

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

July 20, 2026



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To attend the City Council meeting virtually register here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dbglTgLXQ2idghTEDLD-pw

Accessibility

The City of Ellensburg strives to make our services, programs, and activities readily accessible.

- Closed Captioning is available to Zoom viewers. To enable closed captioning, you will need to click on the "CC" button at the bottom of your Zoom screen and then select either "Show Subtitle" or "View Full Transcript."
- Members of the public who do not speak English or who have limited proficiency may request an interpreter if they wish to participate in public meetings.
- The City will provide reasonable accommodation for members of the public with disabilities.

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COUNCIL MEETING

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

All City Council meetings are broadcast on Charter/Spectrum Channel 191 and available to livestream on Ellensburg Community Television at www.ectv2.com or on YouTube at [ECTV Ellensburg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv3v3v3v3v3v3v3v3v3v3v3). You may also attend by phone, only, and listen to the meeting by following the registration instructions under “Procedure for Remote Participation During Meeting” below. Once you register, you will be sent a meeting invitation with a phone number for the meeting.

Public comment on Non-Agenda Issues (Item No. 7) is limited to a combined total of thirty (30) minutes unless Council votes to extend the time. Testimony or comments will be accepted in the following manner:

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

- **Written comments submitted in advance of meeting**
Submit written comments by mail to Beth Leader, City Clerk, Ellensburg City Hall, 501 N. Anderson St., Ellensburg, WA 98926, or via email to: cityclerk@ellensburgwa.gov. Comments received by 5 p.m. on the meeting date will be compiled, sent to the City Council and entered into the record.
- **Comments for public hearings**
Written comments must be received by the City Clerk by 5 p.m. on the meeting date. Comments can either be mailed to Beth Leader, City Clerk, Ellensburg City Hall, 501 N. Anderson St., Ellensburg, WA 98926, or sent via email to: cityclerk@ellensburgwa.gov. Comments received by 5 p.m. on the meeting date will be compiled, sent to the City Council and entered into the record.

PROCEDURE FOR REMOTE PARTICIPATION DURING MEETING

1. ***Advance registration is required to provide public comment or hearing testimony via remote meeting attendance. Once registered, you will receive an email with the meeting link and phone number (for those who wish to call into the meeting).***
 - a) Anyone wishing to provide public comment on ***Non-Agenda Issues*** (Item No. 7 on the Agenda) must: 1. Register via the Zoom link by no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting; and 2. Provide a description in the Zoom registration form of the topic upon which they wish to speak with sufficient detail to allow the Mayor to determine whether it pertains to City business or a matter over which Council has control.
 - b) Anyone wishing to speak on ***all other Agenda items*** where it specifically states “Public Comment Opportunity” must register prior to 7 p.m. the day of the meeting.
2. **Join the meeting early**, as you may need to download the app in advance to participate. Once you’ve joined the meeting, your camera and microphone will be muted until you are recognized by the Mayor to speak.
3. Please note that there may be several items on the City Council Agenda that will precede the agenda item you wish to address.
4. **The Mayor will identify the agenda item** and ask if anyone wishes to speak on the matter.
5. If you wish to speak on an agenda item, you must:
 - a) **Wait to be called upon by the Mayor** using your name, e-mail, or phone number used to log in to the teleconference.
 - b) **Raise your “virtual hand”** in the corner of Zoom application on the computer screen or press *9 on your phone. Raising your hand signals the moderator that you wish to speak.
6. **Please state your name, whether you live in the City of Ellensburg, Kittitas County or elsewhere, and whether you are representing only yourself or others.**

PROCEDURE FOR IN-PERSON PARTICIPATION (COUNCIL CHAMBERS)

- ◆ When recognized, approach the microphone provided on the right side of the room.
- ◆ Please state your name, whether you live in the City of Ellensburg, Kittitas County or elsewhere, and whether you are representing only yourself or others.
- ◆ Each speaker's comments are to be limited to 3 MINUTES.
- ◆ Submit any written comments to the City Clerk.
- ◆ Speakers may not identify themselves as candidates for elective public office or make any statements which assist or discuss the campaign of a candidate for elective office or discuss or campaign for or against a ballot proposition (unless the ballot proposition is being considered as part of the City Council agenda item).

PUBLIC COMMENT RULES FOR ALL MEETING PARTICIPANTS

1. Each speaker's comments are to be limited to 3 MINUTES.
2. Speakers are cautioned not to engage in conduct that disrupts, disturbs or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the Council meeting.
3. Speakers may not identify themselves as candidates for elective public office or make any statements which assist or discuss the campaign of a candidate for elective office or discuss or campaign for or against a ballot proposition (unless the ballot proposition is being considered as part of the City Council agenda item).
4. Speakers providing comments on Item 7, Non-Agenda Issues, may only address the Council on matters which concern the City's business or over which the Council has control, and must announce the topic upon which they wish to speak before making their comments.

Please note: City Council Rules provide that no action will be taken by the Council at the meeting at which a subject is first introduced during the citizen comment period (Item 7 on the Agenda). Council may consider an item at a future meeting, thus you may wish to concisely state your concern and request placement of your matter on a future agenda. Staff will follow up with speakers as necessary.

CONSENT AGENDA

Members of the audience may request items be removed from the consent agenda by asking for recognition and making the request during Agenda Approval. Items will not be removed from the consent agenda unless your request is confirmed by a councilmember.

AGENDA ITEMS

If you wish to have an item placed on a Council agenda, a written request should be delivered to the City Manager's Office prior to noon on the Monday preceding the Council meeting. Assistance will be provided in preparing a request if you wish to contact the City Clerk at (509) 925-8614.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

City Council accepts testimony or comments in person or via remote testimony on a particular subject schedule for Public Hearing. Council will consider all testimony, respond to any questions, and take action after the public hearing is closed. Testimony or comments will be accepted in the following manner:

1. When recognized,
 - If attending in the Council Chambers, approach the microphone provided on the right side of the room.
 - If attending remotely, raise your "virtual hand" in the corner of Zoom application on the computer screen or press *9 on your phone.
2. Please state your name, address, and whether you are representing only yourself or others.
3. Please limit your comments to 5 MINUTES.
4. Submit written comments to the City Clerk.

**CITY OF ELLENSBURG
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
Council Chambers
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926
And remotely via Zoom
Monday, July 20, 2026
7:00 PM - Regular Meeting**

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

2. Proclamations (No Public Comment)

2.A Recognizing and Honoring the 80th Anniversary of KXLE-AM 1240 6

3. Awards and Recognitions

4. Approval of Agenda (No Public Comment)

5. Consent Agenda (No Public Comment)

Items listed below have been distributed to Councilmembers in advance for study and will be enacted by one motion. If separate discussion is desired on an item, that item may be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda at the request of a Councilmember or at the request of a member of the public with concurrence of a Councilmember. Requests to remove items should be made under Item 4 Approval of Agenda.

5.A Approve Minutes of July 6, 2026 Regular Meeting 7

5.B Approve Minutes of July 6, 2026 Study Session 12

5.C Acknowledge Minutes of Boards and Commissions 13

5.D Award Bid Call No. 2026-11 Tree Trimming Contract Utility Electrical
Distribution System to Arbor Works LLC 21

5.E Approval for Grant Application for Three New Police Officers Under House Bill
2015 23

5.F Bid Award - Bid Call 2026-09 Ellensburg Public Library and Hal Holmes
Community Center HVAC Replacement 25

5.G Approve July 20, 2026 Voucher Listing 27

6. Petitions, Protests, and Communications

7. Public Comment on Non-agenda Items

8. Business Requiring Public Hearings

9.	Introduction and Adoption of Ordinances and Resolutions	
9.A	Second Reading of Ordinance 4991 Approving Rezone of Parcel 242833 from Residential Medium (R-M) to Residential High (R-H). (Public Comment Opportunity)	28
9.B	Ordinance 4992 (First Reading) - Urban Forestry Code, Repeal and Replace Chapter 4.36 Street Trees (Public Comment Opportunity)	37
10.	Unfinished Business	
11.	New Business	
11.A	First and Pine Property Contribution Letter of Intent (Public Comment Opportunity)	49
11.B	2026 Comprehensive Plan - Chapter 2 Discussion - Our Community: Access, Engagement, and Belonging (Public Comment Opportunity)	60
12.	Miscellaneous	
12.A	Manager's Report (No Public Comment)	102
12.B	Councilmembers' Reports (No Public Comment)	
13.	Executive Session	
14.	Adjournment	



City of Ellensburg

PROCLAMATION

Recognizing and Honoring the 80th Anniversary of KXLE-AM 1240

WHEREAS, on July 19, 1946, the radio station now known as KXLE-AM 1240 first signed on the air in Ellensburg, Washington, as **KCOW-AM**, beginning 80 years of local broadcasting service to Ellensburg and the Kittitas Valley; and

WHEREAS, over the past eight decades, the station has helped share local news, weather, public service information, community announcements, school and civic events, local sports, music, and other important information to Ellensburg residents; and

WHEREAS, local radio has played an important role in keeping residents connected with their community, including during times of celebration, emergency, growth, and change; and

WHEREAS, KXLE-AM 1240 has been part of Ellensburg's history for generations, reflecting the voices, events, organizations, schools, businesses, and public service efforts that help define the community; and

WHEREAS, the 80th anniversary of KXLE-AM 1240 provides an opportunity to recognize the station's long history of local service and the many broadcasters, listeners, community members, and local organizations who have been part of that history; and

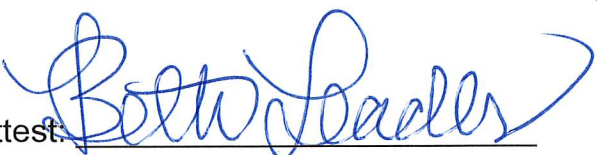
WHEREAS, the City of Ellensburg recognizes the importance of local communication, community information, and shared civic life in strengthening the connection among residents;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHERMORE RESOLVED that as the Mayor of the City of Ellensburg, I do hereby proclaim hereby recognize and congratulate KXLE-AM 1240 on its 80th anniversary and thank the station for its continued service to the Ellensburg community.

Signed this 20th day of July, 2026.



Mayor

Attest: 

City Clerk



CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Date of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Place of Meeting

Minutes of City Council, Regular Meeting

July 6, 2026

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

501 North Anderson Street

Ellensburg, WA 98926

And remotely via Zoom

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Palmer

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Roll Call Present: Sarah Beauchamp, Rich Elliott, Nancy Goodloe, Nancy Lillquist, David Miller, Delano Palmer, Joshua Thompson (present remotely)

Others present in person: City Manager Behrends Cerniwey, City Attorney Horner, City Clerk Leader, Community Development Director Carlson, Public Works Director Lyyski, Assistant City Engineer Mattson, City Engineer Mayo, HR Director Young, Transit Manager Dunbar and approximately six members of the public

Others present remotely via Zoom: Eight members of the public

2. Proclamations

2.A Rural Transit Day

Betsy Dunbar, Transit Manager, read the proclamation.

3. Awards and Recognitions

4. Approval of Agenda

Councilmember Palmer moved to approve the Agenda as presented. **Motion Approved 7-0**

5. Consent Agenda

5.A Approve Minutes of June 15, 2026 Regular Meeting

5.B Acknowledge Minutes of Boards and Commissions

5.C Bid Award – Bid Call No. 2026-13, Wastewater Treatment Plant Aeration Basin Upgrades

5.D Sunnyside Jail Contract Renewal

5.E Approve 2026 AAEE Commission Work Plan

- 5.F Award Bid Call 2026-12 for the 2026 CBD Sidewalk Repair – Pearl Street – 3rd Avenue to 4th Avenue

- 5.G Approved July 6, 2026 Voucher Listing

Councilmember Lillquist moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. **Motion Approved 7-0**

6. Petitions, Protests, and Communications

- 6.A Council Commitment - Resolution 2026-13 Adopted June 15, 2026 (Public Comment Opportunity)
Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager, presented information in the staff report. Councilmember Goodloe requested a press release in the Daily Record and Upper County Tribune newspapers and post on the City website. Councilmembers also requested the list of commitments be posted in a prominent public location at City Hall.

7. Public Comment on Non-agenda Items

Public comment was heard from the following citizen:
Pat Kelleher

8. Business Requiring Public Hearings

- 8.A Closed Record Hearing for Rezone Application P26-024, Residential Medium (R-M) to Residential High (R-H) Zoning, and First Reading of Ordinance 4991 (Limited Public Comment)
Mayor Elliott opened the public hearing. Mayor Elliott asked the standard questions regarding appearance of fairness and conflict of interest. There were no appearance of fairness, ex parte contacts or conflicts of interest disclosed by the Mayor or Councilmembers.

Daniel Carlson, Community Development Director, presented information in the staff report. With no comments from the application and no questions from Council, Mayor Elliot closed the public hearing.

Councilmember Lillquist moved to approve rezone application request P26-024 to rezone Parcel 242833 from Residential Medium (R-M) to Residential High (R-H) and adopt the Hearing Examiner's Recommended Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Decision, and conduct first reading of Ordinance 4991. **Motion Approved 7-0**

9. Introduction and Adoption of Ordinances and Resolutions

- 9.A Ordinance 4990 (Second Reading) - June 2026 Development Regulations Amendments (Public Comment Opportunity)
Mark Rud, Associate Planner, presented information in the staff report.

Councilmember Miller moved to conduct second reading and adoption of

Ordinance 4990, amending Titles 3 and 15 of the Ellensburg City Code. **Motion Approved 7-0**

- 9.B Resolution No. 2026-16 Setting a Public Hearing to Consider Vacating a City Easement Located Between Catherine Cottages and Radio Road (Public Comment Opportunity)
Chris Horner, City Attorney, presented information in the staff report.

Councilmember Goodloe moved to adopt Resolution 2026-16, which would set a public hearing to consider vacating a City easement located between Catherine Cottages and Radio Road. **Motion Approved 6-0 (Lillquist abstained)**

10. Unfinished Business

- 10.A Catherine Cottages Revised Design (Public Comment Opportunity)
Lily Frey, Housing Program Manager, presented information in the staff report. Rebecca Wold with Habitat for Humanity and Skylar Bisom-Rapp with MAPD, presented information concerning the revised plan for Council consideration. Council asked questions of staff.

Public comment was heard on the topic from the following citizens:
Logan Scully
Stephen Greenfield (present remotely)

Councilmember Goodloe moved to authorize the Mayor to sign the amended letter of intent and direct staff to prepare an affordable housing agreement for the property contribution. **Motion Approved 6-0 (Palmer abstained)**

11. New Business

- 11.A 2026 Comprehensive Plan - Final Draft of Transportation Chapter (Public Comment Opportunity)
Derek Mayo, City Engineer, presented information in the staff report and introduced Daniel Dye with Fehr & Peers, who presented information concerning the work done on the draft chapter. Council asked questions of staff and the consultant.
- 11.B Interlocal Agreement between Kittitas County and City of Ellensburg for Funding of the Ellensburg Fieldhouse (Public Comment Opportunity)
Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager, presented information in the staff report.

Councilmember Palmer moved to approve Interlocal Agreement with Kittitas County for \$1 million for the Ellensburg Fieldhouse and authorize the City Manager to sign and initiate future actions to execute the agreement as attached or in substantially similar form. **Motion Approved 7-0**

12. Miscellaneous

12.A Manager's Report (No Public Comment)

Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager, presented information in the report. She referred to information on the dais concerning the Community Results Team for the City's Priority-Based Budget Development. Council consensus was to proceed with the proposed process.

12.B Councilmembers' Reports (No Public Comment)

- Councilmember Beauchamp requested an excused absence for the July 20, 2026 regular meeting, reported on LTAC, attended community picnic and spoke about the mural festival

Councilmember Palmer moved to approve an excused absence for Councilmember Beauchamp for the July 20, 2026 meeting. **Motion Approved 7-0**

- Councilmember Goodloe attended the Touch-a-Truck event, Juneteenth celebration, July 4th community picnic, KCCOG meeting, Homelessness & Affordable Housing Committee meeting, reported on the cold weather shelter planning, and requested an excused absence for the July 20, 2026 regular meeting

Councilmember Palmer moved to approve an excused absence for Councilmember Goodloe for the July 20, 2026 regular meeting. **Motion Approved 7-0**

- Councilmember Lillquist attended the July 4th community picnic
- Councilmember Miller attended the Touch-a-Truck event which coincided with Coffee with Council, Juneteenth celebration and July 4th community picnic, AWC conference, State audit entrance conference and Mural Festival
- Councilmember Palmer commented regarding downtown events
- Councilmember Thompson attended the July 4th community picnic, Touch-a-Truck and requested an excused absence for the August 3, 2026 meeting

Councilmember Miller moved to approve an excused absence for Councilmember Thompson for the August 3, 2026 regular meeting. **Motion Approved 7-0**

- Mayor Elliott reported the countywide burn ban will start July 7th at midnight and will likely last through September; he attended the State audit entrance conference, spoke regarding the EMS Trauma Council meeting on July 15th, spoke about proactive measures by Puget Sound Energy, and reported the KITTCOM meeting is upcoming and staffing has improved.

13. Executive Session

14. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk



CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Date of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Place of Meeting

Minutes of City Council, Study Session

July 6, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

501 North Anderson Street

Ellensburg, WA 98926

And remotely via Zoom

Study Session (No Public Comment)

Councilmembers Present: Sarah Beauchamp, Rich Elliott, Nancy Goodloe, Nancy Lillquist, David Miller, Delano Palmer, Joshua Thompson (present remotely)

Others present in person: City Manager Behrends Cerniwey, City Attorney Horner, City Clerk Leader, Water Resources Manager Springer, Water/Storm Program Coordinator McGowan, Public Works Director Lyyski, Assistant City Engineer Mattson, City Engineer Mayo, HR Director Young and one member of the public

Others present remotely via Zoom: No members of the public

- A Urban Forest Management Project Update
Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager, introduced the item. Erin McGowan, Water/Storm Program Coordinator, presented information to Council. Council asked questions of staff.

14. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Date of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Place of Meeting

**Minutes of Access, Advocacy, Equity, &
Engagement (AAEE) Commission Meeting**

June 9, 2026

3:00 PM

Council Chambers & Zoom

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Goodloe called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Goodloe welcomed and introduced the two new commission members. Kandee Cleary and Amber Hoefer did not seek reappointment and their terms expired in May.

Roll Call Present: Phil Backlund, Amber Darting, M. Eliatamby-O'Brien, Nancy Goodloe, Judd Grey, Kathryn Martell, Lorena Medina-Dirksen, and Cody Natland.

Also present: Nicole Klauss, staff member assigned to the AAEE Commission; Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager; Lisa Young, HR Director; Dan Carlson, Community Development Director; Mark Rud, Associate Planner; Ruben Cardenas, CWU Associate Vice President liaison; and 2 members of the public.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Backlund moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Natland seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioner Grey had not yet arrived).**

3. Public Comment

Chair Goodloe called for public comment. William Coleman provided public comment.

4. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Darting moved to approve the meeting minutes from the May 12 and May 19 AAEE Commission meetings. Commissioner Backlund seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioner Grey had not yet arrived).**

5. New Business

A. Associate Planner Mark Rud presented on the current draft of Comprehensive Plan Chapter 2. Community Character and Voices. Commission members provided feedback. William Coleman provided public comment.

B. City Manager Heidi Behrends Cerniwey presented on the commission's draft work plan. Commissioner Backlund made a motion to approve the work plan as summarized in the two pages for 2026. Commissioner Martell seconded the motion. During discussion, Commissioner Grey requested that staff rearrange the work plan in chronological order of due date. **Motion approved 7-0.**

C. Chair Goodloe introduced the draft Council commitment resolution that City Council will consider at the June 15 meeting and invited commission members to attend the meeting.

6. Liaison Reports

Ruben Cardenas reported that CWU is finishing their academic year and commencement is this week.

7. Subcommittee Reports

Chair Goodloe reported the Grants Subcommittee is meeting on Friday.

8. Commission Representative Reports

No reports.

9. Staff Report

Staff requested a volunteer to replace Amber Hoefer and Kandee Cleary on the Climate and Environmental Planning Task Force. Kathryn Martell volunteered for the role.

Staff reported:

- New commission members will be onboarded after the meeting.
- City is looking for Ad Hoc Committee to consider possible taxi code changes.
- Touch A Truck and Coffee With City Council are on June 17.
- Juneteenth Celebration is on June 19.
- Community Picnic is on July 4.
- The AAEE Commission will be transitioned to new staff members this summer: Lisa Young and Gretchen Delaford.

10. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Drafted by Nicole Klauss, staff member assigned to the AAEE Commission

Drafted: 6/10/26

Approved: 7/14/26



CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Date of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Place of Meeting

Minutes of Environmental Commission, Regular Meeting

April 15, 2026

4:00 PM

**Council Conference Room
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83993951704>

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

- 1.A Commission Members: Nancy Lillquist, Jordan Spradlin, Christina Wollman, Brenda DeVore, Kamran Hermann, Raven Harlin
___OPEN___: EHS Env. Club President (Ex-officio Member)

Present: Nancy Lillquist, Jordan Spradlin, Christina Wollman, Brenda DeVore, Kamran Hermann, Raven Harlin.

