

# AGENDA PLANNING COMMISSION July 9, 2026

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1. Unduly repetitive or irrelevant remarks;
2. Use of intimidating, threatening, or abusive language;
3. disobedience of an order to be seated or to discontinue further comments;
4. and/or engaging in violent behavior,

will be deemed out of order and may be removed from the meeting and/or have his or her virtual microphone muted.

**CITY OF ELLENSBURG  
PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA  
Council Chambers  
501 North Anderson Street  
Ellensburg, WA 98926  
And remotely via Zoom  
Thursday, July 9, 2026  
5:45 PM - Regular Meeting**

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call**
- 2. Approval of Agenda (No Public Comment)**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
  - 3.A June 11, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
- 4. Public Comment**
- 5. New Business**
  - 5.A Land Use Comprehensive Plan Draft Review (Public Comment Opportunity)
- 6. Unfinished Business**
- 7. Staff Update/Discussion Items**
  - 7.A July 22 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Open House (Public Comment Opportunity)
- 8. Commission Representative Update**
- 9. Adjournment**



For more information on the Ellensburg Planning Commission, contact Planning Manager, Stacey Henderson, at 509-962-7232.

The Contents of this agenda have been photocopied on recycled paper.



**CITY OF ELLENSBURG**

**Date of Meeting**

**Time of Meeting**

**Place of Meeting**

**Minutes of Planning Commission, Regular Meeting**

**June 11th, 2026**

**5:45 PM**

**Council Chambers**

**501 North Anderson Street**

**Ellensburg, WA 98926**

**And remotely via Zoom**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Vice Chair Bisom-Rapp called the meeting to order at 5:50 pm.

Present: Joe Sheeran, Skylar Bisom-Rapp, Ed Harrell, Michael Buehn, Matthew Stalder

Absent: Geraldine O'Mahony

Others present: Daniel Carlson, Community Development Director; Mark Rudd, Associate Planner; and Denise Tlatelpa, Planning Technician.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Councilmember Stalder moved to approve the agenda as presented; Councilmember Buehn seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

3.A. May 28, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Councilmember Sheeran moved to approve; Councilmember Harrell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

**4. New Business**

5.A. Review of DRAFT Comprehensive Plan Element: Climate and Environment  
(Public Comment Opportunity)

Rudd introduced Nicole Gutierrez from SCJ Alliance, the consultant working on the Climate and Environmental Chapters. She presented the mandatory elements, climate hazards and impact reports, the climate policy audit, engagement efforts, and the current draft that combines the existing environmental chapter with an expanded section addressing various climate-related sectors. Gutierrez further explained the chapter's content, which includes an overview, background and context, the Growth Management Act, regional efforts, connections to city work, climate impact factors, and the city's resources and assets.

The new changes to the Climate and Environment chapters included changes to policies and programs, a focus on coordination, restoration, emergency preparedness, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and the impact of transportation sectors.

Commissioners discussed the historic data of water usage, the options for a conservation program, and the balance of increased density & resource usage. They explored methods of addressing critical areas, highlighted thermology use within goals/policies/programs, the option of utilizing public facilities for a heating/cooling center, and better integrating new topics into the chapter.

## **5. Unfinished Business**

None.

## **6. Public Comments**

None.

## **7. Staff Update/ Discussion Items**

### **7.A. Comp Plan General Discussion**

Rudd informed the commissioners of the review procedure remaining for the Climate and Environment chapter. He also stated that chapter 9 will be absorbed into the Climate and Environment chapter or divided among other applicable chapters.

Rudd reminded the group of the upcoming Open House on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Commissioners requested an advertisement for the open chair positions, and they provided an update on their availability in June.

## **8. Commission Representative Update**

No Updates.

## **9. Adjournment**

Vice Chair Bisom-Rapp adjourned the meeting at 6:44 pm.



Meeting Date: July 9, 2026  
**City of Ellensburg**  
**Planning Commission Agenda Report**

**Agenda Subject:** Land Use Comprehensive Plan Draft Review (Public Comment Opportunity)  
**Submitted by:**  
**Department:** Community Development

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**Information:**

# 3. Land Use Element

## What you will find in this Chapter:

- ◆ Information about the City's expected population and employment growth.
- ◆ Description and capacity of existing and future land use designations.
- ◆ Policies that direct the City's growth strategy and land uses.
- ◆ A map of future land uses.

## Overview

One of the fundamental roles of the City of Ellensburg's Comprehensive Plan is to anticipate, guide, and plan for growth. The plan is a tool to look ahead to the likely growth and ensure alignment of the City's plan for land uses, infrastructure, and services.

The Land Use chapter addresses the general pattern of land use within the City and its Urban Growth Area (UGA) and provides a framework to guide the City's overall growth and development. It ensures an appropriate mix of land uses are available to support the City's economic goals, provide an array of housing choices, and ensure that adequate infrastructure and services are available.

The City's growth strategy emphasizes a combination of development on vacant land and redevelopment of underutilized properties within existing urban areas, while planning for orderly expansion within the Urban Growth Area. This approach supports efficient use of land and infrastructure and helps reduce environmental impacts associated with growth.

Land use patterns play an important role in supporting equitable access to housing, services, and employment opportunities, as well as helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging compact development and multimodal transportation options.

The Land Use goals, policies and programs help protect environmentally sensitive areas, enhance the vitality of neighborhoods, and promote opportunities for healthy lifestyles while allowing the City to evolve to meet the changing needs of the community.



# Background and Context

Core community values this chapter supports include the following:

- ◆ **Supporting a range of housing types and densities** will help meet the community’s housing needs, improve affordability, and provide opportunities for people at different stages of life, while contributing to Ellensburg’s diversity and overall appeal.
- ◆ **Protecting and conserving Ellensburg’s natural environment, open spaces, and ecosystems, while addressing climate impacts and resilience,** will help ensure equitable access to recreation opportunities and maintain a high quality of life for current and future residents.
- ◆ **Supporting the development of neighborhood-scale commercial and mixed-use areas** will improve access to goods, services, and employment opportunities, while supporting walkable neighborhoods and affordable housing and living options.
- ◆ **Encouraging entertainment, cultural, and community activities** will enrich the community and provide opportunities for people of all ages to gather and connect.
- ◆ **Ensuring industrial and institutional uses are located in appropriate areas** will support employment and essential services, while maintaining the intended feel and function of residential and mixed-use neighborhoods.

## Public Health and Land Use

The intersection between health and land use planning is becoming more important in today’s communities. Long term plans impact how people make choices about where to live and how to get around in their communities. The way we plan our communities can affect things like access to healthy foods, safe and accessible opportunities for physical activity, and easy access to health and social services, as well as environmental conditions such as clean air and water and broader issues such as social equity. Our environments play a key role in helping healthy choices be the easy choices.

## Existing Zoning and Land Use Patterns

This section provides an overview of existing land use and zoning patterns within the City of Ellensburg. These patterns reflect a combination of historic development, infrastructure availability, and market conditions, and provide a baseline for understanding how the City functions today. As the Comprehensive Plan is updated and implemented, these patterns may evolve over time to better align with the City’s future land use designations and community priorities.

### Residential

Residential land uses make up nearly half of the land within Ellensburg’s city limits. The current Comprehensive Plan includes several residential designations, with the overwhelming majority of residential land in suburban, low, and medium density categories.



High density residential zoning currently accounts for just over one percent of total residential acreage. Most of the high-density residential areas are located near the Central Washington University (CWU) campus and house large numbers of students residing off campus.

Mixed residential is intended to provide for the development of housing at approximately four-to-12 dwelling units per acre, while high density residential provides a target density of eight-to-18 units per acre. These higher-density areas are generally located near the CWU campus and in areas with access to services and transportation, including north of the campus, along Kittitas Highway, and southeast of the west Interstate-90 interchange.

Residential areas are primarily zoned Residential Suburban (R-S), Residential Low Density (R-L), Residential Medium Density (R-M), Residential High Density (R-H), and Manufactured Home Park (MHP). These zones collectively provide for a range of housing types and densities, from predominantly single dwelling neighborhoods to multifamily residential development in areas with access to services and transit.

## Commercial

Ellensburg's downtown remains the main retail and commercial center of the City and the lower Kittitas Valley. Maintaining the prominence and vitality of downtown has been an important goal for Ellensburg dating back to the City's first Comprehensive Plan in 1975.

Commercial development in Ellensburg is generally characterized by a mix of a historic, pedestrian-oriented downtown core and more auto-oriented commercial areas located along major transportation corridors. The majority of commercial-designated land is located in the Commercial Highway zone.

Commercial areas are primarily zoned Commercial Highway (C-H). These zones range from small-scale, neighborhood-serving commercial areas to larger, auto-oriented commercial corridors that provide goods and services to the broader community.

## Industrial

Recent development activity indicates substantial growth in the Industrial Light zone, which accounts for the majority of pending nonresidential square footage and employment capacity.

Ellensburg's early industrial development centered along the railroad tracks to the west of the existing central commercial area. Heavy industrial land continues to be located on a narrow strip paralleling the railroad tracks, while light industrial land has expanded along Dolarway Road to the west interchange area and to the area around the airport located north of the University.

Industrial areas are zoned Light Industrial (I-L) and Heavy Industrial (I-H). The I-L zone accommodates a range of light manufacturing, service, and employment uses with limited impacts, while the I-H zone supports more intensive industrial activities that require separation from residential and commercial uses.



## Mixed Use

Mixed-use areas in Ellensburg provide a combination of residential, commercial, and employment uses in an integrated and often pedestrian-oriented environment. These areas are typically located in and around downtown, along key corridors, and at neighborhood or community activity centers, and are intended to support walkability, access to services, and a mix of housing opportunities.

Mixed-use areas are primarily zoned Central Commercial (C-C and C-C II), Neighborhood Center Mixed Use (NCMU), Regional Center Mixed Use (RCMU), and Residential-Office (R-O). These zones accommodate a range of vertically and horizontally integrated uses, from downtown mixed-use buildings with ground floor commercial and upper-story residential to neighborhood and corridor-scale mixed-use developments that combine housing, services, and employment opportunities.

## Public/Institutional

Ellensburg has a long-standing and important institutional component. Ellensburg is home to Central Washington University, is the County seat, and hosts Kittitas County's central medical and hospital services. Institutions are among the largest employers in Ellensburg. The University campus is the primary public/institutional land use and occupies approximately 380 acres and employs almost 1,500 full-time staff. Other public uses are distributed throughout Ellensburg and include city and county offices, Kittitas Valley Healthcare, schools, fire stations, the Kittitas County Event Center, and other public services that provide necessary services to Ellensburg and the surrounding region.

Public and institutional uses, along with many parks and open space areas, are primarily zoned Public Reserve (P-R). This designation accommodates a wide range of public uses, including governmental, educational, recreational, and cultural facilities.

## Parks and Open Space

Ellensburg operates a park system that encompasses more than 300 acres. Current open space land includes both publicly owned land and private property that is generally open in nature and may or may not be developed.

Parks and open space areas are generally included within the Public Reserve (P-R) zoning district when publicly owned, while some privately owned open space areas may be zoned for other uses but remain undeveloped due to natural features or other constraints.

