

Planning Commission Agenda

August 19, 2025

6:00 PM

MAYOR
MATTHEW LUNDH

CITY ADMINISTRATOR
ROBERT OMANS

CITY PLANNER
COLLEDA MONICK

CITY CLERK
DEBBIE LEE



119 W FIRST STREET
CLE ELUM, WA 98922

PLANNING COMMISSION
GARY BERNDT
AMANDA HAHNEMANN
JONATHAN CORNELIUS
MARC KIRKPATRICK
COLIN BRISSEY - VICE-CHAIR
PAUL KANTWILL - CHAIR
IAN STEELE

COUNCIL LIASON - CASSIDY
BUECHLE-CURTIS

Join Virtually with Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/7573184018?pwd=dERndjBjVC9GdVQ1d2ISRExwZFhXZz09>
Meeting ID: 757 318 4018 Passcode: 98922

Join by Phone: 1-(253)215-8782, Meeting ID: 757 318 4018, Passcode:98922

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DISCLAIMER: The City does not guarantee that virtual or telephonic access to the City Council meeting will be available and the City does not warrant audio quality. Attendees are encouraged to attend in-person.

1. **Call to Order & Roll Call**
2. **Public Comment – Limited to 5 Minutes**
 - a. None scheduled.
3. **Adoption of Minutes**
 - a. August 5, 2025
4. **Business Requiring Public Hearings**
5. **Planning Update**
 - a. Planning Consultant Colleda Monick, Staff Announcements
6. **New Business**
 - a. Comp Plan Priorities & Vision Chair Kantwill
 - b. CEMC 17.04.040 Nonconforming Uses
7. **Next Meeting Agenda Development**
 - a. CEMC 14.30.140 Site & Design Review
8. **Commissioner Comments and Discussion**
9. **Adjourn**

Upcoming Meetings:

Historical Preservation Commission Meeting: August 19, 2025 @ 3:00 p.m.

Public Safety & Health Committee Meeting: August 20, 2025 @ 2:00 p.m.

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119 W FIRST STREET
CLE ELUM, WA 98922

Regular Council Meeting: August 26, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.

General Government Committee Meeting: August 27, 2025 @ 8:30 a.m.

Coal Mines Trail Commission Meeting: September 1, 2025 @ 4:00 p.m.

Planning Commission Meeting: September 2, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.

Public Works & Community Development Committee Meeting: September 3, 2025 @ 8:30 a.m.

Lodging Tax & Event Committee Meeting: September 10, 2025 @ 8:30 a.m.

City of Cle Elum
Planning Commission (CEPC) Meeting Minutes
City Council Chambers
August 5, 2025 | 6:00 PM

Call to Order

Chair Kantwill called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM

Roll Call

CEPC Members Present: Paul Kantwill, Gary Berndt, Jon Cornelius, and Amanda Hahnemann (zoom)

CEPC Members Absent: Marc Kirkpatrick, Colin Brissey, and Ian Steele. **Commissioner Berndt made a motion to excuse Commissioners Kirkpatrick, Brissey and Steele. Corneilius seconded. Motion carried.**

Council Liaison: Cassidy Buechele-Curtis

Staff Present: Colleda Monick

Public Comment

None.

Adoption of Minutes

Commissioner Berndt motioned to accept the July 15, 2025 minutes as presented. Commissioner Cornelius seconded. Motion carried.

Public Hearing- City Planning

None.

Commission and Staff Reports

Colleda Monick, Staff Announcements:

- **Historic Preservation Commission Openings:** There is still a vacancy on the Historic Preservation Commission.
- **Comprehensive Plan:** Commerce has not issued updated grant contracts

New Business

1. 2017 Community Vision Summary

Chair Kantwill's Remarks:

- Opened discussion with a brainstorming session on the community vision and how to move forward with updating the Comprehensive Plan.
- Noted that many challenges facing the community have persisted for decades, dating back to the 1960s, making progress seem daunting.
- Highlighted what he believed are top four issues: jobs, business, connectivity, and workforce housing.
- Emphasized focusing on items the Commission can realistically influence.
- Questioned how the community can address the seasonal economy and reliance on seasonal workers.

Commissioner Berndt:

- Noted lack of cheap power and natural gas in the area – limiting economic development.

- Emphasized the need for proactivity in economic development.

