

**PORT ORFORD PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA  
GABLE CHAMBERS, PORT ORFORD CITY HALL  
REGULAR MEETING  
Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 5:30 PM**

If unable to join in person, please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://meet.goto.com/815658101>

You can also dial in using your phone.

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Access Code: 815-658-101

1. Call to Order
2. Chair Comments
3. Public Comments (On Agenda Items Only)
4. Additions to the Agenda
5. Minutes
6. Discussion Items
  - A. Code Compliance/Enforcement (see attachments)
  - B. Outdoor Lighting Code and draft Council recommendation (see attachment)
  - C. Discussion; Web Site ID, Citizen Information
  - D. Planning clearances approved since the last meeting
7. Other Business
  - A. City Planner Comments
  - B. Planning Commission Comments
8. Public Considerations
9. Future Meetings
  - A. March 10<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30
10. Adjourn

**City of Port Orford  
 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes  
 In the Gable Chambers / Virtual participants  
 Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 5:30 P.M.**

<b>Commission Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>City Staff</b>	<b>Present</b>
<i>Chairman Greg Thelen (GT)</i>	Present	<i>Joseph Harrison, Planning Tech. (JH)</i>	Present
<i>Comm. Jerry Boydston (JB)</i>	Present	<i>Crystal Shoji, City Planner (CS)</i>	Present
<i>Comm. Margo Truini (MT)</i>	Present		
<i>Comm. Stephanie Gomes (SG)</i>	Present		
<i>Comm Carol Lawton (CL)</i>	Present		

*The minutes were prepared using the video available at:*

**1. Call to Order**

A. Chair Thelen called to order this Meeting of the Planning Commission on **January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026**, at **(5:30)** p.m. with a roll call showing all members are present except Comm. JB who is excused.

**2. Chair Comments**

A. Chair Thelen welcomes the commission to the first meeting of the year.

**3. Public Comments**

A. None

**4. Additions to the agenda**

A. Chair Thelen adds a report from Commissioner Gomes as 6 (c) and the election of a Planning Commission Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary as item 6(a)

**5. Minutes from the September meeting will be at the next meeting.**

**6. Discussion Items**

**A. Elections**

**i. Chair**

- 1. Comm. Gomes nominates Greg Thelen, who accepts the nomination**
- 2. Comm. Lawton seconds the motions**
- 3. No objections or other candidates, Greg Thelen is the Chair for 2026**

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- ii. Vice Chair
  - 1. Comm. Lawton nominates Comm. Gomes, who accepts the nomination
  - 2. Comm. Boydston seconds the motions
  - 3. No objections or other candidates, Stephanie Gomes is the Vice Chair for 2026
- iii. Secretary
  - 1. Chair Thelen nominates Joseph Harrison, who accepts the nomination
  - 2. Comm. Lawton seconds the motions
  - 3. No objections or other candidates, Joseph Harrison is the Secretary for 2026

- B. Outdoor Lighting Code Discussion
  - i. The highlights of their discussion include: Enforcement methods and standards, methods of measuring light pollution, different restrictions for different zones, grandfathering of existing structures, and education.

- C. Commissioner Gomes Update on Enforcement
  - i. Commissioner Gomes spoke with the planning directors of nearby municipalities and is inquiring on the last update to our Strategic Planning Initiative. Good code enforcement is tied to having an updated and well written plan and involving the public.

- D. RV park Update: Owner has stated that the Park is ready for occupants

- E. Planning Clearances Approved Since Last Meeting: Update will come at the next meeting.

- F. Next issues to address
  - i. The planning commission discusses what they would like to address while briefly discussing each issue in turn. The major items Commissioners brought up were; code enforcement, dark sky ordinance, and the process of water hook ups coming out of curtailment.

- 7. Other Business
  - A. City Planner Comments: None
  - B. Planning Commission Comments: None

- 8. Public Considerations
  - A. None



January 29, 2026

To: Greg Thelen, Chairman  
Port Orford Planning Commission

From: Stephanie Gomes, Commissioner  
Port Orford Planning Commission

RE: Code Enforcement Research

The first week of January 2026, I had phone conversations with the Planning Directors of Bandon, Gold Beach and Brookings. As the Port Orford Planning Commission is looking at our city's codes and their enforcement, my charge was to inquire about how our neighboring small cities on the southern Oregon coast are enforcing their city codes considering limited staff and budgets.

The three cities all have code enforcement duties assigned to their Planning departments. They all address code enforcement similarly, they are complaint-driven, but there are some differences:

#### **Bandon**

The Planning Director has tested various strategies in code enforcement. Recently, their Code Enforcement Officer retired, and the plan is not to replace the officer "like for like". They are going to invert the idea, and instead of being an enforcement tool, the new officer will focus on education and outreach to help people follow the codes and thrive in the community. The goal will be to try to prevent the need for code enforcement in the first place, vs. playing "whack-a-mole" and popping around the city to address code violations. A proactive approach will be more successful.

