

# Planning Commission Public Hearing



Community Development • 125 NW Chehalis Avenue, Chehalis, WA 98532 • Phone: (360) 740-1146

## STAFF REPORT

**Date:** July 17, 2025

**Staff:** Mindy Brooks, Director

**Attachments:** (Embedded links in this staff report)

On July 22, the Planning Commission will deliberate on the Lewis County Comprehensive Plan proposed development regulations. Please review all of the materials provided since the May 27 meeting before the July 22 and send questions to [mindy.brooks@lewiscountywa.gov](mailto:mindy.brooks@lewiscountywa.gov). You can find past staff reports and presentations on the webpage linked below by choosing Planning Commission under the Materials heading. You can find the June 18 proposed draft regulations by choosing Task 10 – Zoning and Development Regulations under the Material heading.

<https://lewiscountywa.gov/departments/community-development/rezones/comprehensive-plan-and-development-regulation-amendments/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update/>

On July 22, staff suggest taking motions and deliberating on individual topics. Below are draft, potential motions, which the commissioners may use. Commissioners may propose your own motions as well. A reminder that deliberations start with a motion and then discussion, followed by a vote. If through deliberations the commissioners decide you'd like to change the motion, you can amend or withdraw the motion. Note – Short Term Rentals will be addressed after these topics and details are included in a separate memo.

### **Topic 1: Urban Growth Area – Small Towns**

Overview – These are new development regulations for Onalaska and Packwood associated with the zones recommended by the Planning Commission on May 13. The draft regulations include a requirement that all new housing in the Residential High (RH) zone be multifamily, which is three or more attached dwelling units per property; limits on commercial business footprint to 10,000 square feet in the Mixed Use (MU) zone and 20,000 square feet in the Commercial Business District (CBZ) and Airport Zone (AX); ground floor commercial requirements and zero-foot setback from the primary streets (SR508, Carlisle, Leonard, Highway 12, Willame, Main); new parking standards; new design standards; and, in Packwood only, new color standards and a prohibition on drive-throughs. The proposed development regulations implement the Onalaska Subarea Plan and Packwood Subarea Plan and were recommended by the Community Advisory Committee.

Motion – I move to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve the new [Chapter 17.17, UGA – Small Towns](#), LCC.

## **Topic 2: [Master Planned Resorts](#)**

Overview – There is an existing MPR north of Mineral Lake and two proposed MRP overlays at TransAlta and Thompson Road that were recommended by the Planning Commission on May 13. Chapter 17.20E, Mater Planned Resort, LCC, exists today. The proposed amendments include a requirement that transient accommodation on any of the parcels within the overlay must be approved through a Binding Site Plan; capital facilities (e.g. sewer, water, transportation) must be addressed cumulatively for the entire project; at least 40% of the total area must be preserved as open space; and there must be employee housing included in the project.

Motion – I move to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve amendments to [Chapter 17.20E, Master Planned Resort](#), LCC.

## **Topic 3: [Energy Production Facilities](#)**

Overview – These are new development regulations for energy production facilities in Lewis County. Exempted from these regulations are private energy production facilities, such as solar on residential roof. The intention is to support transition of TransAlta from coal to other energy production via the Master Industrial District (MID) zone that was recommended by the Planning Commission on May 13. All energy production facilities would be allowed in the MID zone and all energy production facilities, except hydroelectric, would be mostly prohibited in other zones. TransAlta submitted testimony on July 7, which has been incorporated into the motion below.

Motion – I move to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve the new [Chapter 17.127, Energy Production and Storage Facilities](#), LCC with the following changes:

- Remove the limit that solar cannot be placed on slopes greater than 7% and add “Solar Energy Production Facilities shall comply with manufacture specifications concerning allowable slope tolerance or shall grade the site into compliance.”
- Clarify that Figure 1 is related to the energy production facility and does not include substations or transmission lines.
- Exempt the properties within the MID zone from the screening and buffering standards because the MID zone.

