



**MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2025
Richland City Hall – Council Chambers
625 Swift Boulevard**

Planning Commission Regular Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

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

Welcome and Roll Call:

Attendance: Chair Richardson	Present
Vice-Chair Nicholson	Present
Member Hernandez	Absent
Member Lambert	Present
Member Leonard	Present
Member Miller	Absent
Member Samuel	Present

Also present were Councilmember VanDyke, Planning Manager Stevens, and Administrative Assistant II Kirkpatrick.

Approval of Agenda:

COMMISSIONER SAMUEL MOVED AND COMMISSIONER LAMBERT SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA AS PUBLISHED. THE MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Approval of Minutes:

1. Approval of the February 26, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

COMMISSIONER LAMBERT MOTIONED AND COMMISSIONER SAMUEL SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 26, 2025, PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING. THE MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Public Comments:

None.

New Business:

2. 2026 – 2031 Transportation Improvement Program

Public Works Director D'Alessandro gave a brief history of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) outlining requirements and statewide coordination. Mr. D'Alessandro then presented them with the 2026-2031 TIP, reviewing details for projects that are higher priority and either fully or partially funded. Projects that are farther down and later in the schedule are mostly developer related. The Commission held a question-and-answer period.

Vice-Chair Nicholson inquired about the status of the Dallas Road project, which has been listed on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) since 2022. She referenced a letter received from the state indicating that road is failing and should be moved up the priority list. However, the project has instead been pushed further down.

Mr. D'Alessandro responded that the developer is currently working with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to develop a plan to move the project forward.

Commissioner Samuel asked about the plan to convert George Washington Way into a one-way street, noting that he did not see it listed on the current TIP.

Mr. D'Alessandro explained that the project is officially titled the Downtown Connectivity Project and has been removed from the TIP because it is actively in development. He reported that Public Works is currently 60 to 70 percent through the design phase, completing environmental review, and working with a consultant on right-of-way and land acquisition. The city is awaiting an agreement with the Federal Highway Administration for funding. The delay stems from a pause initiated by the current administration to thoroughly review all contracts. Mr. D'Alessandro expressed optimism that the contract would be signed soon. He also noted that significant public engagement and communication efforts are planned as the project approaches the construction phase.

Commissioner Aaron commended the diversity of projects currently on the TIP and the level of communication that has occurred around them.

Councilmember VanDyke addressed Commissioner Samuel's concerns regarding the Downtown Connectivity Project, stating that he was hesitant to begin but is now favorably in support of the project. He emphasized the City's efforts to improve public outreach, including the hiring of a communications consultant to engage the community.

Commissioner Leonard raised concerns about safety and traffic planning during the construction of the Downtown Connectivity Project, particularly the potential impact on north-south traffic and surrounding neighborhoods in the event of an accident. He also asked about funding certainty.

Mr. D'Alessandro responded and offered to set up a meeting with Commissioner Leonard to review the project in greater detail.

Chair Richardson asked for an update on the funding status for the top two TIP projects.

Councilmember VanDyke responded that legislative involvement will be necessary, and the City and Council are actively working to raise awareness about the importance of these projects.

Mr. D'Alessandro provided additional details on the status of both projects and the next steps required to move them forward.

VICE-CHAIR NICHOLSON MOVED AND COMMISSIONER LAMBERT SECONDED THE MOTION TO RECOMMEND TO RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF THE 2026-2031 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. THOSE OPPOSED: NONE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Communications:

Planning Manager Stevens:

- Introduced the new member to the Commission.
- Announced the resignation of Commissioner Austin.
- Noted an anticipated increase in the frequency of Planning Commission meetings due to the growing number of development projects initiated by the city.
- Reported the successful hiring of a new Senior Planner who will begin on Monday. The department is still in the process of recruiting for a second Senior Planner position.

Councilmember VanDyke:

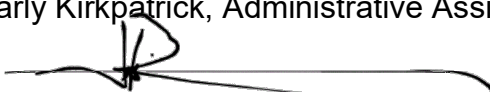
- Provided an overview of the strategic plan adopted by the City Council.
- Highlighted the "trifecta" of capital improvement plans currently underway, which will soon be brought before the Planning Commission for review and input.
- Directed Commissioners to the City's website for more detailed information on these plans.

Chair Richardson thanked Mr. D'Alessandro for his presentation and hard work for planning and transportation.

Adjournment:

Chair Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:00 P.M.

PREPARED BY: Carly Kirkpatrick
Carly Kirkpatrick, Administrative Assistant

APPROVED BY: 
Jet Richardson, Chair

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