**Table 3-1** includes estimated acreages of existing zoning districts within the Ellensburg city limits. These figures provide a general snapshot of existing conditions and may change as zoning designations are updated and development occurs over time.

Existing zoning districts generally align with the land use patterns described in this chapter and provide the primary regulatory framework for development in Ellensburg. The City's zoning code establishes allowed uses, densities, and development standards for each district, and is periodically updated to implement the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.



**Table 3-1: Inventory of Existing Zoning Districts**

<b>Residential Zones</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Residential High Density (R-H)	30.0	0.5%
Residential Medium Density (R-M)	418.0	7.0%
Residential Low Density (R-L)	580.9	10.3%
Residential Suburban (R-S)	1,617.0	28.5%
Manufactured Home Park (MHP)	61.5	1.1%
<b>Total – Residential</b>	<b>2,707.4</b>	<b>47.4%</b>
<b>Commercial Zones</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Commercial Highway (C-H)	724.47	12.0%
Commercial Neighborhood (C-N)	9.3	0.2%
<b>Total – Commercial</b>	<b>733.77</b>	<b>12.1%</b>
<b>Industrial Zones</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Heavy Industrial (I-H)	193.5	3.4%
Light Industrial (I-L)	601.4	10.6%
<b>Total – Industrial</b>	<b>795.0</b>	<b>14.0%</b>
<b>Mixed-Use Zones</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Central-Commercial (C-C)	109.4	1.9%
Central-Commercial II (C-C II)	93.6	1.7%
Neighborhood Center Mixed-Use (NCMU)	25.5	0.4%
Regional Center Mixed-Use (RCMU)	133.2	2.4%
Residential-Office (R-O)	111.8	2.0%
<b>Total – Mixed Use</b>	<b>473.4</b>	<b>8.4%</b>
<b>Parks, Open Space, and Public/Institutional Zones</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Public Reserve (P-R)	956.2	16.9%
<b>Total – Parks, Open Space, and Public/Institutional</b>	<b>956.2</b>	<b>16.9%</b>
<b>All Zones</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Total – Residential	2,707.4	47.4%
Total – Commercial	733.77	12.1%
Total – Industrial	795.0	14.0%
Total – Mixed Use	473.4	8.4%
Total – Parks, Open Space, and Public/Institutional	956.2	16.9%
<b>Total – ALL ZONES</b>	<b>5,665.7</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



## Growth Projections

Kittitas County's adopted growth forecasts for the 2020 to 2046 planning period anticipate continued regional growth in population and employment. Ellensburg must plan for a total population of 25,631 residents by 2046, an increase of 4,834 people from the 2020 baseline. The city is also projected to accommodate 2,710 net new jobs during this period.

Within this context, Ellensburg is planning for 3,012 net new housing units between 2020 and 2046 to support anticipated population growth.

These projections are based on state Office of Financial Management forecasts and countywide allocations developed in coordination with Kittitas County and its jurisdictions. They are supported by the City's 2026 Land Capacity Analysis, which evaluates the availability of land to accommodate projected housing and employment growth over the planning horizon. The targets reflect each jurisdiction's commitment to provide adequate infrastructure, land capacity, and zoning to support growth over the 20 year planning horizon.

## Residential and Employment Growth Capacity

Based on current zoning and the 2026 Land Capacity Analysis, Ellensburg demonstrates sufficient land capacity to accommodate projected population and employment growth through the 2020 to 2046 planning horizon. The LCA estimates capacity for approximately 5,882 housing units and 6,921 jobs, exceeding the City's projected need of 3,012 housing units and 2,710 jobs.

This capacity is distributed across a range of land use designations and is expected to be accommodated through a combination of vacant land, redevelopment of underutilized properties, and mixed-use development. A significant portion of future growth is anticipated to occur through infill and redevelopment within existing urban areas, supporting efficient use of land and infrastructure.

Residential capacity is provided across low, medium, and high-density residential designations, as well as within mixed-use areas that allow housing integrated with commercial and employment uses. Commercial and industrial capacity is concentrated in the Commercial Highway and Industrial Light zones, supporting continued economic development and job growth.

In addition to capacity on vacant and redevelopable land, the LCA identifies additional housing potential through accessory dwelling units (ADUs), reflecting recent trends and changes in state law that expand opportunities for this housing type. The LCA was conducted using the Kittitas County methodology and incorporates assumptions related to development trends, densities, market factors, and infrastructure availability to provide a realistic and achievable estimate of development capacity over the planning horizon.



## Growth Projections:

- ◆ Ellensburg works cooperatively with Kittitas County and other incorporated areas to establish long-range population growth targets based on state and regional forecasts.
- ◆ The City's adopted growth targets include 4,834 additional residents, 2,710 net new jobs, and 3,012 net new housing units by 2046.
- ◆ The City uses these targets to ensure adequate zoning, infrastructure, and land capacity to support anticipated growth over the 20 year planning period. These projections represent planning targets rather than guarantees of market delivery.

## Residential Capacity by Income Level

While the City demonstrates overall sufficient land capacity, the LCA identified a deficit in capacity for housing affordable to households earning below 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) under current zoning. To address this gap, the City is pursuing targeted zoning and land use changes to increase opportunities for multifamily and mixed-use development. These changes are expected to add capacity for approximately 1,700 additional housing units and ensure sufficient land capacity across all income levels. Additional information on land capacity by income level can be found in the Housing Element of this plan.

In addition to these rezone areas, the City is also planning to consolidate the R-S and R-L zones into a single zone which allows for more flexibility for middle housing types such as townhomes and duplexes compatible with the predominant single dwelling residential uses, consistent with the City's housing action plan goal of adding more variety to the housing stock and strategies for development of more of these housing types.

## Future Land Use

Land use designations and policies provide a guide for the appropriate development and redevelopment locations for residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The future land use designations (**Table 3-2, Page 34**) are aimed at ensuring a safe, livable, and sustainable environment that will shape Ellensburg's future development within the 20-year planning cycle. The City's comprehensive plan establishes the overarching guide for decisions related to land development regulations and patterns, with this chapter functioning as a summary of the intent.

The City of Ellensburg has been using land use designation maps since the mid-1970s. Descriptions and mapping of land use designations visually depict the community's desired direction as it meets new growth challenges and changing times. The descriptions of each land use designation along with the recommended locations for land use designations help to set a broad understanding of land use patterns that enables city services and agencies, along with residents and property owners, to effectively plan.



Land use designations are general in nature and serve as a guide; they do not carry the same force of law as zoning. The guiding land use designations help set up future considerations for zoning, but do not change zoning district locations or descriptions. Zoning regulations are adopted by the City to implement the Comprehensive Plan and are applied through a separate public process.

To provide a complete understanding of potential land development patterns, this chapter describes and illustrates the land use designations. Land use mapping is a visual representation of the goals, policies, and programs within this comprehensive plan. The map and the policies they represent are the general foundation for land use decisions and implementation strategies.

The land use patterns and policies discussed in this chapter apply to the Ellensburg city limits. Areas outside of the city limits and within Ellensburg's Urban Growth Area, which change from time to time with annexations, are included to inform private and public parties of the desired pattern for development as the city grows. The land use designations outside of city limits (within the UGA) are not binding in nature until lands are incorporated within the municipal boundaries. The process of looking beyond the city limits and planning for 20 years of growth within the Urban Growth Area helps to facilitate City-County coordination in land use planning and related issues, and provides a greater level of predictability to landowners and interested parties.

The Future Land Use Map (**Figure 3-1, Page 35**) reflects desired uses and implements the land use goals and policies in this plan; it does not always represent existing uses. Decisions and implementation based on these designations should include consideration of the entire comprehensive plan and site-specific conditions.

A description as well as the intent of specific land use designations are included for each designation. The Future Land Use Map provides recommended locations for each designation. The land use designations include four main categories: residential, mixed use, commercial, and industrial.

## Residential

Residential land use designations are areas in the City where the primary activity is residential dwellings. Uses that complement residences should be incorporated into these areas, such as: parks, low-intensity home based occupations, fire stations, churches, small-scale neighborhood commercial services, schools, and other public facilities. The Future Land Use map, goals, and policies in this chapter encourage high density residential in close proximity to commercial centers to facilitate access to services and employment opportunities. All implementing zoning districts should consider the compatibility with adjacent development, natural constraints such as watercourses, and the overall goals of the Ellensburg comprehensive plan. The residential land use category includes two land use designations that support a range of housing densities to achieve the City's housing and affordability goals: Residential Neighborhood and Urban Neighborhood.



## Residential Neighborhood

This designation applies to areas that have traditionally accommodated single-family detached homes and generally surround the urbanized core of the community or exist at the edge of the city adjacent to unincorporated land. The residential neighborhood designation supports a range of residential zones with housing densities that help to achieve the City's housing diversity and affordability goals. This designation accommodates the many established residential neighborhoods and acknowledges the single dwelling residential building type as the predominant use along with accessory dwellings, townhouses, cottage housing, clustered housing, and other middle housing forms. This designation also allows for more dense zoning options along transit corridors and in transitional areas offering opportunities for infill development using existing infrastructure.

## Urban Neighborhood

This designation accommodates areas close to the University campus, accessible by public transportation, close to amenities, and where city services and infrastructure are readily available. This designation accommodates a wide range of housing 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. The Urban Neighborhood designation is anticipated to accommodate a significant share of future residential growth.

Within this designation, development is generally higher in intensity and supports a range of medium- to high-density housing types. Higher intensity residential development is appropriate in areas with convenient access to the University campus, transit routes, parks, and commercial services. It may also be appropriate adjacent to existing or planned higher density development. Development should provide appropriate transitions in scale and intensity to adjacent lower density neighborhoods and be designed to support a cohesive development pattern.

## Mixed Use

Mixed-use developments provide a range of land use and development types to create focal points for community activity and identity. Mixed-use areas serve as a transition from the urban center toward primarily residential neighborhoods, and as a transition between commercial or industrial areas and residential neighborhoods. Mixed-use developments should be developed in an integrated, pedestrian-friendly manner and should not be overly dominated by any single type of land use. Higher intensity employment or residential uses are encouraged in the core of the area, adjacent to major streets or intersections, or adjacent to existing or planned higher density development.

Mixing residential and commercial uses within the same building or within the same development serves both residential and commercial uses. This enables people to live near their places of employment and services and thereby reduce vehicle miles traveled.



The mixed-use designations accommodate a horizontal and/or vertical mixture of retail, service, office, restaurant, entertainment, cultural, and residential uses. Mixed-use structures that vertically integrate uses will have housing above ground floor commercial, office, or other pedestrian-active uses. A mixed-use development that is horizontally integrated may have a combination of buildings that are exclusively nonresidential, exclusively residential, and vertically mixed buildings.

The two mixed-use land designations are Urban Center and Community Mixed Use. Mixed-use areas are expected to accommodate both residential and commercial development, consistent with assumptions used in the LCA.

## Urban Center

The purpose of this designation is to create and sustain a commercial district and adjacent areas that caters to pedestrians and emphasize street activity. This area addresses the concentration of downtown uses including commercial office, retail, arts and entertainment, eating and drinking establishments, and residential uses. This is where people can live, work, and recreate within minutes of each activity.

