

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Planning Policy Commission  
**FROM:** Minnie Dhaliwal, CPD Director  
**RE:** Title 18 Update – Part 6, IMC 18.500 – 18.702 Through Block Passages  
**DATE:** August 11, 2022

### Background

The Council Ad Hoc Committee's Title 18 Update Desired Goals and Outcome document identifies the following priority relevant to Through Block Passages.

**Goal 10:** *Effective management of travel resulting from new development, in line with non-motorized, transit, and climate goals.*

**Desired Outcome:**

- New multifamily and commercial developments play an active role in managing trips, increasing use of alternatives and reducing traffic and air quality impacts.

**Goal 11:** *Successfully implement the Parks Strategic Plan and Green Necklace.*

**Desired Outcome:**

- Parks and recreational spaces support year-round use; private open space complements public open space; all connecting to other spaces and the City's nonmotorized transportation system.
- The Green Necklace connects the city, region, major parks, schools, commercial/retail areas, and new neighborhoods and, creates a hierarchy of experiences from urban to natural using: bike/pedestrian trails, pedestrian centric shared streets, 'linear urban parks/plazas' next to streets, streets with multi-use paths and sidewalks, green parks, open spaces, and urban plazas

**Goal 13:** *Modernize code and incorporate best practices.*

**Desired Outcome:**

- Create a well-organized, clear code that improves public access to information; provides tools that address community needs; and helps create the kinds of places the community expects.

The draft code for Through-Block Passages adapts and updates existing regulations in the Municipal Code, Central Design and Development Standards and Urban Design Manual.

Attachment A to this memo includes a summary of substantial changes that focus on improvements to organization of code, process or implementation of direction from the Administration or the Commission; but are actions that do not warrant discussion with the Commission. The following Analysis section includes the additional information to help the Commission's discussion of the policy questions posed for this section of code.

## Policy Question

The city anticipates creating individual neighborhood plans in the future. For these areas, outside of Central Issaquah, should the code require through block passages to be constructed with the development of subdivisions only (current code) and/or identify specific through block passage locations through the neighborhood planning processes, which would be implemented during redevelopment?

## Summary of Changes for IMC 18.702 Through Block Passages

The following summarizes the substantive changes made to develop the proposed **18.702 Through Block Passages** chapter and the reasoning behind it. The changes are based on the gaps analysis, previous discussions with the Planning Policy Commission, a Staff evaluation of existing code and feedback from the City attorney's office.

CHANGE	REASON
1. IMC 18.702 is a new section consolidating regulations for all through block passages into one location.	Enables consistency in application and regulation.
2. Created a map showing desired locations for through block passages within the Central Issaquah subarea.	The map helps applicants know where a through block passage should be constructed.
3. Added language requiring the through block passage to have a public access easement and be always accessible to the public.	This ensures the pathways can be used by the public and sets the expectation that these walkways will be accessible 24/7.
4. Added specific design requirements for residential and commercial uses. Landscape bed widths were increased for residential uses. For commercial uses, no vehicles can use the pathways in any circumstance, and the overall corridor width was reduced for feasibility.	Increased bed widths ensure adequate tree growth. Disallowing vehicles increases pedestrian safety. Reducing the width increases the likelihood of construction.
5. Established exceptions when a through block passage can deviate for the Code.	Existing code uses an Administrative Adjustment of Standards (AAS) section to provide code flexibility. The new code limits deviation requests and identifies clear expectations.

## Previous Meetings

- February 10, 2022 – Planning Policy Commission: Parking and Circulation, ([Agenda](#)/ [Minutes](#)/[Video](#) )

## Timeline

- August 11, 2022 – Public Hearing: Title 18 – IMC 18.508 Accessory Uses, IMC 18.510 Temporary Uses, IMC 18.512 Wireless Communication Facilities, IMC 18.516 Sustainable Micro-Infrastructure, IMC 18.702 Through Block Passages, IMC 18.800 SEPA Rules, and IMC 18.810 Forested Hillside Preservation.
- November 2022 – Public Hearings: Consolidated Draft Title 18 Update