Staff Report

November 2, 2026, Council Regular Meeting

Our Camas 2045 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Our Downtown Camas 2045 Subarea Plan, Downtown Design Manual, and associated amendments to Titles 17 and 18 of the Camas Municipal Code
Presenter: Alan Peters, Community Development Director
Time Estimate: 30 minutes

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BACKGROUND: The City of Camas is completing a periodic update of its comprehensive plan and development regulations to guide growth through 2045. The Our Camas 2045 Comprehensive Plan is an update to the Camas 2035 plan adopted in 2016. The proposed plan responds to changes in community conditions and state requirements, and establishes a shared direction for housing, employment, transportation, public services, environmental protection, and community character. The City prepared the Our Downtown Camas 2045 Subarea Plan concurrently to address the distinct opportunities and needs of the historic downtown and surrounding downtown neighborhoods.

The planning process began with community visioning in December 2023. Through community conversations, surveys, interactive mapping, stakeholder discussions, and outreach at local events, residents and businesses identified what they value about Camas and what they would like to improve. Visioning reached more than 1,000 community members. Recurring themes included preserving Camas's small-town character and natural beauty, providing a broader range of housing choices, improving walking and bicycling connections, supporting local businesses, and strengthening downtown as a place to gather. Community summits were held in June 2024, October 2024, and from September through December 2025. Council adopted the Our Camas 2045 Vision Statement by resolution in July 2024. The draft Comprehensive Plan and Subarea Plan were both published in July 2025.

The Community Advisory Committee, Climate Policy Advisory Team, and Downtown Advisory Committee provided community and technical perspectives. Staff coordinated with Clark County on allocations, land capacity, and countywide planning. Throughout 2025 and 2026, the Planning Commission and Council reviewed the draft plans and code updates and provided feedback at workshop meetings.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on September 15, 2026, and voted unanimously on September 29, 2026, to forward a recommendation to Council to adopt the Our Camas 2045 Comprehensive Plan, the Our Downtown Camas 2045 Subarea Plan, Downtown Design Manual, and associated amendments to Titles 17 and 18 of the

Camas Municipal Code together as a coordinated package. Council held a public hearing on October 19, 2026. This meeting is intended to provide time for Council to consider the public record, deliberate, and advance the proposal towards adoption.

SUMMARY: Under the Camas Municipal Code and Growth Management Act, proposed amendments to comprehensive plans and development regulations must be reviewed by the Planning Commission which serves in an advisory capacity to Council.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on September 15, 2026. The Commission then met again on September 29, 2026, to deliberate and vote on a recommendation. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the Our Camas 2045 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Our Downtown Camas 2045 Subarea Plan, Downtown Design Manual, and associated amendments to Titles 17 and 18 of the Camas Municipal Code with the following additional recommendations:

1. For the Downtown Plan, the City should consider additional details and plans for the following historic areas: the historic [city] steps, the Mill Ditch Green Space Connector, and the Cedar Street right-of-way.
2. Adjust the border of the new multifamily zone east of Elm Street to retain the existing zoning.
3. Recommend that the City Council look closely at the infrastructure needed to support demand for water under the new plan, and recommend a demand analysis, and transport study to understand the extent and movement of the [PFAS] contamination and consider mandatory conservation measures.

<u>Growth Management Act</u>

Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA) (RCW 36.70a) establishes a coordinated framework for managing growth through comprehensive plans and development regulations, directing development toward urban areas while reducing sprawl and ensuring adequate public facilities and services. Its goals include housing affordability and choice, economic opportunity, efficient transportation, environmental and natural resource protection, climate resilience, and preservation of community character, supported by public participation, regional coordination, and respect for property rights.

Under GMA, Camas is required to maintain a comprehensive plan and periodically review it to maintain compliance with state law and meet the needs of future anticipated growth. This periodic review considers changes in state law, growth assumptions, land capacity, and the community's own vision.

The periodic review has been closely coordinated with Clark County and neighboring jurisdictions. Clark County is responsible for establishing countywide planning policies, growth allocations, and urban growth areas. The County Council approved the Clark County Comprehensive Plan on October 13, 2026. The County's plan includes the 80-acre Grove Field urban growth area expansion.

Our Camas 2045 Comprehensive Plan

The draft Comprehensive Plan includes eight elements: Community Character, Land Use, Housing, Natural Environment, Climate Change and Resiliency, Transportation, Public Facilities and Services, and Economic Development. Community Character and Climate are new elements, addressing preservation and enhancement of Camas's identity and quality of life, as well as greenhouse gas reduction and resilience to climate impacts. Together these elements establish the Our Camas 2045 vision and policy framework for growth and development over a 20-year planning horizon through 2045.

Community Character

The Community Character Element defines Camas's sense of place and provides a consistent context for the comprehensive plan. It addresses how the natural environment, development, community programming, and public engagement contribute to the City's physical and social character. The element envisions an inclusive community where residents feel connected, history and culture are celebrated, and the natural landscape is thoughtfully integrated into the urban environment.

