



# Planning Commission Minutes

Note: Anyone wishing to speak at any Planning Commission meeting is encouraged to do so. If you wish to speak, please rise and, after you have been recognized by the Chair, give your name and complete address for the record. You will then be allowed to speak. Please note the public testimony may be limited by the Chair.

**April 14, 2026**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
***DRAFT* Minutes**

## **I. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Verner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street.

### **Commissioners Present:**

Lisa Verner  
Jay Lininger  
Susan MacCracken Jain  
Russell Phillips  
John Maher  
Kerry KenCairn  
Eric Herron

### **Staff Present:**

Brandon Goldman, Community Development Director  
Derek Severson, Planning Supervisor  
Michael Sullivan, Executive Assistant

### **Absent Members:**

### **Council Liaison:**

Jeff Dahle (absent)

## **II. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **1. Staff Announcements:**

Community Development Director Brandon Goldman made the following announcements:

- Community Development office hours have changed to 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m., Monday–Thursday, with walk-in hours from 1:00–4:00 p.m. at the Community Center.
- April is Fair Housing Month; the City is collaborating with the Fair Housing Council of Oregon and Oregon Shakespeare Festival on a display highlighting Oregon's fair housing history, on view through April 20<sup>th</sup>.
- The Perozzi fountain has been removed for restoration; carving is expected to begin shortly.
- A Type 1 planning approval was issued for renovation of the former automotive site at A Street and First Street into a food and outdoor seating area.

### **2. Advisory Committee Liaison Reports – None**

## **III. CONSENT AGENDA**

### **Approval of Minutes**

1. March 10, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes





# Planning Commission Minutes

**Commissioners Maher/ Lininger m/s to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioners KenCairn and Herron abstained from the vote due to their absence from the March 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. Voice Vote: Commissioners Maher, Lininger, Phillips, MacCracken Jain, and Verner: AYE. Motion Passed 5-0.**

## IV. **PUBLIC FORUM** – None

## V. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **Approval of Findings for PA-T2-2026-00066, Kestrel Park Area 7**

#### **Ex Parte Contact**

Commissioner Herron abstained due to a potential business conflict. Commissioner KenCairn recused herself as she had worked on the project. No Commissioners reported ex parte contact.

#### **Decision**

**Commissioners MacCracken Jain/ Maher m/s to approve the findings as presented. Commissioner Herron abstained due to a potential business conflict. Commissioner KenCairn recused herself as she had worked on the project. Voice Vote: Commissioners Maher, Lininger, Phillips, MacCracken Jain, and Verner: AYE. Motion Passed 5-0.**

## VI. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Discussion of Legislative Updates in Response to State Requirements**

#### **Presentation**

Planning Supervisor Derek Severson presented an overview of required code amendments under **Senate Bill 974 (All Housing)**, which aims to remove procedural impediments to housing production, with a compliance deadline of July 1, 2026 (see attachment #1). Four topic areas were discussed:

1. **Zone Changes / Up-Zones:** SB 974 mandates Type 1 staff decisions for increased residential density without public hearings, conflicting with ORS 227.186, which requires a public hearing. The Commission recommended waiting for state rulemaking to resolve this conflict.
2. **Performance Standards Option (PSO) Subdivisions / PUDs:** Initial urban housing application decisions must be made without hearings, but appeal hearings are permitted. Staff was directed to research the definitions of "initial decision" and "final decision" as the Commission considered retaining the two-tier process.





## Planning Commission Minutes

3. **Variations:** Variations related to urban housing applications must be Type 1 decisions. Discussion included adjusting thresholds in SB 1537. Staff was asked to analyze how these relate to current variance procedures.
4. **Design Standards for Subdivisions:** SB 974 limits the application of design standards for projects with 20+ single- or two-family lots. Staff noted minor amendments needed for compliance, with no immediate direction required from the Commission.

Staff indicated that a model code from DLCD is not expected until early 2027, and that a parallel regional code review through the Rogue Valley Council of Governments is underway but not due for completion until July 2027. Staff will return with proposed code language in advance of the July 1, 2026 deadline.

### VII. **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Chair Verner distributed a brief guide on how to structure and deliver motions during Commission deliberations, and noted that staff will include a recommended motion in future staff reports to assist commissioners (see attachment #2).

### VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

*Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.*

*Submitted by,  
Michael Sullivan, Executive Assistant*





Ashland Planning Commission  
April 14, 2026

# SB 974 Implementation Approaches

SB 974



Community Development staff volunteering with HFH Rogue Valley build at Beach Creek

SB 974



*Kestrel Park Subdivision, Ph. III  
Infrastructure Installation*

# SB 974 - URBAN HOUSING APPLICATIONS (UHA)

Prohibits certain zone changes (upzones), planned unit developments, and variances from being subject to quasi-judicial review. Creates appeal pathway for these decisions.

