



Staff Report

August 18, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting

Our Camas 2045 – Zoning Code Amendments

Presenter: Alan Peters, Community Development Director

Time Estimate: 60 minutes

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BACKGROUND: The City of Camas is currently updating its Comprehensive Plan. As part of this effort, the City will also be reviewing and updating portions of the zoning code to ensure that development regulations are aligned with the updated plan's goals, policies, and growth objectives. The Planning Commission is reviewing several updated code sections as part of this implementation effort.

SUMMARY:

CMC 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. The new standards establish that such lot splits are allowed only in residential zones and may be used only to create one additional lot.

While lot splits do not require immediate construction of subdivision improvements, they must demonstrate that access and utility easements have been 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.

CMC 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.

CMC 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.

CMC 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.

The landscape buffering table is also updated to replace the Business Park designation with Mixed Employment. In addition, parking lot standards are revised to require wheel stops where vehicle overhang could obstruct pedestrian access, interfere with maintenance, or damage landscaping, while allowing wheel stops to be omitted where adequate clearance or planting setbacks are otherwise provided.

CMC 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 the placement of signs within the public right-of-way beyond the sizes already authorized by Chapter 18.15.