



White Salmon Planning Commission Meeting
A G E N D A
January 14, 2026 – 5:30 PM
119 NE Church Ave and via Zoom Teleconference

Meeting ID: [851 8240 7978](#)
Call in Number: 1 (253) 215-8782 US (Tacoma)

Call to Order/Roll Call

Public Comment

Members of the public attending the meeting, either in person or via Zoom, are welcome to provide general public comment. Each speaker will be allotted three minutes.

Approval of Minutes

- [1.](#) Meeting Minutes – August 13, 2025
- [2.](#) Meeting Minutes – November 12, 2025

Presentations

- [3.](#) Chris Heald: Affordable Housing at Bethel Church

Action Items

- [4.](#) Finalize the draft 2026 workplan and recommend approval for City Council.

Discussion Items

- [5.](#) Commentary: Should e-bikes be legal for younger riders?

Adjournment



File Attachments for Item:

1. Meeting Minutes – August 13, 2025



DRAFT

White Salmon Planning Commission MEETING MINUTES

August 13, 2025 – 5:30 PM

119 NE Church Ave and Zoom Teleconference

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commission Members:

Carl Trabant, Chair
Michael Morneault
Erika Price
Nate Loker
Brendan Brown (Zoom)

Staff:

Rowan Fairfield, City Planner
Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk
Kelly Hickok, Legal Counsel

CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL

Chair Carl Trabant called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum of planning commissioner members was present. Four members of the community attended the meeting in person or via teleconference.

PRESENTATION

1. Short Course Video: Updating Your Comprehensive Plan

The Planning Commission reviewed a Short Course training video on “Updating Your Comprehensive Plan,” with emphasis on requirements under Washington’s Growth Management Act (GMA).

GMA Background: Washington created a commission to review how other states manage growth, and its recommendations ultimately led to the adoption of the Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1990. The Act establishes 13 goals that guide how cities and counties prepare and implement their comprehensive plans.

Critical Areas and Resource Lands: Under the GMA, cities and counties must identify and protect Critical Areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitat, aquifer recharge areas, flood zones, and geologic hazard areas. Local governments are required to adopt regulations based on the best available science to protect the functions and values of these areas. In addition, jurisdictions must map and conserve resource lands—agricultural, forest, and mineral lands—that have long-term commercial significance.

Urban Growth Areas (UGAs): Counties fully planning under the GMA must designate Urban Growth Areas that are sized to accommodate 20 years of projected population and employment growth. Land must be categorized as urban, rural, or resource, without overlapping. Counties establish UGAs in coordination with cities and guided by Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), which may assign growth targets and address regional issues such as transit, climate resilience, and economic development.

Required Comprehensive Plan Elements: Each jurisdiction must include several required elements in its comprehensive plan.

- Land Use: A future land use map, growth projections, density descriptions, and policies for managing development and protecting sensitive areas.
- Transportation: An inventory of the transportation system, identification of needed improvements, and planning for all travel modes, including transit and pedestrians.

- Housing: An assessment of existing housing and planning for a range of types and affordability levels to meet current and future needs.
- Utilities: A description of utility systems and their capacity to meet future demand.
- Capital Facilities Plan: Identification of needed public facilities, cost estimates, funding sources, and a six-year financing plan. If funding is insufficient, the plan must be adjusted accordingly.

Rural Planning (Counties Only): Counties must define rural character, determine appropriate rural densities, and adopt policies to guide rural development in a way that preserves rural qualities.

Optional Elements: Jurisdictions may include additional elements such as economic development, conservation, design, recreation, or other important local topics. Many communities also prepare a Vision Statement to articulate long-term aspirations and community values.

Consistency Requirements: Comprehensive plans must be externally consistent with the GMA, Countywide Planning Policies, and applicable regional plans. They must also be internally consistent, ensuring that all plan elements support one another.

Essential Public Facilities (EPFs): Essential public facilities—including hospitals, jails, and wastewater treatment plants—cannot be prohibited under local regulations. Jurisdictions must have procedures for siting these facilities and may apply reasonable conditions, provided they do not effectively prevent siting.

Role of the Department of Commerce: The Department of Commerce provides technical assistance to jurisdictions as they develop and update their GMA-compliant plans, but it does not approve or certify them. Comprehensive plans are considered valid upon adoption unless they are appealed to the Growth Management Hearings Board.

