



City of Longview

1525 Broadway
Longview, WA 98632
www.ci.longview.wa.us

Agenda

Downtown Advisory Committee

Tuesday, May 19, 2026

10:00 AM

2nd Floor, City Hall

To create a downtown in Longview whose viability is based on unique character, is easily differentiated from other commercial in the Longview/Kelso area, is attractive to residents and visitors, is active "24-7", and attracts residents and visitors from Longview and other areas.

HYBRID MEETING DETAILS

26-00384 Please click the link to join the webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83331274129>
Webinar ID: 833 3127 4129
Or by Telephone: (253) 205 0468; (253) 215 8782

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

26-00385 MINUTES FROM APRIL 21, 2026

PUBLIC COMMENTS

NEW BUSINESS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

26-00386 JANUARY 20TH COMMUNITY MEETING - REPORT BACK FROM MAY 14TH COUNCIL MEETING

26-00387 DOWNTOWN SIGNAGE - REPORTING BACK

26-00419 UPDATE ON DOWNTOWN PARKING STATUS (SPOTS)

REPORTS

26-00388 DOWNTOWNERS REPORT

SHOW & TELL

26-00389 BRING FORTH THE FUN & POSITIVES

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT



City of Longview

1525 Broadway
Longview, WA 98632
www.ci.longview.wa.us

Minutes

Downtown Advisory Committee

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

10:00 AM

2nd Floor, City Hall

HYBRID MEETING DETAILS

26-00349 Please click the link to join the webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83331274129>
Webinar ID: 833 3127 4129
Or by Telephone: (253) 205 0468; (253) 215 8782

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am.

ROLL CALL

*Present: Elizabeth Borders, Chair; Kat Cooper; Erin Gabrielle; Bill Hallanger; Rikissa Harrison; Laura Hight; Ariel Large; Dawn Morgan; Karl Salzsieder; Ruth Kendall, Council Liaison;
Excused: Rachelle (Sanders) Burch; Allan Rudberg;
Staff present: Nick Little, Irene Rutikanga, Nancy Vandehey
Guests: Amelia Nesbit, Dntowners; Jennifer Westerman, HOSWWA*

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

26-00350 MINUTES FROM MARCH 17, 2026

The minutes were approved as presented. This passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

26-00351 JANUARY 20TH COMMUNITY MEETING

Nick Little provided a brief overview from the Downtown Summit. He'll take this to Council on May 14th with additional analysis. He will also bring this back again after Council discussion. There is an opportunity to seek out a grant for outside lighting planning that he plans to pursue.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

26-00352 DOWNTOWN SIGNAGE - REPORTING BACK

The data has been compiled and shared in an application that was shared with the group. Liz thanked the group for all the work on information gathering. It was shocking to see all the signs and how many are outdated or damaged. Discussion included what to do next with this information. One idea was to use the empty poles that are already in place for some signage for informational signage for downtown. Downtowners already have a QR code that could be added. A free wifi zone downtown was suggested. There might be an option of using a color scheme that would designate the downtown area.

Next step - focus on way finding (labeling parking lots), usability (spacing for signage), and branding (districts).

Nick was asked to come back with a COL branding package if available and standards for how many signs can be per pole or in a general area/location.

This will can be used to work on a plan to present to the City for the new parking signs.

REPORTS**26-00353 DOWNTOWNERS REPORT**

Amelia Nesbit shared what is happening with the Downtowners. Planting day - May 17th and Deep Clean Downtown Day. Three new stores are coming in- a restaurant and bar; a second hand store and an insurance business. Fourth Fridays are coming - hoping businesses will be opening a little later. Planning has started for a harvest fest this fall.

SHOW & TELL**26-00354 BRING FORTH THE FUN & POSITIVES****BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS****ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.



To: Longview City Council

From: Nick Little, Community Development Director

Meeting: May 14th, 2026

Subject: Draft Downtown Summit Report and Action Items

Background

The City of Longview owns 10 public parking lots, with the Schneider Lot at 12th and Hemlock in downtown being the largest and least utilized. City Council directed staff to preliminarily investigate the potential sale and surplus of the Schneider Lot. Staff research confirmed that Schneider Lot is composed of nine separate, contiguous lots acquired by the city in 1972 and held as general governmental property. Staff findings were presented at the September 11, 2025, meeting, and included a general discussion of options regarding the sale and or use of the property. Council directed staff to conduct a community meeting regarding the potential future of Schneider Lot, including future potential uses, methods of sale, forms of compensation, and potential opportunities available to the downtown area.

