



CITY OF OREGON CITY NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE AGENDA

Community Room, Community Development Building,
695 Warner Parrott Rd, Oregon City, OR
Wednesday, August 12, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Ways to participate in this public meeting:

- Attend in person, location listed above. Please see the public comment guidelines below.
- Attend the livestream of the meeting on the City's YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CityofOregonCity>

- Register to provide electronic testimony (email ocplanning@orc.org by 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting to register)
- Email ocplanning@orc.org (deadline to submit written testimony via email is 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting)

1. CONVENE MEETING AND ROLL CALL

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Approval of NRC Minutes for 1/10/2024 and 2/14/2024.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Please see the public comment guidelines below.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. NROD property owner informational flyer update and discussion

5. COMMUNICATIONS

6. ADJOURNMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES

Complete a Comment Card prior to the meeting and submit it to the clerk. When the Chair calls your name, proceed to the speaker table, and state your name and city of residence. Each speaker is given 3 minutes to speak. As a general practice, the committee does not engage in discussion with those making comments. Complaints shall be addressed at the department level prior to addressing the committee.

ADA NOTICE

The location is ADA accessible. Hearing devices may be requested from the City Recorder prior to the meeting. Individuals requiring other assistance must make their request known 48 hours preceding the meeting by contacting the City Recorder's Office at 503-657-0891.

Agenda Posted at City Hall, Pioneer Community Center, Library, City Website.

Video Streaming & Broadcasts: The meeting is streamed live on the [Oregon City's website](https://www.cityoforegoncity.org) and available on demand following the meeting. The meeting can be viewed on Willamette Falls Television channel 28 for Oregon City area residents as a rebroadcast. Please contact WFMC at 503-650-0275 for a programming schedule.



City of Oregon City

625 Center Street
Oregon City, OR 97045
503-657-0891

Meeting Minutes - Draft Natural Resources Committee

Monday, February 14, 2024

6:00 PM

Commission Chambers

1. Convene Regular Meeting and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

Present: 3 - Committee Member Samantha Wolf, Committee Member Emily Lisborg, and Committee Member Doug Neeley

Absent: 1 - Committee Member Dave Trotter

Staffers: 2 - Planning Manager Pete Walter and Parks and Cemetery Manager Thomas Kissinger

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted as presented.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Guests/Presentations

Virtual meet and greet with Thomas Kissinger, Oregon City Parks and Cemetery Manager – Mr. Kissinger introduced himself and discussed the responsibilities he had at the City and how he could partner with the NRC. The NRC introduced themselves and spoke about their backgrounds.

5. New Business/Discussion Items

Tree Code Recommendation to the City Commission – Mr. Walter said at the last meeting they had a presentation from staff about the sidewalk repair grant program. The focus was liability and sidewalk repair, and not on prioritization of trees. Part of that was the way the code was written and how it did not require an arborist report when there was a sidewalk lift and automatically allowed the tree to be removed if there was a sidewalk lift ADA issue. The NRC wanted to put together a recommendation to the City Commission to change the code.

Committee Member Wolf had written a draft recommendation, and she would send a copy of it to discuss at the next meeting.

City Commission Goal 7, Strategy 7.1 – Mr. Walter shared information on Goal 7 to protect and preserve environmental and natural resources and Strategy 7.1, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the City's tree canopy. He discussed what had been done so far for this goal and how a tree survey could be done with volunteers. The NRC had identified several activities in their work plan that supported a healthy tree canopy and he listed the activities.

It was suggested to do a pilot tree inventory for ash trees in response to the ash borer threat. There was discussion regarding monitoring and treatments for ash borer, involvement of Clackamas Community College students in the inventory, and getting assistance from Oregon Department of Forestry.

Mr. Walter said the City's Tree City USA application was approved for the twelfth year. He discussed the data that was included in the application and how the City also received the Growth Award for the third time.

NRC Work Plan – Mr. Walter reviewed the 2023-2025 Work Plan. The items on the list included actions to promote community involvement in natural resources conservation, initiate recommendations and review updates to the City's codes and policies, receive notice and comment on land use applications and projects, conduct orderly meetings, and coordinate with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, and City Commission on an annual basis.

There was discussion regarding heritage tree designation in the Thimble Creek Concept Plan area, annual presentation to the City Commission in March, and interviews for new NRC members.

6. Election of NRC Officers

There was consensus to table this item until there were more members present.

7. Communications

Committee Member Neeley suggested going back to in-person meetings. There was consensus to hold hybrid meetings.

Committee Member Wolf said the Urban and Community Forestry Conference would be in Eugene this year on June 27. The theme was trees and housing. There was a round of IRA funding and the call for proposals would be posted on the ODF website in April.

Mr. Walter reported the City had received a grant for the Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities project for assistance in changing the code to reduce parking requirements, increase tree canopy over parking lots, and unbundle rent from parking charges.

8. Future Agenda Items

The tree code recommendation to the City Commission would be discussed at the

next meeting.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 PM.



