



# Town of Erie

645 Holbrook Street  
Erie, CO 80516

## Meeting Agenda

### Town Council

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Tuesday, July 21, 2026

6:00 PM

645 Holbrook Street

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**Study Session**  
<https://www.erieco.gov/CouncilMeeting>

**I. Call Meeting to Order**

**II. Discussion Items**

- A. Joint Planning Commission and Town Council Meeting on Proposition 123 Fast Track, 2026 Comprehensive Plan Amendment, 2026-2027 Planning and Development Work Plan, and Planning Commission Roles and Responsibilities

**III. Adjournment**

The Town Council's goal is that all meetings be adjourned by 10:30 p.m. An agenda check will be conducted at or about 10:00 p.m., and no later than at the end of the first item finished after 10:00 p.m. Items not completed prior to adjournment will generally be taken up at the next regular meeting.

**Translation Services**

Persons planning to attend the meeting who need sign language interpretation, translation services, assisted listening systems, Braille, taped material, or other accommodation should [email the Town Clerk's Office](#) or call 303-926-2710. Please submit requests at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Si requiere una copia en español de esta publicación o necesita un intérprete durante la reunión del Consejo, por favor [llame a la Ciudad](#) 303-926-2710. Por favor envíe sus solicitudes al menos 48 horas antes de la reunión.



# Town of Erie

645 Holbrook Street  
Erie, CO 80516

Town Council

**Meeting Date: 7/21/2026**

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**File #:** 2026-51

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**Subject:**

Joint Planning Commission and Town Council Meeting on Proposition 123 Fast Track, 2026 Comprehensive Plan Amendment, 2026-2027 Planning and Development Work Plan, and Planning Commission Roles and Responsibilities

**Department:** Planning - Land Use,

**Presenter(s):** Sarah Nurmela, Director of Planning & Development  
Kelly Driscoll, Deputy Director of Planning & Development  
Josh Campbell, Senior Strategic Planner  
Darryll Wolnik, Planning Manager

**Time Estimate:** 120

**Fiscal Summary:**

Cost as Recommended:

Balance Available:

Fund:

Line Item Number:

New Appropriation Required:

**Policy Issues:**

Staff will provide an overview of the options for complying with Proposition 123; information pertaining to the Council-directed Elevate Erie Comprehensive Plan Amendments; an overview of the Planning 2026-2027 Work Plan; and Planning Commission Roles and Responsibilities.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Information item only.

**Summary/Key Points:**

- **Proposition 123 Fast Track Review Process**

- No code changes are necessary to comply.
- Fast Track process would only apply to a handful of application types.
- Utilizing the Fast Track process is entirely voluntary for developers.
- While affordable housing funding at the State level is reduced over the next three years, homeownership grants, local planning capacity grants, and housing tax credits are not affected.
- Should the Town fail to meet its commitment by the end of the three-year cycle, projects will be ineligible to receive Proposition 123 funding for 2027.
- **Staff will provide an update on the amendments to the Elevate Erie Comprehensive Plan that are based on direction received from Council on Jan. 6, 2026.**
- **Staff will provide an overview of the 2026-2027 Planning & Development Work Plan.**
- **Planning Commission requested discussion of Planning Commission Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Background of Subject Matter:**

#### **Proposition 123 Fast Track Permitting**

In June 2023, the Town filed a commitment under Proposition 123 to increase affordable housing by 9% over the next three years for a total of 15 additional units by Dec. 31, 2026. This commitment was met and confirmed by the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) in June 2026. To remain eligible for Proposition 123 funding after 2026, Erie must implement a system to expedite the development review process (Fast Track Review Process) for affordable housing that is effective as of Jan. 1, 2027. To comply, no code changes are necessary, and the Fast Track Process would only apply to Site Plans, Architecture Review, Building Permits, Variances, and Special Use Permits.

More details on Fast Track, funding, and potential impacts of not remaining in compliance are in the attached staff report.

