



**NOTICE OF A JOINT WORK SESSION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL  
OF THE TOWN OF CLARKDALE  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2024 AT 3:00 PM**

In Person: Clark Memorial Clubhouse, 19 N. Ninth St., Clarkdale AZ

Unless otherwise stated, the public will have physical access to the meeting place 15 minutes prior to the meeting start time.

**Town of Clarkdale Vision**

The Town of Clarkdale capitalizes on our unique history, proximity to the Verde River, and small-town charm. We cultivate an environment where residents and businesses can thrive.

We sustainably enhance our infrastructure, support the arts and education, and develop recreational opportunities to create a bright future for our entire community.

PURSUANT TO A.R.S. §38-431.02, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the members of the Common Council of the Town of Clarkdale, the Design Review Board, Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission and to the general public that the Town of Clarkdale Town Council will hold a Joint Work Session open to the public on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at 3:00 PM in person at 19 N. Ninth Street, Clarkdale, Arizona, Clark Memorial Clubhouse, Men's Lounge. Members of the Clarkdale Common Council and Boards and Commissions will attend in person.

Supporting documentation and staff reports furnished with this agenda are available for review on the Town website at [www.clarkdale.az.gov](http://www.clarkdale.az.gov) and the Town Clerk's Office.

**ALL ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA ARE SCHEDULED FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**A. Town Council**

**B. Design Review Board**

**C. Planning Commission**

**D. Historic Preservation Commission**

**2. ROLL CALL**

**A. Town Council**

**B. Design Review Board**

**C. Planning Commission**

**D. Historic Preservation Commission**

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Discussion only with Town Council, Design Review Board, Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission regarding the possible reorganization of certain Boards and Commissions.**

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

**Values**

Values are the guiding principles that provide an organization with purpose and direction. The Town of Clarkdale's organizational values are:

**COPPER**

**Customer focused**

**Open, transparent and equitable**

**Preserving our history, charm, and environment**

**Planning for a sustainable future**

**Economic and social resiliency**

**Resourceful and innovative**

**Mission**

The Town of Clarkdale serves the community by providing amenities, infrastructure, services, and public safety to enhance quality of life. We are stewards of our history while we sustainably and resiliently plan for the future with an emphasis on community engagement and transparency.

*Persons with a disability may request reasonable accommodations by contacting the Town Hall at (928) 639-2400 (TTY: 1-800-367-8939) at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting.*



# Staff Report

Item Number: 3.A.

**Agenda Item:** **Discussion only with Town Council, Design Review Board, Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission regarding the possible reorganization of certain Boards and Commissions.**

Discussion only with Town Council, Design Review Board, Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission regarding the possible reorganization of certain Boards and Commissions.

**Staff Contact:** Ruth Mayday, Community Development Director

**Meeting Date:** October 8, 2024

**Strategic Goal:** Not applicable.

**Background:** The Community Development Department (CDD) currently oversees four (4) boards:

- 1) Planning Commission
- 2) Design Review Board
- 3) Historic Preservation Commission
- 4) Board of Adjustment

During those times when the Town is in the process of updating its General Plan, the General Plan Commission is created to advise staff regarding the revising of language, adding elements, and considering the impact of such changes on the long-range development of the Town.

Of the four (4) boards, only the Board of Adjustments (BOA) is statutorily required in A.R.S. 9-462.06, Board of adjustment. It mandates the creation of a separate board of at least five (5) but no more than seven (7) members, or a hearing officer. The legislative body of the jurisdiction may also serve as the BOA. This board sits in a quasi-judicial function; its decisions are legally binding and can only be appealed to Superior Court. The purpose of the BOA is to hear appeals of decisions of the zoning administrator and may exercise other powers granted to it through the enabling ordinance for the Board. However, it is limited in what it can consider and how it can make decisions. The BOA can hear variances from the zoning regulations only if special circumstances such as size, shape, topography or other issues inherent in the land will deprive the landowner of privileges enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district and does not constitute a grant of special privileges and cannot be self-imposed by the property owner. The BOA cannot rezone

property, nor can it rewrite zoning code requirements. Meetings are held when there is an appeal of a decision made by the zoning administrator; it has met only two (2) times in the past five (5) years.

