



MINUTES

Richland City Council Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, April 28, 2026
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.

Welcome and Roll Call

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

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

Also present were City Manager Amundson, Deputy City Manager Schiessl, Assistant City Manager Florence, Fire Chief Aust, Chief of Police Pilcher, Energy Services Director Whitney, Finance Director Allen, Public Works Director D’Alessandro, Parks & Public Facilities Director Waite, and City Clerk Rogers.

Agenda Items

1. City Economic Development Update (30 minutes)

Economic Development Manager Wallner provided an overview of the City’s Economic Development Program, emphasizing job creation and tax base expansion through business retention, industrial recruitment, and retail attraction. She highlighted ongoing initiatives including national marketing efforts, business grants (Lodging Tax and Commercial Façade Improvement), and partnerships with Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and Washington State University to support workforce development and innovation.

She then outlined key development areas, including the Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park and the Targeted Urban Area, noting recent business attraction successes and ongoing efforts to diversify industry sectors such as clean energy, manufacturing, and supply chain support. She also discussed future development opportunities and ongoing landfill site investigations impacting development planning.

Economic Development Manager Wallner presented a community-informed retail recruitment “wish list” which identified desired businesses such as specialty grocers, pharmacies, and national retailers.

Economic Development Manager Wallner then introduced Brooke Hill and John Mark Boozer, representatives of Retail Strategies, the City’s national retail recruitment consultants, who presented an update on recruitment efforts. The consultants described its data-driven approach, including demographic analysis, mobile tracking data, and property cataloging to identify viable retail opportunities.

Consultants reported that Richland’s retail trade area extends beyond city limits and over 100 retailer prospects have been contacted since its partnership with Richland began in 2023. Consultants noted that retail recruitment timelines vary and may take several years depending on site readiness and market conditions.

Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint presentation included with the agenda packet.

Council offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff and the consultants throughout the presentation.

2. The Downtown Loop Update and Business Marketing Program (30 minutes)

Public Works Director D’Alessandro provided an update on the Downtown Loop Project, reporting that the project is fully funded and approximately 90 percent complete in design. He noted that right-of-way acquisition remains the primary source of schedule delay. Construction is anticipated to begin in winter 2026/2027 and will be phased to maintain traffic flow and business access, with limited closures and continued pedestrian and vehicle access throughout the downtown area.

Economic Development Manager Wallner presented an overview of the City’s business communication strategy, branded “*The Downtown Loop is Open for Business*”, which is designed to support local businesses during construction through proactive communication, marketing, and promotional efforts.

Key components of the strategy include public outreach, targeted advertising, business promotion, event coordination, wayfinding improvements, direct business engagement, and prioritization of grant funding within the project area to encourage continued patronage.

Detailed information can be found in the PowerPoint presentations included with the agenda packet.

Council offered comments and engaged in a question-and-answer session with staff and the consultants throughout the presentation.

Adjournment


Mayor Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

APPROVED:



Theresa Richardson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jennifer Rogers, City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: May 5, 2026

DATE PUBLISHED: May 6, 2026