Other Present: Rebecca Springer - Water Resources Manager, Heidi Behrends Cerniwey - City Manager, Ryan Lyyski - Public Works Director, Derek Mayo - City Engineer, Josh Mattson - Assistant City Engineer, Mike Helgeson - Assistant Public Works Director, Caroline Escobar - Finance Officer, Erin McGowan - Water/Storm Program Coordinator, Mackenzie Capaci - Kennedy Jenks, Jarod Fischer - Kennedy Jenks, Sergey Tarasov - FCS, Daniel Dye - Fehr & Peers.

2. Approval of Agenda

- 2.A Approval of Agenda for April 15, 2026

Commissioner Lillquist moved to approve the agenda as proposed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner DeVore. Motion passed 6-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

- 3.A Approval of Minutes from March 18, 2026

Commissioner Spradlin moved to approve the Meeting Minutes from March 18, 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lillquist. Motion passed 6-0.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. New Business

5.A General Sewer Plan Presentation

Commissioner Spradlin made a motion to provide a favorable recommendation to City Council to approve the General Sewer Plan Update. The motion was seconded by Commissioner DeVore. Motion passed 6-0.

5.B Water / Sewer Rate Presentation

Commissioner Spradlin made a motion to provide a favorable recommendation to City Council for the three-year rate increase for water and sewer utilities, and to increase water and sewer PIFs to the maximum allowable charge over the next three years, and re-evaluate utility rates and PIFs after three years have passed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hermann. Motioned passed 6-0.

5.C Transportation Element - Comprehensive Plan Update

No formal action was taken on this agenda item.

5.D 2025/2026 Stormwater Management Plan Update

Commissioner Spradlin made a motion to provide a favorable recommendation to City Council to approve the 2025-2026 Stormwater Management Plan Update. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harlin. Motion passed 6-0.

6. Unfinished Business

6.A 2026 Recycle Event Update

No formal action was taken on this agenda item.

6.B 2026 Bike Month Subcommittee Update

No formal action was taken on this agenda item.

7. Staff Update/Discussion Items

7.A 2026 Ecology Statewide Drought Declaration

No formal action was taken on this agenda item.

8. Adjournment

Commissioner Wollman adjourned the meeting at 7:23 pm.



CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Date of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Place of Meeting

Minutes of Environmental Commission, Regular Meeting

May 13, 2026

5:15 PM

**Council Conference Room
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926**

[Environmental Commission Regular Zoom Meeting Link](#)

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Commissioner Wollman called the meeting to order at 5:24 p.m.

- 1.A Commission Members: Nancy Lillquist, Jordan Spradlin, Christina Wollman, Brenda DeVore, Kamran Hermann, Raven Harlin
___OPEN___: EHS Env. Club President (Ex-officio Member)

Present: Nancy Lillquist, Jordan Spradlin, Christina Wollman, Raven Harlin.

Absent: Kamran Hermann, Brenda DeVore

Other Present: Rebecca Springer — Water Resource Manager; Heidi Behrends Cerniwey — City Manager; Arden Thomas — Kittitas County Water Resource Manager; Erin McGowan — Water/Storm Program Coordinator

2. Approval of Agenda

- 2.A Approval of the Agenda for May 13, 2026

Commissioner Lillquist moved to approve the agenda as proposed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Spradlin. Motion passed 4-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

- 3.A Approval of the Minutes from April 15, 2026

Commissioner Spradlin moved to approve the Meeting Minutes from April 15, 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harlin. Motion passed 4-0.

4. Public Comment

Arden Thomas, Kittitas County Water Resource Manager, introduced herself and spoke about coordinating water conservation messaging in relation to Agenda Item 5.B, the 2026 Water Conservation Campaign Framework.

No formal action was taken.

5. New Business

5.A 2026 Community Recycling Event - Recap and Debrief

No formal action was taken.

5.B 2026 Water Conservation Campaign Framework

No formal action was taken.

6. Unfinished Business

6.A Climate & Environmental Planning (CEP) Task Force - Recap & Discussion

No formal action was taken.

6.B Bike Month Subcommittee Update

No formal action was taken.

7. Staff Update/Discussion Items

7.A 13-Month Pumping Report

No formal action was taken.

7.B Council Actions on Recently Discussed Items:

KCCD ILA - May 4th **APPROVED**

Stormwater Management Plan - May 4th **APPROVED**

General Sewer Plan - May 4th **APPROVED**

Water/Sewer Rate Study - Going to Council May 18th

No formal action was taken.

7.C Move June Environmental Commission Meeting – Proposed Date: June 10, 2026

No formal action was taken.

8. Adjournment

Commissioner Wollman adjourned the meeting at 6:27 p.m.



CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Date of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Place of Meeting

Minutes of LEOFF 1 Disability Board, Regular Meeting

April 22, 2026

8:00 AM

Ellensburg City Hall - Council Conference Room

501 N Anderson St.

Ellensburg, WA 98926

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 am

Board members present: Councilmember Sarah Beauchamp (present remotely), Mike Davis, Larry Loveless and Councilmember David Miller

Others present: Beth Leader, Board Clerk

2. Approval of Agenda

David Miller moved to approve the Agenda as presented. **Motion Approved 4-0**

3. Approval of Minutes

3.A Approve Minutes of the April 15, 2026 meeting

Sarah Beauchamp moved to approve the minutes as presented. **Motion Approved 4-0**

4. Public Comment on Non-agenda Items

5. Unfinished Business

6. New Business

6.A Approve three claims from two retirees

Mike Davis moved to approve the three claims as submitted. **Motion Approved 4-0**

7. Miscellaneous

Beth explained all members were due to take OPMA training and that could be done online at the May meeting. All board members concurred to take the training at the May 27, 2026 meeting.

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 am



Meeting Date: July 20, 2026
City of Ellensburg
City Council Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: Award Bid Call No. 2026-11 Tree Trimming Contract Utility Electrical Distribution System to Arbor Works LLC
Submitted by: Dan Davis, Engineering Tech
Department: Energy Services

Suggested Motion/Action:

Award Bid Call 2026-11 Tree Trimming Contract - Utility Electrical Distribution System) to Arbor Works LLC, the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

Background/Summary:

Annually, the Energy Services Department solicits bids for a tree trimming contract. This service provides clearance for the City's overhead electrical distribution system and is necessary to reduce power outages, for safety and reliability. The City sent the bid document to all contractors on the City's Small Works Roster for this type of work and also advertised and posted the bid on the City's website.

Staff received a total of (4) four bids. The bid from Xylem L LLC was deemed non-responsive due to the fact that the bidder did not include the Bid Proposal Signature Form with their bid submittal. The other (3) three bids submitted included bids from Arbor Works LLC, Uribe's Tree Service LLC and Basin Tree Service & Pest Control LLC. Arbor Works LLC was the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

Staff recommends that City Council award the contract for Bid Call 2026-11 for Tree Trimming Contract Utility Electrical Distribution System to the lowest responsive and responsive bidder, Arbor Works LLC, for a total of 500 hours at a unit cost of \$429.3356 per crew/equipment hour or not to exceed \$214,667.80, including Minor Change of \$22,000 for a total contract not to exceed \$236,667.80.

Previous Council Action:

Award of previous bids for Tree Trimming:

Bid 2025-09 awarded 9/2/25

Bid 2025-08 rejected all bids 7/21/25

Bid 2024-16 awarded 7/1/24

Bid 2023-15 awarded 11/6/23

Bid 2022-15 awarded 9/6/22

Bid 2021-10 awarded 9/16/21

Analysis:

The quoted price received is for hourly rates and includes a 3-person crew, lift truck, chipper and dump truck. The bid included (2) two bid schedules. Schedule A includes a total of 420

hours, starting on September 21, 2026 & includes 70 working days and shall be completed by March 31, 2027. Schedule B is for additional On Call Tree Trimming including a total of 80 hours, starting on January 1, 2027, and shall be completed by September 10, 2027. The total bid amount shown is based on the contracted scope of work, which is estimated at a combined 500 hours of tree trimming, and includes \$22,000 for Minor Changes.

The City received a total of (4) four bids this year. The bid from Xylem L LLC was deemed non-responsive. The responsive and responsible bidders are:

- Arbor Works LLC \$236,667.80
- Uribe's Tree Service LLC \$264,125.00
- Basin Tree Service and Pest Control LLC \$266,890.00

The engineer's estimate for this project is \$290,630.00. The bid submitted by Arbor Works LLC is approximately 23% less than the engineer's estimate.

The electrical system tree trimming is critical and needs to be completed within the working days, as identified in the bid documents, to maintain the safety and reliability of the City's overhead electrical distribution system. This work also needs to be completed before winter. Therefore, staff recommend City Council award bid 2026-11 for Tree Trimming Contract Utility Electrical Distribution System to Arbor Works LLC.

Financial Impact:

Funding for the proposed tree trimming is included in the adopted 2025-2026 Electric Utility Fund budget and will be included in the 2027/2028 budget process.

Budget Adjustment: No

Attachments:

None



Meeting Date: July 20, 2026
City of Ellensburg
City Council Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: Approval for Grant Application for Three New Police Officers Under House Bill 2015

Submitted by: Jim Weed, Captain

Department: Police

Suggested Motion/Action:

Approve the grant application to cover costs of three new police officers for three years and approve the necessary budget adjustments.

Background/Summary:

The Washington State Legislature approved 100 million dollars in grant funding for the purpose of recruiting, hiring and training new police officers to bolster the historically low staffing levels across Washington law enforcement agencies. The funding opportunity for grant application has just opened on July 1 and is open through August 15 for new grant requests. This is the second, and likely final round to meet the funding goals.

Previous Council Action:

None

Analysis:

The purpose of this grant request is to enhance public safety and improve service capacity by adding three full-time police officers to our department. With a staffing level of 25 officers, our current ratio of officers per 1,000 residents remains significantly below national benchmarks. Additional staffing is needed to ensure timely response to calls for service, strengthen community policing efforts, and maintain adequate coverage as demand continues to grow. Increasing our staffing will also create the necessary capacity for officers to meet modern training benchmarks, including advanced de-escalation practices and improved mental-health response skills. This investment will allow the department to deliver safer, more effective, and more professional service to the community.

Financial Impact:

This funding opportunity will cover up to 75% of the annual cost per officer with the final 25% being incumbent upon the employing agency. The maximum dollar amount allowed by the grant rules is \$125,000 per position per year. New Ellensburg Police Department employees have an associated salary and benefit cost of \$121,000 with training and equipment running close to \$25,000 for year one. This will leave the liability balance for the City's budget at \$109,500 **per year** to cover the 25% matching funds for all three officers, with the Grant covering \$328,500 per year.

Budget Adjustment: Yes

Attachments:

None



Meeting Date: July 20, 2026
City of Ellensburg
City Council Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: Bid Award - Bid Call 2026-09 Ellensburg Public Library and Hal Holmes Community Center HVAC Replacement
Submitted by: Hunter Slyfield, Shop & Warehouse Manager
Department: Public Works

Suggested Motion/Action:

Award bid call 2026-09 to MBI Construction Services Inc. in the amount of \$1,097,985.10, the lowest responsive and responsible bidder and approve necessary budget adjustments.

Background/Summary:

Bids were received on July 2nd, 2026 for the above-mentioned project. MBI Construction Services Inc. was the lowest responsive and responsible bidder in the amount of \$1,097,985.10.

This project will construct a replacement of the aging Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system in the Ellensburg Public Library and Hal Holmes Community Center. It will provide reliable, energy efficient heating and cooling to the entire facility utilizing air source heat pump technology.

MW Consulting Engineers designed and prepared bid specifications for the project, Bid Call 2026-09. City staff will provide administration of the work associated with the bid call, along with MW Consulting Engineers who will provide technical review of submittals and technical inspection of installed systems. MW Consulting Engineers will also provide equipment startup assistance and verify system operation after commissioning.

The City was fortunate to receive grant funding for the entire project through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

Previous Council Action:

On March 17, 2025, Council authorized staff to apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and adopted Resolution 2025-05 describing a grievance process related to the use of CDBG funds.

On January 5, 2026 Council authorized the City Manager to sign a professional services agreement with MW Engineers to complete the design, preparation of construction bid documents and construction administration for the Library and Hal Holmes HVAC Replacement Project.

Analysis:

The project was advertised and bids were received as follows:

MBI Construction Services Inc.:	\$1,097,985.10
Lumank Inc.:	\$1,193,800.00
Bruce Mechanical Inc.:	\$1,231,795.50
Campbell and Company Service Corp.:	\$1,305,847.67
Pac West Mechanical LLC:	\$1,378,134.00
Engineer's Estimate:	\$1,102,290.00

The low bid submitted by MBI Construction Services Inc. is below the engineer's estimate. The low bid price was decreased by \$101,649.60 to account for a math discrepancy in the total of unit prices. This change resulted in MBI Construction Services Inc. becoming the low bid for the project. The bid price from Bruce Mechanical Inc. was decreased by \$0.50 and the bid price from Campbell and Company Service Corp. was increased by \$0.01 to account for math discrepancies in the totaling of unit prices.

Financial Impact:

The City was awarded \$1,620,000 in federal CDBG funds for this project. Construction of this project will be fully grant funded. While the grant funds were budgeted in 2025, they will need to be carried forward to 2026 via supplemental budget adjustment to the General Facilities Internal Service Fund. Council is being requested to authorize the necessary budget adjustments for both the revenue and expenditure necessary to accommodate this project.

Budget Adjustment: Yes

Attachments:

None

VOUCHER APPROVAL

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, DO HEREBY CERTIFY UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE MATERIALS HAVE BEEN FURNISHED, THE SERVICES RENDERED OR THE LABOR PERFORMED AS DESCRIBED, OR THAT ANY ADVANCE PAYMENT IS DUE AND PAYABLE PURSUANT TO A CONTRACT OR IS AVAILABLE AS AN OPTION FOR FULL OR PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF A CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION, AND THAT THE CLAIM IS A JUST, DUE AND UNPAID OBLIGATION AGAINST THE CITY OF ELLENSBURG, AND THAT I AM AUTHORIZED TO AUTHENTICATE AND CERTIFY TO SAID CLAIM.

Ka m
AUDITING OFFICER

7/13/26
DATE

CLAIMS VOUCHERS AUDITED AND CERTIFIED BY THE AUDITING OFFICER HAVE BEEN RECORDED ON THE ATTACHED LISTING, WHICH HAS BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO THE COUNCIL AS OF THIS **19TH DAY OF JULY 2026**. THE COUNCIL, BY A VOTE, HAS APPROVED FOR PAYMENT THE VOUCHERS INCLUDED IN THE ABOVE LIST AND FURTHER DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

Claims Fund				Total Amounts
Check #'s	174916	TO	175104	\$ 780,608.46
EFT #'s	8052	TO	8075	\$ 284,589.76
Treasure Cash				Total Amounts
EFT #'S	1874	TO	1907	\$ 1,151,181.98
Check #'s	34629	TO	34641	\$ 1,817.11
Payroll Fund				Total Amounts
Check #'s	96600	TO	96600	\$ 2,532.27
Direct Deposits	92979	TO	93253	\$ 662,718.38

COUNCIL MEMBER

COUNCIL MEMBER

COUNCIL MEMBER

COUNCIL MEMBER

ATTEST: _____
CITY CLERK



Meeting Date: July 20, 2026
City of Ellensburg
City Council Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: Second Reading of Ordinance 4991 Approving Rezone of Parcel 242833 from Residential Medium (R-M) to Residential High (R-H). (Public Comment Opportunity)

Submitted by: Dan Carlson, Community Development Director

Department: Community Development

Suggested Motion/Action:

Move to conduct second reading and adoption of Ordinance 4991, approving rezone of Parcel 242833 from Residential Medium (R-M) to Residential High (R-H)

Background/Summary:

City Council held a closed record hearing on July 6, 2026, to consider the Hearing Examiner's June 16, 2026, Recommended Findings of Fact, Recommended Conclusions of Law, and Recommended Decision pertaining to the site-specific rezone request submitted by Winzer Properties LLC. The rezone request was approved at the conclusion of the Closed Record hearing and was immediately followed by first reading of Ordinance 4991.

The subject property is a 2.743-acre parcel located at 101 E 14th Avenue. After taking evidence at the open record hearing on June 10, 2026, and considering the record, the Hearing Examiner recommended that City Council approve the rezone from Residential Medium (R-M) to Residential High (R-H). The request is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan future land use designation of Urban Neighborhood. At the conclusion of the closed record hearing on July 6, 2026, City Council approved a motion to adopt the Hearing Examiner's Recommended Findings of Fact, Recommended Conclusions of Law, and Recommended Decision.

Previous Council Action:

City Council approved the rezone request and conducted first reading of Ordinance 4991 on July 6, 2026.

Analysis:

City Council adopted the Hearing Examiner's Recommended Findings of Fact, Recommended Conclusions of Law, and Recommended Decision on July 6, 2026. Therefore, the ordinance reflects the applicable conclusions and findings to adopt the zone change as discussed and approved by City Council. The ordinance also directs staff to make appropriate changes to the City's zoning map and to the Geographic Information System (GIS) data.

Financial Impact:

None

Budget Adjustment: No

Attachments:

1. Ordinance 4991 - Second Reading
2. Exhibit A Hearing Examiner Decision

ORDINANCE NO. 4991

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ELLENSBURG, WASHINGTON, RELATING TO ZONING AND AMENDING TITLE 15 OF THE ELLENSBURG CITY CODE BY CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN PROPERTY WITHIN THE CITY OF ELLENSBURG FROM RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM (R-M) TO RESIDENTIAL HIGH (R-H).

WHEREAS, on March 5, 2026, the City received an application (P26-024) from Winzer Properties LLC, property owner, requesting a rezone of one parcel of land located at 101 E 14th Avenue, Parcel ID Number 242833; and

WHEREAS, the application proposed to rezone the parcel from Residential Medium (R-M) to Residential High (R-H); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ellensburg City Code (“ECC”) Table 15.210.050(D), a Site-Specific Rezone Application is processed under a Type IV review, which requires a Hearing Examiner recommendation to City Council after an Open Record Hearing, with the final decision to be made by City Council after a Quasi-Judicial Closed Record Hearing; and

WHEREAS, the proposed rezone is categorically exempt from SEPA pursuant to WAC 197-11-800(6)(b) and WAC 197-11-800(6)(c); and

WHEREAS, the Hearing Examiner held a duly noticed open record hearing on June 10, 2026, where the Examiner received evidence and heard testimony regarding the proposed rezone; and

WHEREAS, the Hearing Examiner on June 16, 2026, issued “Recommended Findings of Fact, Recommended Conclusions of Law, and Recommended Decision” for the rezone request from R-M to R-H; and

WHEREAS, the Ellensburg City Council held a closed record hearing on July 6, 2026, and at the conclusion of the hearing approved a motion to adopt the Hearing Examiner’s “Recommended Findings of Fact, Recommended Conclusions of Law, and Recommended Decision” dated June 16, 2026, and to approve the applicant’s request to rezone the subject property from R-M to R-H.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Ellensburg, Washington, do hereby ordain as follows:

Section 1. The City Council adopts the findings of fact and conclusions based thereon, made and entered by the Hearing Examiner in support of the recommendation to the City Council for approval with regard to the rezone for the hereinafter described property located at 101 E 14th Avenue, with Parcel ID Number 242833, as set forth in the Hearing Examiner’s “Recommended

Findings of Fact, Recommended Conclusions of Law, and Recommended Decision,” dated June 16, 2026 attached as Exhibit A.

Section 2. Title 15 of the Ellensburg City Code is hereby amended by changing the city’s zoning map as adopted in ECC 15.300.020 for the following described area from Residential Medium (R-M) to Residential High (R-H):

PARCEL ID NUMBER 242833 – PTN SW1/4 NE1/4 & PTN NW1/4 SE1/4 (LOT A, B47/P176); SEC 35, TWP 18, RGE 18

Section 3. That the official zoning map of the City of Ellensburg, as well as the Geographic Information System (GIS) data shall be amended to incorporate the land use classifications herein provided.

Section 4. Except as modified herein, each and every provision of the City Land Development Code, Title 15, as amended, shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 5. Severability. If any portion of this ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.

Section 6. Corrections. Upon the approval of the City Attorney, the City Clerk and the codifiers of this ordinance are authorized to make necessary corrections to this ordinance including, but not limited to, the correction of scrivener’s/clerical errors, references, ordinance numbering, section/subsection numbers and any references thereto.

Section 7. Effective Date. This ordinance shall take effect and be in full force five (5) days after passage, approval and publication as required by law.

The foregoing ordinance was passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council on the 20th day of July 2026.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

Publish:

I, Beth Leader, City Clerk of said City, do hereby certify that Ordinance No. 4991 is a true and correct copy of said Ordinance of like number as the same was passed by said Council, that Ordinance No. 4991 was published as required by law.

