

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-017

AN ORDINANCE amending Yakima Municipal Code Title 15 (Yakima Urban Area Zoning Ordinance) to incorporate text amendments recommended by the City of Yakima Planning Commission and adding a new section 15.09.026.

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the City of Yakima has considered amendments to modify several sections in YMC Title 15 – Yakima Urban Area Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, notice of all amendments to YMC Sections 15.09.025, 15.13.025, 15.06.050, 15.06.140, 15.08.030, 15.08.060, 15.08.140, 15.10.020, and 15.17.030, and implementation of a new section, 15.09.026, hereinafter “Amendments,” to fulfill the requirements of RCW 36.70A.130 was sent to the Washington State Department of Commerce and received by the same on October 23, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held two study sessions for these amendments on July 10, 2024 and September 25, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held an open record public hearing on January 8, 2025, pursuant to notice and has received and considered all evidence and testimony presented; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, having conducted such public hearing, found, determined, and recommended that the City Council approve such amendments as indicated in the signed recommendation dated February 3, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held a public hearing on May 6, 2025 pursuant to notice to consider such amendments as recommended by the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Yakima, having considered the record herein, the testimony provided at the public hearing, and the recommendation from the Planning Commission, hereby finds and determines that approval of these amendments is in the best interests of residents of the City of Yakima and will promote the general health, safety and welfare; now, therefore

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF YAKIMA:

Section 1. Amendments to Replace and Supersede. The proposed amendments to YMC Sections 15.06.050, 15.06.140, 15.08.030, 15.08.060, 15.08.140, 15.09.025, 15.10.020, 15.13.025, and 15.17.030, as contained in Exhibit “A” attached hereto and fully incorporated herein, shall replace and supersede previous versions of the referenced documents.

Section 2. The following sections of the Yakima Municipal Code is added. YMC Section 15.09.026 is hereby added to the Yakima Municipal Code, as contained in Exhibit “A” attached hereto and fully incorporated herein.

Section 3. Adoption of Planning Commission Findings. The findings within the February 3, 2025 signed Yakima Planning Commission's Recommendation, regarding this proposed text amendments are hereby adopted by the Yakima City Council as its findings in support thereof pursuant to YMC § 15.23.020, and are incorporated herein by this reference as if fully set forth herein.

Section 4. Severability/Validity. If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.


Section 5. Ratification. Any act consistent with the authority, and prior to the effective date of this ordinance is hereby ratified and affirmed.

Section 6. Authorization to File. The City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to file a certified copy of this ordinance with the Yakima County Auditor.


Section 7. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect 30 days after its passage, approval, and publication as provided by law and by the City Charter.

PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL, signed and approved this 6th day of May, 2025.

ATTEST:


Rosalinda Ibarra, City Clerk




Patricia Byers, Mayor

Publication Date: May 10, 2025

Effective Date: June 9, 2025

Exhibit "A"

15.06.050 Computation of required spaces.

The following rules shall apply in the determination of the number of required off-street parking spaces:

A. **Fraction.** If the number of off-street parking spaces required in Table 6-1 contains a fraction, such number shall be rounded up to the next whole number if one-half or over or down to the next whole number if less than one-half.

B. **Mixed Uses.** When different uses occupy a single structure or lot, the total required parking spaces shall be the sum of the requirements of the individual uses.

C. **Shared Uses.**

1. Owners of two or more uses, structures, or parcels of land within three hundred feet of each other may share the same parking or loading areas when the hours of operation do not overlap.

2. The owners of two or more uses, structures, or parcels within three hundred feet of each other may also share facilities concurrently; however, the total parking requirements shall be the sum of the requirements for each individual use.

3. Whenever shared parking is allowed under this section, the parking lot shall be signed so as to reasonably notify the public of the availability of use, and spaces shall not be assigned, allocated, or reserved between uses. (Also see YMC 15.06.060.)

4. A parking easement approved by the administrative official shall be filed with the county auditor whenever two or more uses propose to share off-street parking facilities.

D. **Tandem Parking.** Parking spaces in tandem, having a single means of ingress and egress, shall not be counted as two off-street parking spaces for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of this chapter; except that each tandem space for residential uses shall be counted as a required parking space for every linear 20 feet.

E. **Compact Car Parking.** For parking areas with twenty or more required parking spaces, up to fifteen percent of the required number of off-street parking spaces may be designed for compact car parking. Compact spaces shall be no less than eight feet by seventeen feet and each space must be labeled individually with a durable pavement marking "Compact."

