



TO: Planning Commission

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DATE: Wednesday, November 10, 2021

RE: Municipal Code Amendment Related to Parking Standards, Housing Density and Building Residential Capacity, Residential and Commercial Zoning Standards, Subdivision Standards, and State Environmental Policy Act Threshold Requirements

STAFF REPORT

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I. BACKGROUND

In late 2018, the City developed and sent out a housing needs assessment survey to the greater Port Angeles community to assess community-wide opinions on current housing conditions, preferences, and priorities. The City received over 580 responses to the survey, which assisted in informing the Plan’s strategy for future implementation of the City’s first Housing Action Plan This plan was adopted as a part of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment on June 17, 2019.

On February 21, 2020 the City of Port Angeles approved a grant contract from the Department of Commerce Growth Management Services. The grant was for selected actions to increase residential building capacity and was in response to the 2019 State Legislature efforts, specifically HB1923. In that bill and the grant application, Cities had to choose at least two actions from a list of 12. Some of the actions weren't applicable to Port Angeles (high frequency transit stops), some were already approved in Port Angeles (duplex and ADU allowances). The City requested \$50,000 to: 1) Adopt an infill exemption for residential or mixed-use development, 2) Adopt a form-based code in one or more zoning districts that permit residential uses, and 3) Allow for the division and redivision of land into the maximum number of lots permitted by the State (which is nine, so a change from 4 to 9 in the City)

To be transparent on the timeline of this project, and some community members' concerns that this project is being rushed, here is a list of tasks and accomplishments for the project at this current time:

- Grant Date of Execution: February 21, 2020
- RFP for Code Audit Project: June/July 2020 (MAKERS Selected for Land Use Codes)
- Consultant Contracts Approved by City Council: August 4, 2020 (Note: Form-based code expanded to all commercial zoning districts that permit multi-family residential uses through a vote by Council)
- MAKERS Presentation to City Council: September 1, 2020
- MAKERS Presentation to Planning Commission: September 9, 2020
- MAKERS Presentation to Elevate P.A. Steering Committee: December 17, 2020
- Stakeholder Interviews: March/April 2021
- Code Audit Work Session with City Council: April 27, 2021
- MAKERS Public Workshop with Planning Commission (followed by public survey): June 9, 2021
- First Deadline with Department of Commerce: June 30, 2021
- Further Drafting of Code: July/August/September 2021
- Release of Public Draft of Code Revisions: September 17, 2021
- MAKERS Presentation on Code Draft to Planning Commission: September 22, 2021
- SEPA Project Notice: September 29, 2021
- Public Hearing with Planning Commission: October 13, 2021
- Additional Planning Commission Meeting: November 10, 2021

The code amendments reflect a robust and continuous public outreach process. The public comments process is explained in the Public Comment section of this report and referenced in the appendices. This staff report features discussion and response to public comment directed to specific major code amendments with support for a staff recommended option in the "Summary and Explanation of Port Angeles Municipal Code Changes"

II. PROPOSAL

In accordance with City Council directed changes to the contract with consultant MAKERS Architecture and Design, Inc. City staff has outlined municipal code amendments that implement portions of the Implementation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and with HB 1923 Building Residential Capacity Grant requirements. These Amendments include:

1. Adoption of an infill exemption under RCW 43.21C.229 for residential or mixed-use development;
2. Adoption of form-based code in one or more zoning districts that permit residential uses; and
3. Allowance for the division or redivision of land into the maximum number of lots through the short subdivision process provided in chapter 58.17 RCW.

IV. PROCEDURE

Notice of the application was provided on the following dates and in the following manner:

1. 09/29/2021: City Hall Peninsula Daily News, SEPA circulation
2. 10/22/2021 60-day Notice to WA Department of Commerce

The Planning Commission will conduct a review of the application, public comment including testimony during the open record public hearing October 13, 2021, and this staff report and make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council will conduct a public hearing on the project on November 16, 2021 following a presentation on the project by the project team. On December 7, 2021, City Council will conduct the first reading of the proposed ordinance that reflects the Planning Commission recommendation from November 10th and any feedback or direction from Council's public hearing on November 16th. An appeal must be submitted within 60 days of the notice of final decision.

V. COMMENTS

Public Comment:

The public comment period for the SEPA Checklist was 30 days in duration and closed on October 29, 2021. In addition to the SEPA comment period, public input and comments were received from a May 2021 Planning Commission subcommittee stakeholder interview session along with December 2020 discussion with the Elevate Port Angeles Stakeholder Committee (Appendix A.1), an interactive virtual work session attended by 86 members of the community and follow-up digital community survey in which there were 49 unique responses (Appendix A.2). A second virtual work session detailing the draft code took place on September 22nd and a public hearing with the Planning Commission held on October 13, 2021 was attended by 8 public commenters providing public testimony. In addition to verbal testimony, written public comment has also been submitted to the Planning Division (Appendix B and C).

Staff presented amendments to various community organizations including the Port Angeles Business Association on October 26, 2021 and Economic Development Council on October 27, 2021. The public will have more opportunities to learn about the proposed amendments with a special project presentation by MAKERS Design at 5:15p.m. on November 16, 2021 during the regular City Council meeting.

Appendix C enumerates the body of public comment received during the public comment period and hearing with both written and verbal testimony. The document includes staff responses to each comment. Staff summarized the responsive major changes for a second draft of the code in a memo (Appendix D).

City of Port Angeles Departmental Comments:

Comments received from City of Port Angeles Departments have been incorporated into this report’s findings and conditions.

VI. FINDINGS OF FACT & STAFF ANALYSIS

Analysis and findings of fact from Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) staff are based on the application materials, Port Angeles Municipal Code (PAMC), standards, plans, public comment, and other relevant materials available during the review period. The findings and analysis section this report is a summary of the completed review by DCED staff.

City of Port Angeles Comprehensive Plan

All Municipal Code Amendment applications must be consistent with the Port Angeles Comprehensive Plan. The following Port Angeles Comprehensive Plan policies are identified by Planning Staff to support the proposal in Municipal Code Amendment Application No. 21-55:

Growth Management Element		
Goal: G-2A	To manage growth in a responsible manner that is beneficial to the community as a whole, is sensitive to the rights and needs of individuals, and is consistent with the State of Washington's Growth Management Act.	
	Policy: P-2A.01	In all its actions and to the extent consistent with the provisions of this comprehensive plan, the City should strive to implement the following goals of the State Growth Management Act: A. Urban growth. Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner. B. Reduce sprawl. Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.