Its three goals address art, culture, and heritage; sustainable growth and distinct identity; and community engagement. As a new element, Community Character translates the community's desire to preserve Camas's small-town feel into land use policy and establishes a stronger focus on identity, art, history, and public engagement.

Land Use

The Land Use Element guides the location, mix, and character of development as Camas accommodates future population, housing, and employment growth. It seeks to maintain the community's small-town feel while providing diverse housing, employment opportunities, and convenient access to daily services. Land use planning is coordinated with infrastructure investments and protection of the natural environment.

The element's goals address citywide development patterns, sufficient employment land, livable neighborhoods, interconnected parks and open spaces, mixed-use areas, and distinctive design overlay areas. Together, these goals support neighborhoods that accommodate different household needs and income levels, commercial areas accessible by multiple transportation modes, and development that respects surrounding uses and natural resources.

Clark County's comprehensive plan includes the 80-acre Grove Field urban growth area expansion adjacent to the North Shore Subarea. The proposed Nevin property expansion was not included in the County's final comprehensive plan and the City's draft plan is being revised to remove any references to this expansion area.

Housing

The Housing Element establishes policies to provide housing for residents of all ages, abilities, household circumstances, and income levels. It supports safe, welcoming

neighborhoods where residents can access employment, schools, services, and recreational opportunities, with housing choices that allow people to remain in Camas as their needs change.

Its goals emphasize housing choice and affordability, accessibility and livability, preservation of existing housing, and efficient permitting. The element encourages a diversified housing supply through new construction, preservation, and partnerships, while addressing the needs of residents who face housing challenges related to age, health, or disability.

Key changes support middle housing and accessory dwelling units consistent with new state housing requirements, along with standards that address neighborhood compatibility. Other changes emphasize streamlined permitting, long-term affordability, nonprofit housing partnerships, maintenance of existing homes, assistance for low-income homeowners, and public education about community housing needs.

Natural Environment

The Natural Environment Element guides the City's stewardship of its natural resources, including critical areas, shorelines, forests, water resources, and wildlife habitat. Its purpose is to preserve ecological functions and the natural qualities that contribute to Camas's quality of life while providing appropriate public access to natural areas.

The element's goals address environmental stewardship, protection and restoration of critical areas, shoreline management, and preservation and enhancement of natural landscapes and tree canopy. It supports a sustainable urban environment, improved ecological function along shorelines, and increased use of native and climate-resilient landscaping.

Key changes add more detailed policies addressing climate resilience, ecosystem services, and environmental justice. The element strengthens attention to soils, hydrology, and native species; encourages adaptive management as climate conditions change; and supports habitat restoration and invasive species removal. Expanded urban forestry and landscaping policies seek to increase tree canopy and reduce urban heat.

Climate Change and Resiliency

The new Climate Change and Resiliency Element serves two related purposes: reducing the community's contributions to climate change and preparing for its effects. It establishes a framework for lowering greenhouse gas emissions while protecting community health, infrastructure, water resources, and vulnerable residents from climate-related hazards. This element was developed with the help of the Climate Policy Advisory Team.

The element's six goals address energy, transportation, local agency sustainability and preparedness, community health, emergency preparedness, and water resources. These goals support renewable energy and energy efficiency, a more efficient and resilient

transportation system, coordinated sustainability efforts, and improved emergency response and recovery. They also emphasize protecting residents who may experience disproportionate impacts and preserving water quality and availability.

Transportation

The Transportation Element guides development of a safe, connected, and efficient transportation system that serves people of all abilities and supports planned growth.

Its goals focus on Complete Streets, dependable local and regional transit, traffic safety, transportation demand management, concurrency and level of service, and transportation funding. The element seeks to use existing infrastructure efficiently, increase the number of people the system can accommodate, and coordinate transportation improvements with land use objectives and adopted service standards.

Key changes expand the emphasis on Complete Streets and multimodal networks. Policies encourage improvements to existing street networks to strengthen connections and address dead ends, improve access to employment centers, schools, and natural areas, and incorporate equity into transportation planning and impact fee allocation. Improved signage and wayfinding are also identified as ways to enhance the pedestrian and visitor experience.

Public Facilities and Services

The Public Facilities and Services Element guides the provision of infrastructure, utilities, and community services needed to support existing residents and future growth. It addresses public safety, parks and recreation, City facilities, schools, and utilities, while emphasizing maintenance of existing assets and coordination of future investments.

The element's goals support adequate fire protection, emergency medical services, and police protection; connected parks, trails, and open spaces; and facilities that serve City government and the community. Additional goals address utility availability, implementation of the Capital Improvement Plan in coordination with the biennial budget, and partnerships that support access to quality public education.

Economic Development

The Economic Development Element guides efforts to maintain a diverse, resilient local economy that provides living-wage employment, supports businesses, and expands access to goods and services.

The element's goals address sufficient employment land, business creation and retention, economic diversification, mixed-use and commercial development, and opportunities within mixed employment and industrial areas. The element also seeks to strengthen the City's tax base and support development that reinforces Camas's identity.

Key changes more closely connect economic development with land use, housing, and transportation planning. The element supports innovation, start-ups, and high-tech

employment; encourages employment opportunities throughout the community; and promotes investment in mixed-use centers and commercial corridors.