Planner Rowan Fairfield noted that the topic is timely as the City has begun its periodic update, which is due in June 2027. As a partially planning city under the GMA, the primary requirement for this cycle is updating the Critical Areas Ordinance.

Commissioner Michael Morneault asked whether the 20-year developable land supply expands with each comprehensive plan update and how the baseline for that calculation is established. Planner Fairfield said it was an excellent question and that they would research the answer and follow up with the Commission.

PUBLIC HEARING

2. Unit Lot Subdivision (Continuation)

Chair Carl Trabant opened the continuation of the public hearing to review proposed Unit Lot Subdivision Ordinance, Chapter 16.66 – Unit Lot Subdivision at 5:43 p.m.

Discussion

Chair Trabant noted that at the previous meeting, the Commission received written public comments after the public comment period had closed. The record was reopened to accept the comments, which were reviewed before the current meeting.

City Planner Rowan Fairfield stated no new comments suggested changes, and the ordinance remains as previously reviewed.

Commissioner Michael Morneault asked whether the Commission had met all the conditions set by the City Council when the ordinance was returned a few months ago. Planner Fairfield explained that the Council requested a review focusing on clarity of language, intent, and process; consideration of limiting the ordinance to zones R1, R2, and R3 while excluding the Large Lot Residential zone (with pros and cons provided); and any other reasonable clarifications. They confirmed that all these items had been addressed.

Commissioners Erika Price and Nate Loker had no comments. Commissioner Brendan Brown expressed satisfaction with the ordinance.

Action

Moved by Michael Morneault. Seconded by Brendan Brown.

Motion to amend Title 16 to add Chapter 16.66, adopting the Unit Lot Subdivision Ordinance, as it is currently written, for eventual consideration and approval by the City Council.

MOTION CARRIES 5-0.

Price – Aye, Morneault – Aye, Loker – Aye, Brown – Aye, Trabant – Aye.

Chairman Trabant closed the public hearing at 5:47 p.m.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

3. Review of By-Laws and Mission Statement

Chair Carl Trabant opened the discussion on the Planning Commission by-laws and mission statement, noting that the documents were included in the meeting packet. He referenced the red-text comments from Commissioner Morneault and asked if everyone had a chance to review them, stating that any updates would ultimately be sent to City Council for approval.

City Planner Rowan Fairfield confirmed that the Council originally established the by-laws by resolution.

Commissioners Erika Price and Nate Loker had no comments at this time.

Commissioner Michael Morneault requested that once staff incorporates the Commission's comments, the updated draft be presented at the next meeting before being forwarded to Council to ensure all changes are captured accurately. Chair Trabant confirmed this approach.

Commissioner Brendan Brown also had no additional comments.

Chair Trabant noted a discrepancy between the by-laws, which state the Commission holds one regular monthly meeting, and other city information suggesting two meetings per month. He suggested keeping one regular meeting for official business, with additional workshop meetings scheduled as needed. Commissioner Morneault agreed, noting that meetings can be canceled if there is no business to discuss. Chair Trabant proposed changing the regular meeting date to the second Wednesday of the month for consistency, which received general agreement from the Commission.

Discussion then turned to member absences. The by-laws require notification to the chairperson and city staff, and absences may be excused by majority vote. Chair Trabant suggested that absences should not be excused without notice, emphasizing courtesy to staff and the chair.

Commissioner Morneault explained that in larger parliamentary bodies, excusing absences typically requires a vote. Commissioner Price asked whether documentation exists for excused or unexcused absences. Chair Trabant and Planner Fairfield confirmed that attendance is tracked in the minutes, and action may be taken if a member has three consecutive unexcused absences. Commissioner Brown asked about late arrivals; Chair Trabant and Planner Fairfield indicated that attending late would not count as an absence.

Planner Fairfield noted that the first listed meeting location in the by-laws is incorrect and should be updated to 119 Church Street. They also recommended retaining the language referring to “city staff” rather than specifying singular or plural.

Discussion on remote attendance followed. Chair Trabant and Commissioners agreed that members should not be required to vote to approve remote attendance and that the by-laws could be simplified accordingly. Sections G1.1 and G1.2 were removed to maintain consistency.

