the public's enjoyment. In 2025, they will be updating the PROS Plan, which drives the goals and objectives and capital plan. They plan to do similar public outreach as the update proceeds. They will also incorporate Comprehensive Plan items into the PROS plan.
- **Ned Lever, City Engineer**, said their office works on the capital program for transportation, water, wastewater and stormwater. They also support operations for all of those services.
- **Cami Apfelbeck, Water Utility Manager**, reported that the updated Comprehensive Plan has now been approved by the state and is ready to enter the public process and be brought to the City Council for adoption. The plan is scheduled to go to study sessions on June 14th and 28th, and hopefully go to a City Council meeting on July 5th.
- **Chance Berthiaume, Stormwater Permit Coordinator** said he manages the stormwater program for the City. They recently completed the Stormwater Comprehensive Plan, which is available on the City's website for review and comment. They have also completed the Watershed-Based Plan and the Stormwater Management Program Plan. Both of these documents are posted on the City's website every year for public review and comment.
- **Bill Davis, Managing Engineer of Utilities**, reported that they have over 40 municipal pump stations and two wastewater treatment plants. One of the plants operates year-round and treats the entire City's wastewater service area. The plant in East Bremerton operates only occasionally during very heavy weather events. There has been a big push the last several years to remove beach sewers. Several projects dating back to 2013 have eliminated beach sewers and they will continue to do that. They are also in the process of updating the Wastewater Comprehensive Plan. A consultant has been selected and they are currently negotiating a scope of work. The goal is to complete the update sometime in 2024. Upcoming projects include sewer improvements along Tracyton Beach Road, several upgrades at the wastewater treatment plant, and some upgrades of the eastside treatment plant UV disinfection system.
- **Gunnar Fridriksson, Stormwater Project Manager**, said he works in conjunction with Mr. Berthiaume, who does the planning and layout for projects. He helps with the design and delivery of the capital projects for their program.
- **Vicki Grover, Transportation Project Manager**, said she will be working on the Transportation Element for the Comprehensive Plan update.

Chair Tift invited public comments.

Jim Cline, Interim Vice President of the Charleston Business District, commented that the Parks and Recreation Department does so many other things besides managing all of the parks in the City. One of them is the hanging baskets that were installed in downtown Bremerton. Another was repairing the brackets to hang the flower baskets on Callow Avenue. He thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for the part they play in keeping the City beautiful.

No one else indicated a desire to participate, and **Chair Tift** closed the public portion of the workshop.

Commissioner Mosiman recalled that, at the last meeting, he raised the issue of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, which is probably a City service rather than a transportation issue. He explained that there is currently a Washington State grant for building EV and hydrogen infrastructure. Bainbridge Island has availed itself to the grant, and they are installing an EV charging station. He reminded them that both the State and Federal Government are wrapping up the clean-air standards and are expecting increases in mileage numbers. Lastly, he said the Biden Administration's recent bill allocates \$7.5 billion to build a network of charging stations for EVs. That money will be funneled to the states, and the states will decide how to disperse the funds. He summarized that probably sometime next fall or winter there will be a large amount of money on the table for building EV infrastructure, and he would like the Planning Commission to recommend the City Council consider these opportunities and include EV infrastructure in the Comprehensive Plan. EVs are coming on, and the City doesn't need to wait 10 years to finally decide to do something about it. By that time, the funding opportunities will have come and gone. The City needs to service its residents who will increasingly purchase EVs, and he would like visitors to be able to pull up an app that shows a number of EV charging stations in the City, particularly in the business districts.

APPROVED

Commissioner Mosiman said he found the statement made at the last meeting by the Director of Community Development to be slightly erroneous. She implied that EV charging stations would be considered a utility, and he believes that they are akin to lightbulbs and street lighting. The utility company provides the power to the street lights, and the City provides the poles and maintenance, but he wouldn't call street lights a utility. While EV charging stations would use the electricity provided by someone else, but they would not be considered a separate utility such as water or sewer. He invited other members of the Planning Commission to share their thoughts on including language in the 10-year plan that would recommend the City either promote or look at installing EV charging stations in the City.

Chair Tift agreed with Commissioner Mosiman that electric cars and EV charging stations are the future. If they want to bring people to Bremerton, they will need a place to charge their vehicles. This is something the City will need to address, and obtaining grant funding is a better strategy than charging the cost to the taxpayers. He asked the staff members who were participating online if there is already something in their plans for EV charging stations.

Vice Chair Rich also agreed with Commissioner Mosiman. She said would like to know what the City's current plans are for EV charging station infrastructure. If the Commission agrees that planning for EV infrastructure should be institutionalized, what kind of direction does staff need in terms of next steps?

Commissioner Flemister said she would also like to know the answer to the questions raised by Chair Tift and Vice Chair Rich. Has the City earmarked any funding for EV charging stations?

Commissioner Pedersen recommended the City explore what it would take to install charging stations, especially if there is grant money available to do so. It would be nice to know what types of programs other similar cities have, especially those nearby.

Mr. Jackson reminded the Commission that the Comprehensive Plan outlines the City's goals and policies and not individual grant proposals or projects. The City works hand-in-hand with Puget Sound Energy, and they contact the City when opportunities come up for adding charging stations throughout the City. He pointed out there are Comprehensive Plan goals supporting the electrification efforts of the State and region, and he agreed to follow up on that. There will also be additional language in the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, which the Commission will see at their next meeting.