Our Downtown Camas 2045 Subarea Plan

The Downtown Subarea Plan provides a more detailed policy and investment framework for downtown within the citywide comprehensive plan. The plan considers the historic character of Downtown Camas and offers a strategy for balancing history with future transformations to make downtown a place that will continue to attract residents and visitors alike. The Subarea Plan is intended to serve as a shared commitment between the City and downtown stakeholders, welcoming the development and business communities to help implement the vision. It also provides discussion about future expansion to Camas Mill Property.

The plan is organized around existing conditions, an urban design framework, land use concepts, open space, transportation, infrastructure, and implementation. Six policy areas guide the work: architecture and design, downtown housing, urban amenities, economic development, civic life, and multimodal connectivity. Together, they provide a basis for both public investment and private development.

The land use concept differentiates the Historic Main Street Core from areas appropriate for additional mixed-use and residential development. The core retains a strong emphasis on pedestrian-oriented ground-floor businesses and the established character of NE 4th Avenue. Low-rise and mid-rise mixed-use areas provide room for additional activity at scales appropriate to their locations, while Downtown Residential areas provide housing opportunities and transitions to adjoining neighborhoods.

The plan supports a range of housing types, including rental and ownership options and housing for different income levels. More residents living near shops, services, and civic facilities can help sustain businesses and create activity beyond special events. Housing policies address incentives, affordability, compatibility, and permitting, while economic development policies support business retention, adaptable spaces, infrastructure improvements, and partnerships with the Downtown Camas Association and other organizations.

The plan reinforces downtown’s role as the civic center and calls for City Hall and primary services to remain downtown. A proposed Civic Hub and plaza would strengthen the area around public facilities as a gathering place and support community events. Other concepts include outdoor seating, pocket spaces, public art, and improvements connecting downtown to Louis Bloch Park and the Mill Ditch Trail.

The downtown transportation framework identifies Main Streets, Connector Streets, Mobility Streets, Gateway Streets, and Neighborhood Streets. Each has a different role in access, circulation, and the pedestrian experience.

The plan recognizes the Camas Mill as a defining part of the city’s history and a significant long-term opportunity. It supports an unrestricted environmental cleanup level to preserve

the broadest range of future uses and calls for continued City participation in the cleanup process.

An implementation program identifies actions, potential timing, responsible parties, and priorities. The program provides a basis for future work plans and budgets, with priorities adjusted as funding and opportunities develop. The proposed Downtown Design Manual and code updates are immediate implementation actions.

Downtown Design Manual

The proposed updated Downtown Design Manual is the principal tool for achieving the subarea plan's vision with new development. In addition to architectural design requirements, it establishes a detailed framework for development standards at the district, street, and frontage levels. The manual ensures that NE 4th Avenue maintains its historic charm as downtown's "Main Street" while allowing for transition to more intensive development in the blocks surrounding the historic main street core. The document combines maps, zoning information, standards, diagrams, and examples so that applicants and reviewers can understand how a project should relate to its site, adjoining buildings, and the street.

The regulating plan connects each property to a base zoning district and street context. The four principal downtown districts are Historic Main Street Core, Downtown Mixed-Use Mid Rise, Downtown Mixed-Use Low Rise, and Downtown Residential. The manual differentiates active and passive retail uses and identifies how uses may occupy ground and upper floors. This is particularly important in the Historic Main Street Core, where active ground floor activity supports a lively, walkable Main Street. Other districts allow different combinations of housing, offices, retail, and services.

Title 17 and 18 Code Amendments

Staff proposes several zoning code updates to ensure that development regulations are aligned with the updated plan's goals, policies, growth objectives and changes to state law. Additional amendments will be necessary in future years to better align the code with the new plan.

Chapter 17.09 – Short Subdivisions

HB 1096, adopted by the Washington Legislature in 2025, requires cities to establish an administrative lot split process allowing an existing residential lot to be divided into two lots through an administrative decision. The proposed amendments establish a new Section 17.09.080, Administrative Lot Split. Pursuant to RCW 58.17.145, this section would allow an existing lot in a residential zone to be divided into two lots through a streamlined process.

Although lot splits do not require the immediate construction of subdivision improvements, applicants must demonstrate that access and utility easements will be provided to serve the newly created lot. The code allows the City to condition approval on right-of-way

dedications and frontage improvements when the newly created lot is developed. The flexibility in the timing of improvements is a key distinction between lot splits and other subdivision processes.

Chapter 18.03 – Definitions

This chapter includes definitions for various terms used throughout Title 18. Currently, definitions are separated into three sections: 18.03.030, Definitions for Land Uses; 18.03.040, Definitions for Development Terms; and 18.03.050, Environmental Definitions. For ease of use, all of these terms will be listed alphabetically in one section. The chapter will also be updated to incorporate several new terms added to Title 18 through various proposed code amendments.

