

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. AGENDA CHANGES
3. MINUTES
 - A) April 15, 2026 Minutes of the Planning Commission

Suggested Motion: I move to approve the April 15, 2026 Minutes of the Planning Commission.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS
 - A) Sign Code Update Work Session: Initial Draft Sign Code
 - B) 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update
5. CITIZEN COMMENTS
6. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS
7. ADJOURNMENT

Our Vision

Chelan is a rural lakeside community surrounded by pristine natural beauty where generations of visitors and residents enjoy an exceptional quality of life.

Our Guiding Principles & Outcomes

- Visionary & Strategic - A city that is forward-thinking, collaborative, and fiscally responsible.
- Thriving & Connected - A vibrant, well-planned city where residents have a sense of home.
- Healthy & Sustainable - A flourishing city that supports an active community.
- Accessible & Welcoming - A safe city where everyone can find community.

The next Planning Commission meeting will be on June 17, 2026, beginning at 5:15 p.m. in Council Chambers, 135 E. Johnson Avenue, Chelan, Washington.



City of Chelan

Planning Commission Meeting
April 15, 2026

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commissioners:

Joe Collins
Vickie Heimark
Gary Myers
Ryan Peterson
Gaylen Willett

Administrative Personnel:

Community Development Director John Ajax
Senior Planner Monica Libbey
Code Compliance Officer Chris Baker

1. CALL TO ORDER

Planning Commission Chair Joe Collins called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

2. AGENDA CHANGES

3. MINUTES

A) March 18, 2026 Minutes of the Planning Commission

Suggested Motion: I move to approve the March 18, 2026 Minutes of the Planning Commission.

MOTION:	I move to approve the March 18, 2026 Minutes of the Planning Commission.
MOVER:	Commissioner Gaylen Willett
SECONDER:	Commissioner Gary Myers
AYES:	Commissioner Gaylen Willett , Commissioner Ryan Peterson, Chair Joe Collins, Vice Chair Vickie Heimark, Commissioner Gary Myers
NAYS:	None
RESULT:	Passed

4. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A.) Community Development Director Ajax reported that the City's Code Compliance Officer, Chris Baker, is present tonight. Director Ajax also reported on new ESHB 2266 STEP Program requiring jurisdictions to allow transitional and emergency housing in zones where residential and/or hotels are allowed.

B.) Code Compliance Officer Baker discussed with the Planning Commission common code compliance issues in the City: dark sky violations, signs, overgrown vegetation, accessory structures, grading and roofs without permits, short-term rentals.

A) Sign Code Update Work Session continued

Senior Planner Libbey presented a Sign Code Update work session. Commissioners and staff discussed draft rules for Temporary Signs, Murals, Freestanding Signs, Fuel Price displays, Lighting standards.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

A.) Lynette Grandy, Chelan Resident, commented in opposition to Electronically Changeable Message signs, stating they should not be allowed for fuel display and should not be allowed in Downtown Public, raised concern about private reuse of DP/PLF zoned properties, referencing the former hospital as an example. Downtown planning area Northwest theme

B.) John Olson, Chelan Resident, commented about Our Valley, Our Future recent flyer illustrating local housing affordability facts. Tourism does affect housing affordability, short-term rentals drive real estate prices.

C.) Jacquelin McMullen, Chelan Resident, commented that she agrees with what Lynette said regarding signs, tourist-driven economy, and the need for affordable housing.

6. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

A.) Gaylen Willett commented that she likes the sports field banner signs. Feel frustration with housing also; CVHT affordable housing why priced so high?
Tim Hollingsworth, CVHT board member, replied priced initially at the cost to build houses, then lowered prices further, affordable to households earning 120% or less of AMI

B.) Vicki Heimark inquired about any new construction projects going on. Community Development Director Ajax responded highlighting a few projects: Prospect St apartments, Apple Blossom Center apartments project, Anderson Rd CVHT short subdivision

C.) Joe Collins inquired about new state law provision for ADUs in rural county areas

D.) Gary Myers inquired about Comprehensive Plan update Open House at Community Center, next Tuesday, April 21st

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:	I move to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting.
MOVER:	Commissioner Gary Myers
SECONDER:	Vice Chair Vickie Heimark
AYES:	Commissioner Gaylen Willett , Commissioner Ryan Peterson, Chair Joe Collins, Vice Chair Vickie Heimark, Commissioner Gary Myers
NAYS:	None
RESULT:	Passed

**The meeting was adjourned
at 7:00 P.M.**

**Date
Approved:**

**John Ajax
Community Development
Director**

**[NAME]
Chair**



Subject/Title: Sign Code Update Work Session: Initial Draft Sign Code

Department: Community Development

Staff Contact:

Guiding Principles:

Initiatives:

Reviewed By:

Number of Looks:

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN

Work Sessions held at February, March and April meetings.

OVERVIEW

Planning Commission and staff have been working to update the City's Sign Code, Chapter 17.58. Staff has prepared an initial draft for review and discussion. Given the degree of proposed updates, the draft code presented is a fully updated signs chapter. This draft Signs Chapter is based on direction discussed at previous meetings. Staff is seeking Planning Commission feedback on the proposed Signs Chapter to identify any areas for further refinement before considering an official draft at a public hearing.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

ATTACHMENTS

1. SignCode_Draft.5.15.26

SUGGESTED MOTION

CITY OF CHELAN

CHELAN MUNICIPAL CODE Chapter 17.58

SIGNS

INITIAL DRAFT FOR REVIEW

Amendments for Compliance with:
Reed v. Town of Gilbert, 576 U.S. 155 (2015)
City of Austin v. Reagan National Advertising, 596 U.S. 61 (2022)

Prepared by:
Community Development Department
May 15, 2026

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Chapter 17.58

SIGNS

17.58.010 Short title.

This chapter shall be known as the "sign code" of the City of Chelan.