#### **Elevate Erie Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

The proposed land use changes requested by Town Council include creation of a new residential category. The new proposed category is Residential-Medium-Low at 8–12 dwelling units per acre. The Residential-Medium category's density is proposed to be 12–18 dwelling units per acre. Council directed that the new Residential-Medium-Low designation be applied to the properties at the southwest corner of 111th Street and Arapahoe Road. At their May 12, 2026 meeting, Council directed that the former Page property at 1025 Weld County Road (WCR) 1.5 be designated as Parks, Open Space, & Protected Lands on the Future Land Use Map.

Staff conducted the Community Education component of the amendment process from May 13 to June 1, interacting with over 250 people over the course of five events. Both the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) had the opportunity to review the proposed amendments. Staff anticipate attending the

Planning Commission meeting on Aug. 5, 2026, for an amendment recommendation and attending Town Council on Sept. 8, 2026, for final amendment consideration and approval.

### **2026-2027 Planning and Development Work Plan**

The 2026/2027 Planning Work Plan focuses on advancing key code updates, regulatory initiatives, and long-range planning efforts necessary to support the Town's growth and strategic priorities. Major work areas are organized into two categories: Code & Regulations and Strategic Planning. Details on these are provided in the staff report and presentation.

### **Planning Commission Roles and Responsibilities**

State statute enables municipalities to establish Planning Commissions, as does section 10.03 of the Town Charter. Title 3, Chapter 2, Section 1 of the Erie Municipal Code establishes the composition of the Planning Commission and refers to Title 10 (Unified Development Code) for powers, duties, and responsibilities. The Planning Commission acts in a quasi-judicial capacity by applying existing regulations and standards to specific properties or land use applications. While the Planning Commission provides valuable insight and recommendations on some legislative items, including comprehensive plan updates and significant land use code changes, policy-making authority lies with the Town Council. The Planning Commission discussed the possible expansion of their roles and responsibilities at meetings in July and wishes to discuss these further with Council.

Any changes to the Commission's role would need to be formalized through updates to the appropriate sections of Title 3 and Title 10 (UDC) of the Municipal Code.

Additionally, the Council and Commission will need to weigh potential changes against elements like the Town's work plan, budget, and staff capacity. Considerations should also include impacts to efficiency of government, responsiveness to the Town's rate of growth, market trends, and long-term implications to governance for both decision-making bodies.

### **Attachments:**

1. Staff Report
2. Staff Presentation

**TOWN OF ERIE  
TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
JOINT MEETING  
July 21, 2026**

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**SUBJECT:** Proposition 123 & Fast Track Permitting, Comprehensive Plan Amendment Update, 2026-2027 Planning and Development Work Plan, and Planning Commission Roles and Responsibilities

**PURPOSE:** Discussion only

**CODE REVIEW:** N/A

**DEPARTMENT:** Planning and Development

**PRESENTER:** Sarah Nurmela, Director of Planning and Development  
Kelly Driscoll, Deputy Director of Planning and Development  
Darryll Wolnik, Planning Manager  
Josh Campbell, Senior Strategic Planner

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Informational item only.

**SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND OF SUBJECT MATTER:**

**Purpose of Discussion**

The Town Council and Planning Commission expressed the desire to review and discuss Proposition 123 and determine the level of conformance and commitment. Additional information will also be provided about the Elevate Erie Comprehensive Plan Amendment process and changes, as well as the Work Plan for Planning and Development and roles of Planning Commission.

**Feedback Requested from Council**

Staff request that Council and Planning Commission discuss the commitment to Proposition 123 Fast Track. The Comprehensive Plan Amendment Update and 2026-2027 Planning and Development Work Plan discussions are informational.