Beth Leader

**CITY OF ELLENSBURG
LAND USE HEARING EXAMINER**

IN THE MATTER OF	)	RECOMMENDED FINDINGS OF
	)	
P26-024	)	FACT, RECOMMENDED
Winzer Properties Rezone	)	CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND
		RECOMMENDED DECISION

THIS MATTER having come on for hearing in front of the City of Ellensburg Hearing Examiner on June 10, 2026, the Hearing Examiner having taken evidence hereby submits the following Recommended Findings of Fact, Recommended Conclusions of Law, and Recommended Decision as follows:

I. RECOMMENDED FINDINGS OF FACT

1. **Applicant:** Winzer Properties LLC, property owner.
2. **Requested Action:** The applicant seeks to rezone the 2.743-acre subject property from Residential Medium (R-M) to Residential High (R-H). The rezone would allow the applicant to increase the density of housing units on the property to create more future rental housing.
3. **Location:** The parcel is located at 101 E 14th Avenue; Kittitas County Assessor's Parcel ID # 242833.
4. **BACKGROUND AND SITE INFORMATION**
 - 4.1. **Site History:** Parcel ID# 242833 is in the R-M zone. The site contains Aspen Circle Apartments, an existing 40-unit apartment complex. The City of Ellensburg recently approved a boundary line adjustment (P25-138) that created the 2.743-acre subject property for this application (Exhibit A).
 - 4.2. **Site Characteristics:** The site topography is relatively flat. The site contains the Aspen Circle Apartments, which contains 40 apartment units in 11 existing structures. The property is located on the corner of N B Street, and E 14th Avenue. The N B Street frontage is improved with curb, gutter, and sidewalks. The 14th Street frontage is only improved with curb and gutter but no sidewalks. There are no regulated critical areas on the subject property.
 - 4.3. **Surrounding Properties:** A zoning map of the surrounding properties was received as Exhibit C. Surrounding zoning is further described below:
 - 4.3.1. **North:** Zoned R-M, consisting of multifamily and single-family residences.
 - 4.3.2. **South:** Zoned R-M and R-O, consisting of multifamily and single-family residences and unimproved lands.
 - 4.3.3. **East:** Zoned R-M, consisting of multifamily and Central Washington University (CWU) facility.
 - 4.3.4. **West:** Zoned R-M, consisting of Mercer Creek Church.
 - 4.4. **Access:** Access to the property is via E 14th Avenue.
 - 4.5. **Comprehensive Plan:** The Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Designation of the property is Urban Neighborhood, which accommodates areas close to the University campus, accessible by public transportation, close to other goods and amenities, and where city services and infrastructure are readily available. This designation accommodates a wide range of housing

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Winzer Properties Rezone
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types and allows for the development of transitional areas between lower density neighborhoods and higher density residential and commercial areas. This designation accommodates a wide range of building types, from small-lot single dwellings to large-scale multistory, multi-dwelling developments. Implementing zoning districts that accommodate higher density housing types are more appropriate adjacent to parks and the University campus, along transit routes and principal and minor arterials, on local streets adjacent to commercial areas and served by transit routes, and near recreational activity centers, shopping centers, and entertainment areas. Urban Neighborhood includes R-H, as is proposed, as well as Residential Office (R-O), and Commercial Neighborhood (C-N).

- 4.6. **Public Comments:** Community Development issued a Notice Public of Application and Rezone hearing (Exhibit F) on April 16, 2026, initiating a 21-day comment period that concluded May 8, 2026. The site was posted with land use action signs (Exhibit G) on April 2, 2026. Notice of the Rezone (Exhibit I) was mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the proposed site on April 16, 2026. No public comments were received at any time prior to the open record public hearing.
- 4.7. **City Department Comments:** The City of Ellensburg Public Works Department submitted comments stating that future development applications will require consistency with Public Works development standards (Exhibit K). The City of Ellensburg Fire Marshal submitted a letter that he had no comments on the rezone at this time, but future development may trigger improvements to the water delivery system as current location is underserved with fire hydrant access (Exhibit L).

5. Environmental (SEPA) Review

- 5.1. Site-specific rezones are considered exempt from SEPA if the project is in an Urban Growth Area for jurisdictions planning under the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.040), the proposal is consistent with and does not require an amendment to the jurisdiction's Comprehensive Plan, and the Plan was previously subjected to an Environmental Impact Statement prior to its adoption that adequately addressed environmental impacts of the rezone.
- 5.2. Ellensburg is part of a Kittitas County Urban Growth Area as a fully planning jurisdiction under the Growth Management Act. The rezone is consistent with the Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan, which has not required an amendment for the project, and which was subject to a Supplemental EIS prior to adoption of its Future Land Use Map and Zoning Conversion Table.
- 5.3. As such, the proposed rezone was categorically exempt from SEPA pursuant to WAC 197-11-800(6)(b) and WAC 197-11-800(6)(c).

6. OPEN RECORD PUBLIC HEARING

- 6.1. An open record public hearing was held, after legal notice, on June 10, 2026.
- 6.2. The following exhibits were admitted into the record:
 - 6.2.1. Ex. A. Approved Boundary Line Adjustment (P25-138)
 - 6.2.2. Ex. B. Location Map
 - 6.2.3. Ex. C. Current Zoning Map
 - 6.2.4. Ex. D. Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map
 - 6.2.5. Ex. E. Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use-Zoning Conversion Table
 - 6.2.6. Ex. F. Affidavit of Publication, *Ellensburg Daily Record*
 - 6.2.7. Ex. G. Posted Land Use Action Sign and Affidavit

- 6.2.8. Ex. H. Affidavit of Posted Land Use Action Sign
 - 6.2.9. Ex. I. Affidavit of Mailed Notice
 - 6.2.10. Ex. J. Rezone Application, Narrative, & Site Plan
 - 6.2.11. Ex. K. City of Ellensburg Public Works Comments
 - 6.2.12. Ex. L. City of Ellensburg Fire Marshal Comments
 - 6.2.13. Ex. M. Staff Report
- 6.3. Appearing and testifying on behalf of the Applicant was: Klaus Holzer, 9900 Manastash Road, Ellensburg, Washington. Mr. Holzer testified that he was an authorized agent of the Applicant; he had reviewed the Staff Report and all attachments prior to the hearing; and he agreed with all factual representations in the Staff Report.
- 6.4. No member of the general public testified at the hearing.
7. **ELLENSBURG CITY CODE REQUIREMENTS FOR SITE-SPECIFIC REZONE, ECC 15.250.060(C)**
- 7.1. Conditions **HAVE** changed since the imposition of the zoning classification on the property.
- 7.1.1. Adjacent Central Washington University is projecting on-campus enrollment to increase to about 12,000 students over the next 10 years, up from 9,656 in 2016. (Exhibit J).
 - 7.1.2. The City of Ellensburg Housing Action Plan adopted by Resolution No. 2021-30 in 2021 found that housing production is not keeping up with growth, and that more housing units and more midsized options for smaller households are needed. (Exhibit M).
- 7.2. The proposed rezone **DOES** bear a substantial relationship to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare.
- 7.2.1. Quality housing is a critical component of public health and general welfare. By increasing the number of housing units within walking distance of Central Washington University and along 14th Avenue transit routes, fewer car trips will be required to get to basic services resulting in lower emissions and shorter commutes. (Exhibit J).
 - 7.2.2. The applicant will be responsible for meeting all development standards for any future development plans in ECC Title 15, as applicable. The City of Ellensburg Housing Action Plan adopted by Resolution No. 2021-30 in 2021 found that housing production is not keeping up with growth, and that more housing units and more midsized options for smaller households are needed. The rezone of parcel 242833 to R-M zoning would allow for more multifamily density on the property. (Exhibit M).
- 7.3. The proposed rezone **IS** consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- 7.3.1. The Plan's Future Land Use-Zoning Conversation Table indicates the rezone request to R-H is consistent with the Future Land Use Map. (Exhibits E and D).
 - 7.3.2. In addition, the request for R-H zoning is consistent with the following goals, policies and programs in the Comprehensive Plan:
 - 7.3.2.1. **Goal LU-1:** Encourage development that creates a variety of housing, shopping, entertainment, recreation, gathering spaces, employment, and services that are accessible to neighborhoods. (Exhibit M).

- 7.3.2.1.1. **Policy A:** Encourage infill development and increased residential density in and around the downtown area. (Exhibit M).
- 7.3.2.1.2. **Policy B:** Integrate new development with consideration to design and scale that complements existing neighborhoods and provides effective transitions between different uses and intensities. (Exhibit M).
- 7.3.2.2. **Goal LU-2:** Establish land use patterns that promote walking, biking, and using transit to access goods, services, education, employment, and recreation. (Exhibit M).
- 7.3.2.2.1. **Policy A:** Enhance the character, quality, and function of existing residential neighborhoods while accommodating anticipated growth. (Exhibit M).
- 7.4. The proposed rezone to R-H IS consistent with the development standards in the Land Development Code for the R-H district.
 - 7.4.1. The applicant will be responsible for meeting all development standards in ECC Title 15, as well as Public Works and building code standards applicable for the project, including but not limited to, utilities, signage, and landscaping for any future proposed development. (Exhibit M).
- 8. The City of Ellensburg Hearing Examiner considered all evidence within the record in rendering this decision.
- 9. Any Conclusion of Law that is more correctly a Finding of Fact is hereby incorporated as such by this reference.

II. RECOMMENDED CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

- 1. The Hearing Examiner has been granted the authority to render this recommended decision.
- 2. The requested rezone meets all the criteria set forth within Ellensburg City Code 15.250.060.
- 3. Any Finding of Fact that is more correctly a Conclusion of Law is hereby incorporated as such by this reference.

III. RECOMMENDED DECISION

Based on the above Recommended Findings of Fact and Recommended Conclusions of Law, P26-024 the Hearing Examiner hereby recommends that this Rezone Request be **APPROVED**.

Dated this 16th day of June, 2026

CITY OF ELLENSBURG HEARING EXAMINER *Pro Tem*



Jay D. Eyestone

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Winzer Properties Rezone
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Meeting Date: July 20, 2026
City of Ellensburg
City Council Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: Ordinance 4992 (First Reading) - Urban Forestry Code, Repeal and Replace Chapter 4.36 Street Trees (Public Comment Opportunity)

Submitted by: Erin McGowan, Stormwater/Urban Forestry

Department: Public Works

Suggested Motion/Action:

Move to conduct first reading of Ordinance No. 4992, repealing and replacing Chapter 4.36 Street Trees of the Ellensburg City Code.

Background/Summary:

In February 2024, the City received notification that it had been awarded the 2024 Community Forestry Assistance Grant. The project includes five key elements: a tree inventory of City facilities and parks; an update to the City’s tree ordinance; updates to the Street Tree chapter of the Public Works Development Standards; development of an Urban Forest Management Plan; and creation of new outreach and education materials.

Public outreach and engagement are a central component of the project and are intended to inform and support the development and refinement of these elements. The City contracted with Dudek to complete the project components and to facilitate public outreach and engagement efforts.

Previous Council Action:

- On October 21, 2024, City Council authorized the City Manager to sign the 2024 Community Forestry Assistance Grant agreement.
- On January 6, 2025, City Council authorized a Professional Services Agreement with Dudek for tree inventory, Urban Forest Management Plan development, and municipal tree ordinance services.
- On July 6, 2026, the City Council received a presentation from staff during a Council Study Session. The presentation provided an update on the Urban Forest Management project, with a focus on the proposed Urban Forestry Code.

Analysis:

The proposed ordinance represents a full repeal and replacement of Chapter 4.36 of the Ellensburg City Code, originally adopted in 1978 and amended periodically. While the existing code established a foundation for the management of street trees, it is limited in scope, lacks clarity in several key areas, and does not fully align with current urban forestry and International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) best practices.

The updated ordinance establishes a modern regulatory framework for the management of the City's urban forest and is intentionally paired with updates to the Public Works Development Standards. Under this approach, the ordinance provides the policy and regulatory structure, while the Development Standards contain the detailed procedures and technical requirements for implementation. This structure improves usability, keeps the code clear and concise, and allows the City to adapt procedures over time without requiring frequent code amendments.

The proposed ordinance includes numerous updates. It expands the scope of the code from "Street Trees" to "Urban Forestry" to reflect its applicability to public trees and street trees, including those in parks and on City-owned properties. It introduces a clear purpose and value statement that recognizes the environmental, economic, and public health benefits of trees. Definitions have been updated and clarified to improve consistency and understanding for both staff and the public.

Additional provisions improve the City's ability to manage and protect its urban forest. These include requirements for tree protection during construction, the establishment of prohibited actions to support consistent enforcement, and clarification of maintenance responsibilities between the City and adjacent property owners. The ordinance also introduces cost recovery mechanisms and an in-lieu fee option when required tree replacement is not feasible on-site. These tools provide flexibility while ensuring continued investment in the City's tree canopy through an Urban Forestry Reinvestment account.

Extensive public outreach and stakeholder engagement informed the development of the ordinance and associated standards. Community engagement efforts included participation in five community events, more than 350 direct conversations with residents, and a community survey conducted from July 12th through September 2nd that received 547 responses, significantly exceeding the initial goal of 100 responses. Survey results indicate strong community support for urban forestry, with 91% of respondents expressing support for trees or a desire for more trees, and 72% identifying trees as equally important as other infrastructure.

The survey also identified key gaps in public awareness that are addressed in the proposed ordinance. Specifically, 92% of respondents were unaware that a permit is required to plant, prune, or remove a street tree, and 56% were unaware that maintenance responsibility for street trees typically lies with the adjacent property owner. These findings highlight the need for clearer code language, improved processes, and continued public education, all of which are incorporated into the ordinance and will be supported through ongoing outreach efforts.

In addition, an Urban Forestry Working Group composed of community members, stakeholders, and technical experts met multiple times to provide input on the ordinance, street tree standards, and broader Urban Forest Management Plan. This collaborative process helped ensure that the proposed updates reflect community values, technical expertise, and long-term planning goals.

On June 10, 2026, the Environment Commission reviewed the proposed Urban Forestry Code. Dudek presented an overview of the proposed changes and community engagement

efforts. Following discussion and review, the Environment Commission provided a favorable recommendation to City Council for adoption of the proposed ordinance.

Overall, the proposed repeal and replacement of Chapter 4.36 creates a clear, consistent, and adaptable framework for urban forest management in Ellensburg. It aligns City regulations with current best practices, improves transparency and usability, and provides the tools necessary to effectively manage, protect, and expand the City's urban tree canopy.

Financial Impact:

The proposed ordinance establishes an Urban Forestry Reinvestment revenue account within Department Fund 120 (Street).

Budget Adjustment: No

Attachments:

1. Ordinance 4992 - Urban Forestry Code

ORDINANCE NO. 4992

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ELLENSBURG, WASHINGTON, RELATING TO URBAN FORESTRY, REPEALING AND REPLACING CHAPTER 4.36 OF THE ELLENSBURG CITY CODE WITH A NEW CHAPTER ENTITLED “4.36 URBAN FORESTRY.”

WHEREAS, the Department of Natural Resources Urban & Community Forestry Program notified the City on February 28, 2024, of a successful grant application for the 2024 Community Forestry Assistance Grant to support development of an Urban Forest Management Plan and Ordinance Update; and

WHEREAS, on October 21, 2024, City Council authorized the City Manager to sign the 2024 Community Forestry Assistance Grant agreement; and

WHEREAS, on January 6, 2025, City Council authorized a Professional Services Agreement with Dudek for tree inventory, Urban Forest Management Plan development, and municipal tree ordinance services; and

WHEREAS, Dudek in collaboration with City staff conducted public outreach to obtain public input, including distribution of an Urban Forestry survey and facilitation of an Urban Forestry Working Group established by the City and composed of community members and local stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, public outreach results indicated a need for clearer standards and direction, including uncertainty regarding street tree maintenance responsibility and permit requirements, and identified strong community support for trees as critical infrastructure, with 72% of survey respondents indicating trees are equally as important as other infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, based on public input and staff evaluation, the City is updating its tree ordinance to clarify maintenance responsibilities, establish tree protection measures during construction, and is updating the associated Street Tree Section of the Public Works Development Standards to more clearly define permit processes; and

WHEREAS, a proposed Ellensburg City Code Chapter 4.36 entitled “Urban Forestry” was presented to the Environmental Commission on June 10, 2026, which recommended City Council adopt this ordinance;

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Ellensburg, Washington do hereby ordain as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 4.36 of the Ellensburg City Code entitled “Street Trees”, as last amended by ordinance 4955, is hereby repealed in its entirety.

Section 2. A new Ellensburg City Code Chapter 4.36 entitled “Urban Forestry” is hereby added to the Ellensburg City Code to read as follows:

CHAPTER 4.36 URBAN FORESTRY

4.36.010 Findings and Statement of Value and Purpose

4.36.020 Definitions

4.36.040 Prohibited Actions

4.36.050 Permits and Approvals

4.36.060 Tree Maintenance

4.36.070 Tree Protection

4.36.080 Tree Replacement and in-Lieu Fees

4.36.090 Recovery of Costs

4.36.110 Tree Permit Appeals

4.36.120 Enforcement and Penalties

4.36.010 Findings and Statement of Value and Purpose

The City of Ellensburg finds that trees provide a broad range of environmental, social, and economic benefits. These include energy conservation through the provision of shade and wind buffering; air quality improvement from the production of oxygen, sequestration of carbon dioxide and filtration of airborne pollutants; mitigation of stormwater impacts through runoff reduction and soil stabilization; support for human health and well-being through the reduction of urban heat, improvement of mental health, and promotion of active, livable communities; preservation and enhancement of neighborhood aesthetics and property values; and the provision of valuable wildlife habitat.

The purpose of this chapter is to create a clear system and framework for the management, maintenance, and ownership of trees; to promote the health of the tree canopy located on City property and within the public right-of-way; to reduce the adverse impacts of the built environment by providing relief from noise, heat, glare, dust, and debris; to encourage the planting of climate resilient tree species that promote species diversity; and to provide minimum standards for the protection, care, safety, health, conservation, and enhancement of trees.

4.36.020 Definitions

ANSI A300 Standards: The American National Standards Institute's A300 standards for tree care operations and accepted practices for pruning, planting, soil management, and other aspects of arboriculture.

Certified Arborist: An International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist, or American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA) Registered Consulting Arborist (RCA).

Critical Root Zone (CRZ): The area around a tree that contains roots that are critical for health and stability. This area may extend beyond the dripline. Calculated as 1 foot per inch of trunk diameter measured at 4.5 feet above grade, unless otherwise approved by the City Arborist.

Diameter at Breast Height (DBH): Synonymous with Diameter at Standard Height (DSH). The diameter of a tree measured at 4.5 feet above grade. For trees that fork at or below 4.5 feet, the diameter should be measured at the narrowest part of the trunk below the fork.

Director: The City's Public Works Director, or their designee.

Dripline: An imaginary line that extends vertically downward from the outer edges of a tree's canopy.

Immediate Hazard: A tree or portion thereof that poses an imminent risk of failure likely to result in injury, property damage, or obstruction of the public right-of-way.

Private Tree: A tree located on private property.

Pruning: Selective removal of branches from a tree in accordance with ANSI A300 Standards, including thinning, crown reduction, crown cleaning, and crown raising. Tree pruning does not include topping or lion tailing. Pollarding is considered pruning only when performed in accordance with ANSI A300 Tree Care Standards.

Public Works Development Standards: The City of Ellensburg Public Works Development Standards, as adopted and amended.

Recommended Street Tree List: A City-approved list of tree species and cultivars identified as appropriate for planting within the public right-of-way.

Public Tree: Any tree growing in a public park, any tree growing on City property, or those trees in the Street Tree Inventory that are designated for City maintenance.

Street Tree: Any tree whose trunk is wholly or partially located within the public right-of-way.

Street Tree Inventory: A database or list of trees growing in the public right-of-way, that includes attributes such as species, size, tree condition, location, and maintenance responsibility, as maintained by the Public Works Department.

Tree: A woody perennial plant with a single or multiple trunks.

Tree Protection Zone (TPZ): A defined area intended to protect a tree's trunk, canopy, roots, and surrounding soil, as defined in the approved Tree Protection Plan.

Tree Removal: The act of taking down or relocating a tree, including cutting, felling, uprooting, or transplanting, which may include stump grinding or chipping.

4.36.040 Prohibited Actions

A . Destruction or Damage of Trees: No person shall damage, mutilate, destroy, remove, or otherwise harm any public tree or street tree without acquiring a permit. This includes, but is not limited to the following actions:

- 1 . Removal of the bark around the circumference of the tree (girdling).
- 2 . Relocation or transportation of a tree.
- 3 . Attaching ropes, signs, or wires to a tree.
- 4 . Introducing harmful chemicals or poisons within the dripline or critical root zone (whichever is larger) of any tree.
- 5 . Introducing pests or pathogens that cause harm to trees.
- 6 . Topping (also known as heading cuts).
- 7 . Digging, excavating, or trenching within the area beneath the tree's canopy.
- 8 . Removing greater than 20% of a tree's live canopy within any 24-month period without a permit.
- 9 . Any other action that foreseeably results in the death of a tree or permanent damage to its health or structure.

If the Director, the City Arborist, or a consulting Arborist retained by the City determines that a tree has been damaged in any of the ways described above, such damage shall constitute a violation of this chapter.

B . Interference with City: It is unlawful for any person to prevent, delay or interfere with the City or any of its agents while planting, cultivating, mulching, pruning, spraying, or removing any tree, as authorized in this chapter.

C . Tree Planting, Pruning, and Removal: It is unlawful to plant, prune, or remove a street tree without a permit or to plant, prune, or remove a tree on City property without written approval. All planting, pruning, and removal shall comply with Section 14 of the Public

Works Development Standards, this chapter, and any conditions established by the City Arborist.

4.36.050 Permits and Approvals

- A . Authorization Required for Public Trees: Any person seeking to plant, prune, or remove a public tree shall first obtain written approval from the Department Director responsible for the oversight of the City property or facility. Approval or denial of such a request shall be at the discretion of the City Arborist, the Department Director, and/or the City Manager.
- B . Street Tree Permits: A permit is required to:
- 1 . Plant a new street tree.
 - 2 . Prune more than 10% of a street tree's live canopy.
 - 3 . Remove a street tree.

