

**JOINT WORK SESSION
DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION,
JUNE 15, 2026**

Minutes

Mayor Amorose Groomes called the Monday, June 15, 2026 joint work session to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendance

Council Members: Ms. Alutto, Mayor Amorose Groomes, Vice Mayor De Rosa, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Keeler, Ms. Kramb and Dr. Lam.

PZC Members present: Ms. Damaser, Ms. Harter, Ms. Newell and Mr. Way
Members absent: Mr. Alexander, Mr. Chinnock and Mr. Garvin.

Staff Members: Ms. O'Callaghan, Mr. Bitar, Ms. Holt, Ms. Willis, Ms. Noble, Ms. Hunter, Ms. Goliver, Ms. Wawszkiewicz, Mr. Barker, Mr. Boggs and Ms. Babbitt

Mr. Way led the pledge of allegiance.

Others Present: Geoff Green, Clarion Associates and Greg Dale, McBride Dale Clarion; Jeff Speck and Mark Bennett, Speck Dempsey; and Mike Brehm, EMH&T.

Discussion Items:

Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations Audit

Ms. Holt introduced the Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations Audit, presenting it as a project designed to deliver prioritized steps for future code updates and to ensure alignment with the City's adopted policies and plans. Ms. Holt clarified that the project would not rewrite the code immediately and would not reopen previously approved plans. Greg Dale of McBride Dale Clarion and Geoff Green of Clarion Associates presented the report.

Project Overview and Timeline

Mr. Dale provided context on the consulting team's structure and the scope of the project. He noted that the City's existing zoning code is the product of approximately 40 years of amendments, resulting in a document that is difficult to navigate and use. He confirmed that the project is on-schedule, with a target date of August 10 to present the finalized report to City Council for acceptance, followed by a potential Phase 2 implementation. Extensive stakeholder engagement has been conducted, including individual interviews with all City Council members, focus group interviews, and surveys involving most Planning Commission members.

Six Evaluation Themes

Mr. Green presented six thematic areas identified through the audit, each tied to priorities established in the Envision Dublin Comprehensive Plan:

Theme 1 – Reorganize and Restructure the Code: The current code suffers from decades of piecemeal amendments, resulting in multiple effectively separate zoning codes combined into one document. Duplicate definitions, inconsistent standards, and poor organization make the code

difficult for residents, developers, staff, and decision-making bodies to use. The audit recommends consolidating the zoning code and subdivision regulations into a single, unified development ordinance (UDO) with a logical structure, clear graphics, tables, and flowcharts to illustrate complex provisions. A separate administrative procedures manual would house application requirements that can change frequently, removing that material from the code itself.

Theme 2 – Enhance Site Development Standards: The City's base zoning districts lack site design standards comparable to those in the Bridge Street or West Innovation districts. This gap makes it difficult for applicants to understand the City's expectations prior to submitting planned unit development (PUD) applications. The audit recommends updating off-street parking standards, potentially eliminating or right-sizing minimums, adding provisions for electric vehicle and bicycle parking, updating landscaping and tree protection standards, establishing comprehensive open space set-aside requirements, incorporating sustainability standards or incentives, and streamlining subdivision standards including a simplified process for minor subdivisions.

Theme 3 – Clarify the PUD Process: Approximately 50 percent of the City is developed under PUD agreements, many of which are 10 to 40 years old. The audit recommends clarifying the PUD application process, better articulating how PUDs are expected to exceed baseline development standards and creating a pathway for limited administrative adjustments to legacy PUDs to reduce the cost and complexity of minor modifications.

Theme 4 – Address Diverse Housing Needs: The audit recommends expanding permitted housing types in appropriate districts, clearly defining those types in the code, and allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in districts with larger lots, in alignment with the City's adopted housing study.

Theme 5 – Update Zoning Districts and Uses: The audit recommends deleting obsolete zoning districts no longer in use, updating commercial and other base districts for consistency with Envision Dublin, and consolidating scattered use lists into a single, clearly organized use table applicable across all districts.

Theme 6 – Improve the Development Review Process: The audit recommends consolidating all development review procedures into a single chapter of the UDO, standardizing submission and review procedures, and establishing clear, uniform decision-making criteria for each application type.

