



MINUTES

RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING

Tuesday, April 22, 2025

Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard

City Council Workshop - 6:00 p.m.

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

Attendance: Mayor Richardson	Present
Mayor Pro Tem Kent	Absent
Councilmember Jones	Absent
Councilmember Lukson	Present (Remote via Zoom)
Councilmember Maier	Present
Councilmember VanDyke	Present
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, Finance Director Allen, Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite, Public Works Director D'Alessandro, and City Clerk Rogers.

Agenda Items

1. Future in Focus: "Three Big Plans - One Bold Future: Land Use, Transportation, and Green Space"

Deputy City Manager (DCM) Schiessl introduced the *Future in Focus* initiative, a coordinated planning effort that integrates and updates three (3) major planning efforts: the Transportation Systems Plan (TSP), the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Comp Plan), and the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Comprehensive Plan (PROS). He noted that this initiative was formerly known as the *Year of the Plan*, but the initiative has been rebranded with the tagline: "*Three Big Plans, One Bold Future.*"

DCM Schiessl stated the coordinated approach offers an opportunity to develop a cohesive public engagement strategy and build a shared vision for Richland's future. He stressed that while the City Council workshop meeting served as the official kickoff of the initiative's early engagement phase, this would not be the Council's only opportunity to interact with the consultants. DCM Schiessl briefly introduced the consultants chosen for each of the plans. He stated that Transpo Group, USA is under contract for the Transportation System Plan, Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG) will lead the PROS Comprehensive Plan, and negotiations are underway with AHBL for the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

During his overview, DCM Schiessl noted that representatives from Transpo Group, USA and MIG were attending via Zoom to present their scope of work, public engagement strategies, and an overview of policy-level observations for Council discussion.

Transportation Systems Plan

Public Works Director D'Alessandro provided a brief background on the TSP, noting that the current plan is approximately twenty (20) years old. He explained that the new plan will address vehicle, freight, bicycle, and pedestrian facility needs for the next twenty (20) years of growth in the city. The TSP will also guide future transportation project selection, account for development activity, identify funding solutions, and inform the transportation element of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Public Works Director D'Alessandro turned the meeting over to Stephanie Herzstein, of Transpo Group, USA. Ms. Herzstein, Project Manager for the TSP, provided an overview of the project team and scope of work for the TSP update, which included objectives, key steps in the planning process, project priorities, schedule, and community engagement activities. She explained that AHBL will lead the community outreach efforts in collaboration with Transpo Group, USA.

Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint presentation. Following the presentation, councilmembers offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff and the consultant.

Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Planning Manager Stevens began his presentation with a background on growth management planning and then presented an overview of the City's 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic update process. The update, titled "Future in Focus," outlines a multi-phase planning effort to be led by AHBL and coordinated with the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG). Planning Manager Stevens reviewed the 13 (thirteen) key tasks included in the update process, which range from developing a work plan and public participation strategy to preparing amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and city development regulations.

He highlighted HB 1181, which mandates each jurisdiction to create and include a Climate Change Element in comprehensive plans to address natural hazards such as wildfire smoke, drought, and extreme heat. Richland is collaborating with neighboring jurisdictions and Cascadia Consulting on a regional climate study to determine which goals and policies should be included in the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

Planning Manager Stevens also presented several key policies and regulatory issues requiring resolution. These include implementing HB 1110's missing middle housing mandate, which requires increased residential density near transit and allowances for affordable housing. He outlined planned updates to zoning and development regulations, including those related to the Business Research Park in north Richland, outdated

industrial zones in north Richland, and unit lot subdivisions. Planning Manager Stevens explained how unit lot subdivisions would allow for greater housing flexibility by permitting individual ownership of units within a single parent lot while maintaining compliance with overall zoning standards.

Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint presentation. Following the presentation, councilmembers offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Comprehensive Plan

Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite explained that the City updates its PROS Comprehensive Plan approximately every six (6) years, which is driven by planning needs and requirements for grant funding eligibility. While the PROS Plan must be updated every six (6) years, some of the recommendations will be designed for a twenty (20) year planning horizon. He emphasized that the PROS Plan serves two (2) main purposes: to guide public investment in parks based on community feedback and prioritization, and to demonstrate community-supported project planning when applying for grants.

Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite then introduced John Pheanis and Lauren Scott, representatives from MIG.

Project Manager John Pheanis and Deputy Project Manager Lauren Scott jointly presented MIG's scope of work relating to planning, designing, and engagement with the community during the long-range planning process. He further explained that the updated PROS Plan will build on the City's 2019 PROS Plan and will incorporate new community feedback through polling and outreach, as well as identify a long-term vision with a list of projects and potential funding sources. MIG's presentation also included an overview of the project's planning steps, process timeline, and the state's planning requirements.

Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint presentation. Councilmembers offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with Director Waite and DCM Schiessl. During the question-and-answer session, DCM Schiessl noted that Marketing & Communications Manager Alexander would coordinate with each consultant team on public outreach strategies to ensure a streamlined process.

2. Public Facilities Districts

DCM Schiessl presented an overview of the City's legal and contractual relationship with the Richland Public Facilities District (RPFDD) and the Tri-Cities Regional Public Facilities District (TCRPFDD).

He explained that the RPFDD was formed in 2002 through Ordinance No. 18-02, granting it broad corporate powers under state law while outlining specific limitations, including a requirement that the RPFDD cannot impose taxes beyond the state's share of sales tax without City approval. DCM Schiessl referenced the May 23, 2023 Council workshop for

background information on the legislative history and financial structure.

DCM Schiessl summarized the four (4) active agreements between the City and RPFDD:

- Columbia Park West Sublease: Allows the REACH Museum to operate on Army Corps of Engineers land leased by the City.
- Facility Contingency Fund Agreement: Requires the RPFDD to maintain a reserve fund managed by the City for construction, maintenance, and contingency needs.
- Contingent Loan Agreement: Obligates the City to loan funds to the RPFDD if RPFDD cannot make required loan payments.
- Interlocal Agreement for Financing: Commits City of Richland lodging tax funds in the amount of \$125,000 annually.

DCM Schiessl also highlighted the broad powers granted to PFDs under Washington law.

Continuing on, DCM Schiessl explained that the Tri-Cities Regional Public Facilities District (TCRPFDD) was formed under RCW 35.57.010(1)(e) to construct a regional center, and co-exists with the individual PFDs formed by Pasco, Kennewick and Richland. Both types of PFDs (city and regional) are subject to the same sales tax cap of 0.2%. The Pasco PFD has fully utilized its entire 0.2% capacity to fund the upcoming Pasco Aquatic Center. With the use of diagrams, DCM Schiessl presented examples of permitted and prohibited overlapping taxes for city PFDs and the regional PFD.

DCM presented discussion topics, noting that the TCRPFDD bylaws allow for three (3) Richland representatives, but currently only two (2) have been assigned. He also raised the broader question of whether the TCRPFDD should continue to exist if it no longer has the ability to impose additional taxes.

Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint presentation. Councilmembers offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with DCM Schiessl throughout the presentation.

Closing Comments

Following the presentations, Mayor Richardson introduced two letters she had been requested to sign on behalf of the City. The first letter, from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), was related to encouraging nuclear programs, and the second, from Benton County, was related to the Girls in Sports initiative. There was consensus among the councilmembers present to approve the signing of the IAEA letter; however, there was no consensus to approve the signing of the Girls in Sports letter.

City Manager Amundson shared that Chris Guerrero, Kennewick Chief of Police and Chair of the Benton County Law & Justice Council, encouraged Richland City Council to assign a councilmember to serve as Richland's legislative representative as authorized by state law. Mayor Richardson and Councilmember VanDyke both expressed interest in serving, depending on the meeting schedule and frequency.

Future Workshop Agenda Items

None.

Adjournment

Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

APPROVED:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: May 6, 2025

DATE PUBLISHED: May 7, 2025