Urban streetscapes, plazas, outdoor seating, public art, and open space and park amenities appropriately designed for urban character help to keep this area a vibrant community destination. This designation is consistent with the historic downtown district and is supportive of evening and weekend activity of lively uses and services to accommodate residents, employees, and visitors to our community.

This designation accommodates zoning districts that provide a mix of retail and residential uses, as well as evening and weekend entertainment and leisure activities. This land use designation extends beyond the historic downtown core of Ellensburg to include transitional areas between downtown and the University, and between downtown and higher intensity industrial and commercial activity to the west and south.

Implementation of this land use designation should encourage second and third floor residential, and office uses in the downtown core. It should also encourage new high-density residential or mixed-use developments while providing areas of transition to adjacent areas and preservation of the historic downtown.

## Community Mixed Use

This designation accommodates a combination of employment, retail, and service uses that serve the broader community, as well as residential developments.

Activities within this land use designation include a broad range of employment and services necessary for a vibrant community. Establishments located in this designation draw from the community as a whole for their employee and customer base. They serve the larger community as well as adjacent neighborhoods. A broad range of functions including retail, education, financial institutions, professional and personal services, offices, residences, and general service activities are typical in this designation.



Community mixed use areas should be integrated with main transportation corridors, including public transit and active transportation systems. The density of development may be higher than currently seen in most commercial areas in Ellensburg. Mixing commercial and residential uses within this designation will facilitate access to services and retail opportunities without requiring the use of an automobile. Implementation of this land use designation should include encouraging medium to high-density residential uses.

## Commercial

The commercial land use designations provide for the creation of local jobs and other economic activity in a manner consistent with the character of the community. Commercial-based uses provide employment opportunities as well as primary retail and service opportunities. These areas provide an array of commercial uses at a range of intensities to meet the demand of current and future market conditions. The commercial land use designation is General Commercial and Services.

### General Commercial and Services

Ellensburg is a retail, education, health services, public administration, and outdoor recreation hub, and provides opportunities for these activities at a regional scale. This designation accommodates uses with large land requirements, including uses that may involve outdoor storage of merchandise; uses that are automobile-oriented or regional-retail related; uses that provide support service to business or industry; and uses that support highway travel.

It is necessary that these types of facilities be located in proximity to major transportation routes. Since uses in this designation are often large and prominent facilities within the community and region, design guidelines ensure compatibility with the remainder of the community. Mixing of uses that encourages broad activity levels is encouraged. Any development within this designation should have a well-integrated transportation network that accommodates different modes of transportation and provides ready access within and to adjacent development.

Residential space should not be a primary function and should only be included as a use in combination with other compatible commercial uses if supportive residential services and spaces are within 1/4 mile of the proposed development. Supportive residential uses include public parks or open space, grocery, school, and transit.

## Industrial

The industrial land use designations provide for the creation of local jobs and other local economic activity in a manner consistent with the character of the community. Industrial land typically includes businesses that manufacture, process, or otherwise generate products sold to commercial businesses later. Industrial areas require good transportation access, particularly to truck routes, for movement of goods and employees. These areas provide a range of intensities including light and heavy industrial uses.



## Light Industrial

This designation accommodates a range of industrial and employment uses, including light manufacturing, research and development, office, technology centers, light assembly, storage, and support services to industry.

Light industrial areas may also include a range of flexible employment uses, such as small-scale production, artisan manufacturing, business park environments, and similar low-impact industrial activities. Uses may be mixed vertically or horizontally in appropriate locations, particularly where such development supports a cohesive employment environment.

This designation includes a broad spectrum of land uses, some of which can be compatible with mixed-use developments, regional commercial services, and live/work developments. The scale and intensity of development should be compatible with adjacent uses.

## Heavy Industrial

This designation generally accommodates industries that process large volumes of raw materials into refined products and/or have significant external impacts. The uses in these areas tend to generate truck traffic and should have access to major transportation networks. Typically, these areas would not be compatible with residential uses.

## Other Land Use Designations

### Public/Institutional

This designation accommodates a variety of activities. Schools are a dominant use including Central Washington University. Other typical uses are libraries, fire stations, Kittitas Valley Event Center, and publicly operated facilities and utilities. A significant portion of Ellensburg's employment occurs within this category.

### Parks and Open Space

All publicly owned recreation lands, including parks, are included within this category, as well as certain private lands. These areas are generally open in character and may or may not be developed.

### Open Space

This designation is for land that is currently open space but is either private or non-city owned and may or may not be developed and is not publicly accessible.

**Table 3-2** includes estimated acreages of proposed future land use designations within the City of Ellensburg and the Urban Growth Area, while **Figure 3-1** illustrates their geographic distribution. **Table 3-3** summarizes the zoning districts are compatible with each future land use designation.



**Table 3-2: Future Land Use Designations**

Future Land Use Designation	Acres	Percent
Residential Neighborhood	1,920	20.8%
Urban Neighborhood	1,477	16.0%
Urban Center	208	2.3%
Community Mixed Use	943	10.2%
General Commercial and Services	336	3.6%
Light Industrial	2,365	25.6%
Heavy Industrial	235	2.5%
Public/Institutional	659	7.1%
Parks and Open Space	632	6.8%
Open Space (private/non-city owned)	455	4.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,230</b>	<b>100%</b>

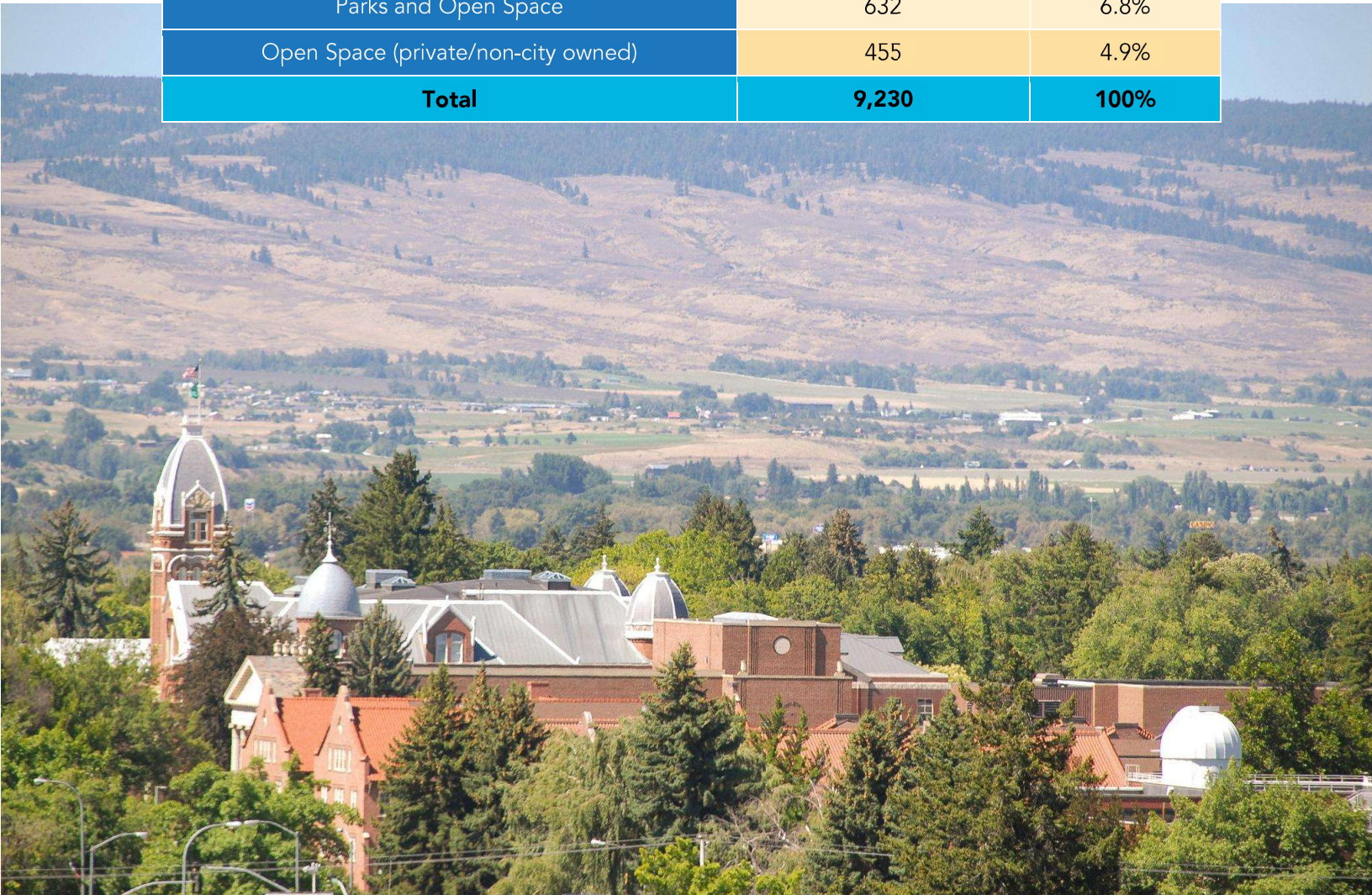
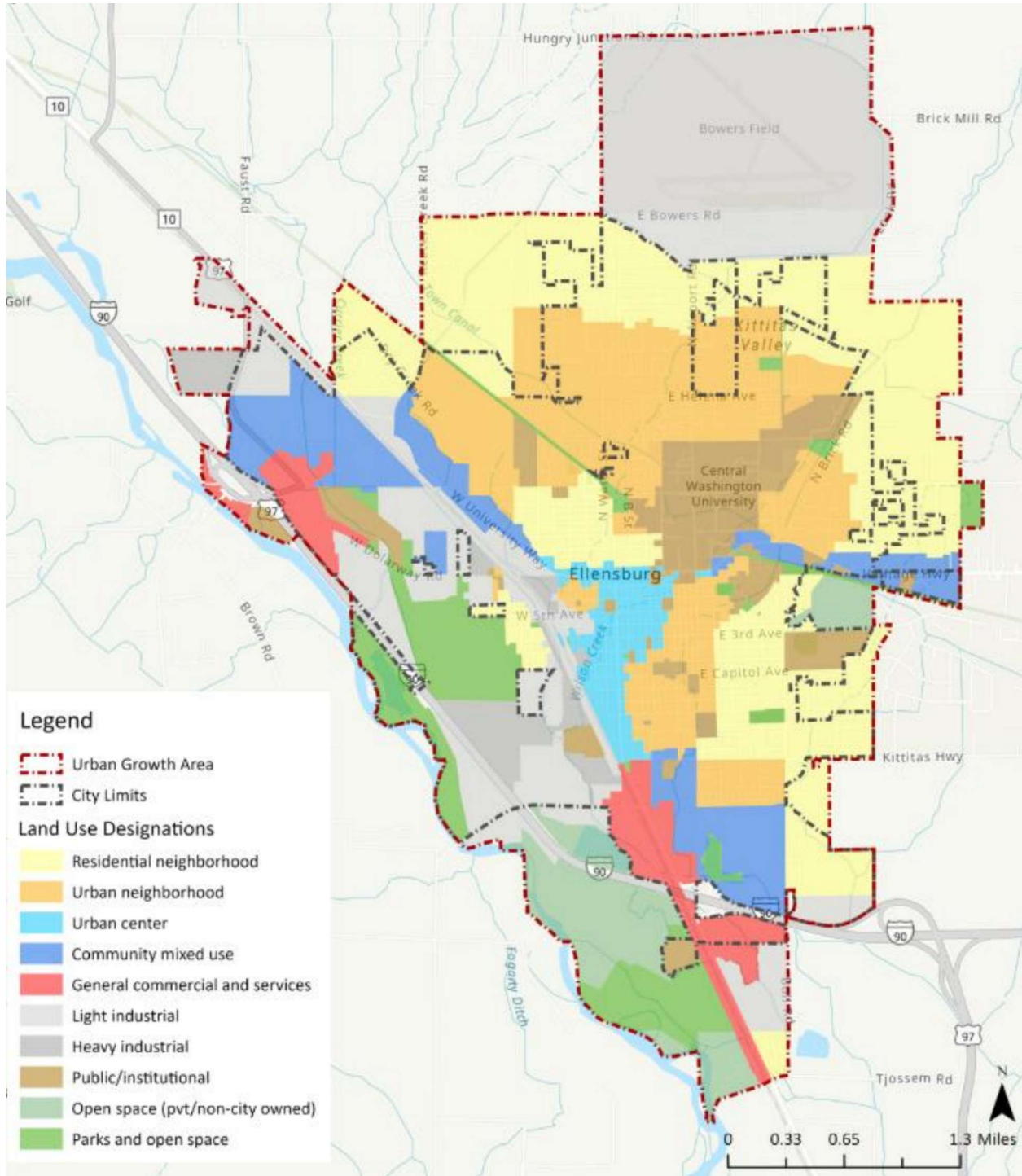


