



MINUTES

RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, February 4, 2025

**Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard**

City Council Regular Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Richardson called the Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Welcome and Roll Call

Mayor Richardson welcomed those in the audience and expressed appreciation for their attendance.

Attendance: Mayor Richardson	Present
Mayor Pro Tem Kent	Present
Councilmember Jones	Present
Councilmember Lukson	Present
Councilmember Maier	Present
Councilmember VanDyke	Present (Remote via Zoom)
Councilmember Whitten	Present

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, City Attorney Kintzley, Fire Chief Huntington, Chief of Police Pilcher, Energy Services Director Whitney, Finance Director Allen, Human Resources Director Paulsen, Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite, Public Works Director D'Alessandro, and City Clerk Rogers.

Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember Whitten led the Council and audience in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Presentations

1. New Hires and Retirements

A video featuring eight (8) new hires for the month of January was played for the audience.

- Tigran Andrew - IT Customer Service Technician II, Information Technology
- Braeden Davis - Apprentice Lineworker, Power Operations
- Tyler Good - Apprentice Lineworker, Power Operations
- Chris Jakubowicz - Building Inspector I, Development Services
- Cindy Salgado - Emergency Communications Dispatcher, SECOMM Operations
- Jacob Doyle - Firefighter, Fire & EMS
- Joshua Stolz - Firefighter, Fire & EMS
- Kael Stueckle - Firefighter, Fire & EMS

The City also recognized D'ette Peach-Atkins, who retired as a Library Assistant after twenty-one (21) years of dedicated service at the Richland Public Library.

Public Hearing

City Clerk Rogers read the Public Hearing and Public Comments procedures.

2. Proposed Adoption of the 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update Amendments, Ordinance No. 2025-04

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:06 p.m. No testimony was offered.

3. Proposed Amendment to Richland Municipal Code Title 23: Zoning Regulations and the Official Zoning Map of the City of Richland, Ordinance No. 2025-05

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:06 p.m. No testimony was offered.

4. Proposed Vacation of a Portion of Gay Road Right-of-Way, Ordinance No. 2025-06

Mayor Richardson opened the public hearing at 6:06 p.m.

The following individual provided testimony:

- Jonathan Bond, a partner and co-founder of GSC Investments, LLC, stated that his company plans to develop a storage facility at 2015 Snyder Street. Mr. Bond raised concerns regarding the proposed pathway's proximity to the railroad and stated that he and his company oppose the placement of the pedestrian pathway at that location. He reiterated that there is already an existing pathway adjacent to the Vantage Highway leading to Hagan Street, and the new pedestrian easement proposed by the City would be duplicative and unlikely to prevent pedestrians from crossing the railroad track.

No other testimony was offered.

Mayor Richardson closed the public hearing at 6:11 p.m.

5. Proposed Amendment to the 2025-2030 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program related to the SR-240/Aaron Interchange Improvements Project, Resolution No. 2025-22

Mayor Richardson opened and closed the public hearing at 6:11 p.m. No testimony was offered.

Public Comments

The following individual provided public comments:

- Shawn Fox, a resident of Richland, advocated for the Early Learning Center and raised concerns about the 10% Early Childhood Assistance Program funding cut that could eliminate pre-kindergarten classes next year. While acknowledging that education funding typically falls outside Council's scope, Fox called for local leadership in addressing the funding crisis. As federal and state support declines, he stated that the community should take action. Mr. Fox concluded by stating that the Early Learning Center should be seen as more than just an expense line but rather as a crucial investment in the shared future of the Tri-Cities, ensuring that every child thrives from their first day of learning.

Consent Calendar

City Clerk Rogers read the Consent Calendar.

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Minutes

6. Approval of the January 21, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes and the January 28, 2025 City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

Ordinances - First Reading

None.

Ordinances - Second Reading & Passage

None.

Resolutions - Adoption

7. Resolution No. 2025-18, Authorizing Award of Bid to Prater Electric, Inc. for the Stevens Substation Expansion & Bank 1 Construction Project
8. Resolution No. 2025-20, Authorizing a Consultant Agreement with KPFF Consulting Engineers for the Horn Rapids Rail Extension Project
9. Resolution No. 2025-21, Accepting Move Ahead Washington Grant Funds for the SR-240/Aaron Drive Complete Streets Improvements

Items - Approval

None.

Items of Business

10. Ordinance No. 2025-04, Adopting the 2022 Comprehensive Plan Amendments into the Existing 2017 Comprehensive Plan (First Reading)

Planning Manager Stevens provided an overview of Ordinance No. 2025-04, which adopts the 2022 Comprehensive Plan amendments into the 2017 Comprehensive Plan. He explained that the proposed 2022 Comprehensive Plan amendments were filed in 2022 but were delayed due to their association with necessary amendments to the Badger Mountain South (BMS) Land Use and Development Regulations (LUDR), which required extensive review with input from community stakeholders, and will be presented to Council at second reading of Ordinance No. 2025-04 and Ordinance No. 2025-05.