**Topics Covered in this Memo:**

1. Proposition 123 and "Fast Track" Permitting
2. Comprehensive Plan Amendment Update
3. 2026-2027 Planning and Development Work Plan
4. Planning Commission Roles and Responsibilities

## 1. Proposition 123 and “Fast Track” Permitting

### KEY POINTS

- No code changes are necessary to comply with Proposition 123.
- Fast Track requirements only apply to Site Plan, Variance, Special Review Use applications, and Architectural and Building Permits that are administratively reviewed.
- Utilizing Fast Track and providing affordable housing is entirely voluntary for developers.
- While affordable housing funding at the State level is reduced over the next three years, homeownership grants, local planning capacity grants, and housing tax credits are not affected.

### OVERVIEW

In June 2023, the Town filed a commitment to Proposition 123 to increase affordable housing by nine (9) percent over the next three years for a total of 15 additional units by December 31, 2026. Local governments that want to remain eligible for Proposition 123 funding after 2026 must implement a system to expedite the development review process (Fast Track Review Process) for affordable housing, effective January 1, 2027. Table 3 lists applicable application types for a Fast Track process. Funding opportunities from Proposition 123 are described in the table below.

*Table 1: Prop 123 Funding Opportunities*

| <b>Funding Source</b>                       | <b>Description of Funds</b>                                                                                                                        | <b>Impact to Town</b>                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>DOLA Local Planning Capacity Grants</b>  | Support local planning efforts including zoning updates, permitting process improvements, staffing, and implementation of Town housing strategies. | Provides resources to update the Unified Development Code, streamline the development review process, and build staff capacity to support affordable housing development. |
| <b>DOLA Affordable Housing Support Fund</b> | Down payment and rental assistance, home rehabilitation programs, manufactured housing support, and housing vouchers.                              | Supports residents directly and helps maintain and expand the Town’s supply of affordable housing.                                                                        |
| <b>OEDIT Affordable</b>                     | Land banking, equity investments, gap financing, below market loans, and                                                                           | Provides critical financing tools needed to make                                                                                                                          |

|                               |                                                                  |                                       |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Housing Financing Fund</b> | supplemental funding for Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects. | affordable housing projects feasible. |
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Proposition 123 has roughly \$300 million available to go towards eligible projects, which is reduced for the next 3 years by HB26-1360: Affordable Housing Financing Fund. This legislation transfers \$130 Million dollars from the Affordable Housing Fund to the State's General Fund over the course of three years, effective June 30, 2026.

#### ERIE'S PROP 123 COMMITMENT

Erie met the required 15 affordable dwelling units for the 2024-2026 period with the Cheesman Street Residences project. However, without an official Fast Track Review Process in place, the Town is not in full compliance. To comply, the Town would need to have a Fast Track Review Process in place by January 1, 2027. Should the Town fail to meet this commitment by then, any projects in 2027 will be ineligible to receive Proposition 123 funding. The Town would have an opportunity to file a new two (2) year commitment for 2028-2029.

Neighboring jurisdictions in the region demonstrate varying levels of alignment with the Fast Track Review Process. The table below provides a snapshot of several of these jurisdictions. As shown below, implementation of a Fast Track process did not require code updates.

*Table 2 Prop 123 Compliance of neighboring jurisdictions*

|                          |                                                                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Town of Lyons</b>     | Fully Compliant                                                                     |
| <b>Town of Nederland</b> | Exploring code amendments to expand an existing expedited review process.           |
| <b>Town of Superior</b>  | Fully Compliant                                                                     |
| <b>City of Lafayette</b> | Exploring formal policy language with expedited review requirements.                |
| <b>City of Longmont</b>  | Exploring formal policy language and update to their existing Development Handbook. |
| <b>City of Boulder</b>   | Exploring the creation of a business process to outline steps for expedited review. |

## FAST TRACK APPLICABILITY

The Fast Track Review process is a voluntary option for developers seeking an expedited review, provided that at least 50 percent of the proposed residential dwelling units are designated as affordable. The State of Colorado defines affordable as 60 percent or lower AMI for rental units and 100 percent or lower AMI for owner-occupied. The Town defines affordable as 80 percent or lower AMI for Rental and 120 percent or lower for owner occupied ([UDC 10-11-3](#)).