If a city does embark on a strategic planning initiative, it should be driven by the 18 Oregon statewide planning goals; also, on front yard scale, the city can talk about compliance and responsibility of all people in the community, with everyone having a role to play (elected/appointed officials, residents, business owners, etc.). Bandon will roll out their "Community Thrives" strategic planning initiative beginning approximately February or March 2026. The director did share an "off the shelf model" from the city of Etna in California that is of a scale would fit Port Orford if we ever decide to update our strategic plan.

Absent a strategic plan, a small city could decide the top two or three violations the city would like to address. Start with that and then build a code enforcement system around that successful effort. Depending on the land use/zoning district, a city could roll out different tactics for each one. This is best tied to a strategic plan as this helps get appointed/elected officials and the community on the same page regarding priority goals/objectives.

## **Gold Beach**

The Planning Director acts as code enforcement officer. When a complaint is made via their website, the director visits the site and if there is a nuisance, they mail a notice first. If the issue is not cleared, the issue goes to municipal court. Their code requires a letter to be mailed as a first step – it would be nice if they could just serve the notice in person and talk to the property owner/tenant. Person-to-person contact is much more successful. They are looking to change their code soon to reflect this.

Determining the nuisance can be difficult, make sure codes are clear and the steps for compliance are very clear.

## **Brookings**

Brookings does not have a code enforcement officer – the duties fall to planning officials when they have time. Their police department will do code enforce sometimes. They sometimes do abatements and bring them back to the planning department. It's difficult for officers to get involved.

Brookings has an online complaint option for residents. When there is a complaint, they interact with the property owner, then abate them if they do not address the issue. Abatement includes two notices to clear the matter within a certain number of days; if not cleared, it goes to the municipal court.

## **Summary**

It is important that a city's codes and the steps for compliance are very clear. The city should identify two or three codes to address first as a starting point, e.g. outdoor lighting, overnight parking, etc. Look at shared responsibilities for code enforcement, including the planning department, the police department and volunteers.

2/10/26

## **Draft of Planning Commission recommendations to City Council concerning the Outdoor Lighting Code**

Background: City Council has asked the Planning Commission to come up with amendments to the Outdoor Lighting Code to make it enforceable, and to also address the holiday lighting section so it is not tied to a particular date. The PC has met and discussed both issues, and makes the following recommendations.

Holiday Lighting. Amend section 15.17.110, which lists exceptions to the Lighting Code, item C. Our code currently reads:

C. "Holiday lighting during the months of November, December and January, provided such lighting does not create glare on adjacent streets or adjacent or nearby properties."

The National Electrical Code currently limits "temporary lighting" to 90 days. Holiday type lighting falls in this category, so we recommend simply adopting the following language, which eliminates the holiday date range:

C. "Holiday lighting in place for no more than 90 days, provided such lighting does not create glare on adjacent streets or adjacent or nearby properties."

Enforcement. After reviewing our current code and the lighting codes in other coastal towns, and reviewing how the others address code violations, we feel the current code, while not perfect, does address the fundamental aspects of this type of ordinance. We believe the items listed below can bring about their successful enforcement.

1. Time. When the current code was adopted in 2021, Council voted to allow 5 years for "...offending lights to come into complete compliance...". The 5 years will be up in August of this year.
2. Education. From now until August and beyond, the City and PC seek to inform the public of the enforcement date through various visual, written and digital media.
3. Enforcement. The PC has been gathering information from other coast towns on successful code enforcement/compliance, and lighting is one piece of the puzzle. Based on information gathered, success will likely depend on things such as identifying and prioritizing offending lighting situations, clear procedures for contacting owners, timing of warning or violation notices, helpful tracking forms, fee schedules, in-office protocols being put into place, citizen volunteer involvement, and police officer involvement as necessary.

We believe that once enforcement of the most glaring violations are in place, it may well be beneficial to revisit the Outdoor Lighting Code for fine tuning. Until then, we would like to put our efforts into developing reasonable and not overly complicated procedural recommendations to support compliance in the City.

Submitted by Greg Thelen

Planning Commission Chair

APA's magazine, *Planning*, has a new article alerting public sector planners to a new phishing trend. All planning departments should be aware of this. I've linked to the full article and also included an excerpt from the article, below.

## [Fraud Alert: How Scammers Are Now Impersonating City Governments](#)

[Planning departments are rethinking digital security as a swarm of imposters scrape public records to send clients fake invoices.](#)

### 3 Ways Planning Departments Can Fight Scammers

**Be transparent and consistent.** Clearly outline the steps for submitting applications to the planning department in relevant communications. This way, applicants understand what is — and is not — involved with the process. Consistent messaging among departments about how residents should interact with the city and how city staff will interact with them also is essential, says Paul Cameron, chief information officer for Minneapolis.