The Commission then reviewed the mission statement. One suggested edit was changing “should” to “shall” to strengthen the language. Commissioners agreed to change all instances of “should” to “shall.”

Commissioner Price requested clarification on phrasing to ensure consistency in first- or third-person perspective in the mission statement. Planner Fairfield confirmed updates would reflect “The Planning Commission believes...” consistently.

Chair Trabant concluded the discussion by proposing that Planner Fairfield update the by-laws and mission statement before the next meeting. The Commission will review the revised documents, then forward them to City Council for approval.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Nate Loker asked if the Commission would be meeting with City Council on September 20. City Planner Rowan Fairfield responded that there would be no meeting with Council this month, noting that some members who wished to attend were unavailable. He encouraged Commissioners to check their emails as staff works to schedule the best date in September for a future meeting.

Erika Castro Guzman announced that she has accepted the position of City Clerk. She noted that she will be transitioning away from the front desk and potentially stepping down from the Planning Commission at the end of September to work more closely with City Council.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Carl Trabant, Chair

Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk

File Attachments for Item:

2. Meeting Minutes – November 12, 2025



DRAFT

White Salmon Planning Commission MEETING MINUTES

**November 12, 2025 – 5:30 PM
119 NE Church Ave and Zoom Teleconference**

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commission Members:

Carl Trabant, Chair
Michael Morneault
Brendan Brown (5:32 p.m. Zoom)
Erika Price

Excused:

Nate Loker

Staff:

Rowan Fairfield, City Planner
Miryan Manjarrez-Hurtado, Associate Planner
Erika Castro Guzman, City Clerk
Kelly Hickok, Legal Counsel

CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL

Chair Carl Trabant called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum of planning commissioner members was present. Two members of the community attended the meeting in person or via teleconference.

Moved by Michael Morneault. Seconded by Erika Price.

Move to excuse the absence of Commissioner Brendan Brown and Nate Loker from the November 12 Planning Commission meeting.

MOTION CARRIED. 3-0

Morneault – Aye, Price – Aye, Trabant – Aye.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Meeting Minutes – July 23, 2025
2. Meeting Minutes – September 10, 2025
3. Meeting Minutes – September 24, 2025

Moved by Michael Morneault. Seconded by Erika Price.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 23, as amended, September 10 and September 24, 2025, as presented.

MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

Morneault – Aye, Price – Aye, Brown – Aye, Trabant – Aye.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public provided comment.

ACTION ITEMS

4. **Finalize and approve the revised by-laws**

City Planner Rowan Fairfield explained that the packet included a redline version of the bylaws beginning on page 13 and a clean version on page 20. They stated that no additional staff comments were needed.

Chair Carl Trabant asked for commissioner feedback and, hearing none, confirmed that a vote was required. Planner Fairfield clarified that the Commission needed to approve the bylaws and forward them to City Council via resolution.

Moved by Erika Price. Seconded by Brendan Brown.

Motion to approve the Planning Commission Bylaws, as presented, and forward them to City Council for consideration and adoption by resolution.

MOTION CARRIED. 4-0

Morneault – Aye, Price – Aye, Brown – Aye, Trabant – Aye.

5. Finalize and approve the revised mission statement

Chair Carl Trabant reviewed the minor edits to the mission statement, including replacing “we believe” with “the Planning Commission believes” and changing “should” to “shall.” The redline was displayed on page 28, and the clean version on page 29.

City Planner Rowan Fairfield noted that the mission statement did not require City Council approval.

Moved by Michael Morneault. Seconded by Erika Price.

Motion to adopt the White Salmon Planning Commission Mission Statement, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED. 4-0

Morneault – Aye, Price – Aye, Brown – Aye, Trabant – Aye.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

6. Recap of protocols from the Joint Workshop on September 24, 2025

City Planner Rowan Fairfield summarized a one-page recap of protocols established during the joint Planning Commission and City Council workshop. They explained the process for adding new work items to the 2026 plan, the need for Council approval on non-priority additions, and the expectation that the Chair will provide quarterly Council updates. They also described the need for a consistent staff/Chair report template for transmitting recommendations. No further discussion occurred among the Commission.