Chapter 18.05 – Zoning Map and Districts

Chapter 18.05 establishes the City's zoning districts and describes the purpose and intended character of each district. The Light Industrial, Business Park, and Light Industrial/Business Park zones would be consolidated into a new Mixed Employment zone. Four park-related zones will be consolidated into a new Parks and Open Space zone. New zones will include a Multifamily Residential – 24 zone and four new downtown zones – Downtown Residential, Downtown Mixed Use – Low Rise, Downtown Mixed Use – Mid Rise, and Downtown Historic Main Street Core.

Section 18.05.040 would be revised to clarify that the R-6, R-7.5, R-10, R-12, and R-15 zones accommodate both single-family and middle housing. The zone densities are also revised from "units" or "dwellings" per acre to "lots" per acre, consistent with recent middle housing changes. This section would also include descriptions for two new residential zones, MF-24 and Downtown Residential.

Section 18.05.050 would be renamed to expressly include mixed-use zoning. This section includes descriptions for four new zones: DT-HMSC, DT-MXM, DT-MXL, and Mixed Employment.

The Heavy Industrial zone description would be amended to allow residential uses west of Lacamas Creek and the Washougal River as a conditional use when included as part of a mixed-use redevelopment. The specific provision for residential development in this zone is addressed below with changes to Chapter 18.07. This change is made consistent with the draft Our Downtown Camas 2045 plan's support for an unrestricted cleanup level for the Camas Mill property, as well as Resolution 25-002 adopted by Council. "Given the site's legacy and its importance to our community," the resolution states, "it is imperative to ensure the cleanup efforts are fully protective of human health and the environment and preserve future private and public redevelopment options, including the flexibility to support a broad range of future uses from residential and commercial development to natural and recreational spaces."

Chapter 18.07 — Use Authorization

Chapter 18.07 identifies the land uses that are permitted, conditionally permitted, temporarily permitted, or prohibited within all zoning districts. The chapter is organized into tables for commercial and industrial zones, residential zones, the parks zone, and a new table for downtown zones.

Table 1 - Commercial and industrial land uses would be reorganized to correspond with the revised zoning districts established in Chapter 18.05.

A new footnote #8 establishes a new conditional-use pathway for residential development in the Heavy Industrial district west of Lacamas Creek and the Washougal River, occupied by the Camas Mill. Residential development would be subject to conditional use requirements in CMC 18.43 and allowable only when part of a mixed-use development and when heavy industrial uses have ceased on the site proposed for residential development.

West of Lacamas Creek/Washougal River, residential uses may be allowed as a conditional use only when part of a mixed-use development project. Heavy industrial uses must have ceased on the portion of the site proposed for residential development and the applicant must demonstrate that the proposed residential development will not interfere with any continuing industrial operations on adjoining properties in a manner that cannot be reasonably mitigated through conditions of approval.

The Camas Mill cleanup process is being conducted under an agreed order between the Washington State Department of Ecology and Georgia-Pacific. The current process involves investigating the nature and extent of contamination and evaluating cleanup options, after which Ecology will establish the cleanup standards and select a final cleanup approach. Under WAC 173-340-740, unrestricted land-use cleanup levels, based on a residential exposure scenario, are the presumed standard unless Ecology determines that the property qualifies for industrial cleanup levels under WAC 173-340-745.

The proposed amendment is relevant because current and reasonably anticipated future land uses are among the factors Ecology considers when determining the appropriate cleanup standard. Although most of the Mill property is zoned Heavy Industrial, the name of the zoning district alone does not determine whether the property qualifies as industrial land for cleanup purposes. Ecology will review the comprehensive plan and zoning provisions, the types of uses allowed and anticipated on the property, surrounding land uses, public access, and other site-specific conditions. The Heavy Industrial zone already allows a range of commercial, public, and recreational uses that extend beyond industrial activity. The proposed pathway for residential use as part of mixed-use development further demonstrates that the property is not intended to be permanently limited to industrial use. While Ecology will make the ultimate determination, the amendment is intended to strengthen the basis for evaluating the property under an unrestricted land-

use cleanup scenario and to preserve the broadest range of future redevelopment opportunities.

Minor changes to Table 2 - Residential land uses would add fourplexes as a recognized middle-housing type and add limited neighborhood commercial uses in residential zones. Limited neighborhood commercial uses would be allowed on corner lots at intersections with collector or arterial streets within design overlay areas.

Table 3 – Park and open space land uses would consolidate the Neighborhood Park, Special Use Park, Open Space, and North Shore Parks/Open Space columns into a single POS zoning column. Uses traditionally associated with parks and open space including recreation facilities, community centers, community gardens, trails, concession stands, restrooms, utilities, and park-support buildings—would be administered under the consolidated district.

A new Section 18.07.060 and Table 4 would establish a separate use table for the DT-HMSC, DT-MXM, DT-MXL, and DT-R districts. The new table distinguishes between active and passive commercial uses and regulates whether uses are allowed on the ground floor, upper floors, or both. The use table generally reserves ground-floor space in the Historic Main Street Core for active commerical and pedestrian-oriented uses.

Chapter 18.09 – Density and Dimensions

The proposed amendments update the City's density and dimensional standards to align with the revised zoning framework and changes to state law.