		<p>C. Transportation. Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.</p> <p>D. Housing. Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population. Promote a variety of residential densities and housing types and sizes and encourage preservation and expansion of existing housing stock.</p> <p>L. Citizen participation and coordination. Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination</p> <p>M. Public facilities and services. Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development should be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards</p>
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Staff Analysis: The proposed municipal code changes continues to provide a strategic public process that amends the City’s residential and commercial zoning code in order to increase residential building capacity, reduce sprawl and the burden on public utilities, improve the frontage interaction between private and public space, increase walkability in several commercial corridors, and improve the subdivision process by increasing the short plat lot maximum to the maximum state allowance. Parking, frontage, and minor design requirements have been developed to ensure any new development in these zones maintains human scale and development standards provide specific benefits to the public realm in the form of a pedestrian accessibility, structural transparency, and a focus on downtown residential development where utility capacity will be greatest.

The project has involved public outreach in the form of stakeholder meetings, workshops and updates with the City Council and Planning Commission, a thirty-day written public comment period, and public hearings held and planned with the Planning Commission and City Council. The proposal to the PAMC is consistent with the goals and policies of the Growth Management Element by ensuring new development and redevelopment will be orderly, supported by city utilities, and will provide all the benefits a reduction of sprawl provides the community.

Land Use Element		
Goal: G-3A	To guide land development in a manner that balances providing certainty about future land use and allowing flexibility necessary to adapt to future challenges and opportunities.	
	Policy: P-3A.01	Use the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map as a conceptual guide when making all zoning and other land use decisions, including all land use decisions and approvals made by City Council and/or any of its appointed Commissions, Boards, or Committees.
Goal: G-3B	To ensure residential land use and development is compatible with the environment with existing uses and residents, and with desired urban design.	
	P-3B.02	Ensure that single family lots are of reasonable shape and have access provided by a collector arterial, local access street or alley.
Goal: G-3C	To create and maintain a fulfilling and enjoyable community of viable districts and neighborhoods with a variety of residential types attractive to people of all ages, characteristics and interests.	
	Policy: P-3C.01	Employ the district and neighborhood concept when developing residential land. Although such districts may be composed primarily of residential uses of a uniform density, the most healthy, viable districts are composed of residential uses of varying densities, and may be augmented, by other compatible uses. Single family and multi-family homes, parks and open-spaces, schools, churches, day care and residential services, home occupations, and district shopping areas are all legitimate components of residential districts
	P-3C.05	Expand housing opportunities in the Central Business District for all income levels, with an emphasis moderately priced owner-occupied units.
Goal: G-3E	To provide shopping areas meeting the needs of all City residents and visitors that are safe, compatible with surrounding land uses, and congruent with environmental goals.	
	Policy: P-3E.01	Mitigate the impacts of commercial development on adjacent residential properties, including the use of site design elements that soften the impacts.
G-3F	To provide a pleasant, safe, and attractive shopping environment in the traditional downtown waterfront area including a wide variety of shopping, dining, entertainment, arts, culture, and housing opportunities for visitors and residents alike.	
	Policy P-3F.02	Orient the design of commercial development in downtown around pedestrian travel, tourist enjoyment, and protection from adverse weather conditions

	P-3F.04	Encourage residential units in the downtown area as part of a mixed-use development concept, including live/workspaces. Ensure that the downtown physical environment is amenable to residential development by minimizing traffic impacts, maintaining security, and providing and maintaining amenities
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Staff Analysis: The proposed municipal code changes are directly influenced by many of the residential and commercial goals and policies of the Land Use Element by providing a greater amount of flexibility in residential lot sizes, density, and allowed uses. This has been balanced by minor design and frontage standards that ensure compatibility with surrounding existing uses and maintaining the City’s neighborhood-based built environment. The changes provide a framework that intends to assist in the transition of Port Angeles into a future that resembles the vision proposed in the Comprehensive Plan. Development standards safeguard development compatibility with the purpose of each zone and creates an opportunity for increased variety and diversity of the City’s housing stock. The proposed changes to the PAMC are foundationally based upon a consistency with the goals and policies of the Land Use Element and the Vision of the Comprehensive Plan.

Transportation Element		
Goal: G-4A	To develop a coordinated, multimodal transportation system, which serves all areas of the city and all types of users in a safe, economical, and efficient manner.	
	Policy: P-4A.01	The safety of non-motorized modes of transportation shall be a primary consideration in the circulation system.
	P-4A.04	Encourage development of low-carbon-impact transportation infrastructure
	P-4A.05	Consider converting alleyways into attractive pedestrian zones for access to local businesses. Encourage alleyways for use as pedestrian zones.
	P-4A.06	Improve trails, sidewalks, streets, and public facilities to encourage walkability and non-motorized transportation.
Goal: G-4B	To improve circulation patterns across and within the community, and to achieve the desired urban design of the City.	
	Policy: P-4B.04	Strengthen the city’s development regulations as necessary to preserve the right-of-way within an identified US 101 corridor
	P-4B09	Ensure off-street parking should be sufficient and accessible within business and residential areas so the traffic flow of the street is not impaired.
	P-4B.14	Consider potential environmental consequences, such as greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprints, when encouraging new commercial developments and businesses.

Staff Analysis: The proposed municipal code changes are focused on community development practices that respond to the need for a more pedestrian-focused environment. Parking requirements have been reduced and the focus of auto-oriented development has been mitigated through frontage standards that for specific transportation corridors require parking to be accessed in the rear or side-street area of the property. The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan is focused on providing equal and/or equitable access to non-motorized transportation modes. Successful place-making efforts are realized through pedestrian-orientation. Allowing higher maximum building heights in high density residential and commercial zones and encourages mixed uses in commercial corridors and greater residential densities in these zones to support these commercial uses. This proposal supports the vision identified in the Comprehensive Plan that transportation occurs harmoniously for all modes. The Plan envisions success as a return to convenient access to goods and services by means of alternative transportation modes. The proposed changes to the PAMC are consistent with the goals and policies of the Transportation Element and the Vision of the Comprehensive Plan.