The Downtown Summit meeting took place on January 20, 2026 at a local downtown space known as the Roxy Theater. The meeting was attended by 19 citizens, six council members, and seven staff. Participants were divided among four small tables to facilitate engaged discussions, with city councilmembers leading each table discussion and staff members taking notes and offering technical support as needed. Participants were then asked a series of question prompts intended to elicit discussion about downtown land uses, public spaces, and possible methods of sale, and compensation considerations. The resulting discussion notes were aggregated into a digital document, reviewed for key themes, and a

summary created to report back to council. This document serves as this final summary and report.

Key Themes

1. Identification of Barriers to a Thriving Downtown

The meeting began with a discussion about who does downtown not work well for today, and how that could change. During the resulting discussion and throughout the course of the meeting, several issues repeatedly surfaced as barriers to a thriving downtown. In general, it was expressed that downtown needs improvements to safety, cleanliness, and basic amenities.

- Lack of public restrooms. Many participants identified the lack of restrooms as a concern and expressed the addition of public restrooms as a desired amenity.
- Safety Concerns. The most frequent safety concern noted was that the current downtown street lighting was insufficient and contributed to other safety issues. Also mentioned were homeless activity, trash in bushes, and public defecation/urination.
- Lack of nightlife and nighttime activity. Nightlife is a key component of most thriving downtowns and is largely absent in Longview's. This issue was at times brought up alongside lighting and other safety concerns as both a cause and a potential solution.
- Code barriers. Building and fire code often present additional costs and complications to the upgrading of second story residences.
- Vacant/unattractive storefronts. Create an unpleasant atmosphere and can feed other issues mentioned.

2. Desire for Public Spaces and Gathering Areas

A common theme at each table was the desire for a public space to draw people, host events, and extend dwell time downtown. There were two specific questions seeking feedback on public spaces and potential benefits:

- *“Should the city seek to include a new public plaza, park, or other amenity as part of the redevelopment of the site? What type of amenity would provide the most public benefit?”*
- *“How would a public space support nearby businesses?”*

The majority of responses supported a public space in downtown, whether in conjunction with potential redevelopment of the Schneiter Lot or elsewhere in

downtown. A broad range of suggestions included an urban plaza, park, playground, amphitheater, covered areas, or simply someplace nice to sit. While the suggestions were varied, there was a clear desire for a public gathering space downtown with the potential to host events, something that downtown currently lacks.

The other side of this discussion was how a public space would support the businesses downtown. Many respondents noted that such a space would draw more people to downtown as well as increase the time spent there, which would likely result in a boost for business for many establishments.

3. Broad Support for Housing Downtown

The comments display overwhelming support for additional housing opportunities downtown and were the clearest and most consistent theme across all tables during the meeting. Participants most frequently expressed a desire for market rate or diverse housing options to bring additional residents downtown; in particular residents who would have the ability to patronize the businesses downtown. Beyond simply reflecting the “more residents = more spending” theme, respondents saw the influx of residents as a way to create a more vibrant downtown and encourage new and different types of commercial activity downtown. The idea that additional housing would act as a catalyst for change downtown was reflected in a number of the comments:

- *“Young professionals”*
- *“Would provide a more vibrant downtown”*
- *“Attract higher end businesses and restaurants”*
- *“More activated spaces”*
- *“Opportunities for different type of businesses”*
- *“More customers to keep businesses open later”*
- *“Change in customer needs with more folks living in the immediate area”*
- *“Younger generations seeking this type of housing”*
- *“Market rate housing – have disposable income typically”*

There were also comments expressing the desire for a mixed-use development combining residential with commercial as preferred outcome. Some respondents counseled caution regarding losing parking and suggested that future development include provisions for parking.