The Fast Track Review Process must make a final decision on a permit or approval required for an Affordable Housing application within 90 calendar days upon receiving a completed application. Prior to a formal application submittal, applicants can utilize the pre-application process with the Town to ensure that applications are comprehensive and accurate to minimize potential errors and review comments. The Fast Track Review Process applies to only a few application types, as shown in the table below:

*Table 3 Fast Track Application Types*

| <b>Applies To</b>                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Does Not Apply</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site Plan</li><li>• Architectural Review</li><li>• Building Permit</li><li>• Variances</li><li>• Special Use Permit</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annexation</li><li>• Preliminary or Final Plat</li><li>• Comprehensive Plan Amendment</li><li>• Pre-Application</li><li>• Initial Zoning or Rezoning</li><li>• Appeals</li></ul> |

## FAST TRACK EXTENSIONS

The Fast Track Review Process allows for extensions to the 90-day review timeline from the Applicant and the Town.

Applicant-initiated extensions are allowed for the following scenarios:

- A one-time 90 calendar day extension at the request of the applicant;
- An extension to allow time to comply with state law or court order (the length of which is determined by the law or court order);
- An extension to allow for review and approval of the project by an external agency whose response time is outside the control of the local government and could extend beyond 90 days.
  - Example agencies and organizations include ditch companies, fire districts, water districts, FEMA, FAA, and utility companies.

Town-initiated extensions are allowed for the following circumstances:

- Extensions for up to 30 calendar days for unique or exceptional circumstances that are outside the control of the applicant or local government.

- Examples include receipt of additional information regarding soil conditions; adequacy of existing utilities or fire protection services; safety of proposed site access points; lack of response from applicants to review comments; applicant revisions resulting in creation of new or unforeseen issues requiring substantial re-review; public noticing error; or a governing body sending an application back down for additional review.

## FEEDBACK AND NEXT STEPS

Staff are seeking feedback on the desired level of commitment to Proposition 123: specifically whether to recommit for an additional three (3) years. Recommitment must be filed with the State prior to November 1, 2026, but the Fast Track process must be in place by December 31, 2026, for the recommitment to be considered confirmed by the State.

In addition to Proposition 123 commitment, staff will also be pursuing next steps in updating the Housing Needs Assessment and conducting a Housing Action Plan to comply with SB24-174 by January 1, 2028.

## 2. Comprehensive Plan Amendment Update

As directed by the Town Council during the January 6, 2026, Special Meeting, staff are evaluating and preparing Elevate Erie Comprehensive Plan amendments. Amendments include the creation of a new land use category, adjustments to the Future Land Use Map, and the creation of additional policy language within the Community Building Blocks chapter.

## LAND USE CHANGES

Town Council requested that staff evaluate modifying the current Residential – Medium use land use category of 8-18 dwelling units per acre into two categories. The first would be a new category, Residential – Medium Low, at 8-12 dwelling units per acre and the second would be a modified Residential – Medium at 12-18 dwelling units per acre. Town Council asked that specific properties be evaluated for change to Medium Low, including the southwest corner at 111<sup>th</sup> Street and Arapahoe Road, the former Page property northeast of Historic Old Town, and roughly 4.5 acres in southeast Historic Old Town. Additional direction from Town Council during the May 12, 2026, meeting included changing the former Page property from Residential-Medium to Parks, Open Space and Protected Lands.

## POLICY CHANGE

Town Council asked to include an additional policy regarding Context Sensitive Design where more intense uses are located adjacent to rural properties. This will be added to Chapter 3: Community Building Blocks. Implementing this policy will

provide important guidance for upcoming revisions to the Unified Development Code (UDC).