Utilities and Public Services Element		
Goal: G-5C	To provide safe, clean, usable, and attractive public facilities which enhance the cultural, educational, economic, recreational, and environmental attributes of the City.	
	P-4C.05	Work in partnership with the community as stewards of the area’s unique environment and quality of life.
Goal: G-5D	To provide utility services in an efficient and cost-effective manner.	
	Policy: P-5D.01	Design urban services for the maximum planned density and/or land use intensity of a given area as designated on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.
	P-5D.02	Provide urban services only in areas that are logical extensions of areas, which are currently served by such services or needed to implement a specific goal or policy of the Comprehensive Plan.
	P-5D.04	Promote the joint use of transportation rights-of-way and utility corridors for all forms of transportation, including non-motorized.

Staff Analysis: The proposed municipal code update is being proposed in order to maximize the land use capability of the City’s utilities and public services. Increasing the residential density in strategic areas in the City by allowing for no maximum residential density in RHD and RMD zones and increasing maximum structure heights in RMD, RHD, and all the City’s commercial zones. Increasing height and density allowances reduces the overall impact on utility construction and maintenance. Increasing residential density also allows for a critical mass of residents in order to provide a more efficient and effective public transportation system.

Creating a built environment that includes housing, retail, office, and recreational spaces will assist in reducing the cost of urban services within the community by promoting walkability, accessibility, public safety, and economic development. The proposed changes to the PAMC maximizing land use capability are consistent with the goals and policies of the Utility and Public Services Element.

Housing Element	
Goal: G-6A	To improve the variety, quality, availability, and attainability of housing opportunities in the City of Port Angeles.
Policy: P-6A.01	Expand the residential land use options in the Zoning Code by classifying residential zones by allowed density rather than by housing types.
Policy: P-6A.04	Plan for sufficient urban services to support future housing in a variety of allowable densities.
P-6A.05	Allow accessory residential units in single family residential zones.
P-6A.06	Promote acceptance of low- and moderate-income housing.
P-6A.11	Provide an appropriate balance between attainable market-rate housing and affordable housing and ensure that affordable housing is provided in a way that contributes to the physical appearance and economic and social health of the neighborhoods and the City.
P-6A.14	Allow for mixed-use opportunities in neighborhoods, including commercial development and mix of housing densities.
P-6A.16	Promote and increase the number of downtown residential living units.
P-6A.17	Develop strategies to combat homelessness and housing insecurity amongst residents.
P-6A.18	Develop and implement tools to support a range of housing types including affordable housing options.
Goal: G-6B	To participate with Clallam County and other entities in programs to increase the availability and affordability of public assisted housing and rental units as well as other affordable housing opportunities.
Policy: P-6B.05	Provide adequate low- and moderate-income housing opportunities within the Port Angeles Planning Area.
Goal: G-6C	To use the 2019 Housing Action Plan as a guide and implementation tool for future City actions in support of providing available State supported financing options, municipal code revisions that promote innovative housing products and designs, incentive zoning, and renovation/rehabilitation of existing of the City’s housing stock.
Policy: P-6C.05	Encourage innovative housing development based on Port Angeles’ forecasted demographic changes.

Staff Analysis: The proposed municipal code update is amending regulations that are directly related to improving the variety, quality, availability, and attainability of housing opportunities in the City’s medium and high density residential and transitional commercial zones. These changes are in direct response to tasks outlined in the 2019 Housing Needs Assessment. This Plan informed Goal G-6C of the Port Angeles Comprehensive Plan. More residential options are being provided to the lower intensity commercial zones, and a greater opportunity for density is being provided throughout the commercial and medium-high density residential zones by removing maximum densities and increasing maximum available building heights. Bonuses in height are being provided to those projects that demonstrate the construction of income-based affordable housing. The proposed code is specifically targeting missing middle housing, such as townhomes and cottage housing, in appropriate residential and commercial zones that will help to provide more balanced and diverse housing throughout the City. The proposed changes to the PAMC encouraging diverse housing development are consistent with the goals and policies of the Housing Element.

Conservation Element		
Goal: G-7A	To promote sustainable development and land use that is compatible with the overall natural environment, historical, archaeological, and cultural amenities.	
	Policy: P-7A.01	Require all development, including the location and design of all structures and open space areas, to be compatible with the unique physical features and natural amenities of the land and complement the environment in which it is placed, while recognizing the rights of private ownership.
	P-7A.02	Promote compatibility between the land and its use by regulating the intensity of the land use.
	P-7A.03	Adopt development criteria, which promote the use of innovative design techniques to provide for the use of the land in a manner compatible with any unique physical features or valuable natural, historical, and/or cultural amenities.
	P-7A.11	Implement site-specific requirements for individual development proposals to mitigate any negative impacts created by the development, particularly to an area identified as an environmentally sensitive area.
Goal: G-7B	To protect and enhance the area's unique physical features, its natural, historical, archaeological, and cultural amenities, and the overall environment.	
	Policy: P-7B.15	Publicly recognize the many values provided by trees in an urban setting and identify opportunities to plant trees.

	P-7B.16	Establish and implement an urban tree management program intended to retain and/or restore the overall tree canopy in the city by using plant materials as a unifying element and tool to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public, using the environmental services provided by trees to mitigate the negative effects of impervious surfaces and vehicular traffic such as increased temperatures, airborne particulates, carbon dioxide, noise, and stormwater runoff.
	P-7B.17	Plant trees along residential streets, in parking lots, and in other areas as opportunities arise. Trees should be retained whenever possible and maintained using Best Management Practices as appropriate for each tree type.

Staff Analysis: The proposed municipal code update includes provisions that will guarantee a continued connection between residents and open spaces. The code provides an increase in available intensity and density and balances this intensity with requirements such as increasing the City’s urban forest canopy and a menu of available options for open space within the development. Development standards and criteria have been incorporated into the City’s commercial and—in a limited capacity—residential zones in order to mitigate the negative effects auto-centric design can have on overall community health and wellbeing. The Comprehensive Plan’s Vision celebrates the unique natural setting of Port Angeles— its access to outdoor spaces connected by non-motorized transportation networks. The proposed PAMC code changes maintain a consistency with the goals and policies of the Conservation Element through protection of open space and encouraging the improvement of our transportation corridors.