Figure 3-1: Future Land Use Map



**Table 3-3: Future Land Use - Zoning Conversion Table**

Future Land Use	Zoning Options
Residential Neighborhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Residential Low (R-L)</li> <li>◆ Residential Medium (R-M)</li> <li>◆ Residential High (R-H)</li> <li>◆ Residential Office (R-O)</li> <li>◆ Manufactured Home Park (MHP)</li> </ul>
Urban Neighborhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Residential High (R-H)</li> <li>◆ Residential Medium (R-M)</li> <li>◆ Manufactured Home Park (MHP)</li> <li>◆ Neighborhood Center Mixed Use (NCMU)</li> <li>◆ Residential Office (R-O)</li> </ul>
Community Mixed Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Residential High (R-H)</li> <li>◆ Residential Office (R-O)</li> <li>◆ Neighborhood Center (NCMU)</li> <li>◆ Regional Center Mixed Use (RCMU)</li> <li>◆ Commercial Highway (C-H)</li> </ul>
Neighborhood Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Commercial Neighborhood (C-N)</li> <li>◆ Residential Office (R-O)</li> </ul>
Urban Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Central Commercial (C-C)</li> <li>◆ Central Commercial II (C-CII)</li> </ul>
General Commercial and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Commercial Highway (C-H)</li> </ul>
Light Industrial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Industrial Light (I-L)</li> </ul>
Heavy Industrial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Industrial Heavy (I-H)</li> </ul>
Public Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Public Reserve (P-R)</li> </ul>
Open Space (Private)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Public Reserve (P-R)</li> </ul>
Parks and Open Space (Public)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Public Reserve (P-R)</li> </ul>

## Goals, Policies, and Programs

This chapter contains goals, policies, and programs necessary to support the City's responsibility for managing land uses and to implement regulations, guidelines, and programs. The Land Use policies contained in this chapter, along with the future land use map (**Figure 3-1 on the previous page**), identify the intensity of development and density recommended for each area of the city. These designations help to achieve the City's goals by providing for sustainable growth that encourages housing choice; locates population centers adjacent to transit and services; provides areas with the city to grow businesses, services, jobs, and entertainment; respects existing neighborhoods; provides for appropriate transitions between uses with differing intensities; safeguards the environment; and maintains Ellensburg's sense of community.



**Goal LU-1: Land use patterns provide a variety of housing, shopping, entertainment, recreation, gathering spaces, employment, and services that are accessible and well-integrated with surrounding neighborhoods.**

**Policy A** Encourage infill development and increased residential density in and around the downtown area.

**Program 1** *Identify and reduce regulatory or procedural barriers to infill development and redevelopment in and around the downtown area.*

**Program 2** *Update zoning and development regulations, as needed, to support increased residential density and a mix of housing types in and around the downtown area.*

**Policy B** Integrate new development with consideration to design and scale that complements existing neighborhoods and provides effective transitions between different uses.

**Program 1** *Incorporate Planned Unit Developments into the City's land development code.*

**Program 2** *Encourage compatible neighborhood commercial uses in residential areas while maintaining particular attention to establishing pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and regulating offsite impacts to adjoining residential areas.*

**Program 3** *Allow healthy food purveyors, such as grocery stores, farmers markets, and community food gardens, in proximity to residential uses and transit facilities.*

**Program 4** *Support the development and location of community facilities and neighborhood-serving uses that accommodate food pantries, local food distribution, farmers markets, and other initiatives that improve access to healthy food.*

**Program 5** *Recognize the placemaking value of arts and cultural facilities and work to site them throughout the City as a means to enhance neighborhoods. support their integration throughout the City to enhance neighborhood identity and community vitality.*



**Program 6** *Encourage the development of public gathering spaces that accommodate cultural events, food traditions, and community activities while providing welcoming and accessible places for people of varied backgrounds and abilities.*

**Program 7** *Regularly review and update the City's zoning regulations, design standards, and review process as needed to allow design flexibility and creativity, address emerging issues, and foster compatibility of development with surrounding areas.*

**Policy C** Support development of compact, walkable mixed-use centers that provide access to daily needs, housing options, employment opportunities, public spaces, and multimodal transportation choices.

**Program 1** *Support downtown's development with the mix of uses, amenities, and infrastructure that maintain it as a cultural, retail, and social destination.*

**Program 2** *Assess the design and scale of commercial uses and other higher density uses when located in mixed use and predominantly residential areas.*

**Goal LU-2: Land use patterns promote walking, biking, and transit use to access goods, services, education, employment, and recreation, thereby supporting public health and reducing per capita vehicle miles traveled.**

**Policy A** Enhance the neighborhood vitality, quality, and function of existing residential neighborhoods while accommodating anticipated growth.

**Program 1** *Evaluate and process rezoning requests that allow appropriate mixing of residential and commercial uses consistent with adopted land use designations.*

**Program 2** *Encourage urban development patterns that use land efficiently, support multimodal transportation, and provide adequate open space and amenities, particularly in newly developing areas and where infill is possible.*

**Program 3** *Review parking requirements and costs and consider including regulatory provisions to reduce parking standards for those uses located within a quarter mile of public transit, or serving a population characterized by low rates of car ownership.*



**Program 4** Support thoughtful planning and development along key corridors – including Canyon Road, University Way, and Dolarway Road – to ensure land use, design standards, and infrastructure investments align with the City’s overall growth and transportation strategies, thereby facilitating equitable access to services and housing opportunities.

**Policy B** Adopt and maintain policies, codes, and land use patterns that promote walking and biking in order to increase public health and reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled.

**Program 1** Locate new community facilities near major transit routes and in areas convenient to pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Goal LU-3: Commercial and mixed-use areas are designed at a pedestrian scale that supports walkability, safety, and an engaging public realm.**

**Policy A** Develop and implement strategies that address on- and off-street parking management in the downtown area consistent with walkability and economic vitality goals.

**Program 1** Building on previous parking study results, develop and implement a parking management strategy for the downtown area, including pricing, time limits, shared parking, and wayfinding improvements.

**Program 2** Develop and implement strategies that improve access and circulation in the downtown area, consistent with walkability and economic vitality goals.

**Policy B** Facilitate development of vacant and underutilized land in and around downtown with commercial, civic, cultural, and higher-density residential uses.

**Program 1** Provide historic renovation training to contractors/developers interested in developing or renovating existing buildings.

**Program 2** Encourage development of second floor housing and/or professional offices in the downtown area.

**Program 3** Seek grant opportunities and partnerships to facilitate elevator placement in downtown buildings to foster ADA accessibility.



## Goal LU-4: Downtown Ellensburg functions as a vibrant, mixed-use center that supports economic vitality, tourism, housing, and community life.

**Policy A** Encourage development and activity that increases pedestrian activity and economic vitality in the downtown area while ensuring safe and efficient access for all transportation modes.

**Program 1** *Support and encourage a mix of businesses, services, housing, cultural uses, and community attractions in downtown.*

**Policy B** Maintain interconnectedness and high levels of access to downtown.

**Program 1** *Identify and improve critical rights of way and important pedestrian and bicycle corridors that provide access to downtown.*

**Program 2** *Implement a program of trails, signs, and other strategies to connect downtown with the west and south interchanges, and the CWU campus.*

**Policy C** Protect, preserve, and promote Ellensburg's historic buildings, districts, objects, sites, and structures as integral components of community identity and downtown revitalization.

**Program 1** *Integrate the train depot and other historically significant places into continued revitalization of downtown.*

**Program 2** *Attract tourists to the City through regional promotion of the historic downtown.*

## Goal LU-5: Commercial and industrial areas serve community needs and support long-term economic vitality.

**Policy A** Ensure the comprehensive plan designates a diversity of commercial and industrial lands sufficient to provide an array of businesses and employment opportunities that serve the community.

**Program 1** *Land designated or zoned industrial in the City and UGA should be reserved for industrial and appropriate accessory uses.*

**Program 2** *Access high-traffic generating land uses from arterials whenever possible. If this is not possible, provide mitigation to address access impacts.*



- Program 3**      *Encourage the master planning of multi-building and multi-parcel developments and large institutions to emphasize aesthetics and community compatibility. Include circulation, landscaping, open space, storm drainage, utilities, and building location and design in the master plan.*
- Program 4**      *Review and regularly update the City's commercial zoning regulations, design standards, and design review process as needed to allow design flexibility and creativity, address emerging issues, and foster compatibility of development with the character of surrounding areas.*
- Program 5**      *Separate heavy industrial uses from incompatible land uses. Use transition zoning, buffers, and other techniques to protect industrial areas and nearby uses from conflicts.*
- Program 6**      *Encourage live/work units in appropriate transitional zones, including light industrial zones.*

**Goal LU-6: Collaborate with Kittitas County to provide coordinated services and facilities in a manner that will be best suited to geographic, economic, demographic, and other factors that influence development needs.**



# Action Items

## Planned Unit Developments

Incorporate Planned Unit Developments into the City's land development code.

## Review Zoning Districts

Review and revise zoning districts, and the allowable uses within each zoning district, as necessary to permit and encourage mixing of residential and commercial uses, increase opportunities for a range of housing types and densities, and ensure compatible land use patterns.