Section 18.09.030, Table 1, has been updated to remove zoning districts that are being replaced or consolidated, add the new Mixed Employment (ME) district, and revise certain Mixed-Use standards.

Section 18.09.040, Table 1, has been updated to revise the density standards from a unit measurement of “dwelling units” per acre to “lots” per acre. This change is intended to harmonize the table with the new middle housing standards, which allow up to four units per residential lot.

Section 18.09.050, Table 1, establishes standards for the newly proposed MF-24 zone.

New Section 18.09.055 has been added for the four Downtown zoning districts—DT-HMSC, DT-MXM, DT-MXL, and DT-R. This section directs development to the applicable standards in the Downtown Design Manual.

Sections 18.09.110 and 18.09.130 add limited height and setback exceptions for additional building insulation and roof-mounted solar panels. These changes implement new requirements of HB 1183, which requires cities to allow the portion of a building envelope that includes exterior insulation to encroach up to eight inches into a setback and to allow solar panels to exceed maximum building heights by up to 48 inches.

Chapter 18.11 — Parking

Chapter 18.11 would be substantially reorganized and updated to provide more flexible parking standards, establish clearer procedures for parking reductions, and reflect changes in state law and development practices.

In 2025, Washington adopted SB 5184, which limits how much parking local governments can require for certain residential uses and commercial spaces. The bill applies to cities with a population of 30,000 or more. This bill does not yet apply to Camas, which has a population of 28,490 according to the latest April 1, 2026, estimate by the Washington Office of Financial Management.

SB 5184 sets the following limits on local government development regulations regarding parking:

- No more than 0.5 off-street stalls per multifamily unit.
- No more than 1 stall per single-family unit.
- No more than 2 stalls per 1,000 square feet of commercial space.
- No parking may be required for residences under 1,200 square feet, commercial spaces under 3,000 square feet, affordable housing, senior housing, childcare centers, ground level non-residential space in mixed-use buildings, or for buildings changing use.

Another 2025 law, HB 1183, eliminated parking requirements for certain types of residential projects. Cities and counties planning under the GMA may not require off-street parking as a condition for permitting affordable housing, new construction or the retrofit of existing buildings meeting passive house requirements, modular construction, or mass timber construction.

The proposed draft substantially retains the existing off-street parking standards in Table 18.11-2. Changes are proposed only to certain residential uses to comply with state law and to be consistent with the City's recent middle housing code updates. Pursuant to HB 1183, there would be no minimum parking requirements for affordable housing, new construction or the retrofit of existing buildings meeting passive house requirements, modular construction, or mass timber construction. The state's definitions for the terms would be adopted into Title 18.

A new Section 18.11.120 would establish an administrative process through which an applicant could request that the reduced parking requirements of SB 5184 be applied early to their project. The applicant would be required to submit a parking assessment explaining the requested reduction, anticipated parking needs, available on-site and on-street parking, transportation options, and relevant site constraints. The alternative standards would allow parking requirements to be reduced as follows:

- One-half space per multifamily dwelling unit.
- One space per single-family dwelling.
- Two spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial space.

No minimum parking would be required under the alternative standards for:

- Residences smaller than 1,200 square feet.
- Commercial spaces smaller than 3,000 square feet.
- Affordable housing
- Senior housing.
- Childcare centers.
- Ground-floor nonresidential space in mixed-use buildings.
- Certain residential or commercial changes of use.

Title 18 currently contains conflicting parking language for downtown and mixed-use zones. Section 18.11.010 generally requires off-street parking in the Downtown Commercial (DC) and Mixed Use (MX) districts but allows the Community Development Director the discretion to waive the requirement for certain projects. In contrast, Section 18.19.050 categorically states that downtown commercial and mixed-use areas are not required to provide on-site parking. The proposal blends the two provisions into a single, more clearly defined standard. In Downtown and Mixed-Use zones only, commercial uses and ground-floor nonresidential space within mixed-use buildings would have no minimum parking requirement – consistent with the current language in 18.19.050. Other uses – including residential – would retain parking requirements. However, for projects one-half block or less in size, the Community Development Director could reduce those requirements when the City Engineer finds that anticipated parking demand can be adequately accommodated by existing on-site parking and adjacent on-street parking. In either scenario, the Director could also require the applicant to convert adjacent on-street parking to angle parking or another approved configuration when necessary to increase parking capacity.

A new Section 18.11.110 would establish when a parking study is required. A study would be required when:

- Parking is proposed below the alternative minimum standards.
- A multifamily project containing more than 20 dwelling units seeks to use the alternative standards.
- No reasonably comparable parking standard exists for a proposed use.
- The Community Development Director determines that the scale, mix, phasing, or operating characteristics of a project warrant additional analysis.

The study would evaluate anticipated parking demand, project phasing, shared and off-site parking, on-street parking, transit access, transportation demand management, accessible parking, and other relevant site and operational conditions. The Director could impose conditions such as parking agreements, monitoring, management measures, or additional review if the use changes materially. A parking study could allow for fewer parking spaces than the parking standards or alternative minimum standards.

