

City Council Meeting Agenda March 23, 2026

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA), the Vancouver City Council meeting will be open to in-person attendance. Options for viewing and/or participating in the meeting portion remotely will also be accommodated. The City Council will be attending this meeting in person.

All City Council workshops and meetings are broadcast ([live closed captioning available](#)), CVTV cable channels 23 / HD 323, and on the [City's Facebook page](#). The Community Forum will not be broadcast.

Public testimony will be accepted regarding any matter on the agenda below. Advance registration will be required.

Unless otherwise announced by the Presiding Officer, each speaker may testify once for up to three minutes under each public testimony opportunity below and will be asked to provide their name and city of residence for the record.

Testimony will be accepted in the following manner:

- **Written comments submitted in advance:** [Email comments to the City Council](#) until 12:00 p.m. March 23, 2026. Comments will be compiled and sent to the City Council and entered into the record.
- **In-person or remote testimony during the meeting:** Register in-person at City Hall. In-person registration is open until 5:30 p.m. on March 23, 2026. Instructions will be provided on-site. Register to testify online. Online registration is open until 12:00 p.m. on March 23, 2026.

Visit the [city's website](#) for more information and to register under Community Testimony or call the City Manager's Office at (360) 487-8600.

The Community Forum will be structured with community members engaging directly with City Councilmembers in small-group conversations. This forum will have the "Vancouver for All" topic of discussion. Community members are welcome to talk about other issues, but all participants will be invited to share their experiences and ideas related to the main topic. For more information regarding the forum, please visit the [City's Calendar for Meeting Details](#).

There is an RSVP for participating during the Community Forum. Please [RSVP here](#).

Further instructions for accessing the virtual meeting (for remote testimony) will be provided upon registration.

Upon request, printouts of agenda materials will be provided, including large print.

[Public Notice](#)

Executive Session Re: Potential Litigation RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) (5:00 - 5:30 PM)

Council Regular Meeting

5:30 PM

Vancouver City Hall - Aspen Room - 415 W 6th Street, Vancouver WA

Pledge of Allegiance

Call to Order and Roll Call

Public Hearings

The following item(s) are scheduled for public hearing. Members of the public addressing Council are requested to give their name and city of residence for the audio record. Unless otherwise announced by the Presiding Officer, speakers are to limit their testimony to three minutes for each public hearing.

1. Amendment to Downtown Redevelopment Authority Bylaws

AN ORDINANCE of the City of Vancouver relating to changes to the Bylaws of the Downtown Redevelopment Authority ("DRA"); adopting an amendment to Section 2.09 of the Bylaws clarifying the employment status of the Executive Director.

Staff Report: 038-26

Request: On Monday, March 23, 2026, upon second reading and a public hearing, finalize and approve the ordinance.

Jeffrey Towery, Deputy City Manager, Jeff.Towery@cityofvancouver.us

Council Dinner (6:00 - 6:30 PM)

Community Forum

This is the place on the agenda where the public is invited to engage directly with City Councilmembers in small-group conversations. This forum will have the "Vancouver for All" topic of discussion. Community members are welcome to talk about other issues, but all participants will be invited to share their experiences and ideas related to the main topic. Up to 90 minutes will be allotted for the Community Forum.

Adjournment

City Hall is served by C-TRAN. Route information and schedules are available online at www.c-tran.com. You also may reach C-TRAN at (360) 695-0123 for more information on times, fares, and routes.

Anyone needing language interpretation services or accommodations with a disability at a Vancouver City Council meeting may contact the City Manager's staff at (360) 487-8600 (RELAY: 711). Assistive listening devices and live Closed Captioning are available for the deaf, hard of hearing and general public use. Please notify a staff person if you wish to use one of the devices. Every attempt at reasonable accommodation will be made. To request this agenda in another format, please also contact the phone numbers listed above.

AN ORDINANCE of the City of Vancouver relating to changes to the Bylaws of the Downtown Redevelopment Authority (“DRA”); adopting an amendment to Section 2.09 of the Bylaws clarifying the employment status of the Executive Director.