Permit applications shall be submitted to the Public Works Department and shall comply with the processes and requirements set forth in Section 11 and Section 14 of the Public Works Development Standards.

4.36.060 Tree Maintenance

- A . Property Owners Responsibility: Maintenance of street trees and other vegetation in the public right-of-way shall be the responsibility of the adjacent property owner at their own expense, except for trees identified in the City's Street Tree Inventory as being designated for City maintenance. Maintenance shall be conducted in accordance with Sections 11 and 14 of the Public Works Development Standards. Maintenance responsibilities include:
- 1 . Keeping the public right-of-way clear from the debris generated from trees. Debris, including but not limited to branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit, must not be intentionally placed, swept, or blown into the street or left within the public right-of-way, including gutters, sidewalks, or planting strips.
 - 2 . Maintaining required clearance for trees within or overhanging the public right-of-way. A minimum of nine feet of vertical clearance must be maintained above sidewalks and twelve feet above streets. Tree limbs and foliage must not obstruct street lighting, traffic control devices, street signs, or visibility at intersections, and must maintain a minimum of ten feet of clearance from overhead utility lines.
 - 3 . Abating hazardous trees and branches within or overhanging the public right-of-way. Trees with dead, broken, or weakened branches that may fall into the public right-of-way shall be pruned to mitigate hazards. Trees that are dead, diseased, or otherwise pose a

hazard, and where the hazard cannot be mitigated through pruning, shall be removed at the property owner's expense.

- B . Failure to Maintain Trees: When a tree or portion thereof is determined by the City to present an immediate hazard to public health, safety, property, infrastructure, or to obstruct the public right-of-way, the City may abate the hazard immediately without prior notice.
- C . City Liability: The City's right to trim, prune or remove private trees under this chapter shall not be interpreted as an obligation upon the City, and the City's failure to act shall not constitute a basis for any claim of liability against the City.

4.36.070 Tree Protection

All public trees and street trees shall be protected during adjacent construction, excavation, boring, or similar ground-disturbing activities.

- A . Tree Protection Plan: A Tree Protection Plan may be required when construction, excavation, boring, or similar work is proposed within the critical root zone of a public tree or street tree, as determined by the Public Works Department.
- B . Authority and Standards: The Tree Protection Plan shall be prepared by a Certified Arborist and shall comply with Tree Protection Plan standards and procedures in Section 14 of the Public Works Development Standards.
- C . Review: Tree Protection Plans shall be submitted to the Public Works Department for review and approval. The Public Works Department may consult with or require review by the City Arborist.
- D . Compliance Required: All approved Tree Protection Plans shall be implemented and maintained for the duration of the permitted activity.

4.36.080 Tree Replacement and In-Lieu Fees

Any street tree or public tree that is approved for removal, removed without a permit, or irreparably damaged must be replaced by the party responsible for the removal or damage, as determined by the City.

- A . Tree Replacement: When tree removal is approved or occurs in violation of this chapter, the City may require replacement of the tree in accordance with Section 14 of the Public Works Development Standards.
- B . In-Lieu Fees: When on-site replacement is not feasible or appropriate due to site constraints, existing tree canopy, or other factors, as determined by the Public Works Department, payment of an in-lieu fee may be required in-lieu of tree replacement. In-lieu fee

requirements, calculations, and administration shall be governed by Section 11 of the Public Works Development Standards.

- C. Use of Funds: In-lieu fees collected under this section shall be deposited into the Urban Forestry Reinvestment account and used for the planting, establishment, maintenance, and management of public trees and street trees.

4.36.090 Recovery of Costs

- A. Authority to Recover Costs: Whenever the City performs pruning, tree removal, stump removal, clearance, hazard mitigation, or other corrective action to address a violation of this chapter or an emergency condition, the City may recover costs incurred from the responsible property owner. Recoverable costs include, but are not limited to, labor, equipment, materials, contractor costs, administrative costs, and overhead.
- B. Emergency Tree Removal and Immediate Hazard Mitigation:
1. When emergency tree removal or immediate hazard mitigation is required, the cost of the work shall be shared equally between the City and the adjacent property owner.
 2. If the emergency condition (including, but not limited to, clearance and/or hazardous tree pruning or removal) is associated with an active street tree permit or a code enforcement action related to the tree, the property owner shall be responsible for one hundred percent of the costs incurred.
 3. Following completion of the work, the City shall provide written notice to the property owner describing the hazard, the work performed, the total cost, and the portion of the cost charged to the property owner.
- C. Damage to City-Owned Property: If a private tree causes damage to City-owned property, infrastructure, or facilities, the property owner shall be responsible for all costs associated with repair, restoration, or replacement, including tree restoration or replacement costs.
- D. Stump Removal: When a street tree is removed, the party responsible shall remove the stump below ground surface within sixty days so that no portion of the stump projects above the surface of the ground. If the City performs stump removal due to noncompliance, the costs incurred shall be recovered pursuant to this section.

4.36.110 Tree Permit Appeals

- A. Right to Appeal: Any person aggrieved by the approval, denial, revocation, or conditioning of a permit issued under this chapter may appeal the decision to the Hearing Examiner within ten business days of the date of decision. The date of decision shall be the date the City provides written notice of the decision to the applicant or affected party. Written notice may

be provided by mail, email, hand delivery, or other documented method of communication. If the decision is mailed, the date of the decision shall be three days after mailing.

B. Filing of Appeal: The notice of appeal shall be delivered to the City Clerk within ten business days of the date of decision. The notice of appeal must be received by the City Clerk no later than the deadline and shall include:

1. The name and contact information of the appellant.
2. Identification of the permit, decision, or notice being appealed.
3. A statement of the grounds for the appeal.
4. The relief requested.

The City Clerk shall take reasonable steps to notify the appellant of the date, time, and place of the hearing.

C. Hearing Examiner Review: Appeals shall be heard by the Hearings Examiner pursuant to Chapter 1.70A ECC.

1. The decision or determination shall be upheld if supported by a preponderance of the evidence.
2. The Hearing Examiner may consider relevant and reliable information, including information that may not be admissible under the formal rules of evidence.
3. The Hearing Examiner shall review the appeal and may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision, or remand the matter for further consideration.

The Hearing's Examiner's decision is the final decision of the City and may be appealed to the Kittitas County superior court within 21 days of the decision being issued.

D. Effect of Appeal: Filing an appeal shall not stay emergency actions necessary to protect public health, safety, or property, unless expressly ordered by the Hearing Examiner.

4.36.120 Enforcement and Penalties

A. Enforcement: Violation(s) of this chapter may be enforced pursuant to the provisions of chapter 1.80 ECC and/or chapter 5.40 ECC.

B. Restitution and Mitigation: In addition to any criminal or civil penalty, a violator may be required to pay restitution as authorized by RCW 7.80.120(4), replace the tree, and/or pay an in-lieu fee as provided in Section 4.36.080, Tree Replacement and In-Lieu Fees, and Section 11 and Section 14 of the Public Works Development Standards.

- C . Stop Work Orders: The City may issue a stop work order for any activity that violates this chapter or an approved Tree Protection Plan. All work subject to the order shall cease until the violation has been corrected and the City determines that work may resume.
- D . Cumulative Remedies: The remedies and penalties provided in this chapter are cumulative and in addition to all other remedies provided or authorized by law, and may be imposed individually or in combination, at the discretion of the City.

Section 3. Severability. If any portion of this ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion(s) of this ordinance.

Section 4. Corrections. Upon the approval of the City Attorney, the City Clerk and the codifiers of this ordinance are authorized to make necessary corrections to this ordinance including, but not limited to, the correction of scrivener's/clerical errors, references, ordinance numbering, section/subsection numbers and any references thereto.

Section 5. Effective Date. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force five (5) days after its passage, approval and publication.

The foregoing ordinance was passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council on the _____ day of August, 2026.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

Approved as to form:

CITY ATTORNEY

Publish:

I, Beth Leader, City Clerk of said City, do hereby certify that Ordinance No. 4992 is a true and correct copy of said Ordinance of like number as the same was passed by said Council, and that Ordinance No. 4992 was published as required by law.

BETH LEADER



Meeting Date: July 20, 2026
City of Ellensburg
City Council Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: First and Pine Property Contribution Letter of Intent (Public Comment Opportunity)
Submitted by: Lily Frey, Housing Program Manager
Department: Community Development

Suggested Motion/Action:

Authorize the Mayor to sign the letter of intent for property contribution.

Background/Summary:

The City issued a request for proposals (RFP) from February to March 2024 for the 1st and Pine property based on cancellation of a previous affordable housing agreement for the property. Council heard applicant presentations and selected a proposed design in August 2024. Council has subsequently approved developer requests for project modifications based on project financial feasibility. City staff and outside counsel have worked through affordable housing agreement documents for the property with First and Pine LLC in the intervening months and are preparing a final agreement packet for Council review at a future meeting.

In parallel, First and Pine LLC contracted a phase 1 environmental review and survey of the site at their own expense with City authorization. The phase 1 review identified the need for a limited phase 2 soil investigation that the developer is prepared to undertake. The developer notes that the limited soil investigation could identify soil remediation needs that the proposed project budget could not accommodate and has requested the City contribute to soil remediation should this be required as a result of the limited investigation.

Previous Council Action:

Council issued a letter of intent to award the property to Inversion Design Build on August 5, 2024 based on the initial design presentation and subsequently approved proposed design changes presented by the developer on March 17, 2025.

At its November 3, 2025 meeting, Council reviewed additional project design changes and directed staff to develop an affordable housing agreement for the property transfer. Staff did not provide a revised letter of intent for the property contribution for signature at that time.

Analysis:

The proposed letter of intent would formalize the City's commitment to the developer for the Council-accepted site design consisting of 16-17 townhomes and set a deadline to finalize the affordable housing agreement governing the property transfer.

If soil remediation needs are identified, any affordable housing development on the City

surplus property would likely require similar remediation work to access lender financing which could challenge the financial feasibility of any proposed project. If soil remediation is needed, the City's affordable and supportive housing sales and use tax funds could be used for this predevelopment expense. The City would contract remediation under City procurement policies. If expected remediation costs exceed the proposed \$100,000 limit in the letter of intent, the City could explore alternate grant and other funding sources to assist with costs.

Financial Impact:

This letter of intent does not commit the City to conduct remediation work at this time, but communicates the City's willingness to contract soil remediation work up to \$100,000 if needed. Any predevelopment site work would be contracted by the City using the affordable and supportive housing sales and use tax funds (under RCW 82.14.540). Any soil remediation work would be completed before the property transfer to First and Pine LLC. If soil remediation work is needed, budget/expenditure authority will be requested from Council at that time.

Budget Adjustment: No

Attachments:

1. Letter of intent 1stPine_7.20.26
2. Fulcrum - Cover Letter - First and Pine Phase I ESA
3. Fulcrum - First and Pine Limited Soil Investigation Proposal Scope



CITY OF ELLENSBURG
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926
Phone: (509) 962-7221

July 20, 2026
Skylar Bisom-Rapp
First and Pine LLC
421 North Pearl St Suite 100
Ellensburg, WA 98926

RE: Award Letter and Conditions for City of Ellensburg 1st and Pine Property Contribution

Dear Mr. Bisom-Rapp:

Congratulations! Your application for the City-owned property located at E 1st Ave and N Pine Street has been conditionally approved by Ellensburg City Council ("Council").

This award is conditional and is not a guarantee the property will be contributed by the City of Ellensburg (the "City"). The City and First and Pine LLC will be required to enter a contractual agreement, the "Affordable Housing Agreement" or "Agreement," that will outline the terms and conditions by which the City agrees to the transfer the property to First and Pine LLC. This letter provides an overview of the conditions and terms the City requires to be in the Agreement but does not include all legal requirements or terms that will be included in the Agreement. Upon issuance of this letter, the City will continue to engage in negotiations to finalize the Agreement with First and Pine LLC which, upon satisfaction of all conditions in the Agreement, will culminate in the transfer of ownership of the 1st and Pine property to First and Pine LLC

Please read this letter carefully and return a signed copy of the Acknowledgement of Conditions at the bottom to the City of Ellensburg Community Development Department.

The City's allocation of the property is based on representations made in your submitted project materials reviewed by City Council on November 3, 2025. Changes to those representations must be reported as specified in the "Conditions" below and approved by the City in writing. If changes are not reported to the City, the City may rescind the property contribution and, if already executed, terminate the Agreement. These requirements are designed to ensure productive communication between First and Pine LLC and the City regarding project status.

Given the results of the Phase I environmental assessment of the property dated April 24, 2026 completed by Fulcrum environmental consulting, the City understands First and Pine LLC plans to hire a contractor to complete a limited Phase II soil investigation, at your sole cost and expense. The City is willing to collaborate with you to address environmental site conditions identified on the property to support development feasibility. Depending on the findings and conclusions of the Phase II soil investigation, the City is willing to consider, in its sole discretion, remediating identified soil concerns at a cost to the City of up to \$100,000, prior to the property transfer. Funding for any necessary remediation would be subject to Council approval, and remediation work would be completed by the City via a contract with a third party. In the event remediation costs are expected to exceed \$100,000, additional communication and Council approval will be required. Please provide the City with a copy of

any completed Phase II soil investigation report or other environmental report related to the property and continue to keep the City informed throughout the environmental assessment process.

CONDITIONS

While the City will continue to engage in negotiations to finalize the Agreement after receipt of the signed Acknowledgement of Conditions, the following conditions will apply to the Agreement:

- The contract term for project completion will be consistent with the development timeline.
- The contract will incorporate a schedule of performance that will include, but not be limited to, the following: submitting a finance plan (pro forma), obtaining civil permits, scheduling a closing date, commencement of construction, completion of construction, review of eligibility requirements for homebuyers, and conveyance of homes to initial homebuyers.
- The proposal and contract must meet the requirements of the City of Ellensburg Affordable Housing program and RCW 39.33.015.
- First and Pine LLC will submit a written status report when changes to the project cause the proposal to differ from the RFP application or previous status reports. Reports must explain any problems or needed modifications and propose a plan for addressing them. Modifications may require a mutually agreed-upon amendment of the Agreement.
- Applicant will provide the City with copies of any environmental reports.
- The Agreement must be executed and effective by December 1, 2026 or the City reserves the right to withdraw the property contribution.

Please notify the Community Development Department as you reach each milestone or encounter challenges.

Thank you for your commitment to make the City of Ellensburg more affordable for everyone in our community!

Sincerely,

Rich Elliott, City of Ellensburg Mayor

Acknowledgement of Conditions

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above conditions.

ORIGINAL SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

Signature: _____ Title: _____
Name: _____ Date: _____
Organization: _____

April 24, 2026

First and Pine, LLC
c/o: Skylar Bisom-Rapp, AICP
421 North Pearl Street, Suite 100
Ellensburg, Washington 98926

**RE: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Cover Letter
First and Pine Parcels, Ellensburg, Washington**

Dear Skylar:

Fulcrum Environmental Consulting (Fulcrum) completed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) per ASTM International Practice E1527-21 *Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments, Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process* (Practice), for the two parcels of real property located northeast of the intersection of North Pine Street and East First Avenue in Ellensburg, Washington (Site). The purpose of the Phase I ESA was to complete due diligence prior to redevelopment of the property into affordable housing.

Summary

The Site consists of Kittitas County parcels 617033 and 937033, totaling 0.5-acres. The Site is currently undeveloped with grass and vegetation, and a graveled driving loop associated with the north adjoining parking lot. Evidence of past development including asphalt and concrete walkways consistent with previous structures, and ground impressions consistent with the former planting beds of the community garden remain.

The Site was developed prior to 1888 with early development consisting of residential buildings and other outbuildings. By 1948, a large building, used over time as a welding and blacksmith shop, an automotive shop, and as apartments is constructed on the north adjacent parcel and extends onto the Site. The residential developments are mostly removed by 1985 and the large building is removed in 2012. The Site was then used by the City of Ellensburg as a community garden from 2012 until about 2025.

Fulcrum's Phase I ESA identified the following findings:

Table 1: Phase I ESA Findings

Condition	Findings
Recognized Environmental Conditions	Former Automotive Building Historic Offsite Gas Station Historic Offsite Dry Cleaners
Vapor Encroachment Concerns	Former Automotive Building Historic Offsite Gas Station Historic Offsite Dry Cleaners
Controlled RECs	<i>None</i>
Historical RECs	<i>None</i>
De minimis Environmental Conditions	<i>None</i>
Business Environmental Risks	Former Building Developments Previous Community Garden Use
Significant Data Gaps	<i>None</i>
Data Gaps	Former Building Heating Sources

The former automotive use of the large building, a historic offsite gas station, and multiple historic offsite gas stations were identified as *Recognized Environmental Conditions* and Vapor Encroachment Concerns for the Subject Site. The former automotive building is a partially onsite sourced concern, while the offsite gas station and dry cleaners are offsite concerns. Fulcrum recommends further investigation into the environmental impact to the Subject Site from the former automotive building and recommends including vapor mitigation design measures into the planned housing developments.

Recommended Investigation for Former Automotive Building

The large building that extended onto the Site from the north adjoining parcel was identified in Fulcrum's historical research as a blacksmith and welding shop by 1948, a used car dealership by 1959, and an automotive shop by 1978 and through 2010. Records show that by 1986 the south portion of the building, present on the Subject Site, was used as an indoor graveled storage area and a residential duplex. The other areas of the building include repair rooms, a paint room, washroom, a used car lot, and other support areas. The specific use of the gravel storage area on the Subject Site was not provided.

No other records related to the interior configuration or use of the building, except this 1986 record, were identified. It is unknown whether the portion of the building on the Subject Site may have previously included automotive repair, parts or used vehicle storage, or other environmentally sensitive operations. It is unknown how paints, cleaners, wash water, used automotive fluids, etc. were managed for the previous automotive operations.

Fulcrum recommends a limited Phase II soil investigation in the vicinity of the former automotive building to evaluate the potential for soil impact associated with the potential former onsite automotive operations. This area is bare and test pits would be an effective approach for evaluating soil impact.

Recommended Mitigation for Offsite Gas Station & Dry Cleaners

One former gas station was identified within 100-feet of the Subject Site, and three historic drycleaners were identified within 600-feet of the Site. No publicly reported environmental investigations are known to have been conducted for these properties, and the environmental impact and condition of these properties are unknown. Offsite gas stations present an environmental concern due to the use and storage of petroleum products that have the potential to impact groundwater and soil vapor at the Subject Site. Historic offsite drycleaners present an environmental concern due to the drycleaning chlorinated solvent usage, management of drycleaning wastes, etc. related to the use of tetrachloroethylene (PCE) and trichloroethylene (TCE) and the degradation into dichloroethylene (DCE), vinyl chloride, and other similarly volatile and hazardous chemicals that have the potential to impact groundwater and soil vapor at the Subject Site.

Investigation and any necessary remediation of environmental impacts from the offsite gas station and dry cleaners would begin at the source property by the respective responsible parties. Risks to the Subject Site are primarily driven by the potential impact to groundwater and soil vapor. Groundwater is not currently used, or planned to be used, as a resource on the Subject Site. Potential onsite impacts from offsite contamination can be effectively mitigated by addressing the soil gas and vapor exposure pathways through use of vapor barriers and passive or active vapor mitigation systems installed as a part of Site development.

Closure

All adverse environmental conditions, environmental violations, and environmental risks in connection with the Subject Site of which Fulcrum is aware are presented in the enclosed Phase I ESA. To the best of our knowledge the report is complete and accurate with respect to the subject matter contained therein and does not contain any material omissions.

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 509.574.0839.

Sincerely,



Erica Newchurch, CHMM, GIT
Environmental Specialist



Ryan Mathews, CIH, CHMM
Principal

May 6, 2026

First and Pine, LLC
c/o: Skylar Bisom-Rapp, AICP
421 North Pearl Street, Suite 100
Ellensburg, Washington 98926

**RE: Limited Soil Investigation: Former Automotive Building
First and Pine Parcels, Ellensburg, Washington**

Skylar,

Fulcrum Environmental Consulting, Inc. (Fulcrum) completed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) for the two parcels of real property located northeast of the intersection of North Pine Street and East First Avenue in Ellensburg, Washington (Site). The Site consists of Kittitas County parcels 617033 and 937033, totaling 0.5-acres. Fulcrum's Phase I ESA identified the following *Recognized Environmental Conditions* and Vapor Encroachment Concerns for the Site:

- Former Automotive Building
- Historic Offsite Gas Station
- Historic Offsite Dry Cleaners

The former automotive building extended onto the Site, while the gas station and dry cleaners are offsite concerns. Fulcrum recommends further investigation into potential onsite concerns associated with the operations of the former automotive building.

The former automotive building was constructed by 1948 at a time when the Subject Site and north adjoining parcel appear to have had common ownership. The building was identified in Fulcrum's historical research as a blacksmith and welding shop by 1948, a used car dealership by 1959, and an automotive shop by 1978 and through 2010. Records show that by 1986 the south portion of the building, present on the Site, was used as an indoor graveled storage area and a residential duplex. The other areas of the building include repair rooms, a paint room, washroom, a used car lot, and other support areas. The specific use of the gravel storage area in the building was not provided.

No other records related to the interior configuration or use of the building, except this 1986 record, were identified. It is unknown whether the portion of the building on the Subject Site may have previously included automotive repair, parts or used vehicle storage, or other environmentally sensitive operations. It is unknown how paints, cleaners, wash water, used automotive fluids, etc. were managed for the previous automotive operations.