Commissioner Cornelius:

- Observed Cle Elum has inadvertently become a bedroom community due to land availability and freeway proximity.
- Suggested exploring workforce housing solutions and recognizing the existing labor force, particularly in trades.
- Noted commuting to Ellensburg is a feasible option for residents.

Community Member Nora Kantwill:

- Shared an analogy comparing Cle Elum to Charlottesville, Virginia—a bedroom community of Washington DC facing similar economic and connectivity challenges.
- Pointed out economic divides, high housing costs, low wages, limited manufacturing, and a largely transient population.

Chair Kantwill concluded the discussion:

- Proposed the Commission complete “homework” to identify priorities for the benefit of compiling a collective list to develop a new vision statement.

Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

None

Next Meeting Agenda Development

- a. Chair Kantwill’s homework assignment – Comp Plan Priorities and Vision
- b. CEMC 17.04.040 Nonconforming (moved to get more voices)
- c. Comp Plan Updates

Commissioner Comments and Discussion

Berndt – requested an update on schedule? – regular meeting schedule is in effect, first and third Tuesday of the month at 6 PM.

Adjournment

Chair Kantwill adjourned the meeting 7:09. The Commission will reconvene on August 19, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

Chair Kantwill

Date

Comp Plan Priorities & Vision, Chair Kantwill

Here are some thoughts for our next session. They are just that- thoughts- and I am not wed to them, but I thought that the use of a slogan, or motto, for our planning efforts might be a good starting point.

I also took a stab at a Vision statement for this planning cycle.

Important in any planning process is the identification of facts and assumptions. Identifying both provides a good foundation for planning as it allows us to fall back upon them during discussions.

All of that follows.

Motto/ Slogan: "Proud of Our Past; Poised for the Future."

Vision: "Cle Elum is the economic engine, and social and recreational center, of the Upper County. Cle Elum is an economically independent community featuring unsurpassed geographic beauty, unparalleled year-round recreational opportunities, and an outstanding climate for business, development, and commerce. Cle Elum's rich history, heritage, and abundant natural resources provide a unique backdrop for progressive, managed growth, bringing together established communities and new residential and commercial development, to create opportunity and provide an enhanced quality of life, transforming Cle Elum from a seasonal tourism destination into the residential and commercial hub of the Upper County."

Facts:

Visitors from all over the state, especially the West Side, will continue to visit; destination tourism will remain a strong component of life in Cle Elum.

Suncadia will continue to grow; so will the Upper County. Unless, however, we can attract business and full-time residents, recreational renters, part-time residents, and pass-through visitors will continue to be the predominate population, continuing and perhaps increasing economic risk to the community.

All local residents must commute to Ellensburg, Yakima and Issaquah for their commercial needs.

I90 construction and "improvements" will increase traffic flow into Cle Elum, increasing congestion and taxing local resources.

Stagnation has existed for 40 years.

The new and more esthetically-pleasing downtown commercial district is a plus but it will not-in and off itself-have more than a slight and incremental effect on the Community. Indeed, since the completion of the new and improved downtown corridor, we have more vacant commercial space than we have seen in years,

While we do and should market ourselves as a recreation mecca, the lack of connectivity is crippling and inherently anti-growth. We have no means of connecting trail networks; there is no means to transit

from Suncadia to Cle Elum or from Roslyn to Cle Elum; there are no safe means of walking, running or cycling within town or to neighboring communities; nor for students to get to school.

The lack of connectivity and the complete lack of wellness and recreation facilities (gyms, pools, walking and running tracks) literally endanger our citizenry, especially during long and cruel winter months. Our older citizens lack the ability and/or facilities to engage in critical wellness and fitness programs and regimens that can enhance quality of life and improve health. Our youth suffer from inactivity, obesity, and opportunities for socialization and recreation, limiting their opportunities for advancement and improved quality of life. Our service sector work force suffers the same challenges, all exacerbated by a complete lack of child care.

Infrastructure challenges and limited physical space will continue to remain barriers to business, commercial and residential development.

Assumptions:

If we cannot attract more business/ commerce and attract commensurate workforce housing, nothing will change.

Destination tourism and destination retail/ business cannot provide the level of growth required for Cle Elum to prosper, or even survive. More is required.

While infrastructure and physical/ spatial challenges are profound, they are not insurmountable.

Thus far, residential development has focused on high-end markets; if this trend continues, we will be unable to attract year-round residents, thus exacerbating the economic challenges we have been facing for decades.