Planning Manager Stevens reviewed the four (4) initial applications approved for the 2022 Comprehensive Plan Policies, Maps and Zoning Code Amendments Docket through adoption of Resolution No. 2022-74. Of the four (4) initially docketed, only three (3) came forward with favorable recommendations from the Richland Planning Commission:

- CPA2022-101 consists of an application from the City of Richland's Parks & Public Facilities Department to replace the existing CF-1 map found within the text of the Comprehensive Plan with an updated map that includes recreational trail data as adopted in the 2019-2025 Parks and Recreation Master Plan via Resolution No. 94-19.
- CPA2021-103 consists of a request from Hayden Homes, LLC to amend the Comprehensive Plan land use designation on approximately 10.43 acres of land located at the intersection of Steptoe Street and Center Parkway from Commercial (C) to Medium Density Residential (MDR) with an associated rezone of the

property from Neighborhood Retail Business (C-1) to Medium Density Residential Small (R-2S) (Assessor's Parcel No. 1018-810-3000-0009).

- CPA2021-104 consists of a request from Teresa Reents and Ken Hofstad to amend the Badger Mountain Subarea Plan land use designation from Civic (Civic) to Low-Density Residential (LDR) with an associated rezone of the site from BMS LUDR Civic (Civic) to Low-Density Residential Small Lot (R-1-12) (Assessor's Parcel No. 1048-840-3000-9000 and Portions of Parcel Nos. 1048-840-3000-4011, 1048-840-3000-4010, 1048-840-3000-4007, 1048-840-3000-4005, 1048-840-3000-5007, 1048-840-3000-5008, 1048-840-3000-5011, 1048-840-3000-5013, 1048-840-3000-4001 and 1048-840-3000-5003).

Planning Manager Stevens elaborated that the subject property was originally intended as part of a fairway for a golf course under the Badger Mountain South development. The land was owned by NorAm Investment, LLC before being sold to Teresa Reents and Ken Hofstad. Subsequent boundary line adjustments allowed several adjoining property owners to purchase portions of the land, but its designation as Civic Land under the Land Use and Development Regulations (LUDR) imposed restrictions that prevented fencing, garages, swimming pools, or similar improvements. The requested amendment seeks to remove the property from the LUDR Civic designation and rezone it as Low-Density Residential (R-112), aligning it with the surrounding properties.

A fourth application docketed by Council was not favorably recommended by the Richland Planning Commission. This application (CPA2022-102) consisted of a request from the City of Richland's Economic Development Division to amend the existing Comprehensive Plan land use designation for a city-owned parcel from High-Density Residential (HDR) to Commercial (COM) with an associated rezone of the site from Commercial Limited Business (C-LB) to Retail Business Use District (C-2) (portion of Assessor's Parcel No. 1169-840-0000-3001). The Planning Commission chose not to advance this proposed amendment due to the current housing shortage and lack of affordable housing. The Planning Commission found that retaining the current High Density Residential (HDR) designation will help provide land needed for multi-family housing and will provide additional residents in the Queensgate area.

Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation.

Council offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff.

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2025.04, ADOPTING THE 2022 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS INTO THE EXISTING 2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR FIRST READING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: COUNCILMEMBER JONES. MOTION CARRIED 6-1.

11. Ordinance No. 2025-05, Amending Richland Municipal Code Title 23: Zoning Regulations and the City's Official Zoning Map to Conform to the Updated 2017 Comprehensive Plan (First Reading)

Planning Manager Stevens stated that the purpose of adopting Ordinance No. 2025-05 is to create consistency between the City's zoning designations and the two (2) Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map changes approved by Ordinance No. 2025-04. Planning Manager Stevens had no additional information to add.

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER WHITTEN SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2025.05, AMENDING RICHLAND MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 23: ZONING REGULATIONS AND THE CITY'S OFFICIAL ZONING MAP TO CONFORM TO THE UPDATED 2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR FIRST READING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: COUNCILMEMBER JONES. MOTION CARRIED 6-1.

12. Ordinance No. 2025-06, Vacating a Portion of Gay Road Right-of-Way (First Reading)

Public Works Director D'Alessandro explained that Ordinance No. 2025-06 is a right-of-way vacation on undeveloped land located at 1991 and 2001 Snyder Street. The 60-foot-wide right-of-way was formerly a county road but has long since been removed. The request to vacate the right-of-way extends from Horn Rapids Athletic Complex to the Vantage Highway. The area includes a pedestrian crossing installed as part of the Vantage Pathway Project.