Fulcrum proposes to complete a limited soil investigation consisting of excavating test pits in the vicinity of the former building to assess potential soil impacts from the previous use.

Scope of Work

The investigation will consist of the following tasks:

- Prepare an Inadvertent Discovery Plan (IDP), Sampling and Analysis Plan and Quality Assurance Project Plan (SAP/QAPP), and Health and Safety Plan (HASP) prior to the start of work.
- Retain an excavation contractor to complete excavation services.
- Place field markings and request a public utility locate (*Call before you dig*, *811).
- Retain a private utility locate and ground penetrating radar (GPR) provider to screen the excavation areas for building foundations, utilities, and other underground features.
- Observe excavation of approximately six test pits to a depth of about 6 to 8-feet bgs, depending on soil conditions.
- Capture location of features identified by GPR, test pits, and sample locations on an ArcGIS map utilizing ESRI's Field Maps application.
- Field screen the excavated soils at approximately 2-foot intervals in the test pits for color, odor, sheen and volatile organic compound levels. Volatile organic compound (VOC) screening will be accomplished by a RAE Systems MultiRAE 4-gas meter (VOCs, carbon monoxide, oxygen, and hydrogen sulfide) with 10.6 eV photoionization detector (PID) or similar.
- Collect up to two soil samples from each test pit for laboratory analysis. Field duplicate samples will be collected at a rate of 10%. Samples will be collected at a depth of about 3-feet and from about 6-feet bgs or the maximum excavation depth. If field screening identifies potential petroleum contamination or discolored soils consistent with contamination, an additional sample may be collected.
- Fulcrum will direct that one sample from each test pit be submitted to the project laboratory for the following analyses:
 - Diesel and heavy oil range organics by Northwest Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (NWTPH)-Diesel (Dx)
 - Gasoline range organics by NWTPH-Gx
 - Volatile organic compounds by EPA Method 8260
 - Heavy metals (arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury, selenium, and silver (collectively the RCRA 8 metals)) by EPA 6000-series method.
- Prepare an investigation report with analytical results compared to WAC 173-340: Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) cleanup standards. MTCA cleanup standards evaluation will include evaluation of MTCA Method A and soil protective of groundwater (as applicable) cleanup and screening levels.

The findings of the soil investigation will be summarized in a draft investigation report, including recommendations and conclusions. The draft report will be finalized following review and direction by First and Pine, LLC.

Limitations

The following conditions are inherent in all work in this scope of work:

- First and Pine, LLC will obtain site access from the City of Ellensburg to complete the investigation.
- No soil disposal will be completed, and all test pits will be backfilled following sample collection. If suspected contaminated soil is identified during the investigation, care will be taken to backfill the contaminated soil at the depth it was initially encountered.
- No permits will be required to complete this work.
- This scope does not include groundwater, soil gas, or vapor investigation.
- This investigation will inform the conditions of previous site use; however, further investigation, groundwater monitoring, and vapor investigation may be required based on findings of this investigation.
- This scope of work does not include the costs of remediation, including costs to load, transport, or dispose of contaminated soils that may be found during additional work.
- Fulcrum is not responsible for the damage to private underground utilities or other features.
- Fee estimates for laboratory analysis represent standard turnaround times (5 business days).
- Any directed tasks that are beyond the scope of work will be invoiced on a time and materials basis.

Fulcrum will utilize Alliance Technical Group, an Ecology accredited laboratory (C910) for project analytical services and intends to retain Russell Crane Service, Inc. for excavation services and Utilities Plus LLC for private utility locating and GPR services.

Schedule

Fulcrum will coordinate the investigation upon notice to proceed. The private utility locate and GPR survey will be completed within one week of notice to proceed and a two business day public locate ticket will be filed concurrent to the GPR survey. The IDP will be prepared prior to completing ground disturbing site work. Fulcrum estimates that the field investigation tasks will take half a day to complete. Soil samples will be submitted to the project laboratory on a standard turnaround time of about 5-business days. Fulcrum will issue the draft investigation report within about 10-business days of data review of the analytical results. The final investigation report will be issued about 3-business days following review and discussion of any comments from First and Pine, LLC.

Fee Estimate

Fulcrum will complete project tasks on a fixed-fee basis. Table 1 below provides an approximate allocation of fees. Fee allocations are estimated and may be allocated to other categories as appropriate. Work beyond this scope of work will be formalized in a contract modification before the work occurs.



Table 1: Fee Estimate

Task	Fixed Fee
Project Management & SAP/QAPP, IDP, HASP Preparation	\$1,500
GPR and Private Utility Locate Contractor	\$800
Excavation Contractor	\$1,900
Field Services: GPR and Soil Sampling (up to 4 hours onsite)	\$2,900
Laboratory Analytical (six samples and one duplicate sample)	\$3,700
Equipment and Reimbursables	\$350
Data Evaluation, Mapping and Reporting	\$3,700
Total Fee Estimate	\$14,850

If this scope of work and proposed fee is acceptable to you, please sign below, as well as the attached Consulting Services Agreement, and return a copy by email to ryan.mathews@efulcrum.net as notice to proceed. If you have any questions, please contact us at 509.574.0839.

Sincerely,

Erica Newchurch, CHMM, GIT
Environmental Specialist

Ryan Mathews, CIH, CHMM
Principal

Attachment



Meeting Date: July 20, 2026
City of Ellensburg
City Council Agenda Report

Agenda Subject: 2026 Comprehensive Plan - Chapter 2 Discussion - Our Community: Access, Engagement, and Belonging (Public Comment Opportunity)

Submitted by: Stacey Henderson, Planning Manager

Department: Community Development

Suggested Motion/Action:

This item is for informational purposes only.

Background/Summary:

Over the course of the summer months in 2026, staff will present individual chapter (element) drafts for the periodic update to the City of Ellensburg's Comprehensive Plan to provide an opportunity for community members and Council to review drafts and provide input and guidance as necessary. The proposed Chapter 2 - Our Community: Access, Engagement and Belonging Draft—and the current Chapter 9 - Access, Engagement, and Belonging—are both attached.

The City of Ellensburg planning staff presented to the AAEE Commission in May, June, and July of 2026. In May, staff presented a proposed path forward for rewriting and reworking the existing Chapter 9 content based on analysis and recommendation from consultant SCJ Alliance (see Attachment 1). In June, staff presented a proposed draft chapter which transferred content of Chapter 9 into a new chapter (Chapter 2), which received mixed reviews from the Commission. At the July 14 meeting, staff returned with a revised draft based on comments received from the first review.

Comprehensive (Comp) Plan Periodic Update Process

The comprehensive plan docketing process of 2025 is a separate process from the periodic update to the comprehensive plan. City staff are now focused on the periodic update for the comprehensive plan, which is a complete overhaul, review, and analysis of the content of the plan. The periodic update happens every ten years, and is an opportunity to reimagine, reconfigure, reassess, and rewrite, based on extensive policy analysis, new state mandates, commerce guidance, best practices, and community feedback. The periodic review process began in 2025 with all elements (chapters), excluding Chapter 9, which was the subject of the 2025 annual docketing process.

There are new requirements for reviewing the city code and comp plan from new perspectives, such as completing a Racially Disparate Impacts Memo, or the adequate provisions review which required staff to analyze the entire development process, identify barriers, and identify possible solutions to those barriers. Required this year was an entirely new chapter addressing climate hazard planning, which entailed a complete deep dive and analysis into the existing environment chapter to evaluate how these two similar topics will co-exist in the comp plan.

Beginning in fall 2025, the project team set to work analyzing the current plan, current studies, reports, and county-wide policies that exist, to identify gaps, needs, and to provide context as to which direction this updated plan should go. An extensive Land Capacity Analysis was completed to understand current capacities for housing and development, and to determine sufficiency of the City's urban growth area (UGA) through the next 20 years (2046). The transportation consultant completed traffic modeling and has integrated active transportation plans into future goals. The project team and environmental consultant

completed an extensive policy audit memorandum and Ellensburg climate hazards and impacts assessment.

In early 2026, the project team also set forth conducting extensive group interviews with members and organizations throughout the community to understand utility and facility needs, community needs, and what needs to be considered looking to the future. The team posted surveys online and hosted a monthly task force meeting to address the new climate chapter.

Chapter 9

As this comp plan work has been completed over the past year, it became clear that changes to Chapter 9 would be required to fit within the context of the updated plan. The project team completed a policy analysis and crosswalk regarding all goals and policies in the plan, including the existing goals and policies of Chapter 9 (Attachment 1). Based on this work, it became clear that a new format to this chapter may be necessary and more effective for use throughout the plan. The existing Chapter 9 was originally adopted into the comprehensive plan during the yearly docketing process. In order to add this content to the comprehensive plan during the yearly docketing process, it was best to add a standalone chapter as opposed to incorporating new content throughout the plan which would require readopting multiple chapters at once.

Previous Council Action:

Council adopted Ordinance 4777 amending the most current version of the City's Comprehensive Plan, including edits to Chapter 9, on December 15, 2025.

Analysis:

Overall Comprehensive Plan Order and Elements

The intro and community profile have been renumbered as chapters, because they are important elements of the plan. They show readers how to use the plan and provide contextual information as to the history of Ellensburg, as well as our strategic planning and community access and belonging priorities. That is why the current Chapter 9 needs to be moved up in the order of elements and follow the introduction chapter. It was determined through a policy analysis workshop that the new required climate chapter and existing environment chapter have enough overlapping policies and goals to be combined. The numbering of the chapters has been adjusted to reflect new requirements and needs of the plan as seen below:

Existing	Proposed
Intro	1: Introduction
Community Profile	2: Our Community: Access, Engagement, and Belonging
Chapter 1: Land Use	3: Land Use Element
Chapter 2: Housing	4: Housing Element
Chapter 3: Transportation	5: Transportation Element
Chapter 4: Capital Facilities	6: Capital Facilities and Utilities Element
Chapter 5: Parks and Recreation	7: Parks and Recreation Element
Chapter 6: Economic Development	8: Economic Development Element
Chapter 7: Environment	9: Climate and Environment Element
Chapter 8: Historic Preservation	10: Historic Preservation
Chapter 9: Access, Engagement, and Belonging	

Appendix A: 6-year Capital Improvement Plan	Appendix A: 6-year Capital Improvement Plan
Appendix B: Transportation Improvement Plan	Appendix B: Transportation Improvement Plan
Appendix C: Household and Employment Growth	Appendix C: Racially Disparate Impacts Memo
Appendix D: Level of Service Reports	Appendix D: Household and Employment Growth
Appendix E: Travel Demand Documentation	Appendix E: Level of Service Report
	Appendix F: Travel Demand Documentation
	Attachment A: Public Outreach- Feedback List

Proposed Chapter 2: Our Community: Access, Engagement, and Belonging

The following is a crosswalk and explanation of where the current content in Chapter 9 has been moved to the proposed Chapter 2 and throughout the plan. (See Attachment 2 Our Community: Access, Engagement, and Belonging.)

Existing Chapter 9 Sections	Connection Between Existing and Proposed	Proposed Chapter 2 Sections	Additional Location
<i>What You Will Find/ Overview</i>	Copied - some direct, some rewritten	<i>What you will find</i>	
<i>Background and Context</i>	Copied - some direct, some rewritten	<i>Community Belonging</i>	
	Existing Content	<i>Local Context Natural Environment</i>	
	New Content	<i>Land Acknowledgement</i>	
	New Content	<i>Community Vision and Strategic Vision</i>	
<i>Why this Matters in Ellensburg</i>	Copied – some direct, some rewritten	<i>Access, Engagement, and Belonging</i>	
<i>Fostering a Sense of Belonging</i>	Copied – some direct, some rewritten	<i>Access, Engagement, and Belonging</i>	
<i>Recognizing the Past – Looking to the Future- Past</i>	Combined existing history sections of existing Chapter 2 and 9.	<i>Ellensburg History</i>	

<i>Present</i>	Not copied to Chapter 2- Concept of content covered in Community Development, and Access, Engagement, and Belonging section. Don't need the past-present- future format in Chapter.		
<i>Future</i>			Data moved to 4. Housing Element: Household Characteristics, Demographic Trends, and Homelessness and Unhoused Population.
Goals and Policies			
<i>Goal- 1</i>	Copied to Chapter 2	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Policy A</i>	Copied to Chapter 2	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 1</i>	Copied to Chapter 2	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 2</i>	Copied to Chapter 2	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Policy B</i>	Guiding Principles section of proposed chapter 2	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 1</i>	Guiding Principles section of proposed chapter 2	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 2</i>	Removed- More suitable for strategic plan	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 3</i>			Parks and Rec -Goal PR-2
<i>Program 4</i>			Economic Development – Policy ED-3
<i>Goal-2</i>			Parks and Rec – PR 2.1
<i>Policy A</i>			Parks and Rec - PR 3.3
<i>Program 1</i>			Parks and Recreation – PR 3.3

<i>Program 2</i>			Parks and Rec and Land Use – PR 2.2, and LU-1B
<i>Program 3</i>			Economic Development – Goal ED – 1
<i>Policy B</i>	Guiding Principles section of Proposed chapter 2	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 1</i>	Removed- More suitable for strategic plan	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 2</i>	Copied to Chapter 2	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 3</i>			Economic Development Goal ED-1
<i>Goal- 3</i>	Redundant- combine with goal 1 into one access-focused goal.	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Policy A</i>	Redundant- combine with goal 1	<i>Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies</i>	
<i>Program 1</i>			Transportation Goal- T-3
<i>Program 2</i>			Housing- Goal H-2
<i>Program 3</i>			Economic Development- ED-1
<i>Policy B</i>			Parks and Recreation- PR 2.1
<i>Program 1</i>			Parks and Recreation- PR 2.3
<i>Program 2</i>			Economic Development- ED-1
<i>Action Items</i>	Removed		
<i>Policy Connections</i>	Removed		

Financial Impact:

This item is for discussion purposes only.

Budget Adjustment: No

Attachments:

1. Attachment 1 - Memo Chapter 9 Recommendations
2. Proposed Chapter 2: Our Community: Access, Engagement, and Belonging
3. Existing Chapter: Access, Engagement, and Belonging



Technical Memo

To Stacey Henderson – City of Ellensburg
From: Laura Barker, Spencer Easton, and Gavin Scouten – SCJ Alliance
Date: April 27, 2026
Project: City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan Update
Subject Findings and Recommendations: Chapter 9 (Access, Engagement & Belonging)

Introduction/Purpose

The City of Ellensburg is currently evaluating the role and structure of Chapter 9 (Access, Engagement & Belonging) within the Comprehensive Plan. As part of this effort, the City directed SCJ to conduct an expanded policy review to better understand how concepts related to equity, inclusion, accessibility, engagement, and belonging are currently addressed across the plan, and to identify opportunities for improvement or consolidation.

This memo summarizes the findings of that analysis, including results from recent community engagement and a detailed policy audit and crosswalk of the existing Chapter 9 goals, policies, and programs, which were most recently updated in 2025. The crosswalk evaluates the extent to which these concepts are already incorporated into other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, identifies areas of overlap and redundancy, and highlights gaps where additional policy direction may be warranted.

The purpose of this memo is to inform City decision-making regarding the future of Chapter 9 by presenting two potential approaches:

- 1) Revising the chapter to better reflect community input and align with the overall plan framework; or
- 2) Incorporating the content of Chapter 9 throughout the Comprehensive Plan elements and removing the standalone chapter.

Based on the findings of the policy audit and crosswalk analysis, this memo also provides recommendations for how equity- and belonging-related policies can be most effectively incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan to improve clarity and overall implementation.

1 Summary of Mini-Poll Results

In order to inform the Comprehensive Plan, the City of Ellensburg and SCJ Alliance conducted three mini-polls related to key planning topics, including a poll focused on access, belonging, and engagement (“Community Voices”). The poll was offered in both Spanish and English; it launched on March 16, 2026 and will run through April 30, 2026. This memo section summarizes preliminary poll results based on 119 responses received at the time of analysis.

Key early poll results include:

- 48% of respondents reported feeling “very welcome” in Ellensburg, with another 30% saying they feel “somewhat welcome.” Only 4% of respondents indicated they do not feel very welcome in Ellensburg.
- When asked what helps Ellensburg feel welcoming and inclusive, over 50% of respondents selected “friendly people” and “community events and festivals” (see Figure 1).
- When asked what barriers make it harder for people to participate in City meetings, events, or decision-making, the top three results were “not aware of opportunities,” “meeting times or schedules,” and “meetings feel unwelcoming or difficult to participate in” (see Figure 2).
- When asked what would make it easier to participate in City decisions or community discussions, the top result (selected by over 60% of respondents) was “Better communication about topics and events” (see Figure 3).

Figure 1. What Helps Ellensburg Feel Welcoming and Inclusive

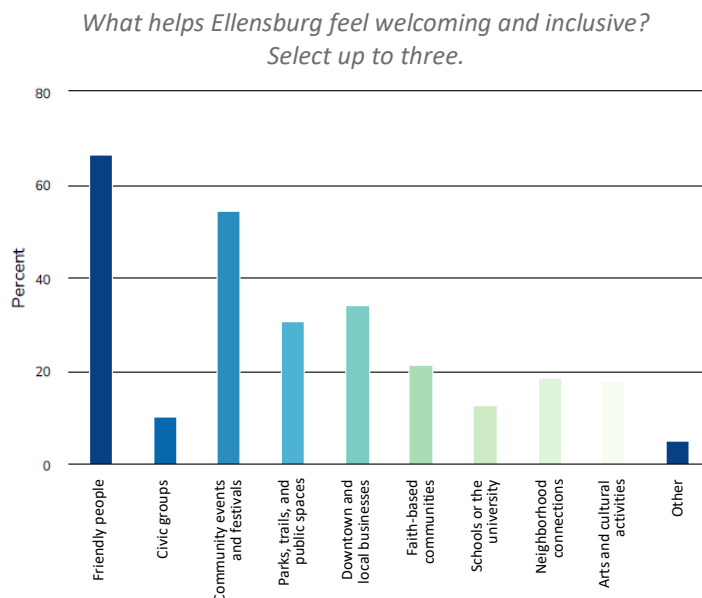


Figure 2. What Barriers Make it Hard to Participate

What barriers make it harder for people to participate in City meetings, events, or decision-making? Select up to three.

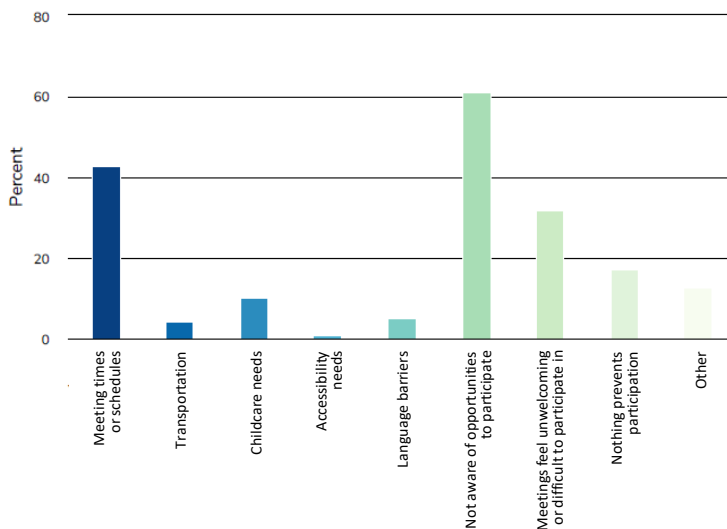
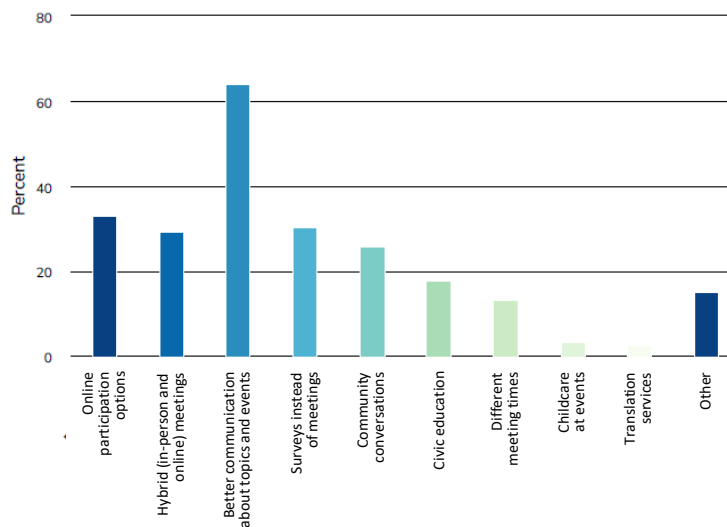


Figure 3. What Would Make it Easier to Participate

What would make it easier for you to participate in City decisions or community discussions? Select up to three.



These results underscore the importance of improving communication, reducing barriers to participation, and cultivating inclusive and welcoming community spaces. These themes are reflected in the recommendations that follow in Section 3.

2 Summary of Policy Crosswalk

SCJ Alliance conducted a policy crosswalk to evaluate the goals, policies, and programs included in Chapter 9 of the existing Comprehensive Plan and their relationship to other plan elements. This review looked at where similar policies already exist, where overlap or redundancy occurs, and where there are opportunities to consolidate or better integrate equity- and belonging-related concepts throughout the plan.