4. Preference for City Influenced Development Process Rather Than Simple Sale

This is a combination of two connected key themes that were echoed throughout by most participants, which was:

- A clear preference for an emphasis of public benefit over price or profit; and
- A clear preference for an alternative style of property sale which includes city-dictated controls and parameters around the subsequent development process.

Nearly every response indicated that the city should seek remuneration for conveyance of the property in some type of public benefit rather than a simple cash sale. What that remuneration should be can be related back to Key Theme #2 regarding the desires for public gathering spaces downtown.

The method of sale in which this would happen was addressed in one of the questions to participants and the resulting discussion(s) included several ideas, including sending a request for proposal (RFP) for development projects, or entering a public-private partnership. Generally speaking, the theme was that most felt that a cash sale would be a missed opportunity and would be insignificant in terms of financial impact or benefits to the city or its residents.

The inclusion of City-dictated development controls was also a strong preference by respondents. Most felt that these controls would add accountability to the developer and ensure that the resulting project would truly be a benefit to the city and the downtown area. Participants were asked what expectations should be set by the city, which resulted in a variety of responses, including:

- *“Must have a public space”*
- *“Apartments”*
- *“Mixed use living”*
- *“Park space”*
- *“Public parking”*
- *“Residential/business use”*
- *“Time benchmarks”*
- *“Aesthetic standards”*
- *“Community art project”*
- *“Establish committee to oversee development of property”*
- *“Something that can be celebrated along the way”*
- *“Replace parking that any development would take away”*
- *“Partnership agreements/RFP for housing and economy booster”*

In whatever form it may take, it was clear that participants felt that the city should retain some semblance of control over the future development to ensure that the resulting development would benefit downtown.

Action Items

What follows are several action items intended to address many of the barriers and future goals for downtown identified during the summit meeting. These suggestions were informed not only by the comments and key themes from the summit, but also previous discussions surrounding downtown with the Downtown Advisory Committee, other public feedback, and staff knowledge of local regulations and funding opportunities. This list is by no means exhaustive, nor does it contain a single “silver-bullet” that could cure all concerns with downtown, real or perceived.

What the list is intended to do is provide a menu of opportunities that the city can pursue to foster an environment downtown that is welcoming to new businesses, existing businesses, and visitors. Ultimately the city’s ability to directly control private property is limited. What the city can do is to create an atmosphere that promotes desired outcomes and removes barriers to future investment. This can include opening up additional opportunities through creative approaches to zoning, offering financial incentives for private investment, providing education on landowner-driven funding sources, and seeking private partnerships for redevelopment of city-owned properties.

The following groups of suggestions reflect three key themes. First are the efforts that can be made to address those barriers to stakeholder to downtown. This section includes infrastructure efforts, financial incentives, and funding options that can positively influence future investment downtown, both public or private. The second section includes options for amendments to the city’s land use ordinance that would seek to address additional development options downtown or look at different approaches to land use regulations. The last section addresses staff recommendations on approaches to the sale/surplus of the Schneiter Lot.

1. Address barriers to downtown

- a. Infrastructure
 - i. Pursue grant funding for lighting study and eventual update
 - 1. Brighter, taller lights, ability for cross-street overhead connections, relocating existing lights to parking lots, tree trimming
 - ii. Reestablish façade improvement program and using demolition fees as funding base
- b. Funding options for future larger scale improvements

- i. Educate on potential for LIDs for area-wide infrastructure upgrades
 - ii. Educate on PBIAs for larger scale improvements, maintenance, or security
- c. Financial barriers
 - i. Investigate B&O deductions for new business startups
 - 1. See Bellingham example
 - ii. Investigate Permit fee reductions for building upgrades
 - iii. Better educate on revolving loan program

2. Amendments to zoning ordinance

- a. Investigate multiple options as a single package for downtown
 - i. Form-based approach vs. Euclidean vs. hybrid approach
 - ii. Open additional housing options
 - iii. Split downtown into multiple zoning districts – downtown core (i.e. commerce)
 - iv. Address potential for public spaces downtown
 - v. Vacant storefront requirements
 - vi. Address physical development standards as needed
- b. Include associated development regs for review
 - i. Sidewalk businesses/food trucks
 - ii. Mixed use design standards
- c. Accomplish updates required by recent changes to RCW regarding residential development in existing buildings (RCW 35A.21.440-.460)