City of Oregon City

625 Center Street
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Meeting Minutes - Draft Natural Resources Committee

Monday, January 10, 2024

6:00 PM

Commission Chambers

1. Convene Regular Meeting and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

Present: 3 - Committee Member Samantha Wolf, Committee Member Emily Lisborg, and Committee Member Dave Trotter

Absent: 2 - Chair Nancy Broshot and Committee Member Brian Kvistler

Staffers: 2 - Planning Manager Pete Walter and Assistant City Engineer Josh Wheeler

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted as presented.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Minutes: November 8, 2023

A motion was made by Committee Member Lisborg, seconded by Committee Member Trotter, to approve the November 8, 2023, minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 – Committee Member Wolf, Committee Member Lisborg, and Committee Member Trotter

5. New Business/Discussion Items

Tree Removal and Sidewalk Mobility/Tree Code Discussion – Josh Wheeler, Assistant City Engineer, explained the City's sidewalk repair program. He spoke about the issue of the wrong street trees being planted years ago, which had happened in most of the Metro area. The City had tried to work through this issue, but it became more of a recent problem when a citizen in Park Place made a

complaint to the City, noting every trip hazard in the neighborhood. The neighborhood thought it was the City's responsibility since they had planted the trees, and the City Commission adopted the sidewalk reimbursement grant program. This allowed a property to apply for reimbursement of a sidewalk replacement that had created a trip hazard caused by a tree. They could get up to \$1,500 reimbursed per location. From February 2022 when the program started to June 2023, there had been 90 applicants and \$222,987.00 had been reimbursed. From July 2023 to date, there had been 14 applicants and \$34,924.00 had been given. He thought this was due to fewer code enforcement cases and the newness had worn off. Currently they had 44 code enforcement cases that had to do with sidewalks. For the program, the tree did not have to be removed and the roots did not have to be cut. However, if the property owner kept the tree they only were allowed a reimbursement one time. They did have to get a permit to cut the tree down.

There was discussion regarding changes to the street tree code including planting street trees in planter strips only if there was enough space, not requiring an arborist report when there was a mobility hazard, issue of taking out large trees and replacing them with smaller caliper trees, options for people that would protect the tree like re-routing sidewalks, street standards, ADA challenges and resources, easement if a sidewalk was bumped out for a tree, need for a recommendation from the NRC to the City Commission about revising the tree code to give more priority to preserving trees and require an alternatives analysis, better right-of-way options for trees, new inspection and design process in the street standards that were adopted, and how staff thought they did not need to make changes at this time,

Mr. Walter shared a comparison table of Metro area cities' tree codes and programs.

There was discussion regarding replacement trees, increasing the fee in lieu to discourage tree removal, creating an Urban Forestry Plan for the City, and to advocate for a tree inventory in the next biennium.

Mr. Walter discussed the updated tree removal/replacement program.

There was discussion regarding clarifying in the code that a tree was not necessarily what made the sidewalk a hazard, requiring a different process for removal of trees of a certain size, public notice of tree removal if the City had to remove a tree and applying that same protocol to private trees, hiring an Urban Forester and researching the cost to the City for arborist services for the Tree City USA program, root inspection should be done when the sidewalk was removed, and next steps for drafting a recommendation to the City Commission.

6. Communications

Mr. Walter discussed NRC recruitment, new Assistant City Manager, Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities project including changes to parking requirements, upcoming legacy of Tom McCall presentation, Tree City USA, grant for Arbor Day event, and Oregon Heritage Tree Award nominations.

7. Future Agenda Items

The next agenda would include officer elections and a discussion on the recommendation to the City Commission.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 PM.



CITY OF OREGON CITY

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Staff Report

To: Natural Resources Committee **Agenda Date:** August 12, 2026
From: Pete Walter, Planning Manager

SUBJECT:

NROD property owner informational flyer update and discussion

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

We will revisit the draft content of the informational flyer to be sent to property owners within the NROD.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

NRC members provided feedback on the content of an easy-to-read informational flyer / brochure for property owners who's property falls within the Natural Resource Overlay District. To review a video of the discussion please go to <https://oregoncityor.portal.civicclerk.com/event/2876/media>.

As of December 2025, there were approximately 2000 properties flagged as falling partially or fully within the adopted NROD boundaries and approximately 30 property transactions. These numbers do not reflect any NROD development approvals or verifications that have been processed in the NROD, only taxlots in the adopted overlay.

The format of the flyer / brochure has not been decided yet. As for the content, there are some items that require staff and committee discussion on language that will clarify the code requirements.

The committee discussed with staff the nuances of a "permit" versus an "exemption" as applied to the NORC. In essence, the NROD regulates various activities. Some of these activities are exempt and are processed as a Type I exemption (a type of permit that is very easy to obtain), some require a Type II land use approval, and some require a Type III, discretionary review by the Planning Commission. Most exempt activities require review by city staff to confirm that a higher land use approval is not warranted and that conditions on the ground will not negatively affect water and habitat resources. However, certain, lawful pre-existing activities, such as gardens and patios that existed prior to adoption of the amended NROD code, should not require extensive review.

BACKGROUND:

Please review the attached draft content and provide feedback. Committee comments should be directed toward the brochure content and what it communicates, not to the language and administration of the code language in OCMC 17.49.

