



MINUTES

PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION 6:30 p.m. – Thursday, September 11, 2025

1. Call to Order

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by CHAIR VOISS.

Commissioners Present: Chair Voiss, Vice-Chair Patterson, Commissioners Adair, Krass, Matthews (virtual), Millender-Irwin, Oliner, and Zakharoff

Absent:

Staff Present: Amanda Jackson, Meeting Assistant
Christen Leeson, Planning Manager
John Mortenson, Transportation Engineering Manager
Gillian Straub, Management Analyst

2. Approval of Minutes

a) Minutes of July 10, 2025

With no changes or comments, the Minutes were approved.

3. Public Comments (General)

There were no requests to speak.

4. Regular Business (00:04)

a) **Comprehensive Plan Amendments Overview (D)**
Presented by:
Christen Leeson, Planning Manager

Leeson presented the topic.

COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF stated that the 50% limitation should be removed.
COMMISSIONER KRASS asked for clarification regarding the 50%, and Leeson replied that the choice is for the property owner not to rent to below 50% Area Median Income, which is

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unenforceable and suggested that verbiage stop at *scenarios*, removing *affordable* to that follows.

b) **Comprehensive Plan Amendments: Transportation Element (D) (00:14)**

Presented by:

John Mortenson, Transportation Engineering Manager (virtual)

Gillian Straub, Management Analyst

Straub began the presentation.

COMMISSIONER OLINER asked for clarification regarding how the trip bank is formed and calculated. Mortenson replied with the process.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if impacts of developments outside of the city counted toward a trip bank. Mortenson replied that the city is responsible for accommodating traffic from outside and the model is calibrated every three to five years; if a trip stops in Issaquah the trip is no longer considered a pass-through trip.

Straub continued the presentation with proposed changes.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked for clarification regarding Tier Four streets and speed limits. Straub replied that all Tier Four streets should be at 20 Miles Per Hour (MPH), but all are not surveyed to ensure compliance. COMMISSIONER KRASS asked about the process to change a speed limit and Mortenson replied either an engineering study completed and Council approval of a lower speed limit, or the city adopts procedures for lowering a speed limit for a non-arterial Tier Four street; looking at how the city will proceed is the next step. COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if all streets without sidewalks are going to be 20 MPH citing Sauk Mountain and asked if policy explains sufficiently. Straub replied by explaining how the overall project list uses tiers; policies guide the process, but Tier Four is a lower priority than Tier One pedestrian connections and while policy is not changing much functionally, there will be the ability to do more going forward.

COMMISSIONER ADAIR asked for clarification regarding schools, possibly moving to Tier One. Leeson replied that enhanced sidewalks include landscape strips on both sides, curb and gutter, more expensive to build, and schools in Tier Two will still get a sidewalk albeit not enhanced, easier to accomplish. COMMISSIONER ADAIR stated that the implication is that Tier One is a higher priority than Tier Two. Straub replied that using the term *priority* is incorrect, that the policy helps score projects going into the Transportation Improvement Plan; tiers can be developer-initiated while some will be subject to city investment. Leeson replied that wider sidewalks were chosen for Central Issaquah, Olde Town, and Highlands because more pedestrians were anticipated throughout the day every day. CHAIR VOISS asked if all new development will require Tier Two sidewalks near schools and Straub replied that if a development occurs in Central Issaquah, Tier One would be required, a geographic breakdown.

Straub asked the Commissioners for feedback regarding changes to the Transportation Element at this point and there were none. Straub continued the presentation with Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (BLTS).

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COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if the goal is for Tier Four facilities to be moved to Tier Three for more accessibility and Straub replied yes, that the goal is to have a BLTS score of three or better on the Priority Bike Network.

COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS asked for thought process for a dangerous bike and pedestrian shared path. Mortenson asked if the location in question is Newport Way near Bellevue and COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS replied yes. Mortenson replied that the shared path would be an interim improvement by the Complete Streets policy after paving and that standards have not caught up to eBike usage.

