



MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Policy Commission
FROM: Minnie Dhaliwal, CPD Director
RE: Title 18 Update – IMC 18.606 Building Design
DATE: June 9, 2022

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of the June 9th, 2022, Plan Planning Policy Commission (PPC) meeting is to seek comments and feedback pertaining to IMC 18.606 Building and Design.

Background

The Council Ad Hoc Committee's Title 18 Update Desired Goals and Outcome document identifies the following priority relevant to this topic:

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 Outcome:

- 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.

The draft code for Building Design consolidates land use development standards from IMC 18.07, Olde Town Design Standards, Olde Town Architectural Standards, Central Issaquah Development and Design Standards including the Urban Design Manual, and Issaquah Highlands and Talus Replacement Regulations.

The packet includes a summary of substantial changes in Attachment A, that focus on improvements to organization of code, process or implementation of direction from the Administration or the Commission; but are actions that do not warrant discussion with the Commission. The following Analysis includes the additional information to help the Commission’s discussion of the policy questions posed for this section of code.

Analysis

Summary of Substantive Changes:

The following summarizes the substantive changes made to develop the proposed **18.606 Building Design**. 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. Purpose and Intent section was adapted from CIDDS 14.1, Building Design, Intent.	Enables consistency in application and regulations.
2. Building design general standards were adapted from CIDDS 14.2, Building Design Standards, General Standards.	Simplifies code and adds clarity for development regulations.
3. New section of code adapted from CIDDS 14.2.G on sustainable building design and revised to implement goals of the Climate Action Plan, including requiring LEED Gold or Built Green 4 star.	Update aligns with the city plan and goals.
4. Building Height standards was moved from Form and Intensity to Building and Design.	Standards consolidated with building standards and also supports the sustainable building approach
5. New energy code requiring solar and heat pumps added.	The state just adopted a revised energy code which will require these elements by July 2023.
6. Building Massing and Articulation section was adapted from CIDDS 14.3, Building Mass and Design. CIDDS 14.3.A standards, 1,2, and 4, which discuss setbacks of building heights over 3 stories, breaking buildings into smaller buildings, and buildings with footprints greater than 45,000 sq. ft. were removed based on staff feedback and conflict with UD standards.	Eliminates confusion and creates consistency in application.

7. Standards from CIDDS 14.5 Weather Protection and UD.2.3.5, Weather Protection. Standard A was adapted from UD 2.3.5 were consolidated and edited for clarity.	The update is to clarify existing regulations to enable consistency in application and regulation.
8. Multi-family building massing design façade modulation standards clarified with additional language and graphics.	The update is to clarify existing regulations to enable consistency in application and regulation.
9. Throughout all sections, additional graphics inserted.	Additional graphics improve clarity of requirements.
10. Established a deviation process for window transparency.	Narrowed the deviation process to streamline permit review.
11. A building step back requirement was revised to allow step backs to occur after the first or second floor but no higher than the sixth floor.	Based on Redmond’s code, this was revised, after consultation with Crandall Arambula, the author of the Design Manual. It recognizes that from a constructability perspective, the best place to make the step back is where taller buildings switch from a concrete based of 1-2 stories to wood construction for the remainder of the building. This switch in materials may provide better weather seal while also giving builders flexibility in considering the variety of uses in the building.
12. Standards listed as “inappropriate” have been incorporated into the intent section for Multi-Family, or rewritten to be prescriptive	Removed due to lack of enforceability and vagueness.
13. Skybridge regulations removed from the land use code and will be placed in the City Street Standards.	Skybridges are likely to be placed over a public right of way or a private street, which are regulated by the City Street Standards. Creates consistency in regulations.

Previous Meetings

- January 20, 2021 – Planning Policy Commission & Development Commission: Building and Design, ([Agenda/ Minutes/Video](#))
- January 27, 2021 – Planning Policy Commission: Building and Design, ([Agenda/ Minutes/Video](#))

Things to Consider: Policy Discussion

There are no policy questions associated with Building Design, however, as always the PPC should consider whether the proposed changes adequately address the goals and outcomes identified by Council?

Timeline

- June 9th, 2022 – Public Hearing: IMC 18.606 Building Design, IMC 18.400 Zones, IMC 18.402 Permitted Uses.
- June 23rd, 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