Staff Report: 038-26

To: Mayor and City Council
From: City Manager
Date: March 23, 2026

Subject

Amendment to Downtown Redevelopment Authority Bylaws

Key Points

- The Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) was established by City Council in 1997 and led the development of the Vancouver Convention Center (“Convention Center”) and Hilton Hotel (“Hotel”).
- The Executive Director of DRA historically has been an at-will employee of the City.
- The City controls and oversees operations of the DRA for the sole purpose of correcting any deficiency and assuring that the purposes of the DRA are reasonably accomplished pursuant to RCW 35.21.745 and VMC 2.73.230.
- The DRA bylaws must be clarified to reflect that the Executive Director will be an at-will employee nominated by the DRA Board and confirmed by the City Manager.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Economic Opportunity – a place where a wide variety of businesses of all sizes grow and thrive

High Performing Government – a government that is reliable, fiscally responsible, equitable, and open to compromise

Present Situation

The City established DRA in 1997 pursuant to RCW 35.21.730-759. Cities, counties and towns in Washington can establish public development authorities (PDA) under State law to carry out specific projects and programs and limit a municipality’s liability for any debts or obligations. DRA was established to develop and own the Convention Center and Hotel, two critical assets for the economic health and vitality of downtown Vancouver.

DRA has primarily been staffed and supported by the City since its formation. An at-will City employee has served as Executive Director for all but two years of DRA’s existence and all administrative support for the operations of DRA has been provided by the City through an Interlocal Agreement for Administrative Services. Nearly 70 public development authorities have been established in Washington State since 1970, and the governance and operations of PDAs varies widely. While many PDAs operate with separate staff and operational infrastructure, a comparable number of PDAs depend entirely on the sponsoring city or county for all staffing and administrative support.

While PDAs are intended to limit liability to the sponsoring municipality, RCW 35.21.745 requires that any city that establishes a PDA control and oversee the PDA's operation and funds to ensure that the PDA is reasonably accomplishing its purpose and correct any deficiencies. A 2013 audit of PDAs by the State Auditor's Office cited a lack of oversight by sponsoring cities as a top concern for the State in monitoring the health and operations of established PDAs.

In addition to the operational overlap between the City and DRA, the City provides financial support to DRA through a debt service guaranty on DRA-issued revenue bonds with a maturity date of January 2044 and the pledge of lodging taxes paid to the City to pay debt service on DRA-issued tax revenue bonds with a maturity of January 2034. These financial obligations are tied to the above bonds and terminate upon repayment on the debt for each set of bonds. This financial support expands the amount of debt available to DRA to fund capital investments in the Convention Center and Hotel and lowers interest costs for DRA.

The DRA is planning a major expansion of the Convention Center that will increase visitors to downtown Vancouver and help transform a vacant lot and building in the heart of Vancouver's central city. Additionally, the City is collaborating with the DRA on two potentially transformative redevelopment projects in downtown Vancouver:

1. The redevelopment of properties owned by the City behind City Hall and adjacent to the Convention Center into a mixed-use development and active public space; and
2. A proposed performing arts center that may be located on City-owned property behind the Convention Center and will require substantial investment by the City.

The City will likely be required to provide credit enhancements, including but not limited to, a debt service guaranty and allocation of lodging tax revenues for future debt offerings by DRA to finance the projects highlighted above.

Because the City is responsible under State law and City code for overseeing and correcting deficiencies in the DRA's operations, including board governance lapses, and to ensure that DRA performs its required fiduciary responsibilities without interruption, the City proposes to amend DRA bylaws to clarify the employment requirements of the DRA Executive Director.

A previous ordinance was approved on consent by City Council on February 23, 2026, and remanded back to staff on March 2, 2026, to clarify role of DRA Board in appointing the Executive Director. The current ordinance has been updated to address this issue.

Advantage(s)

1. Ensures that existing approach to DRA operations continues.
2. Protects the financial interests of the DRA and the City.
3. Maintains collaborative relationship between the City and DRA, which protects the long-term viability of the Convention Center and Hotel.

Challenge(s)

This ordinance amends Section 2.09 of the DRA bylaws, which DRA amended by resolution on February 19, 2026. The DRA took this action despite the City's formal request that it table the proposed resolution due to noncompliance with its charter, bylaws, and certain financial obligations.

Budget Impact

None

Prior Council Review

- City Council adopted Ordinance M-3302 in 1997 to establish DRA. The DRA Charter and bylaws have been subsequently amended by Ordinances M-3517, M-3738 and M-3939.
- City Council approved the item on Consent on February 23, 2026.
- City Council remanded the item back to staff on March 2, 2026.
- City Council approved the item on Consent on March 16, 2026.