## Review Land Use Regulations

Review land use regulations and revise as necessary to allow neighborhood commercial uses in residential areas, where appropriate, with particular attention to establishing pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and regulating offsite impacts to adjoining residential areas.

## Implement Land Capacity Analysis Findings

Amend zoning and development regulations, as needed, to ensure sufficient land capacity for housing and employment growth, including housing affordable to a range of income levels, consistent with the 2026 Land Capacity Analysis.

## Promote Infill and Redevelopment

Identify and reduce barriers to infill and redevelopment of underutilized properties within the City.

## Policy Connections

The **Transportation** chapter contains a set of policies on active modes of transportation and ways to improve street and neighborhood connectivity.

The **Housing** chapter contains a set of goals and policies that provide a framework for increasing housing supply and diversity while protecting existing neighborhoods.

The **Capital Facilities and Utilities** chapter contains goals and policies to ensure that public services and infrastructure are available to meet growth and development demands.



# 3. Land Use

## What you will find in this chapter

- ◆ Information about the City's expected population and employment growth.
- ◆ Description and capacity of existing and future land use designations.
- ◆ Policies that direct the City's growth strategy and land uses.
- ◆ A map of future land uses.

## Overview

One of the fundamental roles of the City of Ellensburg's Comprehensive Plan is to anticipate, guide, and plan for growth. The plan is a tool to look ahead to the likely growth and ensure alignment of the City's plan for land uses, infrastructure, and services.

The Land Use chapter addresses the general pattern of land use within the City and its Urban Growth Area (UGA) and provides a framework to guide the City's overall growth and development. It ensures an appropriate mix of land uses are available to support the City's economic goals, provide an array of housing choices, and ensure that adequate infrastructure and services are available.

The City's growth strategy emphasizes a combination of development on vacant land and redevelopment of underutilized properties within existing urban areas, while planning for orderly expansion within the Urban Growth Area. This approach supports efficient use of land and infrastructure and helps reduce environmental impacts associated with growth.

Land use patterns play an important role in supporting equitable access to housing, services, and employment opportunities, as well as helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging compact development and multimodal transportation options.

The Land Use goals, policies and programs help protect environmentally sensitive areas, enhance the vitality of neighborhoods, and promote opportunities for healthy lifestyles while allowing the City to evolve to meet the changing needs of the community.

## Background and Context

Core community values this chapter supports include the following:

- ◆ ~~Attractive residential neighborhoods and a lively and vital downtown contribute greatly to Ellensburg's high quality of life.~~



- ◆ Allowing for a variety of housing types will add to Ellensburg’s diversity and appeal, and will help to address housing availability. **Supporting a range of housing types and densities** will help meet the community’s housing needs, improve affordability, and provide opportunities for people at different stages of life, while contributing to Ellensburg's diversity and overall appeal.
- ◆ Encouraging sustainable practices related to both the environment and social equity will preserve a high quality of life for generations to come. **Protecting and conserving Ellensburg’s natural environment, open spaces, and ecosystems, while addressing climate impacts and resilience,** will help ensure equitable access to recreation opportunities and maintain a high quality of life for current and future residents.
- ◆ Encouraging entertainment and cultural uses will enrich the community and provide activities for all age groups. **Supporting the development of neighborhood-scale commercial and mixed-use areas** will improve access to goods, services, and employment opportunities, while supporting walkable neighborhoods and affordable housing and living options.
- ◆ Increasing opportunities for local businesses will help supply employment for Ellensburg’s residents. **Encouraging entertainment, cultural, and community activities** will enrich the community and provide opportunities for people of all ages to gather and connect.
- ◆ Suitable locations for industrial and institutional uses will protect the city’s neighborhoods, while providing essential facilities needed by every community. **Ensuring industrial and institutional uses are located in appropriate areas** will support employment and essential services, while maintaining the intended feel and function of residential and mixed-use neighborhoods.

## Public Health and Land Use

The intersection between health and land use planning is becoming more important in today's communities. Long term plans impact how people make choices about where to live and how to get around in their communities. The way we plan our communities can affect things like access to healthy foods, safe and accessible opportunities for physical activity, and easy access to health and social services, as well as environmental conditions such as clean air and water and broader issues such as social equity. Our environments play a key role in helping healthy choices be the easy choices.

## Existing Zoning and Land Use Patterns

This section provides an overview of existing land use and zoning patterns within the City of Ellensburg. These patterns reflect a combination of historic development, infrastructure availability, and market conditions, and provide a baseline for understanding how the City functions today. As the Comprehensive Plan is updated and implemented, these patterns may evolve over time to better align with the City’s future land use designations and community priorities.

### Residential

Residential land uses make up nearly half of the land within Ellensburg’s city limits. The current Comprehensive Plan includes several residential designations, with the overwhelming majority of residential land in suburban, low, and medium density categories. High density residential zoning



currently accounts for just over one percent of total residential acreage. Most of the high-density residential areas are located near the Central Washington University (CWU) campus and house large numbers of students residing off campus. Mixed residential is intended to provide for the development of housing at approximately four-to-12 dwelling units per acre, while high density residential provides a target density of eight-to-18 units per acre. These higher-density areas are generally located near the CWU campus and in areas with access to services and transportation, including north of the campus, along Kittitas Highway, and southeast of the west Interstate-90 interchange.

Residential areas are primarily zoned Residential Suburban (R-S), Residential Low Density (R-L), Residential Medium Density (R-M), Residential High Density (R-H), and Manufactured Home Park (MHP). These zones collectively provide for a range of housing types and densities, from predominantly single dwelling neighborhoods to multifamily residential development in areas with access to services and transit.

## Commercial

Ellensburg's downtown remains the main retail and commercial center of the City and the lower Kittitas Valley. Maintaining the prominence and vitality of downtown has been an important goal for Ellensburg dating back to the City's first Comprehensive Plan in 1975. ~~The Central Commercial land use (which includes downtown and South Water Street) makes up about 12% of land designated commercial. More recent developments on South Water Street and Mountain View Avenue have shifted some of the retail from the downtown area and currently about 43% of commercial land is located at the west and south freeway interchanges on the edge of town.~~

Commercial development in Ellensburg is generally characterized by a mix of a historic, pedestrian-oriented downtown core and more auto-oriented commercial areas located along major transportation corridors. The majority of commercial-designated land is located in the Commercial Highway zone.

Commercial areas are primarily zoned Commercial Highway (C-H). These zones range from small-scale, neighborhood-serving commercial areas to larger, auto-oriented commercial corridors that provide goods and services to the broader community.

## Industrial

Recent development activity indicates substantial growth in the Industrial Light zone, which accounts for the majority of pending nonresidential square footage and employment capacity.

Ellensburg's early industrial development centered along the railroad tracks to the west of the existing central commercial area. Heavy industrial land continues to be located on a narrow strip paralleling the railroad tracks, while light industrial land has expanded along Dolarway Road to the west interchange area and to the area around the airport located north of the University.

Industrial areas are zoned Light Industrial (I-L) and Heavy Industrial (I-H). The I-L zone accommodates a range of light manufacturing, service, and employment uses with limited impacts, while the I-H zone supports more intensive industrial activities that require separation from residential and commercial uses.



## Mixed Use

Mixed-use areas in Ellensburg provide a combination of residential, commercial, and employment uses in an integrated and often pedestrian-oriented environment. These areas are typically located in and around downtown, along key corridors, and at neighborhood or community activity centers, and are intended to support walkability, access to services, and a mix of housing opportunities.

Mixed-use areas are primarily zoned Central Commercial (C-C and C-C II), Neighborhood Center Mixed Use (NCMU), Regional Center Mixed Use (RCMU), and Residential-Office (R-O). These zones accommodate a range of vertically and horizontally integrated uses, from downtown mixed-use buildings with ground floor commercial and upper-story residential to neighborhood and corridor-scale mixed-use developments that combine housing, services, and employment opportunities.

## Public/Institutional

Ellensburg has a long-standing and important institutional component. Ellensburg is home to Central Washington University, is the County seat, and hosts Kittitas County's central medical and hospital services. Institutions are among the largest employers in Ellensburg. The University campus is the primary public/institutional land use and occupies approximately 380 acres and employs almost 1,500 full-time staff. Other public uses are distributed throughout Ellensburg and include city and county offices, Kittitas Valley Healthcare, schools, fire stations, the Kittitas County Event Center, and other public services that provide necessary services to Ellensburg and the surrounding region.

Public and institutional uses, along with many parks and open space areas, are primarily zoned Public Reserve (P-R). This designation accommodates a wide range of public uses, including governmental, educational, recreational, and cultural facilities.

## Parks and Open Space

Ellensburg operates a park system that encompasses more than 300 acres. Current open space land includes both publicly owned land and private property that is generally open in nature and may or may not be developed.

Parks and open space areas are generally included within the Public Reserve (P-R) zoning district when publicly owned, while some privately owned open space areas may be zoned for other uses but remain undeveloped due to natural features or other constraints.

Table 3-1 includes estimated acreages of existing zoning districts within the Ellensburg city limits. These figures provide a general snapshot of existing conditions and may change as zoning designations are updated and development occurs over time. Existing zoning districts generally align with the land use patterns described in this chapter and provide the primary regulatory framework for development in Ellensburg. The City's zoning code establishes allowed uses, densities, and development standards for each district, and is periodically updated to implement the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Table 3-1. Inventory of Existing Zoning Districts**

Existing Zoning Designations	Acres	Percent
Residential Zones		



Existing Zoning Designations	Acres	Percent
Residential High Density (R-H)	30.0	0.5%
Residential Medium Density (R-M)	418.0	7.0%
Residential Low Density (R-L)	580.9	10.3%
Residential Suburban (R-S)	1,617.0	28.5%
Manufactured Home Park (MHP)	61.5	1.1%
<b>Total – Residential</b>	<b>2,707.4</b>	<b>47.4%</b>
<b>Commercial Zones</b>		
Commercial Highway (C-H)	724.47	12.0%
Commercial Neighborhood (C-N)	9.3	0.2%
<b>Total – Commercial</b>	<b>733.77</b>	<b>12.1%</b>
<b>Industrial Zones</b>		
Heavy Industrial (I-H)	193.5	3.4%
Light Industrial (I-L)	601.4	10.6%
<b>Total – Industrial</b>	<b>795.0</b>	<b>14.0%</b>
<b>Mixed Use Zones</b>		
Central Commercial (C-C)	109.4	1.9%
Central Commercial II (C-C II)	93.6	1.7%
Neighborhood Center Mixed-Use (NCMU)	25.5	0.4%
Regional Center Mixed-Use (RCMU)	133.2	2.4%
Residential Office (R-O)	111.8	2.0%
<b>Total – Mixed Use</b>	<b>473.4</b>	<b>8.4%</b>
<b>Parks, Open Space, and Public/Institutional Zones</b>		
Public Reserve (P-R)	956.2	16.9%
<b>Total – Parks, Open Space, and Public/Institutional</b>	<b>956.2</b>	<b>16.9%</b>
<b>Total – ALL ZONES</b>	<b>5,665.7</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Growth Projections

Kittitas County’s adopted growth forecasts for the 2020 to 2046 planning period anticipate continued regional growth in population and employment. Ellensburg must plan for a total population of 25,631 residents by 2046, an increase of 4,834 people from the 2020 baseline. The city is also projected to accommodate 2,710 net new jobs during this period.

