



**AGENDA
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING &
PUBLIC HEARINGS
MARCH 26, 2026, 5:30 PM**

**COMMISSION ATTENDANCE IN PERSON
PUBLIC MAY ATTEND IN PERSON OR REMOTELY VIA
ZOOM**

To better serve our community, we are now offering Live Streaming of our Planning Commission Meetings on our YouTube channel (link is provided below). This will enable citizens who wish to just view the meeting and not participate (provide comments) to do so in the comfort of their homes. Those that wish to provide input during the citizen comment periods may join the meeting as usual via the Zoom link.

- **Join the Zoom Meeting –**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82769733537?pwd=q4w0j8n1gHSOPpvYdQRWBMDqZ7Izcy.1>

Meeting ID: 827 6973 3537

Passcode: 662294

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,82769733537#,,,,*662294# US (Tacoma)

+12532050468,,82769733537#,,,,*662294# US

Join instructions

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/82769733537/invitations?signature=p4HYfNz0CSIWs3ibSj93TVINAZDvqPvH5sDFwF5-Quw>

- **Watch the Live Stream on YouTube -**

<http://www.youtube.com/@CityofMedicalLake>

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

If you wish to provide written public comments for the Planning Commission meeting, please email your comments to erodriguez@medical-lake.org by 2:00 p.m. the day of the commission meeting and include all the following information with your comments:

1. The Meeting Date
2. Your First and Last Name
3. If you are a Medical Lake resident
4. The Agenda Item(s) which you are speaking about

*Note – If providing written comments, the comments received will be acknowledged during the public meeting, but not read. All written comments received by 2:00 p.m. will be provided to the Planning Commission in advance of the meeting.

Questions or Need Assistance? Please contact City Hall at 509-565-5000

- 1) CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL**
- 2) ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**
- 3) INTERESTED CITIZENS: AUDIENCE REQUESTS AND COMMENTS**
- 4) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a) February 26, 2026, meeting minutes
- 5) STAFF REPORTS**
- 6) SCHEDULED ITEMS**
 - a) Meeting Date Changes for April, November, and December
 - b) Periodic Update: MLMC amendments regarding Specialized Housing
- 7) PUBLIC HEARING**
 - a) Periodic Update: MLMC amendments regarding Zoning – Continued from February meeting
 - b) Periodic Update: MLMC amendments regarding Affordable Housing
- 8) COMMISSION MEMBERS' COMMENTS OR CONCERNS**
- 9) INTERESTED CITIZENS: AUDIENCE REQUESTS AND COMMENTS**
- 10) CONCLUSION**



City of Medical Lake
124 S. Lefevre Street – City Council Chambers
Planning Commission Meeting & Public Hearing
February 26, 2026, Minutes

NOTE: This is not a verbatim transcript. Minutes contain only a summary of the discussion. A recording of the meeting is available on the City of Medical Lake's YouTube channel where meetings are livestreamed.

1) CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL

- a) Commissioner Mark acted as Chair in the absence of Commissioner Veliz. Commissioner Mark called the meeting to order at 5:38pm, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and conducted roll call. Commissioner Twohig was present on Zoom. Commissioners Altheide, Rowe, and Mark were present in person.

2) ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

- a) Motion to approve agenda as is made by Commissioner Twohig, seconded by Commissioner Rowe, carried 4-0.

3) INTERESTED CITIZENS: AUDIENCE REQUESTS AND COMMENTS

- a) Tammy Roberson, resident of Medical Lake – shared letter from her attorney regarding her request to give an educational presentation on wetlands. Gave hard copy to commissioners and read the letter out loud. Letter will be part of the public record.
- b) Diane Nichols, resident of Medical Lake (via Zoom) - asked questions regarding comprehensive plan proposals from mayor's letter in the packet, hoping to have them answered during presentation.

4) APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 22, 2026

- i) Motion to approve made by Commissioner Altheide, seconded by Commissioner Rowe, carried 4-0.

5) STAFF REPORTS

- a) Elisa Rodriguez, City Planner – first round of amendments was approved at city council as Ordinance 1140 Amendment Criteria. Ordinance 1141 regarding Code Enforcement is still going through council, 2nd read scheduled for March 3rd meeting. Addressed Ms. Nichols' inquiry regarding the old Nike site.

6) SCHEDULED ITEMS

- a) Periodic Update: Comprehensive Plan: Intro and Part 1
- i) Ms. Rodriguez reviewed the agenda packet items and held discussion with commissioners. Commissioner Altheide shared thoughts and thanked Ms. Rodriguez for her hard work. Commissioner Rowe also commended Ms. Rodriguez for her efforts. Commissioner Mark asked for some clarification regarding wastewater collection system which Ms. Rodriguez provided. Commissioner Twohig stated that he is curious to see where this all is going but has no comments so far.
- b) Periodic Update: MLMC Amendments regarding Affordable Housing
- i) Ms. Rodriguez stated that she did not have a presentation. Reviewed briefing sheet and held discussion. Went over key points of the suggested amendments and state requirements.

7) PUBLIC HEARING

- a) Periodic Update: MLMC amendments regarding Zoning
- i) Commissioner Mark opened the public hearing at 6:13pm.
- ii) Commissioner Mark read the rules for the hearing.
- iii) Ms. Rodriguez requested at commissioners' discretion to continue the hearing to the March meeting because this is the heart of the zoning code and some items should be looked at more closely, i.e. cottage housing, commercial along 902, etc. Gave a presentation, see attached.
- iv) Commissioner Mark called for citizen comments and read rules for public comment.
1. No public comment.
- v) Commission comments – None.

vi) Motion to continue hearing to the March 26th meeting made by Commissioner Altheide, seconded by Commissioner Rowe, carried 4-0.

8) **COMMISSION MEMBERS' COMMENTS OR CONCERNS** – None.

9) **INTERESTED CITIZENS: AUDIENCE REQUESTS AND COMMENTS** – None.

10) **CONCLUSION**

a) Motion to conclude at 7:02pm made by Commissioner Rowe, seconded by Commissioner Altheide, carried 4-0.

Roxanne Wright, Administrative Clerk

Date



City of Medical Lake
124 S. Lefevre St.
P.O. Box 369
Medical Lake, WA 99022-0369

3/26/2026 Planning Commission Meeting

To: Planning Commission
From: Elisa Rodriguez, Senior Planner
TOPIC: Future Meeting Dates

Requested Action:

Consider changing the Planning Commission meeting dates for April, November, and December.

Key Points:

The annual Planning Association of Washington (PAW) conference is held annually during the last week of April. I request the PC meeting date is changed to April 16, 2026.

Thanksgiving is always the fourth Thursday of November. I request the PC meeting date is changed to November 19, 2026.

The fourth Thursday of December is Christmas eve. I request the PC meeting date is changed to December 17, 2026.



To: Planning Commission
From: Elisa Rodriguez, Senior Planner
TOPIC: Periodic Update: MLMC amendments regarding Specialized Housing

Requested Action:

Provide feedback and guidance on potential amendments regarding specialized housing to the Medical Lake Municipal Code (MLMC).

