

Anacortes City Council Minutes - August 11, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the August 11, 2025, Anacortes City Council meeting at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and Amanda Hubik were present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Miller thanked all who participated in National Night Out the previous Tuesday evening. He then thanked Ms. Moulton for attending the opening of the Skagit Habitat for Humanity homes in Anacortes last Saturday. He reminded the public that the draft 2025 Comprehensive Plan is available on the city website, that comments can be submitted via email to CompPlan@anacorteswa.gov through August 28th, and that there will be a public hearing on the 27th of August during the Planning Commission meeting at 6pm. Mayor Miller finally announced that there will be a special joint Port - City meeting to discuss the design, construction and operation of an event center on August 18th at 4pm in City Council chambers.

Silver Level Bicycle Friendly Community

Ms. Moulton introduced the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee members, John Pope and Julie Kinder, who have worked to achieve the auspicious Silver Status for Anacortes in 2025 as a Bicycle Friendly Community. Mr. Pope and Ms. Kinder spoke about their efforts to achieve silver status, thanking city staff and volunteers for their efforts. Ms. Kinder also reminded the public that they should come out to the Open Streets Festival from 11am–3pm in downtown on August 24, 2025.

Port / City Liaison Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Port / City Liaison Committee meeting held August 5th. The topics discussed included finalizing the two interlocal agreements that will be considered in a joint meeting on August 18th at 4pm in Council chambers.

Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee

Ms. Moulton reported from the Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee meeting held August 6th. The topics discussed included a presentation by Chuck Messinger from Volunteers of America, and Andrew Miller, the CEO of the United Way, about the recent purchase of tiny homes from Bellingham that have been refurbished for use in a coop model to provide housing to qualified individuals on leased land in Mount Vernon and would offer workforce training to residents.

Planning Committee

Mr. Walters reported from the Planning Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included tree preservation and street trees in reference to the Comprehensive Plan update and reporting requirements in the city's stormwater permit, and the study regarding the Sharpes Corner city-owned land analysis report.

Public Safety Committee

Ms. Hubik reported from the Public Safety Committee meeting held August 5th. Fire / EMS topics discussed included service response statistics for the year thus far, a recruiting update, and an upcoming Emergency Management Community Forum scheduled for September 9th at 6pm.

Police topics included the department being fully staffed by the end of the year, a recruiting and training update, the need for additional vehicles with new hires coming on board, property crimes are down 40% from 2023 to 2024, and the possibility of sharing a shooting range with the City of Oak Harbor Police Department.

Ms. Moulton mentioned the Habitat for Humanity opening, expressing that it was heartening to see that the residents of those homes are individuals who work in Anacortes and can now afford to live in Anacortes.

Public Comment

Mayor Miller invited the public to comment on any item not on the agenda.

Wim Houppermans of Anacortes spoke about city regulations regarding political signs, pointing out that all candidates are in compliance except for one, and asked why the city code is not being enforced for that individual. Mayor Miller responded that he would look into the issue.

Steve Anderson of Anacortes addressed road debris and low-hanging tree limbs on 12th Street and on Oakes Avenue that represent a safety hazard to bicyclists and vehicles. Mayor Miller responded that the public can report issues like this via [See-Click-Fix](#).

Consent Agenda

Mr. Young moved, seconded by Mr. Fantini, to approve the following Consent Agenda items. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

a. Minutes of August 4, 2025

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$682,742.44

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 113241 through 113275, total \$488,719.78

Check numbers: 113276 through 113290 total \$168,176.41

Wire transfer numbers: 373606 through 373954, total \$25,846.25

c. Special Event Application: Veterans Day Parade

Other Business

Sharpes Corner City-Owned Land Analysis Report

Planning, Community, and Economic Development Director John Coleman presented the findings of the Sharpes Corner city-owned land analysis report, which was performed by MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Mixed-income housing was an assumption of the study.
 - Would it be more feasible with market-rate housing and affordable housing?
 - Study assumed mixed housing
 - Higher per unit cost with higher income housing.
- The analytical assumption was that the city was donating the land.
 - Metrics would change if the city were selling the land at market rate.
- Avoid having all low-income residents at the edge of the city with less access to services.
- Buildable land analysis is not favorable.
- Look at other uses due to the small land area available to build housing.
- Low income tax credit is uncertain as a funding source.
- High cost for building, but the need is high as well.
- Bring together builders and see what projects they could envision.
- Land exchange.
- Smaller units for senior residents looking to downsize. Sharpes Corner is not a great fit for that demographic.
- The feasibility gap is the difference between being able to 'pencil out' the project and the actual cost.

- Increased parking requirements for more small units and parking placement.
 - Overflow parking possible on the west side of the street.
 - Wetland or sensitive areas must be avoided or mitigated.
- An assisted living facility or higher level elder care could be more reachable for people living in Anacortes.
- Wetland delineation would be an important variable in determining the feasibility of development.
- Was this land included in the city-wide housing land analysis and assessment?
 - Zoned for light manufacturing.
- Significant changes to transportation infrastructure funding source(s).
 - Cost would rest with the developer(s).
 - The city could supplement it with grant funding if it is available.
- Do not leave the population that lives there stranded or abandoned.
 - Memorandum of Understanding with Skagit Transit to make transportation more effective and more efficient.
- The analysis is not encouraging for the immediate development of housing.
- Transportation continuity is important.
- Upward building along the R Avenue corridor.
- Smaller units for seniors who are looking to downsize and stay in the city.
- The next steps are requests for qualifications that will be between city staff and the Economic Development committee.
 - The logical next step is wetlands delineation. Costs will be included in the 2026 budget request.
- Natural gas pipeline impact radius requires mitigation and was not addressed in the analysis.

Executive Session

Potential Real Estate Transaction per RCW 42.30.110(1) (20 minutes)

At 7:20 pm, Mayor Miller announced that the City Council would convene in Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i) for approximately 20 minutes to discuss a potential real estate transaction. At 7:40 pm, Mayor Miller reconvened the regular meeting and reported that no action had been taken during the executive session.

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 7:40 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of August 11, 2025 was adjourned.