Capital Facilities Element		
Goal: G-8A	To provide and maintain safe and financially feasible urban services and capital facilities at or above stated levels of service to all City residents and the general public.	
	Policy: P-8A.04	At a minimum, ensure the continuation of established level of service standards for all urban utilities and services to the extent and in the manner provided herein.
Goal: G-8D	To reduce the amount of impervious surface created by new developments and thereby reduce stormwater management costs and environmental impacts to the City and its natural resources, reduce development costs to private property owners, and provide safe and more attractive streets through traffic calming, safe pedestrian amenities, and improved street edge landscaping.	

	Policy: P-8D.01	Revise existing urban development standards in low density residential areas to include low impact development standards for street, pedestrian and nonmotorized access, sewer, and fire suppression to more nearly reflect the needs of suburban densities and conditions in outlying undeveloped areas of the City and PAUGA.
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Staff Analysis: The proposed municipal code update provides density that will lessen overall systematic costs to City utilities and services by encouraging this density within previously existing neighborhoods. Increased residential density and an increase in allowable building height will reduce the construction of impervious surface per capita, thereby reducing stormwater impacts downstream of the development. These allowances also improve level of service and the capacity for continued maintenance throughout the life of the facility. A balance of density and provision of urban services such as improved streetscapes will reduce the overall lifetime impact of traffic congestion, wear and tear, and unnecessary upgrades to the City’s capital facilities. The proposed PAMC changes promoting increased residential density and encouraging the improvement of our transportation corridors are consistent with the goals and policies of the Capital Facilities Element.

Economic Development Element		
Goal: G-9A	To create and maintain a balanced and stable local economy with full employment and emphasis on strengthening the community's traditional natural resource related industries as well as diversifying the overall economic base.	
	Policy: P-9A.01	To create and maintain a balanced and stable local economy with full employment and emphasis on strengthening the community's traditional natural resource related industries as well as diversifying the overall economic base.
	Policy: P-9A.03	Promote the diversification of the community's economic base by encouraging the location, retention, and expansion of local small and medium sized businesses.
	P-9A.04	Promote the “traditional downtown feeling” of retail, dining, arts, culture, and entertainment-oriented activities that are attractive to both tourists and local residents
	Policy: P-9A.17	Attract and retain businesses and industries which create family wage jobs for local residents.
	P-9A.22	Encourage the design of public spaces that encourage people to interact.
Goal: G-9B	To have a healthy local economy that co-exists with the community's high quality of life through the protection, enhancement, and use of the community's natural, historical, and cultural amenities.	
	Policy: P-9B.05	Encourage the availability of housing that meets the needs of the entire spectrum of the community's residents.

Staff Analysis: The proposed changes to the municipal code promote a critical mass of residents in the downtown Central Business District zone and in the City’s most heavily developed commercial corridors. This change encourages commerce and the local exchange of goods and services in these areas with residential uses located in the immediate vicinity of those commercial uses. Residential density supports the need for well-designed public spaces and a diversity of available commercial space that is pedestrian-oriented. Proposed downtown frontage and design standards will ensure that development and redevelopment of property in that zone will remain traditional in nature and attractive to residents and tourists. Traditional in this case means that the design ensures human scale is evident and monotony in the building façade will be broken up with articulated design elements.

The amendments encourage development of mixed-use multistory structures, which increases the availability of housing that is essential to the promotion of locating new businesses and industries. The amendments assist in expansion of existing businesses and industries within the City and greater North Olympic Peninsula region through diverse residential construction and is consistent with the goals and policies of the Economic Development Element.

Parks and Recreation Element		
Goal: G-10C	To establish and protect a visual character of the community through open spaces, streetscapes, borrowed landscapes, and publicly owned natural resource areas.	
	Policy: P-10C.01	Strive to protect and retain the natural beauty of the area.
	Policy: P-10C.02	Supplement and enhance the visual attractiveness of the city through the use of formal landscaping in street medians, city entryways, and along sidewalks, as well as the use of other public spaces, flower beds, and street trees. Emphasize use of planter strips with drought tolerant vegetation and bio-retention facilities.
Goal: G-10D	To promote economic growth through recreational tourism and attract visitors and new business by enhancing the image of the community through beautification and recreation programs.	
	Policy: P-10D.01	To encourage efficient transportation systems, support the use of shuttle services during events to move participants between venues.

Staff Analysis: The proposed changes to the municipal code acknowledge the positive changes occurring in Port Angeles as the community continues to grow in population and popularity. The codes have been drafted in part to protect the visual character of the community’s open spaces and streetscapes. Frontage and design standards ensure that capital investments in open space and multimodal transportation corridors by the community will be supported by future private developments. Attractive public space encourages adjacent development and beautification. Through the direction of the Parks and Recreation Element this proposed PAMC update directs the contribution of private development to high quality of life that will support the Plan’s Vision to enliven the human spirit and serve multiple community needs.

Chapter 11: Implementation		
Action: A-3.05	Adjust zoning to protect the prime commercial corridor	Timeline (year): Short (0-2)
A.3.07	Consider adoption of an overlay district for downtown to respond to sign, design, and parking issues.	Long (4+)
A.4.10	Review and assess progress per AIA Urban Design Study; consider proposals to transform First and Front Streets	Short (0-2)
A-6.01	Identify appropriate areas of the city for higher-density housing, converting low-density residential areas into medium and high-density designations.	Medium (2-4)
A-6.02	Evaluate revisions to height limitations in all commercial, medium, and high-density zones, helping accommodate increased residential densities without impacting viewsheds.	Medium (2-4)
A-6.03	Align Municipal Code for high density development zones.	Medium (2-4)
A-6.06	Assist in the development of accessory residential units by Allowing the R-7 zone to increase the size of ARU's attached to primary dwelling units.	Short-Medium (0-4)
A-6.07	Encourage mixed use development and affordable housing units by: Encourage mixed use development and affordable housing units by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing Multi-family zones to create mixed housing type developments with internal drives (via circulation plan) as an alternative to public rights-of-way. • Allow ground floor residential and convertible space in CA, CN and CSD zones. • Identify Commercially-zoned properties that have multi-family capabilities on site. • Amend zoning code to adjust setbacks, maximum site coverage allowances, and other restrictions that prevent the use of to expand the definition of allowable innovative, functional, and cost effective housing products. • Amend zoning code to eliminate larger lot size requirement for duplexes and assess the value of incentive zoning allowance beyond existing overlay zones 	Short (0-2)
A-9.11	Infill development in downtown	Long (4+)