Within this context, Ellensburg is planning for 3,012 net new housing units between 2020 and 2046 to support anticipated population growth.

These projections are based on state Office of Financial Management forecasts and countywide allocations developed in coordination with Kittitas County and its jurisdictions. They are supported by the City’s 2026 Land Capacity Analysis, which evaluates the availability of land to accommodate projected housing and employment growth over the planning horizon. The targets reflect each



jurisdiction’s commitment to provide adequate infrastructure, land capacity, and zoning to support growth over the 20 year planning horizon.

## Residential and Employment Growth Capacity

Based on current zoning and the 2026 Land Capacity Analysis, Ellensburg demonstrates sufficient land capacity to accommodate projected population and employment growth through the 2020 to 2046 planning horizon. The LCA estimates capacity for approximately 5,882 housing units and 6,921 jobs, exceeding the City’s projected need of 3,012 housing units and 2,710 jobs.

This capacity is distributed across a range of land use designations and is expected to be accommodated through a combination of vacant land, redevelopment of underutilized properties, and mixed-use development. A significant portion of future growth is anticipated to occur through infill and redevelopment within existing urban areas, supporting efficient use of land and infrastructure.

Residential capacity is provided across low, medium, and high-density residential designations, as well as within mixed-use areas that allow housing integrated with commercial and employment uses. Commercial and industrial capacity is concentrated in the Commercial Highway and Industrial Light zones, supporting continued economic development and job growth.

In addition to capacity on vacant and redevelopable land, the LCA identifies additional housing potential through accessory dwelling units (ADUs), reflecting recent trends and changes in state law that expand opportunities for this housing type. The LCA was conducted using the Kittitas County methodology and incorporates assumptions related to development trends, densities, market factors, and infrastructure availability to provide a realistic and achievable estimate of development capacity over the planning horizon.

### Growth Projections

- ◆ Ellensburg works cooperatively with Kittitas County and other incorporated areas to establish long-range population growth targets based on state and regional forecasts.
- ◆ The City's adopted growth targets include 4,834 additional residents, 2,710 net new jobs, and 3,012 net new housing units by 2046.
- ◆ The City uses these targets to ensure adequate zoning, infrastructure, and land capacity to support anticipated growth over the 20 year planning period. These projections represent planning targets rather than guarantees of market delivery.

### Residential Capacity by Income Level ~~Residential and employment growth capacity~~

While the City demonstrates overall sufficient land capacity, the LCA identified a deficit in capacity for housing affordable to households earning below 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) under current zoning. To address this gap, the City is pursuing targeted zoning and land use changes to increase opportunities for multifamily and mixed-use development. These changes are expected to add capacity



for approximately 1,700 additional housing units and ensure sufficient land capacity across all income levels. Additional information on land capacity by income level can be found in the Housing Element of this plan.

In addition to these rezone areas, the City is also planning to consolidate the R-S and R-L zones into a single zone which allows for more flexibility for middle housing types such as townhomes and duplexes compatible with the predominant single dwelling residential uses, consistent with the City's housing action plan goal of adding more variety to the housing stock and strategies for development of more of these housing types.

## Future Land Use

Land use designations and policies provide a guide for the appropriate development and redevelopment locations for residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The future land use designations (Table 3-2) are aimed at ensuring a safe, livable, and sustainable environment that will shape Ellensburg's future development within the 20-year planning cycle. The City's comprehensive plan establishes the overarching guide for decisions related to land development regulations and patterns, with this chapter functioning as a summary of the intent.

The City of Ellensburg has been using land use designation maps since the mid-1970s. Descriptions and mapping of land use designations visually depict the community's desired direction as it meets new growth challenges and changing times. The descriptions of each land use designation along with the recommended locations for land use designations help to set a broad understanding of land use patterns that enables city services and agencies, along with residents and property owners, to effectively plan.

Land use designations are general in nature and serve as a guide; they do not carry the same force of law as zoning. The guiding land use designations help set up future considerations for zoning, but do not change zoning district locations or descriptions. Zoning regulations are adopted by the City to implement the Comprehensive Plan and are applied through a separate public process.

To provide a complete understanding of potential land development patterns, this chapter describes and illustrates the land use designations. Land use mapping is a visual representation of the goals, policies, and programs within this comprehensive plan. The map and the policies they represent are the general foundation for land use decisions and implementation strategies.

The land use patterns and policies discussed in this chapter apply to the Ellensburg city limits. Areas outside of the city limits and within Ellensburg's Urban Growth Area, which change from time to time with annexations, are included to inform private and public parties of the desired pattern for development as the city grows. The land use designations outside of city limits (within the UGA) are not binding in nature until lands are incorporated within the municipal boundaries. The process of looking beyond the city limits and planning for 20 years of growth within the Urban Growth Area helps to facilitate City-County coordination in land use planning and related issues, and provides a greater level of predictability to landowners and interested parties.

The Future Land Use Map (Figure 3-2) reflects desired uses and implements the land use goals and policies in this plan; it does not always represent existing uses. Decisions and implementation based on



these designations should include consideration of the entire comprehensive plan and site-specific conditions.

A description as well as the intent of specific land use designations are included for each designation. The Future Land Use Map provides recommended locations for each designation. The land use designations include four main categories: residential, mixed use, commercial, and industrial.

## Residential

Residential land use designations are areas in the City where the primary activity is residential dwellings. Uses that complement residences should be incorporated into these areas, such as: parks, low-intensity home based occupations, fire stations, churches, small-scale neighborhood commercial services, schools, and other public facilities. The Future Land Use map, goals, and policies in this chapter encourage high density residential in close proximity to commercial centers to facilitate access to services and employment opportunities. All implementing zoning districts should consider the compatibility with adjacent development, natural constraints such as watercourses, and the overall goals of the Ellensburg comprehensive plan. The residential land use category includes two land use designations that support a range of housing densities to achieve the City's housing and affordability goals: Residential Neighborhood and Urban Neighborhood.

### Residential Neighborhood

This designation applies to areas that have traditionally accommodated single-family detached homes and generally surround the urbanized core of the community or exist at the edge of the city adjacent to unincorporated land. The residential neighborhood designation supports a range of residential zones with housing densities that help to achieve the City's housing diversity and affordability goals. This designation accommodates the many established residential neighborhoods and acknowledges the single dwelling residential building type as the predominant use along with accessory dwellings, townhouses, cottage housing, clustered housing, and other middle housing forms. This designation also allows for more dense zoning options along transit corridors and in transitional areas offering opportunities for infill development using existing infrastructure.

### ~~BLENDED RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD~~

~~This designation applies to areas close to the core of the community, and where city services and infrastructure are readily available but the pattern of existing development is less intense than primary multi-dwelling buildings. This designation accommodates a range of housing types, and functions as a transition between neighborhoods with less density and core uses such as mixed-use areas and higher density residential and commercial areas. This designation accommodates a range of building types from small lot single dwellings, attached or semi-attached dwellings, duplexes, and small-scale multi-dwelling developments, such as triplexes and fourplexes.~~

~~Implementing zoning districts that accommodate lower density housing types are appropriate adjacent to existing single-family residential areas and are characterized primarily by detached housing units and zero lot line projects. 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. Higher density zones would also be appropriate adjacent to existing or planned higher density development.~~

## Urban Neighborhood

This designation accommodates areas close to the University campus, accessible by public transportation, close to amenities, and where city services and infrastructure are readily available. This designation accommodates a wide range of housing 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. The Urban Neighborhood designation is anticipated to accommodate a significant share of future residential growth.

Within this designation, development is generally higher in intensity and supports a range of medium- to high-density housing types. Higher intensity residential development is appropriate in areas with convenient access to the University campus, transit routes, parks, and commercial services. It may also be appropriate adjacent to existing or planned higher density development. Development should provide appropriate transitions in scale and intensity to adjacent lower density neighborhoods and be designed to support a cohesive development pattern.

## Mixed Use

Mixed-use developments provide a range of land use and development types to create focal points for community activity and identity. Mixed-use areas serve as a transition from the urban center toward primarily residential neighborhoods, and as a transition between commercial or industrial areas and residential neighborhoods. Mixed-use developments should be developed in an integrated, pedestrian-friendly manner and should not be overly dominated by any single type of land use. Higher intensity employment or residential uses are encouraged in the core of the area, adjacent to major streets or intersections, or adjacent to existing or planned higher density development.

Mixing residential and commercial uses within the same building or within the same development serves both residential and commercial uses. This enables people to live near their places of employment and services and thereby reduce vehicle miles traveled. The mixed-use designations accommodate a horizontal and/or vertical mixture of retail, service, office, restaurant, entertainment, cultural, and residential uses. Mixed-use structures that *vertically* integrate uses will have housing above ground floor commercial, office, or other pedestrian-active uses. A mixed-use development that is *horizontally* integrated may have a combination of buildings that are exclusively nonresidential, exclusively residential, and vertically mixed buildings.

The two mixed-use land designations are Urban Center and Community Mixed Use. Mixed-use areas are expected to accommodate both residential and commercial development, consistent with assumptions used in the LCA.

## ~~Neighborhood Mixed Use~~

~~The purpose of this designation is to provide for a mix of residential, employment, retail, service, and other related uses at a scale that services individual or small groupings of neighborhoods. Commercial uses typical of this designation include retail, offices, entertainment, professional services, eating and~~



~~drinking establishments, live/work units, and shop front retail that serve a market at a small neighborhood scale. Implementation of this designation includes a range of housing equivalent to the Blended Residential designation. Development in this area requires lower demand on city resources (utilities are already installed) and is advantageous for development of denser affordable housing types.~~

## Urban Center

The purpose of this designation is to create and sustain a commercial district and adjacent areas that caters to pedestrians and emphasize street activity. This area addresses the concentration of downtown uses including commercial office, retail, arts and entertainment, eating and drinking establishments, and residential uses. This is where people can live, work, and recreate within minutes of each activity.

Urban streetscapes, plazas, outdoor seating, public art, and open space and park amenities appropriately designed for urban character help to keep this area a vibrant community destination. This designation is consistent with the historic downtown district and is supportive of evening and weekend activity of lively uses and services to accommodate residents, employees, and visitors to our community.

This designation accommodates zoning districts that provide a mix of retail and residential uses, as well as evening and weekend entertainment and leisure activities. This land use designation extends beyond the historic downtown core of Ellensburg to include transitional areas between downtown and the University, and between downtown and higher intensity industrial and commercial activity to the west and south.

Implementation of this land use designation should encourage second and third floor residential, and office uses in the downtown core. It should also encourage new high-density residential or mixed-use developments while providing areas of transition to adjacent areas and preservation of the historic downtown.

## Community Mixed Use

This designation accommodates a combination of employment, retail, and service uses that serve the broader community, as well as residential developments.

Activities within this land use designation include a broad range of employment and services necessary for a vibrant community. Establishments located in this designation draw from the community as a whole for their employee and customer base. They serve the larger community as well as adjacent neighborhoods. A broad range of functions including retail, education, financial institutions, professional and personal services, offices, residences, and general service activities are typical in this designation.