17.58.020 Statement of purpose.

[NOTE: Purpose statement revised to articulate compelling governmental interests supporting content-neutral regulation per Reed v. Gilbert. Added dark sky/light pollution purpose.]

The purpose of this chapter is to establish reasonable, content-neutral time, place, and manner regulations for signs. These regulations are intended to:

- A. Protect the public health, safety, and welfare;
- B. Reduce traffic hazards caused by signs that distract motorists or obstruct driver vision;
- C. Maintain and enhance the aesthetic character, scenic beauty, and visual quality of the community;
- D. Protect property values by ensuring compatibility between signs and surrounding land uses;
- E. Enable the effective identification of businesses, services, and activities;
- F. Prevent visual clutter that may be harmful to traffic safety, property values, business opportunities, and community appearance;
- G. Minimize light pollution and protect the community's dark sky environment; and
- H. Regulate signs in a content-neutral manner that is consistent with constitutional free speech protections.

17.58.025 Content neutrality and message substitution.

[NOTE: New section. Required by Reed v. Town of Gilbert to ensure the code is content-neutral. The substitution clause ensures noncommercial speech (opinions, political messages, etc.) is never treated less favorably than commercial speech (advertising). This is a standard best practice in post-Reed sign codes nationwide.]

- A. **Content neutrality.** The regulations in this chapter are content-neutral and shall be interpreted and applied without regard to the content of the sign message. No sign permit application shall be approved or denied based on the communicative content, viewpoint, or subject matter of the proposed sign message.
- B. **Message substitution.** Any sign allowed under this chapter to display a commercial message may instead display a noncommercial message, subject to the same size, height, location, lighting, and structural standards that apply to the sign. This provision does not authorize increasing the size or changing the structural type of a sign; it simply ensures that the communicative content of a sign does not determine whether the sign is allowed.

- C. **Severability of content-based provisions.** If any provision of this chapter is found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be an unconstitutional content-based regulation of speech, such provision shall be severed from the remainder of this chapter, which shall continue in full force and effect.

17.58.030 Interpretation.

[NOTE: Added content-neutrality interpretation clause per Reed v. Gilbert.]

If any sections of the sign code conflict, the most restrictive shall govern. If there is a conflict between a general requirement and a specific requirement, the specific requirement shall govern.

All sign regulations in this chapter shall be interpreted and applied in a content-neutral manner consistent with the requirements of CMC 17.58.025. No city official shall consider the message, viewpoint, or subject matter of a sign when determining the applicable regulations, except as may be necessary to distinguish between commercial and noncommercial speech for the limited purpose of applying different regulations to commercial advertising where constitutionally permissible.

17.58.040 Definitions.

For purposes of this chapter, the following terms, phrases, words and their derivatives shall be construed as specified in this section:

[NOTE: Definitions streamlined to necessary definitions only, and revised throughout to remove content-based sign categories and replace with content-neutral structural definitions. Under Reed, a sign type defined by its message (e.g., “political sign,” “real estate sign”) is content-based because an enforcement officer must read the sign to classify it. Sign types must be defined by physical characteristics.]

- A. **Abandoned sign** is a sign that is located on a premises that has been vacant or unoccupied for a continuous period of more than six months, or a sign for which no valid business license or sign permit is in effect.
[NOTE: Revised to focus on property use rather than sign content.]
- B. **Alteration of sign** is any construction material, size, or location change except for normal maintenance to an existing sign.
- C. **Area** or **sign area** is the total area of a sign excluding the sign support structure. The area is calculated by measuring from the outside edge of the frame. (For calculating the area of a double-faced sign, only one side of the sign is to be used.) Architectural embellishments and decorative features which contain no written or advertising copy, which are not illuminated and which contain no logos or trademarks shall not be included in the sign area. Signs painted on or attached to a wall or awning are calculated by imaginary straight lines around the entire copy or grouping of letters, words, or symbols, using a maximum of eight lines.
- D. **Commercial** is any activity carried on for financial gain.
- E. **Highway frontage** is property located outside the downtown planning area, as shown in Figure 1 of CMC 17.14.010(B.), that abuts SR 150 or Highway 97A, as designated by the Washington State Department of Transportation.

- F. **Illuminated sign** is any sign that is lit by an artificial light source, whether internal or external. Illuminated signs are further classified as:
1. **Internally illuminated sign:** A sign where the light source is contained within the sign structure and light is transmitted through a translucent sign face or individual letters/elements.
 2. **Externally illuminated sign:** A sign lit by an external light source directed at the sign face, including spotlights, gooseneck lamps, and similar fixtures.
 3. **Halo-lit sign (reverse channel):** A sign where opaque letters or elements are mounted away from a wall surface, with lighting projected behind to create a halo or silhouette effect.
 4. **Neon sign:** A sign using glass tubes filled with neon or other inert gases that glow when electrified.
- [NOTE: Expanded definitions to support new lighting standards in Section 17.58.065.]
- G. **Nonconforming sign** is a sign located within the city limits of Chelan that was in existence prior to the effective date of the ordinance codifying this chapter which does not conform with the provisions of this chapter. Abandoned signs shall not be considered a nonconforming sign.
- H. **Normal maintenance** is an act of repair or other acts to prevent decline, lapse or cessation from original state or condition.
- I. **Off-premises sign** is a sign that is not located on the same premises as the activity, business, or use to which it relates.
[NOTE: Revised to be a simple location-based definition consistent with Austin v. Reagan.]
- J. **On-premises sign** is a sign that is located on the same premises as the activity, business, or use to which it relates.
- K. **Sign** in the singular or plural, means any communication device, structure, inflatable, or fixture using letters, symbols, trademarks, logos, artwork, or written copy intended to express commercial or non-commercial information, draw attention, or advertise.
- L. **Sign height** is the vertical distance measured from the grade below the sign to the highest point of the sign.
- M. **Wall plane** is that portion of a building face which is contained on one general plane. If there is a shift in the facade forward or back, a new plane is created. A single wall plane may contain windows and doors.