Staff Analysis: The implementation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan was created as a part of the 2016 update of the Plan to ensure that guidance provided in its goals and policies are acted upon strategically through measured responses. Each action is given a timeline, identifies potential partnerships, and the metric of successful completion. In reviewing the Implementation Chapter, it is apparent that the proposed code changes go beyond the requirements of the grant to building residential capacity awarded by the Department of Commerce. This effort is successfully fulfilling the intent or furthering the efforts of eight distinct actions proposed actions in the Plan. Six of these actions were proposed to have been completed before or by 2021. The code update to Titles 14,15,16, and 17 are directly fulfilling the actions presented in the Comprehensive Plan, which are in turn based upon the vision, goals, and policies in the Comprehensive Plan. By directing standards in the code to allow for increased residential capacity, greater development intensity in targeted areas; ensuring the design of new and redevelopment remains compatible with existing and future development; and preserving or creating inclusive, attractive, and useful open spaces and transportation corridors, this municipal code update is fulfilling the Comprehensive Plan’s vision through a tangible, actionable response.

Summary and Explanation of Port Angeles Municipal Code Changes

Title 14: Building and Construction

Chapter 14.40: Off-Street Parking

The primary changes occurring in this code chapter are 1) to adjust parking requirements for key uses, 2) introduce parking requirements for all the unique housing types being introduced or recognized in the residential infill standards, 3) specify parking requirements for multi-family household projects based on unit bedroom size/quantity, 4) consolidate parking reductions to one section and 5) introduce the concept of “Electric Vehicle” parking (or EV).

The public comment received supports the approach to determine parking requirements based on unit bedroom size/quantity for multifamily projects. There was concern about the requirements for EV parking being unnecessary and too costly for projects. As included in Appendix D, Staff is recommending the number of EV spaces will be changed to be “0” but there will remain requirements to install the electrical infrastructure to support EV spaces in the future (with the goal that the City can obtain additional grant funding to offset these costs for housing projects).

Title 15: Environment -Emma

Section 15.04.105 – Categorical Exemptions for residential mixed use and residential infill development (NEW)

The primary change to this title is exempting certain infill developments from environmental review, as allowed under state law RCW 43.21C.229. The Port Angeles Comprehensive Plan's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) provides adequate environmental review to allow for this change. When located in the City's R7, R9, RMD, RHD, CO, CN, CSD, CA, or CBD zones, new exemption levels apply for new construction that is mixed-use development or residential development above the flexible thresholds in State Environmental Policy Act Exemptions, WAC 197-11-800. The exemption excepts proposals undertaken wholly or partly on lands covered by water, when a rezone is required, the project requires a license governing emissions to air or discharges to water, or the project is within an environmentally sensitive area. On a case-by-case basis the SEPA responsible official must determine the project meets all criteria in the section, that the City has identified that current density and intensity of use in the area is roughly equal to or lower than that called for in the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, and that specific impacts are addressed by the development regulations or other applicable requirements of the Comprehensive Plan or other local, state, or federal rules or laws.

The draft proposes supporting mitigation measures in the applicable zoning regulations (Chapter 17.10-20), the Residential Infill Design Standards (Chapter 17.21), and Commercial and Multifamily Design Standards (Chapter 17.22). Specifically, new site planning, building design, and block frontage standards are expected to enhance compatibility between new and existing development. Some of the proposed amendments result in an increase of potential density in low density residential areas consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, but design standards are also proposed to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.

The City has received applications for new multifamily in the past two years, which unfortunately, became stalled in the SEPA aesthetics review process for appropriate design mitigation. This provision will help make the planning and development process more predictable for staff, applicants, and the community, and potentially reduce some costs of development. Public comment received favored the proposed changes to simplify the development process.

Title 16: Subdivisions

The primary change to this title is changing the number of lots that can be platted and built in a short plat subdivision from 4 lots to 9 lots, using the provisions under state law RCW 58.17. Many public comments suggested changes to improve usability; however, these changes are not within scope for the project. These may be considered for a future effort.

Chapter 16.02 - Definitions

Definitions were changed to increase the short subdivision quantity from four or less lots to "nine" or less lots. Additionally, the definitions include a new definition for "unit lot subdivision."

Public comments on this change favored the increase for residential capacity and regulatory flexibility.

Chapter 16.04 – Short Plat Subdivision Regulations

As a part of that move, while the procedures for short plats remain unchanged, the design standards should be the same as for regular subdivisions, particularly with the increase in lots from 4-9. While staff has noted that the subdivision design standards and policies need to be updated, such changes are beyond the scope of this project, but are a high priority for subsequent code update work.

Public comment supports the lot increase. Comments also reflected suggestions for future code work, not included in this project scope.

Chapter 16.09 – Unit Lot Subdivisions (NEW)

A Unit lot subdivision is the most popular method of dividing up land for fee simple sale for cottages and townhouses in the region. Currently there is no such option in Port Angeles. The provisions are very similar to a binding site plan, which is used to divide commercial properties into smaller sellable sites. A unit lot subdivision differs from a normal subdivision in that it:

- retains a parent parcel after subdivision,
- allows zero lot line dwellings with the requirement for CC&R's and maintenance agreements to ensure management of common elements under fee simple ownership, and
- Development standards typically do not apply to all individual lots, just the parent parcel.

The current code presents barriers to traditional subdivisions for townhomes. Therefore, existing townhomes in Port Angeles were established as multifamily or as condominiums. Condo minimization presents challenges for construction financing. The Unit Lot subdivision thus removes barriers to building a unicorn—that is, middle housing for first-time home buyers such as townhomes and cottage housing.