Overall, the analysis found that many of the topics addressed in Chapter 9 are already reflected, at least in part, within other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. In many cases, these policies can be more effectively implemented when located in the elements most responsible for carrying them out (e.g., Housing, Transportation, Capital Facilities and Utilities, or Parks and Recreation). This suggests that a standalone chapter may not be necessary to achieve the City's goals related to access, equity, and belonging.

The crosswalk also identified the following overall themes among the existing Chapter 9 goals, policies, and actions:

- A number of Chapter 9 policies address topics that are already covered, at least partially, in other elements, including access to services, housing affordability, transportation access, and community programming. In these cases, there is an opportunity to consolidate or strengthen these policies within existing elements rather than duplicating them in a standalone chapter.
- Many policies are well-suited for integration into specific elements, where they can be tied to implementation tools or capital planning. This approach improves clarity and ensures that policies are actionable.
- Some policies are broader in scope and apply across multiple elements, particularly those related to community engagement, accessibility, and belonging. These policies do not fit neatly within a single element and are better suited to be reframed as plan-wide guiding principles.
- A small number of policies relate to internal City operations (such as staff training or City-wide proclamations) and are not well-suited for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan. These items would be more appropriately addressed through the City's Strategic Plan or internal policies.
- While most topics are already addressed within the plan, the crosswalk also highlighted opportunities to strengthen policy language and better address identified community priorities, including reducing barriers to participation, improving communication, and supporting a welcoming and inclusive community.

The detailed policy crosswalk matrix is included at the end of this memo in **Appendix A**.

3 Recommendations

While Chapter 9 could be revised and retained as a standalone chapter, the policy audit indicates that many of its goals and policies may be more effectively implemented when integrated across the Comprehensive Plan elements. The policy crosswalk analysis found that many of these concepts are already partially addressed in existing elements, with opportunities to strengthen, consolidate, and clarify implementation.

Overall, the goals, policies, and programs from Chapter 9 can be integrated effectively across the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Incorporating these goals and policies throughout other elements will better integrate access, equity, and belonging into every aspect of the way the City of Ellensburg grows over the next 20 years. Instead of containing equity-focused policies in their own chapter, equity can inform every chapter.

We recommend:

- **Placing specific, measurable actions in existing elements**

Goals, policies, and programs from Chapter 9 are recommended to be distributed across the Comprehensive Plan elements to better align with GMA requirements and improve implementation.

- Most items are recommended for reassignment to the elements most closely tied to their subject matter:
 - Land Use – siting of public spaces, equitable development patterns
 - Housing – affordability, housing access, proximity to services
 - Transportation – equitable mobility, access to services and destinations
 - Capital Facilities and Utilities – equitable service delivery, accessibility, language access, ADA considerations
 - Parks and Recreation – inclusive programming, cultural events, equitable access to recreation
 - Economic Development – support for diverse businesses, workforce access and opportunity
 - Environment – environmental justice, climate impacts
- In a few cases, policies are recommended to be split between elements to ensure all of their components are addressed in the most appropriate context.

- **Consolidating high-level values and direction into a new Guiding Principles section**

A few of the Chapter 9 policies are more cross-cutting and apply across multiple elements of the Comprehensive Plan. These are recommended to be reframed as plan-wide guiding principles focused on engagement, access, and belonging.

- A new “Guiding Principles” section is recommended, located in the Community Voices chapter.
- Cross-cutting policies related to community engagement, access, and belonging would be consolidated into this section.
- This section would provide a consistent, plan-wide framework to guide policy development and implementation across all elements.
- Additional considerations based on outreach Ellensburg has done over the past year (including the mini-poll summarized in Section 1 and work Ellensburg has conducted with Better Angels) can be incorporated into the Guiding Principles section, including:
 - Reducing/removing barriers to participation (including physical, financial, cultural, language barriers)
 - Creating a welcoming and inclusive community that provides a sense of belonging
 - Supporting perceived safety and comfort in civic spaces

- **Removing or relocating internal/administrative actions**

Finally, a small number of the Chapter 9 policies relate to internal City operations (e.g., staff training, proclamations). These items are not well-suited for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan and are recommended instead to be addressed through the City's Strategic Plan or internal policies.

- ◆ The underlying intent of these policies can be retained and integrated into the Guiding Principles, as described in the policy crosswalk (see **Appendix A** for the full policy crosswalk
- ◆ matrix).

The recommended approach integrates access, equity, and belonging throughout the Comprehensive Plan in a way that is more actionable, while also remaining aligned with community input and GMA requirements. This structure allows these concepts to inform all elements of the plan, rather than being addressed in a standalone chapter.

Appendix A: Policy Crosswalk Matrix

This policy crosswalk matrix summarizes each of the Chapter 9 goals, policies, and programs, along with recommended actions, potential placement within other plan elements, and notes on revision or consolidation.

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	RecommendedG ooa Element	Specific Location	Notes
Goal	1	Increase accessibility to City Services, Projects, Programs, and Events.	Move + Revise	Capital Facilities & Utilities	Goal CFU-1 (provision of services)	Strengthen language to focus on equitable service delivery, infrastructure, ADA compliance and add "equitable access for all residents."
Policy	A	Support policies and programs that increase accessibility to City services for all, guided by an awareness of varied community needs and potential barriers.	Move + Revise/Split	Capital Facilities & Utilities + Community Voices	Policy CFU-1A; new Guiding Principles section	Revise to add clarity around measurable actions for language access, ADA, service standards. Split between: - Capital Facilities and Utilities: Policy addressing implementation of accessible City services - Community Voices: New high-level guiding principle supporting equitable/inclusive access to City services, programs, events, and other community opportunities
Program	1	<i>Provide increased access to government documents in multiple languages and easily accessible assistance for those who may need additional support.</i>	Move + Revise/Split	Capital Facilities & Utilities + Community Voices	Policy CFU-4A (tech/communication); new Guiding Principles section	Split between: - Capital Facilities and Utilities: Policy addressing language access and assistance as part of service delivery - Community Voices: New high-level guiding principle supporting accessible communication, equitable access to information, reducing language and communication barriers (potentially combined with principle suggested in Goal 1, Policy A above)
Program	2	<i>Identify areas of City government where greater physical accessibility and accommodations are needed to increase access to all members of the public.</i>	Move	Capital Facilities & Utilities	Policy CFU-1A	Strong Capital Facilities fit - tie to facility planning and upgrades.

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	RecommendedG ooa Element	Specific Location	Notes
Policy	B	Promote and encourage community engagement and outreach to all.	Move + Revise	Community Voices	New Guiding Principles section	Strengthen language to align with GMA public participation requirements, but reframe as a guiding principle that cuts across all plan elements - e.g. "The City will promote inclusive and accessible community engagement and outreach to all members of the community."
Program	1	<i>Actively encourage participation from the public for community projects, events, and recreational activities, through a wide variety of media and information distribution methods.</i>	Move + Revise	Community Voices	New Guiding Principles section	Revise as a guiding principle focused on inclusive engagement. Shift from specific outreach methods to providing a range of accessible participation opportunities.
Program	2	<i>Provide City staff and elected officials with tools and regular training to understand and lead actions that deepen their understanding of community needs and to lead efforts that reduce barriers to participation.</i>	Remove from Comp Plan (Move to Strategic Plan or Internal Training Framework)	None	Potential to reframe and fold into New Guiding Principles section (in Community Voices chapter)	This item addresses internal operations rather than a comprehensive plan policy. It would be more appropriately addressed in a Strategic Plan or internal HR training/framework. Note: The underlying intent (supporting inclusive and equitable service delivery) is still relevant - it can be retained in the comp plan as a high-level guiding principle if the focus is shifted from <i>internal training</i> to <i>public-facing outcomes</i> . For example: "The City will support practices that promote inclusive and equitable service delivery." This can likely be folded into the principle created from Goal 1, Policy A above.
Program	3	<i>Establish an ongoing review process of the costs for City-sponsored recreation and leisure activities to ensure that all members of the public have access to these services.</i>	Move	Parks & Recreation	Goal PR-2 (recreation facilities and programs)	Recreation affordability review - ties directly into equitable access and LOS standards for Parks & Recreation.

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	RecommendedG ooa Element	Specific Location	Notes
Program	4	<i>Support civic education programs that actively engage community members from many backgrounds, and encourage diverse representation among local leadership, organizations, and agencies.</i>	Move	Economic Development	Policy ED-3 (grow and sustain the workforce)	Fits in with Economic Development as it relates to workforce/leadership pipelines.
Goal	2	Foster Understanding, Cultural Awareness, and Belonging within the Community.	Move + Revise	Parks & Recreation	Policy PR 2.1 (citywide programs and services)	Vague as-is; could be reworded for goal intent - reframe around inclusive community spaces and programming + cultural awareness.
Policy	A	Encourage cultural sharing.	Move + Revise	Parks & Recreation	Policy PR 3.3 (cultural arts programs and resources)	Would be a strong fit with arts programming. Add more specific language and tie to events, programming, and public space design.
Program	1	<i>Regularly support events and celebrations that highlight the variety of cultural traditions within the community.</i>	Move + Revise	Parks & Recreation	Policy PR 3.3 (cultural arts programs and resources)	Fits existing Parks & Recreation programming structure; revise/strengthen to clarify the "how" (measurable actions).
Program	2	<i>Encourage the creation of spaces where cultural foods and traditions can be shared among all members of the community, as well as the creation of public spaces that are accommodating and accessible to all.</i>	Move + Revise/Split	Parks & Recreation + Land Use	Policy PR 2.2 (recreational facilities); Policy LU-1B (complements Program 4, placemaking)	Split between Parks & Recreation and Land Use goals/policies: - Parks & Recreation: Programming and gathering - Land Use: Siting/design of public spaces

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	RecommendedG ooa Element	Specific Location	Notes
Program	3	<i>Encourage increased communication and collaboration between the City government, Central Washington University, businesses, and education and social service sectors, through shared events, projects, and outreach, to help residents feel more comfortable visiting campus, and non-resident students feel more comfortable within the community.</i>	Move	Economic Development	Goal ED-1 (strengthen city partnerships)	Strong school/community relationship focus fits into Economic Development policies; strong tie to city partnerships.
Policy	B	Encourage local leadership to address ongoing issues that create barriers for participation.	Move + Revise	Community Voices	New Guiding Principles section	Too broad as-is - as a policy, lacks clear enforcement. Reframe as a plan-wide guiding principle.
Program	1	<i>Encourage City leadership to demonstrate support of groups that experience additional social barriers or a sense of exclusion through a variety of proclamations, and publicly speak to local actions that affect the diverse members of the community.</i>	Remove from Comp Plan (Move to Strategic Plan or Internal Training Framework)	None	Potential to reframe and include in new Guiding Principles section (in Community Voices chapter)	This is a governance action rather than a Comp Plan policy. As with Goal 1, Policy B, Program 2 above, this would typically belong in a Strategic Plan or HR training/framework and should move there if it exists. Note: The underlying intent (visible, public support for inclusion and belonging) is valid and can be retained if reframed as a high-level guiding principle (in the new Community Voices section). For example: "The City will support practices that promote inclusion, respect, and belonging for all members of the community." Potential to combine with Goal 2, Policy B above.
Program	2	<i>Support the development of a framework to identify and address areas where individuals experience barriers within our local institutions.</i>	Move + Revise/Split	Capital Facilities & Utilities + Environment	Goal CFU-1 (provision of services); Goal E-1 (address impacts of climate change to public)	Recommend splitting between: - Capital Facilities & Utilities: Equitable service delivery (implementation) - Environment: Tie directly to Environmental Justice requirements (GMA/Commerce checklist); strengthen language consistent with GMA requirements

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	RecommendedG ooa Element	Specific Location	Notes
Program	3	<i>Collaborate with local organizations to help local businesses support a broad spectrum of community members from different backgrounds and cultures.</i>	Move	Economic Development	Goal ED-1 (strengthen city partnerships)	Align with small business support strategies - already partially exists in Policy ED-1A, Program 4 (potential to merge).
Goal	3	Increase accessibility to local services and community resources for all residents.	Merge with Goal 1	-	-	Redundant - combine w/ Goal 1 into one access-focused goal.
Policy	A	Ensure that high quality service programs are available, accessible, and utilized by all in order to support resident's basic needs.	Move	Capital Facilities & Utilities	Goal CFU-1 (provision of services)	Avoid duplication of Goal 1 policies; potential to merge with Goal 1, Policy A. Tie to service provision standards.
Program	1	<i>Partner with local health and social services to identify strategies for making their services accessible by all means of transportation.</i>	Move + Revise	Transportation	Goal T-3 (transportation network providing connections to key destinations)	Strong multimodal access policy. Expand to add "access to essential services."
Program	2	<i>Advocate for low income, residential care facilities, and other housing for aging people to be located close to services and amenities.</i>	Move	Housing	Goal H-2 (variety of housing types/densities to meet community needs)	Strong fit with existing housing goals addressing GMA housing + land use integration. Consider strengthening language to more clearly define how the City will support or advance this objective.
Program	3	<i>Encourage and support programs that seek to provide residents with access to health care providers with varied expertise and backgrounds who can respond to varying cultural and medical needs.</i>	Move	Economic Development	Goal ED-1 (strengthen city partnerships)	The focus on providers/services fits well into Economic Development.
Policy	B	Encourage healthy activity and lifestyle by making recreational resources and opportunities accessible and welcoming to all residents.	Move	Parks & Recreation	Policy PR 2.1 (citywide programs and services)	Fits well into Parks & Recreation goals. There is a related GMA/Commerce checklist requirement for consideration of EJ and avoiding worsening environmental health disparities - could directly address this requirement by strengthening policy language to add affordability and inclusivity.

Type	#	Text	Recommended Action	RecommendedG ooa Element	Specific Location	Notes
Program	1	<i>Provide opportunities for healthy activity in safe and accessible public spaces for all residents.</i>	Move	Parks & Recreation	Policy PR 2.3 (design and access standards)	Fits well into Parks & Recreation goals.
Program	2	<i>Encourage communication between local businesses, organizations, and schools, to coordinate food pantries and local food distribution.</i>	Move + Revise/Split	Economic Development	Goal ED-1 (strengthen city partnerships); Policy LU-1B (complements Program 3 - healthy food purveyors)	Split between Economic Development and Land Use: - Economic Development: Food systems/businesses (strengthen language beyond “encourage” - consider partnerships, infrastructure) - Land Use: Food access as it relates to EJ + health (good partner to Program 3 under Policy LU-1B)

2. Our Community: Access, Engagement, and



Belonging

What you will find in this chapter

- Community Conversations
 - Ellensburg History
1. Community Vision and Strategic Direction
 2. City of Ellensburg Guiding Principles for the Comprehensive Plan and City Planning

Community Belonging

Ellensburg lies at the heart of central Washington. It is home to families, farmers, educators, health care workers, artists, and students - to name a few - many born and raised here, and many who have found their home here. Each community member brings to the table a different lived experience, new traditions, perspectives, and beliefs, which is what makes Ellensburg such a vibrant community.

The City of Ellensburg is committed to creating a community with a



lived and built environment that improves lives, supports all people, and provides residents with opportunities to flourish. Creating a community where people can thrive requires paying attention to the lived experiences of those who may encounter obstacles – whether physical, social, economic, or cultural – that impact their ability to navigate daily life or engage with local government.

In recent years, national and local conversations have highlighted the importance of understanding how different groups in our community experience Ellensburg. These conversations highlighted the need for the City to be intentional about listening to residents, understanding where barriers exist, and strengthening community connection by consistently listening to residents, responding to concerns, and supporting practices that help all people feel welcomed and included in Ellensburg’s civic, social, and economic life.

Throughout the 2026 Periodic Update process, the City has worked towards ways to reduce and remove barriers for all residents, and strengthen community connection. This document is a starting point for that important work, with acknowledgement that there are likely many issues not yet articulated that can be addressed as they are identified.

Local Context

Natural Environment

Ellensburg lies 110 miles east of Seattle and 170 miles west of Spokane. Two interstate highways and various state highways provide access to and through the area, connecting the Cascades to the west and the farmland to the east. The City’s footprint is approximately 7.6 square miles, with another 7.1 square miles in the Urban Growth Area (UGA) to accommodate for future growth.

The City of Ellensburg sits at an elevation of 1,540 feet in a fertile basin next to the Yakima River, east of the Cascade mountain range, and on the western side of the Columbia Plateau. Enormous basaltic lava flows 15 million years ago, and a series of glacial flooding events after the ice age, shaped the landscape of central and eastern Washington. Ellensburg has a climate that experiences both hot summers and cold winters. Temperature patterns vary considerably within the seasons. The Cascade Mountains to the west effectively block much of the rain from the wetter side of the state, producing a dry climate with an average of less than ten inches of rainfall per year.

Ellensburg experiences four distinct seasons and a strong breeze in the spring and summer months. High summer temperatures (June through September) average about 80° Fahrenheit, and winter temperatures (December through March) average around 21° Fahrenheit. The Ellensburg basin is composed of agricultural land with a significant portion located within the 100-year floodplain. The surrounding topography includes snow-capped mountains, irrigated valley land, desert terrain, and two major rivers: the Yakima and the Columbia.

Land Acknowledgment

The City of Ellensburg is located on the historic home of the K’ti’tas and Pshwánapam bands of Indigenous people. Today, these bands are part of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, a federally-recognized Native Nation constituted under the Treaty with the Yakamas of 1855. The Indigenous stewards of this land practiced a subsistence lifestyle through fishing, hunting, and gathering since time immemorial and remain committed stewards of this land, cherishing it, protecting



it and using it, as instructed by their elders through generations, and actively practicing the traditions and culture as neighbors in the Ellensburg community.



Ellensburg History

The earliest known inhabitants of Kittitas Valley were Psch-wan-wap-pams also known as the Kittitas band of the Yakama or Upper Yakama Tribe. The Kittitas Valley was one of the few places in Washington where both camas and kouse plants grew. For this and other reasons the valley was an important gathering place for regional tribes who congregated to harvest these foods, socialize, fish, and trade.

Though fur traders and Catholic missions had established themselves earlier, Euro-American settlers in greater numbers began moving into the Kittitas Valley in the early 1860s. By the end of the 1860s, a trading post known as Robber's Roost was established near the present corner of Third and Main Streets. In 1871 John Alden Shoudy, who in 1875 platted the town streets and named the community Ellensburgh in honor of his wife, Mary Ellen, purchased this post. In 1894, the United States Post Office requested the 'h' be dropped from the City's name.

During this platting period, The Northern Pacific Railroad donated land in hopes that the town would be a rail-based center for the area's abundant farmland, forests, and mines. Ellensburg grew slowly until plans for rail access were completed and the 1886 arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad helped stimulate markets in cattle, dairy products, timber, wool, and hay. Community boosters hoped Ellensburg would be the new state capitol due to its central location. Such speculation even led to the construction of a mansion to house the future Governor on the corner of what is now Chestnut Street and Third Avenue.

A disastrous fire on July 4, 1889 changed the course of the community's history. The fire, fanned by Ellensburg's famous winds, destroyed most of the business district and many homes. Although the community put forth a heroic effort and rebuilt its downtown within the year, Olympia was ultimately chosen as the state capital. The efforts to place the state capital did help bring an important element to Ellensburg; during the State Legislature's first session, Washington State Normal School (now Central Washington University) was established. In 1891 the doors opened for 86 students. Today Central Washington University has an on-campus enrollment of approximately 6,700, occupies more than 300 acres, and is the county's largest employer.

In addition to the many contributions from those commonly identified as the founders of modern Ellensburg, the histories and experiences of those often overlooked within Ellensburg for their contributions and background continues to be uncovered within documentation and oral records, and there is still much more to be discovered. Residents from Black, Chinese, Jewish, Hispanic, and Japanese communities moved to Ellensburg as early as the mid-19th Century for reasons including migrant labor, such as work on the railroad or at local businesses. Sources such as Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps have shown that Ellensburg used to have a "China Town," and "Chinese Laundries" appear to have existed throughout town (Sanborn Map 1888). An African Methodist Episcopal Church was established in 1908 at 404 South Main Street, and many Black individuals played on local baseball teams as well. There is also evidence at times of divisive behavior and negative language towards these communities during this time, as found in newspaper advertisements regarding restaurants and hotels that employed individuals.

To the world outside Kittitas County, Ellensburg is famous for its annual Fair and Rodeo. The Ellensburg Rodeo was founded in 1922 through the combined efforts of local ranchers and cowboys, the Kittitas



County Fair organization, local businesspersons, and the Yakama Nation. The Ellensburg Rodeo served as a nostalgic celebration of the frontier lifestyle, where townspeople could join ranchers, farmers, and Native Americans in an annual gathering. The Fair and Rodeo has become a way to foster business and promote Ellensburg's identity as a destination.

Historically, Ellensburg has been, and still is, a multicultural community composed of a broad range of people and families, with many stories and experiences that have yet to be discovered or shared. Acknowledging and learning local history within the community, the positive and the negative, can help increase awareness and empathy toward others and strengthen our community as a whole. Understanding local history can help create a more inclusive environment for all, where residents feel welcome and equally represented.

Community Vision and Strategic Direction

In June of 2026, the Ellensburg City Council adopted a new five-year Strategic Vision for 2026-2031 after holding a retreat to consider strategic questions, with input from the public, who were invited to attend and participate. The Strategic Vision represents the most important issues facing the City of Ellensburg and establishes precedence for expenditure of staff and other City resources. While the Strategic Vision has a shorter timeframe than the Comprehensive Plan, the priorities identified by the City Council help inform the policies and strategies included in this long-range plan. Together, the Strategic Vision and the Comprehensive Plan help ensure that day-to-day decisions and long-term planning efforts work toward shared community goals.