Key Points:

HB 1220 (effective in 2021) requires jurisdictions to allow permanent supportive housing and transitional housing in zones that allow residences and hotels. This means Medical Lake must allow these uses in all zones except the public facilities zone. This same bill requires jurisdictions to allow emergency shelters and emergency housing in any zone that allows hotels. Hotels are allowed in the Mixed Use and Central Business zones.

ESHB 2266 (effective in 2026) prevents jurisdictions from having extraordinary requirements for any of the above housing. However, it does allow jurisdictions to request information about the housing, require notification and a community meeting, and safety provisions.

HB 1956 (effective in 2010) allows a religious organization to host the homeless on property owned or controlled by the religious organization.

HB 1377 (effective in 2019) allows an increased density bonus consistent with local needs for any affordable housing development located on real property owned or controlled by a religious organization.

All of these State mandates are the legislature's response to an acute shortage of affordable housing, resulting in housing insecurity and a growing number of people experiencing homelessness.

Background Discussion:

The terms used above are defined in State law as noted below.

"Transitional housing" means a project that provides housing and supportive services to homeless persons or families for up to two years and that has as its purpose facilitating the movement of homeless persons and families into independent living." (RCW 84.36.043)

"Permanent supportive housing" is subsidized, leased housing with no limit on length of stay that prioritizes people who need comprehensive support services to retain tenancy.... Permanent supportive housing is paired with on-site or off-site voluntary services designed to support a person living with a complex and disabling behavioral health or physical health condition who was experiencing homelessness or was at imminent risk of homelessness...." (RCW 36.70A.030)

“Emergency shelter” means a facility that provides a temporary shelter for individuals or families who are currently homeless. Emergency shelter may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement. Emergency shelter facilities may include day and warming centers that do not provide overnight accommodations.” (RCW 36.70A.030)

“Emergency housing” means temporary indoor accommodations for individuals or families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless that is intended to address the basic health, food, clothing, and personal hygiene needs of individuals or families. Emergency housing may or may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement.” (RCW 36.70A.030)

Public Involvement:

A public hearing will be held with both the Planning Commission and the City Council. In addition, language will be provided on the City website for review and comment by the public.

Next Steps:

After a workshop with the City Council on April 7, 2026, amendment language will be provided to the Planning Commission prior to the public hearing on April 16, 2026. At that meeting, the Planning Commission will be expected to make a recommendation to the City Council.

Periodic Update Schedule for Planning Commission (PC) and City Council (CC)

Meeting Date	Comprehensive Plan	Development Regulation Subject Groups									
		Amendment Criteria	Enforcement	Street Vacations	Zones	Affordable Housing	Specialized Housing	Transportation	Subdivisions	Impact Fees	Critical Areas
Nov 20, 2025		PC Workshop	PC Workshop								
Dec 2, 2025		CC Idea Workshop									
Dec 16, 2025											
Dec 18, 2025		PC Hearing		PC Workshop							
Jan 6, 2026		CC Language Workshop	CC Language Workshop								
Jan 20, 2026											
Jan 22, 2026					PC Workshop						
Feb 3, 2026		CC Hearing / 1st Read	CC Hearing / 1st Read	CC Idea Workshop							
Feb 17, 2026		CC 2nd Read / Adoption	CC 2nd Read / Adoption		CC Idea Workshop						
Feb 26, 2026	PC Workshop: Comp Plan Intro/Part 1				PC Hearing	PC Workshop					
Mar 3, 2026	CC Workshop: Comp Plan Intro/Part 1			CC Language Workshop							
Mar 17, 2026				CC Hearing / 1st Read	CC Language Workshop	CC Idea Workshop					
Mar 26, 2026						PC Hearing	PC Workshop				
Apr 7, 2026				CC 2nd Read / Adoption	CC Hearing / 1st Read		CC Idea Workshop				
Apr 16, 2026	PC Workshop: Comp Plan Part 2						PC Hearing	PC Workshop			
Apr 21, 2026					CC 2nd Read / Adoption	CC Language Workshop					
May 5, 2026	CC Workshop: Comp Plan Part 2						CC Language Workshop	CC Idea Workshop			
May 19, 2026						CC Hearing / 1st Read	CC Hearing / 1st Read				
May 28, 2026								PC Hearing	PC Workshop		
Jun 2, 2026						CC 2nd Read / Adoption	CC 2nd Read / Adoption				
Jun 16, 2026								CC Language Workshop	CC Idea Workshop		
Jun 25, 2026	PC Workshop: Comp Plan Part 3								PC Hearing	PC Workshop	
Jul 7, 2026	CC Workshop: Comp Plan Part 3							CC Hearing / 1st Read	CC Language Workshop	CC Idea Workshop	
Jul 21, 2026								CC 2nd Read / Adoption	CC Hearing / 1st Read		
Jul 23, 2026	PC Hearing: Comprehensive Plan									PC Hearing	PC Workshop
Aug 4, 2026	CC Hearing / 1st Read: Comprehensive Plan								CC 2nd Read / Adoption	CC Language Workshop	CC Idea Workshop
Aug 18, 2026	CC 2nd Read/Adoption: Comprehensive Plan									CC Hearing / 1st Read	
Aug 27, 2026											PC Hearing
Sep 1, 2026										CC 2nd Read / Adoption	
Sep 15, 2026											CC Language Workshop
Sep 24, 2026											
Oct 6, 2026											CC Hearing / 1st Read
Oct 20, 2026											CC 2nd Read / Adoption



To: Planning Commission
From: Elisa Rodriguez, Senior Planner
TOPIC: Periodic Update: MLMC amendments regarding Zoning

Requested Action:

Provide a recommendation to City Council

Key Points:

The staff report has been updated with revised code language. Sections that have been revised are in red text. The findings of fact have not changed.

The following are some key revisions:

Additional definitions have been added.

The terms Primary Structure and Accessory Structure have been replaced with the terms Primary Building and Accessory Building.

Group Living has changed from a Conditional Use to an Allowed Use in the Medium Density Zone.

Footnotes regarding Adult Family Homes and Child Care Centers have been added to the use table.

A Footnote regarding conversion of buildings from commercial to residential has been added to the use table.

A definition for Multi-Dwelling Development has been added to the Housing Types chapter.

The term Single-Family House, Detached has been changed to Single-Family House.

Cottage Housing has changed from an Allowed Use to a Conditional Use.

Multi-Dwelling Development has been added to the Housing Type table.

Footnotes regarding rooftop solar equipment, carports, and fences have been added to the Development Standards table.

Main Entrance and Window standards have been moved to a Primary Building Design Standards Chapter with a purpose statement added.

The Accessory Buildings with Residences and Cottage Housing chapters have been revised.

Next Steps:

If the Planning Commission provides a recommendation, the City Council will hold a public hearing on April 7, 2026.