Unit lot subdivisions provides more predictability than a traditional subdivision process because review of proposals less than five acres in size is administrative. The infill development SEPA exemptions proposed also would exempt unit lot subdivisions from SEPA when consistent with Chapter 15.04.105 PAMC. This synergy offers potential to streamline City project review and add residential capacity, and is an innovative, functional, and cost-effective way to expand housing products called for in action A-6.07 of the Comprehensive Plan.

Public comment largely supports this new section (Public-General Comment # 41 and Public – Titles 14,15,16 Comment # 9). Comments also suggested revising the unit lot subdivision with a more robust explanation of the tool and removing a title report requirement upon preliminary submittal (Titles 14,15,16 Comment # 13, 46).

Title 17: Zoning

Chapter 17.01 – Purpose and Scope - Ben

Change have been made to this section in order to remove any duplicative purpose statements in the newly created Chapter 17.20 that consolidates the City’s commercially designated zones. No public comment directed towards this section has been received.

Chapter 17.08 – Definitions -Ben

Changes to definitions in Title 17 have been made for the following reasons:

- The current definition does not align with the state law, standard, or requirement;
- Several definitions have been combined in order to reduce duplicative entries and provide a single consistent definition;
- The definition is related to a use in a zone that has not been adequately defined;
- The definition has been simplified;

Several minor changes were made to this section based upon public comment (see comment #'s 26, 27, 45, 47, and 48). Other concerns were either out of the scope of the current project or outside the scope of Title 17. The remaining comments were either changes related to State laws and requirements or required explanation of the changes purpose due to misunderstanding or confusion. Reasoning for leaving the specific definition in question unchanged is provided in the comment matrix.

Chapters 17.10-12 – Low Density Residential Zones

Staff proposes eliminating maximum lot coverage from all residential zones. This is because: 1) it serves a duplicative purpose of maximum site coverage but tends to incentivize excessive parking; 2) maximum site coverage more directly regulates the stormwater issue that is important to Port Angeles; 3) new landscaping standards are being proposed; and 4) lot coverage reduces the design options and flexibility for housing and other development, a point echoed by project stakeholders. An additional incentive has been added to eliminate site coverage requirements on lots that manage stormwater runoff from hard surfaces on-site. Changes to the R7 zone include a new permitted use for “small lot single-household dwellings” on lots less than 5,000 square feet. The minimum lot area would also be reduced to 3,500 square feet and minimum lot width to 25-feet on alley-loaded lots east of Tumwater Truck Route and west of White Creek. City lots in Port Angeles’ R7 zone are typically 50 feet wide by 140 feet long and 7,000 square feet in area. The proposal would enable property owners to short plat an existing lot into two lots. These changes carry out in action A-6.07 of the Comprehensive Plan. Recommended changes also consolidate footnotes into Table 17.10.050-1 R7 zone area and dimensional requirements for ease of use. There is a new reference to design standards including detached small lot single-household dwelling units, ADU’s, cottage housing, and duplexes.

Public comment on reducing minimum R7 lot sizes/lot frontage fell into two categories. Many comments favor expanding the reduction to the entire R7 zone. Other comments oppose reduction to any R7 lots. City Engineering staff recommend the geographic limitation for small lots due to preliminary findings from an ongoing sewer capacity analysis. Staff recommends Option A in Appendix D to keep standards as drafted. The targeted area ensures a more predictable development review due to available City utility infrastructure prepared to support smaller lot sizes without substantial utility system upgrades. Once a sanitary sewer plan has been developed, the City may consider expanding this area.

Alternatively, reduction could be expanded to the entirety of the R7 zone by selecting Option B. If selected, development proposals outside of the targeted area may need to demonstrate sewer capacity with engineering analysis prior to approval.

Chapter 17.14 – RMD-Residential Medium Density and 17.15 – RHD-Residential High Density

The RMD zone has been modified in order to provide higher density residential development through an increase in building height to 45 feet allowed outright in RHD and (with 3:12 roof pitch in RMD); the allowance of building height increase to 50 feet in RHD where all roof forms above 45 feet have a minimum 3:12 roof pitch, the removal of lot coverage, the removal of site coverage with appropriate on-site stormwater management techniques, increasing the number of townhouses in RMD from 4 to 6 attached units, and the removal of maximum unit per acre requirements.

Response to Public Comment: Based upon public comment and Planning Commission input, changes to the chapter have been made to strike the raising of minimum units per acre from four to eight. The Planning Commission had consensus to allow the reduction of minimum lot size from 40 feet to 25 feet to mirror the lower density zone changes already proposed (See PC Comment 21). Public comment also included concerns about a possible lot frontage reduction (See Title 17 Comment 88). Staff has responded by striking the minimum lot frontage requirement in order to allow applicants to demonstrate that their proposal must be shaped/sized enough to allow for permitted uses within the district. Staff clarified the intent of proposed codes referenced by other public comments without making additional revisions.

Chapter 17.20 – Commercial Zones (NEW)

The new chapter 17.20 implements the form-based code action of the Commerce grant requirements by streamlining and consolidating zone-based use and dimensional standards for the Port Angeles commercial zones. Key features of this chapter include: 1) purpose statements for each zone; 2) compact table of permitted uses; 3) combined table of dimensional standards; 4) cross-references to applicable design standards and other important code provisions. The chapter streamlines how the code looks and functions by eliminating redundancies seen in the previous five separate commercial chapters (each for CBD, CA, CSD, CN and CO zoning districts).

The permitted use table now combines all the allowed uses in commercial zones. Changes to the use table include adding the new residential dwelling unit types as appropriate. New supportive housing terms are being inserted to comply with a 2021 update to state law (E2SHB 1220). Childcare is permitted in all commercial zones. Additional revisions to the use table are to remove overly detailed commercial use descriptions or dated commercial use descriptions and replace them with more general and commonly used terminologies.