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Amendments to the Elevate Erie Comprehensive Plan require transparency and feedback from the community. Staff created multiple educational opportunities during the following dates and times:

- Organized Neighborhoods of Erie (ONE) Open House
  - 5/13, 6:00 – 8:00pm
- Erie Town Fair
  - 5/16 10:00am – 4:00pm
- Erie Community Center Pop-ups
  - 5/19 11:00am – 2:00pm
  - 5/29 7:00am – 10:00am
  - 6/1 4:00pm – 7:00pm

Over 250 residents interacted with staff over the course of the five (5) events.

In addition to these events, staff met with the property owners of the sites identified for change from Residential-Medium to Residential-Medium-Low, including the owners of properties at 111<sup>th</sup> Street and Arapahoe Road as well as Main Street and Anderson Street. A property owner at 111<sup>th</sup>/Arapahoe had concerns with the proposed change, citing that the reduction in density feels disproportionately impactful to their property and may not align with current market signals, which have not indicated a shift toward lower-density development. The property owner of Main/Anderson site in south Old Town had no concerns with the proposed change.

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK & NEXT STEPS

The majority consensus from the community members was neutral. A small number of community members expressed concerns with the proposed land use amendments, noting that they did not feel the changes aligned with the community's interest in expanding diverse and affordable housing options within Erie. A small number expressed their support as the proposed changes lowered the likelihood for apartments but still allowed options such as attached townhomes.

Both the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) had opportunity to review the proposed amendments. No substantive feedback or comments were provided.

Staff anticipate attending Planning Commission August 5, 2026, for recommendation and Town Council on September 8, 2026, for final consideration.

### 3. 2026-2027 Planning and Development Work Plan

The 2026/2027 Planning Work Plan focuses on advancing key code updates, regulatory initiatives, and long-range planning efforts necessary to support the Town's growth and strategic priorities. Major work areas are organized into two categories: Code and Regulations, and Strategic Planning.

#### CODE AND REGULATIONS

- **Short-Term Rental Licensing and Regulation:** Development and adoption of a licensing and regulatory framework for short-term rentals.
  - Fall/Early Winter 2026
- **Unified Development Code (UDC) Update:** A comprehensive update to the UDC to modernize development standards and improve usability.
  - Targeting adoption in 2027

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING

- **Comprehensive Plan Updates:** Completion of Council-directed targeted updates to the Town's Comprehensive Plan.
  - Adoption expected in Fall 2026
- **Old Town Visioning:** A focused visioning effort for Old Town, to guide future investment and preservation efforts.
  - Scheduled for Fall/Winter 2026 & early 2027
- **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program:** Development of a formal ADU program to expand housing options.
  - Ongoing program to support ADU development
  - State grant funding opportunities late summer
- **Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Action Plan:** Updated numbers for the Housing Needs Assessment and creation of the Housing Action Plan as required by SB24-174. Both must be complete by the end of 2027.

Each work plan item will include meaningful engagement from both the Planning Commission and the Town Council, including regular check-ins, work sessions, and formal review and adoption processes. Along with community engagement, these check-ins will help shape key policy decisions, ensure alignment with community goals, and provide the necessary direction at critical milestones throughout each project.

## **4. Planning Commission Roles & Responsibilities**

### **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

State statute enables municipalities to establish Planning Commissions, as does section 10.03 of the Town Charter. Title 3, Chapter 2, Section 1 of Erie Municipal Code establishes the composition of the Planning Commission and refers to Title 10 (Unified Development Code) for powers, duties and responsibilities.

### **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Planning Commission makes recommendations to Town Council on the following types of land use applications:

- Zoning
- Special Review Use
- Preliminary Plat
- UDC amendments
- Comprehensive Plan

The Planning Commission makes the final decision on Site Plans larger than 25,000 square feet, as well as on any Site Plans referred to the Commission by the Planning and Development Director. Planning Commission acts in a quasi-judicial capacity by applying existing regulations and standards to specific properties or land use applications. The Commission makes recommendations based on facts, evidence, and legal criteria, not public opinion. While the Planning Commission provides valuable insight and recommendations on some legislative items, including comprehensive plan updates and significant land use code changes, policy-making authority lies with the Town Council.