A. Summary of Public Comments

Date	Commentor Name	Topic	Comment	Response Notes
7/16/2021	Larry Franks	Title 16 Building Code	Carefully construct regulations and standards for impervious surfaces and runoff. Stream level and turbidity already rise with a moderate amount of precipitation. Contaminated runoff and silt-laden water is dangerous for fish. The current state of runoff has little chance to recharge groundwater.	Impervious surface standards are addressed with the Form and Intensity section. Water quality and storm water regulations are peripherially included in this update and different titles (other than Title 18) address these standards.
7/21/2021	Susan Neville	Building & Design	New projects need to achieve a minimum level of sustainability - example, LEED Silver, Built Green 3 Star etc.	New incentives for LEED and Built Green standards have been proposed in this draft in 18.606, requiring LEED or Built Green 4 Star for Non-residential and mixed-use buildings over 20,000 square feet.
7/22/2021	Steve Bolliger	Building & Design	I support incorporating both climate change mitigation and sustainability into all sections of the code and adopting a “performance based” approach to development. The performance approach would establish strong minimum thresholds to meet but also provide meaningful incentives for a developer or builder to go beyond minimums by offering potential increases in FAR and height.	Staff agree that climate mitigation and sustainability needs to be integrated into all sections of code. The current approach is to provide incentives and requirements for building and design, such as for LEED and Built Green standards. This draft, however, does not propose any changes in FAR and height requirements and limits.
1/30/2022	Connie Marsh	Building & Design	This comment is regarding whether a site needs to completely comply with regulations and what incremental compliance looks like. During the joint DC & PPC meeting the Jacksons Shell Station was presented as an example. The plan set shows this site having a 50-foot wetland buffer and being located within the flood plain. When should a site with	We recognize that the current code is limited on when an existing building must comply with the standards upon redevelopment. This is being addressed in a new thresholds section in the forthcoming procedures and permitting chapters.

critical areas need to adhere to the new code? This conversation cannot be split apart ignoring the environment and non-confirming conditions.

We are encouraging a delicate balance of current vs. future be kept in mind. In regard to thresholds for the design manual or a neighborhood overlay, code must allow for existing buildings to easily and efficiently be maintained, enhanced, and/or updated. If the codes are too onerous, building owners are discouraged from reinvesting in/updating their properties and blight will happen faster as the buildings age. The updated code should enable an existing building/development to address parcel constraints or opportunities and use; allow for flexibility in design and/or developer obligations; and not be financially burdened.

Older buildings serve a necessary need with industrial flex use that enables small businesses that provide services residents expect. New construction is very expensive and is harder for most startups and small businesses to accommodate. Buildings can have multiple uses throughout the life of the building. A building's use should be able to change over time without adding extra mandates and costs to keep the rents affordable. Making the most of a building and its useful life is an important aspect of sustainability.

As far as ensuring consistency with existing standards, the current approach is to apply standards in a consolidated code across the City. Neighborhoods with differing standards and design standards are maintained through Part 7, Neighborhood Overlays. The goal is to simplify the existing baseline standards through consolidation, while ensuring continuity of neighborhood characteristics.

We recognize that the current code is limited on when an existing building must comply with the standards upon redevelopment. This is being addressed in a new thresholds section in the forthcoming procedures and permitting chapters. The intent will be to ensure that older or existing buildings are not encumbered with complying with the code requirements.

Kristi Tripple

Building & Design

2/23/2022	Tia Heim	Building & Design	<p>Request that staff more clearly identify the proposed changes, taking into consideration different areas of the City. Also, request that staff provide examples from other jurisdictions and analysis of how that has worked in other jurisdictions.</p> <p>How does this proposed code ensure consistency of new projects within the neighborhoods that are already developed?</p> <p>It is essential that regulators understand the costs and impacts of those regulations. What is the estimate cost that this adds to a multifamily or complex project? Has impacts on housing affordability, commercial project viability and ability to develop new ball fields and lighted outdoor recreational spaces been considered?</p> <p>How would the prohibition on outlining buildings or roofs with LED lights or the prohibition on blinking lights found in this proposed code be consistent with holiday lighting – particularly in retail areas?</p> <p>Why include some ROW lighting standards in this code section, if they are found elsewhere in the IMC? Requiring property owners to look in multiple places for lighting requirements seems counter to the stated goal of streamlining and making the IMC more user-friendly. The memo says they are included on a temporary basis but there is no evidence of that temporary nature in the draft</p>	<p>The lighting standards are consolidated and addressed in the new chapter, 18.614. The code intends to balance safety, aesthetics, and dark sky standards.</p> <p>As far as ensuring consistency with existing standards, the current approach is to apply standards in a consolidated code across the City. Neighborhoods with differing standards and design standards are maintained through Part 7, Neighborhood Overlays. The goal is to simplify the existing baseline standards through consolidation, while ensuring continuity of neighborhood characteristics.</p> <p>As far as costs, the goal of the consolidation will be greater consistency and clear design standards and expectations for projects, ensuring greater ability of the city and projects to anticipate the requirements of code.</p> <p>Flexibility is provided in more concrete situations through deviation sections in code chapters. If an applicant wishes to pursue greater flexibility, a variance would be needed, outlined in the forthcoming Procedures chapter.</p> <p>Research was conducted on peer cities on drafting the code. Such cities included Redmond, Kirkland, Bellevue, and others based on the content of the code. The content of such research was integrated into update Memos for PPC. And where relevant, added into code with explainers on the code standard inspiration.</p>
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code itself?

Have you considered how the limitations on lighting imposed by this proposed code will impact safety?

Where are the provisions that allow for exceptions and flexibility?