



City of Medical Lake
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Medical Lake, WA 99022-0369

9/1/2026 City Council Meeting

To: City Council
From: Elisa Rodriguez, Senior Planner
TOPIC: Periodic Update: Comprehensive Plan (Ordinance 1150)

Requested Action:

Hold a public hearing and consider Ordinance 1150, adoption of the Medical Lake Comprehensive Plan 2046

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.

Commenters noted that while the plan contained valuable information, the number of goals and action items made implementation difficult to understand and prompted requests for an action plan. In response, staff restructured and simplified the goals to clearly distinguish them from objectives and action items. Redundant action items were consolidated and relocated to a new implementation chapter (Chapter 15), organized around the strategic targets of the Healing Waters Strategic Plan. Goals remain within their respective chapters for context and continuity.

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.

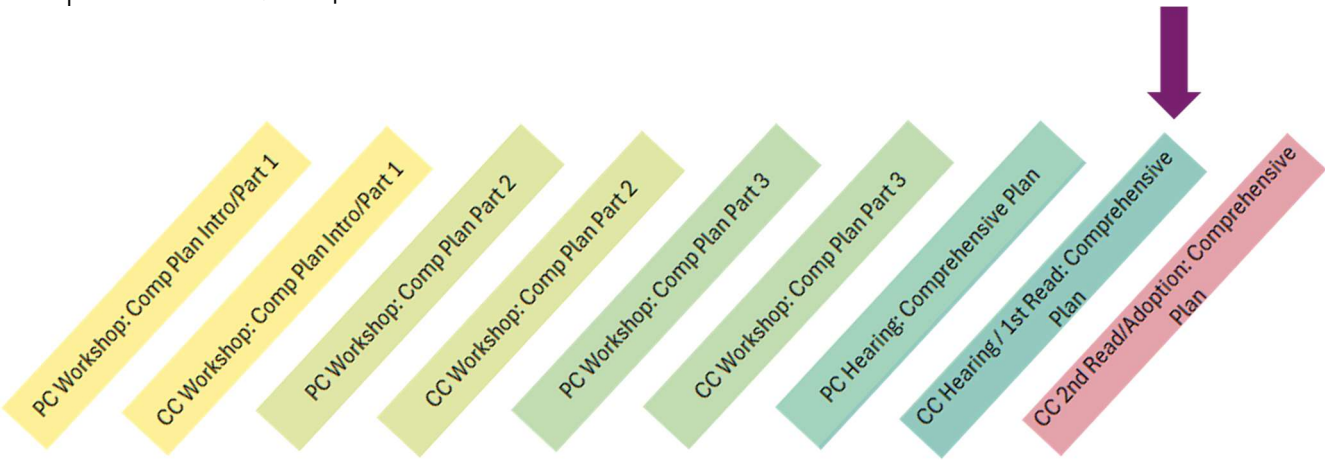
Some additional information regarding critical areas and climate resiliency was added to Chapter 5: Land Use, in response to comments from the Department of Natural Resources.

The Department of Commerce reviews comprehensive plans for consistency with the Growth Management Act. Their comments resulted in a summary of the Housing Needs Assessment, a new table, and new housing goals in Chapter 2: Housing. A Future Land Use Map was added to Chapter 5: Land Use along with a paragraph on page 29, clarifying our current and proposed UGA expansion areas.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on July 23 and August 27, 2026, considered the approval criteria, and unanimously recommended approval to the City Council.

Background Discussion:

This public hearing is the eighth step in a nine-step process for adoption of the Medical Lake Comprehensive Plan 2046.



Public Involvement:

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on August 27, 2026. In addition, draft plan materials are available on the City website for review and comment by the public.

Next Steps:

A second read of Ordinance 1150 is scheduled for the September 15, 2026 City Council meeting.