7. Discuss adding a Land Acknowledgment to Commission meetings

Chair Carl Trabant opened the discussion by noting that City Council begins meetings with a Land Acknowledgment and the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked whether the Commission should adopt similar practices.

Commissioner Erika Price inquired whether the City had a written Land Acknowledgment on its website, and City Clerk Erika Castro Guzman replied that she did not believe so.

Commissioner Morneault asked for clarification on what a Land Acknowledgment entails.

Commissioner Price suggested consulting local Native community members for guidance.

Commissioner Brendan Brown expressed concern that a Land Acknowledgment without Indigenous involvement could appear symbolic rather than substantive.

City Planner Rowan Fairfield added that adopting ceremonial elements was optional. Based on the discussion, Chair Trabant concluded that the Commission would not pursue the item at this time.

8. Discussion of commissioners making recommendations for code updates

Chair Carl Trabant summarized guidance from the recent joint workshops clarifying that commissioners may flag issues and recommend code updates, but cannot independently pursue ordinance changes.

City Planner Rowan Fairfield supported this interpretation, referencing that code updates outside Council priorities must be evaluated through the work plan approval process. City Clerk Erika Castro Guzman provided information on Council's budget retreat timing. Planner Fairfield confirmed that staff would begin compiling proposed work plan items when the final budget is approved.

9. Discuss the Draft 2026 Work Plan

City Planner Rowan Fairfield reviewed the draft 2026 work plan and noted that the only remaining item from 2025, the Unit Lot Subdivision Ordinance, had already been approved by Council.

Chair Carl Trabant initiated discussion of shared utilities, and Planner Fairfield explained that the high staff workload might limit their ability to conduct in-depth research. Commissioner Morneault asked whether shared utilities were tied to the subdivision ordinance. Planner Fairfield said the issue originated there but had broader applications.

Chair Trabant suggested commissioners conduct preliminary research on how other small Washington cities manage shared utilities. Planner Fairfield encouraged this, noting that examples of both successful and unsuccessful models would be useful. Chair Trabant volunteered to begin research, and Planner Fairfield requested coordination to avoid duplication.

Commissioners further discussed plumbing code requirements, the need to review the state plumbing code, and potential flexibility for shared utilities.

Planner Fairfield also emphasized that separate utility meters increase development costs and reduce achievable density, and that Public Works Director Chris True should be consulted because the City already has aging, non-conforming shared sewer lines. Chair Trabant suggested inviting Public Works Director True to a future meeting if the Commission continues exploring the topic.

10. Trash cans

Chair Carl Trabant described chronic issues with residents leaving trash cans out for extended periods due to unclear code language. He suggested adopting a clear time-limit standard, similar to other cities' 24-hour rules.

City Planner Rowan Fairfield agreed that clearer language would aid code compliance and noted that most residents respond quickly to reminders.

Commissioner Morneault suggested the City request better communication from the garbage provider, especially given the east/west pickup split. Chair Trabant agreed that the messaging was confusing but noted that residents can check their Republic Services account. Planner Fairfield confirmed that they would explore the communication issue.

11. E-Bikes

Chair Carl Trabant raised concerns about unregulated e-bike use, particularly throttle-only models operated by minors at unsafe speeds on streets and sidewalks. Commissioner Morneault commented that throttle-only bikes resemble small motorcycles.

Planner Rowan Fairfield asked whether some lacked pedals and clarified that state definitions of e-bike classes must be followed. They provided examples from Oregon where pedal-less e-bikes are considered electric motorcycles.

Chair Trabant noted that many cities adopt rules limiting e-bike speeds to 20 mph in bike lanes and emphasized the safety concerns he has observed, especially at night. Planner Fairfield stated they have seen similar municipal proposals and emphasized the need for public outreach on any future ordinance.

Chair Trabant directed Rowan to add the trash-can ordinance and e-bike research to the draft 2026 work plan and forward them to Council for consideration.

12. Planner's Desk Updates

City Planner Rowan Fairfield provided an overview of upcoming workload items, including:

- A citywide zoning “up-zone” to align with the 2021 Comprehensive Plan
- Coordination on the Hood River Bridge replacement
- Reintroduction of the Planning Fee Schedule previously rejected by Council
- Shared utilities research
- Bluff Connector Trail Phase II
- Required periodic updates, including the critical areas ordinance

Chair Trabant clarified that the Commission had supported the previous fee schedule, but Council had declined to adopt it. Planner Fairfield noted that Council wanted a more stable staffing structure before implementing major fee changes, and staff capacity has since improved.

