

**REGULAR MEETING
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
AUGUST 17, 2026
ANNEX COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:00 PM**

The Council of the City of Destin met in regular session with the following members and staff present:

Destin City Council

Mayor Bobby Wagner
Mayor Pro-Tem Terésa Hebert
Councilmember Rodney Braden
Councilmember Dewey Destin

Councilmember Chatham Morgan
Councilmember John Stephens
Councilmember Sandy Trammell

Destin City Staff

City Manager Larry Jones
Parks and Recreation Director Lisa Firth
Public Information Director Tamara Young
Public Works Director Michael Burgess
Principal Planner Daniel Butler
Projects and Grants Manager Jeff Cozadd
City Attorney Kimberly Kopp

City Clerk Lisa Wallace
Community Development Director Tina Deater
City Engineer Robert Tomesek
Finance Director Krystal Strickland
IT Director Andy Peters
Senior Planner Jesse Hernandez
Code Compliance Chris Koch
Principal Planner Daniel Butler

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Pastor David Butler of Faith Assembly Christian Church gave the invocation which was then followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Councilmember Stephens requested that "Pending Ordinance Doctrine for two-foot free board flood zone requirement" be added under his name. Dr. Jones reported that the applicants for item 5.A. (PZ-2026-66) requested that the item be removed from the agenda until a later date. The consensus from Council was to continue with the public hearing.

Councilmember Hebert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Stephens, to approve the agenda with the change requested by Councilmember Stephens. The motion carried 6-0.

1. PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS/SPECIAL/PUBLIC
PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Okaloosa County Sheriff Captain Fulghum announced that he would no longer be the OCSO liaison due to his recent promotion and introduced Captain Smith as his replacement.

Mayor Wagner presented Major Fulghum with a plaque thanking him for his years of service to the Destin community.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ricky Grant, Jr. thanked the council for listening to his story and journey. He discussed his business, social media presence, and plans to develop his website and online branding. He expressed interest in expanding his digital presence, sharing business-related content, and continuing to build his brand. He also spoke about his lifestyle, daily routine, and plans to follow college and professional football.

Justin Goff addressed the council regarding an \$11,000 mobility fee associated with rebuilding his home. He explained that his family purchased the property as their permanent home, but extensive mold contamination—reported at approximately 90%—required the home to be demolished and rebuilt. Mr. Goff stated that the rebuild was necessary to protect his wife and children and that the additional mobility fee creates a significant financial burden. He asked the council to consider removing or otherwise waiving the fee in light of the circumstances.

Mustafa Akan, owner of Red Onion, addressed the council regarding an impact fee for a change of use associated with relocating the restaurant to a nearby building. He explained that the move was necessary due to the age and limited capacity of the former location and that significant funds had already been spent on renovations, equipment, and relocation. Akan stated that the new location is only about 15 feet away, has ample parking, and primarily serves local customers, so he does not believe the move will significantly affect city traffic. He asked the council to reconsider the impact fee and provide the maximum reduction possible.

Wesley Poole raised concerns about conditions at the Beach Street connector park, including concrete damaged by trucks, an overgrown walkway, and invasive tree species such as cherry laurel, popcorn, and chinaberry trees. He encouraged the city to address the invasive vegetation and maintain the area. He also distributed information regarding herbicide use and potential EPA liability. Poole complimented the city's clock timer and efforts to encourage citizen participation, then asked whether the city had made a decision regarding an AI facility.

There being no further comments, the Mayor closed this portion of the public comments.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Destin Rodeo Run
- B. Letter of Support - Resilient Florida Grant Program - Four Prong Lake Emergency Outfall Application
- C. Approval of Minutes of August 3, 2026 Regular City Council Meeting

Councilmember Hebert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed 6-0.

4. CITY MANAGER REPORTS

A. RFB 26-03-PW Miscellaneous Continuing Services Electrical Contract

Councilmember Trammell made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to authorize the City Manager to execute a 3-year contract with D & D Air Conditioning for electrical services through December 2029. The motion passed 6-0.

B. FDOT Joint Participation Agreement, US98/SR30 Median Improvements Concrete Curbing

Councilmember Stephens made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve the request for Hayes Construction Co. to construct curbing in accordance with the FDOT previously approved plans and authorize the City Manager to execute a purchase order for the estimated amount of \$321,375 to construct the curbing and request reimbursement from FDOT upon completion. The motion passed 6-0.