Same for jobs: we have not been able to create year-round employment outside of the tourism/ service-sectors; if we cannot reverse this trend, we will experience not improvements in quality of life for our residents.

The City's fiscal straits are a complication, but not a complete impediment to growth.

Enough for now. See you Tuesday. Thanks for your great work and collegiality.

PK

Colonel Paul E. Kantwill, U.S. Army (Ret.)
Chair & Commissioner
City of Cle Elum Planning Commission

City of Cle Elum Planning Commission

August 5, 2025

Subject – Nonconforming Uses

Staff Narrative: These changes are being proposed to provide greater flexibility for home and property owners to modify lawfully established nonconforming uses.

17.04.040 Nonconforming uses.

The lawful use of any building, structure, land or sign in existence at the time of the passage of the ordinance codified in this title, although such use does not conform to the provisions of this title, may be continued subject to the limitations of this section.

A. Expansion – No existing building, structure or land ~~devoted containing~~ to a nonconforming use shall be expanded, enlarged, reconstructed, intensified or structurally altered unless the ~~use thereof is changed to a use permitted in the zoning district in which the building, structure, or land is located following standards are met:~~

- ~~1. Degree of nonconformity is not increased...~~
- ~~2. Building or use expansion shall not exceed 50% of existing...~~
- ~~1.3. All other applicable standards of the underlying zone are met...~~

B. Change – When authorized by the planning director, a nonconforming use may be changed to a use of a like nature or use that is more in conformance with the existing regulations.

C. Extension – When authorized by the planning director, a nonconforming use may be extended throughout those parts of a building which were manifestly designed or arranged for such use prior to the date when such use of the building became nonconforming, if no structural alterations except those required by law are made therein.

D. Discontinuance – When a nonconforming use of land or a nonconforming use of all or part of a structure is discontinued or abandoned for a period of one year, such use shall be considered abandoned and lose its nonconforming status. Normal seasonal cessation of use, or temporary discontinuance for purposes of maintenance or improvements, shall not be included in determination of the one-year period of discontinuance.

E. Reversion – If a nonconforming use is changed to a permitted use, the nonconforming use shall not be resumed.

F. Residential exception – Legally established residential uses located in any ~~residential~~ zoning district shall not be deemed nonconforming for the purposes of residential alteration, residential enlargement or residential expansion provided:

1. The residential use was legally established.

~~2. The residential use was established at least fifty years prior to the adoption of this regulation.~~

32. The residential use has been continuous and has never lapsed for more than twelve consecutive months.

43. The residential use shall comply with the development standards of the underlying zone in which it is located.

~~5. A declaration of covenant between the property owner and the city of Cle Elum must be completed and executed prior to the issuance of a building permit, and shall be recorded with the Kittitas County Auditors Office, stating generally:~~

~~The current Residential use and proposed expansion, enlargement or alteration is not located within a residential zone and is therefore subject to noise, dust, vibration, smoke, activity, and the like associated with legally permitted uses in the zoning district. Legally permitted uses in compliance with Cle Elum Municipal Code in any zone have the right to continue without hindrance.~~

17.04.050 Nonconforming buildings and structures.

A building or structure in existence at the time of the passage of the ordinance codified in this title, although such use does not conform to the provisions of this title, may be maintained subject to the limitations of this section.

A. Expansion – A nonconforming structure may not be changed, altered, replaced, added to or expanded in any manner, except as provided in ~~subsection B of this section and unless such change or alteration does not increase the degree of nonconformity or would bring the structure into conformity with provisions of the zoning code.CEMC 17.04.040(A).~~

B. Repair – ~~Such Normal structural~~ repair and maintenance work as required to keep the structure in sound condition may be made, ~~including replacement of walls, fixtures and plumbing provided no structural alterations shall be made except such as are required by law or ordinance or authorized by the planning director.~~

C. Reconstruction of a Nonconforming Structure - In case of damage or destruction by fire or other causes ~~requiring expenditures for repair in excess of one-half of the assessed value as shown on the county assessor's records~~ the structure can be rebuilt as it was immediately prior to destruction, the structure or structures, other than residential dwellings, shall ~~not be rebuilt unless they conform to all requirements of the zoning code.the damage or in a manner that is less nonconforming.~~ Permits to repair the damage must be applied for within one year and construction must be completed within two years of the damage occurring or the legal nonconforming status will be lost.

GD. Any nonconforming structures shall be maintained in usable condition or the nonconforming status shall be lost.