## **Topic 4: [Land Use Table](#)**

Overview – The current land use summary table in Chapter 17.42 groups many uses under generalized categories, such as “isolated small business”, which has created confusion and inconsistent application. By expanding the use table, there will be consistency in how the use allowances are implemented. In addition, it will be easier for the public to determine if a particular land use is allowed within any given zone. Staff have attempted to retain the same allowance for most rural zones as were allowed in the original Table 2. Some changes were made to reflect changes in state law regarding housing in LAMIRDs and day care facilities.

Motion – I move to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve amendments to [Table 2, Chapter 17.42, Land Use Summary](#), LCC.

## **Topic 5: Mining**

Overview – Staff updated [Table 2, Chapter 17.42, Land Use Summary](#), LCC, to include agriculture, forestry and mining uses with the intent of having all land use allowances in the same table rather than resource allowed uses in Chapter 17.30. Staff intended to maintain the same allowances as today. Testimony from Lakeside Industries on July 8, 2025 notes inconsistencies between the allowances today versus proposed, as well as with the definitions. In particular, today the definition of mining includes asphalt batching as an accessory use but the proposed Table 2 had it as a separate use. Staff recommend making changes to be consistent with allowed mining uses today.

Motion – I move to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve amendments to [Table 2, Chapter 17.42, Land Use Summary](#) with the following changes:

- Change “Mineral Extraction” to “Mining” to be consistent with the proposed [Chapter 17.10.130 “M” Definitions](#).
- Inte Table 2, allow mining as Permitted in the Major Industrial District (MID) to match existing allowed uses.

## **Topic 6: [UGA Cities](#)**

Overview – The City of Napavine voted on July 16, 2025 to move from an Option 2 to an Option 1 city. This means that the properties located in the unincorporated UGA of Napavine would have the city zoning designations removed and Rural Development District with a five acre minimum lot size (RDD-5) applied. This requires changes to the development regulations to strike Napavine from the list of Option 2 cities and to change the recommended zoning designation to RDD-5.

Motion – I move to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve amendments to [Chapter 17.15 UGA Cities](#) with the following changes:

- Strike Napavine from proposed Chapter 17.15.040(2).
- Change the zoning on the following parcels to RDD-5 and notify the property owners:
  - 018086001000
  - 018093000000
  - 018139000000
  - 018140002000
  - 018176012000
  - 018176001001
  - 018428000000

## **Topic 7: [All Other Development Regulations](#)**

Overview – There are many other amendments to the Lewis County Code to address changes in state law since the last periodic update particularly related to housing, and county priorities including clustered tourist uses, SEPA categorical exemptions and signs. The Planning Commission may choose to pull any of the other proposed development regulations for an individual vote or to make a recommendation as a group.

Motion – I move to recommend the Board of County Commissioners approve amendments to the following development regulations,;

[Chapter 2.25.010 Definitions](#)  
[Chapter 8.41 On Site Sewage Systems](#)  
[Chapter 15.15.040 Setbacks](#)  
[Chapter 15.50.035 Wireless Communications Facility](#)  
[Chapter 16 Subdivisions](#)  
[Chapter 17.05.060 Contents of Application](#)  
[Chapter 17.10 Definitions](#) (except mining, address separately)  
[Chapter 17.12.110 Approval Criteria](#)  
[Chapter 17.30 Resource Lands](#)  
[Chapter 17.110.090 SEPA](#)  
[Chapter 17.142.020 Lighting Standards](#)  
[Chapter 17.142.080 LAMIRD Commercial Building Size](#)  
[Chapter 17.142.100 Clustered Tourist Uses](#)  
[Chapter 17.142.105 Data Processing Center](#)  
[Chapter 17.142.107 Detached Bedrooms](#)  
[Chapter 17.142.160 Multifamily Housing](#)  
[Chapter 17.142.207 Sign Standards](#)  
[Chapter 17.142.210 Surface Mining](#)  
[Chapter 17x Other Minor Changes](#)

## **NEXT STEPS**

Once motions are passed, staff will prepare a Letter of Transmittal on behalf of the Planning Commission to provide the recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. The BOCC is expected to hold a hearing(s) on the recommendations in September.

Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) will be the next package of materials that come before the Planning Commission. CAO includes amendments to comply with changes in state law since the last periodic update. The staff report and workshops on the proposal will occur in October.