



MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 14, 2022

TO: Port Angeles Planning Commission

FROM: Planning Division Staff

RE: Pursuing Housing for All Code Update: List of Staff Proposed Amendments to Title 17

Planning Division Staff has taken the opportunity to review the entirety of Title 17 of the Port Angeles Municipal Code (PAMC) in order to assist the Planning Commission in addressing proposed amendments to the PAMC. This will continue the statewide effort to Build Residential Capacity (BRC) prior to the April 1, 2023 deadline established by RCW 36.70A.600. The proposed changes are provided individually within six categories, each of which is described below. These categories define either how the existing code serves as a barrier to housing development or how it serves as an opportunity to provide greater development flexibility, increase housing density, decrease unnecessary financial burden of existing and developed housing, or ensure housing for all community members.

Each of the categories below is associated with a color. The individual suggested code changes in the final section of this memorandum are coded to one or more of the following categories using these color designations.

1. Code as a Barrier to Affordable Housing Development ■

A major focus of this code revision exercise is to identify where the City's zoning and building code continues to act as a barrier to the development of affordable and attainable housing. Changes identified under this criterion have been identified as barriers. The goal is to remove these barriers from code while ensuring consistency in regulations remains across individual Titles and Sections.

2. Increasing Flexibility in Zoning Code Provisions ■

Since 2017 the City of Port Angeles has continued to provide more flexibility in residential uses allowed in residentially focused zones and commercially mixed-use focused zones. This flexibility includes the use itself (whether now allowed outright or by condition) and how the use performs on the site through design standards and dimensional standards such as setback, height, and bulk (how development interacts with adjacent property and the street). Examples of this include allowing duplexes by right and accessory dwelling units as an accessory use in every residentially focused zone, and reducing lot size requirements in certain zones.

3. Increasing Housing Density Availability ■

Housing density has historically been the most significant control segregating districts of residential

development. Increasing housing density allows for more affordable and equitable housing availability across the community. Zoning is a tool to ensure incompatible uses do not create undue nuisance, burdens, or health impacts to surrounding property owners. Best available science and practice has recently shown that this frame of thought has created a pattern of development across the United States inhibiting affordable residential development, especially “missing-middle” housing that has the ability to easily integrate into historically low-density residential development. The BRC is especially framed to provide a means to develop missing middle housing and integrate housing density as infill development into existing low density residential zones.

4. Reducing the Potential Cost of Development ■

Development cost includes more than the cost of labor and materials. Cost can also be attributed to the amount of time the development process takes to navigate from property acquisition to an occupiable structure; the required infrastructural improvements required to ensure adequate services and safe occupancy; and restrictive design standards imposed by municipal codes. Municipal codes should not impose a barrier that drives housing costs up in order to cover the cost of development. Streamlining permitting, imposing infrastructural alternatives, and strategically relaxing some design standards are all some ways that municipal codes can assist in reducing housing costs.

5. Ensuring Housing Equity and Availability ■

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, housing is a human right. In order to appropriately ensure housing for all members of the community, municipal code should adequately address the needs of everyone. Best available science and practice has recognized the faults in requiring strict segregation of certain housing types that can otherwise be reasonably located adjacent to each other. All community members deserve to have access to housing that meets their specific needs at any and all stages in their life. Successfully employed municipal code should act as the framework providing diverse housing construction to support and encourage the realization of this right for everyone.


6. Enabling Local Property Development Through Self Reliance ■

By amending Title 17 PAMC to be more easily read and interpreted, local property owners will more readily understand development requirements and make informed choices to maximize the use of their property.

Staff Code Changes (In No Particular Order)

- Reevaluate and revise each residential zone’s purpose statement to reflect the changes provided in the BRC process. ■■■
- Replace “single-family” with “single-household” to provide inclusivity and equity in Title 17. ■
- Reestablish consistency among all zone titles (e.g., “RS-7” replaced with “R7”). ■

- Codify pre-application requests with a firm timeline and deliverable date. ■
- Create Maximum lot sizes in R11 and R9 zones to prevent large lot subdivisions or require a restriction on the plat requiring future subdivision to be at a minimum density. ■■
- Allow a detached accessory dwelling unit (ADU) to be constructed accessory to a duplex on one lot in all residential zones where duplexes are allowed by right. ■■■■
- Eliminate bedroom requirements for ADUs. ■■
- Creation of temporary housing section of Title 17 with design standards and timelines that also addresses RVs. ■■
- Allow for alley/street lot subdivision in areas on property with appropriate existing or updated street standards. ■■■■
- Define “apartment” and add as a permitted use in all commercial zones. ■■■■
- Add corresponding definitions in multiple logical places to ensure people find term they are looking for. E.g. *SEE _____* ■
- Identify inconsistency between PAMC titles. ■
- Exempt apartments above businesses from residential density requirements. ■■■■
- Refine use charts and lists to avoid conflicts. ■
- Allow “preexisting single-household dwelling” as an allowed use in all zones. ■■■■
- Create a disincentive fee for large single-household dwellings above a certain square footage and use that fee for multi-family market subsidy. ■■
- Enable a City-led development authority/land bank (i.e. Transfer of Development Rights). ■
- Define “public” in Title 17 so use of terms such as “public buildings” in Section 17.22.110 are clear and consistently applied. ■
- Allow 1 dwelling unit per 1,750 sf of land area in the R7 zone. ■■■■
- Modify Form Based Codes
 - Reevaluate landscaped block frontage standards to require minimum frontage distances. ■■
 - Parking standards – sequential spaces and landscaping. Location of parking. ■■
 - Allow deviations from design standards for existing historically significant structures. ■■
- Allow for commercial to residential conversion with design considerations – specific to CBD to allow for residential on ground floor. ■■■■
- Allow for conversion of accessory structures to housing units in all residential zones regardless of conformity to zoning standards. ■■■■
- Remove per unit requirements for cottage housing developments. ■■■■

- Allowed dwelling types – if building meets IBC standards per WA state, allow it on any property if the design meets applicable infill development standards. 
- Define and allow “corner shop mixed-use structure” on strategic residential intersections 