Implementation Options

Three implementation options were presented. Option 1 would reorganize the existing code and subdivision regulations into a UDO without substantive changes beyond resolving clear conflicts or redundancies. Option 2 would build upon that reorganization by incorporating substantive changes reflecting all of the audit's recommendations. Option 3 would continue the current approach, with selective adoption of individual recommendations into the existing code. Ms. Holt shared that staff recommended Option 2, characterizing it as a two-step strategy: first organizing the code to understand what is in place, then proceeding with substantive improvements through a redline process.

Discussion

Members of both bodies expressed broad support for Option 2 and for the overall direction of the audit. The discussion surfaced several substantive points of emphasis and concern.

Ms. Damaser expressed support for the overhaul from a legal perspective, noting that disorganized and duplicative codes are difficult to work with in practice.

Mr. Way strongly endorsed the graphic and table-driven approach, and raised concerns from the Commission's recent casework, including the lack of a design component in subdivision regulations, the absence of market-driven demand for innovative housing types despite supportive language in adopted plans, and persistent ambiguity around what constitutes mixed use development. He also noted that the Suburban Office Institutional designation has caused ongoing confusion due to the unclear meaning of its institutional component.

Ms. Newell expressed strong support for preserving the PUD process, cautioning against any changes that would diminish its role, and noting the value of minor text amendment procedures that the Commission has used effectively.

Ms. Harter emphasized the importance of public education and resident engagement throughout the process, suggesting accessible formats such as videos to help the public understand what is changing and why. She also highlighted the importance of ensuring housing diversity is not lost in the reorganization.

Ms. Kramb noted she had read the audit in detail and expressed general support. She recommended a hybrid release approach, suggesting the reorganized but substantively unchanged UDO be made available to the public before the full revised version is complete. She flagged that the Historic District did not appear to be called out in the annotated outline article on zoning districts, which Mr. Green confirmed was an oversight that would be corrected. She expressed caution about administrative approvals of PUD modifications, preferring to retain Planning and Zoning Commission review even for older PUDs. She also expressed reservations about any blanket standard permitting six to eight units per acre, citing concerns about dense infill development being inserted between existing single-family residential properties, a pattern she noted is occurring in surrounding communities.

Ms. Johnson expressed general support and indicated particular interest in the recommendation to eliminate use variances, a mechanism she suggested has created community friction. She offered a somewhat more open posture than Council Member Kramb on the question of broader density standards, suggesting that consistent application across the city may produce better long-term outcomes, though she acknowledged the matter warrants further discussion. She commended the value of tracking deletions, moves, and cross-references throughout the rewrite process.

Ms. Alutto expressed support, noting the audit document itself was clearly written and accessible. She endorsed the hybrid release concept and expressed support for additional housing types, while emphasizing that density increases should be applied thoughtfully so that higher-density housing is placed in contextually appropriate locations rather than inserted between incompatible uses.

Dr. Lam expressed strong support for Option 2 and for themes 1 and 6 in particular, viewing those as foundational to the success of all other themes. He shared the concern about resident trust during a multi-year implementation and emphasized the need for robust public engagement, particularly around ADUs. He also raised concerns about eliminating parking minimums in areas that currently experience overflow into adjacent neighborhoods.

Mr. Keeler expressed support for the overall direction and noted that the current code appears to include zoning categories clearly designed for contexts that do not exist in Dublin, such as quarry excavation and gas districts, which he suggested are appropriate candidates for removal. He also raised the question of whether certain developments approved as PUDs in recent years truly reflect the spirit of the PUD designation, and expressed interest in ensuring that definition is better clarified going forward. He indicated support for cottage court units and ADUs, particularly as options for senior residents seeking to downsize.

