



MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Policy Commission
FROM: Minnie Dhaliwal, CPD Director
RE: Title 18 Update – IMC 18.604 Site Planning and Urban Design
DATE: June 9, 2022

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of the June 9, 2022, joint Planning Policy Commission (PPC) and Development Commission (DC) meeting is to hold a public hearing to receive comments and feedback pertaining to IMC 18.604 Urban Design and Site Planning.

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 Urban Design and Site Planning consolidates Central Issaquah Development and Design Standards, Olde Town Design Standards, Olde Town Architectural Standards, Central Issaquah Design Manual portions on Urban Design, 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 **18.604 Urban Design and Site Planning**. 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. Created the Intent section A by merging CIDDS 11.0, Site Design Intent; Subsections A.1 - 5 are adapted from CIDDS 11.2 Site Design - General Standards.	Enables consistency in application and regulation.
2. Remove the Universal design provisions.	The existing provision is vague and difficult to implement. This item has been moved to the White Board to allows consideration of the best means to implement.
3. Building orientation and subsection 1 is adapted from CIDDS 11.4, Environmentally Critical Areas, CIDDS 18, Design Manual, UD.1.1.1, Natural Context, and UD.2.3.2.3 Building Edges, Setbacks and Step Backs, Natural Areas	Merged sections to simplify the code and remove duplicate language.
4. Through-block passages and trails removed from the preservation of views and will be incorporated into the Public Works Street Standards.	Update improves City process and creates consistency.
5. Merged the Olde Town MF Standards and Ground Level Details (When Ground Floor Is Commercial) to create the Commercial Use in Mixed Use Buildings section.	The update is to clarify existing regulations to enable consistency in application and regulation.
6. Consolidated the Urban Design Manual Description on Groundfloor, Multi-family Entries,	The update is to clarify existing regulations to enable consistency in application and regulation.

UD 2.3.3.1 and CIDDS 14.4 to develop the Multi-family entries section.	
7. Combined the language from IMC 18.19B&C.240, Single family and townhouse standards, and Olde Town SF-D Standards 6.0 to create the Single Family Driveways and Garages section.	The update is to simplify existing regulations and enable consistency in application and regulation.
8. This draft presents an alternative Administrative Adjustment of Standards (AAS) process which more narrowly defines which standards can be changed through a “deviation” process. Now, AASs can only be requested for building location to preserve view corridors.	Limits what requirements can be adjusted to simplifies reviews.
9. Throughout the chapter “should” has been replaced with “must”.	Eliminates vagueness and allows staff to enforce the code.
10. Added Solid Waste Collection Space Standards to the code.	Enforceability, consolidation, and simplification.

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 Site Planning and Urban 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

B. 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 peripherally included in this update and different titles (other than Title 18) address these standards.
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 critical areas need to adhere to the new code? This conversation cannot be split apart ignoring the environment and non-confirming conditions.	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.

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?