City of Medical Lake Planning Department
124 S. Lefevre St.
Medical Lake, WA 99022
509-565-5000
www.medical-lake.org

UPDATED STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

File: Periodic Update: MLMC Zoning

Date of Staff Report: March 19, 2026

Date of Hearing: February 26, 2026, continued to March 26, 2026

Staff Planner: Elisa Rodriguez 509-565-5019 or erodriguez@medical-lake.org

SEPA: Determination of Non-Significance was made on January 30, 2026

Procedure: This request requires a legislative review, therefore, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council will hold a public hearing to consider an ordinance to adopt the amendments to the Medical Lake Municipal Code. The complete process can be found in the Medical Lake Municipal Code (MLMC), Section 19.270.050 – Type IV Reviews.

Proposal: It is proposed to create five new zoning districts with the associated allowed uses and development regulations in Title 19 – Land Use and Development. These will replace the ten existing zoning districts in Title 17 – Zoning, when the Official Zoning Map is updated later this year. Significant differences include allowing more housing types, including townhouses and cottage housing, and reducing the minimum lot size in all but the low-density residential zone. In addition, it is proposed that the Variance and Conditional Use chapters of Title 17 are replaced with updated chapters in Title 19.

Note: This proposal is to create zoning districts, but not apply them to the Official Zoning Map. An amendment to apply these zones to the Official Zoning Map will occur later this year as part of the Periodic Update.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

SEPA DNS Issued – January 30, 2026

Notice of a Public Hearing Published in Cheney Free Press – January 29, 2026

Public Comment Period Closed – February 13, 2026

PROPOSED LANGUAGE

Language that has been changed from the previous staff report is in red text.

Chapter – Definitions

Accessory Building. A building that is subordinate to and incidental to the primary building(s). Accessory buildings are clearly secondary in size, purpose, and/or function.

Accessory Use. A use or activity which is a subordinate part of a primary use and which is clearly incidental to a primary use on a site.

Adult Family Home. A residence where care is provided to adults as defined in RCW 70.128.010.

Building. Something constructed to shelter, support, or contain people, animals, or property, and is meant to be occupied or used for a purpose.

Carport. A roofed building that lacks one or more full-height walls, for the purpose of storing motor vehicles. A carport may be freestanding or attached to another building.

Child Care Center. An agency that provides child care as defined in RCW 43.216.010.

Development. All improvements on a site, including buildings, other structures, parking and loading areas, landscaping, utilities, paved or graveled areas, and areas devoted to exterior display, storage, or activities. Development includes improved open areas such as plazas and walkways, but does not include natural geologic forms or unimproved land.

Dwelling Unit. A building, or a portion of a building, that has independent living facilities including provisions for sleeping, cooking, and sanitation, and that is designed for residential occupancy by a person or group of people.

Easement. A grant of rights by a property owner that allows others to use the owner's property for a specific purpose, such as access, or to locate utilities.

Eave. Projecting overhang at the lower border of a roof and extending from a primary wall or support.

Family Daycare Provider. The care of children in a residence as defined in RCW 43.216.010

Garage. A roofed building for the purpose of storing motor vehicles. A garage may be freestanding or attached to another building.

Home Occupation. A business activity that is carried out on the same site as a Dwelling Unit, and which is accessory to the Household Living use on the site.

Main Entrance. A primary entry point for pedestrians into a building, intended for use by the general public, such as residents, employees, customers, clients, or visitors, and typically serves as the most significant or frequently used doorway or access route into the building.

Manufactured Home. A HUD-certified, factory-built home constructed after June 15, 1976, built on a permanent chassis, and intended for residential use when connected to utilities.

Mobile Home. A factory-built dwelling built before June 15, 1976.

Modular Home. A factory-built dwelling that meets state and local building codes rather than HUD standards.

Planning Official. The City official(s) appointed or retained by the City to administer and enforce this title and associated regulations and other such codes and regulations as the City may so designate.

Primary Building. A building or combination of buildings of principal importance or function on a site. In general, the primary use of the site is carried out in a primary building.

Street Frontage. The part of a site that abuts a street.

Short-Term Rental. A Dwelling Unit or portion of a Dwelling Unit that is rented to guests for less than thirty (30) consecutive days.

Chapter – Measurements

Average Grade. The average grade is the average elevation of the finished ground level around the building, measured at the midpoint of each building face.

Building Coverage. The area that is covered by buildings or other roofed structures, measured by the footprint. Building coverage also includes uncovered horizontal structures such as decks, stairways and entry bridges that are more than six (6) feet above grade. Eaves are not included in building coverage.

Density. Density is measured using the gross area of a parcel(s).

Distances. Distances are measured along a horizontal plane, not by following the topography of the land.

Height. Height is measured from the average grade to the top point of the building, except for pitched roofs, which are measured to the midpoint between the peak and the top of the wall.

Lot Area. The total horizontal area within the boundary lines of a lot, expressed in square feet or acres.

Setback. The required horizontal distance between a building or structure and a property line, measured perpendicular to that property line.

Chapter – Zones

Purpose. The following zoning districts are created to ensure that different types of development occur in the appropriate places so that the City may function safely, efficiently, and predictably. These zoning districts have been created to carry out the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Applicability. Zoning Districts are depicted on the Official Zoning Map pursuant to MLMC Chapter 140 – Zoning Map Administration. The allowed uses and development regulations are in the following chapters [citation].

Zoning Districts

Low-Density Residential. The LDR Zone is intended to preserve and expand neighborhoods with detached single-family housing. This zone also provides for middle-income housing via Accessory Dwelling Units, group living, and cottage housing.

Medium-Density Residential. The MDR Zone is intended to preserve and enhance older residential areas near commercial centers that provide middle-income housing.

Central Business District. The CBD Zone is intended to preserve and enhance the downtown area with a mix of uses, including commercial and residential. This zone encourages pedestrian-oriented design.

Mixed-Use. The MU Zone is intended to provide for larger scale commercial and residential development.

Public Facilities. The PF Zone is intended to recognize the different nature of those services provided by public entities.

Chapter - Uses

Purpose. This Chapter creates use categories based on function, activity, services, products, physical characteristics, and/or site factors. The use categories provide a systematic basis for assignment of present and future uses to zones and carries out the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Applicability. Based on the zone, uses are allowed, prohibited, or require a conditional use as prescribed in Table [citation].

Use Types

Primary Use. An activity or combination of activities of principal importance on the site. One of the main purposes for which the land, buildings or structures are intended, designed, or ordinarily used. A site may have more than one (1) primary use.

Allowed Use. Uses allowed in each zone are listed in Table [citation] with a "Y". These uses are allowed if they comply with the development standards and other regulations of this Title.

Conditional Use. Uses that are allowed if approved through the conditional use review process are listed in Table [citation] with a "CU". These uses are allowed provided they comply with the conditional use approval criteria for that use, the development standards, and other regulations of this Title.

Accessory Use. These uses are only allowed as accessories to the primary use.

Prohibited Use. Uses listed in Table [citation] with an "N" are prohibited. Existing uses in categories listed as prohibited may be subject to the regulations of Chapter [citation], Nonconforming Uses And Development.

Use Categories

Agriculture. Agriculture includes activities that raise, produce or keep plants or animals.

