

Comprehensive

What You Need to Know:

To: Echo Residents

Back-story: The City of Echo received a Grant from the Department of Land Conservation and Development for 65k dollars, in order to revise/update Echo's Comprehensive plan and city codes. The City hired Carla McClane as an outside consultant to help with this project on December 12, 2023. A Public Affairs Committee (PAC) was formed after the recommendation of McClane and Mayor Chad Ray later appointed members on April 9, 2024. The PAC held multiple meetings to discuss and review the Comprehensive plan and city codes laid out by McClane. There were four community representatives and two councilpersons, along with McClane and the City Administrator Dave Slaght. Members helped make suggestions on re-zoning, along with city codes. The PAC worked on Echo's goals set forth in the Comprehensive Plan, with the basis being formed from Oregon's Statewide goals. To date they have had 12 meetings and there has been one "work session" with the city council.

Timeline of Events:

March 14, 2023- City Administrator reported that Echo needs a new/updated comprehensive plan and city code. The grant from the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) was mentioned and that the City Administrator is going to apply for it.

August 8th, 2023- There was a vote to approve the planning grant.

September 12th, 2023- The council voted to approve a letter of support for the DLCD grant.

December 12th, 2023- The council was asked to approve Carla McClane to be hired as a consultant to work on the new comprehensive and city code plans. This would be funded by the 60k DLCD grant. The council voted and approved.

January 9th, 2024- The council voted on the approval to use the DLCD grant money to fund a full comprehensive plan and city code update.

February 13th, 2024- There was no mention in the meeting meetings for the comprehensive plan.

March 12th, 2024- Carla McClane went over the upcoming comprehensive plan and code update project the TA grant (DLCD) and mentioned needing to form a Public Affairs Committee (PAC). Mayor Chad Ray asked to go about forming a PAC. McClane recommended 5-7 members that are part of the community, council, and staff.

April 9th, 2024- Mayor Ray appointed citizen volunteers and two council members to be part of the Comprehensive planning committee or PAC (it is mentioned as several different names throughout the minutes). There was no motion made or 2nd, and there was no vote mentioned in the minutes to approve this committee.

May 14th, 2024- No mention of the Comprehensive planning committee

June 11th, 2024- It was reported that the Comprehensive Planning Committee had their first meeting. It was stated that the consultant (McClane) laid out the plan for them and gave them homework to read the first 50 pages (no specifics on what was in the 50 pages was mentioned)

July 9th, 2024- It was noted that the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee would meet in August.

August 13th, 2024- It was noted that the TAC will be meeting later in the month. There was no notice of a meeting, no agenda, and no minutes found for a meeting in August.

September 10, 2024- The minutes states the comp. plan committee meeting was in a few days. There was no update from the August meeting and still no minutes to be found either.

October 8th, 2024- The TAC committee meeting was postponed but will be rescheduled according to the minutes. Again, no updates given from any of the prior scheduled meetings.

November 19th, 2024- No update or mention of the comprehensive plan or committee

December 10th, 2024- No update or mention of the comprehensive plan or committee.

January 14th, 2025- No update or mention of the comprehensive plan or committee.

February 11th, 2025- McClane is mentioned as staff on the staff report that was prepared for a public hearing regarding the Madison application for annexation (001-2025). Again, no mention of the comprehensive plan or committee.

March 11th, 2025- No minutes were attached for this council meeting but can be found in the packet for the April meeting. There was no update or mention of the comprehensive plan or committee.

April 8th, 2025- No update or mention of the comprehensive plan or committee.

*****It has been said that there was a Planning committee meeting prior to April 28th, and that was recorded. No information has been found on the city website. *****

April 28th, 2025- Agenda was posted for a meeting on the city website for the planning committee, however it did not specify it was for the planning committee. There was also no notice posted (that anyone has seen), and no meeting minutes. (It was mentioned that this meeting was recorded, which you can request a copy)

May 9th, 2025- An agenda was posted for the Planning Committee to meet from 2:00pm-5:00pm. There were no minutes posted and there was also no notice posted anywhere that the public had seen. (This meeting is also stated to be recorded, and a copy can be requested).

May 13th, 2025- There was no update or mention of the comprehensive plan or committee. The mayor was asked after the meeting if the council only recognized the Art and Trail committees, or if there were more. He responded that there was a budget committee, never mentioning the Comprehensive planning committee. Although, he did say there was a new comprehensive plan in the works.

May 27th, 2025- This was a working session between the council and the Comprehensive planning committee, otherwise known/mentioned as the Public Affairs Committee (PAC). McClane the Consultant approved to help with the update of the comprehensive plan and city codes was present, as well as several of the appointed PAC members. McClane did majority of the speaking and reviewed what was going on with the new updates. There was minimal discussion going on between the council and the PAC, however they did spend an hour discussing rezoning open spaces to residential. City Council President Tammy Willimas was concerned about public meeting violations and conflict of interest. The concern was met with hostile disregard and she was asked if she thought the whole process should be scrapped and started over.


***** Public Hearings have been scheduled for June 24th and July 8th *****

Issues Within the Process:

- City Council was notified by the City Administrator in 2023 that he would be applying for the DLCD grant to update Echo's comprehensive plan and city codes.
- The council knew in late 2023 of the grant's approval
- Carla McClane was approved to be hired as the consultant before the DLCD grant money was approved by the council to be used to fund and update Echo's comprehensive plan and city codes.
- As the record shows, the potential for any other consultants was not explored.
- The Comprehensive planning committee was not selected from the guidelines set forth in the Echo City Council Rules of Procedures as outlined in Section 14, but off the recommendation of McClane.
- The Comprehensive plan committee according to the record/minutes of the April 9th, 2024, meeting was appointed by the mayor, but the council did not vote and approve of said members. (see section 14 of City Council Rules of Procedures)
- Not a single planning committee meeting was posted or had public agendas (except for the 2 mentioned in the timeline), and no meetings have minutes. The last 3 meetings out of the 12 are said to have been recorded and copies can be requested. This is a violation of not only the City Council Rules of Procedures but also of Oregon Public Meeting laws outlined in ORS.192.610-192.705
- There are also violations of conflict of Interest with a committee member and a member of the city council. The conflict could result in financial benefit or potential of financial benefit if open spaces are rezoned to be residential. General Requirements for Public Officials state that any actual or potential conflict of interest must be disclosed. Oregon Ethics Law can be found in Oregon revised statutes Ch 244 Government Ethics and Section 14 of Echo's city council rules of procedures.

Summary:

In conclusion with the timeline outlined and the multitude of violations cited from City Councils Rules of Procedures, as well as Oregon State laws, everything completed to this point should be null and void. While



an updated comprehensive plan and city codes are needed, this process should be fully transparent to the public from start to finish. We cannot in good faith support the draft of the current comprehensive plan or city codes. As it stands, the draft has not taken into consideration the needs, wants, or concerns with the residents of Echo.