17.58.045 Sign types.

The term “sign” includes, without limitation, the following types of devices:

- A. **Banner sign** is a sign constructed of cloth, fabric or other nonrigid material hanging from a staff, pole or frame or wall mounted. A banner sign shall be regulated based on its physical characteristics and location.
- B. **Electronically changeable message sign** is a sign upon which graphics, symbols or words can be varied upon the face or faces of the sign.

- C. **Freestanding sign** is a sign permanently supported from the ground in a fixed location by a structure of poles, uprights, braces or monumental base and not supported by nor attached to a building.
- D. **Monument sign** is a type of freestanding sign supported by an internal structural framework or integrated into the landscaping or other solid structural features other than support poles.
- E. **Portable sign** is a sign that is capable of being moved easily and not permanently affixed to the ground, a structure, or a building.
- F. **Projecting sign** is a sign other than a wall sign that extends horizontally from and is supported by a wall of a building or structure.
- G. **Sandwich-board sign** is a sign no more than 42 inches in height and 30 inches in width and weighted to prevent it from tipping over.
- H. **Suspended sign** is a sign which hangs below the permanent overhang, marquee or canopy extending over public or private sidewalks or rights-of-way.
- I. **Wall sign** is a sign painted, attached to or erected against and parallel to the wall plane of a building or structure. A wall sign shall be confined within the limits of said wall and shall not extend more than 12 inches from the face of the wall. Awning signs shall be considered wall signs for the purposes of this code.

17.58.050 Sign classification.

[NOTE: The exempt sign list has been restructured from content-based categories to content-neutral categories.]

A. Exempt signs. The following types of signs and devices shall be exempt from the permit requirements of this chapter; provided, that all applicable standards or conditions specified are met:

1. Accessory Signs. Small supplemental signs that provide incidental information and are located on the premises. Accessory signs shall not exceed two square feet per sign and four square feet total per business or use.
2. Address signs, nameplates, and property identification signs not exceeding two square feet;
3. Exterior holiday or festive decoration lights;
4. Flags poles and noncommercial flags and/or insignia of any nation, state, or political subdivision;
5. Signs directing and guiding traffic and parking on private property; provided, that such signs shall not exceed six square feet in area per sign;
6. Sandwich-board signs, subject to the following:
 - a. Limited to one per use or establishment;
 - b. May be placed in front of a use or establishment during operating hours only;
 - c. Shall be placed adjacent to the curb; provided, that such sign shall not be placed in any location which obstructs pedestrian or vehicular travel or visibility, or create blind spots at intersections. In areas with sidewalk business activities, signs shall be attached to sidewalk barriers or within the designated sidewalk business area;
 - d. Shall not exceed forty-two inches in height and thirty inches in width;

- e. Shall be weighted to prevent it from tipping over;
 - f. Shall be painted or finished with a sealer, and
 - g. Shall be nonilluminated.
7. Temporary signs, subject to the following:
- a. In residential zones: maximum six square feet per sign, maximum 42 inches in height, limited to three signs per property;
 - b. In nonresidential zones: maximum 32 square feet per sign, maximum six feet in height, limited to one sign per street frontage. Where a street frontage exceeds 200 feet in length, a maximum of three signs may be permitted on that street frontage;
 - c. Signs shall be securely affixed to a building face / structure or placed in the ground using stakes, posts, or similar supports;
 - d. Signs shall not be placed where they obstruct vehicle driver visibility at intersections, alleys, or driveways;
 - e. Each temporary sign shall not remain for more than 60 consecutive days;
 - f. This category includes signs commonly known as political signs, garage sale signs, real estate signs, banner signs, and similar temporary signs regardless of message content;
 - g. A sign displayed continuously for more than 60 days shall be considered a permanent sign subject to permit requirements;
8. Customer information signs at service windows and entrances, not exceeding four square feet;
- [NOTE: Menu signs replaced with 'customer information signs' based on physical location rather than content.]*
9. Enclosed display cases permanently attached to a building wall, limited to two per building face, not exceeding 24 square feet each;
10. Wall plaques and integral signs, with engraved or cast lettering, cut into a masonry surface or constructed of bronze or other incombustible material, not exceeding four square feet, and permanently affixed flat to a building wall or structure;
- [NOTE: Changed from 'commemorative plaque' (content-based) to 'wall plaque' (physical description).]*
11. Integral decorative or architectural features of buildings, except when such features include moving parts or moving lights;
12. Locally significant vintage signs that are over fifty years old and have been determined by the city council as worthy of preservation based on their contribution to community character. Approved vintage signs shall be restored and maintained in good condition;
13. Signs at properties listed on a federal, state, or local historic register, not exceeding 12 square feet, nonilluminated;
- [NOTE: Removed content restriction on what the sign may say.]*
14. Murals, paintings applied directly to a wall or building, except any portion of a mural that meets the definition of a "sign" in section 17.58.040(K);
15. Signs located at publicly-owned recreational facilities, including athletic field fences, where authorized by the City;

16. Signs of a public entity, including, without limitation, regulatory, wayfinding, and traffic control signs erected by a public entity in the performance of a public duty;
17. Wall graphic, except that portion which contains letters, symbols, trademarks, logos, written copy, moving parts or moving lights;
18. Window signs located on the interior of a window within one foot of the glass or located on the exterior of a window.