COMMISSIONER ADAIR asked, on Page 40, if the stress measured includes slope. Straub replied that slope and other factors are taken into consideration.

VICE-CHAIR PATTERSON asked about the difference between a bicycle network and bicycle facility. Straub replied that the network includes all facilities.

Straub continued the presentation with Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI).

COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF asked what the timeline for implementation will be if supported. Mortenson replied that the challenge at this time is that the Traffic Signal Operations Engineer position is currently vacant with active recruiting occurring, but that pedestrian push buttons can be replaced easily.

CHAIR VOISS asked which four intersections are being considered and Straub replied Newport and State Route 900, and Leeson replied that the remainder are Highlands and Park, and one north also at Highlands.

COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS asked if pedestrian crossings would be four seconds longer for crossing or if the time allowed to cross would not change. Mortenson stated not being a Traffic Signal Engineer but assumed the time to cross would remain the same. COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS stated that there are LPI crossings in Seattle and that they are effective. Straub replied that staff will evaluate each crossing regarding pedestrian-initiated buttons or blanket implementation.

Straub concluded the presentation with Transit Signal Priority and Transit Level of Service (LOS).

COMMISSIONER MILLENDER-IRWIN asked if there was a formal plan for Metro user equity and advocacy. Straub replied that Metro reviews service, collaborating with partner cities, twice per year and that the city would like a policy to indicate that there is a real need for transit access and more frequent service in Issaquah. Mortenson replied that King County Metro has Service Guidelines, in which equity is considered as a part of planning services. Leeson replied that Thomas Valdriz, Senior Transportation Planner, will be at two Planning Policy Commission meetings in October for further questions.

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Straub stated that the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) proposed that the Mobility Action Plan (MAP) action 7.2 remain, but staff is doing the work as part of the program and keeping this would be redundant.

COMMISSIONER OLINER stated that the staff memo contained many abbreviations, and that the term Level of Service or LOS is being used in different ways; and asked if the city role is quality of service as opposed to level of service. Straub replied that keeping the term LOS could be an advantage as an advocacy tool.

Straub asked what the level of support from the Commission for changes is as the policy moves to Mobility and Infrastructure later in September, 2025. COMMISSIONER KRASS replied that the policy has been reviewed thoroughly, worth endorsing, and asked that any policy put forth be implemented and enforced. VICE-CHAIR PATTERSON replied supporting the expertise of the TAB and staff on the topic. COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF stated being in support of all proposed changes and being interested in ongoing conversations with Metro. COMMISSIONER ADAIR stated that the TAB has done an excellent job and asked that schools be kept in mind. COMMISSIONER OLINER stated agreement with all comments. COMMISSIONER MILLENDER-IRWIN stated that great work has been done by staff and the TAB and being in support of the changes requested. COMMISSIONER MATTHEWS and CHAIR VOISS both stated agreement and support.

CHAIR VOISS asked for clarification that the Public Hearing for the topic will be held in two weeks and Leeson replied correct.

5. Reports

a) Council Update (01:24)

Leeson stated that the proposed Tree Code amendments went to the Planning, Development, and Environment Committee on September 9, 2025 and while recommending approval to Council, staff have been requested to work on certain amendments further in December, 2025.

Leeson stated that the Committee of the Whole Council will be prioritizing work for the Community Planning and Development Department, the top priority being the Eco Northwest study of the Housing Strategy Action Plan. The Planning Policy Commission will see the topic throughout 2026.

6. Other Business/Announcements

a) Upcoming Schedule

Leeson stated that two new Associate Planners have been hired. Emily Medina has been promoted to Senior Planner. An Assistant Planner and a Principal Planner are being interviewed. Leeson is the current Planning Policy Commission Liaison.

Leeson stated appreciation hearing that the Transportation Element is understandable for the public.

CHAIR VOISS stated that Valerie Porter, Assistant Planner, has left city employment.

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7. Adjournment

CHAIR VOISS adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC
Recording Secretary