15.06.140 Nonconforming parking.

A. Any use which, on the effective date of the ordinance codified in this section or any amendments hereto, is nonconforming in terms of required off-street parking facilities may continue in the same manner as if they were conforming; however, the number of existing off-street parking spaces shall not be reduced.

B. When an existing structure with nonconforming parking is expanded and additional parking is required, the additional parking spaces shall be provided in accordance with the provisions of this chapter; however, the number of additional spaces shall be computed only to the extent of the enlargement, regardless of whether or not the number of previously existing spaces satisfies the requirements of this chapter.

C. When the use of an existing lot or structure with nonconforming parking is changed to another use listed in Table 4-1, the nonconformity shall cease and the new use shall provide all the required off-street parking in accordance with the provisions of this chapter. However, this requirement may be waived by the administrative official for existing buildings and/or lots within the B-1, CBD or GC zoning districts, containing insufficient area to provide parking, provided the following factors are taken into consideration:

1. New use has similar parking requirements to the previously approved use;
2. The availability of on-street parking;
3. The availability of nearby off-street parking or other opportunities to conform to the parking standard, such as a shared parking agreement; and
4. Location of the business in proximity to the downtown business district exempt area (YMC 15.06.040(C)).

15.08.030 Development permit required.

No sign governed by this title shall be erected, structurally altered or relocated after the adoption without first receiving a development permit from the building official. All applications for a development permit under this chapter shall be reviewed for consistency with the standards of this chapter and other applicable chapters of the Yakima Municipal Code, according to sign type and other applicable regulations.

1. For new freestanding signs and subdivision identification/signs. All on-premises freestanding signs and subdivision identification/use identification signs meeting the standards of this chapter require Modification review under YMC Ch. 15.17 if proposed to be located in a parking space or drive aisle. On-premises signs not meeting the standards shall follow the procedures of YMC 15.08.170, and are otherwise not permitted. Off-premises signs and billboards are permitted as identified in YMC 15.08.130.
2. For Changes or Replacement of an Existing Sign. Structural changes to, or replacement of, an existing sign requires review and approval by the building official.

15.08.060 Sign standards.

The provisions of this chapter and the requirements in Table 8-1, "Type and Number of Signs Permitted," Table 8-2, "Maximum Sign Area," and Table 8-3, "Sign Height and Setbacks," are established for all signs in the zoning districts indicated. All permitted signs are subject to the review procedures of this title and the standards of this section.

15.08.140 Multiple-building complexes and multiple-tenant buildings.

A. Purpose. The following provisions shall apply to multiple-building complexes and multiple-tenant buildings in the commercial and industrial districts. Tenants in such buildings or complexes may also have their own signs in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

B. Number of Freestanding Signs. Each multiple-building complex shall be allowed one freestanding sign on each street frontage in accordance with Table 8-2. When the street frontage is longer than four hundred feet:

1. One additional freestanding sign shall be permitted for each additional four hundred feet of street frontage or part thereof; or
2. A single, larger freestanding sign can be erected in accordance with Table 8-2.

If option 1, as set forth in subsection (B)(1) of this section, is selected, no freestanding sign shall be placed closer than two hundred feet to any other freestanding sign or exceed the standards in Table 8-2. These provisions shall also apply to each multiple-tenant building, unless it is a part of a multiple-building complex.

The allowable freestanding sign(s) may be used to advertise one or more of the uses in the multiple-building complex or multiple-tenant building.

15.09.025 Mixed-use buildings.

A. Purpose and Intent.

1. To provide a streamlined process for new development or redevelopment projects that include a mixture of high density residential along with complementary retail, commercial, or professional uses at a scale that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

B. Level of Review—Mixed-use building.

1. A new or redeveloped mixed-use building is a Class (1) permitted use, requiring Type (1) review, in applicable zones and is determined to be the appropriate level of review for any combination of Class (1) and Class (2) uses listed in those zones.
2. Any combination of uses which includes a Class (3) permitted use shall undergo Type (2) review.
3. The mixed-use building/development shall not contain any use which is otherwise not permitted in the zone.
4. A new mixed-use building that does not meet the layout requirement of subsection (D)(1) of this section shall undergo Type (2) review or be reviewed based upon its particular uses as listed in Table 4-1, whichever is higher.

5. A new mixed-use building located in the downtown business district shall also comply with YMC 15.09.026.

C. Prohibited Uses. The following uses are prohibited in a mixed-use building/development project:

1. All wholesale trade—Storage uses.
2. All transportation uses.
3. All utilities uses.
4. All automotive sales, maintenance and repair, carwash/detailing, paint and body, parts and accessories, and towing uses.
5. Boats and marine accessories.
6. Farm and implements, tools and heavy construction equipment.
7. Farm supplies.
8. Fuel oil and coal distributors.
9. Lumber yards.
10. Nurseries.
11. All rental uses.
12. Repairs: reupholstery and furniture.
13. Repairs: small engine and garden equipment.
14. Service stations.
15. Truck service stations and shops.