13. New Associate Planner Introduction

Associate Planner Miryan Manjarrez-Hurtado introduced herself, noting she had been with the City for one month and two weeks.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Carl Trabant, Chair

Miryan Manjarrez-Hurtado, Associate Planner

File Attachments for Item:

3. Chris Heald: Affordable Housing at Bethel Church



Google Maps



3D



13



Zimbra

marchrs872@gorge.net

Re: Potential affordable housing site

From : Rowan Fairfield <rowanf@ci.white-salmon.wa.us>

Tue, Oct 28, 2025 04:53 PM

Subject : Re: Potential affordable housing site**To :** Chris & Marcie <marchrs872@gorge.net>

Hi Chris,

After reading Michael's thoughts, I see 2 or 3 possible paths forward for this idea. Please note this is my best guess based on what we currently know – it is non-binding and not a "pre-approval".

1. Build a conforming mixed-use building.

A conforming mixed-use structure would have a commercial component and 400+ sqft apartments. Residential uses can be up to 80% of the total square footage, so the size of the commercial component would determine how much area is allowed for residential. Note that it does not have to be a for-profit business. For example, the library and other government buildings are in the commercial zone. Church-affiliated operations that are similar to a commercial use, such as offices for social services or a non-profit thrift store, would be appropriate.

2. Apply for a Conditional Use Permit to build 3 ADUs

As Michael noted, there is a catch-all provision in the conditional uses in section 17.48.030, "D. Any other uses judged by the planning commission to be no more detrimental to adjacent properties than, and of the same type and character as, the above-listed uses." ADUs are already allowed in the C zone with a Conditional Use Permit, and I think we could ask the Commission to determine that the ADUs would be accessory to the church, rather than a commercial use or a primary dwelling, and would otherwise meet all the typical ADU standards.

In either case, the buildings would need to meet the aesthetic requirements for the C zone in [WSMC 17.48.075](#) and the parking requirements as amended in [Ordinance 2024-12-1171 Amending WSMC Title 17 "Parking Reforms"](#). The proposal would need to go through "Site and Building Plan Review" per [WSMC Chapter 17.81](#) because it's in a C zone.

I do not think that building a single-family home + 3 ADUs will be viable. A single-family home in the C district would increase the non-conformity, and is probably not permittable.

I agree with Michael that this lot does not really face or abut Jewett Blvd, so it does not have a "commercial street front" as defined by the Code.

A third option could be:

3. Apply for a Zone Change, become an R-2 or R-3 Residential lot, then build later

This would be an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan under [WSMC 19.20](#), so it would be more expensive upfront and a longer process that requires Council's approval, but it could give more flexibility for residential uses. It would also mean the "nonconformity" is eliminated, since churches are a conditional use in the Residential zones. But I think there could be unintended consequences to this option, like the density provisions would be tricky to apply, and mixed-uses are very rare in R zones. There's not a lot of precedent. This option would need to be 100% thought-out to its logical conclusions before I could recommend it, but it might be worth considering.

You also asked me if Washington HB 1377 (2019) would apply to you, regarding density bonuses for church-owned or -operated properties. I think it would. That bill was codified in RCW under [35A.63.300](#), and we are a "Code City" that is subject to that chapter. The city does not have any particular policy about a density bonus at this time, so we'd need to develop one.

I hope this helps! Thanks for your patience as I puzzled through the options. Do keep me in the loop as you develop this idea!

Regards,

Rowan Fairfield (they/them)

City Planner

100 N Main Street, White Salmon, WA 98672

(509) 493-1133 ext. 204

On Mon, Oct 27, 2025 at 4:13 PM Chris & Marcie <marchrs872@gorge.net> wrote:

Rowan,

Zimbra

marchrs872@gorge.net

Potential affordable housing site

From : Michael Mehaffy <michael.mehaffy@gmail.com>

Sat, Oct 11, 2025 11:09 AM

Subject : Potential affordable housing site 1 attachment**To :** Chris Heald <marchrs872@gorge.net>, Marla Keethler <marlak@ci.white-salmon.wa.us>, Rowan Fairfield <rowanf@ci.white-salmon.wa.us>

Hi Mayor, Rowan and Chris,

I met with Chris at the Bethel church site yesterday, and he was looking for preliminary information regarding the potential to do affordable housing units on the site, should the church decide to explore this. I stressed to him (and stress now) that I am only speaking in an informal advisory capacity, and not for the City.