B. Prohibited signs. It is unlawful to erect or maintain:

1. Abandoned signs located on a premises that has been vacant or unoccupied for a continuous period of more than six months, or a sign for which no valid business license or sign permit is in effect;
2. Animated signs which include the optical illusion of action or motion or color changes of all or any part of the sign facing to show or give the appearance of video or television-type pictures that required electrical energy;
3. Bench signs located on any part of the surface of a bench or seat;
4. Portable signs that are capable of being moved easily and not permanently affixed to the ground, a structure, or a building, excluding sandwich board signs in accordance with Section 17.58.050(A)(6) and temporary signs in accordance with Section 17.58.050(A)(7);
5. Off-premises signs that are not located on the same premises as the activity, business, or use to which it relates;
[NOTE: Removed CUP pathway for off-premises signs. These are now fully prohibited.]
6. Roof signs or marquee signs which are located on, project or extend above the eave or parapet line of any portion of the building;
7. Signs in a dilapidated or hazardous condition;
8. Signs on doors, windows or fire escapes that restrict free ingress or egress;
9. Flashing signs having lights or illuminations that flash, move, rotate, scintillate, blink, flicker, vary in intensity or color, or use intermittent electrical pulsations. Displays that cycle at intervals of four seconds or more are not considered flashing signs;
10. Moving signs having visible moving, revolving or rotating parts or visible mechanical movement of any kind or other apparent visible movement achieved by electrical, electronics or mechanical means;
11. Signs which purport to be, are an imitation of, or resemble an official traffic sign or signal or which could cause confusion with any official sign, or which obstruct the visibility of any traffic/street sign, signal, or obstruct a vehicle driver's visibility at, including, but not limited to, intersections, alleys, and driveways;
12. Signs of a private entity attached to utility, street light and traffic control standard poles;
13. Signs on any vehicle or trailer parked as a stationary display for advertising purposes on public or private property which are visible from public rights-of-way. This provision shall not prohibit signs which are painted on or magnetically attached to any vehicle operating in the normal course of business;
14. Electronically changeable message signs, except as allowed in section 17.58.060(B)(6);
15. Signs with unshielded external lighting that allows light to project above the horizontal plane;

16. Signs with lighting that exceeds the luminance standards in Section 17.58.065;

[NOTE: NEW: Prohibited sign types related to light pollution prevention.]

17. Inflatable signs, figures, or characters (such as Tube men) intended to advertise or attract attention to a business or activity.

C. Permitted signs. Except as otherwise provided in this title, signs shall be permitted provided they meet all conditions and requirements established in this chapter, including the illumination standards in Section 17.58.065. No sign permit shall be approved or denied based upon the content of the sign message, consistent with Section 17.58.025.

17.58.060 Construction and design standards.

A. General requirements. All signs must conform with the following requirements, unless otherwise provided for in this chapter:

1. Building coverage. Except as provided herein, signs attached to a building face including, but not limited to, wall and projecting signs shall not be located on more than two sides of any building. Exception: If the building contains an individual business or businesses with separate entrances on more than two sides of the building, signs may be located on three sides of the building. Businesses with the main entrance fronting on an alley may use the exception stated above.

2. Clearance. Clearance under the lowest point of any sign which projects out over a public walkway shall not be less than eight feet.

3. Lighting. All illuminated signs shall comply with the illumination standards in Section 17.58.065.

[NOTE: Lighting requirements moved to new comprehensive Section 17.58.065.]

4. Multiple tenant buildings. In buildings with multiple tenants, it shall be the building owner's responsibility to assign the allowed sign size and location between tenants to comply with the sign code.

5. Signs with opposing faces. Signs with opposing faces 135 degrees or less shall be considered a two-sided sign and only one side of the sign shall be used in calculating sign size. If the opposing faces of a sign are more than 135 degrees, both opposing faces shall be used in calculating sign size.

6. Uniform Sign Code. All signs shall be constructed and erected in conformance with the current edition of the Uniform Sign Code, as the same now exists or as may be hereafter amended, which is hereby adopted and incorporated herein by this reference as if fully set forth.

7. Nonconforming uses. For those zoning districts in which nonconforming uses have been permitted, there shall be no signage except one nonilluminated sign not exceeding four square feet in area or six feet in height and such sign shall be located within the property boundaries.

B. Design requirements. The signs specified below shall comply with the requirements set forth herein.

1. Wall signs. The maximum area for the total of all permitted wall signs for any single wall plane shall not exceed ten percent or 50 square feet whichever is less. This shall include all window and door areas and shall be measured from the sidewalk or ground line to the building eave line or parapet. Wall signs may not extend above the building parapet, soffit, the eave line or the roof of the building. A sign applied to or on the covering of an awning shall be considered a wall sign. Signs shall not cover over windows or other significant architectural features, as determined by the director. Where there is more than one tenant on the facade, signs should be centered above the storefront space, where architectural features allow.

2. Freestanding signs. Freestanding or monument signs shall be permitted in accordance with the table below, subject to the following:

- a. The parcel shall have a minimum of fifty (50) feet of street frontage.
- b. The principal building shall be set back a minimum of ten (10) feet from the front property line.
- c. The sign shall be located entirely within the property boundaries and set back a minimum of two (2) feet from any existing or planned sidewalk.
- d. The sign shall not obstruct public walkways or vehicle driver visibility, including but not limited to intersections, alleys, and driveways.
- e. Signs shall be constructed of wood, metal, or other similar durable materials for framing and support or an internal structural framework integrated into landscaping or other solid structural features.
- f. Buildings on corner lots may have one sign per street frontage provided the signs are separated by at least 150 feet (measured in a straight line). Corner lots may use different street frontages separately in terms of calculating maximum sign area.
- g. Properties with more than 200 feet of street frontage may have more than one freestanding sign, such signs shall be spaced a minimum of 100 feet apart.