D. Development Standards.

1. Layout. A mixed-use building should not have any residential dwelling units located on the ground floor, whenever feasible. A minimum of fifty percent of the total floor area shall be residential dwelling units, and least 60 percent of the ground floor shall be dedicated for community facility or commercial use.
2. Height Bonus. In the B-1, B-2, and SCC zoning districts, the maximum height of the building (YMC 15.05.030, Table 5-1) may be increased to fifty feet if all of the following are met:
 - a. The majority of the additional building height is used to increase the number of dwelling units;

- b. The additional building height is necessary to accommodate off-street parking requirements.
- c. Additional onsite landscaping is provided equal to a minimum of fifteen percent of the parking area.

E. Design Standards.

- 1. Entrances. Primary pedestrian entrances to the building shall face the street frontage or face common open space which is oriented toward the street.
- 2. Transparency.
 - a. There shall be windows on all sides of the building facing streets and pedestrian ways.
 - b. Within the downtown business district, the ground floor of a mixed-use building shall contain transparency for the majority of the wall between three and twelve feet above ground level, including both doors and windows, as measured along street but excluding alleys. Ground floor transparency shall be visually distinct from the above floors by not repeating the exact dimensions and placement of windows.

15.09.026 Downtown business district development.

A. Purpose and Intent.

- 1. To establish standards for new development or redevelopment projects within the downtown business district in order to promote efficient land use and a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- 2. These standards shall apply to the following in the downtown business district:
 - a. New mixed-use buildings, pursuant to YMC 15.09.025.
 - b. New multifamily development.
 - c. New commercial/nonresidential development, except for the following:
 - i. Uses exempt from review per YMC 15.13.025.
 - ii. Uses located in the light industrial zoning district.
- 3. For the purpose of implementing this section, the "downtown business district" shall be defined as the downtown business district exempt area—See YMC [15.06.040](#), Figure 6-1.

B. Development Standards.

- 1. Parking.

- a. Location. Off-street parking shall be located within, behind, below, and/or to the side of the building. Any side of the building that faces a street shall not be fronted by off-street parking. However, for corner lots with more than one street frontage, at least one side of the building that faces the street shall not be fronted by off-street parking. For corner lots that have frontage on Yakima Avenue, that side shall not be fronted by off-street parking.
- b. Off-street parking shall be installed in accordance with YMC Chapter 15.06, except that buildings that cannot physically provide on-street residential parking may utilize off-street private parking through a shared parking agreement; or on-street or off-street public parking if the building is located within the residential or long-term parking boundary (YMC Chapter 9.50).
- c. Off-street parking shall be separated from abutting public rights-of-way that includes an existing or required sidewalk by a landscaping buffer a minimum of four feet in width consisting of a combination of trees and shrubs. Fencing may substitute for the required landscaping buffer.
- d. Parking located within a structure, whether attached to or detached from the primary structure, shall be architecturally compatible with the primary structure. Any openings within a parking structure that do not provide pedestrian or vehicular access shall be screened from view with decorative grilles or landscaping.
- e. These standards shall also apply to standalone parking lots and garages not otherwise part of a development or structure.
- f. A drive-up lane intended to arriving/departing guests, valet service, and other related functions located at the front of motels and hotels (including extended stay) is not considered to be parking for the purpose of this section.

C. Design Standards.

1. Entrances. Primary pedestrian entrances to the building shall face the street frontage or face common open space which is oriented toward the street.
2. Windows Along Streets and Pedestrian Ways.
 - a. There shall be windows on all sides of the building facing streets and pedestrian ways, excluding alleys.
 - b. All floors of a multifamily building shall contain transparency consistent with the Washington State Energy Code, including both doors and windows.
3. Blank Walls.
 - a. Defined. "Blank wall" means a wall or portion of a wall that has eight hundred square feet of vertical surface area without any building modulation, transparency, or other architectural feature.

