DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Sequim Civic Center
152 W. Cedar Street, Sequim, WA 98382

To: Sequim City Council
From: Travis Simmons, Senior Planner
Karla Boughton, DCED Director
Date: March 16, 2026
Subject: Draft Title 17 Land Division – City Council Public Hearing Staff Report

Planning Commission respectfully recommend approval of 2026 Development Code Update – SMC Draft Title 17 Land Division as set forth in Exhibit A to this staff report.

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1.0 Background and Proposed Code Amendments

The City of Sequim is proposing updates to Title 17 - Land Divisions and a new zoning chapter, Title 18, Chapter 18.21-Supplemental Housing Requirements, as part of its periodic Growth Management Act (GMA) update. This amendment package is the first phase of a multi-year code update effort, with additional amendments planned for 2026 and 2027.

Draft SMC Title 17 – Land Division
The proposed Sequim Municipal Code Draft Title 17 Land Division is a full rewrite of the City of Sequim's land division and subdivision regulations. The update modernizes the code, ensures compliance with recent changes in Washington State law, and improves clarity, consistency, and predictability for applicants, staff, and decision-makers, including new requirements related to lot splitting, unit lot subdivisions, and other housing-related reforms. The draft also incorporates feedback from the development community and the comprehensive plan update process, addressing recurring concerns such as extension timelines, boundary line adjustment flexibility, street standards, and procedural clarity. [1]

This code amendments are being presented parallel with the City's 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update and reflect a combination of policy implementation, legislative compliance, and code administration objectives. While these amendments are separate from the formal adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, they are a key step in ensuring that the City's development regulations remain aligned with state requirements and best practices in municipal planning.

2.0 Planning Commission Review Process

The Planning Commission, in its role as the City's land use advisory committee, reviewed the initial Draft Title 17 at the following meetings:

- January 6, 2026 – Draft Title 17 Land Divisions: Sections 17.10 through 17.50
- January 20, 2026 – Draft Title 17 Land Divisions: Sections 17.60-17.110
- February 3, 2026 – Draft Chapter 18.21 Supplemental Housing Requirements
- February 17, 2026 – Planning Commission Public Hearing

At the January-February 3, 2026 meetings, the Planning Commission identified modifications to the draft documents. These modifications were captured in the Planning Commission Redlined Draft Title 17 and Chapter 18.21. Modifications identified by the Planning Commission were shown as orange underline for new language or additions or orange ~~strikeout~~ for deletions. Staff recommended additions or deletions are red underline or ~~strikeout~~, for Planning

[1] There are a number of code provisions that are in the current Title 17 Subdivisions, that was determined would be more appropriately located in Title 12 Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places. These provisions are identified in Staff Report Exhibit B "Ancillary Code Amendments to Title 17". No changes to the code provisions are included and is a move between titles within the municipal code.

Commission consideration. These redlined version drafts are available for review at the City of Sequim website, search Development Code Update.

At conclusion of the February 17, 2026 public hearing, the Planning Commission voted to recommend with modifications, the Planning Commission Redlined Version Draft Title 17, as well as revisions identified in the staff report. These modifications are incorporated as a 'clean' Planning Commission recommended Draft Title 17 Land Divisions.

3.0 Process to Date

Sequim Municipal Code Draft Title 17 Land Division and Draft Chapter 18.21 Supplemental Housing Requirements	
January 2, 2026	Public Release of Draft Title 17 Land Division and Summary Memo posted on website
January 3, 2026	Planning Commission packet posted on website for January 6, 2026 meeting
January 6, 2026	Planning Commission Meeting – Draft Title 17, Sections 17.10-17.50
January 15, 2026	Washington State Department of Commerce notification
January 16, 2026	Planning Commission packet posted on website for January 20, 2026 meeting
January 20, 2026	Planning Commission Meeting – Draft Title 17, Sections 17.60-17.110
January 22, 2026	Developers' Forum held at Sequim Civic Center
January 23, 2026	Public Release Draft Chapter 18.21 Housing Focused posted on website
January 23, 2026	Notice of Code Amendments published in Peninsula Daily News
January 23, 2026	SEPA Threshold Determination published in Peninsula Daily News; submitted to Department of Ecology SEPA Register; Distributed to SEPA list
January 30, 2026	Planning Commission packet posted on website for February 3, 2026 meeting; Planning Commission Redlined Draft Title 17 Land Divisions posted on website
February 3, 2026	Planning Commission Meeting – Chapter 18.21 Supplemental Housing Requirements
February 3, 2026	Planning Commission Public Hearing Notice published in Peninsula Daily News and posted on website
February 5, 2026	Planning Commission Redlined Draft Chapter 18.21 Supplemental Housing Requirements posted on website
February 9, 2026	Planning Commission Public Hearing Staff Report posted on website
February 9, 2026	SEPA Comment Period over

