Community Development
CODE ASSESSMENT
EVALUACIÓN DEL CÓDIGO DE
desarrollo comunitario

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
Summary - Meeting #1
June 25, 2025

Meeting Attendees

Project Staff:
Cascadia Partners: Jamin Kimmell, Rachel Cotton, Lydia Ness
Washington County: Suzanne Savin, Theresa Cherniak, Anne Kelly

TAC Members:
Washington County Planning Commissioner – Amber Rosenberry
Home Builders Association – Matt Wellner
Fair Housing Council of Oregon – John Miller
Clean Water Services (CWS) – Elle Worrlein
Washington County Current Planning – Anne Elvers
Washington County Engineering – Stacy Shetler
Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) – Laura Kelly
Metro – Glen Hamburg
Community representative – Mary Manseau
City of Beaverton Current Planning – Jana Fox
Community Partners for Affordable Housing (CPAH) - Christopher Ibeling

Members of the public:
Gretchen Buehner
Bruce Bartlett

Project Orientation

- County staff provided project overview and background summary. The CDC Assessment is a review and evaluation of Washington County's Community Development Code (CDC) to identify and prioritize changes that are needed to the CDC's structure and content to:
    - Ensure compliance with state requirements
    - Remove obstacles to housing development
    - Streamline the code for easier use
- The assessment is the first phase of a multi-year program to comprehensively update the CDC.
- Role of TAC is to:
    - Attend four meetings over the course of the project.
    - Provide input and feedback to staff on:
        - Barriers to housing production, choice, and affordability

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        - Legal compliance issues
        - Ease-of-use of the CDC
    - Review and provide input to staff on draft consultant deliverables.

CDC Orientation

- County staff provided a high-level CDC overview, covering what the CDC is, its structure, and the content of Articles III (Land Use Districts) and IV (Development Standards). More information can be found in the TAC Meeting #1 packet, Attachment 4: CDC Overview Slide Deck.

Questions on Project and CDC Orientation

- TAC member asked:
    - Is the Advisory Council on Racial Equity (ACRE) going to be involved in this project?
    - When will the October TAC meeting date be set?
    - This project runs through the end of this upcoming fiscal year. In the following fiscal year, are there going to be ordinances to enact changes recommended by the CDC Assessment project?
        - Staff response: This project is Phase 1 and will run to the end of fiscal year 2025-26. After Phase 1 there will be a Phase 2 starting in the subsequent fiscal year; this is the continuing work and will include starting work on ordinances for prioritized CDC changes.

Interview Report Out

- Cascadia Partners staff provided key takeaways from stakeholder focus group interviews held thus far. Eight group interviews were held in May and June and included Community Representatives, Market Rate Developers/Homebuilders, Developer Representatives, Housing Advocates/Non-Profit Developers, County Leadership and County Planners. Interviews with County Building/Engineering and Service Agencies planned to happen in the next week. A summary of key takeaways from the interviews can be found in the TAC Meeting #1 packet, Attachment 1: TAC Meeting #1 Slide Deck.

Legal Compliance Audit Summary

- Cascadia Partners staff provided an overview of the CDC's legal compliance with a set of housing-related statutes and administrative rules. The summary highlighted statutory requirements and topics the CDC was found to comply with, to partially comply with, to not comply with, and where codification is recommended for clarity and transparency to applicants/users of the CDC. A summary of the legal compliance audit can be found in the TAC Meeting #1 packet, Attachment 5: Legal Compliance Audit Table.