C. Updating of Ordinance 359, Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan, seeking direction and a legislative sponsor

Councilmember Trammell made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to authorize staff to proceed with the formal legislative process for updating Ordinance No. 359. The motion passed 6-0. Dr. Jones reported that Councilmember Trammell has agreed to be the legislative sponsor. The motion passed 6-0.

D. FEMA Preliminary Flood Insurance Study, Flood Insurance Rate Maps, and Summary of Map Actions - information only

Dr. Jones reported that the City received the latest FEMA Preliminary Flood Insurance Study, Flood Insurance Rate Maps, and Summary of Map Actions for review. The maps, received July 31, are preliminary and do not replace the city's current effective flood maps or regulations. The review period allows the city, residents, property owners, and other interested parties to review the proposed flood hazard information and submit comments before FEMA finalizes the maps.

E. R&R Library 10-ton A/C Replacement

Councilmember Trammell made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to authorize the City Manager to execute a task order with D & D Air Conditioning Services for replacement of the 10-ton unit for the cost of \$38,952. The motion passed 6-0.

Councilmember Destin requested to see any available maintenance logs for the unit.

F. Update on State-Acquired Land in Holiday Isle Adjacent to City's Norriego Point Park

City Attorney Kopp reported that the Okaloosa County Dispute Resolution 26-21 initiating dispute resolution procedures with Okaloosa County, was passed August 3. The first meeting is scheduled for August 19 at 1:00 p.m. at the Fort Walton Beach Convention Center involving the city manager and county administrator. Council members are invited to attend and public input will be allowed, but no final decisions would be made.

City Attorney Kopp added that a second meeting between the City Council and County BCC must also be held. Potential dates discussed were September 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, or 11, with September 8 discouraged due to a scheduled council meeting.

G. Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance Estuary Program (CBAEP) Approval and Appointment

Councilmember Hebert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Destin, to nominate John Stephens as the Primary member and Sandy Trammell as the Secondary member of the CBAEP. The motion passed 6-0.

H. Intersection of Benning Dr. & Maltezos St.

Councilmember Destin made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve the placement of an all-way stop at the intersection of Benning Dr. and Maltezos Street. The motion passed 6-0.

I. Mobility Plan Update

Councilmember Trammell made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Stephens, to have staff set a special meeting date to reprioritize the Mobility Plan and report back to Council. The motion passed 6-0.

J. Pending Ordinance Regarding Mobility Fees

City Attorney Kopp reported that the city is receiving requests to waive or reduce mobility fees, which have increased significantly. Because the current code does not provide a waiver process, Council is limited in its ability to grant them. Staff has prepared amendments to the mobility fee ordinance, which the LPA recommended for approval, but further changes are being considered in conjunction with the LDC rewrite and impacts on CRAs. Staff recommends invoking the pending ordinance doctrine so Council can consider waivers while the ordinance is pending. Potential criteria could include redevelopment of vacant or underutilized property, elimination of blight, increased taxable value or economic activity, and correction of existing nonconformities. Other options include a blanket reduction in mobility fees or an updated mobility fee study.

Councilmember Hebert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to direct staff to prepare Ord. 26-09-LC to amend the LDC and invoke the pending ordinance doctrine to provide Council with the opportunity to make waivers. No vote was taken.

Councilmember Morgan made a substitute motion, seconded by Councilmember Braden, to include all of Councilmember Hebert's motion and add or amend proposed language to the ordinance that provides for an open-ended reduction amount (not limited), de minimis impact considerations, and harbor district taxing considerations. The motion passed 6-0.

K. Mobility Fee Reduction Request: The Red Onion – 535 Harbor Boulevard

Councilmember Morgan made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve the reduction in the Mobility Fees for the Red Onion project pursuant to the pending ordinance doctrine for good cause shown that the Red Onion pays \$0 (zero) dollars in Mobility Fees. The motion passed 6-0.

Councilmember Morgan made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve the reduction of the Mobility Fees for 5 Cross Court pursuant to the pending ordinance doctrine for good cause shown that 5 Cross Court pays \$0 (zero) dollars in Mobility Fees. The motion passed 6-0.

The following reports were provided to council as informational only.

