



BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

## Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

January 27, 2026, at 1:15pm

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Yeater called the meeting to order at 1:19pm.

**2. Roll Call - Present**

Chair Justin Yeater  
Vice Chair Louisa Andersen  
Commissioner Erik Briscoe  
Commissioner Larry Modlin  
Commissioner Christian Schulte

**Absent**

Commissioner Jeff Carlson  
Commissioner Brian Franzen

**3. Approval of the agenda**

There were no changes to the agenda, Chair Yeater proceeded with the agenda as published.

**4. Approval of the January 13, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

**Motion by Vice Chair Andersen:**

She moved to approve the minutes as presented.

**Vote:** Motion passed 5-0

**Absent:**

Commissioner Jeff Carlson  
Commissioner Brian Franzen

**5. Staff Report:**

Don Threewitt (Interim Director of Community Development) stated he would like to forego the staff report this week, as there is a full agenda for the work session and no new updates to report. He is available to answer any questions or follow up on issues raised by the Commission.

There were no questions from the Commission at this time.

**6. Adjournment:**

Chair Yeater adjourned the meeting at 1:21pm.

## Workshop

**7. Westside Area Plan & Form-Based Code**

Caleb Jackson (Interim Planning Manager) introduced the workshop item as presented. He then invited Jeff Speck (Consultant from Speck Dempsey) and Jason King (Consultant from Able City) to proceed with their presentation. Following the presentation, Mr. King asked if there were any questions.

Chair Yeater had two questions. First, he referenced density. The plan assumes approximately 1.8% year-over-year growth, which translates to roughly a 50% population increase over the next 40 years. With that in mind, he asked whether the team calculated what proportion of that projected growth the plan can accommodate. Second, Chair Yeater noted that the foundation of the plan relies on a change in density. That approach has already been presented to Council and, to date, has been rejected. He asked whether there is anything inherent in this plan that might reasonably be expected to change Council's position.

Mr. King noted that the plan was coordinated with water and sewer providers, stays within existing infrastructure capacity, and reallocates growth to more walkable, transit-supportive areas without increasing overall development. While acknowledging public resistance to density, he emphasized that well-designed density, modeled on successful downtowns and historic places, can be attractive and aligned with the community's vision, and that projects developed under the form-based code are likely to gain broader support.

Mr. Speck explained that the issue is not how much growth occurs, but over what timeframe. The plan illustrates a full build-out of all developable sites using a neighborhood framework, which can appear overwhelming at first. However, he emphasized that this growth could unfold over several decades and is intended to show how growth should occur when it happens. While long-range planning requires depicting significant growth, they noted the importance of clearly communicating that the plan represents an ultimate build-out, not near-term development.

Vice Chair Andersen inquired whether the plan accommodates industrial or blue-collar employment and, if so, where those opportunities are envisioned.

Mr. King emphasized that the plan does accommodate industrial, agricultural, and employment uses. The future land use and place type maps identify designated areas for large-scale industry and workplaces, all of which are permitted under the form-based code. He recognized the importance of maintaining space for jobs and large employers as a key driver of the city's continued growth.

Mr. Speck stated that there may be a need for more areas explicitly designated for larger-scale industrial uses. Given that this is the first draft, this stage is intended to identify potential issues or concerns.

Commissioner Modlin asked how the city can incentivize developers to align already zoned or partially plated land with the plan's vision. He noted that much of the land has existing entitlements, apart from the area between Highway 34 Bypass and 37<sup>th</sup> St, which, while designated in part for industrial use, is expected to include residential development. He asked how the city can encourage developers to adapt plans now, before construction begins.

Mr. King noted that several landowners on the west side, including those with PUDs and approved projects, were included in the plan. He expressed hope that one or two might take up the city's offer, delaying the issuance of their first permit until the plan is approved, and seriously consider pursuing this approach.

Commissioner Schulte asked how the plan's walkable pods would interact with existing, conventional development, which often appears as a patchwork with empty spaces in between. He wanted to know whether interspersing these new walkable areas with traditional development would have any practical effects going forward.

Mr. Speck explained that interspersing neo-traditional pods with conventional development generally works well, as residents naturally access the new neighborhoods on foot or by vehicle. Mixed-use and organizational strength of adjacent areas is less critical at the local scale. At the regional scale transit depends on localized density and neighborhood nodes, where walkable clusters support bus or future BRT stops. Interspersing development is not seen as a social problem or for transit, since each neighborhood can function independently as a walkable, livable area and potential transit hub.

Mr. Threewitt offered Bradburn as a successful example of integrating traditional neighborhood development into suburban areas. Despite varying design success in adjacent developments, residents access its amenities, and its strong market performance suggests it could serve as a model for connecting suburban areas in western Greeley.

Mr. Speck noted that surveys from the National Association of Realtors show that 40–60% of people prefer smaller homes on walkable lots over larger homes in isolated suburban areas. Only about 10% of new housing offers this type of walkable living, creating a significant mismatch between demand and availability. He emphasized that maintaining affordability in these rare communities is a key challenge and requires incorporating diverse housing and building types, as current demand remains largely unmet.

