



BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

September 23, 2025, at 1:15 pm.

1. Call to Order

Chair Yeater called the meeting to order at 1:15 pm.

2. Roll Call - Present

Chair Justin Yeater

Vice Chair Louisa Andersen

Commissioner Erik Briscoe

Commissioner Brian Franzen

Commissioner Larry Modlin

Commissioner Christian Schulte

Absent

Commissioner Jeff Carlson

3. Approval of the agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

Chair Yeater proceeded with the agenda as published.

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Franzen:

He moved to accept the September 9, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes as presented.

Second: Vice Chair Andersen

Vote: 6-0

Absent: Commissioner Carlson

5. This is a request to continue an application for the Prairie Hawk Subdivision Preliminary Plat, No. SUB2025-0001 to October 28, 2025. The Subdivision proposes dividing a property 23.99 acres in size into 11 lots. The property is within a Planned Unit Development (Schneider Farm PUD No. 2022-0006).

Motion by Commissioner Briscoe:

He moved to approve the request to continue the application for the Prairie Hawk Subdivision Preliminary Plat No. SUB2025-0001 to the October 28, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting.

Second: Vice Chair Andersen

Vote: 6-0

Absent: Commissioner Carlson

6. Staff Report:

Don Threewitt (Deputy Director of Community Development) shared that Brian McBroom (Director of Community Development) will be temporarily overseeing the Economic Development Urban Revitalization Department. As he is handling dual responsibilities, his availability may be limited over the next couple of months. For timely assistance, Mr. Threewitt offered commissioners the option to contact him, as Mr. McBroom may not be able to respond promptly.

Mr. Threewitt invited the Commission to attend the West Greeley Catalyst groundbreaking on Wednesday, the 24th, from 10–11 a.m. The event will be held near Highway 34 and County Road 17, with the entrance off County Road 17, likely marked near the Cascadia Gate.

Mr. Threewitt informed the Commission that the Cascadia PUD went before City Council last Tuesday and was approved with a 6-1 vote. Public input was relatively limited compared to earlier stages of the project, and it will now move forward.

Mr. Threewitt asked the Commission to confirm their availability for the November and December Planning Commission meetings, given the upcoming holiday season. This is to ensure meetings can still be held during those months. If a quorum is not available, staff will schedule special meetings as needed and notify the Commission once dates are confirmed.

Chair Yeater requested that everyone respond within 24 hours and asked that a polite reminder be sent by staff the following day to anyone who has not yet replied.

7. Adjournment:

Chair Yeater adjourned the meeting and at 1:19 pm moved into the Workshop portion of the meeting.

Workshop

8. Greeley Urban Forest Strategic Plan, Dana Karcher & Shiloh Hatcher

Dana Karcher (Consultant from Native Resource Group) began their presentation by introducing herself and the presentation as published.

Vice Chair Andersen asked if there are incentives for planting more trees than required—both for developers and for existing homeowners, especially on the older east side, where many trees are maturing or dying due to lack of watering, likely from high water costs.

Ms. Karcher answered by saying; while the plan does not include specific incentives, the urban forester is aware of potential programs, such as 'Share the Shade,' which supports tree planting. Although water costs are a challenge, studies show that mature trees help manage stormwater. The key is educating property owners on the long-term benefits, which is why the plan emphasizes increased public education.

Chair Yeater asked what the current inventory of trees is in the City of Greeley, and how many still need to be addressed or managed. Ms. Karcher answered that that amount was 12,000.

Chair Yeater then asked out of the 12,000 trees mentioned, the slide indicated a plan to prune 2,000 and add 7,000 more. Given that, how many trees can the City of Greeley realistically prune each year with its current capacity. Shiloh Hatcher (City of Greeley Forestry Manager) acknowledged the complexity of the issue and the need for a long-term solution. Currently, the City can prune about 300–400 trees annually in parks, which are in good condition. Efforts are now shifting toward maintaining trees in public spaces, like parkways. For 2025, the goal was to prune 300 parkway trees, but they expect to reach 500, and believe more may be possible within the budget.

Discussion followed between Chair Yeater, Commissioner Schulte, Ms. Karcher & Mr. Hatcher regarding budget, equipment, maintenance plans, code requirements, and enforcement—both for existing trees and those included in recently approved developments. The discussion primarily centered on the forestry department’s capacity to manage the maintenance and enforcement related to these trees. Specific emphasis was placed on what strategies are or have been considered to enforce tree planting that was required as part of an approved development and initially completed but later removed. Ms. Karcher shared the key takeaway is the need to involve the forestry team in planning. While Greeley’s political landscape differs from other cities, the plan presents real opportunities. The City’s urban forester is well-informed on both local and national trends. In time, the community may be more open to expanding urban forestry efforts, potentially through a supportive tree committee or commission.

Commissioner Schulte inquired about the presence of tree diseases and if there is a requirement to plant a mix of species to avoid these. Ms. Karcher said there will always be pests and challenges, regardless of location in the U.S. That said, the City of Greeley has done a commendable job educating the public about tree diseases, their appearance, and their impact.

Chair Yeater asked whether the current Forestry Department budget includes resources for addressing diseased trees. Mr. Hatcher answered by saying he believes they are as prepared as possible. While they have taken on responsibility for maintaining parkway trees through trimming, removal remains the homeowner’s responsibility. This aligns with a longstanding policy: if a homeowner lets a tree die, they must bear the cost of its removal. Homeowners are therefore responsible for tree care. There is potential to explore incentives encouraging homeowners to replace removed trees, but removal costs will continue to fall on those whose trees die.

Commissioner Modlin asked for clarification on why trees planted in parkways are preferred over homeowner properties. He said parkway trees face challenges like poor watering, restricted root growth, increased vulnerability to fungus and disease due to heat from asphalt and concrete, and they often damage sidewalks. Ms. Karcher stated that, beyond knowing that it is a requirement, she wasn't familiar with further details.

Vice Chair Andersen inquired about the 50% living material requirement for front or corner side yards—asking whether a single tree would be sufficient, and if the canopy would count toward that percentage. They noted a trend of residents removing turf and replacing it with rocks, sometimes with just one tree, and expressed concern that enforcement seems inconsistent. They asked whether the city has clarified how the code is interpreted. Mr. Hatcher stated that he was unsure and would need to consult with other staff.

With no other questions regarding the presentation, Chair Yeater ended the meeting at 2:09 pm.

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Justin Yeater
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Justin Yeater – Chair

DocuSigned by:
Don Threewitt
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Don Threewitt – Interim Director of Community Dev.