Chapter 18.13 – Landscaping

Section 18.13.051 establishes the minimum tree density requirements for development. When first established, the required minimum tree density was set at 20 tree units per acre. In 2023, when adopting North Shore zoning, the City established a standard of 30 tree units per acre in the North Shore subarea. Additionally, the 2023 changes required that at least 50 percent of the tree density be achieved with existing trees in most cases and that replacement trees be native or coniferous.

The proposed amendments to this section increase the citywide tree standards by increasing the minimum tree density from 20 to 30 tree units per net acre and eliminating the separate North Shore tree density standard.

Chapter 18.15 – Signs

Limited amendments are proposed to this chapter at this time. Section 18.15.040(D)(3) has been updated to provide a separate height standard for signs affixed to awnings over pedestrian areas and to resolve a conflict between the sign code and building code requirements for awnings. Awnings must maintain a minimum vertical clearance of 7 feet 6 inches above sidewalks. The current sign code requires a 10-foot clearance over sidewalks for signs. This conflict would prohibit signs from being affixed to awnings anywhere below 10 feet.

A minor change to Section 18.15.100 would prohibit the placement of temporary signs within center roadway medians. A change to Section 18.15.070 would clarify that a Master Sign Permit does not authorize signs within the public right-of-way that exceed the size limits established by Chapter 18.15.

Chapter 18.18 – Site Plan Review

The amendments refine the chapter's applicability and exemptions, clarify that middle housing and ADUs located on a single residential lot are exempt from site plan review, and remove references to outdated zoning districts.

Chapter 18.19 – Design Review

Proposed amendments to CMC Chapter 18.19 align design review requirements with the Downtown Design Manual, North Shore Design Manual, and proposed Design Overlay regulations. The proposed amendments would update references and terminology, clarify applicability of design review requirements, expand applicability to development within Design Overlay corridors, and incorporate design review into the consolidated review process by City planning staff, removing the need for a design review committee.

Chapter 18.20 – Gateway Design Overlays

The proposed new Gateway Design Overlay chapter is intended to establish corridor-focused design standards throughout the city. These new design overlay corridors would replace the existing Gateway standards and complement the new Downtown Design

Manual. The overlays would apply to properties fronting designated Tier 1 and Tier 2 corridors identified on the Gateway Design Overlay Corridors Map. Proposed standards address landscaping, lighting, signage, sidewalks, street trees, bicycle facilities, gateway features, and other corridor design elements intended to improve community appearance and pedestrian experience.

Chapter 18.22 – Mixed Employment

The proposed new Mixed Employment zone is intended to implement the Mixed Employment land use designation in the draft Comprehensive Plan and would include lands in the former Light Industrial, Business Park, and Light Industrial/Business Park zones. The purpose of the proposed Mixed Employment zone is to provide areas for a broad range of employment-focused activities that support the local and regional economy. The zone is intended to accommodate uses such as advanced manufacturing, research and development, service commercial, offices, limited retail, artisan or craft industrial uses, technology production, and other compatible employment uses. The intent is to support higher-wage jobs, business diversity, innovation, and local employment opportunities while ensuring compatibility with nearby residential and commercial areas. This supports draft plan Policy ED-4.3 to "Support a mix of light industrial, research and development, manufacturing, and office spaces through flexible zoning that allows for evolving business needs" and Policy ED-4.4 to "Support the development of business parks, incubators, and innovation hubs that integrate industrial and high-tech employment uses".

The proposed chapter includes flexible site development standards intended to accommodate a variety of employment sites, building types, and business needs, but also includes standards to ensure quality design in grading and drainage, parking and loading, refuse and storage areas, utilities, fencing, and lighting. These standards are intended to ensure that employment areas are functional while also presenting a high-quality appearance from public streets and neighboring properties. The draft encourages shared parking between adjacent uses, limits parking between the primary street and the front of the building to visitor and accessible spaces, encourages employee parking behind buildings, and requires loading areas and truck docks to be located and screened to minimize visibility from streets and adjacent properties.

The proposed language would allow warehousing, indoor storage, and distribution activity only as an accessory use when directly associated with and subordinate to a permitted principal use on the same site. The language would prohibit stand-alone warehouse, distribution center, fulfillment center, freight terminal, mini-storage, self-service storage, and outdoor storage yard uses.

Chapter 18.23 – Planned Residential Development

Policy LU-1.4 of the draft Our Camas 2045 Plan is to "Promote the use of flexible development options (e.g., planned residential developments and development agreements) to create a variety of accessible housing types within new developments."

This policy is implemented through Chapter 18.23 of the Zoning Code, Planned Residential Development (PRD). The proposed amendments would establish objective approval criteria for PRDs and make them subject to quasi-judicial review by the Hearing Examiner.

The proposed changes would require all PRDs to provide a minimum of 15% open space and would guarantee a 15% density bonus.

Chapter 18.24 — Mixed Use

The proposed revised Mixed Use zone establishes a requirement for a mix of uses that can be achieved through either vertical or horizontal mixed-use projects.