Basic Utilities. Basic Utilities are infrastructure services which need to be located in or near the area where the service is provided. Basic Utility uses generally do not have regular employees at the site. Services may be public or privately provided. All public safety facilities are Basic Utilities. Accessory uses

include offices and parking. Examples include water and sewer pump stations, sewage disposal and conveyance systems, electrical substations, water towers and reservoirs, energy production, data centers, water quality and flow control facilities, water conveyance systems, water harvesting and re-use conveyance systems and pump stations, stormwater facilities and conveyance systems, telephone exchanges; mass transit stops or turn arounds, wireless communication facilities, and public safety facilities, including fire and police stations.

Commercial Parking. Commercial Parking facilities provide parking that is not accessory to a specific use.

Community Services. Community Services are uses of a public, nonprofit, or charitable nature generally providing a local service to people of the community. Generally, such uses provide the service on the site or have employees at the site on a regular basis. Accessory uses include offices, food preparation, dining, and parking. Examples include libraries, museums, senior centers, community centers, hospices, drug and alcohol centers, social service facilities, housing shelters, vocational training for persons with disabling conditions, and charitable meal service or food distribution centers.

Daycare. Daycare use includes day or evening care of two (2) or more children outside of the children's homes, for a fee. Daycare uses also include the daytime care of teenagers or adults who need assistance or supervision. Accessory uses include offices, food preparation, dining, recreation, and parking. Examples include child care centers, preschools, before and after school programs, and adult daycare programs.

Essential Public Facility. Facilities that are typically difficult to site. Siting of essential public facilities is regulated by RCW 36.70A.200. Examples include airports, state education facilities and state or regional transportation facilities, regional transit authority facilities, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, opioid treatment programs including both mobile and fixed-site medication units, recovery residences, harm reduction programs excluding safe injection sites, and inpatient facilities including substance use disorder treatment facilities, mental health facilities, group homes, and secure community transition facilities.

Group Living. Group Living is the residential occupancy of a congregate housing facility. Tenancy is typically arranged on a month-to-month basis or longer period. Group Living often includes a common eating area for residents. The residents may or may not receive any combination of care, training, or treatment. Accessory uses include parking, storage, food preparation, dining, laundry, and recreation facilities. Examples include dormitories, convalescent and nursing homes, and single-room occupancy housing, group homes for people with disabling conditions, and residential programs for drug and alcohol treatment.

Household Living. Household Living is the residential occupancy of a Dwelling Unit. Tenancy is arranged on a month-to-month basis or longer period. Accessory uses include parking, storage, raising pets, recreational activities, hobbies, agriculture, certified childcare, and home occupations. Examples include houses, townhouses, plexes, and apartments. Adult Family Homes are considered Household Living.

Manufacturing and Production. Manufacturing And Production firms are involved in the manufacturing, processing, fabrication, packaging, or assembly of goods. Accessory uses include offices, warehouses,

storage yards, and parking. Examples include processing food, coffee roasting, breweries, woodworking and cabinet making, movie and video production, and sign making.

Medical Centers. Medical Centers include uses providing medical or surgical care to patients and offering overnight care. Accessory uses include offices, laboratories, food preparation, dining, and parking. Examples include hospitals.

Offices. Office uses are characterized by activities conducted in an office setting that focus on the provision of goods and services, usually by professionals. Accessory uses include parking and storage. Examples include lawyers, accountants, architects, engineers, medical and dental clinics, scientists, and real estate agents.

Parks. Parks are uses of land focusing on natural areas, large areas consisting mostly of vegetative landscaping or outdoor recreation, community gardens, or public squares. Accessory uses include concessions and parking.

Retail Sales and Service. Retail Sales and Service firms sell, lease or rent new or used products to the general public and/or provide personal services or entertainment, or provide product repair or services for consumer and business goods. Accessory uses include offices, storage, manufacturing, and parking. Examples include stores, banks, personal care services, laundromats, art/photo studios, dance/music classes, urgent medical care, veterinarians, restaurants, bars, entertainment, clubs, vocational schools, and repair services.

Schools. This category includes public and private schools at the primary, elementary, middle, junior high, or high school level that provide state mandated basic education. Accessory uses include offices, recreation, food preparation, dining, before and after school care, and parking.

Self Service Storage. Self-Service Storage uses provide separate storage areas for individual or business uses. The storage areas are designed to allow private access by the tenant for storing or removing personal property. Accessory uses include security and leasing offices.

Religious Institutions. Religious Institutions are intended to primarily provide meeting areas for religious activities. Accessory uses include offices, recreation, food preparation and distribution, dining, parking, and daycare. Examples include churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques.

Temporary Lodging. Temporary lodging is the residential occupancy of a room(s) or Dwelling Unit with a tenancy of less than thirty (30) days. Accessory uses include parking, recreational activities, food preparation, and dining. Examples include hotels, motels, and short-term rentals.

Vehicle Service. Vehicle Service firms service passenger vehicles, light and medium trucks and other consumer motor vehicles such as motorcycles, boats and recreational vehicles. Accessory uses include offices, sales of parts, vehicle storage, and parking. Examples include gas stations, repair shops, tire sales and mounting, oil change shop, and auto detailing.

Warehouse. Warehouse firms are involved in the storage, or movement of goods for themselves or other firms. Accessory uses include offices and fleet parking.

Waste Related. Waste-Related uses are characterized by uses that receive solid or liquid wastes from others for disposal on the site or for transfer to another location, uses that collect sanitary wastes, or uses that manufacture or produce goods from the biological decomposition of organic material. Accessory uses include offices, parking, and storage. Examples include composting and sewer treatment plants.

Wholesale. Wholesale sales firms are involved in the sale, lease, or rent of products primarily intended for industrial, institutional, or commercial businesses. Accessory uses include offices, warehouses, and parking.

Use Categories	Low-Density Residential	Medium-Density Residential	Central Business District	Mixed Use	Public Facilities
Agriculture	A	A	N	A	A
Commercial Parking	N	N	CU	Y	A
Community Service	CU	CU	Y	Y	Y
Daycare	CU ⁶ /A ²	CU ⁶ /A ²	Y	Y	Y
Essential Public Facility	CU	CU	CU	CU	CU
Group Living	CU ⁵	Y	Y	Y	Y
Household Living	Y	Y	Y ^{4,7}	Y ^{4,7}	N
Manufacturing and Production	A ¹	A ¹	Y	Y	A
Medical Centers	N	N	N	Y	Y
Office	A ¹	A ¹	Y	Y	Y
Parks	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Religious Institutions	CU	CU	Y	Y	A
Retail Sales and Service	A ¹	A ¹	Y	Y	A
Schools	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Self-Service Storage	N	N	N	Y	N
Temporary Lodging	CU	CU	Y	Y	A
Utilities ³	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Vehicle Service	N	N	N	Y	A
Warehouse	N	N	N	Y	A
Waste-Related	N	N	N	N	Y
Wholesale	N	N	N	Y	N

¹ Use is limited and allowed only through a home occupation permit [citation]

² Family Daycare Providers are considered Home Occupations and are allowed without a Conditional Use Review.

³ Wireless Communications may require a Conditional Use Review [citation]

⁴ Household Living is not allowed on the ground floor within 100 feet of the public right-of-way of SR 902, Lake Street, and Lefevre Street.

