



Staff Report

August 17, 2026, Council Workshop Meeting

Our Camas 2045 – Draft Zoning Code Amendments

Presenter: Alan Peters, Community Development Director

Time Estimate: 30 minutes

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BACKGROUND: The *Our Camas 2045* Comprehensive Plan Update is entering its final phase as we complete the draft Comprehensive Plan in preparation for adoption this fall. Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on September 15 to consider a recommendation to Council on the proposed Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Subarea Plan, and zoning code updates. Following the Planning Commission’s review, Council will hold a public hearing on October 19 to consider the proposal, with possible adoption by ordinance to follow on November 2.

SUMMARY: This report covers proposed changes to CMC Chapter 18.24 – Mixed Use and a new proposed Chapter 18.20 – Mixed Employment. Staff will also continue discussion from the April 3 Workshop related to parking (Chapter 18.11). Further discussion on Downtown ground floor land uses will be part of a future workshop.

Chapter 18.24 — Mixed Use

As part of the Comprehensive Plan update, the City anticipates expanding the use of mixed use zoning in additional areas, implementing draft Goal LU-1 to “Foster economically and socially diverse mixed-use neighborhoods that meet the multi-modal transportation, housing, employment, education, recreation, and health needs of the community.”

As the City considers expanding the MX zone, an important policy question is how strictly to enforce a mix of commercial and residential uses. Draft plan Policy LU-1.1 calls for Camas to “Create a mixed use zone that requires developments to include a minimum percentage of commercial space in both vertical and horizontal mixed-use settings.” The current MX zone allows residential and commercial uses but does not require any minimum/maximum percentages of each use. The newer North Shore Mixed Use zone adopted in 2023 allows no more than 70% of the total acreage of a site to be committed to residential.

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.

CMC Chapter 18.20 – Mixed Employment

Draft Comprehensive Plan Goal ED-4 is to “[Provide] a mix of traditional industrial and non-industrial land uses to maximize opportunities and partnerships and facilitate employers to remain, expand, or locate in Camas”. 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.

A key policy issue addressed in the draft chapter is warehousing. 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 18.11 — 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.

18.11.010 - Parking policy designated.

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For projects one-half block or less in size in the DC District and MX District, the Community Development Director may waive the off street parking requirements if the City Engineer finds that the anticipated parking needs of the project can be adequately met by existing off street parking on site, if any, and on street parking adjacent to the project. The Community Development Director may, as a condition of waiving the off street parking requirements of Section 18.11.020, require that on street parking be converted at the expense of the applicant to angle parking or another parking configuration approved by the City Engineer.

In contrast, Section 18.19.050 categorically states that downtown commercial and mixed-use areas are not required to provide on-site parking.

2. Commercial and Mixed Uses.

a. On-site parking areas shall be placed to the interior of the development unless site development proves prohibitive. All on-site parking areas along adjacent roadways shall be screened with landscaping. Downtown commercial and mixed-use areas shall not be 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.

Downtown and mixed-use zones. Commercial uses and ground-floor nonresidential space in a mixed-use building have no minimum parking requirements. For other uses in projects one-half block or less in size, the Community Development Director may reduce the off-street parking requirements if the City Engineer finds that the anticipated parking needs of the project can be adequately met by existing off-street parking on site, if any, and on-street parking adjacent to the project. The Community Development Director may, as a condition of this section, require that on-street parking adjacent to the project be converted at the expense of the applicant to angle parking or another parking configuration approved by the City Engineer.

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.

The draft also includes new bicycle parking standards, requiring most developments to provide a modest amount of short-term and long-term bicycle parking. The standards are intended to make bicycle travel more practical by ensuring that visitors have visible and convenient parking near building entrances, while residents and employees have covered and secure parking for longer-term use.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY: The proposed amendments will implement the *Our Camas 2045* Comprehensive Plan. The amendments covered in this report modernize zoning districts and development standards to support a broader range of housing and employment opportunities and mixed-use development. The amendments also improve clarity and consistency in the code, incorporate recent state requirements, and provide more flexible parking requirements.

STRATEGIC PLAN: This item most directly supports the Strategic Plan's "Economic Prosperity" priority, particularly the goal to ensure a supply of developable employment land, balance job and housing growth, and streamline review processes. Consolidating employment zones, clarifying mixed-use requirements, expanding housing options, and auditing and revising development regulations directly advance these actions.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES: Reduced or more flexible parking requirements may raise concerns about inadequate parking or additional off-street parking demands. The revised Mixed Use zone requirements demand equal residential and commercial components, which is a stricter standard than currently exists. Staff will continue to refine the amendments based on Planning Commission, Council, agency, and public input before adoption.

BUDGET IMPACT: The comprehensive plan update and preparation of zoning code updates is being completed by City staff and previously authorized consultant resources. The amendments will facilitate future development activity, resulting in corresponding City revenues and costs.

RECOMMENDATION: Review and provide feedback on the proposed text amendments.