### **DISCUSSION**

At their July 1 meeting, the Planning Commission held a broad discussion about its current responsibilities and potential opportunities to refine or expand their role. Members asked how [Table 7.1-1](#) in the code compares with other municipalities. Commissioners also expressed interest in gathering comparative information on how similar bodies operate in neighboring jurisdictions. There was interest in understanding why certain items, such as initial zoning and annexations, do not come before the Commission. Several members suggested that expanding the types of applications reviewed by the Commission could be beneficial in relieving Council's workload, provided Council retains the ability to take up items at its discretion.

The Commission discussed the balance between efficiency and public involvement, noting that changes to decision-making authority would need to consider the role and importance of public hearings. Examples from other communities, including early public-comment models, were referenced as potential concepts worth exploring.

The Chair asked Commissioners to consider what additional roles, beyond those currently identified in code, they might wish to engage with, such as joint study sessions with other advisory boards, presentations from staff/consultants on all strategic plans, or deeper involvement in Capital Improvement Planning and infrastructure. The Commission agreed to develop a clear set of recommendations to present to Council.

Any changes to the Commission's role would need to be formalized through updates to the appropriate sections of Title 3 and Title 10 (UDC) of the municipal code. Additionally, the Council and Commission will need to weigh potential changes against elements like the Town's work plan, budget and staff capacity. Considerations should also include impacts to efficiency of government, responsiveness to the Town's rate of growth, market trends, and long-term implications to governance for both decision-making bodies.

**TOWN OF ERIE  
TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
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July 21, 2026**

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**PURPOSE:** Discussion only

**CODE REVIEW:** N/A

**DEPARTMENT:** Planning and Development

**PRESENTER:** Sarah Nurmela, Director of Planning and Development  
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

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**Feedback Requested from Council**

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provide important guidance for upcoming revisions to the Unified Development Code (UDC).

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Amendments to the Elevate Erie Comprehensive Plan require transparency and feedback from the community. Staff created multiple educational opportunities during the following dates and times:

- Organized Neighborhoods of Erie (ONE) Open House
  - 5/13, 6:00 – 8:00pm
- Erie Town Fair
  - 5/16 10:00am – 4:00pm
- Erie Community Center Pop-ups
  - 5/19 11:00am – 2:00pm
  - 5/29 7:00am – 10:00am
  - 6/1 4:00pm – 7:00pm

Over 250 residents interacted with staff over the course of the five (5) events.

In addition to these events, staff met with the property owners of the sites identified for change from Residential-Medium to Residential-Medium-Low, including the owners of properties at 111<sup>th</sup> Street and Arapahoe Road as well as Main Street and Anderson Street. A property owner at 111<sup>th</sup>/Arapahoe had concerns with the proposed change, citing that the reduction in density feels disproportionately impactful to their property and may not align with current market signals, which have not indicated a shift toward lower-density development. The property owner of Main/Anderson site in south Old Town had no concerns with the proposed change.

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK & NEXT STEPS

The majority consensus from the community members was neutral. A small number of community members expressed concerns with the proposed land use amendments, noting that they did not feel the changes aligned with the community's interest in expanding diverse and affordable housing options within Erie. A small number expressed their support as the proposed changes lowered the likelihood for apartments but still allowed options such as attached townhomes.

Both the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) had opportunity to review the proposed amendments. No substantive feedback or comments were provided.

Staff anticipate attending Planning Commission August 5, 2026, for recommendation and Town Council on September 8, 2026, for final consideration.

### 3. 2026-2027 Planning and Development Work Plan

The 2026/2027 Planning Work Plan focuses on advancing key code updates, regulatory initiatives, and long-range planning efforts necessary to support the Town's growth and strategic priorities. Major work areas are organized into two categories: Code and Regulations, and Strategic Planning.