⁵ Adult Family Homes are considered Home Occupations and are allowed without a Conditional Use Review.

⁶ Child Care Centers are allowed without a Conditional Use Review.

⁷ New housing in existing buildings may not be subject to all development standards per RCW 35A.21.440 and 36.70.810.

Y = Yes, allowed

N = No, not allowed, prohibited

CU = Allowed only if approved by a Conditional Use Review [citation]

A = Accessory, allowed only as an accessory to the primary use

Chapter – Housing Types

Purpose. Defining housing types serves to plan for unique sizes, densities, infrastructure needs, and impacts on traffic.

Applicability. Based on the zone, housing types are allowed, prohibited, or require a conditional use as prescribed in Table [citation]

Accessory Dwelling Unit. A self-contained Dwelling Unit within or on the same property as a detached single-family house.

Apartment Building. A building with 7 or more Dwelling Units.

Cottage Housing. Dwelling Units that are detached yet sit on a single property. The units may be rented or sold as condominium units. May include community buildings for activities such as cooking, dining, gathering, and recreating.

Group Living. See definition in [citation]

Mixed-Use Building. A building with both residential units and one (1) or more non-residential uses. Parking does not qualify as a non-residential use.

Multi-Dwelling Development. Except for cottage housing, a grouping of individual buildings where each buildings contains one (1) or more dwelling units. The land underneath the buildings is not divided into separate lots.

Plexes. Buildings that contain two (2) to six (6) Dwelling Units and sit on a single property. The units may be rented or sold as condominium units.

Single-Family House. Also known as detached single-family house. A Dwelling Unit that is not attached to another Dwelling Unit.

Townhouse. Also known as an attached single-family house. A Dwelling Unit that is attached to another Dwelling Unit, extends from foundation to roof and has a yard and/or right-of-way on not less than two (2) sides. These Dwelling Units are divided by fire walls, sit on individual properties and are sold individually.

Housing Type	Low-Density Residential	Medium-Density Residential	Central Business District	Mixed Use	Public Facilities
Accessory Dwelling Unit	Y ¹	Y ¹	N	N	N
Apartment Building	N	N	Y	Y	N

Cottage Housing	CU	Y	N	N	N
Group Living	CU	Y	Y	Y	Y
Plexes	N	Y	N	Y	N
Mixed Use Buildings	N	N	Y	Y	N
Multi-Dwelling Development	N	Y	Y	Y	N
Single-Family House	Y	Y	N	N	N
Townhouse	N	Y	N	Y	N

¹ Allowed only as an accessory to a detached single-family house.

Y = Yes, allowed

N = No, not allowed, prohibited

CU = Allowed if approved by a Conditional Use Review [citation]

Chapter – Density and Lot Sizes

Purpose. Density and lot size standards assist in planning for infrastructure and transportation impacts as well as the layouts of subdivisions. Furthermore, they contribute to community character and carry out the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Applicability. Based on the zone, lot size and densities are prescribed in Table [citation].

Standards	Low-Density Residential	Medium-Density Residential	Central Business District	Mixed-Use	Public Facilities
Minimum Lot Area	6,000 sf	5,000 sf ¹	none	none	none
Minimum Lot Width	60 feet	50 feet ²	none	none	none
Minimum Street Frontage	30 feet	30 feet ²	12 feet	12 feet	12 feet

¹ Townhouses require 1,500 square feet

² Townhouses require 15 feet

Substandard Lots. All substandard lots created prior to January 1, 1984 shall be exempt from the minimum lot size, minimum street frontage, and minimum lot width requirements set forth in this Chapter.

Chapter – Development Standards

Purpose. Development standards influence the look, feel, and functionality of a place, contributing to the community character and ensuring that new development meets the City’s vision as set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.

Applicability. Development standards are based on the use, the building type, and the zone in which the site is located.

Basic Development Standards. Based on the zone, the development standards are prescribed in Table [citation].

Standards	Low-Density Residential	Medium-Density Residential	Central Business District	Mixed Use	Public Facilities
Maximum Density	1 unit per lot ¹	1 unit per 2,000 sf	none	none	none
Maximum Building Coverage	40%	60%	none	none	none
Maximum Height ⁵	35 feet	35 feet	45 feet	45 feet	45 feet ²
Maximum Front Setback ⁸	none	none	10 feet	none	none
Minimum Front Setback ^{6,8}	15 feet	15 feet	0	10 feet	10 feet
Minimum Garage Entrance Setback ^{3,7}	5 feet/20 feet	5 feet/20 feet	5 feet/20 feet	5 feet/20 feet	5 feet/20 feet
Min. Interior Side Setback ^{6,8}	5 feet	5 feet ⁴	0	0	5 feet
Min. Street Side Setback ^{6,8}	10 feet	10 feet	0	10 feet	10 feet
Minimum Rear Setback ^{6,8}	15 feet	15 feet	0	0	5 feet

¹ 1 unit per 6,000 sf for cottage housing.

² Exceptions, see [citation]

³ 5-foot alley setback, 20-foot street setback.

⁴ Does not apply to the attached side of a townhouse.

⁵ Maximum height does not apply to chimneys, vents, small mechanical structures, and flagpoles. **Roof-mounted solar energy panels may exceed the height limit by 48 inches.**

⁶ Chimneys, eaves, uncovered steps and ramps, and other similar features may project two (2) feet into the setback.

⁷ Applies to carports.

⁸ Fences are allowed within the setback and are regulated by MLMC Chapter 17.37 – Fences and Hedges.

Chapter - Primary Building Design Standards.

Purpose. These design standards help buildings face the street so people can easily see what is happening around them. This improves safety and helps discourage crime. The standards also make the street more interesting to walk along, support pedestrian activity, and help homes and businesses feel more connected to the public space.

Main Entrance. At least one (1) main entrance for each primary building shall face the street, be within forty (45) degrees of the street, or open onto a porch facing the street. See exception for Cottage Housing [citation]

Windows. At least fifteen (15) percent of the area of each facade that faces a street lot line shall be windows or main entrance doors. Windows used to meet this standard shall allow views from the building to the street. Glass block does not meet this standard. Windows in garage doors do not count toward meeting this standard, but windows in garage walls do count toward meeting this standard. To count toward meeting this standard, a door shall be at the main entrance and facing a street lot line.

Chapter - Accessory Buildings with Residences.

Accessory buildings provide storage for vehicles, machinery, equipment, seasonal items, and other items that are not traditionally stored in a residence. They also provide space for hobbies, recreation, and outdoor activities. Accessory buildings used for Accessory Dwelling Units are regulated in [citation].

Purpose. The purpose of accessory buildings standards is to prevent residential lots from becoming overbuilt, diminishing neighbors' privacy and light, while providing flexibility for the above uses and maintaining an attractive front yard.

Standards. In the residential zones, Accessory buildings are subject to the following standards:

- A. An Accessory Building attached to the primary building shall meet the setback requirements of the zone.
- B. The interior side setback and rear setback for a detached Accessory Buildings shall be five (5) feet.
- C. A detached Accessory Building shall be located no closer to the street than the primary building.
- D. An Accessory Building shall not be taller than 24 feet.
- E. The cumulative building coverage for all Accessory Buildings shall not exceed 17% of the site area.