- L. Capital Project Status - Informational Only
- M. Operations Financial Report - Informational Only
- N. TDC Monthly Report - Informational Only
- O. Minutes of Standing Boards & Committees - Informational Only
- P. Announcements

The announcements included reminders that primary election voting will take place tomorrow at designated polling locations, with polls open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. General elections are scheduled for November 3. The Clement Taylor Park bathrooms are expected to be delivered September 10, with additional work still to be completed. The city will also hold a second vertical oyster garden event on September 12 from 1–2 p.m. at Captain Royal Melvin Heritage Park. City offices will be closed for Labor Day on September 7, and the next City Council meeting will be held Tuesday, September 8, at 6 p.m.

The City Attorney requested an executive session for Tuesday, September 8 at 5:30 p.m. regarding the litigation matter of Daisy Centenno v. Key Destin Owner LLC, et al., including the City of Destin. The session will address matters permitted under state law, including litigation strategy and potential settlement. Attendees will include the City Council, Mayor, City Attorney, City Manager, and litigation counsel Bill Warner.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. A public hearing regarding the application for a Major Deviation (PZ-2026-66) to a Major Development Order (Development Orders: DO-21-12, DO-23-16, and DO-25-16) for the Indian Bayou West Subdivision. The requested deviation seeks approval to remove the proposed connector road identified as Old Creek Trail on the approved plan set. Old Creek Trail is planned to connect Indian Bayou Trail to Commons Drive West, just east of Airport Road. The portion of land designated for the connector road is located within the Indian Bayou Country Club property located at 1 Country Club Drive East (Parcel ID: 00-2S-22-0000-0046-0000). The application requests the removal of Old Creek Trail as a required element of the approved site plan.

Senior Planner Jesse Hernandez provided a brief report on this application reporting that South Management Company, on behalf of Indian Bayou West LLC, requested a major deviation to remove Old Creek Trail from the approved development plan and eliminate the obligation to construct the connector road. The applicant stated that Old Creek Trail was intended to serve the original 86-lot development, but the project was later reduced to 45 lots and no longer requires the road for access. Staff noted concerns regarding continued access to the reclaimed water facility, ADA pedestrian access, connectivity, and emergency response times. While DWU agreed to

provide an alternative paved access route and necessary sidewalk improvements if Old Creek Trail is not constructed, the city engineer opposed removing the road. Staff ultimately found that the requested deviation was inconsistent with the approved development order and could negatively affect public access, safety, and infrastructure.

The applicant's representative, Robert McGill, requested that the item be postponed or tabled because the applicant was not given adequate notice of the city engineer's opposition. He stated that the applicant had previously been told the project was approved at the Technical Review Committee level and had only seen the engineer's recommendation against the request when the meeting packet was released. The applicant contacted the city manager's office upon discovering the opposition and asked for additional time to review and prepare a response. He requested that the item either be tabled to a specific future date or removed from the agenda until the applicant is ready to bring it back.

Andrew White, who lives adjacent to the proposed Old Creek Trail area, spoke in favor of maintaining the road. He said the connector could help alleviate traffic for Indian Bayou residents and surrounding areas by providing an additional route west, particularly as future development increases traffic. He noted that the existing road is currently overgrown and primarily used by law enforcement but believed it could be improved and made more attractive. He also expressed interest in what will ultimately happen with the One Country Club Drive East property.

The city engineer clarified that the engineering department has consistently maintained that Old Creek Trail should be constructed. He explained that the issue was not included in the Technical Review Committee comments because the TRC focuses on code compliance, while engineering also considers connectivity and infrastructure. Engineering previously identified that the road had not been constructed when the applicant was ready to complete the permit, even though the infrastructure permit includes Old Creek Trail.

Bob Lee, a managing partner of Indian Bayou, spoke at length in support of removing the Old Creek Trail requirement. He explained that the road was originally proposed to provide access for the larger 86-lot development, but after the project was reduced to 45 lots and 25 acres were sold, the road was no longer viewed by the applicant as necessary. He argued that Indian Bayou already has multiple access routes and that constructing Old Creek Trail would divide the remaining 10-acre property and potentially limit future uses.

Mr. Lee also questioned whether the county would approve the proposed intersection and argued that additional intersections can create safety concerns. Staff clarified that the entire area is within the City of Destin and that the road remains a requirement of the existing development order, even though the TRC review did not object because it evaluates compliance with the code rather than previously approved development-order conditions.

Mr. Lee maintained that he had not understood the road to remain a requirement and expressed concerns about the timing and communication of the city engineer's opposition. He also noted that the city manager had discussed potentially purchasing the property and said he had not responded to the city's appraisal because he wanted to know the outcome of the road issue first.