#### CODE AND REGULATIONS

- **Short-Term Rental Licensing and Regulation:** Development and adoption of a licensing and regulatory framework for short-term rentals.
  - Fall/Early Winter 2026
- **Unified Development Code (UDC) Update:** A comprehensive update to the UDC to modernize development standards and improve usability.
  - Targeting adoption in 2027

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING

- **Comprehensive Plan Updates:** Completion of Council-directed targeted updates to the Town's Comprehensive Plan.
  - Adoption expected in Fall 2026
- **Old Town Visioning:** A focused visioning effort for Old Town, to guide future investment and preservation efforts.
  - Scheduled for Fall/Winter 2026 & early 2027
- **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program:** Development of a formal ADU program to expand housing options.
  - Ongoing program to support ADU development
  - State grant funding opportunities late summer
- **Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Action Plan:** Updated numbers for the Housing Needs Assessment and creation of the Housing Action Plan as required by SB24-174. Both must be complete by the end of 2027.

Each work plan item will include meaningful engagement from both the Planning Commission and the Town Council, including regular check-ins, work sessions, and formal review and adoption processes. Along with community engagement, these check-ins will help shape key policy decisions, ensure alignment with community goals, and provide the necessary direction at critical milestones throughout each project.

## 4. Planning Commission Roles & Responsibilities

### LEGAL FRAMEWORK

State statute enables municipalities to establish Planning Commissions, as does section 10.03 of the Town Charter. Title 3, Chapter 2, Section 1 of Erie Municipal Code establishes the composition of the Planning Commission and refers to Title 10 (Unified Development Code) for powers, duties and responsibilities.

### ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Planning Commission makes recommendations to Town Council on the following types of land use applications:

- Zoning
- Special Review Use
- Preliminary Plat
- UDC amendments
- Comprehensive Plan

The Planning Commission makes the final decision on Site Plans larger than 25,000 square feet, as well as on any Site Plans referred to the Commission by the Planning and Development Director. Planning Commission acts in a quasi-judicial capacity by applying existing regulations and standards to specific properties or land use applications. The Commission makes recommendations based on facts, evidence, and legal criteria, not public opinion. While the Planning Commission provides valuable insight and recommendations on some legislative items, including comprehensive plan updates and significant land use code changes, policy-making authority lies with the Town Council.

### DISCUSSION

At their July 1 meeting, the Planning Commission held a broad discussion about its current responsibilities and potential opportunities to refine or expand their role. Members asked how [Table 7.1-1](#) in the code compares with other municipalities. Commissioners also expressed interest in gathering comparative information on how similar bodies operate in neighboring jurisdictions. There was interest in understanding why certain items, such as initial zoning and annexations, do not come before the Commission. Several members suggested that expanding the types of applications reviewed by the Commission could be beneficial in relieving Council's workload, provided Council retains the ability to take up items at its discretion.

The Commission discussed the balance between efficiency and public involvement, noting that changes to decision-making authority would need to consider the role and importance of public hearings. Examples from other communities, including early public-comment models, were referenced as potential concepts worth exploring.

The Chair asked Commissioners to consider what additional roles, beyond those currently identified in code, they might wish to engage with, such as joint study sessions with other advisory boards, presentations from staff/consultants on all strategic plans, or deeper involvement in Capital Improvement Planning and infrastructure. The Commission agreed to develop a clear set of recommendations to present to Council.

Any changes to the Commission's role would need to be formalized through updates to the appropriate sections of Title 3 and Title 10 (UDC) of the municipal code. Additionally, the Council and Commission will need to weigh potential changes against elements like the Town's work plan, budget and staff capacity. Considerations should also include impacts to efficiency of government, responsiveness to the Town's rate of growth, market trends, and long-term implications to governance for both decision-making bodies.