Vice Mayor De Rosa raised the need to ensure the revised code and its graphics are compatible with artificial intelligence search tools and modern digital interfaces, noting that residents and staff increasingly interact with code through such platforms, and that graphics which are not machine-readable may create future accessibility problems. She recommended feeding the existing code through AI tools as part of the process to identify organizational improvements. She also recommended adding a fiscal health and financial resiliency goal to the introductory section of the code. She urged that mixed-use definitions be addressed on a parallel track rather than waiting for the full code rewrite to conclude, given that mixed use questions arise regularly before the Planning and Zoning Commission. She additionally noted that approximately 70 percent of the City is subject to homeowners' association (HOA) restrictions that may limit or complicate the implementation of new housing types and suggested that dynamic be accounted for in the planning process.

Mayor Amorose Groomes affirmed the importance of retaining a robust review process over PUDs, expressing concern about the varied and individual character of those developments. She expressed a preference for encouraging two-family residential development over ADUs, noting that the City's street network does not lend itself well to accessory dwelling units. She also highlighted the importance of reviewing parallel visioning documents and handbooks that have been developed over the years alongside the code, many of which contain illustrations and guidance that would be valuable to incorporate into the revised UDO.

Mr. Dale closed the presentation by affirming that the team understands Dublin's culture of resident engagement and is not recommending any process that would diminish public participation. Mr. Green noted that copious public engagement would be a recommended component of any Phase 2 implementation process.

Bridge Street Corridor Visioning

Ms. Noble introduced the Bridge Street Corridor Visioning Study, describing it as a two-phase effort examining the full corridor from Interstate 270 to Sawmill Road, divided by the Scioto River. She noted that Phase 1, covering East Bridge Street, was presented to City Council in 2025. The current session is focused on Phase 2, the West Bridge Street segment from Frantz Road to Franklin Street, while maintaining a cohesive corridor-wide perspective. The consulting team for this phase includes EMH&T, represented by Mike Brehm and Speck Dempsey, represented by Jeff Speck and Mark Bennett.

Background and Context

Mr. Brehm provided traffic volume context for the corridor. Traffic volumes on Bridge Street range from approximately 35,000 vehicles per day near the Interstate 270 interchange, declining to approximately 26,000 east of Frantz Road, and to approximately 18,000 between Riverside Drive

and Sawmill Road. He described how the corridor's character transitions from a high-speed highway environment west of Frantz Road to a more urban, historic character east toward the river and into the Bridge Street District. He noted that the development/redevelopment potential varies significantly across four identifiable zones: the highway transition zone west of Corbin Mills Drive, the school and cemetery zone, the historic Dublin core, and the Bridge Street District east of the river. He also presented planned trail network information, including the Emerald Trail designation along East Bridge Street and Riverside Drive, and a proposed Signature Trail alignment, emphasizing that the build-out of the trail network and the street network should proceed in coordination with development.

Walkability Principles

Mr. Speck summarized the general theory of walkability as it applies to the Bridge Street corridor. He organized the framework around four conditions a walk must meet to compete with driving: the walk must be useful, safe, comfortable, and interesting. He highlighted the opportunity that Dublin possesses in having both a traditional historic downtown and Bridge Park as complementary walkable districts. He characterized Bridge Park as among the best examples in the United States of a mixed-use, new town-in-town development.

On the comfortable walk, Mr. Speck discussed the importance of spatial enclosure and the ratio of building height to street width, noting that beyond a 6-to-1 ratio, pedestrians no longer feel enclosed or comfortable. He noted that Historic Dublin's main street and Bridge Park both achieve favorable ratios.

On the safe walk, Mr. Speck discussed the national pedestrian safety crisis, noting that pedestrian fatality risk has increased by 78 percent over the past 15 years. He emphasized that street design is the most actionable lever available to reduce pedestrian fatalities and introduced the Vision Zero principle of designing streets so that drivers do not feel comfortable exceeding posted speed limits. He identified key safety factors including lane count, lane width, presence of parallel parking as a protective buffer, and street trees. He also addressed the concept of induced demand, explaining that widening roads to reduce congestion is self-defeating because additional capacity attracts additional traffic, reaching a new equilibrium. He noted that for Bridge Street, which runs parallel to Interstate 270, Waze and other navigation applications route comparable travel times on either road, meaning that any congestion reduction achieved by widening Bridge Street would quickly be offset by additional diverted traffic.