The Strategic Vision identifies five strategic pillars for Ellensburg:

3. Community Safety, Civic Engagement and Cultural Inclusion
4. Infrastructure, Utilities, and Mobility
5. Economic Vitality and Workforce Resilience
6. Housing Opportunities and Neighborhood Stability
7. Organizational Excellence and Fiscal Stewardship

These priorities reinforce many of the goals and policies found throughout this Comprehensive Plan, which help inform not only physical planning decisions, but also how the City approaches community engagement, participation, accessibility, and connection.

Access, Engagement, & Belonging

The themes of access, engagement, and belonging; and the strategic pillars, are a lens through which the periodic update team worked when updating the comprehensive plan. Community conversations and engagement efforts in recent years have highlighted that residents do not always experience Ellensburg in the same way. While many people describe Ellensburg as welcoming and community-oriented, some residents have shared experiences of exclusion, unwelcoming behavior, or barriers that affect their ability to access opportunities, feel safe, or feel like they belong. These conversations reinforced the need for City government and staff to be intentional about listening to residents, understanding where barriers exist, and working toward solutions that foster participation, fairness, and



a sense of belonging for all who live here. By doing so, City government and staff can help strengthen community connection and support practices that help all people feel welcomed and included in Ellensburg's civic, social, and economic life.

Why This Matters in Ellensburg

Ellensburg is home to residents with a wide range of life experiences, identities, cultural backgrounds, abilities, and circumstances. Not everyone moves through our community with the same level of ease or access, and some residents encounter challenges that others may never see. When the City government and staff understand these differences and plans with them in mind, it helps ensure that public services, facilities, and community spaces are welcoming, functional, and safe for everyone.

Bringing awareness to where people may face barriers, whether physical, social, economic, cultural, linguistic, or informational, allows City government and staff to identify gaps early and respond in ways that strengthen trust and connection. When residents feel seen, valued, and able to participate fully in community life, the whole City benefits. This approach supports a healthy civic environment, fosters stronger neighborhoods, and contributes to a resilient local economy.

Fostering a Sense of Belonging

It is important for City government and staff to acknowledge and embrace the range of differences present within our community. Doing so will help to build a strong foundation of understanding and a heightened awareness of the unintended impact of current policies or ways of engaging residents. The City seeks to promote new ways of sharing space with others, sharing traditions, foods, and stories. In doing so, City government and staff can strengthen a sense of community and connection through outreach, regular events, and creating spaces accessible to all.

To support all residents, City government and staff will continue to advance goals and policies that actively recruit participation and involvement from all residents within the community, foster a sense of belonging, and engage those who experience barriers to social and cultural participation. Throughout the comp plan, possible barriers have been considered and brought to focus to address, whether it's accessibility to affordable housing, accessibility to safe transportation, or being provided affordable city programs and utilities. It is important to always be learning, listening, and communicating as a community, to better respond to varying needs.

Comp Plan Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies

As Ellensburg continues to grow and evolve, themes related to access, engagement, and belonging provide important context for how the City approaches inclusive public participation and community-building efforts. The following guiding principles are synthesized from Periodic Update outreach efforts to date, and reflect the community values and priorities discussed throughout the following elements. They are intended to support a welcoming, accessible, and connected community and provide overarching guidance for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan across all elements.



- ◆ **Inclusive Engagement:** Support inclusive and accessible community engagement opportunities that encourage participation from people with varied backgrounds, experiences, identities, and needs.
 - **This looks like:** Working with the City of Ellensburg AAEE Commission and local community organizations, and City Staff, to brainstorm and standardize outreach methods for advertising engagement opportunities, and frequent collaboration to ensure City events are designed to be welcoming and accessible to all.

- ◆ **Accessible Information and Services:** Support equitable access to public information, City services, programs, community resources, and participation opportunities, including efforts to reduce language, communication, and accessibility barriers.
 - **This looks like:** Creating standardized practices and trainings among city staff to ensure programs, resources, and participation opportunities across departments are advertised and organized in a consistent and welcoming manner with opportunity for participation regardless of accessibility, language, or communication needs.

- ◆ **Welcoming and Respectful Community:** Foster a welcoming community where residents feel respected, safe, supported, and connected, and where people from varied backgrounds and experiences feel a sense of belonging.
 - **This looks like:** Supporting a wide range of events, activities, and resources that provide an opportunity for community members to share their traditions and experiences, and foster connections with others.

- ◆ **Reducing Barriers:** Work to identify and reduce barriers to participation in civic, social, and community life, including physical, financial, cultural, transportation, informational, and language barriers.
 - **This looks like:** Working with the City of Ellensburg AAEE Commission, local community organizations, and City Staff, to identify ways we can listen, learn, and move forward with creating a built and lived environment that is more welcoming to all.

- ◆ **Community Connection:** Encourage opportunities for cultural sharing, collaboration, relationship-building, and community connection among residents, organizations, businesses, institutions, and community partners.
- ◆ **This looks like:** Working with the City of Ellensburg AAEE Commission, local community organizations, and City Staff, to encourage opportunity for new events and collaboration too build community connection.

Creating a community where everyone feels they belong requires us to pay attention to the experiences of residents who may not always feel fully seen or heard. When we make space for voices that have been, or continue to be, overlooked, we build trust, strengthen connection, and help ensure that the future we shape reflects the needs and hopes of all who live here. It is important for City government and staff to acknowledge and embrace the range of differences present within our community. Doing so



will help to build a strong foundation of understanding and a heightened awareness of the unintended impact of current policies or ways of engaging residents. The City seeks to promote new ways of sharing space with others, sharing traditions, foods, and stories. In doing so, City government and staff can strengthen a sense of community and connection through outreach, regular events, and creating spaces accessible to all.



Chapter 9 Material to Be Incorporated into Other Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

The following Goals, Policies, and Programs will be incorporated into other elements of the Comprehensive Plan as outlined below. This section will be deleted from this chapter once the content has been migrated into the other elements.

- ◆ **Goal 1: Increase accessibility to City Services, Projects, Programs, and Events.**
- ◆ Move to Capital Facilities and Utilities Element under Goal CFU-1 (provision of services).
- ◆ Revise/strengthen language to focus on equitable service delivery, infrastructure, ADA compliance and add "equitable access for all residents."
- ◆ **Policy 1A: Support policies and programs that increase accessibility to City services for all, guided by an awareness of varied community needs and potential barriers.**
- ◆ Move to Capital Facilities and Utilities Element under Policy CFU-1A.
- ◆ Revise to add clarity around measurable actions for language access, ADA, service standards. Policy should address implementation of accessible City services.
- ◆ **Program 1A-1: Provide increased access to government documents in multiple languages and easily accessible assistance for those who may need additional support.**
- ◆ Move to Capital Facilities and Utilities Element under Policy CFU-4A (tech/communication).
- ◆ Revise to create policy addressing language access and assistance as part of service delivery.
- ◆ **Program 1A-2: Identify areas of City government where greater physical accessibility and accommodations are needed to increase access to all members of the public.**
- ◆ Move to Capital Facilities and Utilities Element under Policy CFU-1A.
- ◆ Strong Capital Facilities fit – tie to facility planning and upgrades.
- ◆ **Program 1B-3: Establish an ongoing review process of the costs for City-sponsored recreation and leisure activities to ensure that all members of the public have access to these services.**
- ◆ Move to Parks & Recreation Element under Goal PR-2 (recreation facilities and programs).
- ◆ Recreation affordability review - ties directly into equitable access and LOS standards for Parks & Recreation.
- ◆ **Program 1B-4: Support civic education programs that actively engage community members from many backgrounds, and encourage diverse representation among local leadership, organizations, and agencies.**
- ◆ Move to Economic Development Element under Policy ED-3 (grow and sustain the workforce).
- ◆ Fits in with Economic Development as it relates to workforce/leadership pipelines.
- ◆ **Goal 2: Foster Understanding, Cultural Awareness, and Belonging within the Community.**
- ◆ Move to Parks & Recreation Element under Policy PR 2.1 (citywide programs and services).



- ◆ Revise language; vague as-is. Could be reworded for goal intent – reframe around inclusive community spaces and programming + cultural awareness.
- ◆ Policy 2A: Encourage cultural sharing.
- ◆ Move to Parks & Recreation Element under Policy PR 3.3 (cultural arts programs and resources).
- ◆ Would be a strong fit with arts programming. Revise/add more specific language and tie to events, programming, and public space design.
- ◆ **Program 2A-1: Regularly support events and celebrations that highlight the variety of cultural traditions within the community.**
- ◆ Move to Parks & Recreation Element under Policy PR 3.3 (cultural arts programs and resources).
- ◆ Fits existing Parks & Recreation programming structure; revise/strengthen to clarify the "how" (measurable actions).
- ◆ **Program 2A-2: Encourage the creation of spaces where cultural foods and traditions can be shared among all members of the community, as well as the creation of public spaces that are accommodating and accessible to all.**
- ◆ Move – split between:
- ◆ Parks & Recreation Element under Policy PR 2.2 (recreational facilities): Programming and gathering.
- ◆ Land Use Element under Policy LU-1B (complements Program 4, placemaking): Siting/design of public spaces
- ◆ **Program 2A-3: Encourage increased communication and collaboration between the City government, Central Washington University, businesses, and education and social service sectors, through shared events, projects, and outreach, to help residents feel more comfortable visiting campus, and non-resident students feel more comfortable within the community.**
- ◆ Move to Economic Development Element under Goal ED-1 (strengthen City partnerships).
- ◆ Strong school/community relationship focus fits into Economic Development policies; strong tie to city partnerships.
- ◆ **Program 2B-2: Support the development of a framework to identify and address areas where individuals experience barriers within our local institutions.**
- ◆ Move – split between:
- ◆ Capital Facilities Element under Goal CFU-1 (provision of services): Equitable service delivery (implementation).
- ◆ Environment Element under Goal E-1 (address impacts of climate change to public): Tie directly to Environmental Justice requirements (GMA/Commerce checklist); strengthen language consistent with GMA requirements.
- ◆ **Program 2B-3: Collaborate with local organizations to help local businesses support a broad spectrum of community members from different backgrounds and cultures.**
- ◆ Move to Economic Development Element under Goal ED-1 (strengthen city partnerships).
- ◆ Align with small business support strategies – already partially exists in Policy ED-1A, Program 4 (potential to merge).
- ◆ **Goal 3: Increase accessibility to local services and community resources for all residents.**
- ◆ Redundant – combine w/ Goal 1 into one access-focused goal (and move to Capital Facilities and Utilities Element).



- ◆ **Policy 3A: Ensure that high quality service programs are available, accessible, and utilized by all in order to support residents' basic needs.**
- ◆ Move to Capital Facilities and Utilities Element under Goal CFU-1 (provision of services).
- ◆ Avoid duplication of Goal 1 policies; potential to merge with Goal 1, Policy A. Tie to service provision standards.
- ◆ **Program 3A-1: Partner with local health and social services to identify strategies for making their services accessible by all means of transportation.**
- ◆ Move to Transportation Element under Goal T-3 (transportation network providing connections to key destinations).
- ◆ Strong multimodal access policy. Expand to add "access to essential services."
- ◆ **Program 3A-2: Advocate for low income, residential care facilities, and other housing for aging people to be located close to services and amenities.**
- ◆ Move to Housing Element under Goal H-2 (variety of housing types/densities to meet community needs).
- ◆ Strong fit with existing housing goals addressing GMA housing + land use integration. Consider strengthening language to more clearly define how the City will support or advance this objective.
- ◆ **Program 3A-3: Encourage and support programs that seek to provide residents with access to health care providers with varied expertise and backgrounds who can respond to varying cultural and medical needs.**
- ◆ Move to Economic Development Element under Goal ED-1 (strengthen City partnerships).
- ◆ The focus on providers/services fits well into Economic Development.
- ◆ **Policy 3B: Encourage healthy activity and lifestyle by making recreational resources and opportunities accessible and welcoming to all residents.**
- ◆ Move to Parks & Recreation Element under Policy PR 2.1 (citywide programs and services).
- ◆ Fits well into Parks & Recreation goals. There is a related GMA/Commerce checklist requirement for consideration of EJ and avoiding worsening environmental health disparities – could directly address this requirement by strengthening policy language to add affordability and inclusivity.
- ◆ **Program 3B-1: Provide opportunities for healthy activity in safe and accessible public spaces for all residents.**
- ◆ Move to Parks & Recreation Element under Policy PR 2.3 (design and access standards).
- ◆ Fits well into Parks & Recreation goals.
- ◆ **Program 3B-2: Encourage communication between local businesses, organizations, and schools, to coordinate food pantries and local food distribution.**
- ◆ Move – split between:
- ◆ Economic Development Element under Goal ED-1 (strengthen City partnerships): Food systems/businesses (strengthen language beyond “encourage” – consider partnerships, infrastructure).
- ◆ Land Use Element under Policy LU-1B (complements Program 3 – healthy food purveyors): Food access as it relates to EJ + health (good partner to Program 3 under Policy LU-1B).



Policy Connections

The **Land Use** chapter contains a set of policies on creating public spaces that are accommodating and accessible to all users.

The **Housing** chapter contains a set of goals to support housing options for residents of all incomes, abilities, and ages.

The **Transportation** chapter contains a set of goals on transportation accessibility to essential services.

The **Capital Facilities and Utilities** chapter contains a set of goals and policies to ensure equitable access to city services for all residents.

The **Parks and Recreation** chapter contains a set of goals and policies to improve access to recreation facilities and programs and support cultural programming.

The **Economic Development** chapter contains a set of goals and policies to support civic engagement with community members from diverse backgrounds and strengthen City partnerships.

The **Climate and Environment** chapter contains a set of goals to identify impacts of climate change through an environmental justice framework.





CHAPTER 9 ACCESS, ENGAGEMENT, & BELONGING

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER

- Background information and context related to local history, current events, and plans for the future, addressing the City's efforts to ensure residents can participate fully and access opportunities without unnecessary barriers.
- Policies that seek to make City resources more accessible to all.
- Policies that direct the City's efforts towards encouraging welcoming and inclusive environments within the Community.
- Policies intended to support a culturally inclusive community, where all people experience a sense of belonging.

OVERVIEW

This chapter contains goals, policies, and programs that define how the City of Ellensburg can play a role in fostering an environment of understanding, equity, and belonging within the community. It recognizes that not all community members experience the city in the same way, and that some face barriers that make it harder to access information, services, or opportunities. The intent of this chapter is to identify ways the City can understand and reduce those barriers, strengthen community connections, and support a sense of belonging for everyone who lives here.

This document is a starting point for the City. There are likely many issues not yet articulated that can be addressed later as they are identified. This chapter is a living document; it is intended to be revisited and revised periodically. The focus is on listening, improving access, and ensuring that people of all backgrounds and identities can engage meaningfully in Ellensburg community life, regardless of background and experiences.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The City of Ellensburg is committed to creating a community with a lived and built environment that improves lives, supports all people, and provides residents with opportunities to flourish. Creating a community where people can thrive requires paying attention to the lived experiences of those who may encounter obstacles--whether physical, social, economic, or cultural--that impact their ability to navigate daily life or engage with local government. Doing so can help create a thriving local economy, retain our residents and attract new ones, and foster an environment where individuals can achieve their full potential.

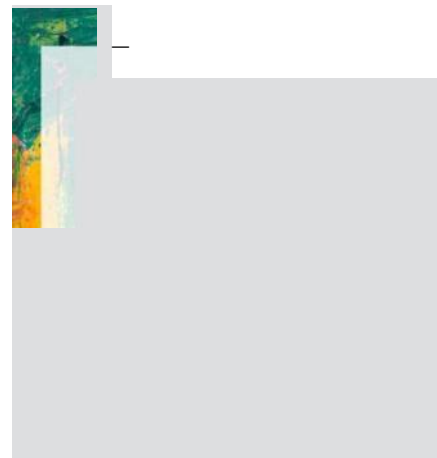
In recent years, national and local conversations have highlighted the importance of understanding how different groups in our community experience Ellensburg. In 2020, many residents shared that certain challenges or barriers affect their ability to access opportunities, feel safe, or feel like they belong. These conversations highlighted the need for the city to be intentional about listening to residents, understanding where barriers exist, and working toward solutions that foster participation, fairness, and a sense of belonging for all who live here. The goal of this chapter is to identify ways the City can recognize and address these barriers, and strengthen community connection by consistently listening to residents, responding to concerns, and supporting practices that help all people feel welcomed and included in Ellensburg's civic, social, and economic life.

Why this matters in Ellensburg

Ellensburg is home to residents with a wide range of life experiences, identities, cultural backgrounds, abilities, and circumstances. Not everyone moves through our community with the same level of ease or access, and some residents encounter challenges that others may never see. When the City understands these differences and plans with them in mind, it helps ensure that public services, facilities, and community spaces are welcoming, functional, and safe for everyone.

Paying attention to where people may face barriers, whether physical, social, economic, cultural, linguistic, or informational, allows the City to identify gaps early and respond in ways that strengthen trust and connection. When residents feel seen, valued, and able to participate fully in community life, the whole city benefits. This approach supports a healthy civic environment, fosters stronger neighborhoods, and contributes to a resilient local economy.

The purpose of this chapter is to guide the City in proactively recognizing where barriers may exist, listening to community experiences, and continually improving how we engage with and serve the public. By building a community where all residents can participate and feel a sense of belonging, Ellensburg positions itself to grow in a way that is inclusive, collaborative, and forward-looking.



Fostering a sense of belonging

Creating a community where everyone feels they belong requires us to pay attention to the experiences of residents who may not always feel fully seen or heard. When we make space for voices that have been, or continue to be, overlooked, we build trust, strengthen connection, and help ensure that the future we shape reflects the needs and hopes of all who live here. It is important for the City of Ellensburg to acknowledge and embrace the range of differences present within our community. Doing so will help to build a strong foundation of understanding and a heightened awareness of the unintended impact of current policies or ways of engaging residents. The City seeks to promote new ways of sharing space with others, sharing traditions, foods, and stories. In doing so, the City of Ellensburg can support a strengthened sense of community and connection through outreach, regular events, and creating spaces accessible to all.

To support all residents, the City will continue to work on goals and policies that actively recruit participation and involvement from all residents within the community, foster a sense of belonging, and engage those who experience barriers to social and cultural participation. These methods can include listening tours, surveys, discussion groups, and use of a variety of media and print publications designed to be accessible to all residents. Creating and supporting goals and policies that meet the community members where they are will help to remove the barriers that make accessing or engaging with basic community services challenging. Increasing accessibility to important resources and opportunities that best meet residents varying needs helps all residents succeed.



Recognizing the Past - Looking to the Future

An important step in building a forward-thinking vision within the community is to first learn about our local history, listen to residents' perceptions now, and consider how new goals and policies will positively affect the City of Ellensburg's plans for the future. The City cannot adequately support our community and elevate all people, regardless of their backgrounds, identities, or experiences, without first building a base of contextual knowledge, understanding, and trust.

Past

Historically, Ellensburg has been, and still is, a multicultural community composed of a broad range of people and families, with many stories and experiences that have yet to be discovered or shared. Acknowledging and learning local history within the community, the positive and the negative, can help increase awareness and empathy toward others and strengthen our community as a whole. Understanding local history can help create a more inclusive environment for all, where residents feel welcome and equally represented.

Kittitas Valley has always been, and continues to be, sacred to Native people. Traditionally, the

Pshwanapum lived in the Kittitas Valley as a sub-band of the larger political and extended family networks of the Yakama tribes and bands. The Pshwanapum members were also referred to as the K'titas ("Kittitas") band, and they moved seasonally throughout the valley and nearby mountains to harvest roots, salmon, berries, game, and medicines. Several other tribal nations including Kiala, Tatxanixsha, Yumi'sh, and Che-lo-han, would hunt and trade in this area as well. Many descendants of these tribes continue to live throughout the 1855 Treaty

Territory of the Yakamas, practicing, honoring, and teaching the heritage and ancestry of the area. (*Information sourced from Daily Record News article from Aronica Family October 12, 2020, and Kittitas Valley Historical Museum*)

In addition to the many contributions from those commonly identified as the founders of modern Ellensburg, the histories and experiences of those often overlooked within Ellensburg for their contributions and background continues to be uncovered within documentation and oral records, and there is still much more to be discovered. Residents from Black, Chinese, Jewish, Hispanic, and Japanese communities moved to Ellensburg as early as the mid-19th Century for reasons including migrant labor, such as work on the railroad or at local businesses. Sources such as Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps have shown that Ellensburg used to have a "China Town," and "Chinese Laundries" appear to have existed throughout town (Sanborn Map 1888). An African Methodist Episcopal Church was established in 1908 at 404 South Main Street, and many Black individuals played on local baseball teams as well. There is also evidence at times of divisive behavior and negative language towards these communities during this time, as found in newspaper advertisements regarding restaurants and hotels that employed individuals.

Present

Despite Ellensburg's vibrant multicultural and diverse makeup, individuals from historically underrepresented communities and backgrounds still report that they feel invisible, experience targeted and discriminatory comments and unwelcoming behavior. While members of some communities within Ellensburg have reported experiencing negative or targeted incidents, they also believe that Ellensburg can be more engaging, welcoming, and inclusive, and that the welcoming nature of our community can rise to a deeper level of acceptance and affirmation, and can draw on the talents, skills, and experiences of all who live here.