For vertical mixed-use development, residential uses may be located above ground-floor commercial or other nonresidential uses. A building with ground-floor commercial or nonresidential uses and residential uses above would be considered consistent with the mixed-use intent of the chapter.

For horizontal mixed-use development, where residential and nonresidential uses are provided in separate buildings or separate portions of a site, the draft requires the development to consist of a maximum of 50 percent residential uses and a minimum of 50 percent commercial or nonresidential uses. The required use mix may be measured by either site acreage or gross floor area. This provides flexibility for different development formats while still ensuring that the commercial or nonresidential component remains a meaningful part of the project.

The draft also provides for some flexibility to allow more residential in a mixed-use project. On lots smaller than 20,000 square feet, a development proposal may be allowed to be 100 percent residential. For larger sites, the approval authority may allow residential uses to exceed 50 percent of the site acreage, up to a maximum of 70 percent residential acreage, when the applicant demonstrates that the proposal will provide a superior mixed-use outcome by ensuring timely delivery of the commercial or nonresidential component. Properties that are currently zoned residential and proposed to be rezoned to Mixed Use could also be developed at 100 percent residential. The proposal also includes an incentive for affordable housing projects, allowing affordable housing to count towards the commercial component of a project when calculating the use mix.

Chapter 18.26 – Flexible Development

The Flexible Development code is similar to the PRD code because both provide flexibility intended to promote efficient land use, ensure compatibility between developments, and preserve community resources. However, the PRD code focuses on innovative residential development, while the Flexible Development code promotes sustainable and environmentally responsive design in any zoning district.

Minor amendments to this chapter expand the purpose of the flexible development program to more explicitly support climate and sustainability goals, including renewable energy, EV infrastructure, low-impact development, and tree retention.

Chapter 18.32 – Park and Open Space Zoning

There are currently four different parks/open spaces zones: Neighborhood Park, Special Use, Open Space, and North Shore – Parks/Open Space. Most properties within these zones are City-owned, although the zones also include several privately owned parcels. The proposed Parks and Open Space zone would consolidate the four existing zones, recognize the privately owned properties within the zone, and better accommodate public park projects.

Chapter 18.43 – Conditional Use Permits

The proposed amendment would increase the required performance bond amount to 150% of the cost of the proposed improvements and authorize the Hearing Examiner to require a bond when necessary. The current code assigns this authority to the City Council; however, Council does not review conditional use permits.

Chapter 18.45 – Variances

Variances are divided into minor and major categories, which differ based on the degree of variation requested and the applicable review process. Minor variances up to 10% of a numerical standard are Type I reviews, meaning they can be approved administratively by City staff. Any variance request over 10% is considered a major variance. Major variances are Type III reviews, requiring a public hearing for approval.

A proposed amendment to this chapter would allow for variances of 10% or 1 foot of setback to be approved as a minor variance. This change would allow a setback reduction of up to one foot to be reviewed administratively as a minor variance, even when the reduction exceeds 10 percent of the required setback.

Major variances would now be limited to a maximum variance of 40%. The amendments also clarify that the hearing examiner, not the defunct board of adjustment, is the approval authority for major variances. This is consistent with prior changes in the municipal code granting this authority to the hearing examiner.

Chapter 18.51 – Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Amendments

This chapter establishes procedures for amendments to the comprehensive plan, zoning map, and zoning code text, which may be requested by any party. The proposed amendments would establish application requirements for zoning text amendments and authorize concomitant rezones.

A concomitant rezone is a zoning map amendment approved with specific, binding conditions governing how the property may be developed. This tool would allow the City

to impose site-specific conditions related to matters such as permitted uses, density, design, phasing, and public improvements.

Additional Changes

Since the Planning Commission's recommendation and the City Council workshop, staff has made additional revisions to the draft Comprehensive Plan and proposed code amendments. These revisions respond to City Council feedback, comments from the Washington State Department of Commerce, and the Clark County Council's adoption of the County Comprehensive Plan. Staff has also proposed refinements to improve clarity, consistency, and implementation of the Plan's goals and policies.

All proposed revisions are identified through highlighted text or redlines in the Council packet materials. Staff is also finalizing additional revisions to the draft plan to reflect the exclusion of the Nevin property from the Camas UGA.

Land Use Element

- Clarified that public facilities and utilities are allowed within all land use designations.
- Added a policy addressing environmental justice, including efforts to avoid creating or worsening environmental health disparities.
- Added a policy to reduce and mitigate risks to life and property from wildfires through land use planning, wildfire preparedness, and fire adaptation measures.

Capital Facilities Element

- Revised Policy PFS-3.2 to emphasize maintaining a strong civic presence downtown rather than specifically requiring City Hall to remain downtown.
- Revised Policy PFS-3.3 to encourage consideration of LEED certification and other sustainable design strategies rather than expressly promoting them.
- Added maps of the City's water and sewer systems and a link to the stormwater facilities map.
- Added a policy or procedure to reassess the Land Use Element if probable funding is insufficient to meet identified capital facility needs.