There is also a new similar table for dimensional standards (setbacks, lot coverages, etc.). The proposed code includes strategic height increases in commercial zones to encourage new housing development while maintaining character and compatibility. Height limits changes are also discussed by the Comprehensive Plan (policy A-6.02 and P-6B.07). 30-35 feet (in the CA, CSD, CN, and CO zones) is the same as the residential zones – and too low for economically viable urban development. All height increases are accompanied by new design standards that mitigate building mass. The proposed building maximum heights are the following:

1. CBD 45 to 75 feet
2. CSD 35 to 45 feet (bonus height to 65 feet)
3. CA 35 to 55 feet (bonus height to 65 feet)
4. CN 35 to 40 feet
5. CO 30 to 45 feet

Based on the public survey feedback, a bonus height incentive is proposed in the CA and CSD zones specifically for affordable housing. How this works is, a developer can meet any of the requirements listed in code items 1-3, and they unlock the height bonus. Option 1 leverages the City's existing program for multifamily tax exemptions. Option 2 requires at least 25% of the new units to be less than 600 square feet – which means that smaller units will be created, which cost less to rent or purchase. Option 3 requires at least 10% of units to contain three or more bedrooms, which creates more opportunities for family living and roommate situations to share housing costs. Overall, the public is receiving the idea of increased building capacity in the community's commercial corridors as appealing and highly desirable to ensure there is opportunity to increase residential density and to promote larger projects.

Based on the project team discussion following public comment, and as included in Appendix D, Staff is recommending a change specifically to where duplexes are permitted. Staff is recommending duplexes are permitted in the CN, CSD, and CA zones, provided the development does not front on a street with a mixed block frontage designation. This opens up the option for duplexes on side streets in more commercial zones that have underlying traditional sized lots (historically used for residential lots).

Staff is also recommending that the location of cottage housing expand in the commercial zones. Specifically, to allow cottage housing in the CN, CSD, and CA zones, provided the development does not front on a street with a mixed block frontage designation. This also opens up the option for cottage housing on side streets in more commercial zones that have underlying traditional sized lots (historically used for residential uses).

Lastly, Staff is recommending there is no distinction between the east and west sides of Lincoln Street, resulting in a consistent maximum base height limit of 45 feet and a bonus height limit of 65 feet.

Please reference Appendix D for the other changes that Staff is recommending to the existing code draft.

Chapter 17.21 –Residential Infill Standards (NEW)

This new chapter is home to the design standards for specific housing types: small lot single-household; accessory dwelling units; cottage housing; duplexes; and townhomes. These standards help implement the infill exemption action under the draft section 15.04.105 by ensuring these housing types are compatible with existing neighborhoods and enjoyable to live in for residents.

Overall, this proposed section was well received by the public and highlights the community's desire to see an increase in residential units in a larger variety of styles and sizes. There were some comments that spoke to concern about the specific design requirements being too specific and detailed. Staff believes the standards are minor in scale and allow for flexibility in design approach.

Chapter 17.22 –Commercial and Multifamily Design Standards (NEW)

The most significant and most important change of the proposed land use codes are contained in the proposed Chapter 17.22. This proposed chapter contains the form-based code design elements that will help to balance the potential negative circumstances that come from reducing minimum lot sizes, increasing lot coverages and building height and allowing a significant increase in building capacity. These land use code provisions are just one small piece of the larger solution. Does the City of Port Angeles have a lot of unique real estate economics and construction industry trends? Should the City's land use code be aware of those realities? Absolutely. But the form-based code elements proposed in Chapter 17.22 are reflective of expert professional advice and recommendations from across the State of Washington and the entire country. The land use code also needs to reflect the larger community goals and objectives that are a part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The City needs to plan for potential.

There is a necessary balancing act between zoning allowances, flexibility and building capacity with design compatibility, neighborhood quality of life, safe and welcoming commercial streetscapes.

There is a dominant public voice that is suggesting the Port Angeles economy is not strong or mature enough to handle additional development standards and that the free market should direct the course of action. It is important to remember that these code changes are greatly increasing building capacity beyond current regulations, by reducing lot sizes, increasing density, increasing building height and site coverage, and reducing parking. We need to ensure there are mitigating design standards in place to enhance compatibility between new and old development and which ensure a minimum level of livability and site functionality for residents and businesses. The City of Port Angeles might be unique, but it cannot sustain poor design of our community – there is too much at risk. A short-sighted lens will have later negative implications: declining quality of life, increased cost to government, and less predictability of development.

The block frontage standard is introduced in Chapter 17.22. Three types of block frontages are proposed: “storefront,” “landscaped” and “mixed.” Each has affiliated design standards that apply. This new chapter departs from the standard text heavy zoning ordinance and introduces maps, images and pictures to help visually relay the requirements. Map are included in the proposed code to clearly show where each standard is designated. The streets that are within the commercial zones that are not shown as either storefront, landscaped or mixed, are known to have a “basic” designation. The least flexible standard is storefront and the most flexible standard is basic designated commercial street corridors where they apply.

This Chapter contains the most options that must be considered by the Planning Commission, per Appendix D (see Figure 1). Specifically they concern residential amenity standards, public space for commercial development, building massing and façade articulation and building design details. See below images that summarize the identified issue, and suggested changes (blue indicates the Staff preferred option):

Code Section	Initiated By...	Change	Notes and Considerations
Chapter 17.22 – Commercial and Multifamily Design Standards			
17.22.020, Applicability	MAKERS and CED staff, public comment	Exempt exterior remodels from the design standards outside the CBD zone.	Remodels of building exteriors is one of the most common building permit applications. This will reduce staff workload, encourage reinvestment in existing properties, and focus the design standards on new construction.
17.22.230, Residential amenity space standards	Public comments	Simplify the standards [see the notes and considerations for options]	Option A: No change, keep the standards as drafted. Option B: Eliminate the “percentage of required amenity space” reflected in Table 17.22.230(D), which appeared to create confusion.
17.22.240, Public space	Public comments	Reduce the number of commercial developments that must provide public space on 2% of the site area [see the notes and considerations for options]	Option A: No change, keep the applicability threshold at developments with 10,000 square feet gross floor area (the size of a Walgreens drug store). Option B: Change the applicability threshold to 15,000 square feet gross floor area Option C: Change the applicability threshold to 20,000 square feet gross floor area (the size of a small grocery store). Option D: Remove the entire public space section.
17.22.260(B)(5), Ground-level service areas and mechanical equipment	Public comments	Clarify this applies only trash and recycling enclosures.	This avoids a weather protection requirement for gas meters, HVAC equipment, loading docks, etc. that would add excessive cost.
17.22.260(E)(2), Roof-mounted mechanical equipment	Public comment	Remove prohibition on perforated metal as a roof screening material.	Adds more flexibility and cost options for rooftop equipment screening.
17.22.320, Building massing and articulation	MAKERS	Exempt all buildings less than 60 feet long from façade articulation requirements.	Adds intended flexibility and responds to public comments concerned about construction cost.

