



MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Policy Commission
FROM: Christen Leeson, Senior Planner
RE: Title 18 Update – Part 5, IMC 18.500 – 18.506 Specified Use Standards
DATE: May 12, 2022

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of the May 12th, 2022 Planning Policy Commission (PPC) meeting is to provide comments and feedback pertaining to Part 5, Specified Use Standards.

Background

The City of Issaquah currently regulates Land Use Standards across separate regulatory codes. Three standalone tables of permitted uses are in the following locations: for Central Issaquah in Central Issaquah Design and Development Standards (CIDDS) Chapter 4; for Issaquah Highlands and Talus in the Replacement Regulations at IMC 18.19B and IMC 18.19C, respectively; and for the rest of the City in IMC 18.06. Similarly, specific standards that certain uses must adhere to are mentioned as footnotes underneath these existing tables, which cross-reference other chapters within CIDDS, IMC 18.19B, IMC 18.19, or, most commonly, IMC 18.06 and IMC 18.07. The Council Ad Hoc Committee's Title 18 Update Desired Goals and Outcome document identifies the following priority relevant to this topic:

Goal 6: *Increase housing diversity.*

Desired Outcomes:

- Housing affordability better meets the needs of individuals and families across the income spectrum and diverse cultural communities to live and work in the community.
- Across the city there are a variety of public amenities, housing types, educational, and other services that contribute to a livable community.

Goal 8: *Neighborhoods retain their charm and distinctive character, pattern, and setting that includes both built and natural environments. Update codes and standards to retain and protect essential characteristics in established neighborhoods.*

Desired Outcomes:

- Neighborhoods retain their charm and distinctive character, pattern, and setting that includes both built and natural environments.

Goal 13: Modernize code and incorporate best practices.

Desired Outcomes:

- Create a well-organized, clear code that improves public access to information; provides tools that address community needs; and helps create the kinds of places the community expects.

Draft Chapter 18.402 consolidates existing land use standards and provides cross-referencing to draft Chapter 18.500, which consolidates existing use permissions into one table.

The new draft chapters consolidate existing sections from the following documents:

- IMC 18.06 – Establishment of Zoning Districts
- IMC 18.07 – Required Development and Design Standards
- IMC 18.19A -- CIDDS 4, Zoning Districts, Uses and Standards Summary
- IMC 18.19B – Issaquah Highlands Replacement Regulations
- IMC 18.19C – Talus Replacement Regulations

The packet includes a summary of substantial changes, which focus on improvements to organization of code, process or implementation of direction from the Administration or the Commission. The following Summary describes the notable changes made.

Summary of Changes for IMC 18.500 Specified Uses

The following summarizes the substantive changes made to develop the proposed **18.500 Land use Standards** chapter and the reasoning behind it. The changes are based on the gaps analysis, previous discussions with the Planning Policy Commission, a Staff evaluation of existing code and feedback from the City attorney's office.

CHANGE	REASON
1. The various standards in the chapter were reviewed and segregated. Standards that apply across the zone were moved to 18.400, Zones. For example Home Businesses, which are allowed in any residential zone were moved. Standards that apply to a specific use, regardless of the zone, remain in Part 5. For example, Self-Storage.	Existing IMC 18.07 was split up to form Permitted Uses and Specified Uses. This change simplifies city code and reduces redundancy.
2. Consolidated uses from Specified Uses and removed redundant language.	The update is to clarify existing regulations to enable consistency in application and regulation
3. The standards were organized by use, similar to 18.07, but more uses were identified and organized into the chapters:	Existing IMC 18.07 was split up to form Permitted Uses and Specified Uses. This

CHANGE	REASON
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18.500 Residential Use Standards • 18.502 Commercial, Retail, and Mixed Standards • 18.504 Industrial Use Standards • 18.506 Public, Institutional, and Open Space Use Standards 	change simplifies city code and greatly reduces redundancy.
4. Temporary and Accessory Use standard chapters, 18.508 and 18.510 were moved to another section of code that will be reviewed later in the project.	Change part of code consolidation and simplification.
5. Design requirements for certain uses are consistent across the City except where there are architectural standards in place such as Central Issaquah’s Design Manual or Olde Town’s Architectural Standards for Single Family-Duplex or where there are active Architectural Review Committees such as at Issaquah Highlands and Talus.	Update improves City process and consistency
6. Exceptions and Deviations were moved to Procedures and will be reviewed later in this project.	Change part of code consolidation and simplification.
7. Redundancies and duplicative text were removed, such as code referencing procedures, parking, circulation, and screening aspects of the use that are being addressed in other chapters.	Improve clarity and remove duplication without making substantive changes.
8. Standards have been written to be specific and clear. For example Roofline Variation now specifies how much of a vertical offset and horizontal offset for the ridge line as well as how much roof pitch is necessary.	Changed for clarity and improvement to City process
9. Residential Mixed Use was deleted because it was determined that other sections replaced it	Improve clarity and remove duplication without making substantive changes.
10. Outdoor Recreation section was streamlined to focus on private facilities	Change improves clarity so vague components were eliminated
11. Standards that read as guidelines—for example, “should,” “encourage,” “consider” verbs—were integrated into code intent sections	Update to provide guidance, or where revised to be more specific in new code.
12. Standards that included less direct language for requirements—for example, “shall” or “shall not”—were replaced with “must” or “may not”	Revisions improve clarity of code.