Mr. Lee ultimately requested a continuance to allow time to consult the county, hire a traffic engineer and land-use attorney, and submit public-records requests concerning communications about the road.

Councilmember Destin made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Trammell, to continue this issue for 60 days. The motion passed 6-0.

- B. First Reading of ORDINANCE NO. 26-08-LC, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DESTIN, FLORIDA, DELETING ARTICLE 14 "CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS" AND ARTICLE 8, SECTION 8.07.00 "APPROVED TRANSPORTATION PLANS" OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE, AND ADOPTING, BY REFERENCE, THE CITY OF DESTIN MOBILITY PLAN, BY CREATING A NEW ARTICLE 9 - TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT, PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION INTO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The City Attorney read Ordinance 26-08-LC by title and then presented it to the city council on first reading.

Principal Planner Daniel Butler presented the proposed update of Article 9 of the Land Development Code, which replaces the existing transportation corridor management provisions in Article 14. The update incorporates the city's Mobility Plan by reference, allowing identified transportation projects and corridors to remain current as the plan is amended. The article also revises certain street classifications to reflect current engineering standards. The purpose is to preserve future transportation corridors before development makes them difficult or costly to implement. When development or redevelopment occurs on property containing an identified corridor, the needed right-of-way would be dedicated to the city through a plat, easement, or deed, with the land's value potentially credited toward mobility fees. The changes largely preserve the existing requirements, and the LPA unanimously recommended approval.

Mayor Wagner opened a public hearing to receive comments for or against the proposed ordinance. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing and turned the matter over to the city council for their discussion and consideration.

Councilmember Trammell made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Hebert, to approve first reading of Ordinance No. 26-08-LC. The motion passed 6-0.

6. COMMENTS / PRESENTATIONS FROM MAYOR, COUNCIL, AND CITY ATTORNEY

A. Councilmember Braden

B. Councilmember Stephens - Pending Ordinance Doctrine for two-foot free board flood zone requirement

Councilmember Stephens made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Morgan, to invoke the pending ordinance doctrine for the LDC amendment removing the 2-foot freeboard flood zone requirement and replacing it with the Florida minimum building code requirement of 1 foot as applicable city-wide. The motion passed 6-0.

C. Councilmember Destin

Councilmember Destin requested that the City Manager work with Parks staff to consider options on removing the seaweed/sea grass at the Leonard Destin Park to help make the beach a little more usable.

D. Councilmember Trammell

E. Councilmember Hebert

Councilmember Hebert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Destin, to appoint Mayor Wagner as the Primary member and Councilmember Hebert as the secondary member for the ECRC Committee. The motion passed 6-0.

F. Councilmember Morgan

G. Councilmember Schmidt

H. Mayor Wagner

I. City Attorney

City Attorney Kopp reported that this is Councilmember Schmidt 3rd absence and, pursuant to the charter, is requesting that Council excuse his absence.

Councilmember Hebert made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Stephens, that Councilmember Schmidt's absence be excused. The motion passed 6-0.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tarik Camp raised ongoing concerns regarding loud chicken noise and delays in Code Enforcement response to noise complaints. The resident reported that the noise is most prevalent in the early morning, approximately 6:00–9:00 a.m., particularly on Tuesdays and weekends. Staff was asked to prioritize the matter and coordinate an early-morning site visit to observe the noise while it is occurring.

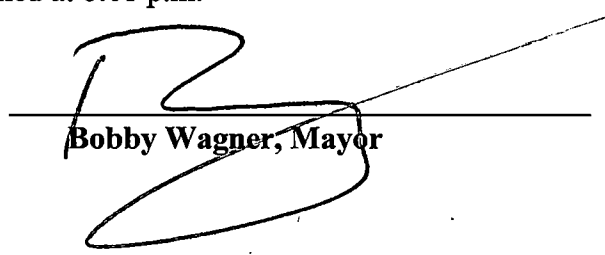
Shane Moody, President/CEO of the Destin Chamber, provided updates on Amendment 3 and the upcoming Okaloosa County half-cent infrastructure surtax referendum. He noted that polling for Amendment 3 is currently unfavorable and that major affiliated organizations have not yet taken a position. He also reported that the county's four chambers of commerce, EDC, and ECAR are actively campaigning in support of renewing the infrastructure surtax, which will appear on the November ballot.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

ATTEST:


Lisa Wallace, City Clerk


Bobby Wagner, Mayor