Chapter – Cottage Housing

Purpose. The purpose of the cottage housing standards is to provide an alternative residential development pattern that increases housing choice, supports efficient use of land and infrastructure, promotes a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood character, and preserves critical areas. These standards are intended to ensure that cottage housing developments are designed around usable common open space, foster a sense of community, protect critical areas, and achieve a scale and form compatible with surrounding residential areas.

Conditional Use Review. Cottage housing developments located in the Low-Density Residential Zone require a Conditional Use Review as stipulated in MLMC Chapter [citation]

Building Coverage. The maximum building coverage for each house is one thousand two hundred (1,200) square feet, including the garage.

Common Outdoor Area. A minimum of one outdoor area that meets the following standards is required. The developer may choose to provide more than one outdoor area.

- A. If a single outdoor area is provided, it shall be centrally located. If multiple outdoor areas are provided, they shall be central to a cluster of houses.
- B. Four hundred (400) square feet of outdoor space is required per unit. The minimum area of any individual outdoor area is 2,000 square feet with minimum dimensions of twenty (20) feet.
- C. The outdoor area(s) shall be contiguous, usable, and serve as a community gathering place. They shall contain amenities such as tables, benches, trees, shrubs, planter boxes, garden plots, drinking fountains, gazebos, play structures, sport courts, or pools.
- D. Stormwater treatment areas shall not be considered common outdoor areas.

Main Entrances. Each Cottage shall have a main entrance that faces the street or a common outdoor area. The main entrance shall open onto a covered porch that is a minimum of sixty (60) square feet in area.

Maintenance and Ownership. Cottage Housing developments shall be owned and maintained by a homeowners' association, land trust, or other approved entity. Codes, Covenants, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) shall be approved by the City prior to approval.

Parking. Cottages may have individual parking in a driveway, a carport, or a garage. Parking and driveways shall not be located between a house and common area. Common parking areas may also be provided in a surface lot or in a parking structure. The minimum number of parking spaces is one space per unit and one guest space per four units.

Pedestrian Connections. All main entrances shall be connected by paved pedestrian paths at least six (6) feet in width and meet ADA standards. This pedestrian path network shall be connected to any common outdoor area, common parking area, and the public street. The pedestrian path network shall not be gated.

Separation. House foundations shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet apart. Minor features such as eaves and bay windows may protrude up to two (2) feet.

Streets. Public streets shall be provided when they are necessary to ensure transportation connectivity with the surrounding areas. Interior circulation may be provided by shared driveways. No public or shared driveway shall be gated. There shall be a minimum of two points of vehicular ingress/egress for the development.

Undeveloped Area. On sites larger than five (5) acres, at least ten (10) percent of the site shall be designated as undevelopable. This area may contain critical areas, their buffers, and stormwater treatment facilities. Undeveloped areas do not count towards common outdoor areas.

Chapter – Essential Public Facilities

Purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a process for siting and review of an Essential Public Facility. The siting process is regulated by RCW 36.70A.200.

Regional Siting Process. Per an interlocal agreement, the process for siting Essential Public Facilities in Spokane County shall be administered by Spokane County. When the siting process is complete and the final site is within the corporate boundaries of the City of Medical Lake, the proposal will be subject to a Conditional Use Review.

Conditional Use Review. Essential Public Facilities that have completed the Spokane County Regional Siting Process, require a Conditional Use Review as stipulated in MLMC Chapter [citation]

Chapter – Conditional Use

Purpose. Certain uses are conditional uses instead of being allowed outright, although they may have beneficial effects and serve important public interests. They are subject to the conditional use regulations because they may have significant adverse effects on the environment, overburden public services, change the desired character of an area, or create major nuisances. The conditional use review provides an opportunity to allow the use but impose mitigation measures to address identified concerns, or to deny the use if the concerns cannot be resolved.

Applicability. A Conditional Use Review is required for those uses with a CU designation in Table [citation]

Applications. The following must be submitted to the City for an application to be deemed complete:

- A. An appropriate City application form;
- B. A written description of the amendment being requested;
- C. Any studies, reports, or documentation to support the request;
- D. A written response to the approval criteria in MLMC [citation], Approval Criteria;
- E. A SEPA checklist: and
- F. The application fee.

Process. Conditional Use Reviews are processed through a Type III review with the Medical Lake Planning Commission holding a public hearing and making a recommendation to the City Council, which shall make the final decision. The Type III review process is found in MLMC Section 19.270.040, Type III reviews.

Approval Criteria. Conditional Use Reviews shall meet all the following criteria for approval:

- A. The proposal is compatible in scale, character, and intensity with nearby land uses and the zoning district.
- B. There are adequate public services available and sufficient to serve the use.
- C. The proposal does not create any substantial negative impacts on the surrounding area. These impacts include, but are not limited to, noise, odor, light, parking, and traffic.
- D. The proposal aligns with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter – Variance

Purpose. The regulations of this Title are designed to implement the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. These regulations apply City-wide, but because of unique situations, some sites are difficult to develop in compliance with the regulations. The Variance Review process provides a mechanism by which the regulations in this Title may be modified if the proposed development continues to meet the intended purpose of those regulations.

Applicability. The Variance Review process may be applied to any development standard in Title 19 – Land Use and Development.

Application. The following must be submitted to the City for an application to be deemed complete:

- A. An appropriate City application form;
- B. A written description of the amendment being requested;
- C. Any studies, reports, or documentation to support the request;
- D. A written response to the approval criteria in MLMC [citation], Approval Criteria;
- E. A SEPA checklist: and
- F. The application fee.

Process. Variance Reviews are processed through a Type III review with the Medical Lake Planning Commission holding a public hearing and making a recommendation to the City Council, which shall make the final decision. The Type III review process is found in MLMC Section 19.270.040, Type III reviews.

Approval Criteria. Variance Reviews shall meet all the following criteria for approval:

- A. Granting the variance will equally or better meet the purpose of the development standard to be modified; and
- B. Any impacts resulting from the variance are mitigated to the extent practical.
- C. The variance does not create any substantial negative impacts on the surrounding area.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were received from agencies or the public.

ZONING CODE APPROVAL CRITERIA

Amendments to development regulations are subject to MLMC Section 17.56.100 – Criteria for evaluation of plan amendments.

1. The amendment is necessary to resolve inconsistencies between the comprehensive plan and implementing ordinances, or inconsistencies between the plan or ordinances and local, state, or federal mandates.

Findings: The proposed amendments are to create new zoning districts along with allowed uses and development standards. In addition, the proposed amendments replace chapters regarding conditional uses and variances. All of these amendments are in concert with the Periodic Update of the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed zoning districts will not be applied to the Official Zoning Map at this time. These amendments are not to resolve inconsistencies, but rather to meet state mandates, carry out the updated comprehensive plan, and create a clearer, well-organized, well-written municipal code. House Bill 1110 was created to increase housing supply and affordability by ending exclusive single-family zoning. By allowing more housing types and densities, these amendments meet the requirements of the Bill. In addition, these amendments are not inconsistent with the existing Comprehensive Plan. **For these reasons, the criterion is met.**

2. The amendment of the plan and/or the development regulations will further the implementation of the comprehensive plan and resolve inconsistency between the two in a manner that will not adversely impact the general public health, safety, and/or welfare.

