

Housing Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes
July 23, 2026

Open Meeting at 3:05 PM

1. Roll Call:

Committee Members Present: Caroline Moser, Ted Jenneskens, Kurt Peterson, BeeJay Robinson, Skyler Cuthill, Councilmember Zeke Reister and Councilmember Mike Bedard.

Committee Members Absent: Jane Dingman and Justin Horvath.

Staff: Mayor Carl Florea, Maggie Boles and Andrea Fischer.

2. Review and Approve June 2026 Minutes

The June 2026 Minutes were reviewed and approved.

3. Re-Cap of the June 23, 2026 Study Session Presentation

Members who attended the June 23rd Study Session reported that the presentation was well received by the Council, with significant positive feedback and encouragement. It was noted that Justin Horvath, Kaylin Bettinger and Matt Melton presented as a strong team. Community Development Director Maggie Boles announced that groundbreaking had occurred that day, with foundations inspected, and that construction could proceed ahead of final plat completion under cottage housing provisions.

The Committee discussed the value of issuing a press release and agreed that a presence at the August 20th community block party would be an effective opportunity to share the project's story with the public. Director Boles confirmed she had reserved table space and offered to prepare poster boards and a project-specific landing page on the City website with a QR code linking to project plans and records.

4. Setting Committee Priorities and Goals

The Committee engaged in an extended discussion and established the following priorities and goals for the coming year:

- **Explore Housing Above the Parking Garage**

Councilmember Reister and Mayor Florea provided context on a study session presentation in which a for-profit affordable housing developer proposed constructing workforce and low-income housing above the City's planned parking garage. The Committee expressed broad enthusiasm for this concept as a public-private partnership model. It was noted that the City's

parking revenue bonds could support approximately \$25 million of an estimated \$40–50 million project, necessitating a private or nonprofit development partner to close the gap. Two additional development organizations were identified as potential partners familiar with federal and state funding mechanisms. The Committee agreed to invite Inland Construction to present at a future meeting, targeting September.

- **Permanently Affordable Housing Only**

The Committee agreed that any project supported by the City must result in permanently affordable housing. Models involving time-limited tax credits that revert to market rate were explicitly rejected as unsustainable and contrary to the Committee's goals.

- **Bring in Subject Matter Experts**

The Committee identified the ongoing need to engage outside organizations and developers who are knowledgeable about available funding programs, including the state's CHIP (Connecting Housing and Infrastructure Program) funding. Director Boles noted that a CHIP application targeting 2027 funding would need to be submitted in the fall of 2026 and that a housing-above-the-garage project could be a strong candidate, particularly given the significant infrastructure improvements that would be required downtown.

- **Property Review**

The Committee agreed to compile and evaluate all City-owned properties as well as vacant or underutilized parcels within City limits, with consideration of zoning, infrastructure availability, and potential for land swaps with private landowners. Director Boles offered to pull existing GIS mapping and assessor data to provide a starting point.

- **Compile and Triangulate Existing Studies**

The Committee noted that significant housing and workforce data already exists across multiple organizations, including the City, MEND, Our Valley Our Future, and the Chamber of Commerce. Rather than simply compiling these studies, the committee agreed the goal should be to triangulate findings across sources to find actionable insights. A partnership with the University of Washington's Housing Teacher Center was also raised as an opportunity to conduct further research specific to Leavenworth's workforce and resident population.

- **Review Innovative and Prefabricated Construction Methods**

The committee expressed interest in inviting modular and prefabricated housing manufacturers to present, recognizing this construction approach is the most cost-effective way to get affordable/workforce housing in the City. Director Boles noted the City of Chelan is currently working with a prefab manufacturer on a low-income project and offered to share that information.

5. Community Development Update

Director Boles provided a brief overview of a memo she had prepared outlining the Community Development Department's key planning priorities for the year. Notable items included the ongoing drafting of development regulations, which must be completed by the end of September in advance of a planned November public hearing. The Committee was informed that the R-3 zoning code update, long on the planning docket, is expected to come forward to the Council this year and may generate community discussion. The co-living code, now mandated by the state, has been drafted and is limited to multifamily zones over a specified square footage threshold. It was noted she would continue to brief the committee on code developments so members could serve as informed community resources, particularly as items receive public attention.

6. Upcoming Meeting Topics

The Committee discussed scheduling a joint meeting with the Planning Commission, with Director Boles suggesting that October or later in the fall would be more realistic given the Planning Commission's accelerated development regulation timeline. She offered to check Planning Commission member availability for the August 27th Housing Advisory Committee meeting as an alternative.

Regarding the water tower property as a potential land swap opportunity, the Committee agreed this topic is captured within the broader property review priority and will be addressed through that process. Councilmember Bedard raised the importance of coordinating with the Parking Committee before advancing housing concepts for the parking garage site, so that both groups are aligned. The committee agreed that hearing from Glenn Peterson and Jennifer Lambert first would be a productive sequencing step before speaking with the Parking Advisory Committee directly.

Action items from the meeting were summarized as follows:

- Councilmember Bedard to reach out to Inland Construction regarding a September presentation
- Staff will contact Glenn Peterson and Jennifer Lambert to present at the August meeting.
- Director Boles to distribute the GIS mapping and parcel data
- A block party sign-up to be circulated via email by staff.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:17 PM