Mr. Speck identified the principal existing deficiencies on West Bridge Street as: missing sidewalks in several segments, paved shoulders that communicate a highway environment and encourage speeding, narrow sidewalks, planting strips too narrow to support trees, missing crosswalks, and long pedestrian signal wait times in the western portions of the corridor.

Street Cross-Section Recommendations

Mr. Bennett presented draft cross-section concepts for four representative segments of West Bridge Street, translating the walkability principles into physical design recommendations.

Near Franklin Street, the primary intervention proposed is a shared-use path on the north side of the corridor, with modest sidewalk widening.

At the West High School Road intersection, the recommendations focus on widening the south sidewalk adjacent to the historic cemetery wall and expanding the planting strip by reallocating

space from vehicle lanes that are wider than necessary, while continuing the shared-use path on the north side.

Near Shawan Falls Drive, where a sidewalk is currently absent on the south side and drainage infrastructure complicates construction, the recommendations include adding a south-side sidewalk, widening the median to enhance planting and visual calming, and providing additional space to support tree health along the north-side boardwalk.

At Frantz Road, recommendations include completing the sidewalk on the south side, widening the median to accommodate future transit infrastructure, and exploring the feasibility of reducing from three westbound vehicle lanes to two at the approach, which would shorten the pedestrian crossing distance.

Mr. Bennett noted that the general toolkit of interventions includes wider sidewalks and filled sidewalk gaps, wider buffers between sidewalks and vehicle lanes, additional trees and planted medians, shorter and more frequent pedestrian crossings, reduced signal wait times, right-sized vehicle lanes and curb radii, removal of paved shoulders, improved access management, low-stress bicycle facilities, and improved lighting.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Considerations

Mr. Bennett presented preliminary analysis of how Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) infrastructure could be accommodated on West Bridge Street. He reported that a recent meeting with COTA confirmed that Phase 1 of the regional BRT network is expected to be operational in 2031, and that West Bridge Street falls within Phase 3, for which no current timeline exists, though a reasonable planning horizon is 5 to 10 years or more. He emphasized that COTA indicated it would work collaboratively with the City on station locations and corridor design, without imposing infrastructure the community does not want.

Mr. Bennett divided the corridor study area into three segments for BRT planning purposes. Segment A, the eastern end near the Historic District, is effectively constrained to its current curb-to-curb width, meaning BRT would require either repurposing a vehicle travel lane for a dedicated bus lane or operating in mixed traffic. Segment B offers more room on the north side of the corridor and could potentially accommodate both preserved vehicle lanes and new dedicated bus lanes through roadway widening, pending further analysis and stakeholder input. Segment C, the westernmost portion near Frantz Road, is already wide enough curb-to-curb to accommodate two vehicle travel lanes in each direction plus dedicated BRT lanes. Mr. Bennett described the team's strategy as future-proofing the corridor by setting curb lines and median widths today in a manner that reduces the reconstruction required when BRT ultimately arrives, rather than fully deferring action or committing to full reconstruction twice.

Discussion

Members of both bodies affirmed the walkability vision for the corridor and offered commentary on specific design and policy dimensions.

Ms. Alutto expressed support for the overall vision and the multimodal approach, and appreciated the value of the physical corridor walks conducted with council members. She expressed some concern about reducing the number of vehicle lanes near the west end of the corridor, suggesting that mixed-traffic BRT operation in the constrained eastern segment may be appropriate, while

dedicated lanes in segments B and C make more sense. She expressed broad support for lane width reductions and parallel parking where applicable.

Ms. Johnson affirmed the vision and expressed openness to designing the corridor around a two-direction dedicated BRT configuration throughout, noting the project's alignment with goals related to housing diversity and the Metro Place area. She asked for confirmation that 10-foot lane widths are used elsewhere in Dublin and was advised that they exist on Bridge Street near High Street in historic Dublin.

Ms. Kramb expressed support for narrowing lanes and for reducing the three westbound lanes near Frantz Road to two. She supported planning for dedicated BRT lanes, particularly in the median between Corbin's Mill Drive and Frantz Road, and recommended that improvements to the north side of the corridor in the interim be kept minimal to preserve flexibility for future BRT alignment. She noted the improved connectivity provided by Franklin Street, which has reduced pressure on the Bridge Street and High Street intersection.