Housing Element

- Updated housing capacity assumptions to reflect the loss of 160 acres of multifamily zoning in the Nevin property expansion proposal. No map or code changes were made except to remove the Nevin property from the land use map.
- Expanded the discussion of barriers to affordable housing, including limited housing variety, rising housing costs, and insufficient funding.
- Added policies supporting housing choice and affordability.
- Added an explanation of how past policies were evaluated for their potential impacts on the development of affordable housing.

Transportation Element

- Expanded the discussion and added policies addressing how the City will achieve its adopted multimodal level of service standards.

- Clarified the Plan's consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan.

Climate Element

- Refined policies to provide greater clarity regarding implementation.
- Expanded the discussion of how climate policies prioritize overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.

Chapter 18.03 – Definitions

- Added definitions for emergency housing, emergency shelters, religious organizations, and co-living housing in response to Commerce comments.

Chapter 18.07 – Use Authorization

- For downtown zones, changed “Active/Passive Retail Uses” to “Active/Passive Commercial Uses”. Also designated banks, medical clinics, and offices as active commercial uses.
- Added machine shops as a permitted use in the Mixed Employment (ME) district, consistent with the existing Light Industrial/Business Park (LI/BP) district that ME will replace.
- Added emergency housing and shelters as permitted uses in all zones allowing hotels, consistent with RCW 35A.21.430 and RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c), in response to Commerce comments.

Chapter 18.09 – Density and Dimensions

- Reduced the minimum side yard setback on corner lots to 10 feet for cottage-style and rowhouse developments in all multifamily zones, consistent with existing standards in the MF-24 and HD-NS districts.

Chapter 18.11 – Parking

- Revised certain residential parking standards for consistency with RCW 36.70A.622, including establishing a minimum parking stall dimension of 8 feet by 20 feet.

Chapter 18.20 – Gateway Design Overlays

- Renamed the chapter to "Gateway Design Overlays."
- Revised various design standards to provide greater flexibility and additional design options, consistent with the chapter's purpose of encouraging quality development and supporting new business opportunities.

Chapter 18.22 – Mixed Employment

- Added a pathway for mixed-use development through a City Council-approved development agreement, subject to requirements intended to ensure substantial employment-generating development.

Chapter 18.28 – Co-Living Housing

- Added a new chapter establishing standards for co-living housing and allowing it as a permitted use in multifamily zones, consistent with RCW 36.70A.535 and Commerce comments.

Downtown Design Manual

- Updated Section 4.2 of the manual to rename “Active Retail Uses” and “Passive Retail Uses” to “Active or Passive Commercial Uses” to more accurately reflect the allowed and preferred uses as commercial rather than retail specifically. Also designated banks, medical clinics, and offices as active commercial uses.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY: The proposed Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Subarea Plan, and associated code amendments establish an updated framework for accommodating growth through 2045. The proposal establishes a new vision statement, expands housing choices, supports economic development and employment opportunities, strengthens environmental and climate resiliency policies, promotes safe and connected multimodal transportation, and coordinates growth with public facilities and infrastructure.

STRATEGIC PLAN: This item advances multiple City strategic priorities, including Economic Prosperity, Safe and Accessible Community, and Vibrant Community Amenities. The updated plans and regulations support a diverse and resilient local economy, expand housing and development opportunities, protect community character and environmental resources, and provide a clearer and more predictable regulatory framework. The proposal also strengthens long-range coordination between land use, transportation, infrastructure, public services, environmental stewardship, and future City investments.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES: Implementation of the updated plans and regulations will require adjustment by City staff, applicants, property owners, and the development community. Increased growth will also require continued coordination of transportation, water, sewer, public safety, parks, and other infrastructure investments. Staff will need to monitor implementation and recommend further code amendments as needed.

BUDGET IMPACT: Preparation of the Comprehensive Plan update, Downtown Subarea Plan, Downtown Design Manual, and associated development code amendments has been completed using existing City staff and previously authorized consultant resources. The amendments will facilitate future development activity, resulting in corresponding City revenues and costs.

RECOMMENDATION: The Planning Commission recommends adoption of the Our Camas 2045 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Our Downtown Camas 2045 Subarea Plan, Downtown Design Manual, and associated amendments to Titles 17 and 18 of the Camas Municipal Code with the following additional recommendations:

1. For the Downtown Plan, the City should consider additional details and plans for the following historic areas: the historic [city] steps, the Mill Ditch Green Space Connector, and the Cedar Street right-of-way.
2. Adjust the border of the new multifamily zone east of Elm Street to retain the existing zoning.
3. Recommend that the City Council look closely at the infrastructure needed to support demand for water under the new plan, and recommend a demand analysis, and transport study to understand the extent and movement of the [PFAS] contamination and consider mandatory conservation measures.

Recommendations 1 and 2 have been addressed in the Downtown Subarea Plan and Zoning Map. Recommendation 3 may be addressed with the City's proposed Water System Plan Update.

Staff recommends Council direct the City Attorney to draft ordinances adopting the Our Camas 2045 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Our Downtown Camas 2045 Subarea Plan, Downtown Design Manual, and associated amendments to Titles 17 and 18 of the Camas Municipal Code, for Council's consideration at the November 16, 2026 City Council Regular Meeting.