Findings: The proposed amendments are to create new zoning districts along with allowed uses and development standards. In addition, the proposed amendments replace chapters regarding conditional uses and variances. All of these amendments are in concert with the periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed zoning districts will not be applied to the Official Zoning Map at this time. By adopting the proposed amendments, the upcoming Comprehensive Plan will be further implemented, and no inconsistencies will be created with the existing Comprehensive Plan. Furthermore, the amendments do not adversely impact the general public's health, safety, or welfare. **For these reasons, the criterion is met.**

3. Conditions have changed so much since the adoption of the comprehensive plan on factors such as, but not limited to population, employment, housing, transportation, capital facilities, or economic conditions that the existing goals, policies, objectives and/or map classifications of the comprehensive plan or development regulations are inappropriate.

Findings: The proposed amendments are to create new zoning districts along with allowed uses and development standards. In addition, the proposed amendments replace chapters regarding conditional uses and variances. All of these amendments are in concert with the periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed zoning districts will not be applied to the Official Zoning Map at this time. The City is in the process updating the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations as part of the 10-year Periodic Update as mandated by the State. Conditions and State mandates have changed significantly since the last Periodic Update. These amendments are one of several to address these changed conditions. **For this reason, the criterion is met.**

4. Substantial conditions exist where the available supply of forecasted lands for residential, commercial, industrial, recreation or agriculture have been absorbed and there is insufficient land available for a twenty-year supply.

Findings: The proposed amendments change the Municipal Code, including density standards. However, the amendments do not affect the available supply of forecasted lands. **For this reason, the criterion is not applicable.**

5. If the comprehensive plan amendment proposal involves extension of water and/or sewer services outside of the urban growth boundary, the following additional criteria must be met:

A. The proposal must be in response to an immediate threat to public health or safety;

B. The proposal is necessary for the protection of the aquifer(s) designated pursuant to RCW 36.70.A170;

C. The proposal is necessary to maintain existing levels of service in existing urban or suburban developments.

Findings: The proposal does not involve the extension of water or sewer services. **Therefore, this criterion is not applicable.**

6. The proposed amendment is consistent with the overall intent of the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Findings: The proposed amendments are to create new zoning districts along with allowed uses and development standards. In addition, the proposed amendments replace chapters regarding conditional uses and variances. All of these amendments are in concert with the periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed zoning districts will not be applied to the Official Zoning Map at this time. By adopting the proposed amendments, the upcoming Comprehensive Plan will be further implemented. These amendments are consistent with the overall intent of the goals of the existing Comprehensive Plan. **For this reason, the criterion is met.**

7. The proposed amendment is consistent with RCW 36.70A, the Growth Management Act, the county-wide planning policies, and applicable multicounty planning policies.

Findings: The proposed amendments are to create new zoning districts along with allowed uses and development standards. These amendments include many standards for housing in an effort to meet new State mandates for middle housing, specifically, House Bill 1096 (Middle Housing), House Bill 1220 (Low Income Housing), House Bill 5235 (Accessory Dwelling Units), and Senate Bill 5290 (Housing Targets) created changes to the Growth Management Act. The county-wide policies reflect State mandates. Therefore, these amendments are consistent with the Growth Management Act and county-wide planning policies. **For this reason, the criterion is met.**

8. Where an amendment to the comprehensive plan map is proposed, the proposed designation is adjacent to property having a similar and compatible designation.

Findings: An amendment to the Comprehensive Plan Map is not proposed, therefore, **this criterion is not applicable.**

9. Public facilities, infrastructure, and transportation systems are present to serve the intended amendment or provisions have been made in accordance with the comprehensive plan to provide the necessary facilities.

Findings: The proposed amendments change the Municipal Code, including density standards. However, the new zoning districts are not being applied to the Official Zoning Map at this time. **For this reason, the criterion is not applicable.**

10. The proposed amendment is complimentary and compatible with adjacent land uses and the surrounding environment.

Findings: The proposed amendments change the Municipal Code, including density standards. However, the new zoning districts are not being applied to the Official Zoning Map at this time. **For this reason, the criterion is not applicable.**

11. The proposed amendment does not adversely affect lands designated as agricultural and/or resource lands of long-term commercial significance or critical areas.

Findings: The proposed amendments change the Municipal Code, including density standards. However, the new zoning districts are not being applied to the Official Zoning Map at this time. **For this reason, the criterion is not applicable.**

CONCLUSION

The proposed amendments are to create new zoning districts along with allowed uses and development standards. In addition, the proposed amendments replace chapters regarding conditional uses and variances. All of these amendments are in concert with the periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed zoning districts will not be applied to the Official Zoning Map at this time. The proposed amendments are consistent with the current Comprehensive Plan, the Countywide Planning Policies, and the Growth Management Act. The amendments do not adversely affect land, uses, or services within the City. All of the applicable approval criteria have been met, therefore, the proposal should be approved.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION

1. Recommend approval of the proposed amendments to the City Council.
2. Recommend approval of modified amendments to the City Council.
3. Request City Staff to address concerns and return with modified language.

EXHIBITS

- A. SEPA Checklist – January 28, 2026
- B. SEPA DNS – January 30, 2026
- C. Public Notice – January 29, 2026



To: Planning Commission
From: Elisa Rodriguez, Senior Planner
TOPIC: Periodic Update: MLMC amendments regarding Affordable Housing (ADUs)

Requested Action:

Provide a recommendation to City Council regarding amendments adding accessory dwelling units to the Medical Lake Municipal Code (MLMC).

Key Points:

The proposed amendments are to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as an allowed housing type, accessory to a single-family detached house. The proposed language combines State mandates with the community's desires for the future of Medical Lake.

In addition to the above mandates, there is always the goal of amending the code in a manner to create clear and concise language that can be understood by the public and implemented by staff.

Background Discussion:

House Bill 1337 was enacted in 2023 and requires all jurisdictions to allow accessory dwelling units (ADU's) where single-family houses are permitted. There are several very specific regulations that must be adopted into the Municipal Code.

Public Involvement:

A public hearing will be held with both the Planning Commission and the City Council. In addition, language will be provided on the City website for review and comment by the public.

Next Steps:

The City Council will have a workshop reviewing the language and your recommendation on April 21, 2026, and will hold a hearing to consider an ordinance on May 19, 2026.



City of Medical Lake Planning Department
124 S. Lefevre St.
Medical Lake, WA 99022
509-565-5000
www.medical-lake.org

STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

File: Periodic Update: MLMC Affordable Housing (ADUs)

Date of Staff Report: March 19, 2026

Date of Hearing: March 26, 2026

Staff Planner: Elisa Rodriguez 509-565-5019 or erodriguez@medical-lake.org

SEPA: Determination of Non-Significance was made on March 2, 2026

Procedure: This request requires a legislative review, therefore, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council will hold a public hearing to consider an ordinance to adopt the amendments to the Medical Lake Municipal Code. The complete process can be found in the Medical Lake Municipal Code (MLMC), Section 19.270.050 – Type IV Reviews.