Freestanding Sign Requirements			
	DMR, DMU, SUD, T-A, PLF Zoning Districts	A, C-HS, C-W, W-I Zoning Districts	Highway frontage
Height Limit	6'	16' or height of structure	25' or height of structure
Maximum Sign Area	20 sf	25 sf	50 sf
Large Parcels	40 sf ₁	50 sf ₁	75 sf ₂
Landscaping₃	1 sf landscaping per 1 sf of sign face	NA	

Notes:

1. Parcels with more than 50 feet of frontage on any one street may increase the maximum size of the sign located on that street frontage by one square foot for each ten lineal feet of street frontage in excess of 50 feet up to the maximum size area.
2. Parcels with more than 100 feet of frontage on any one street may increase the maximum size of the sign located on that street frontage by one square foot for each ten lineal feet of street frontage in excess of 100 feet up to the maximum size area.
3. Landscaping includes a decorative combination of ground cover and shrubs to provide seasonal interest in the area surrounding the sign. Landscaping shall be well maintained at all times of the year. The administrator may reduce the landscaping requirement where the signage incorporates stone, brick, or other decorative materials.



Figure 3. Acceptable Examples of Monument and Freestanding Signs

3. **Projecting signs.** The total area of all projecting signs shall not exceed 15 square feet or project more than five feet from the building face per business property. Projecting signs shall not cover or conflict with windows or other substantial architectural features of a building, as determined by the director. The structure around or supporting the sign, such as wrought iron work, shall not be included in the total sign area.
4. **Suspended signs.** One suspended sign is permitted for each business in a storefront building provided it does not exceed six square feet, 12 inches in height or six feet in length. Suspended signs shall maintain a minimum clearance of eight feet between the walkway and the bottom of the sign.
5. **Directory signs.** In addition to all other signs allowed in this chapter, each tenant or occupant shall be permitted one directory sign not to exceed four square feet attached flush with the wall. Individual signs within an approved directory sign may be added, moved or substituted with signs for new businesses or uses without going through the design review process; provided, that the design is consistent and the provisions of the original permit are met.
6. **Electronically changeable message (ECM) signs.** Any permitted ECM sign shall be subject to the sign size and location restrictions applicable to the sign type and shall comply with applicable Illumination Standards.
 - a. **Public Uses:** ECM signs may be permitted on properties zoned DP or PLF. The message transition interval for electronically changeable message signs shall be no less than four seconds. Brightness levels shall not exceed 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light, as measured at a distance of 150 feet from the sign face.
 - b. **Fuel Pricing:** ECM signs may be permitted on nonresidential properties that include on-site vehicle fueling infrastructure and a permanent sign is used to display fuel

prices. Messages shall be displayed as a single continuous static image and shall not scroll, flash, fade, animate, move, or transition.

7. Canopy signs. Canopy signs are allowed a maximum area of 50 square feet per side on any two sides of a canopy structure, and a business symbol, not to exceed 12 square feet, may be allowed on a third side.

8. Lake frontage. For buildings with frontage on Lake Chelan, an additional freestanding or projecting sign shall be allowed on the lake frontage; provided, that the total area of all freestanding and projecting signs shall not exceed 50 square feet per business property.

9. Residential development identification signs. Residential development identification signs shall be placed at the entrance to the development or subdivision and shall not obstruct visibility, create blind spots or obstruct pedestrian travel. Signs shall be a maximum of 50 square feet and shall not exceed six feet in height. Signs shall be limited in number to one per development or subdivision entrance. If lighting is installed, said lighting shall be shielded and directional. The term residential development shall include residential subdivisions, planned developments, condominium developments, and mobile home parks.

10. Non-residential uses in Residential districts. For those residential zoning districts within this title wherein the following non-residential uses are developed, the following requirements shall be met:

a. Private commercial uses. This includes uses such as bed and breakfasts, child day cares, and agriculture. Signs in residential districts shall not exceed 12 square feet in area. Freestanding signs shall not exceed ten feet in height and shall be located within the property boundaries. Only one sign shall be allowed on any site or structure.

b. Non-commercial uses. This includes uses such as churches, schools, and public and community facilities. Signs in residential districts shall not exceed a total of 18 square feet in area. Freestanding signs shall not exceed ten feet in height and shall be located within the property boundaries. Only one sign shall be allowed on any site or structure.

c. Home occupations. Home occupation signs shall not exceed four square feet in area. Freestanding signs shall not exceed six feet in height and shall be located within the property boundaries. Only one sign shall be allowed and said sign shall be nonilluminated.

17.58.065 Illumination standards.

[NOTE: NEW SECTION: Comprehensive illumination standards designed to prevent light pollution while allowing effective signage. Standards based on International Dark-Sky Association recommendations and best practices from communities with dark sky ordinances.]

A. Purpose. The purpose of this section is to establish standards for sign illumination that:

1. Minimize light pollution and preserve the community's dark sky environment;
2. Prevent glare and light trespass onto adjacent properties;
3. Protect traffic safety by preventing driver distraction;
4. Reduce energy consumption; and
5. Maintain the aesthetic character of the community.

B. General illumination requirements. All illuminated signs shall comply with the following:

1. No sign illumination shall cause direct glare into any residential zoning district or dwelling unit.
2. No sign illumination shall cause direct glare that impairs driver vision on any public street or highway.
3. All sign illumination shall be designed, located, and maintained to prevent light from projecting above the horizontal plane of the top of the sign.
4. Sign illumination shall be reduced to 50 percent of daytime levels, or turned off entirely, between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., unless the business is open to the public during those hours.
5. All wiring for illuminated signs shall be installed in accordance with the current edition of the National Electrical Code.

C. Externally illuminated signs. Signs illuminated by external light sources shall comply with the following:

1. Light fixtures shall be fully shielded and aimed downward at the sign face at an angle not exceeding 45 degrees from vertical.
2. Light fixtures shall be located above the sign and directed downward, except where physical constraints require fixtures below the sign, in which case fixtures shall be shielded to prevent upward light projection.
3. Light shall not project beyond the edges of the sign face.
4. Fixtures shall use warm-white light sources with a correlated color temperature (CCT) not exceeding 3000 Kelvin.
5. Total illumination on the sign face shall not exceed 100 foot-candles when measured perpendicular to the sign surface.