Chris, I promised you I would look up the code and give my own (personal) interpretation of the code (Rowan will have to confirm). Here it is:

In the C zone, which is what this is, there are no setbacks required, although you may need to have setbacks for fire - typically 5 feet if there is a window, or other combustible conditions. (The adjoining lot is also commercial, so the 20-foot zone change setback doesn't apply.)

The change we made to the C zone is copied below (as well as the ADU section that I will also discuss). You CAN do residential in the C zone, with the conditions highlighted. The requirement that it be "an integral part of a commercial or retail structure" could be a sticking point, unless you included a small commercial element. An interesting wrinkle is that the church itself is nonconforming to this zone, highlighting the need to put churches into the C zone (or create another zone, which I wouldn't recommend).

BUT... there is a catch-all provision in the conditional uses, "D. Any other uses judged by the planning commission to be no more detrimental to adjacent properties than, and of the same type and character as, the above-listed uses." So the planning commission could grant a conditional use permit for the residential, even if not "an integral part of a commercial or retail structure."

Another requirement is that the units have to be minimum 400 square feet, which would be, say, 20 x 20. That's on the upper end of a "tiny house," but might fit.

There is also the ability to do up to three ADUs in the C zone, which can be as small as 200 SF each -- although the way it's written, you'd have to create at least one "primary dwelling", and then the floor area of the ADUs couldn't add up to more than 100% of that unit's floor area.

That would mean, as I interpret it, that you could, say, do one "primary dwelling" (say, for a small family) of 600 SF, and then three ADUs (tiny houses) of 200 square feet each. Or you could do more than one dwelling within the "primary dwelling" building, but each unit would have to be at least 400 SF. (Say 2 at 800 SF total, or 3 at 1200 SF total, etc.)

There isn't actually a density limit, other than the height, and restrictions of the site - note also required parking, "one space is required per unit, and one-half space per ADU, with a minimum of one space provided." You might be able to meet that with shared parking with the existing church parking (which requires "1 for each 50 square feet of floor area") - although the church congregation may have an opinion on that!.

In the two areas we looked at, you might do the "primary dwelling" in the current garden area, and the ADUs (tiny houses) in the narrow upper area between the two trees and the property line. See the attached aerial with those two areas shaded in green.

There is one other issue, which is the requirement for commercial uses facing Jewett, as a "commercial street" (per H4 below). I think you could make the case that this site actually faces Grandview, not Jewett, so the requirement doesn't come into play.

On a personal note, if we could see 3, 4, 5 or more small affordable or "attainable" units here, it would achieve exactly the intent of the zoning code changes we made, and the goals of the Housing Action Plan and Housing Needs Analysis. But of course, we have to stay within what the law requires. I will leave it to the Mayor and Rowan to review and discuss with you further!

Best, m

Michael W. Mehaffy, Ph.D.
President, Structura Naturalis Inc.
P.O. Box 2579
White Salmon, WA 98672
(503) 250-4449

https://library.municode.com/wa/white_salmon/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT17ZO_CH17.48CGECODI

- H. Residential - Condominium, apartment, and other dwelling types including balconies, outside courts or patios and constructed or renovated **to be included as an integral part of a commercial or retail structure** with the following conditions:
1. The dwelling units shall have a **minimum living area of four hundred square feet** and a maximum of one thousand five hundred square feet.
 2. Residential uses shall not be more than eighty percent of the total square footage of the structure(s).
 3. The design of commercial establishments which include dwellings shall be a matter subject to review and approval by the city, applying clear and objective design standards as furnished to applicants at the outset of their application.
 4. If located on or along a commercial street front, the **ground floor fronting that street shall be one hundred percent commercial use, with a minimum depth of twenty feet.** An exception applies to residential stairway entrances and/or lobbies at a maximum width of twenty feet.
- I. **Up to three accessory dwelling units**, if not facing a commercial street; subject to conditional use review and [Chapter 17.64](#);

[https://library.municode.com/wa/white_salmon/codes/
code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT17ZO_CH17.64ACDWUN](https://library.municode.com/wa/white_salmon/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT17ZO_CH17.64ACDWUN)

Chapter 17.64 - ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

17.64.020 - Location.