The single legal requirement for the Planning Commission (PC) is that if one is established by the legislative body, it must consist of no fewer than five (5) members. The local governing body is tasked with the creation, organization, number of members, terms of office, and appointment and removal of commissioners if they desire to establish a commission – almost all municipalities have seated planning commissions. The purpose of the PC is to oversee the creation and implementation of the General Plan, conducting public hearings for Zone changes, Planned Area Developments, General Plan amendments, Plats, and amendments to the text of the zoning code. The Commission then forwards applications pertaining to these actions to Town Council with recommendations for approval, approval with amendments, or denial of the application. The PC can also send an item back to staff for additional work. There are no experience or educational requirements to serve on the PC, however, analytical skills are beneficial. The PC meets on an ongoing, as needed basis.

Title 9-462.01 (10) allows for the establishment of “districts of historical significance.” It does not address the need for a commission or board other than to designate structures or sites of historic significance, which can also be determined by a department or person. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was created for that and other purposes by Town Council. In addition to the responsibilities established in the enabling legislation, the proposed Historic Preservation Ordinance (HPO) assigns Design Review responsibilities to the HPC rather than DRB. The requirements for membership on an HPC as set forth in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Secretary of Interior who list a number of educational or professional qualifications – a degree in history, architecture, historic architecture, planning, design, and anthropology, or hands-on experience in these fields. Currently, the HPC has a Landscape Architect, Anthropologist, and historic design experience, in addition to a member with deep knowledge of local history. The purpose of these requirements is to ensure that the Commission is staffed by commissioners with specific expertise in historic design rather than architecture and design in general. Meetings are on an as-needed basis.

The Design Review Board (DRB) was created by the Town Council upon the adoption of Ordinance #310 in May 2008. The purpose of this board is to review the exterior design of proposed new commercial, industrial, and multifamily buildings to ensure that they are compatible with the existing built environment, and preserve and protect the integrity and character of Clarkdale. Single-family homes are specifically excepted. The DRB is limited to design only and cannot make decisions regarding the appropriateness of a project to a specific location, change zoning classifications, or General Plan designations. This board has five (5) members; the enabling ordinance does not specify design or architectural experience to be appointed to the BOA.

Meetings are held on an as-needed basis.

Meetings of the boards and commissions have been inconsistently scheduled, as there are generally no applications for DRB or PC every month. The HPC, given its recent establishment, has been meeting much more frequently as it moves through the tasks assigned to it in the ordinance.

The second regular session of the 56<sup>th</sup> Arizona Legislature was rife with bills intended to streamline processes that affect approvals of residential housing. While most did not survive, enough attention was given to the housing crisis that the expectation is that most of the bills that did not make it to the Governor's desk will likely be reintroduced when the 57<sup>th</sup> Arizona Legislature is called to order.

In advance of the next legislative session, it would benefit the Town to consider streamlining processes and approvals for development. Currently, a subdivision requires approval of a preliminary plat by Planning Commission and Town Council, then technical review, then final approval by Town Council. Notification of public hearings alone add 90 days to the process. For Planned Area Developments (PADs), a minimum of 45 additional days must be added to the timeline to account for at least one (1) hearing before the DRB. Multifamily, commercial, and industrial development projects are all subject to DRB, regardless of zoning status.

To streamline processes, staff suggests combining DRB with the PC. Both Sedona and Cottonwood have combined the responsibilities of the two (2) bodies under their PCs and have found it to be far more efficient. This will reduce the public hearing notification time and eliminate a meeting from the process, which will accelerate the approval timeline. It also eliminates a meeting that the public would need to attend, as both planning and design matters are considered at one (1) time rather than at two (2) separate meetings. The combined DRB/PC would consider projects outside the Historic Preservation District; those would be reviewed by the HPC.

There are currently five (5) members on the DRB and PC; the size of the HPC and PC could be increased to seven (7) member boards, with one (1) DRB member serving as an alternate to either remaining body.

**Budget Impact:**

This change would reduce the number of mailings and publications required for public hearings.

**Recommendation:**

Discussion only. No recommendation.