Ms. Grover referred to a Transportation Element goal, which is to *"promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy."* A subgoal is that the City would *"participate with the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and other regional entities to understand and contribute to the implementation of regional plans for electrical vehicle charging and accommodation of other alternative fuel sources, including support of installation of EV charging stations on private and publicly owned property."* She summarized it is her intention to look into these opportunities via the Transportation Element. She has reached out and had conversations with Puget Sound Energy. She said she is just scratching the surface, but EV charging stations are something they will be looking at in the Transportation Element update.

Chair Tift summarized that the Commission has made itself clear that they want EV charging stations to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. **Commissioner Mosiman** thanked his fellow Commissioners for weighing in on the issue. Ms. Grover's statement about EV infrastructure sounds complete from first blush. However, he would like to know that will be adequately addressed in the Comprehensive Plan going forward. He sees EV charging stations as a service, but he is okay with addressing it in the Transportation Element instead. He just wants to make sure it is adequately covered. **Mr. Jackson** said the Planning Commission will have an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Transportation Element at their June meeting.

Commissioner Flemister said that after Ms. Grover's response, she is fairly satisfied and comfortable that EV charging station language will be considered as part of the Transportation Element.

Vice Chair Rich referred to the staff presentation that stated that in 2022, the Fire Department responded to 60.7% more emergency calls compared to 2012. She asked if that was calls or service provided. She asked what internal conversations the Fire Chief is having about this huge increase. **Chief McGanney** said it was an increase in the call volume from 2012 compared to 2022, and it includes emergency services. There are a lot of things that contribute to the increase, including homelessness,

pandemic, drug problems and population growth. Two years ago, the City Council approved an additional three staff, which are used to staff an additional 10-hour response unit (paramedic or life-support unit), which runs Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. They have increased transport times due to the relocation of St. Michaels Hospital. As mentioned earlier, the City Council has authorized a levy on the August ballot that will help with staffing issues and allow them to increase from a 10-hour to a 24-hour response vehicle.

Commissioner Pedersen commented that the internet is a basic community utility needed by all and more akin to the road in front of his house. He said he is a bit uninformed about the County's program for creating a public internet service. It may have only been supplemental to provide service to outlying areas that aren't currently getting good service. However, it might be nice to have supportive wording in the City's planning documents if and when the County were to start an effort of this type.

Mr. Jackson pointed out that there is a map attached to the Staff Report showing the current public utility district fiber that is provided to the City of Bremerton. The City has projects in the works with the Kitsap Public Utility District for extending that fiber. **Commissioner Pedersen** asked if the general public would be given an option of purchasing this service, and **Mr. Jackson** responded that he would research and get back to the Commission as to the availability of the fiber. **Commissioner Pedersen** commented that it would be a big deal if the City provided the service directly instead of requiring citizens to purchase the service from a third party. **Chair Tift** said he also had questions about the fiber the public utility district has installed as well as the mechanism to connect to it. The internet has become a vital part of homes today, so this information will be useful going forward.

Chair Tift said he would also like information about how the streets are repaired when sewer and/or stormwater lines are replaced or installed. He assumes that City departments coordinate this effort as the streets program is a part of the Public Works Department.

Chair Tift pointed out that Kitsap Lake is a nice resource for the City of Bremerton. It is utilized not only by the people who live nearby, but by visitors to the public park. He thanked the Parks and Recreation Department and other City departments that were involved in the work that has been done in the park to improve the stormwater system, etc.

Ms. Apfelbeck informed the Commission that, in addition to the Interlocal Agreement with the Kitsap Public Utility District to take advantage of opportunities to share fiber, the water and wastewater utilities are currently working with Astound, formerly Wave Broadband, to extend dark fiber to all of the critical facilities. This means there would be fiber conduit throughout several portions of the City, and she is certain it is part of Astound's business plan to then lay fiber to bring service to the broader citizenry and businesses. Hans Nielson in the City's IT Department is managing this project, and **Mr. Jackson** could follow up with him for a more comprehensive description as to what ways this might lead to access for citizenry.

Commissioner Mosiman noticed from the map provided that the wastewater system provides service to places that are beyond the City of Bremerton. However, Rocky Point and the area to the south were left out. He assumes that means there is no sewer services to those areas. He asked if all of these people are on septic systems. **Mr. Jackson** said sewer is considered a strictly urban service, and the City's service area is limited to the urban area and the City's UGA. There's a small area north of Kitsap Lake that has sewer service, and they are looking to include this area in the UGA as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. **Mr. Lever** clarified that Rocky Point is part of the UGA, but there hasn't been an extension of sewer service to that area. Currently, these properties are on septic systems. That is also true for other properties in the UGAs where the sewer service hasn't yet been extended. **Mr. Davis** added that the City prepared a plan in 2013 that shows some intention in those areas, but nothing has been acted on to date.

Chair Tift thanked the staff members for making themselves available for questions and clarifications during the meeting.

APPROVED

BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Report

Chair Tift did not have any items to report.

Director Report

Mr. Jackson announced that a lot of legislation has been passed at the State level, specifically House Bill (HB) 1110, for missing-middle housing. Staff is currently conducting an internal analysis to see how the legislation will impact the Comprehensive Plan update. There is a lot to take in and analyze.

Chair Tift asked how homeowner's associations (HOAs) would be impacted by HB 1110. Would HOAs take precedence over State law? For example, would duplexes or fourplexes be allowed in developments if the HOA requires single-family residences? Mr. Jackson said he would research and follow up on these questions at a later meeting.

Old Business

There was no old business.


New Business

There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Respectively Submitted by:


Andrea L. Spencer, AICP
Executive Secretary
Maggie Rich, Vice Chair for
Rick Tift, Chair
Planning Commission

APPROVED