3. Develop RFP for Schreiber Lot redevelopment

- a. Solicitation to developers for market rate housing/optional mixed-use
- b. Integrate public parking availability to offset loss of parking area, at least partially
- c. Seek public open space/plaza or other public improvement as remuneration
- d. Define city level of involvement and benchmarks

Downtown Summit

1/20/26

Aggregated Notes

Attendees

- Joanne Baker
- Spencer Boudreau
- Rachelle Burch
- Steve Carson
- John Chilson
- Kat Cooper
- James Dieter
- Bill Fashing
- Carlos Fernandez
- Erin Gabriele
- Hayden Harris
- Rikissa Harrison
- Lisa Kayser
- Amelia Nesbit
- Marc Roland
- Sally St. Clair
- Cliff Verhoeff
- Jamie West
- Brad Whittaker

City Staff/Councilmembers

- Chris Bryant (*councilmember*)
- Chris Collins
- Sabrina Fraidenburg
- Erik Halvorson (*councilmember*)
- Brad Hannig

- Ruth Kendall (*councilmember*)
- Kalei LaFave (*councilmember*)
- Nick Little
- Wayne Nichols (*councilmember*)
- Kenny Robinson
- Irene Rutikanga
- Mike Sullivan
- Nancy Vandehey
- Keith Young (*councilmember*)

Location: Roxy Theater, corner of Commerce and Florida

Start Time: 6:00pm

End Time: 8:00pm

LaFave/Hannig Table

Entrance Question

Question 1 – *Who is downtown not working well for today, and how could that change?*

Business owners

Increase safety after dark

parking at certain time (enforce 2-hour)

lighting (could be an attraction to homeless)

job opportunity

foot traffic increase

pocket park

Section 1: Alternative uses for a healthy downtown

Question 2 – *What kinds of uses are missing today that would encourage people to stay longer in downtown?*

Entertainment – comedy nights

3-6pm activities (restaurants highlighted)

Reduce Vacancies

Organized events

Recreation

Gathering spot(s)

Store Window upgrades

Make apartments nicer and to current standards

Question 3 – *How important is housing downtown? What types of housing (market rate, workforce, etc.) would help push downtown forward?*

Housing diversification

Better opportunity and housing not focused on affordability

Diverse housing

Historic buildings

Residential ↔ Recreational, later hours

Question 4 – *What types of benefits or impacts would additional housing opportunities provide for downtown?*

More people to live, work, and seek entertainment

Increase in money spent downtown

Section 2: Public spaces in downtown

Question 5 – *Should the city seek to include a new public plaza, park, or other amenity as part of the redevelopment of the site? What type of amenity would provide the most public benefit?*

Some sort of recreation

Playground

Public plaza

Event space that covers many types of activities

Community cleanups – involve business to highlight activity

Incentives w/competitions

Parking garage with park on the top

Gathering place, some small and some large areas

Larger office firm (50+ emp), LCC extension

Nickel and dime costs – permitting, B&O, etc

Question 6 – *How would a public space support nearby businesses?*

Mixed use – Housing/retail/parking

Streamline services

Incentives for businesses

Too many small fees

Question 7 – *How much risk should the city tolerate to achieve long-term benefits?*

Risk of doing nothing or doing too much,

You need to invest to see a reward, risk to incentivize

Permit process

Section 3: The way a city sells property may matter as much as what gets built.

Question 8 – *Should the city prioritize price, public benefit, or a balance?*

Public benefits, new businesses over price or profit

Need to invest in future

RFP – housing and economy booster

Question 9 – *How important is it that the city retain influence through tools like development agreements, design standards, or performance benchmarks?*

Accountability

Commitment with hand cuffs

Question 10 – *What expectations should the city set for a private developer on this site?*

Partnership agreements

Offices, 1-2 floors

Living space above

Retail

Exit Question:

Question 11 – *What is the biggest opportunity we risk missing if we do nothing?*

You do nothing, you get nothing

Halvorson/Young/Sullivan Table

Entrance Question

Question 1 – *Who is downtown not working well for today, and how could that change?*

