



City of Medical Lake
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4/16/2026 Planning Commission Meeting

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

Requested Action:

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

Key Points:

SSB 6015 limits the number of parking spaces that can be required per unit for middle housing (plexes, townhouses, cottage houses). In addition, jurisdictions must allow tandem parking to meet minimum parking requirements and parking on grass block pavers. Finally, required parking cannot be required to be larger than 8 feet by 20 feet. The Medical Lake Municipal Code (MLMC) currently requires spaces to be 9 feet by 18 feet.

Parking standards are located in MLMC Chapter 17.36 – Off-Street Parking. Required parking spaces are determined by use. The chapter's list of uses is incomplete and has not been updated since 1999.

Per RCW 36.70A.070(6)(b), jurisdictions are required to address transportation concurrency with development. Concurrency is a land-use planning principle that requires public infrastructure and services to be available at the same time a new development's impacts occur. Concurrency is addressed in MLMC Chapter 16.02 – Concurrency Management. This chapter was added to the municipal code in 1998 and has not been revisited since. Concurrency is led by the level of service standards prescribed in the Comprehensive Plan.

RCW 82.70 requires a Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) ordinance to achieve reductions in the proportion of single-occupant vehicle trips. The City of Medical Lake has worked with other Spokane County jurisdictions and Commute Smart NW to create a CTR plan. The City Council adopted the Plan by resolution (#25-743) on March 18, 2025. However, MLMC Chapter 16.22 – Commute Trip Reduction Ordinance and Plan, was adopted in 2010 and needs to be revised.

MLMC Chapter 15.40 – Private Road Standards, provides the opportunity for the development of private streets as an alternative to public streets. Private streets, although open to the public for travel, are privately owned and are not maintained by the City. Private streets are typically narrower than public streets. The City has found that private streets benefit the developer at the time of construction by reducing costs, however in the long term, citizens do not benefit, being responsible for snow removal, potholes, and repaving. In addition, parking and emergency vehicle access can be impaired.

Background Discussion:

Determining minimum parking standards is a matter of balancing demand with cost of construction. Excessive parking requirements can price out affordable housing and discourage commercial development. Oversupplying parking encourages car ownership and driving while

discouraging walking, biking, and transit use. In a City that struggles with groundwater issues, parking increases the amount of impervious surfaces, which leads to higher stormwater runoff and pollution.

The City hired a consultant to produce a Transportation Plan to reflect the values of Medical Lake and plan for the future of the community. Staff is reviewing a draft which will be made available to the public soon. This Transportation plan will inform the Comprehensive Plan.

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 May 5, 2026, amendment language will be provided to the Planning Commission prior to the public hearing on May 28, 2026. At that meeting, the Planning Commission will be expected to make a recommendation to the City Council.