February 12, 2026	Planning Commission packet posted on website for February 17, 2026 meeting
February 17, 2026	Planning Commission Consolidated Public Hearing – Draft Planning Commission Redlined Title 17 and Chapter 18.21
February 23, 2026	City Council 1st Touch
March 9, 2026	City Council 2nd Touch - Waived
March 23, 2026	City Council Public Hearing

4.0 Public Comment Received to Date

Two public comment letters have been received as of the date of this staff report (March 23, 2026) and are included as Exhibit D. Summary of comments:

a. Suggest for Title 17.40.050 Approval Criteria #4 underlined addition:
   - 4. Make adequate provisions for sidewalks, street lighting and other planning features that provide safe walking conditions for students who walk to and from school;

b. Suggest for Title 17.80.060 Approval Criteria #5 underlined addition (in black):
   - 5. Make adequate provisions for sidewalks, street lighting and other planning features that provide safe walking conditions ~~for~~ including students who walk to and from school ~~for~~ from multifamily residential developments;[2]

c. Question for 17.100.050 Recording: How many days for days for applicant to produce a revised plat drawing?

d. Comment regarding Title 17 Street Design: Current Transportation Master Plan and Engineering Standards are inconsistent, which could create problems for enforcing updates to Title 17.

e. Question regarding Title 17 Underground utilities: Can the city allow the utility providers to allow alternatives to undergrounding?

f. Comment regarding Title 17 Private streets: Private streets should allow for design flexibility, especially for things like street lighting.

g. Question regarding Title 17 Underground utilities: Why is there a statement about payment for non-city utilities?

Staff Response:

Comments a. and b.: The Planning Commission has recommended adding street lighting in approval criteria for 17.40.050 (Minor Subdivisions) and 17.80.060 (Binding Site Plans) as suggested:

Title 17.70.060 Approval Criteria #4:
- 4. Make adequate provisions for sidewalks, street lighting and other planning features that provide safe walking conditions for students who walk to and from school;

[2] Orange underline/strikeout is from PC Redlined Draft Title 17 February 2026.

Comment c.: RCW 58.17. 212 and 215 do not identify a time limit for recording of plat alterations or vacations, and do not require or preclude the local ordinance from doing so. The Planning Commission recommends including a deadline, and suggests the following revision (in red):

- The director of community and economic development is authorized to sign the approved document to be recorded, and within 60 calendar days of the signed approved document, ~~then~~ the applicant must record it with the county auditor at the applicant's cost, to become the lawful record of the property (or to vacate the previously approved development). Applicant must provide the city with a copy of the recorded document after recording.

Comment d.: No action is proposed at this time. The Transportation Master Plan is being updated as part of the Comprehensive Plan and updates to the City's Engineering Standards will look to address all consistency concerns.

Comment e.: The current draft code states, "or as otherwise approved by the utility provider". No edits are necessary to address this question.

Comment f.: No action is proposed at this time. The distinction between public and private street improvements will be addressed in future code updates as necessary.

Comment g.: This statement is not just for non-city utilities, and it is in the code as a disclaimer to developers that they will have to pay the cost for undergrounding utilities as necessary.

Additional public comment letters received after issuance of this staff report will be forwarded to the City Council prior to or at the public hearing on March 23, 2026 and will be made part of the record.