D. Internally illuminated signs. Signs illuminated by internal light sources shall comply with the following:

1. Cabinet signs (box signs). Internally illuminated cabinet signs are permitted only outside the downtown planning area and if the background is opaque and illumination is limited to translucent letters, logos, or graphic elements ("push-through" or "routed" letters).
2. Channel letters. Internally illuminated channel letters are permitted and shall have:
 - a. Opaque returns (sides); and
 - b. Translucent faces that are not white; or
 - c. Open faces with exposed neon or LED light sources.
3. Luminance limits. Internally illuminated signs shall not exceed the following luminance levels measured at the sign face:

Time Period	Maximum Luminance
Daytime (sunrise to sunset)	5,000 nits (cd/m ²)
Nighttime (sunset to 11:00 p.m.)	500 nits (cd/m ²)
Late night (11:00 p.m. to sunrise)	100 nits (cd/m ²)

4. Halo-lit signs (reverse channel). Halo-lit signs, where letters or elements are silhouetted against a lighted background on the building wall, are encouraged as a low-impact illumination method and shall comply with the following:
 - a. Letters or elements shall be opaque.
 - b. Light sources shall not be directly visible.
 - c. Luminance of the halo effect on the wall shall not exceed 200 nits (cd/m²).
5. Neon signs. Neon signs, and signs using similar gas-discharge tubes or neon-like LED illumination, are permitted and shall comply with the following:

- a. Neon signs are encouraged in the Downtown Planning Area as consistent with historic character.
- b. Exposed neon tubing shall not exceed 800 nits (cd/m²) luminance.
- c. Neon signs shall not flash, blink, or vary in intensity.

E. Prohibited illumination. The following types of sign illumination are prohibited:

1. Unshielded external lighting that allows light to project above the horizontal plane;
2. Searchlights, laser lights, or similar high-intensity light sources;
3. Signs with light sources that blink, flash, rotate, or vary in intensity, except for time and temperature displays;
4. Signs illuminated by exposed incandescent bulbs ("marquee" style), except for designated vintage signs;
5. Signs with lighting that exceeds the luminance standards in this section;
6. Internally illuminated awning signs; and
7. Illuminated signs on residential properties, except address signs not exceeding 0.5 square feet that are indirectly illuminated.

F. Measurement and enforcement. The administrator may require the sign owner to provide certification from a qualified professional that the sign complies with the luminance standards in this section. The city may measure sign luminance at any time using a luminance meter aimed perpendicular to the sign face from a distance of 100 feet or the nearest public right-of-way, whichever is closer.

17.58.080 Nonconforming signs.

A legal nonconforming sign shall not be enlarged, extended, relocated, replaced, or structurally altered in any manner that increases its nonconformity or creates a new nonconformity.

Normal maintenance of a legal nonconforming sign is permitted, provided such work does not increase the sign's size, height, area, illumination, or degree of nonconformity.

Loss of nonconforming status. A nonconforming sign shall immediately lose its nonconforming designation if:

1. The sign is structurally altered in any way, physically enlarged, or moved;
2. The sign structure is replaced; or
3. A new sign is erected on the same premises that, together with the nonconforming sign, exceeds the total signage allowance for the premises under this chapter.

On the happening of any one of the above, the sign shall no longer be designated a nonconforming sign and the sign shall immediately be brought into compliance with this chapter and a new sign permit secured therefor, or the sign shall be removed.

17.58.090 Administration.

A. Permit requirement. No sign governed by the provisions of this chapter shall be erected, altered or relocated without first obtaining a sign permit issued by the city, unless expressly exempt under this chapter.

B. Administration and enforcement. This chapter shall be administered and enforced by the planning and community development director or designee in accordance with Chapter 17.12.

C. Review standards. Sign permits shall be reviewed for compliance with the objective standards of this chapter, including size, height, location, structural type, and illumination requirements. If the proposed sign meets all applicable objective standards, the administrator shall approve the permit. The administrator shall not consider the communicative content of the sign in reviewing the application. A permit shall not be denied based upon subjective aesthetic judgments.

17.58.100 Severability and substitution.

[NOTE: NEW SECTION: Severability and substitution clause to protect code from invalidation if one provision fails.]

A. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this chapter is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this chapter. The City Council hereby declares that it would have adopted this chapter and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words may be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

B. Substitution. If any sign that would otherwise be prohibited or more stringently regulated under this chapter is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to constitute protected noncommercial speech under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Article I, Section 5 of the Washington State Constitution, then to the extent necessary to avoid an unconstitutional application, such sign shall be subject to the same regulations as the most permissive category of temporary signs in this chapter.

C. Content neutrality. If any provision of this chapter is found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be content-based and not narrowly tailored to serve a compelling governmental interest, then such provision shall be severed and the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.



Subject/Title: 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update

Department: Community Development

Staff Contact:

Guiding Principles:

Initiatives:

Reviewed By:

Number of Looks:

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN

OVERVIEW

Community Development Director Ajax will discuss the proposed 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update Public Review Process & Hearing Schedule.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

ATTACHMENTS

1. Chelan_CompPlan_Schedule_Chart
2. Chelan_CompPlan_Public_Process

SUGGESTED MOTION

Public Review Process & Hearing Schedule

Early December 2026

A. PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARINGS

Five grouped hearings, June – October 2026 · 3rd Wednesday of each month · 5:15 p.m. · Chelan City Hall

#	DATE	THEME	CHAPTERS & ITEMS UNDER PUBLIC HEARING
01	Jun 17, 2026	Foundation	Ch. 1 Overview & Vision · Ch. 2 Land Use · Critical Areas Ordinance compliance updates
02	Jul 15, 2026	Community & Housing	Ch. 3 Subarea Plans · Ch. 4 Housing · ESHB 2266 STEP housing code amendments
03	Aug 19, 2026	Economy & Climate	Ch. 5 Economic Development · Ch. 10 Climate Change & Resiliency
04	Sep 16, 2026	Infrastructure & Services	Ch. 6 Utilities · Ch. 7 Capital Facilities · Ch. 8 Parks & Recreation
05	Oct 21, 2026	Mobility & Final Comment	Ch. 9 Transportation * · Peterson Place private comp plan proposal · Omnibus public comment on full plan

* Transportation Element is in development with the City's consultant and will be posted prior to its public hearing.