Community mixed use areas should be integrated with main transportation corridors, including public transit and active transportation systems. The density of development may be higher than currently seen in most commercial areas in Ellensburg. Mixing commercial and residential uses within this designation will facilitate access to services and retail opportunities without requiring the use of an automobile. Implementation of this land use designation should include encouraging medium to high-density residential uses.



## Industrial Residential

This designation accommodates a dynamic living and working environment that supports artisanal production. Light industrial and residential uses are vertically or horizontally integrated into small-scale business park environments characterized by artist studios, design offices, and low impact facilities producing food products, garments, carpentry, or custom-made products. This designation accommodates mixed-use projects that create small-scale business park environments suitable for residential, very-low impact light industrial uses, artisan industrial, and supporting commercial activity. A range of housing equivalent to the Urban Neighborhood designation is appropriate for this designation.

## Commercial

The commercial land use designations provide for the creation of local jobs and other economic activity in a manner consistent with the character of the community. Commercial-based uses provide employment opportunities as well as primary retail and service opportunities. These areas provide an array of commercial uses at a range of intensities to meet the demand of current and future market conditions. The commercial land use designation is General Commercial and Services.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL**

This designation accommodates employment, retail, service, and other related uses at a scale that serves individual or small groupings of neighborhoods. Commercial uses typical of this designation include retail, offices, entertainment, professional services, eating and drinking establishments, live/work units, and shop front retail that serve a market at a small neighborhood scale.

### **MIXED BUSINESS PARK**

This designation accommodates a range of commercial and industrial activities typified by office uses, low impact light industrial uses, businesses that may include several uses such as manufacturing, research and development, warehousing, distribution, office, retail, customer service, or showrooms. Retail, residential, or services should be accommodated in an accessory or service role. This designation is often a transitional area between other uses and the scale and intensity of implementing zoning districts should be compatible with adjacent developments. Uses may be mixed vertically and horizontally with vertical mixed uses encouraged. Higher intensity uses are encouraged in the core of the area or adjacent to significant streets, intersections, or existing higher intensity development. This designation includes a broad spectrum of land uses, some of which can be compatible with mixed-use developments, regional commercial services, and live/work developments.

## General Commercial and Services

Ellensburg is a retail, education, health services, public administration, and outdoor recreation hub, and provides opportunities for these activities at a regional scale. This designation accommodates uses with large land requirements, including uses that may involve outdoor storage of merchandise; uses that are automobile-oriented or regional-retail related; uses that provide support service to business or industry; and uses that support highway travel.

It is necessary that these types of facilities be located in proximity to major transportation routes. Since uses in this designation are often large and prominent facilities within the community and region, design



guidelines ensure compatibility with the remainder of the community. Mixing of uses that encourages broad activity levels is encouraged. Any development within this designation should have a well-integrated transportation network that accommodates different modes of transportation and provides ready access within and to adjacent development.

Residential space should not be a primary function and should only be included as a use in combination with other compatible commercial uses if supportive residential services and spaces are within 1/4 mile of the proposed development. Supportive residential uses include public parks or open space, grocery, school, and transit.

## Industrial

The industrial land use designations provide for the creation of local jobs and other local economic activity in a manner consistent with the character of the community. Industrial land typically includes businesses that manufacture, process, or otherwise generate products sold to commercial businesses later. Industrial areas require good transportation access, particularly to truck routes, for movement of goods and employees. These areas provide a range of intensities including light and heavy industrial uses.

### Light Industrial

This designation accommodates a range of industrial and employment uses, including light manufacturing, research and development, office, technology centers, light assembly, storage, and support services to industry.

Light industrial areas may also include a range of flexible employment uses, such as small-scale production, artisan manufacturing, business park environments, and similar low-impact industrial activities. Uses may be mixed vertically or horizontally in appropriate locations, particularly where such development supports a cohesive employment environment.

This designation includes a broad spectrum of land uses, some of which can be compatible with mixed-use developments, regional commercial services, and live/work developments. The scale and intensity of development should be compatible with adjacent uses.

### Heavy Industrial

This designation generally accommodates industries that process large volumes of raw materials into refined products and/or have significant external impacts. The uses in these areas tend to generate truck traffic and should have access to major transportation networks. Typically, these areas would not be compatible with residential uses.

## Other Land Use Designations

### Public/Institutional

This designation accommodates a variety of activities. Schools are a dominant use including Central Washington University. Other typical uses are libraries, fire stations, Kittitas Valley Event Center, and publicly operated facilities and utilities. A significant portion of Ellensburg's employment occurs within this category.



## Parks and Open Space

All publicly owned recreation lands, including parks, are included within this category, as well as certain private lands. These areas are generally open in character and may or may not be developed.

## Open Space

This designation is for land that is currently open space but is either private or non-city owned and may or may not be developed and is not publicly accessible.

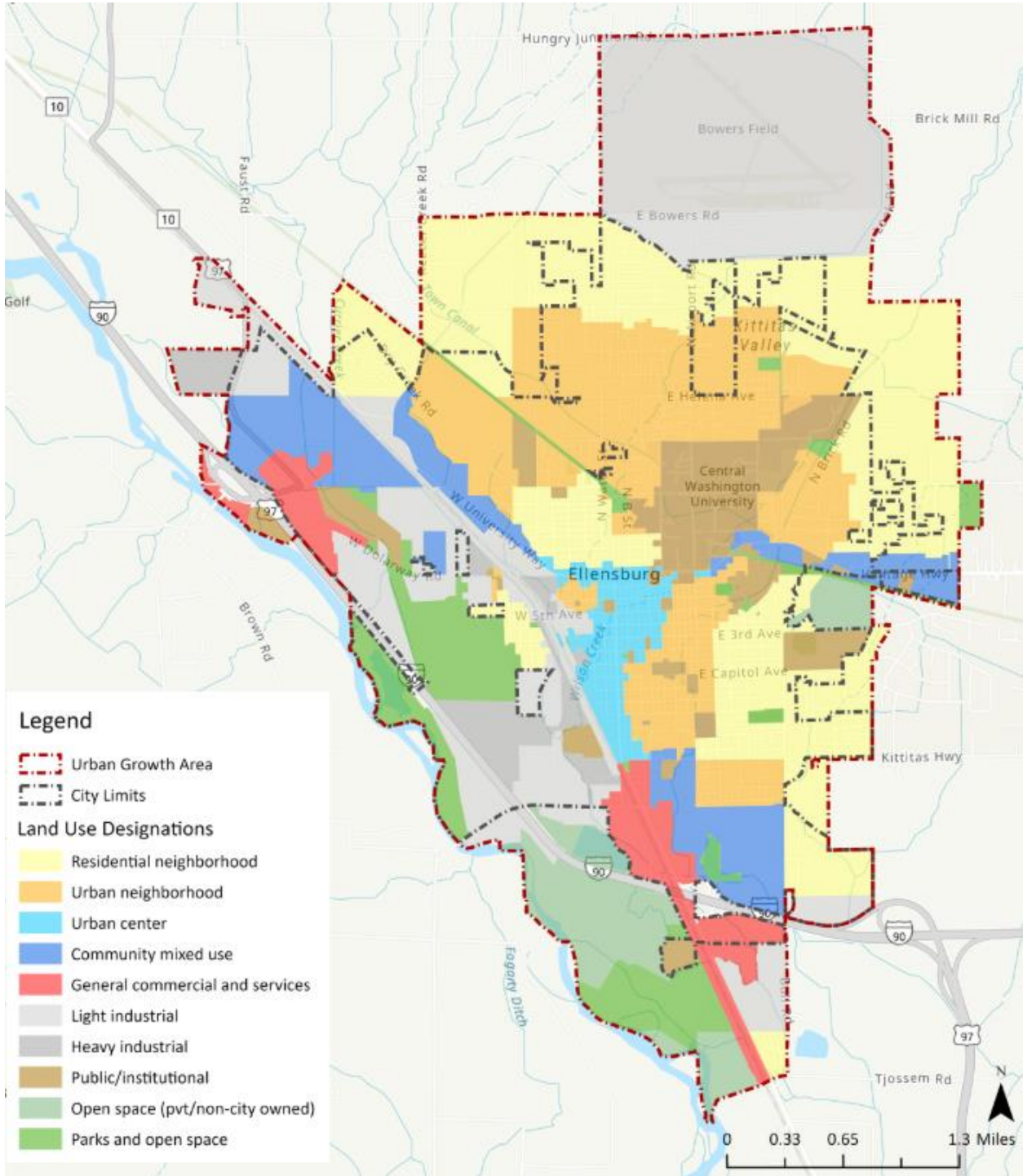
Table 3-2 includes estimated acreages of proposed future land use designations within the City of Ellensburg and the Urban Growth Area, while Figure 3-1 illustrates their geographic distribution. Table 3-3 summarizes the zoning districts are compatible with each future land use designation.

**Table 3-2. Future Land Use Designations**

Future Land Use Designation	Acres	Percent
Residential Neighborhood	1,920	20.8%
Urban Neighborhood	1,477	16.0%
Urban Center	208	2.3%
Community Mixed Use	943	10.2%
General Commercial and Services	336	3.6%
Light Industrial	2,365	25.6%
Heavy Industrial	235	2.5%
Public/Institutional	659	7.1%
Parks and Open Space	632	6.8%
Open Space (private/non-city owned)	455	4.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,230</b>	<b>100%</b>



Figure 3-1. Future Land Use Map



**Table 3-3. Future Land Use–Zoning Conversion Table**

Future Land Use	Zoning Options
Residential Neighborhood	Residential Low (R-L) Residential Medium (R-M) Residential High (R-H) Residential Office (R-O) Manufactured Home Park (MHP)
Urban Neighborhood	Residential High (R-H) Residential Medium (R-M) Manufactured Home Park (MHP) Neighborhood Center Mixed Use (NCMU) Residential Office (R-O)
Community Mixed Use	Residential High (R-H) Residential Office (R-O) Neighborhood Center (NCMU) Regional Center Mixed Use (RCMU) Commercial Highway (C-H)
Neighborhood Commercial	Commercial Neighborhood (C-N) Residential Office (R-O)
Urban Center	Central Commercial (C-C) Central Commercial II (C-CII)
General Commercial and Services	Commercial Highway (C-H)
Light Industrial	Industrial Light (I-L)
Heavy Industrial	Industrial Heavy (I-H)
Public Institutional	Public Reserve (P-R)
Open Space (Private)	Public Reserve (P-R)
Parks and Open Space (Public)	Public Reserve (P-R)

## Goals, Policies, and Programs

This chapter contains goals, policies, and programs necessary to support the City's responsibility for managing land uses and to implement regulations, guidelines, and programs. The Land Use policies contained in this chapter, along with the future land use map (Figure 3-1), identify the intensity of development and density recommended for each area of the city. These designations help to achieve the City's goals by providing for sustainable growth that encourages housing choice; locates population centers adjacent to transit and services; provides areas with the city to grow businesses, services, jobs, and entertainment; respects existing neighborhoods; provides for appropriate transitions between uses with differing intensities; safeguards the environment; and maintains Ellensburg's sense of community.