Ellensburg is often a welcoming community where people come together in times of need, where neighbors look out for one another. However, fully supporting and accepting identities, cultures, and backgrounds of those who experience unwelcoming behaviors or additional barriers, can be improved. Strengthening our ability to include and support people of all backgrounds remains an ongoing priority. Similar to what many towns and cities around the country are currently experiencing and working on, the City of Ellensburg recognizes it needs to be more responsive and prepared when handling issues related including all residents, present and future. This chapter lays the groundwork for this to happen, as the City continues towards a future of growth and expansion.

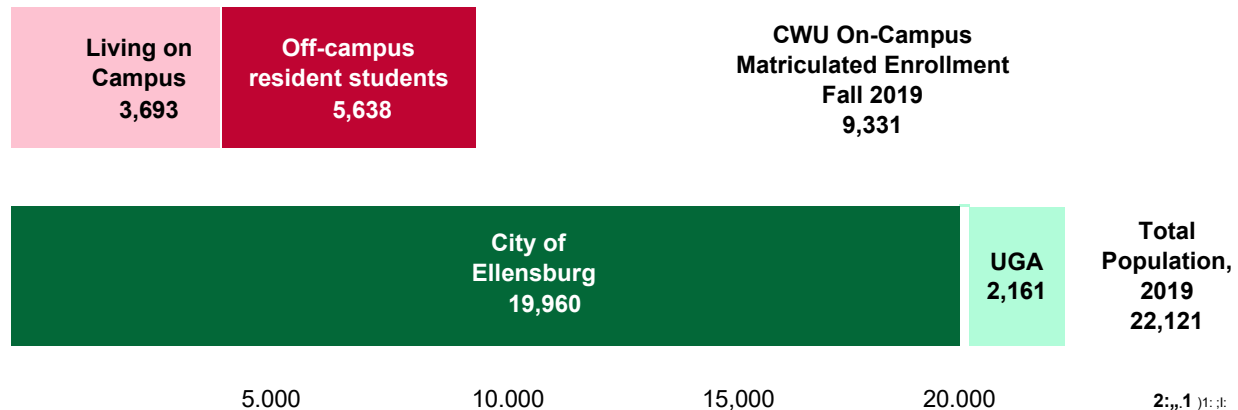
Future

Our dynamic community landscape has continued to develop, particularly in the last ten years, growing in size and in the diversity of residents. Statistics from the City of Ellensburg's 2021 Housing Action Plan, show that in 2020, the estimated population of the City, with its urban growth area, (UGA) was 22,879 people, demonstrating a growth rate of roughly 1.9% annually

¹ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer and/or questioning

since 2015. Of the 22,879 people, roughly 9,331 constitute CWU enrollment, 3,693 of which were on-campus living, and 5,638 representing off campus resident students, as depicted in *Figure 26*.

Figure 26. CWU Student Population and Total Population, 2018

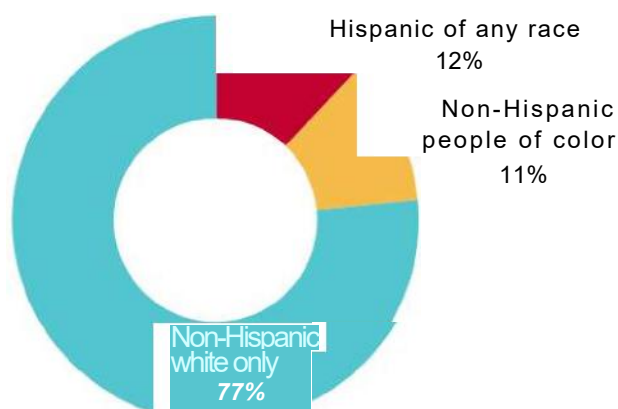


Students living on campus represents the housing occupancy for Fall 2019. Programmed capacity is 3,918 and the full built capacity is 4,249.

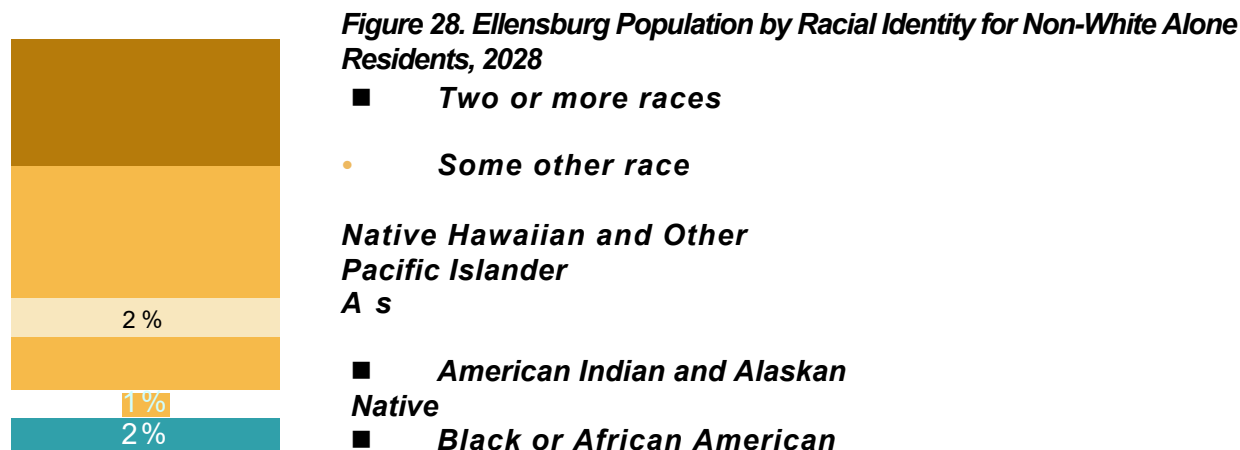
Sources: Central Washington University — Ellensburg Campus, Fall 2019; Washington OFM, 2021; BERK, 2021

As the City continues to support the needs of the diverse communities that live here, it is important to recognize that the statistics reflected in this chapter from the 2021 Housing Action Plan, do not reflect all of the varied demographics of our community. It is still valuable to look at current information that is available as we work towards obtaining more detailed statistics. It is anticipated that by 2040, 20% of the County population will be in the age bracket over age 65, and 19% in the age bracket of 45 to 64. At the same time, proportional decreases are expected for school-aged youth (5 to 19).

The Census also captures the ethnic background of respondents. As shown in *Figure 27* below, the Ellensburg community in 2018 was majority White and non-Hispanic (77%) but is growing to be more multicultural. From 2010 to 2018, Ellensburg's Hispanic population increased from 7% to 12% overall, and non-Hispanic non-white residents increased from 8% to 11%. *Figure 28* provides a further breakdown of the Non-White Alone demographics.

Figure 27. Ellensburg Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2028

Sources: ACS 5-year B02001 estimates, 2018; BERK, 2021.



Sources: ACS 5-year B02001 estimates, 2018; BERK, 2021.

As we look at Ellensburg's present landscape, it's important to recognize how changes in Ellensburg's population have been influenced by many factors, including the role of our local university, and these shifts continue to shape the character of the community. The University's emphasis on attracting diverse students, faculty, and staff, and those from underrepresented backgrounds and identities, continues to impact the demographics of Ellensburg. The changing nature of the labor force has also created greater diversity in the community. People from many countries have settled in Ellensburg over the years, and there is no reason to think that these influential factors are going to be less impactful in the future.

As Ellensburg continues to grow, there is the potential for those whose identities are not within the majority to feel excluded, unless the community has a plan for improving its relationships with all residents. The City of Ellensburg has developed this chapter in a sincere effort to create safe, welcoming, and understanding community— one where all residents know they belong and are welcome.

GOALS, POLICIES, & PROGRAMS

These goals, policies, and programs contain steps that the City of Ellensburg will take to create an inclusive, welcoming, equitable, and safe community.

Goal -1: Increase accessibility to City Services, Projects, Programs, and Events.

Policy A Support policies and programs that increase accessibility to City services for all, utilizing the lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Program 1 Provide increased access to government documents in multiple languages and easily accessible assistance for those who may need additional support.

Program 2 Identify areas of City government where greater physical accessibility and accommodations are needed to increase access to all members of the public.

Policy B Promote and encourage community engagement and outreach to all.

Program 1 Actively encourage participation from the public for community projects, events, and recreational activities, through a wide variety of media and information distribution methods.

Program 2 Provide City staff and elected officials with tools and regular training to understand and lead actions that are inclusive and equitable.

Program 3 Establish an ongoing review process of the costs for City-sponsored recreation and leisure activities to ensure that all members of the public have access to these services.

Program 4 Support civic education programs that actively engage diverse groups of the community, and encourage diverse representation among local leadership, organizations, and agencies.

Goal -2: Foster Understanding, Inclusive Excellence, Multiculturalism, and Belonging within the Community.

Policy A Encourage cultural sharing.

Program 1 Regularly support events and celebrations that highlight the variety of cultural traditions within the community.

Program 2 Encourage the creation of spaces where cultural foods and traditions can be shared among members of the community, as well as the creation of public spaces that are accommodating and accessible to all.

- Program 3** Encourage increased communication and collaboration between the City government, Central Washington University, businesses, and education and social service sectors, through shared events, projects, and outreach, to help residents feel more comfortable visiting campus, and non-resident students feel more comfortable within the community.
- Policy B** Encourage local leadership to address ongoing issues that create barriers for participation.
- Program 1** Encourage City leadership to demonstrate support of groups that experience additional social barriers or a sense of exclusion through a variety of proclamations, and publicly speak to local actions that affect the diverse members of the community.
- Program 2** Support the development of a framework to identify and address areas where individuals experience barriers within our local institutions.
- Program 3** Collaborate with local organizations to help local businesses support a broad spectrum of community members from different backgrounds and cultures.

Goal -3: Increase accessibility to local services and community resources for all residents.

- Policy A** Ensure that high quality service programs are available, accessible, and utilized by all in order to support resident's basic needs.
- Program 1** Partner with local health and social services to identify strategies for making their services accessible by all means of transportation.
- Program 2** Advocate for low income, residential care facilities, and other housing for aging people to be located close to services and amenities.
- Program 3** Encourage and support programs that seek to provide residents with access to health care providers with varied expertise and backgrounds who can respond to varying cultural and medical needs.
- Policy B** Encourage healthy activity and lifestyle by making recreational resources and opportunities accessible and welcoming to all residents.
- Program 1** Provide opportunities for healthy activity in safe and accessible public spaces for all residents.
- Program 2** Encourage communication between local businesses, organizations, and schools, to coordinate food pantries and local food distribution.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Work with DEI Commission to begin regular review of current City policies and procedures to better engage those who face barriers or have been less represented within the City's planning .
 2. Provide opportunities for staff and elected officials to engage and learn more about ways to reduce barriers and make Ellensburg more welcoming.
 3. Increase use of community engagement to help with local outreach.
 4. Review fees and costs for city sponsored recreational and leisure activities.
 5. Develop a framework of accountability.
 6. Develop a work plan for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission.
-

POLICY CONNECTIONS

The **Housing** chapter includes policies and land use designations that support the development of many types of housing to ensure that people who live and work in Ellensburg have adequate housing choices.

The **Transportation** chapter includes policies related to providing a variety of transportation networks that is available for all community members.

The **Capital Facilities and Utilities** chapter includes policies that focus on providing public facilities and utilities that are accessible and affordable to all community members, including access to the library, reasonably priced utilities, and access to data and technology. This chapter also provides goals centered around providing excellent public safety services.

The **Parks and Recreation** chapter includes policies that focus on providing citywide programs and services that meet all community and group needs, in addition to preserving historical areas and features, while also developing high quality, diversified cultural arts facilities and programs that increase community awareness, attendance, and participation opportunities.

The **Economic Development** chapter includes policies related to growing and sustaining local businesses, while creating opportunities for new businesses that can provide goods and services that meet the needs of the local and regional community.



MANAGER'S REPORT

DATE: July 20, 2026

To: Ellensburg City Council

FROM: Heidi Behrends Cerniwey, City Manager

1. Comp Plan Update Open House on July 22

Help shape Ellensburg's future. The City of Ellensburg's Comprehensive Plan Update is well underway, and we want to hear from you! Stop by the CWU Foundry Building, located at 421 N. Main St., on Wednesday, July 22, 2026, between 4-6 p.m. for the open house. The Draft Comprehensive Plan will be available for review. Learn more about the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, ask questions about the process, and share your input. Draft chapters will be available online through this page as well.

2. City Accepting 2027 Grant Applications

The City of Ellensburg is accepting applications for Council-funded Grant Programs and Arts Commission Grants for work to be completed in 2027. Each program has a specific purpose, application, and set of requirements:

- **Community Grants** - \$25,907.68 available to support actions to address community needs
- **Park Partnership Grants** - \$25,907.68 available to support capital projects to improve City parks, trails, open space, and recreation facilities
- **Water Quality Grants** - \$10,000 to improve and protect local surface water quality
- **Historic Preservation Grants** - \$25,907.68 available for historic preservation efforts
- **Arts Commission Grants** - up to \$2,500 (groups) and \$1,000 (individuals) to expand local arts programs and performances

Information and application materials for each program are available on the City's website at: www.ellensburgwa.gov/grants. Applicants may not apply to multiple grant programs for the same project.

The application deadline for all five grant programs is 5 p.m. on Monday, August 31, 2026, for potential 2027 funding. All applications will need to be approved by the Ellensburg City Council.

3. Thanks to Partners for the City’s America 250 Funding

The recent America 250 July 4th Community Picnic held at Unity Park was a wonderful celebration of people coming together and honoring our shared past and the future we carry forward together. Funding for the event came from multiple sources—all with community-building in mind. The City was awarded and/or utilized the following funding sources for the event:

Washington State Historical Society	\$1,000.00
Kittitas County America 250 Fund	\$1,500.00
AAEE Commission	\$1,500.00
Ellensburg Creative District	\$1,500.00

On behalf of the America 250 Picnic Committee, we are thankful for the generous support we received for a wonderful community event.

4. City of Ellensburg Seeks Residents to Serve on Ad Hoc Citizen Advisory Committee for 2027–2028 Budget Development

The City of Ellensburg is seeking up to seven (7) Ellensburg residents or business owners to serve on an Ad Hoc Citizen Advisory Committee (Community Results Team) that will assist the City in its priority-based and sustainable budget development process for the upcoming 2027–2028 biennial budget.

This committee will help review City priorities, service information, budget tradeoffs, and sustainability considerations, and will provide advisory input to the City Manager, Staff, and City Council. The goal is to strengthen transparency, improve public understanding of the budget process, and ensure community perspectives inform City decision-making.

Applicants must:

- be residents of the City of Ellensburg or primary owner of a business in Ellensburg;
- be available between August 21, 2026, and September 15, 2026;
- be able to commit approximately 30 hours of service, including one full-day (or two half-day) working session(s); and
- be willing to review materials, participate respectfully, and consider citywide needs and long-term fiscal sustainability.

Interested parties should submit: 1) a completed application form including a brief statement of interest; and 2) confirmation of availability for the scheduled work period. Applications are available online at: www.ellensburgwa.gov/ResultsTeamApplication or through the City Manager’s office. Applications are due to the City Manager’s office (City Hall, 501 N. Anderson, Ellensburg, WA 98926) by Thursday, July 23, 2026. Applications will be reviewed and final selection will be made by the City Council at the Council meeting on August 3, 2026.

5. Ellensburg Street Chipseal Project Scheduled July 21-23

The City of Ellensburg's annual chipseal program will run July 21-23, 2026, between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The project includes approximately nine miles of City streets. City of Ellensburg street crews will work in partnership with Kittitas County Public Works Department crews and equipment to complete the project. The complete list of streets being chipsealed can be viewed at www.ellensburgwa.gov/chipseal.

- Residents living along streets receiving chipseal treatment should turn off sprinklers and avoid watering their lawn or yard close to the project area because street surfaces must be dry to complete the work.
- Park vehicles off the affected road on dates the crews are scheduled. Affected roads will have "No Parking" signs posted at least 24 hours prior to the start of work.
- Access to City streets during the chipseal process is limited.

Drivers, pedestrians, and bicycle riders should exercise extreme caution when approaching the crews and follow all traffic control signs and signals from personnel. It is very important to follow posted speed limits and other instructions to prevent oil and chips from damaging vehicles. Traffic delays and detours may occur.

Following the chipseal process, crews will begin sweeping loose rock remaining. The sweeping operations will take several weeks.

Chipseal is a cost-effective method to extend the life of a road. This cooperative effort between the City and County involves placing a thin layer of liquid asphalt on existing pavement, followed by gravel (the chip). The chip is applied with a spreader. Work is weather dependent, and the schedule is subject to change. The annual chipseal program is funded by the City of Ellensburg Street Division budget. For questions, contact the Ellensburg Public Works Department at (509) 962-7230

6. Kittitas County Board of County Commissioners May Consider Resolution to Create Countywide Public Facilities District at July 21 Meeting

A Public Facilities District (PFD) may be created by a County under RCW 36.100. A Public Facilities District can develop and operate sports, entertainment, convention or recreational facilities. Prior to the formation of a PFD, the Washington State Department of Commerce must conduct an independent financial feasibility review as describe in RCW 36.100.025. This independent feasibility review was requested by the County and contracted with Commerce. Commerce contracted with a consultant, Johnson Consulting, who has completed the review. A final report was prepared by the consultant to Commerce. The financial review examines the potential costs in and revenues in the formation of the PFD. This independent review considered three potential projects which may be advanced if the PFD is formed. It was determined that the formation of the PFD appears to be a viable funding mechanism to support the

proposed projects. The City's Fieldhouse and future Kittitas Valley Aquatic Center were considered for partial funding in the feasibility study.

Creation of a PFD is by resolution as described in RCW 36.100.010(2). As a quasi-municipal entity, The PFD would be required to have a separate Board of Directors. The establishment of the Board of Directors is identified in RCW 36.100.020(1)(b). Because Ellensburg comprises over 40% of the County population, the initial PFD Board of Directors would be established with the County appointing two members, the City of Ellensburg appointing two members, and those four members appointing one member.

7. Youth Gladiator Dash on August 1

The Youth Gladiator Dash will be held on Saturday, August 1st at Rotary Park. Youth age 5 through 8th grade are invited to join the fun! The Youth Gladiator Dash is a challenging, exciting fun run with many muddy obstacles along the way. The Dash includes running, jumping, sliding, crawling, balancing, hopping, searching, climbing, throwing, and the opportunity to get muddy! Participants must register (\$15).

8. County Auditor Encourages Use of Ballot Drop Boxes for August 4 Primary



Published by Bryan Elliott · 15h · 🌐

Ballots for the August 4th, 2026, Primary Election are being mailed out to all registered Kittitas County voters!

To make sure your vote counts, we strongly encourage you to return your ballot early when mailing it back through the USPS, or by using one of our secure ballot drop boxes.

ALL nine of our county-wide drop boxes are open for this election! They are secure, convenient, and require no postage. Drop boxes will close promptly at 8:00 PM on Election Night, August 4th.

Drop Box Locations

- Easton Fire Station – 180 Cabin Creek Rd, Easton
- Ronald Fire Station #1 – Atlantic Ave & 1st Street, Ronald
- Roslyn City Hall/Library – 201 S. 1st Street, Roslyn
- South Cle Elum Town Hall – 523 Lincoln Street, South Cle Elum
- Cle Elum (Upper District Court) – 700 E. 1st Street, Cle Elum
- Thorp Fire Station #1 – 10700 Thorp HWY N, Thorp
- Central Washington University (SURC) – 1007 N. Chestnut St, Ellensburg
- Kittitas County Courthouse – 205 W. 5th Ave, Ellensburg
- Kittitas City Hall – 207 Main Street, Kittitas (Alley)

Returning by mail?

Your ballot must be postmarked on or before Election Day (August 4th). We strongly recommend mailing it as early as possible to guarantee a timely postmark!

Transparency is a priority in Kittitas County. The public is welcome to observe our election processes at the Kittitas County Courthouse or through our live view camera link:

<https://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/.../election-live-feed.aspx>

See our official schedule for the Primary Election in the image below!

Questions or need a replacement ballot? Contact the Kittitas County Auditor's Office:

(509) 962-7503

elections@co.kittitas.wa.us See less

9. Public Hearing on August 3 for the 2026 – 2031 Transit Development Plan

Public Transit Agencies in Washington State are required by law to annually update their Transit Development Plan (TDP) and file a copy with the Washington State Department of Transportation. The plan, which requires a public hearing by the City Council, must be adopted by resolution. Staff has coordinated the development of the TDP with the Ellensburg Transportation Advisory Committee (ETAC).

The public hearing is set for August 3, 2026, to consider the 2026-2031 Transit Development Plan.

10. National Night Out on August 4

National Night Out will be held on August 4 from 6– 8 p.m. at Veteran’s Memorial Park. Enjoy a free BBQ, meet members of our police and public safety teams, connect with neighbors, and learn more about working together to keep Ellensburg safe.

11. Preview of August 3 Council Agenda and Study Session

The August 3 Study Session will focus on the Parking Report. The regular Council meeting is expected to include:

- Review of draft amendments to the Land Use & Housing elements of the Comprehensive Plan
- Financial Quarterly Report
- Second reading of the Urban Forestry Ordinance
- Appoint members of the Community Results Team (see item 3, above)