- b. Along streets and pedestrian ways, a minimum of fifty percent of the wall between three feet and twelve feet above grade shall be treated with one or more of the following elements:
 - i. Architectural variation including but not limited to color, material, and/or modulation.
 - ii. Artwork, including murals and signs.
 - iii. Shrubs, trees, trellises, or other landscaping that may be actively maintained.
- 4. Equipment Screening.
 - a. Electrical and mechanical equipment placed on the ground surface or rooftop shall be screened from view by materials that are consistent and compatible with the design, color, and materials of the building.
 - b. The height of the parapet and other rooftop elements may be increased in order to achieve this and shall comply with the height restrictions of YMC 15.05.030 and 15.10.020(D)(1).
- 5. Multifamily Development Limited Downtown. Multifamily development that does not meet the definition of mixed-use shall comply with the following standards:
 - a. New buildings shall have a minimum front setback of ten feet from the property line or have windows that begin at least three feet above the elevation of the highest adjoining sidewalk or finished ground surface adjacent to the setback.
 - b. Multifamily development in existing or new buildings shall not be permitted in the following locations unless it meets the definition of mixed-use (YMC 15.09.025):
 - i. On any corner lot along Yakima Avenue.
 - ii. Within the Old North Yakima Historic District.

15.10.020 Administrative adjustment of some development standards authorized.

The purpose of this section is to provide flexibility by allowing certain development standards in YMC Chapters 15.05 through 15.08 to be administratively adjusted. A particular standard may be reduced or modified, so long as the administrative official determines that the adjustment and/or reduction is consistent with the intent and purpose of the standards, and will accomplish one or more of the following objectives:

- A. Allow buildings to be sited in a manner which maximizes solar access;
- B. Coordinate development with adjacent land uses and the physical features;
- C. Permit flexibility in the design and placement of structures and other site improvements that is the minimum adjustment necessary to accommodate the proposed structure or site improvement; or

D. Allow development consistent with a specific subarea plan adopted by the appropriate jurisdiction.

Administrative adjustments of development standards shall be processed under Type (2) review for Class (1) and (2) uses, and under Type (3) review for Class (3) uses.

Administrative adjustments of development standards for signs in Chapter 15.08 shall be processed under Type (2) review.

The administrative official shall not have the authority to reduce the site design requirements for minimum lot size, building height, or subdivision requirements set forth in YMC 15.05.030 and Table 5-2; except as provided below:

1. Maximum building height may be increased to incorporate architectural building elements or mechanical equipment that:
 - a. Does not exceed more than a ten percent increase of the total building height; and
 - b. Does not cover more than fifty percent of the total roof area.

15.13.025 Type (1) review exemptions.

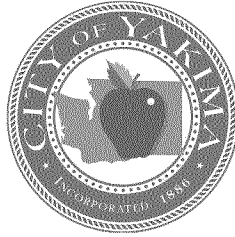
A. Change of use proposals for commercial uses within existing buildings shall be exempt from Type (1) review when the proposed new use is a Class (1) use for the zone in YMC 15.04.030, Table 4-1. New construction, expansion of existing buildings, or alteration of parking lots shall follow the Type (1) review or modification process, as applicable.

B. The following residential uses listed as Class (1) uses in Table 4-1 shall be exempt from Type (1) review when a compliant site plan is submitted with the building plans:

1. Detached single-family dwelling
2. Attached single-family dwelling, common wall
3. Two-family dwelling (duplex) and converted dwelling
4. Accessory dwelling unit
5. Multifamily development up to six dwelling units

15.17.030 Exemptions.

Modifications to existing single-family homes and duplexes when Class (1) or (2) uses shall be exempt from the review processes of this chapter when in conformance with the standards of Table 5-1. For other exemptions from the review processes, see YMC 15.01.040(A).



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
YAKIMA, WASHINGTON
AGENDA STATEMENT**

Item No. 8.B.
For Meeting of: May 6, 2025

ITEM TITLE: Public hearing and Ordinance to consider the Yakima Planning Commission's recommendation regarding text amendments to YMC Title 15 - Yakima Urban Area Zoning Ordinance, Chapters 15.06, 15.08, 15.09, 15.10, 15.13, and 15.17

SUBMITTED BY: *Trevor Martin, Planning Manager

SUMMARY EXPLANATION:

On January 8, 2025, the Yakima Planning Commission conducted an open record public hearing regarding the proposed text amendments to YMC Title 15 (Yakima Urban Area Zoning Ordinance) regarding changes to development permit standards, adding an expedited land use review process for businesses within existing buildings, and adding clarification to downtown business development requirements. No comments were received during the open record public hearing. On February 3, 2025, the chair signed the findings.

The complete record was distributed to City Council in the agenda packet on April 15, 2025, and can be found online at: <https://www.yakimawa.gov/council/agendas-and-minutes/>

ITEM BUDGETED: N/A

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 24-25: A Resilient Yakima

RECOMMENDATION: Pass Ordinance.

ATTACHMENTS:

ORDINANCE_YMC Title 15_TXT#003-24.docx
Track Changes_Title 15_TXT#003-24.pdf