Action Requested

On Monday, March 23, 2026, upon second reading and a public hearing, finalize and approve the ordinance.

Staff Contact

Jeffrey Towery, Deputy City Manager, Jeff.Towery@cityofvancouver.us

Attachments:

1. Presentation
2. Ordinance



Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) Bylaws Amendment

Jeff Towery
Deputy City Manager
March 16, 2026



Agenda

- Public Development Authorities
- DRA Background and History
- City – DRA Relationship
- Future Collaboration
- Prior Council Review
- Proposed Action





Public Development Authorities (PDAs)

- RCW 35.21.730-759 allows cities to establish PDAs to carry out specific projects and programs and limit a municipality's liability for any debts or obligations.
- Governance and operations of PDAs vary widely across the state.
 - Many PDAs operate with separate staff and operational infrastructure.
 - Some PDAs depend entirely on the sponsoring city or county for all staffing and administrative support.



Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) History

- City Council established DRA in 1997 as a public authority organized pursuant to the laws of State of Washington.
- The Convention Center and Hotel opened in 2005.
- DRA charter was amended by City Council in 2006 to focus on the development and management of Convention Center and Hotel.
- The Convention Center and Hotel are owned and managed by DRA.





DRA Governance & Operations

- DRA is governed by a seven-person board of directors appointed by City Council.
- DRA Executive Director has historically been an at-will City employee except for two-year period.
- All staffing and systems for DRA, including administrative support, financial management, IT, and project management, are provided by the City.



Financial Support for DRA

City support expands the amount and lowers the cost of DRA debt

The City provides ongoing financial support to DRA through:

- A debt service guaranty on DRA-issued project revenue bonds;
- A pledge of lodging taxes paid to the City to pay debt service on DRA-issued tax revenue bonds.

	Maturity	City Obligation
2013 Project Revenue Bonds	January 1, 2044	Debt Service Guaranty
2013 Tax Revenue Bonds	January 1, 2034	Pledge of 2% Lodging Taxes



Proposed DRA/City Projects

The City and DRA are collaborating on a series of planned or proposed redevelopment projects in Downtown Vancouver:

- Convention Center expansion to grow capacity and attract more events and visitors;
- The redevelopment of properties owned by the City behind City Hall and adjacent to the Convention Center into a mixed-use development and active public space; and
- A proposed performing arts center that may be located on City-owned property behind the Convention Center and will require substantial investment by the City.



City Oversight of DRA

- Pursuant to State law, the City is responsible for overseeing and correcting deficiencies in the DRA's operations, including board governance lapses.
- City Council has amended the charter of DRA three previous times to refine mission, address changes to DRA operations and manage risk to the City.



Prior Council Review

A previous ordinance was approved on consent by City Council on February 23, 2026, and remanded back to staff on March 2, 2026, to clarify role of DRA Board in appointing the Executive Director.

The amended bylaw language in the current ordinance is intended to address this issue by retaining the DRA's role in appointment process.



Requested Action

Advance the ordinance amending the bylaws for the Downtown Redevelopment Authority clarifying the employment status of the DRA Executive Director, setting the date for the second reading and public hearing for March 23, 2026.



Thank You



3/16/26 (Date of First Reading)
3/23/26 (Date of Public Hearing)

ORDINANCE NO. M- [Ordinance Number]

AN ORDINANCE of the City of Vancouver relating to changes to the Bylaws of the Downtown Redevelopment Authority (“DRA”); adopting an amendment to Section 2.09 of the Bylaws clarifying the employment status of the Executive Director.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Vancouver (“City”) adopted Ordinance M-3302, effective May 19, 1997, creating the DRA as a public authority organized pursuant to the laws of State of Washington, RCW 35.21.730 through RCW 35.21.759; and

WHEREAS, the Charter and Bylaws of the DRA were subsequently amended by City Council pursuant to Ordinances M-3517, M-3738 and M-3939; and

WHEREAS, the Bylaws of the DRA were subsequently amended by DRA Resolution 2026-02-19-01 on February 19, 2026; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, the City has provided staff and administrative support for DRA, including staffing the Executive Director position through an Interlocal Agreement for Administrative Services between DRA and the City; and

