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# Astorian

149TH YEAR, NO. 156

DailyAstorian.com // THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 2022

\$1.50

## City weighs code changes for housing

Planning Commission will forward ideas to City Council

By NICOLE BALES  
*The Astorian*

The Astoria Planning Commission was generally supportive Tuesday of development code amendments designed to remove barriers for new housing construction and is expected to make recommendations to the City Council in the coming weeks.

When Astoria's population tipped over 10,000, the city became recognized as a medium-sized city, which came with rules set by recent changes in state law.

The changes, which are intended to increase housing affordability and availability across Oregon, include allowing duplexes on residential lots that allow single-family homes. The city must also expand opportunities for lot divisions for middle housing, which enables units in duplexes and triplexes to be sold individually.

The changes must be adopted by the end of the year to avoid the state code automatically taking effect. The city is also using the opportunity to incorporate recommendations made in Clatsop County's 2019 housing study.

During a public hearing on the amendments, Megan Leatherman, the city's community development director, offered a higher level view of the draft and presented community feedback from stakeholder meetings and listening sessions. The Planning Commission is expected to comb through more of the details when it meets in July.

*'THE CHANGES HERE ARE NOT GOING TO BE SOMETHING THAT WE ALL SEE AND FEEL OVERNIGHT. IT WILL BE SOMETHING THAT PROBABLY WILL BE SEEN IN A COUPLE MORE DECADES MORE FULLY.'*

Megan Leatherman | Astoria's community development director

Leatherman said there was a wide spectrum of community feedback, but that the majority of people fell in the middle and supported expanding housing as long as the character of Astoria and its neighborhoods is maintained. She also noted that most of the city's buildable land has been developed, so the changes would encourage infill.

"These are expected to create incremental changes over time," Leatherman said of the amendments. "The changes here are not going to be something that we all see and feel overnight. It will be something that probably will be seen in a couple more decades more fully."

The amendments include making multifamily homes, which include three dwellings or more, permitted outright in medium-

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Photos by Lydia Ely/The Astorian

The van housing the mobile clinic includes a private room for meeting with patients.

## County launches mobile clinic with van

Outreach for disease testing and vaccination

By ERICK BENDEL  
*The Astorian*

A new Clatsop County mobile clinic will help bring public health services, such as disease testing and vaccinations, to remote areas on the North Coast.

The county has purchased a van for \$160,000 using an Oregon Health Authority grant for services related to pandemic response.

The 2021 Ford E-450, previously used by a New York university, has been refurbished for the county Public Health Department, which plans to roll out the van in the first half of July.

Lisa McClean, the county's nurse manager and

clinic supervisor, said the department is working out the van's schedule.

In a given week, the mobile clinic may spend time in Astoria, Warrenton or Seaside, as well as smaller, underserved communities such as Knappa and Jewell. The van will be staffed with at least two public health employees.

Emblazoned with the health department logo, the mobile clinic will reach schools, workplaces and central locations in communities, but is unlikely to make home visits or park on residential streets, as it should be kept near a power source.

In Cannon Beach, the van may be used to serve the Hispanic community, delivering vaccines as the Oregon Health Authority has done.

The front of the van is equipped for blood draws; the back has an exam table.

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From left, Ted McLean, the county public works director, T.J. Hecox, the county road foreman, and Patty Jo Angelini, the county public affairs officer, stand outside the mobile clinic.



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Black bears are entering coastal communities looking for food because a prolonged cool, wet spring damaged or delayed the wild berry crops that bears typically rely on.

## Late berry crop creates bear problems

The animals are in search of food

By SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN  
*Capital Press*

A late wild berry crop due to this year's cool and wet spring means hungry black bears are entering Oregon's coastal communities looking for food.

According to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, bears have recently killed livestock, dug through garbage cans and stripped young trees owned by timber companies.

"We have seen an increase in bear activity," said Adam Baylor, a department spokesman.

The bears are hungry because the spring's stormy weather damaged

or delayed a major food source: wild berries, including salmonberries and thimbleberries.

Salmonberries typically are ripe in May, but the extended cool, wet weather this spring slowed or disrupted the ripening process. In some areas, blossoms didn't get pollinated and fewer salmonberries are available.

"Some districts are seeing failures of salmonberry crops," said Stuart Love, wildlife biologist at the Department of Fish and Wildlife's Charleston office.

On the North Coast, thimbleberries are also behind schedule.

As a result, black bears are drawing closer to communities in search of something to eat. According to the state, hungry bears are digging into residents' garbage cans, bird feeders, barbecue grills, pet food

and chicken and livestock feed. In a few cases, bears have killed livestock.

"ODFW wildlife biologists have their hands full with bear complaints," the agency said.

When a bear becomes habituated to human food and other attractants, it can start to show aggression. If prevention measures fail and a threat to human safety is posed, euthanasia is considered by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

In Manzanita, a bear, which had reportedly broken into a shed multiple times, knocked over garbage

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