5.0 Review Criteria and Recommended Findings

Development code amendments to the Sequim Municipal Code are processed according to the provisions of Chapter 18.88.

- Section 18.88.030 classifies code text amendments not in combination with comprehensive plan amendments as Type I Amendment type.

- Section 18.88.040.C Standards for Review for Type I amendments:
  1. The proposed land use designation shall be found to be consistent with the comprehensive plan and the comprehensive plan optimum land use map.

- Section 18.88.060.E requires the Planning Commission to hold a public hearing for Type I amendments, receive comments and testimony, and prepare a recommendation to the

city council. The planning commission shall recommend approval if the commission finds the amendments meet the criteria for approval in SMC 18.88.040.C.

- The City Council shall hold a public hearing and take action through an adopting ordinance.

Planning Commission Findings:

1. The Planning Commission, in its role as the City's land use advisory committee, has reviewed draft code amendments to the Sequim Municipal Code: a rewrite resulting in a new Title 17- Land Divisions. No amendments to the land use map are included.
2. The Planning Commission held three meetings prior to the public hearing to ensure thorough review. During these meetings, the Planning Commission identified modifications to the initial draft. These modifications are documented in the Planning Commission Redlined Draft Title 17 Land Divisions(dated February 2026).
3. A Planning Commission public hearing to receive comments and testimony was held on February 17, 2026.
4. The proposed amendments to SMC Title 17 Land Division are consistent with the criteria of SMC 18.88.040.C as consistent with the comprehensive plan policies, by:
    a. Ensuring consistency with state housing mandates; and
    b. Supporting variety of housing types and affordability; and
    c. Providing updated and modernized code to encourage predictable and clear administration.

6.0 City Council First Touch

The City Council held a first touch meeting on Monday February 23, 2026 and reviewed Draft Title 17. The Council made a motion to waive their second touch that was tentatively scheduled for Monday March 9, 2026 and directed Staff to schedule the Public Hearing on Monday March 23, 2026.

7.0 City Council Public Hearing

The City Council Public Hearing is scheduled for Monday, March 23, 2026, starting at 6 p.m. at the Civic Center, 152 W. Cedar Street, Sequim. Interested persons may attend this meeting in person, view it online at https://www.sequimwa.gov/319/Attending-a-Council-Meeting (click on the link Join the meeting now), or by phone by calling (253) 363-9585 and entering Phone conference ID 702 678 272#. Any person may appear and be heard. To provide a remote public comment via Teams or phone, fill out the request form here: https://www.sequimwa.gov/1219/Submit-Public-Comments. Written public comments can be sent to clerk@sequimwa.gov or by regular mail addressed to the Sequim City Clerk, Sequim Civic Center, 152 W. Cedar Street, Sequim, WA 98382, and will be distributed to the Council before the meeting. Any person needing special accommodation to attend should contact the Sequim City Clerk.

8.0 Proposed Motion

MOVE to (approve) OR (approve with modifications) an ordinance adopting Draft Title 17 Land Division and ancillary updates as identified in agenda packet attachments. (See also Council Agenda cover sheet).

9.0 List of Exhibits

A. Planning Commission Recommended Draft Title 17 – Public Hearing Draft March 2026
B. Ancillary Code Amendments Title 17 to Title 12
C. Proposed SMC Title 17 Land Division and Chapter 18.21 Supplemental Housing Requirements Overview Memo
D.1 Public Comment 1 – Tierney
D.2 Public Comment 2 – Nielson
E. Noticing Documents
E.1 Affidavit of Publishing – Notice of Development Code Amendments
E.2 Commerce Submittal Receipt Email
E.3 Planning Commission Public Hearing Notice Publication Affidavit
E.4 City Council Public Hearing Notice Publication Affidavit
F.1 SEPA Environmental Checklist
F.2 SEPA Threshold Determination
F.3 SEPA Register Posting
F.4 Affidavit of Publishing – SEPA Determination

All Exhibits are available at the City's Development Code Update webpage as well.