## WHAT APPLIES

Only applies to land that is:

- Inside the urban growth boundary (UGB), and
- "Zoned primarily for residential use or mixed residential use or planned for residential use"

## WHAT DOESN'T APPLY

Does not apply to applications:

- That reduce minimum residential density of land
- For final subdivision or partition plat
- For a residential construction permit under the building code
- For final engineering review
- Subject to ministerial or other expedited approval procedure, including outright permitted uses

## ZONE CHANGES

- Minor Zone Change - **Type II**
  - PC is Approving Authority
  - Appeal is made to City Council
- Major Zone Change - **Type III**
  - PC makes a recommendation to Council
  - City Council is Approving Authority
  - Appeal is made to LUBA

## PSO Subdivisions

- Outline Plan Subdivisions under the Performance Standards - **Type II**
  - PC is Approving Authority
  - Appeal is made to City Council
- Final Plan Subdivision - **Type I**
  - Staff Advisor is Approving Authority
  - Appeal is made to PC

## VARIANCES

- Variances - **Type I or II**
  - Dependent on details of request
- All Exceptions (SDUS, Street Standards, Hillside Development Standards) - **Type I**
  - Staff Advisor is Approving Authority
  - Appeal is made to PC

CURRENT CODE

CURRENT CODE

## Define UHAs

- Create definition of Urban Housing Application (UHA), which would include certain zone changes\*, PSO Subdivisions, Variances and Exceptions
- Amend procedures for UHAs involving zone changes, PSO subdivisions and variances - make **Type I** Procedure

### Amendment Option 1

- Zone changes (upzones) that qualify as a UHA would be processed as **Type I**.
- All other Zone Changes would follow existing procedure (**Type III**)

### Amendment Option 2

Retain Zone Changes codes as is until conflicts with ORS 227.186 are resolved or at least addressed through *rulemaking*.

## Considerations

- SB 974 as written conflicts with ORS 227.186(2) & (5) which requires notice, a hearing and adoption by ordinance.
- Non-UHA Zone Changes, including residential downzones would follow existing procedure (**Type III**).

### Amendment Option 1

- Separate PSO Subdivisions into Non-residential (**Type II**) and Residential (**Type I**)
- Residential would fall under definition of UHA

### Amendment Option 2

- Make all subdivisions (standard and PSO) a **Type I** procedure subject to appeal to the Planning Commission.

## Considerations

- Do we retain the two-tiered Outline/Final PSO process?
- Should number of lots for concurrent review increase? Currently 10, should be at least 12.
- With amendments, we need to look at more *clear & objective* standards.

### Amendment Option 1

- Variances that meet UHA criteria would be a **Type I** procedure
- Retain **Type II** procedure for other Variances

### Amendment Option 2

- Make all Variances a **Type I** procedure subject to appeal to the Planning Commission

## Considerations

- How do we apply more *clear & objective* standards for Variances.

## Other Items

- SB 974 also requires some design standard flexibility for development of 20 or more lots.
- In all amendments, need to consider clear & objective standards for residential projects.
- Do we want to look at other areas of procedural distinction between **Type I** & **Type II**?

SB 974



2019 PC Retreat Site Visit. Verde Village Ph. 1

## Zone Changes to Increase Residential Density

- Currently, zone changes are treated as a Type III procedure requiring hearings before the PC and Council with adoption by ordinance as required under ORS 227.186.
- There are limited provisions in the current code to allow property-specific zone changes to be processed as a Type II procedure with a decision by the PC (AMC 18.5.9.020.A). *These provisions haven't been used because of the state requirements for adoption by ordinance which requires a hearing at Council.*
  - **OPTION 1:** Up-zones that qualify as a UHA could be processed as a Type I staff decision, with all other procedures to remain as is. ***This does not address the ORS 227.186 requirement that zone changes be by ordinance with full public notice and a public hearing.***
  - **OPTION 2:** Retain all zone change regulations as is until conflicts with ORS 227.186 are resolved (*through rulemaking?*)

ORS 227.186(2) All legislative acts relating to comprehensive plans, land use planning or zoning adopted by a city shall be by ordinance.