Commissioner Schulte supported the concept for guiding future development but cautioned that people's stated preferences often don't match their actual choices. He worried that interest in smaller homes may fade once space constraints are felt, and cited St. Michael's as an earlier, scaled-back attempt that ultimately fell short, possibly due to the Great Recession.

Mr. Speck described St. Michael's as a hybrid example that raises concerns because key walkability elements from the form-based code are missing, underscoring the importance of strong codes, clear plans, and developers who understand the value of implementing them correctly.

Commissioner Briscoe expressed concern that making the form-based code optional in western Greeley may limit its effectiveness, noting that even large projects like Stapleton in Denver faced challenges. While he strongly supports the vision of western Greeley as a destination for walkable living, the area currently consists mostly of residential and multifamily pods, causing some residents to move to neighboring towns. He questioned what tools the city has to steer development toward this vision, arguing that some form-based code zones should be mandatory to ensure the plan's success.

Mr. Speck noted the importance of having developers choose between following the existing zoning or fully adopting the optional form-based code and not allowing the creation of a hybrid. This ensures that outcomes will either follow the current zoning or fully implement the form-based code, avoiding a "Frankenstein" mix of sprawl and traditional neighborhood design.

Commissioner Briscoe supported the concept but questioned how required capital improvements, especially costly streets and trails, would be funded and how added development fees might affect project feasibility and developer participation.

Mr. Speck noted that mandatory trail and public improvement costs would be consistent across developments, with the primary added expense being a more complete street network that could be offset by higher density, and that city incentives would be crucial to success.

Commissioner Briscoe urged the group to take the feedback seriously, emphasizing the need for clear implementation tools, mandatory overlays, and a defined CIP budget that funds the critical capital projects necessary for success. He stressed the importance of transit in connecting eastern and western Greeley to avoid regional division and support the health and prosperity of the entire community.

Chair Yeater added that Greeley's role as a developer, with a financial stake, complicates the plan, as this role raises questions about how to balance the city's incentive to concentrate traffic and commerce in one area with a vision that emphasizes slower traffic and localized commercial hubs.

Mr. Threewitt shared that achieving different developmental outcomes requires different approaches. Ranging from a full legislative rezoning mandating form-based code across western Greeley, to modifying or making the code optional. Past voluntary efforts failed because developers defaulted to familiar, profitable models, but ultimately implementation will be up to the Planning Commission and Council to determine the path forward. On financing, the city is rethinking growth funding by combining districts, HOAs, and impact fees, noting that higher-density development reduces infrastructure costs and makes projects more feasible.

Commissioner Modlin asked how much density increases under the form-based approach, noting that developers would likely view that increase as key to the project's feasibility. He admitted they hadn't fully understood how the design leads to higher density.

Mr. King said it is difficult to assign a single percentage increase for the form-based code, as impacts vary by place, noting that regions, towns, and neighborhood centers each experience different increases. The plan provides a few examples, but outcomes depend on factors such as acreage, infrastructure costs, and location. Mr. King shared that currently, single-family neighborhoods have 3–7 units per acre, while the new code allows up to 15, effectively doubling residential density. Commercial areas, which now permit 30% lot coverage, could expand to 80% under the new code, more than doubling development potential for both residential and commercial sites.

Chair Yeater asked if the GID still functions as originally intended for Cascadia when this project and its increased density are added.

Mr. Threewitt stated there was no side-by-side comparison or reanalysis done, as the GID pro-forma for Cascadia is complex. It is expected that, if analyzed, it would likely outperform the current proposal in terms of both density and amenities.

Commissioner Briscoe asked the consultants whether, based on their experience, attracting retail tenants in these types of areas would be challenging.

Mr. Speck stated that chain retailers are often eager to occupy ground-floor spaces with mixed-use residential buildings, benefiting from the built-in customer base. While some developers still prefer one story pad sites with highway visibility, these can be integrated into broader mixed-use plans.

Commissioner Schulte mentioned that in the presentation it was noted that mansions are located within sight of multifamily housing. In periods of rapid multifamily growth, communities often hear

vocal opposition from residents who prefer not to live near such developments. He then asked whether this attitude is generational or common in other communities.

Mr. King said under form-based code, design transitions reduce height impacts, incorporate pedestrian scale lighting and required parks and amenities. These improvements make multifamily more acceptable to single family neighbors and can even enhance surrounding property values when combined with mixed use development.

Commissioner Briscoe emphasized the need for an implementation framework to translate the vision into reality, rather than approving projects piecemeal without encouraging use of the form-based code. He suggested practical, balanced tools or triggers the city could use to promote adoption, with the goal of making Greeley a desirable, well-planned community that attracts residents back from surrounding areas.

Chair Yeater shared that western Greeley already appears supportive of this concept, providing momentum that could be leveraged to implement it effectively.

Mr. Threewitt noted that implementing the plan will require a cultural shift, including closer collaboration with Planning Commission and Council and a willingness to say no to undesired development.

With no other questions or comments from the Commission, Chair Yeater ended the workshop at 2:35pm.

DocuSigned by:  
*Justin Yeater*  
3F44E3E176F84C8...

**Justin Yeater – Chair**

DocuSigned by:  
*Don Threewitt*  
2A71D92FBF874DE...

**Don Threewitt – Interim Comm. Development Director**