- Needs more public restrooms
- Businesses must lock back/side doors to keep homeless out.
- No information center
- Building owners can't afford to update to code for apartments on upper levels

Section 1: Alternative uses for a healthy downtown

Question 2 – *What kinds of uses are missing today that would encourage people to stay longer in downtown?*

- Stageworks
- Strippers
- Outdoor seating during summer
- Better restaurants
- More market-price housing
- More “spenders” living downtown

Question 3 – *How important is housing downtown? What types of housing (market rate, workforce, etc.) would help push downtown forward?*

- Market rate housing
- More people living there with disposable income
- Young professionals
- Will raise quality of everything, attract better businesses

Question 4 – *What types of benefits or impacts would additional housing opportunities provide for downtown?*

- Would provide a more vibrant downtown
- Attract higher end businesses and restaurants

Section 2: Public spaces in downtown

Question 5 – *Should the city seek to include a new public plaza, park, or other amenity as part of the redevelopment of the site? What type of amenity would provide the most public benefit?*

- Public restrooms
- Public park
- Plaza (like in front of Columbia Theater)
- Trolleys instead of buses
- Hotel

Question 6 – *How would a public space support nearby businesses?*

- It would draw more people downtown
- It would increase the time people spend there

Question 7 – *How much risk should the city tolerate to achieve long-term benefits?*

- Have to take a risk or nothing changes
- Not taking a risk makes things worse in time

Section 3: The way a city sells property may matter as much as what gets built.

Question 8 – *Should the city prioritize price, public benefit, or a balance?*

- Public benefit should be the biggest consideration
- The sale price for that lot is minimal in the big scheme
- A private developer can build it cheaper/better than the city could
- Perhaps contact the Koelsch family (55+ living – disposable income)

Question 9 – *How important is it that the city retain influence through tools like development agreements, design standards, or performance benchmarks?*

- Extremely important
- Simply selling the lot provides little benefit
- We need to ensure we maximize public benefit
- Absolutely critical the city retains influence in all three

Question 10 – *What expectations should the city set for a private developer on this site?*

- Must have a public space
- Mixed use living
- Park space
- Public parking
- Residential/Business use

Exit Question:

Question 11 – *What is the biggest opportunity we risk missing if we do nothing?*

- If it doesn't grow... it shrinks and dies (we become irrelevant)
- Lose revenue

Nichols/Bryant/Collins Table

Entrance Question

Question 1 – *Who is downtown not working well for today, and how could that change?*

- Vacant buildings an issue
- Lack of nightlife
- Streetlights insufficient
- Need to be open later
- Lingering unhoused
- Lack of public restrooms
- Public defecation and urination
- Trash in bushes

Section 1: Alternative uses for a healthy downtown

Question 2 – *What kinds of uses are missing today that would encourage people to stay longer in downtown?*

- Businesses staying open later and 7 days a week
- Owner operated businesses
- Lack of an outdoor public space
- Need additional housing
- Community gathering area, mini amphitheater
- More upscale options
- Food trucks

Question 3 – *How important is housing downtown? What types of housing (market rate, workforce, etc.) would help push downtown forward?*

- Convenient to live downtown
- More diverse housing options – affordable and market rate
- Benefits/ideas for downtown residents
 - Walking downtown
 - Mural Walk
 - Art pubcrawl
 - More events

Question 4 – *What types of benefits or impacts would additional housing opportunities provide for downtown?*

- More people
- More diversity
- More activated spaces
- Opportunities for different type of businesses

Section 2: Public spaces in downtown

Question 5 – *Should the city seek to include a new public plaza, park, or other amenity as part of the redevelopment of the site? What type of amenity would provide the most public benefit?*

- Yes
- Large enough to hold events
- Restrooms
- Covered area
- Seating
- Accessibility
- Kid space
- Squirrel bridges

Question 6 – *How would a public space support nearby businesses?*

- Bring more people downtown
- Boost business
- Designated event space
- Rooftop restaurants/Ferris Wheel

Question 7 – *How much risk should the city tolerate to achieve long-term benefits?*

- Be aggressive with timelines
- Be realistic
- Motels
- More sports facilities

Section 3: The way a city sells property may matter as much as what gets built.