ORS 227.186(5) An additional individual notice of land use change required by subsection (3) or (4) of this section shall be approved by the city and shall describe in detail how the proposed ordinance would affect the use of the property. The notice shall:

(a) Contain substantially the following language in boldfaced type across the top of the face page extending from the left margin to the right margin: *"This is to notify you that (city) has proposed a land use regulation that may affect the permissible uses of your property and other properties."*

(b) Contain substantially the following language in the body of the notice: *"On (date of public hearing), (city) will hold a public hearing regarding the adoption of Ordinance Number \_\_\_\_\_. The (city) has determined that adoption of this ordinance may affect the permissible uses of your property, and other properties in the affected zone, and may change the value of your property. Ordinance Number \_\_\_\_\_ is available for inspection at the \_\_\_\_\_ City Hall located at \_\_\_\_\_. A copy of Ordinance Number \_\_\_\_\_ also is available for purchase at a cost of \_\_\_\_\_. For additional information concerning Ordinance Number \_\_\_\_\_, you may call the (city) Planning Department at \_\_\_\_\_."*

SB 974



SB 974



*Snowberry Brook Subdiv., Ph. 1*

# Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) Performance Standards Options Subdivisions

Ashland does not have a PUD process, but Performance Standards Options Subdivisions are largely similar. PSO subdivisions are currently handled through a two-stepped review process:

- **Outline Plan** approval is a Planning Commission decision with appeal to Council.
- **Final Plan** approval is a staff decision with appeal to the PC.
- **Outline & Final Plan** approvals can be granted simultaneously by the Planning Commission for projects of less than ten lots, with appeal to Council.

**Option 1:** Separate PSO subdivisions into Non-Residential (Type II) and Residential/UHA (Type I).

**Option 2:** Make all subdivisions (“cookie-cutter” and PSO) a Type I procedure subject to appeal to the Planning Commission.

SB 974



*Plaza West in the Lithia First Subdivision* 10

# Variations & Exceptions

Currently, Variations are processed based on specific details of the request with some subject to staff approval and some requiring a hearing before the Planning Commission.

All Exceptions (SDUS, Street Standards, Hillside Development) can be approved by staff subject to appeal to the Planning Commission, although some come to the PC where associated with other Type 2 requests.

- **OPTION 1:** Variations that meet the UHA definition would be a Type 1 procedure, with a staff decision subject to appeal to the PC. Other Variations would be subject to current procedures.
- **OPTION 2:** Make ALL Variations subject to a Type 1 procedure (staff approval subject to appeal to the Planning Commission).

# Variations (as currently regulated)

## Type I Variations (approvable by staff, subject to appeal to PC):

1. Sign placement, per chapter 18.4.7.
2. Non-conforming signs, when bringing them into conformance as described in chapter 18.4.7.
3. Up to a 50 percent reduction of standard yard requirements.
4. Parking in setback areas.
5. Up to ten percent reduction in the required minimum lot area.
6. Up to ten percent increase in the maximum lot coverage percentage.
7. Up to 20 percent reduction in lot width or lot depth requirements.
8. Up to ten percent variance on height, width, depth, length or other dimension not otherwise listed in this section.

## Type II Variations (approved by PC through hearing with on-the-record appeal to Council): Any Variations not listed above.

SB 974



*Beach Creek Subdivision*



Code changes to comply with SB 974 are intended to be implemented by cities **by July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.**

Tonight, staff are seeking some guidance from the Commission on the options discussed above.

**Generally, staff envisions:**

- Creating a new definition for *Urban Housing Application* (UHA)
- Looking for a way to address **Up-Zones** that is consistent with state law and doesn't expose applicants or the city to unnecessary appeals.
- At minimum, making **Performance Standards Options Subdivision** UHAs Type 1.
- Making UHA **Variances** Type 1 and revisiting the **distinctions** between Type 1 & Type 2.
- Reworking the single family, duplex and North Mountain design standards for 20+ lot UHAs.
- Updating these sections to be clear and objective.



Questions?...

Ashland Planning Commission  
April 14, 2026

**SB 974 Implementation Approaches**

## How to Make a Motion:

Include:	Content:		Example:
Decision	Approve		
	Approve with Conditions		I make a motion to approve with conditions
	Disapprove		
Description of Request	Main request	Concurrent Outline and Final Plan for Performance Standards Option (PSO) Subdivision	a concurrent Outline and Final Plan for a 4-lot Performance Standards Option (PSO) subdivision,
	Second request	Residential Site Design Review Approval	residential Site Design Review Approval, and
	Third request	Tree Removal Permit	a Tree Removal permit for X trees,
	Additional requests	List, if any	
File Number			application number PA-T2-2026-00066
Property Address			at Nandina Street and Mountain Meadows Drive
Conditions	If any		with the conditions as recommended by staff in the staff report given to us tonight
			OR with the conditions as recommended by staff in the staff report and described in the staff presentation tonight
			OR with conditions 1-5 and 7-9 as recommended by staff in the staff report and revised Condition 6 as described in staff's presentation (or as described by the Commissioner)