Ms. Harter expressed support for the vision and noted the importance of creating safe pedestrian access from nearby neighborhoods to the corridor, as well as the opportunity to improve the visual environment by moving utility infrastructure underground as was done in historic Dublin. She raised awareness of evolving traffic signal technology as a related consideration and cautioned that public education will be essential as bike facilities are introduced, since pedestrians and drivers are not accustomed to looking for cyclists in protected lanes.

Ms. Newell expressed strong personal support for walkability but raised concerns about 10-foot lane widths given the prevalence of large pickup trucks with extended mirrors, drawing on her experience with narrow streets in her own neighborhood. She suggested that incorporating visual elements such as planters or other barriers near the sidewalk edge could calm traffic without necessarily reducing lanes to the minimum width, and proposed that a compromise between full lane width reduction and complementary design elements might be appropriate.

Mr. Way expressed full support for the recommendations, noted personal experience with the inadequate bicycle facilities near Post Road, and expressed hope that the BRT line would ultimately extend to a future passenger rail station.

Ms. Damaser echoed the residents who testified during the Monterey Square case about the discomfort of traveling on that portion of Bridge Street. She expressed support for the walkability measures and noted that traffic calming on Bridge Street may naturally divert some traffic to Interstate 270 via navigation applications. She raised concerns about e-bike speeds on shared-use paths as a growing safety issue.

Dr. Lam affirmed the vision and supported graduated lane width reduction as an effective speed management tool. He expressed reservation about reducing the number of westbound lanes at the Frantz Road intersection, noting that the three westbound lanes serve distinct turning and through movements that back up significantly at peak hours. He asked whether ODOT standards would permit 10-foot lanes on State Route 161. Mr. Brehm confirmed that Dublin, as a home rule city, has considerable latitude on that roadway and that ODOT does permit 10-foot lanes in some locations. Dr. Lam also raised the question of how e-bike speeds on shared-use paths can be managed through design, to which Mr. Speck acknowledged the challenge, noting that shared-use paths predate the e-bike era and that enforcement is difficult.

Mr. Keeler expressed support for 10-foot lanes, noting personal comfort with the width even for a large vehicle, and endorsing the principle that drivers who are uncomfortable with the route or with congestion will seek alternatives. He expressed uncertainty about committing to dedicated BRT lanes today given the uncertain timeline, while acknowledging the public benefit of consolidating riders into fewer vehicles.

Vice Mayor De Rosa noted from personal bicycle use that the school-side sidewalk is nearly impassable due to poor curb cuts and discontinuities, and suggested that improvements to curb cuts alone would meaningfully improve safety independent of lane width changes. She expressed support for the 10- or 11-foot shared-use path standard the city previously adopted but has not yet implemented, and recommended doing so here. She endorsed the wider median concept as sound forward planning for BRT, while acknowledging the timeline uncertainty.

Mayor Amorose Groomes affirmed the vision and expressed the view that BRT may arrive sooner than anticipated given COTA's inflationary revenue position and political pressure to deliver on commitments made to voters. She expressed a preference for maximizing dedicated transit infrastructure to preserve future opportunities for fixed rail or light rail, recommending bidirectional or dedicated lanes wherever feasible rather than mixed-traffic configurations. She raised a concern about the feasibility of tree canopy in narrow medians and planting strips given the size of freight and commercial vehicles that use the corridor, and suggested that more columnar tree species or alternative streetscape elements such as lighting fixtures might be necessary in constrained locations. Mr. Speck confirmed that columnar species are the standard solution for that condition, and affirmed the importance of tree placement in medians as a visual cue that communicates an urban rather than highway environment.

Mr. Speck offered a clarification at the close of discussion, noting that when members referred to lane reduction, it was important to distinguish between reducing lane count and reducing lane width, as the data are clear that narrower lanes do not reduce traffic throughput. Throughput is determined primarily by the number of lanes approaching intersections, not by lane width.

The joint work session was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.



Mayor, Dublin City Council



Chair, Planning and Zoning Commission



Clerk of Council