WHEREAS, the DRA was established to construct, own, and manage the Vancouver Convention Center (“Convention Center”) and Hilton Hotel (“Hotel”), two critical assets for the economic health and vitality of downtown Vancouver; and

WHEREAS, the DRA issued the City Downtown Redevelopment Authority Conference Center Project Revenue Bonds in 2013 (“Project Revenue Bonds”) and the City Downtown Redevelopment Authority Conference Center Sales and Lodging Tax Revenue Bonds in 2013

ORDINANCE - 1

("Tax Revenue Bonds") to refund existing debt and finance improvements to the Hotel and Convention Center; and

WHEREAS, the City provided a debt service guaranty through an Amended and Restated Payment Agreement between DRA and the City in 2013 that provided the necessary security to issue the Project Revenue Bonds in a cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, the City has pledged a certain amount of lodging taxes paid to the City to the DRA to help fund required debt service payments on the Tax Revenue Bonds; and

WHEREAS, the DRA is planning a major expansion of the Convention Center that will increase visitors to downtown Vancouver and help transform a vacant lot and building in the heart of Vancouver's central city; and

WHEREAS, the DRA is collaborating with the City and the City Center Redevelopment Authority ("CCRA") to redevelop properties owned by the City behind City Hall and adjacent to the Convention Center into a mixed-use development and active public space; and

WHEREAS, the DRA is collaborating with the City on a proposed performing arts center that will require substantial investment by the City and may be located on City-owned property behind the Convention Center; and

WHEREAS, the City will likely be required to provide credit enhancements including but not limited to a debt service guaranty and allocation of lodging tax revenues for future debt offerings by DRA to finance the expansion of the Convention Center and other adjacent capital projects; and

WHEREAS, effective collaboration between DRA and the City on both current DRA operations and planned future projects requires regular coordination between DRA and City leadership and staff; and

ORDINANCE - 2

WHEREAS, Section 2.09 of the Bylaws states that the Board may contract with the City or an independent contractor to fill the Executive Director function; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to clarify that the Executive Director is an employee-at-will of the City; and

WHEREAS, at-will City employees are appointed and removed by the City Manager pursuant to City Charter Section 3.03; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to retain the Board's Executive Director appointment authority subject to the approval of the City Manager;

WHEREAS, Pursuant to VMC 2.73.130 (C), the City Council may amend the Bylaws of the DRA by ordinance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF VANCOUVER:

Section 1. **Recitals Adopted as Findings.** The City Council hereby adopts and incorporates by reference the above recitals as findings in support of this Ordinance.

Section 2. **Amendment.** Downtown Redevelopment Authority Bylaws Section 2.09 entitled "Executive Director" as initially codified by Ordinance Ord. M-3302, and amended by Ordinances M-3517, M-3738 and M-3939 and DRA Resolution 2026-02-19-01, is hereby amended as follows:

Section 2.09 Executive Director. The Executive Director shall be the chief administrative officer of the Authority responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Authority and for carrying out the policies and directives of the Board. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Authority after receiving approval from the City Manager. The Executive Director shall make recommendations to the Board on practices, policies and programs of the Authority. ~~He or she~~ The Executive Director shall have such powers and perform such duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board. The Executive Director ~~must be an at-will City employee, may be as provided in the Authority Charter, or may be or an independent contractor, and as such~~ The Executive Director may be removed,

with or without cause, by the ~~Board in the Board's sole discretion~~. City Manager. If the Executive Director ceases employment at the City, their position as Executive Director is automatically vacated.

Section 3. **Effective Date.** This ordinance shall be effective five days after the date of passage.

DATE OF FINAL PASSAGE by the Vancouver City Council:

SIGNED this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Anne McEnerny-Ogle, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa Brandl, Acting City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Nena Cook, City Attorney

SUMMARY

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE of the City of Vancouver relating to changes to the Bylaws of the Downtown Redevelopment Authority (“DRA”) pursuant to VMC 2.73.130; adopting an amendment to Section 2.09 of the Bylaws clarifying the employment status of the Executive Director.

The full text of this ordinance will be mailed upon request. Contact public records staff at (360) 487-8480, citypdr@cityofvancouver.us, or via [Public Records Request -The City of Vancouver, WA](#).