Figure 1: Appendix D Excerpt

Section 17.22.230 – Residential amenity space adds standards on the minimum amount of open space required for new multifamily residential units together with design standards for a variety of “amenity” space types that can be used to meet the requirements. These provisions are critical to the livability of multifamily developments, particularly considering the needs for



Figure 2: Amenity Space Example

new housing and increases in densities recommended as a part of this effort. Both the minimum amount and the design standards are similar to those of a great variety of cities in the pacific northwest region. They have been crafted to allow a wide range in choices in how developments may comply with the standards (providing a measure of cost control to the developer). The design standards focus more on layout and orientation of amenity space rather than an emphasis of costly materials. While it’s recognized that some residents may minimally use their amenity space, or only during warmer seasons, providing the “opportunity” of the amenity space for the city’s wide-ranging demographics cannot be overlooked (see Figure 2).

Code Section	Initiated By...	Change	Notes and Considerations
<p>17.22.320, Building massing and articulation</p> <p>This section includes: (B) non-residential façade articulation; (C) residential façade articulation; (D) departure criteria; (E) maximum façade width; and (F) roofline modulation.</p>	MAKERS, CED staff, public comments	Reduce the requirements for façade articulation [see the notes and considerations for options]	<p>Option A: No change, keep the standards as drafted.</p> <p>Option B: Simplify the standards with the following changes to help reduce construction costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine the list of options for residential and non-residential buildings and consolidate the roofline modulation option Delete articulation requirements for "other" residential building elevations not facing parks, containing primary building entrances, or being adjacent to lower intensity zones Remove the maximum façade width requirements <p>Option C: Increase the articulation interval for non-residential buildings from 30 to 40 feet in the CBD, CSD, CN, and CO zones; and from 40 to 50 feet in the CA zone.</p> <p>Option D: Adjust articulation for residential development to apply at intervals no greater than the unit interval or 30/50 feet (whichever is less).</p>
<p>17.22.330, Building details</p> <p>This section includes: (B) and (C) ground floor commercial façade details; (D) window design; (E) flat roof design; and (F) building entries.</p>	MAKERS	Reduce the requirements for building details [see the notes and considerations for options]	<p>Public comments were most concerned with the cost of ground floor commercial façade details.</p> <p>Option A: No change, keep the standards as drafted.</p> <p>Option B: Only require building details in two situations: within the CBD zone; and outside the CBD zone on mixed block frontages choosing the Storefront design option.</p>

Figure 3: Appendix D Excerpt

Section 17.22.320 – Building massing and articulation includes standards in subsections (C-E) and are the most important and impactful of all of the building design standards proposed for Port Angeles. Staff wants to have those standards be prioritized for the heart of the community, which is the Central Business District or CBD zone. First of all, articulation refers to integration of architectural elements that create a complementary pattern or rhythm, dividing large buildings into smaller identifiable pieces.



Figure 4: Building Massing and Articulation Example

The primary intent of these standards is to encourage thoughtful articulation of facades, so that they are compatible with the context of the neighborhood. In other words, avoiding monolithic designs that ignore the context of the neighborhood and thus degrade the character and property values of the neighborhood. The proposed articulation standards have been crafted to allow choices for the developer. For example, apartment buildings must integrate at least three articulation features from a list of six options (one of which is simply “other” that could allow any other treatment that meets the intent). Façade modulation (stepping forward or backwards a portion of the façade) is only one of the articulation options. Others are less costly elements, including window and entry patterns. The proposed standards also include an opportunity for departures, which could include a proposal to employ only two articulation treatments instead of three and/or providing such treatments every 40 feet instead of every 30 feet, providing such designs meet the intent.

Chapter 17.94 –General Provisions Conditions and Exceptions - Emma

Changes to this section include:

- Removal of 17.94.030 Use of lots or parcels containing more than minimum required lot area. This section is recommended for deletion because it acts as a short plat regulation. Such regulations are already covered by Chapter 16.04 PAMC.
- Change of terminology from child daycare to “child care” in 17.94.065 Table A to be consistent with definitions elsewhere in the chapter.
- Removal of 17.94.070 Development standards for and Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). This section governing ADUs is relocated to 17.21.020.
- Removal of 17.94.170 Exception to height requirement because it duplicates the building height definition and exceptions in Chapter 17.08.

Environmental Review

This project was reviewed under the Washington State SEPA threshold determination rules requirements and procedures. A Determination of Non-significance (DNS) is anticipated for this action. In accordance with WAC 197-11-340 a 14-day appeal period will begin on the date of the determination. The SEPA checklist and environmental documents are on file at the City of Port Angeles Department of Community and Economic Development Planning Division and are available upon request.

Consistency

In preparation and submission of a Municipal Code Amendment City Staff has demonstrated that all standards will be met in accordance with the City’s Comprehensive Plan and the Port Angeles Municipal Code.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

It is the recommendation of Department of Community and Economic Development Staff that the Planning Commission concur with staff's recommendation to the City Council to approve Municipal Code Amendment No. 21-55. This recommendation is based on the staff report, 2019 Comprehensive Plan, 2019 Housing Needs Assessment, submitted comments, and proposed major changes for second draft. Staff has indicated in the findings of this report and Appendix D the recommended options, where options exist for producing a second draft.

The recommended specific motions are:

1. Direct staff to produce a new code draft reflecting the Planning Commission's changes.
2. In reference to the "Major Code Changes for Second Draft," Attachment D, where options are identified, the Planning Commission recommends the following code section options:
 - a. Code Section X Planning Commission selects Option Y
 - b. Code Section Y Planning Commission selects Option Z, etc.
3. Final: General motion to approve Municipal Code Amendment No. 21-55 and recommend the draft to Council with the remainder of changes identified in Attachment D.

VIII. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Title 14, 15, 16 and 17 municipal code amendments

Appendix A.1: Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Appendix A.2: Workshop and Survey Summary

Appendix B: Public Comment Matrix by Code Reference

Appendix C: Individual Public Comments by Date Received

Appendix D: Major Code Changes for Second Draft