An ADU may be allowed where an **existing structure is non-conforming.**

(Ord. No. 2012-11-905, 11-26-2012)

17.64.030 - Design standards.

- A. Configuration. An ADU may be located either within, attached to, or detached from the primary structure.
- B. Density. Up to three ADUs may be created in conjunction with each single-family residence, as follows: Up to two ADUs in RL, R1 and R2, and up to three in R3. **In the C district, up to three ADUs may be created if not facing a commercial street.**

- C. Minimum lot size. An ADU shall not be established on any parcel smaller than two thousand square feet. Note: site size and configuration must accommodate all parking and other development standards in addition to meeting the minimum lot size requirement.
- D. Maximum unit size. The gross floor area, calculated from finished wall to finished wall, of existing structures, additions, or new detached structures, converted to, or constructed for the purpose of creating ADUs shall **not exceed one hundred percent of the gross floor area of the primary single family structure**, not including garage and/or detached accessory buildings. A maximum of two bedrooms may be provided in an ADU. If the accessory unit is completely located on a single floor, the planning administrator may allow increased size in order to efficiently use all floor area, so long as all other standards set forth in this section are met.
- E. Minimum unit size. **The gross floor area of an ADU shall not be less than two hundred square feet** even if this exceeds the maximum requirement in [subsection] (D) above, or as otherwise established by the requirements of the city Adopted Building Code.



Site Diagram.jpg
507 KB

Zimbra

marchrs872@gorge.net

Potential affordable housing site

From : Marla Keethler <marlak@ci.white-salmon.wa.us>

Tue, Oct 14, 2025 04:39 PM

Subject : Potential affordable housing site**To :** Michael Mehaffy <michael.mehaffy@gmail.com>, Chris Heald
<marchrs872@gorge.net>, Rowan Fairfield <rowanf@ci.white-salmon.wa.us>

Hi Michael, Chris, and Rowan,

Michael, thanks for the detailed summary and for highlighting the considerations from your code review. Your advisory notes are useful as we consider affordable housing potential at the Bethel church site. Chris, thank you for thinking of our community and your leadership within Bethel to consider such a direction for the "unused" portions of the site.

Chris, as Michael noted, any formal interpretation and next steps from a City perspective would need to be confirmed by our planning staff. Rowan, could you review Michael's analysis and provide your perspective on the interpretations, particularly regarding the conditional use provisions and the ADU configuration? Please also confirm any parking or commercial frontage requirements that might apply - given the site's unique context - that may be in addition to anything captured in Michael's advisory notes.

From a leadership perspective, we are committed to supporting creative, code-compliant approaches that advance our Housing Action Plan while respecting the existing neighborhood context and property owner interests. Once Rowan has had a chance to clarify, I'm happy to discuss potential pathways and next steps with you both.

Appreciate everyone's engagement in exploring options that align with both our code and our broader community goals!
Warmly,
Marla

--



Marla Keethler (she/her)
Mayor, City of White Salmon

Phone 509-774-7491

File Attachments for Item:

4. Finalize the draft 2026 workplan and recommend approval for City Council.



Annual Work Plan 2026 DRAFT

White Salmon Planning Commission

Goal 1: Approve the meeting minutes at the very next meeting

Goal 2: TBD

Activity 1: Explore the possibility of shared utilities

Item	Notes	Timeline	Who
Basic research	Questions like: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What other jurisdictions allow shared utilities? Find examples of both successful and unsuccessful models.• Why does that work for them (or not)?• What are the pros and cons?• What would it take if WS wanted to explicitly allow them?		Commissioners
tbd	tbd	tbd	tbd

Activity 2: Trash Can Nuisances

Item	Notes	Timeline	Who
	To address residents leaving out their garbage cans for extended periods of time.		

Activity 3: E-Bike Regulation

Item	Notes	Timeline	Who
	To address unregulated use of electric bicycles, particularly throttle-only models operated by minors on streets and sidewalks.		