Previous Meetings

- October 28, 2021 – Joint Meeting Planning Policy Commission with Development Commission: Zoning and Uses, ([agenda](#) / [video](#) / [minutes](#))

Timeline

- May 12th, 2022 – Public Hearing: IMC 18.300 Subdivisions, IMC 18.400 Zones, IMC 18.402 Permitted Uses, IMC 18.404 Form and Intensity, and IMC 18.500 Land Use Standards.
- May 26th, 2022 – Deliberation: Title 18 – IMC 18.400 IMC 18.300 Subdivisions, IMC 18.400 Zones, IMC 18.402 Permitted Uses, IMC 18.404 Form and Intensity, and IMC 18.500 Land Use Standards
- September 2022 – Public Hearings: Consolidated Draft Title 18 Update

Attachments

- A. Summary of Public Comments

B. Summary of Public Comments

Date	Commentor Name	Topic	Comment	Response Notes
7/21/2021	Susan Neville	Land Use Standards	Incentives need to be developed to facilitate affordable housing (expedited permits, reduced fees etc) - things that will save a builder significant money, otherwise they will only build what makes them the most profit	Affordable housing credits and incentives will be addressed in the forthcoming section 18.514, Affordable Housing, later this summer. No housing incentives were incorporated into the Specified Use Standard update. In addition to the Affordable Housing chapter being drafted for this summer, incentives will be considered in developing the Housing Action Plan and implementing regulations, as well as the upcoming Comp Plan Update work.
7/26/2021	Kristi Tripple	Land Use Standards	18.07.430 (Manufactured Housing) Enable tiny homes as ADUs. .430 (MF Stds) section 5C - min outdoor space up to 48sf per unit private space. Can an element be added in lieu of proximity to park space? ADU - why not one in garage & in yard. Limit one to 500SF.	This update does not make substantive changes to housing standards, including Accessory Dwelling Unit provisions or Tiny Houses. However, policy changes to housing and uses will occur with the Comprehensive Plan Update. Outdoor space is now discussed in the Community Spaces and Green Necklace chapter of code, IMC 18.612, and will be considered in the next phase of review
9/9/2021	Mary Lynch	Land Use Standards	Cluster development has required reduction of buffers and also portions of HOA to be consider protected open space - Yet there is really nothing in existing Code that encourages new owners to maintain these areas or protect them from encroachments by other property owners.	Policy discussions are ongoing on the use of Cluster Development standards. For this draft existing text is maintained
10/28/2021	Tia B. Heim	Land Use Standards	The UV-COM/RET zoning has created non-conforming situations for non-residential uses and made develop economically unfeasible, which leads to undevelopable vacant parcels. No development has occurred in the Highlands since the DA has been terminated. Believes the community would like more retail uses in the Highlands. Specific concerns: 50% structure parking requirement and 1.0 FAR minimum. Would like the City to seek and consider expert feedback on market viability of particular uses. Thinks consolidating zoning designations is a good idea and	This code update did not change use standards or consolidate zoning for the UV-COM/RET zone. However, the commenter brings up important policy issues that the City will consider in future code analysis work or during land use analysis for the Comprehensive Plan update.

Date	Commentor Name	Topic	Comment	Response Notes
			<p>should extend to UV-COM/RET. UV-COM/RET should allow for multi-family and mixed-use development.</p>	
12/2/2021	Brook Lang	Land Use Standards	<p>Asked why an administrative adjustment would be made if there are well-defined standards. An administrative adjustment should be available only in unique situations that are not accounted for. A question is if there are no complaints in a usual situation, would an administrative adjustment be given solely because the applicant doesn't like the standard.</p>	<p>This code update aims to clarify many of the allowed changes and adjustments, in the Land Use Standards and throughout. The proposed approach is to simplify administrative adjustments, now called deviations. The deviations will now be regulated consistently in the forthcoming Part 2, Procedures. While additional criteria may continue to exist in code, the intent behind this change will be to ensure that adjustments are not just given solely because applicants do not agree with the standards.</p>