



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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April 25, 2022

City of Camas
Community Development
Robert Maul, Planning Manager
Madeline Sutherland, City Planner

Sent Via Electronic Mail: rmaul@cityofcamas.us, msutherland@cityofcamas.us

Re: Proposed 2022 Amendments to the Camas Municipal Code

Dear Mr. Maul and Ms. Sutherland,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed amendments to the Camas Municipal Code (CMC) Title 18, relating to residential treatment facilities, sober living homes, and transitional housing. The proposed amendments were received by Growth Management Services on January 27, 2022, and given material identification number 2022-S-3631.

Commerce applauds the progress the City has made to identify and address the shortage of housing for people suffering from chronic mental illness or substance abuse disorders. Amending your development codes to include the new uses and definitions for residential treatment facilities, sober living homes, and transitional housing is an important step in supporting the changing dynamics of your community.

We offer the following comments on your draft amendments to the Camas Municipal Code:

- **Residential Treatment Facilities.**

As proposed, the draft regulations:

- prohibit the use in residential zoning districts, which accounts for 48% of zoning throughout the city;
- limit the use to commercial districts and industrial districts, which tend to be located along the perimeter of the city and west, furthest from the heart of the community;
- allow the use in multifamily districts, albeit through a rigorous and costly conditional use permit process;
- prohibit the use "...within 1,000 feet of public and private schools, public parks, public libraries, other RTFs, or similar uses".

We encourage you to consider reducing the tight constraints around this special needs type of housing by removing the burden of conditional use permit requirements for this use in multifamily zones, and by reducing the distance restriction. A conditional use process can complicate permitting of facilities that may have minimal impacts to the community. Development, construction, or conversion of existing buildings can become too costly for developers. The 1,000 foot distance appears to be too large to allow adequate facilities to meet this special needs housing type RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c).

We ask that you bear in mind the requirements of RCW 35A.21.430, which expressly state that requirements on occupancy, spacing, and intensity of use may not prevent the siting of a sufficient number of permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, or indoor emergency shelters necessary to accommodate each code city's projected need for such housing and shelter under RCW 36.70A.070(2)(a)(ii). Commerce encourages the city to ensure that the standards placed on transitional and permanent supportive housing do not inadvertently result in housing inequity racially disparate impacts, displacement or discrimination. RCW 36.70A.070(2)(e).

- **Permanent Supportive Housing**

In 2021, the legislature adopted ESSHB 1220, changing how Washington plans for housing. The bill, which supports emergency shelters and housing through local planning and development regulations, states in Section 3 that a city shall not prohibit transitional housing or permanent supportive housing in any zones in which residential dwelling units or hotels are allowed and shall not prohibit indoor emergency shelters and indoor emergency housing in any zones in which hotels are allowed. This is codified in RCW 30.21A.430, and is copied in at the end of this letter.

Based on this statute and a review of Camas Municipal Code, Chapter 18.07, Use Authorization, Commerce would like to bring your attention to a potential conflict in the land use development standards for permanent supportive housing – the use is prohibited in the CC, RC, BP and LI commercial zoning districts, yet residential uses are permitted in CC districts and hotels are permitted in the CC, RC, BP and LI districts.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the City's proposed ordinance. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Mary.Reinbold@commerce.wa.gov, or 509-638-5449. If you have questions about any other aspect of growth management, please contact me at catherine.mccoy@commerce.wa.gov, or 360-280-3147.

Sincerely,

Catherine McCoy
Senior Planner
Growth Management Services

cc:

David Andersen, AICP, Managing Director, Growth Management Services
Valerie Smith, AICP, Deputy Managing Director, Growth Management Services
Mary Reinbold, AICP, Senior Housing Planner, Growth Management Services

[RCW 30.21A.430](#)

A code city shall not prohibit transitional housing or permanent supportive housing in any zones in which residential dwelling units or hotels are allowed. Effective September 30, 2021, a code city shall not prohibit indoor emergency shelters and indoor emergency housing in any zones in which hotels are allowed, except in such cities that have adopted an ordinance authorizing indoor emergency shelters and indoor emergency housing in a majority of zones within a one-mile proximity to transit. Reasonable occupancy, spacing, and intensity of use requirements may be imposed by ordinance on permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, and indoor emergency shelters to protect public health and safety. Any such requirements on occupancy, spacing, and intensity of use may not prevent the siting of a sufficient number of permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, or indoor emergency shelters necessary to accommodate each code city's projected need for such housing and shelter under RCW [36.70A.070](#)(2)(a)(ii).