



Staff Report

September 21, 2026, Council Workshop Meeting

Our Camas 2045 – Draft Development Code Amendments

Presenter: Alan Peters, Community Development Director

Time Estimate: 30 minutes

Phone	Email
360.817.7254	apeters@cityofcamas.us

BACKGROUND: After over three years of development, the *Our Camas 2045* Comprehensive Plan Update entered the adoption phase this month, with a Planning Commission hearing on September 15. Over the past year, staff and the Planning Commission have developed zoning code and development regulation updates to implement the new plan.

SUMMARY: The Planning Commission held a public hearing on September 15 to consider a recommendation to Council on the proposed Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Subarea Plan, and zoning code updates. A special Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for September 29 for deliberations and development of a recommendation to the City Council. Following the Planning Commission's review, the City Council will hold a public hearing on October 19 to consider the proposal.

Development regulations are aligned with the draft plan's goals, policies, growth objectives, and changes to state law.

Proposed Development Code Amendments

As part of the *Our Camas 2045* update, the City is also reviewing and updating portions of the zoning code to ensure that development regulations are aligned with the updated plan's goals, policies, growth objectives and changes to state law. The Planning Commission has reviewed several proposed code updates in batches over the past several months. This report covers proposed updates related to the downtown subarea and design review requirements.

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. Council previously reviewed this chapter during the August 3 Workshop Meeting, however this report addresses allowed uses within the downtown subarea.

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 retail uses and regulates whether uses are allowed on the ground

floor, upper floors, or both. Active retail uses are street-facing, ground-floor businesses that attract regular customer activity, support walkability, and help animate the sidewalk. Examples include shops, cafés, restaurants, bakeries, bars, fitness centers, theaters, hotels, and similar customer-oriented establishments. Passive retail uses are commercial or service uses that serve a smaller or more specialized customer base, generate less frequent foot traffic, or require less visibility from storefront windows. Examples include professional and real estate offices, banks, medical or dental clinics, public agencies, repair services, and other businesses that typically operate by appointment or do not depend on pedestrian customers.

Both types of uses would be allowed downtown; however certain uses would be prioritized in different areas and on specific street frontages. Within the Historic Main Street Core district, at least 70% of ground floor area and frontages on NE 4th Avenue must be occupied by active retail uses. On all other streets, at least 70% of the ground floor area and frontages must be occupied by active or passive retail uses. Other allowable uses could occupy up to 30% of these ground floor areas. Municipal uses may occupy 100% of ground floor area and frontages on any street type east of NE Everett St between NE 3rd Ave and NE 5th Ave.

Within the Downtown Mixed-Use Mid-Rise zone at least 70% of ground floor area and frontages on NE 4th Avenue must be occupied by active retail uses. On Mobility and Gateway Steets (Birch, Cedar, Dallas, Everett, Franklin, NE 2nd, NE 5th, and portions of NE 3rd and NW 6th), at least 70% of ground floor area and frontages must be occupied by active or passive retail uses. On all other street types, residential uses may not occupy more than 70% of ground floor area and frontages.

In the Downtown Mixed-Use Low-Rise zone, at least 70% of ground floor area and frontages must be occupied by active or passive retail uses on Mobility and Gateway Steets (2nd and portions of Dallas, 3rd, Joy, and 1st Ave). Residential uses may occupy 100% of ground floor area and frontages on any street, including Mobility and Gateway Streets.

Downtown Design Manual

The proposed Downtown Design Manual includes a combination of zoning regulations (including use and dimensional standards) and architectural design requirements. The manual organizes downtown into four design districts: the Historic Main Street Core, Downtown Mixed-Use Mid-Rise, Downtown Mixed-Use Low-Rise, and Downtown Residential districts. It also classifies streets into five street types, recognizing that appropriate building form and frontage design vary depending on a property's location and relationship to the public realm. Design standards include requirements for frontages, public realm areas, and general architectural standards.

The manual establishes step-by-step process for determining which standards apply to a particular development. Standards address building placement and orientation, ground-floor design, façade articulation, materials, windows and transparency, entrances, roof

forms, parking and service areas, landscaping, lighting, signage, and pedestrian connections. Additional requirements for active ground-floor uses are intended to support a walkable and visually engaging downtown. These are covered in more detail in the summary of Chapter 18.07 above.

CMC Chapter 18.19 – Design Review

Staff is proposing amendments to CMC Chapter 18.19 Design Review to align the chapter 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. The revised approach is intended to improve predictability, reduce duplication and delays, and ensure compliance with state requirements for consolidated permit review.

CMC Chapter 18.20 – Design Overlays

The proposed Design Overlay chapter replaces the existing Gateways and Corridors Overlay framework with a more comprehensive set of standards for prominent streets and community entryways. The overlays are intended to improve corridor appearance and walkability. The standards apply to various corridors regardless of their underlying zoning.

Overlay standards address streetscape improvements, pedestrian connections, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, landscaping, lighting, signage, building orientation, and the relationship of development to the street. Tier 1 corridors receive the highest level of design attention and may require enhanced public or private amenities, such as gateway signage or public art. Tier 2 standards provide a more moderate level of design standards.

Tier 1 corridors include sections of NE Ingle Rd, NE Goodwin Rd, North Shore Boulevard, NE Everett St, NW Lake Rd, NW Brady Rd, NW Parker St, NW 38th Ave, NW Pacific Rim Blvd, NW 6th Ave, and NE 3rd Avenue. Tier 2 corridors include portions of NE Ingle Road Corridor, N 92nd Ave/Boxwood St, NW Camas Meadows Dr, NW Friberg-Strunk St, NW Lake Rd, NW 38th Ave, NW Sierra St, NW McIntosh Rd, Division St, NE Dallas St, NE Garfield St, SE Crown Rd, and NE 43rd Ave.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY: The proposed amendments would implement the Our Camas 2045 Comprehensive Plan and Our Downtown Camas 2045 Subarea Plan. The updates support context sensitive design and land use downtown and streamlined design review requirements citywide.

STRATEGIC PLAN: This item most directly supports the Strategic Plan's "Economic Prosperity" priority by improving the clarity, consistency, and efficiency of the City's development regulations and review processes.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES: Some amendments may affect project design and costs, and allowable land uses, specifically new design and use requirements within the downtown subarea. City staff and the development community will need to adapt to new standards and procedural changes. 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.