NEXT STEPS:

Staff time and printing and mailing costs.

OPTIONS:

Dear NROD Property Owner,

You are receiving this ~~letter~~ informational flyer because your property lies within ~~the a~~ Natural Resource Overlay District (NROD) boundary. It is not a notice of violation and does not introduce new rules. Our goal is to explain what the NROD is and how its requirements may apply to common projects such as landscaping, tree removal, or building improvements.

What is the Natural Resource Overlay District?

The NROD is a series of designated areas across Oregon City where you'll find streams, wetlands, floodplains, and wildlife habitat. The NROD code, adopted in 2009, protects these natural areas by limiting activities that could harm water quality, wildlife habitat, or slope stability. As the city grows, it is increasingly important to protect our natural heritage so that future generations will continue to enjoy and benefit from it.

To that end, land activities within the NROD ~~are is~~ subject to extra rules. These rules apply to both new development and common homeowner projects like installing a fence, building a shed, removing trees, or changing landscaping. They apply to City-owned property and rights-of-way as well as private property.

You'll see that many NROD rules emphasize using native plants. Native plants are adapted to our soils and climate, support a wide range of local wildlife, and help conserve water and protect soil, thus preserving the landscapes and ecosystems that have been here for generations. Removing invasive vegetation is just as important. Invasive plants often spread aggressively, crowd out natives, and disrupt the local food webs that sustain our wildlife. Common invasive plants include English and Portuguese laurel, ivy, holly, Himalayan blackberry, butterfly bush, and periwinkle (vinca).

You can find the official NROD map, as well as a comprehensive list of native and invasive plants, via the links at the end of this brochure. The map will show exactly where the NROD boundary falls on your property. In some cases, the NROD may cover only a portion of a lot, but the rules still apply to any work done within that boundary.

How do NROD rules apply?

The NROD rules apply to both construction projects and changes to landscaping or vegetation. In short, any project that might disturb the ground, remove trees, or change landscaping within the NROD should be checked against the rules before it begins.

New development: New homes, major additions, or subdivisions must meet NROD standards. These projects are reviewed by City staff through the normal permit process.

Existing homes: Adding new structures, paved areas, and fences within an NROD boundary generally requires City review. Basic upkeep that doesn't enlarge what's already there (for example, repairing an existing fence, or resurfacing a driveway without expanding it) is usually exempt.

Landscaping and vegetation: Use native plants for any new landscaping, except in cases where non-native plants are part of a planting plan approved by the City. Do not remove existing native vegetation, add lawn or turf, or plant invasive species within an NROD boundary. If invasive plants are present on your property, you are encouraged to remove them using hand tools and replant with natives. See the links at the end of this brochure for information and resources about native plants and landscaping.

Tree removal: Do not remove or significantly prune trees in the NROD without checking first. Tree removal generally requires City permission. The City determines whether a tree is dead, diseased, or hazardous under the rules. If removal is approved, native replacement is typically required, and the new tree must be kept healthy for at least two years.

What requires review?

Most ~~projects activities~~ within an NROD boundary need City review ~~or exemption unless they're clearly exempt~~ (see "What is allowed outright?"). The review process ensures that work is done in a way that aligns with NROD goals.

Type I Review (most common for homeowners): This level covers smaller projects such as a shed or patio, a short driveway/walkway expansion, a fence, or tree/vegetation removal that isn't exempt. City staff will check that impacts are minimized and will typically require native landscaping in the work area.

Type II Review (for larger projects or greater impacts): For projects such as new homes or major additions, work near a stream edge, or removing large areas of vegetation, this level may require more detailed site plans and steps to offset impacts.

[Let's list and describe the forms that a person might need to submit. e.g. the Type I Exemption form — in what cases is this form necessary?]

Before you start: If your project adds new structures, paved areas, or fences, or changes landscaping beyond basic upkeep, speak with Planning first. Application forms and contact information are available via the link provided at the bottom of this brochure.

What is allowed outright (aka Exempt)?

Some ~~activities work~~ can proceed without an NROD permit if it is specifically listed as exempt in the code. Most exempt activities still require approval from the Planning Division to confirm that they are actually exempt and do not require a higher level of development review. Common examples include:

- Planting native species and removing invasive plants using hand-held tools.
- Routine maintenance and repairs that keep the existing size, height, footprint, and/or paved area unchanged.
- Small, temporary ground disturbance may be exempt if it disturbs no more than 100 sq ft, occurs outside the stream channel and its immediate banks, and the area is promptly

restored to pre-construction conditions. When the disturbed area is covered mostly with invasive plants, replace them with native plants.

- Simple, low-impact fences and narrow pedestrian paths may be exempt when they meet the City's dimensional and siting standards and avoid sensitive areas.
- Site investigation work (e.g., surveys and soil borings) is typically exempt when any disturbed ground is restored.

If you are unsure whether your project is exempt, speak with Planning first.

Find resources and the full NROD Municipal Code at orccity.org/nrod or by scanning this code:

[QR CODE GOES HERE]

Thank you for helping protect Oregon City's natural heritage.