**Goal LU-1:** Encourage development that creates Land use patterns provide a variety of housing, shopping, entertainment, recreation, gathering spaces,



employment, and services that are accessible ~~to neighborhoods~~, and well-integrated with surrounding neighborhoods.

Policy A Encourage infill development and increased residential density in and around the downtown area.

~~Program 1 — Review and revise the residential density bonus program to promote infill development in and around the downtown area.~~

Program 1 Identify and reduce regulatory or procedural barriers to infill development and redevelopment in and around the downtown area.

Program 2 Update zoning and development regulations, as needed, to support increased residential density and a mix of housing types in and around the downtown area.

Policy B Integrate new development with consideration to design and scale that complements existing neighborhoods and provides effective transitions between different uses and intensities.

*Program 1 Incorporate Planned Unit Developments into the City's land development code.*

*Program 2 Encourage compatible neighborhood commercial uses in residential areas while maintaining particular attention to establishing pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and regulating offsite impacts to adjoining residential areas.*

*Program 3 Allow healthy food purveyors, such as grocery stores, farmers markets, and community food gardens, in proximity to residential uses and transit facilities.*

Program 4 Support the development and location of community facilities and neighborhood-serving uses that accommodate food pantries, local food distribution, farmers markets, and other initiatives that improve access to healthy food.

*Program 5 Recognize the placemaking value of arts and cultural facilities and work to site them throughout the City as a means to enhance neighborhoods.*

Program 6 Encourage the development of public gathering spaces that accommodate cultural events, food traditions, and community activities while providing welcoming and accessible places for people of varied backgrounds and abilities.

*Program 7 Regularly review and update the City's zoning regulations, design standards, and review process as needed to allow design flexibility and creativity, address emerging issues, and foster compatibility of development with surrounding areas.*



Policy C Support development of compact, walkable mixed-use centers that provide access to daily needs, housing options, employment opportunities, public spaces, and multimodal transportation choices.

*Program 1 Support downtown's development with the mix of uses, amenities, and infrastructure that maintain it as a cultural, retail, and social destination.*

*Program 2 Assess the design and scale of commercial uses and other higher density uses when located in mixed use and predominantly residential areas.*

Goal LU-2: Land use patterns promote walking, biking, and transit use to access goods, services, education, employment, and recreation, thereby supporting public health and reducing per capita vehicle miles traveled.

Policy A Enhance the neighborhood vitality, quality, and function of existing residential neighborhoods while accommodating anticipated growth.

~~*Program 1 Encourage and promote Evaluate and process rezoning requests that allow appropriate mixing of residential and commercial uses consistent with adopted land use designations.*~~

~~*Program 2 Encourage urban development patterns that use land efficiently, support multimodal transportation, and provide adequate open space and amenities, particularly in newly developing areas and where infill is possible.*~~

~~*Program 3 Encourage large commercial or residential projects to include transit stop improvements when appropriate.*~~

*Program 3 Review parking requirements and costs and consider including regulatory provisions to reduce parking standards for those uses located within a quarter mile of public transit, or serving a population characterized by low rates of car ownership.*

~~*Program 4 Prepare corridor plans for Canyon Road, University Way, and Dolarway Road to ensure land use designations along them are consistent with overall development strategies. Support thoughtful planning and development along key corridors – including Canyon Road, University Way, and Dolarway Road – to ensure land use, design standards, and infrastructure investments align with the City's overall growth and transportation strategies, thereby facilitating equitable access to services and housing opportunities.*~~

Policy B Adopt and maintain policies, codes, and land use patterns that promote walking and biking in order to increase public health and reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled.

*Program 1 Locate new community facilities near major transit routes and in areas convenient to pedestrians and bicyclists.*



**Goal LU-3:** Encourage pedestrian-scale design in commercial and mixed-use areas. Commercial and mixed-use areas are designed at a pedestrian scale that supports walkability, safety, and an engaging public realm.

Policy A Develop and implement strategies that address on- and off-street parking management in the downtown area consistent with walkability and economic vitality goals.

*Program 1 — Prepare a parking study to assess parking demand and supply in the downtown area.*

*Program 1 Building on previous parking study results, develop and implement a parking management strategy for the downtown area, including pricing, time limits, shared parking, and wayfinding improvements.*

*Program 2 Develop and implement strategies that improve access and circulation in the downtown area, consistent with walkability and economic vitality goals.*

Policy B Facilitate development of vacant and underutilized land in and around downtown with commercial, civic, cultural, and higher-density residential uses. ~~Financial, government, high-density residential, and cultural uses while respecting design, scale, and uses of surrounding neighborhoods.~~

*Program 1 Provide historic renovation training to contractors/developers interested in developing or renovating existing buildings.*

*Program 2 Encourage development of second floor housing and/or professional offices in the downtown area.*

*Program 3 Seek grant opportunities and partnerships to facilitate elevator placement in downtown buildings to foster ADA accessibility.*

**Goal LU-4:** Support downtown’s development as an economic, tourist, and retail destination. Downtown Ellensburg functions as a vibrant, mixed-use center that supports economic vitality, tourism, housing, and community life.

Policy A Encourage development and activity that increases automobile and pedestrian traffic in the downtown area. ~~activity and economic vitality in the downtown area while ensuring safe and efficient access for all transportation modes.~~

*Program 1 Support and encourage a mix of businesses, services, housing, cultural uses, and community attractions in downtown.*

Policy B Maintain interconnectedness and high levels of access to downtown.

*Program 1 Identify and improve critical rights of way and important pedestrian and bicycle corridors that provide access to downtown.*

*Program 2 Implement a program of trails, signs, and other strategies to connect downtown with the west and south interchanges, and the CWU campus.*



Policy C Protect, ~~and take advantage of~~ preserve, and promote Ellensburg's historic buildings, districts, objects, sites, and structures as integral components of community identity and downtown revitalization.

*Program 1 Integrate the train depot and other historically significant places into continued revitalization of downtown.*

*Program 2 Attract tourists to the City through regional promotion of the historic downtown.*

### Goal LU-5: Commercial and industrial areas serve community needs and support long-term economic vitality.

Policy A Ensure the comprehensive plan designates a diversity of commercial and industrial lands sufficient to provide an array of businesses and employment opportunities that serve the community.

*Program 1 Land designated or zoned industrial in the City and UGA should be reserved for industrial and appropriate accessory uses.*

*Program 2 Access high-traffic generating land uses from arterials whenever possible. If this is not possible, provide mitigation to address access impacts.*

*Program 3 Encourage the master planning of multi-building and multi-parcel developments and large institutions to emphasize aesthetics and community compatibility. Include circulation, landscaping, open space, storm drainage, utilities, and building location and design in the master plan.*

*Program 4 Review and regularly update the City's commercial zoning regulations, design standards, and design review process as needed to allow design flexibility and creativity, address emerging issues, and foster compatibility of development with the character of surrounding areas.*

*Program 5 Separate heavy industrial uses from incompatible land uses. Use transition zoning, buffers, and other techniques to protect industrial areas and nearby uses from conflicts.*

*Program 6 Encourage live/work units in appropriate transitional zones, including light industrial zones.*

### Goal LU-6: Collaborate with Kittitas County to provide coordinated services and facilities in a manner that will be best suited to geographic, economic, demographic, and other factors that influence development needs.

~~Policy A- Adopt an interlocal agreement with Kittitas County regarding land use designations, zoning districts, and public works standards for the UGA that are consistent between the City and County.~~



# Action Items

## ~~Density Bonus Program~~

~~Review, revise, and publicize the density bonus program to promote infill development in and around downtown.~~

## ~~Design Charrettes~~

~~Conduct community design charrettes to develop gateway designs for each entryway to the City.~~

## ~~Interlocal Agreement with Kittitas County~~

~~Adopt an interlocal agreement with Kittitas County regarding land use designations and public works standards for the UGA that are consistent between the City and County.~~

## ~~Parking Study and Review of Parking Requirements~~

~~Review parking requirements and assess parking costs and consider revising parking requirements in areas within a quarter mile of transit and residential uses that are characterized by low rates of car ownership. Prepare a parking study to assess parking demand and supply in the downtown.~~

## **Planned Unit Developments**

Incorporate Planned Unit Developments into the City's land development code.

## **Review Zoning Districts**

Review and revise zoning districts, and the allowable uses within each zoning district, as necessary to permit and encourage mixing of residential and commercial uses, increase opportunities for a range of housing types and densities, and ensure compatible land use patterns.

## **Review Land Use Regulations**

Review land use regulations and revise as necessary to allow neighborhood commercial uses in residential areas, where appropriate, with particular attention to establishing pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and regulating offsite impacts to adjoining residential areas.

## **Implement Land Capacity Analysis Findings**

Amend zoning and development regulations, as needed, to ensure sufficient land capacity for housing and employment growth, including housing affordable to a range of income levels, consistent with the 2026 Land Capacity Analysis.

## **Promote Infill and Redevelopment**

Identify and reduce barriers to infill and redevelopment of underutilized properties within the City.

# Policy Connections

The **Transportation** chapter contains a set of policies on active modes of transportation and ways to improve street and neighborhood connectivity.



The **Housing** chapter contains a set of goals and policies that provide a framework for increasing housing supply and diversity while protecting existing neighborhoods.

The **Capital Facilities and Utilities** chapter contains goals and policies to ensure that public services and infrastructure are available to meet growth and development demands.





*Meeting Date: July 9, 2026*  
**City of Ellensburg**  
**Planning Commission Agenda Report**

**Agenda Subject:** July 22 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Open House  
(Public Comment Opportunity)

**Submitted by:**

**Department:** Community Development

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**Suggested Motion/Action:**  
Discussion

**Background/Summary:**

The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update team is excited to be planning for an open house- July 22, at the CWU Foundry Building.

This is an opportunity to review the proposed drafts, goals, and policies, of the updated elements before the final adoption process begins! There is opportunity to comment, provide feedback, and review, in person and online. [Ellensburg 2046 Comprehensive Plan Update | Ellensburg, WA](#)

This open house is also an opportunity to review and comment on our updated City-wide Environmental Impact Statement, before proposed final adoption later in 2026.

**Previous Council Action:**

**Analysis:**

**Financial Impact:**

Budget Adjustment: No

**Attachments:**

1. Ellensburg 2046 - July Open House Flyer\_2026-0604



# ELLENSBURG 2046

Hometown Heart — Bright Future

## JOIN US FOR OUR DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OPEN HOUSE!

The City of Ellensburg's **Comprehensive Plan Update** is well underway, **and we want to hear from you!** Stop by the Foundry Building on Wednesday, July 22nd, anytime between 4–6 PM for our **draft open-house event** and help shape Ellensburg's future.

### Comprehensive Plan Open House



**Wednesday, July 22nd | 4:00 – 6:00 PM**  
The Foundry Building at 421 North Main Street,  
Ellensburg, WA 98926



**The Draft Comprehensive Plan will be available for your review!**  
Join us at the open house to learn more about the project,  
ask questions about the process, and share your input.