



To: City Council  
From: Elisa Rodriguez, City Planner  
**TOPIC: Periodic Update: MLMC amendments regarding Amendment Criteria**

**Requested Action:**

Provide feedback and guidance on Amendment Criteria in the Medical Lake Municipal Code (MLMC).

**Key Points:**

RCW 36.70A.130 states that comprehensive plans and development regulations shall be subject to continuing review. WAC 365-196-640 states each jurisdiction should provide procedures for governing the amendment of the comprehensive plan and development regulations.

MLMC Chapter 17.56 – Amendments, contains the procedures and criteria for amending the comprehensive plan, development regulations, and the zoning map. The chapter, most recently amended in 1999, is poorly written, difficult to follow, and does not clearly distinguish the different types of amendments.

The goal of amending this chapter is to create clear and concise language that can be understood by the public and implemented by staff.

**Background Discussion:**

The Growth Management Act requires jurisdictions to update their comprehensive plans and development regulations every 10 years. Medical Lake is in the midst of the update. In addition, jurisdictions are allowed to update the comprehensive plan no more than once annually. Development regulations may be updated as needed, but must always be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

In land use, the purpose of approval criteria is to serve as a standard for evaluating the proposal. Approval criteria provide a structured and consistent way to assess the suitability of the plan/regulation and ensure decisions are fair, logical, and aligned with the strategic plan.

**Public Involvement:**

A public hearing will be held with both the Planning Commission and the City Council. The SEPA comment period is open until December 4, 2025. In addition, language will be provided on the City website for review and comment by the public.

**Next Steps:**

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on December 18, 2025, where they are expected to make a recommendation to the City Council. The Planning Commission recommendation, staff report, and draft language will be provided in the packet for the January 6, 2026 City Council meeting.