



City of Medical Lake
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P.O. Box 369
Medical Lake, WA 99022-0369

7/23/2026 Planning Commission Meeting

To: Planning Commission
From: Elisa Rodriguez, Senior Planner
TOPIC: Periodic Update: Comprehensive Plan

Requested Action:

Hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the draft Comprehensive Plan

Key Points:

In response to comments from the Periodic Update Steering Committee, the Planning Commission, and City Council, changes have been made to the draft Plan.

Commentors stated that there was a lot of good information, but with the number of goals and action items, they had trouble seeing how the plan would be implemented and suggested an action plan. Staff have endeavored to accommodate this request, but not with an action plan. First, the goals were restructured and simplified to ensure that they were in fact goals and not objectives or action items. The goals remain at the end of the associated chapter. There was a fair amount of redundancy found in the action items. For instance, trails were addressed in mobility, parks, and placemaking. For this reason, all of the action items were culled and moved to a final chapter (Chapter 15). This chapter is arranged to align with the strategic targets of the Healing Waters Strategic Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan and the Healing Waters Strategic Plan are intended to function together as complementary decision-making tools. The Comprehensive Plan establishes the City's long-range policy direction for growth, land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, parks, environmental stewardship, climate resiliency, placemaking, and development standards. The Healing Waters Strategic Plan translates that long-range direction into a practical framework for governance, budgeting, departmental work plans, performance measurement, and accountability. Together, the two plans help ensure that Medical Lake's day-to-day decisions, annual priorities, capital investments, and long-term policy choices remain aligned with the City's vision, mission, values, and community expectations.

To support this process, Chapter 14: Next Steps was added. This chapter outlines how the goals and actions identified in the Comprehensive Plan are implemented through the Strategic Plan and departmental work plans. It also describes the roles of budgeting, capital planning, and performance measurements in advancing plan objectives, and explains how these activities inform future amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

Commenters expressed a desire for a stronger emphasis on economic development within the plan. Given the City's limited resources, it is important to focus on strategies that are both

achievable and within the City's sphere of influence. Research and best practices demonstrate that placemaking initiatives, including improvements to public spaces and community programming, can contribute positively to economic development by enhancing community vitality and attracting residents, visitors, and investment. In response to this feedback, a new section titled "Placemaking and Economic Development" was added to Chapter 11.

As we continue work on impact fees, it is important that we establish a level of service (LOS) for Parks. LOS for Parks is approached a little differently than streets and utilities. Park location and amenity minimums are now addressed in a new section titled, "Level of Service" in Chapter 8.

Following this line of thought, the need for park space in UGA expansion areas was added to Chapter 12 in a section titled, "Integrating Park Space", along with a section on future zoning designations.

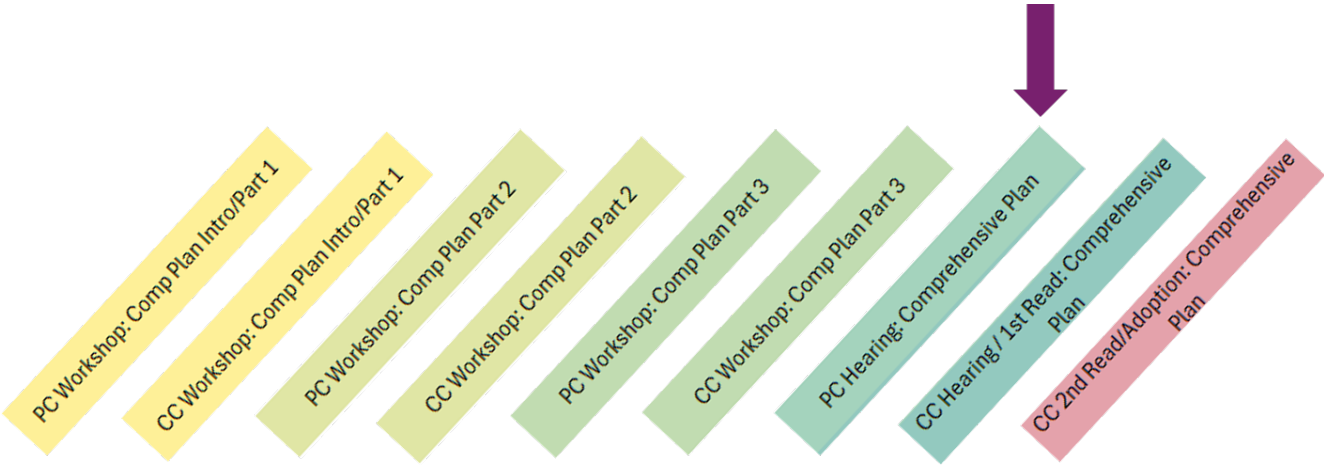
Finally, some additional information regarding critical areas and climate resiliency was added to Chapter 5: Land Use, in response to comments from the Department of Natural Resources.

Background Discussion:

The Growth Management Act mandates that all fully-planning cities have comprehensive plan with land use, housing, capital facilities, utilities, transportation, and climate change elements.

Medical Lake is choosing to present a new comprehensive plan that serves the needs and desires of the community first, while still meeting the requirements of the State.

This is the step 7 of a 9-step process for adopting a new comprehensive plan.



Public Involvement:

The draft Plan is informed by and created with the information gathered in outreach activities throughout 2025 and the help of Periodic Update Steering Committee. The public is invited to provide comment on this draft at tonight's hearing and a public hearing at City Council on August 4th. In addition, the draft is available on the City website for review and comment by the public.

Next Steps:

When a recommendation is made by the Planning Commission, a public hearing will be held with City Council. This hearing is currently scheduled for August 4, 2026.