**Remove contact information from publicly available applications.** Removing email addresses before land variance or zoning requests are publicly available makes it more challenging for scammers to collect that data. Oskaloosa, Iowa, has started redacting contact information, including phone numbers, before applications are posted online, Shawn Christ says. This process also has made a difference in Houston, Suvidha Bandi says. That city's planning department staff noticed that every time they didn't scrape emails from a batch of applications, they'd hear about scam emails over the following weeks.

**Prioritize education.** Notify residents of these scams, how to avoid them, and how to report them. Oskaloosa even shared a copy of a phishing email on its [Facebook page](#), which caught the attention of local media and radio. "I think using both social media and traditional media was important to help the message spread more quickly to a wider audience," Christ says.



**Laura Buhl, AICP, LEED GA**

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 [Book time to meet with me](#)

We recently redacted address, phone and emails from comment letters regarding that generated so much controversy that we posted them online. We have unredacted version available through a public records request. We haven't made this a standard practice, but I am looking into it.

**Carol Johnson, AICP | PDS Manager**

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**From:** [opn-bounces@lists.uoregon.edu](mailto:opn-bounces@lists.uoregon.edu) <[opn-bounces@lists.uoregon.edu](mailto:opn-bounces@lists.uoregon.edu)> **On Behalf Of** Dan Zinder

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 3, 2026 11:22 AM

**To:** Planners throughout Oregon <[opn@lists.uoregon.edu](mailto:opn@lists.uoregon.edu)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: OPN: From Planning Magazine - Fraud Alert: How Scammers Are Now Impersonating City Governments

Thanks Laura. We just got one today that fortunately our applicant was able to decipher. Just put some language up on our website and via social media.

Vis a vis redacting applicant information – is anyone aware of any legal implications of doing that. Obviously something we'd discuss with our legal team but would appreciate any feedback anyone who has looked into this can provide.

Best,

*Dan Zinder*

503.759.0226

Kris,

Good points. My understanding of why cities and counties in land use cases where there is a public hearing have historically wanted the testifiers to state who they are and their address is, a party who testifies establishes standing to appeal the decision.

The U.S. Constitution includes the term “due process.” For local land use decisions, “due process” affords those who have an interest in the case to participate in the process. If they participate in the process by testifying and disagree with the decision, they have a Constitutional right to be notified and to appeal the decision.

Continuing with the Constitutional right to “due process,” Oregon Revised Statute (Oregon's laws) 197 requires a city/county, once a decision has been made, to mail to the testifiers (need a name and address) a notice of the decision that states what the decision is, the conditions of approval, the deadline to appeal and where the appeal must be submitted.

If the decision is made by a planning commission, typically, an appeal would be decided by the governing body, i.e., City Council or Board of County Commissioners.

If the decision is made by the governing body, typically, an appeal would be decided by the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals.

Given that times have changed, it may be time for local governments to, for example, ask for testifiers to fill out a card as they come into the room so the city/county knows who they are and their mailing address. Then, the testifier can testify without saying what the mailing address is.

Whatever the changes are, it will likely be a balancing of the Constitutional right to "due process" and reducing the ability of scammers, etc., to get names and addresses of those who want to participate in a local land use decision. Hopefully, a reasonable accommodation can be found. Jim.

Jim Jacks  
Senior Planner  
Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments  
100 High Street SE, Suite 200  
Salem, OR 97301  
503 540-1619 (direct)

Due to all this scamming and the serious harm to hundreds of victims, perhaps Planning and Building Departments should start acting more like City Police Departments, and not post so much information online where criminals can find it.

City Police post only the general area of burglaries, etc. (For example, "1400 Block of Elm Street.") There's no state law requiring Planning and Building Departments to post owners' names, exact address, phone number, email, etc. online. In fact, I don't think anything is required to be online, just available to those that ask.

It seems that this would be a good first step to make it more difficult for scammers to so easily scam people. It could also protect jurisdictions from lawsuits.

Thanks,  
Kris

If you have a situation where scammers are making use of a transparent government system....

It's been a while since OPN has supported a legislative change (if a change is needed...I am a bit rusty and aging :)

I too have been hit and was forced to change accounts... It is horrible.  
Take care and do good things in the face of bad...

John Boyd

John Boyd

On Fri, Feb 6, 2026, 12:36 PM K A <[lady\\_snowberry@hotmail.com](mailto:lady_snowberry@hotmail.com)> wrote:

Thanks. I'm aware of public hearing laws. I'm thinking of how some jurisdictions put all the paperwork for all building permits and all planning files online, including property owners' full names, email addresses, cell phone numbers, etc. This seems unethical to me given the ease with which scammers have been using that information.

Thanks,  
Kris