B. CITY COUNCIL REVIEW & ADOPTION

November – December 2026 · 2nd & 4th Tuesdays · 5:15 p.m. · Chelan City Hall

Nov 10	Nov 24	Dec 8
Briefing	Public Hearing	Adoption

C. STATE REVIEW (PARALLEL TRACKS)

Both must conclude before Council adoption

Commerce 60-Day	Late May → Late Jul 2026	RCW 36.70A.106
SEPA Threshold	Late May → Mid-Jun 2026	Ch. 43.21C RCW

D. MASTER TIMELINE · ALL TRACKS AT A GLANCE

	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
Planning Commission		Hearings 1-5 (Jun 17 · Jul 15 · Aug 19 · Sep 16 · Oct 21)							
City Council							Council action		
Commerce 60-Day		60-day notice (May 28 → Jul 27)							
SEPA Review		DNS							

CITY OF CHELAN, WASHINGTON

2026 Comprehensive Plan

Public Review Process & Hearing Schedule

June – December 2026

DRAFTS · cityofchelan.gov/compplan

PRESENTED BY

Community Development Department

PERIODIC UPDATE PER

RCW 36.70A.130 (Growth Management Act)

From draft chapters to adopted plan

9

Draft Chapters Online

Of 10 total — Transportation in development

60

Day Commerce Review

Required by RCW 36.70A.106

Dec

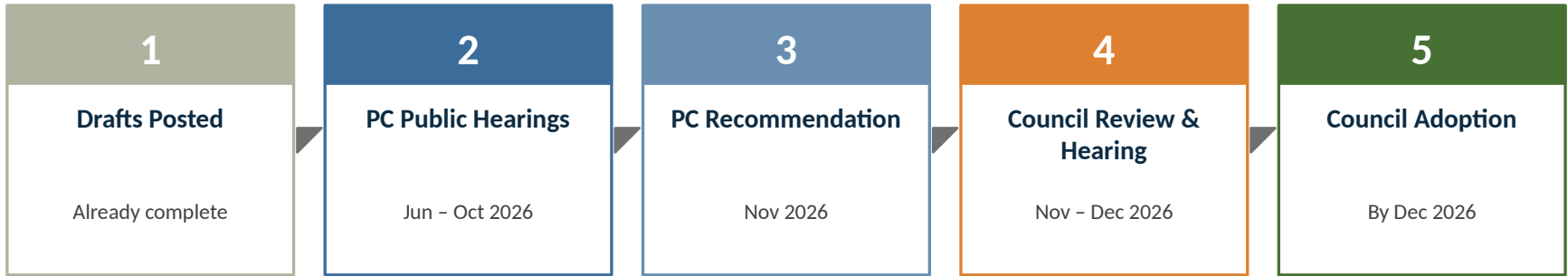
2026 Adoption Target

Aligned to GMA periodic update deadline

This is the final and most public phase. Nine of the ten elements have been drafted, internally reconciled for consistency, and posted at cityofchelan.gov/complan. The Transportation Element remains in development with the City's consultant and will be posted prior to its public hearing. Over the next seven months, the Planning Commission will hold a series of grouped public hearings, the City Council will deliberate on the Commission's recommendation, and the State will conduct its parallel agency review. The plan must be adopted by December 2026 to meet the State-mandated periodic update deadline.

How we get from drafts to adopted plan

Required by Chapter 19.40 CMC and RCW 36.70A (Growth Management Act)



PARALLEL TRACK

State Agency Review (runs alongside Steps 2-4)

Department of Commerce 60-day review — submitted late May 2026, comment period closes late July 2026. **SEPA threshold determination** — issued late May 2026, public comment closes mid-June 2026. Both must conclude before Council adoption.

Two state-required reviews running in parallel

Department of Commerce 60-Day Review

Required by RCW 36.70A.106

Before adopting any comprehensive plan amendment, the City must give the Department of Commerce at least 60 days' notice to review the draft and forward it to other state agencies for comment.

T I M E L I N E

Late May 2026	Notice of intent submitted to Commerce with full draft
Jun - Jul 2026	60-day state agency review window
Late Jul 2026	Comment period closes; City addresses any agency comments

SEPA Threshold Determination

State Environmental Policy Act, Ch. 43.21C RCW

Adopting a comprehensive plan is a non-project action under SEPA. The City issues an environmental review document — typically a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) — with a public comment period.

T I M E L I N E

Late May 2026	Threshold determination issued; public notice published
Mid-Jun 2026	Public comment period closes (14-day minimum)
Late Jun 2026	Final determination; appeal period runs concurrent with hearings

Five grouped public hearings, June – October 2026

All hearings held during regular Planning Commission meetings, 3rd Wednesday of each month, 5:15 p.m., Chelan City Hall

#	DATE	THEME	CHAPTERS & ITEMS UNDER PUBLIC HEARING
01	Jun 17, 2026	<i>Foundation</i>	Ch. 1 Overview & Vision · Ch. 2 Land Use · Critical Areas Ordinance compliance updates
02	Jul 15, 2026	<i>Community & Housing</i>	Ch. 3 Subarea Plans · Ch. 4 Housing · ESHB 2266 STEP housing code amendments
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05	Oct 21, 2026	<i>Mobility & Final Comment</i>	Ch. 9 Transportation * · Peterson Place private comp plan proposal · Omnibus public comment on full plan

* Transportation Element is in development with the City's consultant and will be posted prior to its public hearing. · Hearings may be added, reduced, or continued per CMC 19.40. A joint Planning Commission / City Council workshop may also be scheduled.