Question 8 – *Should the city prioritize price, public benefit, or a balance?*

- Public benefit over cash
- Cash sale only would be a missed opportunity
- Apartments (housing)

Question 9 – *How important is it that the city retain influence through tools like development agreements, design standards, or performance benchmarks?*

- Establish committee to oversee development of property
- Very hands on
- Parking for residents
- Establish aggressive, yet reasonable benchmarks
- Be bold
- Remove barriers

Question 10 – *What expectations should the city set for a private developer on this site?*

- Time benchmarks
- Aesthetic standards
- Visible progress can ease long timelines
- Community art project
- People want to see an investment in Longview that makes people stay
- Something that can be celebrated along the way

Exit Question:

Question 11 – *What is the biggest opportunity we risk missing if we do nothing?*

- Staying the same, downtown struggles
- Investment in our community
- Change of mentality
- Doing what we do well

Kendall/Fraidenburg Table

Entrance Question

Question 1 – *Who is downtown not working well for today, and how could that change?*

- Not accessible for parking (public)
- Elderly folks
- Businesses that rely on street traffic
- Lack of opportunities, late night options
- Small business and city incentives
- Tree lights
- Filling empty storefronts with artwork or displays
- Shops open later
- Diversity of business
- Event venue/plaza
- Additional residences downtown

Section 1: Alternative uses for a healthy downtown

Question 2 – *What kinds of uses are missing today that would encourage people to stay longer in downtown?*

- More residential housing
- Downtown promotion, “visit downtown” brochure or app
- Monthly business highlight for downtown
- What buildings are available downtown for refurbishment
- Keep street visibility with storefronts
- Connect businesses to services
- Outdoor seating

Question 3 – *How important is housing downtown? What types of housing (market rate, workforce, etc.) would help push downtown forward?*

- Market rate housing – have disposable income typically
- Upper floor refurbishment difficult due to fire sprinkler requirements, lack of contractors

Question 4 – *What types of benefits or impacts would additional housing opportunities provide for downtown?*

- More foot traffic
- More customers to keep businesses open later
- Change in customer needs with more folks living in the immediate area
- Younger generations seeking this type of housing

Section 2: Public spaces in downtown

Question 5 – *Should the city seek to include a new public plaza, park, or other amenity as part of the redevelopment of the site? What type of amenity would provide the most public benefit?*

- Have plaza in front of Columbia Theater, Circle not far away
- May take away from parking which would take away from businesses
- Costly not having a place to park

Question 6 – *How would a public space support nearby businesses?*

- Food trucks
- Saturday or Sunday markets
- Place to sit and take a break
- Consistency – expect excellence (reference farmers market decline)
- Some standards on operating hours for businesses
- Missing civic-minded leaders
- Need good faith effort from City management

Question 7 – *How much risk should the city tolerate to achieve long-term benefits?*

- City has to identify what they want leadership going for – goals and objectives identification – Train leaders and work side by side
- Locomotive restoration example of how the City could be more efficient
- When city turns their back it makes it hard
- Business owners shy to commit
- Historic city needs to be restored
- Parking lot at Merk could be green space
- Bathrooms needed, but attract issues. Build downtown first then add bathrooms

Section 3: The way a city sells property may matter as much as what gets built.

Question 8 – *Should the city prioritize price, public benefit, or a balance?*

- Balance price, public benefit
- Make sure current businesses aren't pushed out

Question 9 – *How important is it that the city retain influence through tools like development agreements, design standards, or performance benchmarks?*

- Extremely important from a vision standpoint
- Make sure it matches and looks alike to other building downtown
- Replace parking that any development would take away
- Parking is an issue – all full. Could lose people downtown because a new building comes in
- Parking lots and infrastructure is city's responsibility.
- Oil tanks in ground that were paved over

Question 10 – *What expectations should the city set for a private developer on this site?*

- Water backflow and shutoff at each building
- LIDs or BIAs can help pay for the parking lots

Exit Question:

Question 11 – *What is the biggest opportunity we risk missing if we do nothing?*

- Doing nothing means things will stay the same or get worse
- Not having money to fix lots
- Losing control
- If we do nothing we will never realize our potential
- Potential energy; find a way to turn it to kinetic energy
- Have a gathering place for the running start kids