The Horn Rapids Athletic Complex and Bicycle Motorcross (BMX) track are north of the Snyder Street property, and have been identified as needing improved pedestrian access. Currently, pedestrians cross the railroad tracks at Snyder Street where no legal or safe crossing exists, highlighting the importance of an alternative pedestrian route. City staff recommends retaining a pedestrian easement simultaneous with vacation of the existing but unopened Gay Road right-of-way.

Staff recommends a 15-foot-wide pedestrian easement along the railroad right-of-way, which would have minimal impact on future development of the site. Because the right-of-way vacation would remove a 60-foot-wide public corridor that bisects the property, a pedestrian easement along the eastern edge of the property has been identified as a lower-impact alternative.

Following the presentation, Council offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff. Council deliberation indicated unwavering support for establishing the pedestrian access easement proposed by staff as a condition precedent to vacation of the Gay Road right-of-way.

COUNCILMEMBER MAIER MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER JONES SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2025.06, VACATING A PORTION OF GAY ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR FIRST READING. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

13. Resolution No. 2025-22, Amending the 2025-2030 Transportation Improvement Program related to the SR-240/Aaron Interchange Improvements Project

Public Works Director D'Alessandro stated that the SR-240/Aaron Interchange Improvements Project is the top priority of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and a legislative priority for transportation. He also acknowledged the efforts of staff and City Council in 2024, which led to the Project's inclusion in the state budget.

The Project successfully received Move Ahead Washington (MAWA) grant funds from the Washington State Legislature to be administered by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). The 2025-2030 TIP must be amended to add the Project to allow receipt of MAWA grant funds.

COUNCILMEMBER LUKSON MOVED AND COUNCILMEMBER VANDYKE SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 2025-22, AMENDING THE 2025-2030 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM RELATED TO THE SR-240/AARON INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT. THOSE IN FAVOR: MAYOR RICHARDSON, MAYOR PRO TEM KENT, AND COUNCILMEMBERS JONES, LUKSON, MAIER, VANDYKE AND WHITTEN. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Reports and Comments

City Manager

City Manager Amundson announced that a virtual open house led by representatives of Tripepi Smith and Associates is scheduled for February 28, 2025 as part of the ongoing communications assessment discussed during the January 28, 2025 City Council workshop. The session will provide an opportunity for community members to share feedback on how the City can enhance communication with residents. The event will be promoted through social media, the City's website, and other channels. Mayor Richardson also recorded a message to help spread awareness.

Next, City Manager Amundson spoke of his recent trip to Olympia, where he and other City representatives advocated for legislative priorities. Deputy City Manager Schissel also traveled to Olympia to testify at a hearing regarding Targeted Urban Area (TUA) exemption legislation as part of ongoing efforts to engage with legislators.

In conclusion, City Manager Amundson noted that the scheduled executive session was no longer needed.

City Council

Mayor Pro Tem Kent, Councilmember Jones, and Councilmember Lukson had no comments.

Councilmember VanDyke shared that over the past weekend, high school students from Richland High School and the cities of Spokane, Vancouver and Kennewick participated in a mock trial at the courthouse. He noted that all the students performed exceptionally well and that it was an enjoyable event to watch. He expressed gratitude to the attorneys who mentored the students, as well as the attorneys and judges who contributed their time to support the event.

Councilmember Whitten congratulated Tri-Cities Animal Control on the grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony for the new animal shelter. He expressed regret that he was unable to attend the grand opening event and hoped that the shelter would expedite its volunteer acceptance process in the near future.

Councilmember Maier stated he will continue to advocate for the elimination of parking minimums in the Central Business District and the Waterfront District this year. He emphasized that while the recently passed height amendment for the zoning overlay was a positive step, it would be ineffective without corresponding changes to parking requirements. He noted that there is significant community interest in this change, citing emails and feedback he has received in support of the proposal. Councilmember Maier suggested that implementing the change in these two districts would serve as a valuable test case while the City conducts a broader study on the issue. He expressed his desire to maintain momentum and focus on the discussion as more information becomes available.

Mayor

Mayor Richardson shared that she attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new animal shelter and commented on the community's excitement about the new facility. She remarked that the shelter had been a long-anticipated project and praised its beautiful design.

Next, she shared positive feedback about the recent 3rd Annual Staff In-Service Day, Huddle 2025, held on January 20, 2025. She stated that many employees appreciated the opportunity to participate. Mayor Richardson thanked City Manager Amundson for strategically fostering leadership development, emphasizing that when staff feel valued, it enhances their work and contributes positively to community engagement.

Executive Session

14. Executive Session Per RCW 42.30.110(1)(i): Discuss Current or Potential Litigation with Legal Counsel (60 minutes) ****CANCELLED****

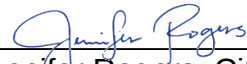
Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

APPROVED:


Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: February 18, 2025

DATE PUBLISHED: February 19, 2025