Three companion items reviewed concurrently

STATE LAW

ESHB 2266

STEP Housing

A 2026 state law requiring cities to allow Permanent Supportive, Transitional, Indoor Emergency Housing, and Indoor Emergency Shelter ("STEP") in any zone within the urban growth area where residential or hotel uses are already allowed — except industrial zones.

Implemented through code amendments to CMC Title 17, paired with the Land Use and Housing element updates.

Heard in Hearing 02 (Jul 15)

REGULATORY

Critical Areas Ordinance

Compliance Updates

Targeted, minor updates to the existing Critical Areas chapter for compliance with new state law and Best Available Science requirements. Not a full rewrite — refinements to keep the City's regulations current.

Tied to the Land Use Element. Public hearing held alongside the Land Use review.

Heard in Hearing 01 (Jun 17)

PRIVATE PROPOSAL

Peterson Place

Private Comp Plan Amendment

A privately-initiated comprehensive plan amendment proposing a roundabout and roadway connection at Peterson Place. Reviewed as part of the Transportation Element update so any changes are consistent with the City's broader mobility framework.

Public testimony specific to this proposal will be taken with the Transportation Element.

Heard in Hearing 05 (Oct 21)

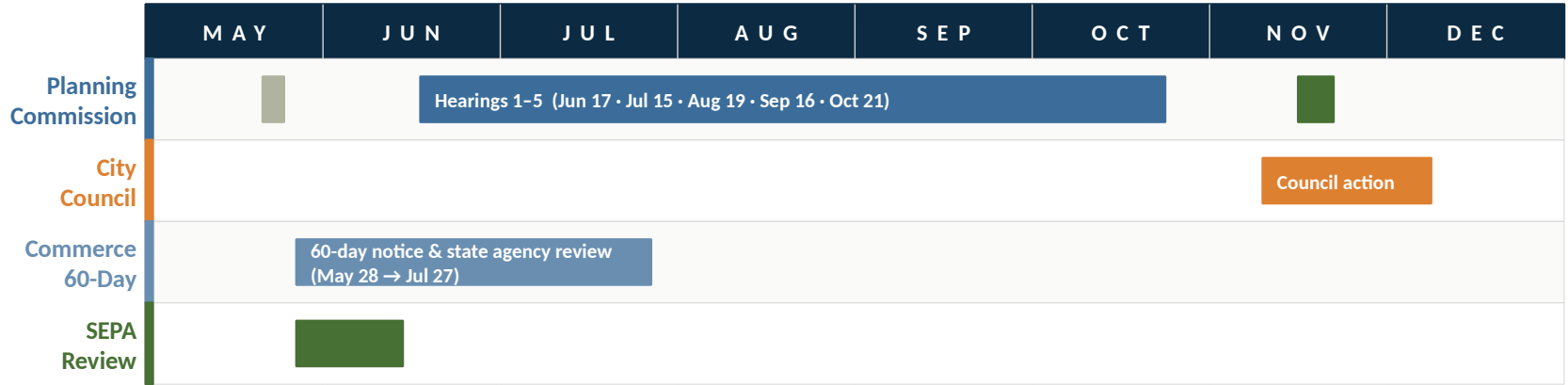
Review and adoption — November & early December 2026

Council reviews the Planning Commission's recommendation, holds its own public hearing, and takes final action by ordinance. Council meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, 5:15 p.m., at Chelan City Hall.

Nov 10	Nov 24	Dec 8
<p>Council Briefing</p> <p>Staff presents the Planning Commission's emerging recommendation; Council discussion; first reading of adopting ordinance introduced.</p>	<p>Council Public Hearing</p> <p>Formal Council public hearing on the comp plan, code amendments, and Peterson Place. Council direction to staff on any amendments.</p>	<p>Council Adoption</p> <p>Council deliberation on hearing testimony; second reading and final vote on the adopting ordinance. Plan transmitted to Commerce.</p>

Adoption target: First half of December 2026, well ahead of the State-mandated periodic update deadline. Dec 8 is the second Tuesday — the regular Council meeting at which the adopting ordinance receives its final vote. The schedule is built to keep all key actions in November and early December.

All review tracks at a glance



■ Planning Commission hearings
 ■ City Council action
 ■ Commerce 60-day review
 ■ SEPA review

All Planning Commission and City Council meetings begin at 5:15 p.m. at Chelan City Hall. A joint Planning Commission / City Council workshop may be scheduled as needed.

Three ways to weigh in on the plan

01

Read the Drafts

Nine of ten chapter drafts are posted online:

cityofchelan.gov/compplan

Transportation Element will be posted prior to its hearing — still in development.

Hardcopies not available — contact Planning staff for arrangements.

02

Attend a Hearing

Each of the five Planning Commission hearings (Jun – Oct) includes time for public testimony.

Hearings begin at 5:15 p.m. at Chelan City Hall and are broadcast online. No sign-up required.

03

Submit Written Comment

Email written comments anytime to the Community Development Department.

Written comments received before each hearing are entered into the record.

Comments can address any chapter, code amendment, or the plan as a whole.

T H E P L A N A H E A D

Questions, Comments, and Discussion

Comprehensive Plan Update Page

cityofchelan.gov/compplan

Community Development Department

City of Chelan · 135 E. Johnson Avenue · Chelan, WA 98816