Proposal: It is proposal is to amend the municipal code to add accessory dwelling units as a permitted use on lots with detached single-family houses in residential zones. These amendments are to provide affordable housing options in line with House Bill 1337.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

SEPA DNS Issued – March 2, 2026

Notice of a Public Hearing Published in Cheney Free Press – February 26, 2026

Public Comment Period Closed – March 17, 2026

PROPOSED LANGUAGE

Chapter – Accessory Dwelling Units

Purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to expand housing options by permitting accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in residential zones, consistent with RCW 36.70A.680–.681, ADUs provide opportunities for affordable housing, supplementing household incomes, aging in place, family support, and efficient land use.

Applicability. ADUs are permitted on lots that contain a detached single-family house in a residential zone.

Development Standards. All ADUs must meet the following standards.

- A. Density. ADUs are exempt from the maximum density of the zone.
- B. Number of Units. Two (2) ADUs are allowed per lot.
- C. Lot Size. ADUs are allowed on lots that meet the minimum lot size of the zone.
- D. Location on Lot. ADUs may be constructed within or attached to a single-family house, in combination with another accessory structure, or as a stand-alone structure. ADUs shall not be located closer to the street than the single-family house.
- E. Size. ADUs shall not be more than 1,000 square feet in floor area.
- F. Height. ADUs shall not be more than 24 feet in height.
- G. Setbacks. ADUs shall meet the setback requirements of the zone, except, they may have a zero lot line setback adjacent to an alley.
- H. Parking. Each ADU requires one parking space that meets the standards of MLMC Chapter 17.36 – Off-Street Parking.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were received from agencies or the public.

ZONING CODE APPROVAL CRITERIA

Amendments to development regulations are subject to MLMC Section 19.143.050 – Approval Criteria.

- A. The proposed amendment(s) implements the goals, policies, and objectives of the Medical Lake Comprehensive Plan.

Findings: The proposal adds accessory dwelling units as an allowed housing type on properties that have a detached single-family dwelling. Goal #19 of the Comprehensive Plan states, “Provide a variety of densities and housing types to promote greater choices and opportunities.” Accessory dwelling units provide an affordable solution for aging in place, supporting family, and gaining income to help make the primary home more affordable. Policy #46 of the Comprehensive Plan states, “Encourage flexibility in residential housing types and project design, including manufactured homes and affordable housing.” Action Item #50 of the Comprehensive Plan states, “Revise zoning and subdivision standards as necessary to encourage a variety of housing options including residential located above street-level commercial, accessory dwelling units, and cluster housing.” Therefore, the proposal implements the goals, policies, and objectives of the Comprehensive plan by providing affordable housing in a form that is specified. **For these reasons, the criterion is met.**

- B. The proposed amendment(s) complies with all requirements of the state's Growth Management Act, including growth boundaries, critical areas, and future housing needs.

Findings: The proposal adds accessory dwelling units as an allowed housing type on properties that have a detached single-family dwelling. The Growth Management Act requires that jurisdictions provide for housing at every income level. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are expected to provide an affordable home to households earning 50%-80% of the area median income. In addition, House Bill 1337 has mandated that jurisdictions amend their municipal codes to allow accessory dwelling units. ADUs provide additional housing to meet Medical Lake's future housing needs, which will accommodate more population before the urban growth boundary will need to be expanded. ADUs must conform to critical area regulations. Therefore, the proposal is complies with the Growth Management Act. **For this reason, the criterion is met.**

- C. The proposed amendment(s) does not conflict with the Shoreline Master Program.

Findings: The proposal adds accessory dwelling units as an allowed housing type on properties that have a detached single-family dwelling. ADUs must conform to the Shoreline Master Program. Therefore, ADUs do not cause an inherent conflict. **For this reason, the criterion is met.**

- D. The proposed amendment(s) is consistent with other adopted City plans, including, but not limited to, the Strategic Plan, Capital Facilities Plan, Parks Master Plan, Water Plan, Sewer Plan, Stormwater Plan, and Transportation Plan.

Findings: The proposal adds accessory dwelling units as an allowed housing type on properties that have a detached single-family dwelling. Strategic Objective #2, Quality Neighborhoods, of the Healing Waters Strategic Plan, states, "Provide a variety of densities and housing types to promote greater choices and opportunities." ADUs are not inconsistent with any other adopted City plan and as those plans are updated, the impact of ADUs will be considered. Therefore, allowing ADUs is consistent with other adopted City Plans. **For this reason, the criterion is met.**

- E. The proposed amendment(s) will not adversely affect the ability to provide City services in a cost-effective manner.

Findings: The proposal adds accessory dwelling units as an allowed housing type on properties that have a detached single-family dwelling. ADUs will require additional services, however the number of ADUs expected in the short term is expected to be low based on other jurisdictions in the region that have been allowing them for several years. As time goes on, the City will have the opportunity to adjust plans for infrastructure and service fees to meet the demand. Therefore, the proposal does not adversely affect the ability for the City to provide services in a cost-effective manner. **For this reason, the criterion is met.**

- F. The proposed amendment(s) will not be detrimental to and will result in long-term benefits to the community as a whole and is in the public interest.

Findings: The proposal adds accessory dwelling units as an allowed housing type on properties that have a detached single-family dwelling. Allowing ADUs will provide one of many affordable housing options within Medical Lake. ADUs provide an affordable solution for aging in place, supporting family, and gaining income to help make the primary home more affordable. The affects of allowing ADUs is not expected to be detrimental to the City due to their small scale and the expectation that, due to the cost of

constructing the unit and the desire of individual households, there will be only a few applications per year. **For these reasons, the criterion is met.**

G. The proposed amendment(s) will not result in adverse impacts to public infrastructure, wetlands, lakes, businesses, or residents.

Findings: The proposal adds accessory dwelling units as an allowed housing type on properties that have a detached single-family dwelling. Due to the small scale and the likelihood of only a few applications submitted per year, the City will have time to adjust infrastructure plans and fees as needed. ADUs will be subject to critical area and shoreline regulations, protecting wetlands and lakes. They will provide additional housing opportunities for residents and more residents will benefit local businesses. **For these reasons, the criterion is met.**

CONCLUSION

The proposal adds accessory dwelling units as an allowed housing type on properties that have a detached single-family dwelling. In addition to aligning with the Comprehensive Plan, the State of Washington is mandating that ADUs be allowed as a form of affordable housing. The proposal is consistent with all other adopted City plans, will provide a benefit to the City, and is not expected to have any detrimental impacts. All of the applicable approval criteria have been met, therefore, the proposal should be approved.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION

1. Recommend approval of the proposed amendments to the City Council.
2. Recommend approval of modified amendments to the City Council.
3. Request City Staff to address concerns and return with modified language.

EXHIBITS

- A. SEPA Checklist – March 2, 2026
- B. SEPA DNS – March 2, 2026