

## AGENDA REPORT

Date: September 6, 2011

To: City Council

Thru: Ted Barkley, City Manager 

From: Mike Smith, Community Development Director 

RE: Draft Land Development Code Update (Sept. 1, 2011) – Initial Review  
- Article 4 Community Design and Article 5 Project Design

**SUMMARY:** A draft land development code update document (Sept. 1, 2011) has been completed and released for public review and comment. It is available on the City's webpage and at the City Library and in the Community Development Department. Council has set a Special Meeting for September 12, 2011 to begin its review of the draft document and has identified Article 4 Community Design and Article 5 Project Design as the initial subjects for that review.

**BACKGROUND:** In 2010 the Ellensburg City Council recognized a need to update the City's land development code regulations in order to:

- correct inconsistencies within the codes and between the codes and the City's Comprehensive Plan;
- provide a more user-friendly development code;
- implement the policy direction adopted in the City's 2007 Comprehensive Plan Update;
- provide for future development that was more energy efficient and that improved walkability in the community;
- provide more development options with a clearer vision of what the desired end product should be; and,
- bring the old 1970's codes up to date with current best planning practices.

Over the past year staff has worked with a consultant, the Planning Commission, City Council and the public to create a Draft Land Development Code Update document that addresses those identified needs. Several public meetings and open houses have also been held to obtain community guidance in the drafting of the document.

The *Draft Land Development Code Update – Sept. 1, 2011* has now been completed and released for public review and comment prior to undergoing the more formal adoption process later this year. This Special Council meeting is the first of a series of meetings in which Council will review portions of the draft code document and make any changes it feels are warranted prior to consideration of the document for final adoption.

**ANALYSIS:** The general approach taken in this new LDC was to consolidate the development code regulations currently scattered throughout the City Code into a single new code Chapter Title 15 and to organize the regulations in a manner that grouped similar pieces of the land development process together. The general approach to substantive changes in the land development code has been to establish design standards:

- that are clear

- that provide a resulting new development pattern which is supportive of the community's character and existing design features as established in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, and
- that provide more development options for a variety of housing types and design features.

The new LDC is composed of six Articles within one new Title (15) of City Code rather than being spread out in multiple Titles of City Code as is the current situation.

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| Article 1 | Contains general provisions including a USER GUIDE for the new code and a DEFINITIONS section where all land development code definitions can be found                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Article 2 | Addresses permits and procedures<br>It establishes 5 permit types within which all permits will fit<br>Each Permit Type has a unique process for public notice, hearings, decision-makers and appeal opportunities<br>It also includes non-conforming use regulations, subdivision regulations, SEPA regulations, Landmarks and Design Register Procedures, and Code Enforcement. |
| Article 3 | Establishes the various zoning districts and the uses that are permitted in each<br>It includes form and intensity standards (setbacks, heights, etc.)<br>It provides density bonus incentives                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Article 4 | Establishes new community design standards that will result in a more uniform and desired development pattern along the City's streets and in new subdivisions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Article 5 | Establishes new project design standards that will result in a more desired development pattern on lots within new developments or as infill in existing developed areas. This is a major implementation action for the 2007 Comprehensive Plan Update.                                                                                                                           |
| Article 6 | Is the existing Critical Areas Ordinance but with some updates to address the new procedures in Article 2.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

ARTICLE 4 – Community Design

This Article establishes design standards for the larger scale community design elements such as new subdivisions, and establishes new Streetscape design standards for private frontages along certain types of streets in the city. **SEE Article 4 Summary (Attachment 'A')**.

ARTICLE 5 – Project Design

This Article addresses new individual project site and building design for primarily new commercial and multi-family developments and infill. It also provides new standards for types of housing, including single family. It applies to additions, remodels and new site improvements on a sliding scale based on 3 levels of improvement. And it establishes a Departure provision for most of the new design standards. **SEE Article 5 Summary (Attachment 'B')**

The Planning Commission initiated its review of Articles 4 and 5 at an August 25, 2011 Regular Meeting. The minutes of that meeting with Planning Commission comments are included here as **Attachment 'C'**. The Planning Commission continued its review of Article 5 to a special meeting on September 7 and the minutes of that meeting will be provided at Council's September 12 Special Meeting.

- RECOMMENDATION:**
1. Review Articles 4 and 5 and provide staff with direction if any direction is warranted.
  2. Consider setting additional Special Meeting dates for review of the other Articles.