Activity 4: Short-term rentals in Commercial Zones

Item	Notes	Timeline	Who
	The Code limits STRs to be 30% of the dwellings on a single parcel in the C zone. This effectively prohibits <u>all</u> single-family homes in the C zone from being used as a STR (except for legacy/grandfathered cases). Should this be revisited?		

Activity 5: Downtown parking

Item	Notes	Timeline	Who
	<p>Required parking for commercial uses has precluded some nonconforming residential properties from converting to a commercial use. Likewise, some vacant lots in downtown may be difficult to develop because they are historical parcels, created before parking mandates and lacking space for modern off-street parking.</p> <p>Should this be examined further? Some communities have a "downtown parking district" with relaxed rules, or a "fee-in-lieu" when a new business cannot provide the minimum off-street parking spaces.</p>		

Activity 6: Private roads standards

Item	Notes	Timeline	Who
	<p>We do not have any formal standards for private roads, and the Code is not very clear on distinguishing between "shared driveways" and "private roads".</p> <p>The Fire Chief has expressed concerns about long dead-end roads and safe egress during fire events, and I have concerns about traffic flow and hazards created from too many driveways on arterial roads (such as the area around the top of Main Ave and NW Loop Rd) and with the street grid having poor connectivity in the outer areas of town.</p>		

Activity 7: Pre-approved building plans

Item	Notes	Timeline	Who
	<p>The city had previously done some work on pre-approved building plans for accessory dwelling units (ADUs), but it was never completed. This was a suggested action from the Housing Action Plan. Should we resume the work?</p>		

File Attachments for Item:

5. Commentary: Should e-bikes be legal for younger riders?

Commentary: Should e-bikes be legal for younger riders?

By Jurgen Hess

Dec 22, 2025



In this commentary, writer Jurgen Hess discusses e-bike safety and age limits for their use.

Frank - stock.adobe.com

E-bikes are everywhere, sweeping us off our feet. But are they safe for young riders?

The New York Times published an in-depth article on this question Nov. 30. The article's impetus was a recent accident in Marin County, California, that almost killed a 15-year-old girl.

E-bikes weigh up to 50 pounds and can reach speeds of 30 miles per hour. They are more akin to a motorcycle than a conventional manual bicycle.

Marin County, California, looked into the question of e-bike safety with a number of studies. Those studies found that the chances of dying in an e-bike accident were 11% where chances of dying in a regular manual bike accident were less than 1%. Due to their speed and weight, injuries in an e-bike accident were much more severe than injuries from a conventional bicycle accident, and when an e-bike collides with a pedestrian, severe injuries or death are likely. From 2017-2022, head injuries in e-bike accidents increased 49-fold in Marin County.

What about the age of people involved in e-bike accidents? The Marin County study found that e-bike accidents are nine times higher for youth than riders over 20 years of age.

What are e-bike rules in Oregon? The State of Oregon, Hood River and The Dalles have a minimum age of 16 to ride/drive an e-bike. Furthermore, e-bikes are limited to a maximum speed of 20 mph and cannot be used on sidewalks. E-bike riders also must use a safety helmet.

“E-bikes are really motorcycles. Kids exceed their riding skills; they push the limits,” said Hood River Police Chief Neal Holste. “The severity of accidents with e-bikes is higher.”

Holste said Hood River police have ramped up enforcement of the rules; he believes that has helped. Police have given tickets to e-bike riders who have violated the laws. He said that the minimum age for e-bike riders should be kept at 16.

A Nov. 3 article from Uplift Local and printed in *Columbia Gorge News* featured Megan Ramey proposing changing rules to allow e-bikes for young children. No mention was made of the dangers and the potential for significant and fatal accidents for young children from e-bikes.

We need to understand the dangers of e-bikes and protect our children. Just like driving vehicles, handling firearms and drinking alcohol, there needs to be rules protecting children from the hazards of e-bikes.

...

Jurgen Hess, Hood River, is a father who cares about the safety of children and adults from the risks of e-bikes. His background includes chairing the Hood River City Planning Commission and being on a committee that recommended Hood River parks and recreation opportunities, including safe bicycling routes. Professionally, Hess is a photojournalist.