Discussion Questions

- Topic 1: Stakeholder Interviews
    - TAC feedback:
        - Support for the idea that common requests for adjustments/variances may be an indicator for where development standards might need changes.
        - Setback standards that have existed for some time might warrant being looked at again - either eliminating or reducing setbacks could reduce burden to fit development on property
        - Support for idea of use table in the CDC. Would help a layperson identify all the uses that are allowed for property or compared to other zones. Would help clarify where it's possible to do certain type of development.
            - Although table can get unwieldy, suggest including some associated standards that go with the use, such as parking, etc.
        - Highlighted policy questions for staff:
            - Requirement for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to be placed at or behind the front building line of the primary dwelling – is this necessary?
            - When two ADUs are proposed, is the requirement for one of the two ADUs to be attached necessary?
            - Bicycle parking requirements in multi family
            - Are these requirements warranted given challenges with building needed housing?
        - Found interesting how different groups thought different areas of CDC were good/bad and that feedback varied depending on group.
        - Would like to push back on idea that neighborhood meetings require additional time or money - developers don't understand how something like stormwater could impact community without going to a meeting.
        - All groups mentioned confusion about middle housing requirements.
            - Could middle housing be its own section in the CDC? Middle housing requirements are currently located throughout the CDC, making it difficult to untangle.
        - The stakeholder interview report-out included a comment that working with other agencies can cause delays. Would annexations to cities help with ease of development? Do cities have a smoother process?
        - Desire to review the stakeholder focus group summary notes to see specific comments that were not included in the high-level summary.
            - Staff response: Staff will discuss whether and how to share stakeholder focus group summary notes with TAC. It's important to note that the purpose of the focus group interviews was to gather perspectives on the CDC from a variety of users. These perspectives will be considered and

evaluated but may or may not result in CDC changes. Identifying a CDC provision as problematic during a focus group discussion does not necessarily mean that Cascadia Partners will recommend changes to it, or that the County will change or remove that CDC provision.

- Specific standards to consider:
  - Is the allowance for guest houses still necessary, given that ADUs are allowed?
  - Is the allowance for temporary health hardship dwellings still necessary, given that ADUs are allowed?
  - Should definitions be simplified for nursery, daycare, etc.?
- Surprised about developer comments - were they hesitant to provide honest feedback because of current projects?
  - An interview participant responded that, if anything, participants in the developer/homebuilder groups were overly honest. They noted that certain standards in the CDC create challenges for infill development, but that overall they liked the CDC's structure (easy to use because it's used often).
    - Suggestion for a cheat sheet for folks that have less experience with the CDC.
  - Cascadia Partners noted there is a difference between CDC ease in navigating and finding information versus ease of complying with the CDC standards for a specific project. These topics will be touched on in future TAC meetings.
- Are any of the state requirements identified in the Legal Compliance audit onerous or specifically difficult for Washington County staff?
  - Beaverton staff shared that from their perspective, it's not any specific state statute that is onerous, but rather the volume of state requirements and that they are constantly evolving.
- There are conflicts between certain CDC development standards and engineering design standards.
- Support for idea of simplifying code as much as possible - one area that needs simplification is definitions of housing types:
  - Is it a duplex or townhouse? Or main home with ADU?
  - For service agencies, this has implications for stormwater management or other areas of their codes.
- What belongs in CDC vs. County Road Standards? - inclusion of access base and sight distance in CDC can be confusing.
- Variance process/exception process in CDC - criteria or threshold to meet is virtually impossible compared to Engineering's exception process.

- Topic 2: Barriers to Housing
    - Two step process for middle housing under CDC if wanting to do a subdivision but then add middle housing and use Middle Housing Land Division. Is there any way to streamline the process or just allow one process?
        - Referenced example of trying to do this and it took multiple years.
    - System Development Charges (SDCs) for ADUs - High SDCs for ADU and wondering if this could be reduced to encourage ADU development?
        - Cascadia Partners clarified that the assessment project will not address changes to fee structures.

Public Comment Period

- Real estate land use lawyer has found the code easy to use when representing developers for greenfield but not so easy when it's infill development.
- Variance issue
    - Challenging dealing with variances due to the County's requirements when annexing area into Portland.
    - Can be barrier to development.
- Two-thirds of the urban county is in the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation district but South County isn't
    - Not charging a parks fee in South County is creating serious problems for South County.
- Conflicts between County's CDC and city codes on development
    - Really need to revise CDC and take a look at Beaverton, Tigard, King City, etc. to compare urban areas of County to those cities' codes for consistency

Next Steps and Project Timeline

- Cascadia Partners staff shared next steps.
- Cascadia Partners will continue with its CDC audit work.
- Next TAC meeting will be held in October.
    - Staff may follow up earlier than September to schedule that meeting
- Staff to provide contact information of fellow TAC members