



**DATE:** December 4, 2025  
**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Ryan Windish, Community & Economic Development Director  
**CC:** Chrissanda Walker, Associate Planner  
**RE:** Zoning Code Text Amendment – Co-Living Housing (HB 1998 Implementation)

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**I. BACKGROUND / WHY THE AMENDMENTS ARE BEING PROPOSED**

In 2024, the Washington State Legislature adopted Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 1998 requiring all Growth Management Act (GMA) cities to allow co-living housing as a permitted use on any lot within an Urban Growth Area where at least six multifamily dwelling units are allowed. Local regulations must be amended to comply by December 31, 2025.

Co-living housing is defined in state law as a residential development comprised of independently rented sleeping units with shared kitchen facilities. The intent of the legislation is to expand access to lower-cost, market-rate housing options—particularly for workforce, seniors, and single-person households—by enabling development of small private units with shared amenities.

The South Sound Housing Affordability Partners (SSHA<sup>3</sup>P) prepared a regional model ordinance and user guide to assist jurisdictions in implementing HB 1998. The City of Sumner’s draft ordinance (Exhibit A) is based on this regional model.

The City of Sumner must update its zoning code to:

1. Add definitions for co-living housing, sleeping units, shared kitchens, and related terms;
2. Permit co-living housing in all zones where multifamily housing of six or more dwelling units per structure is already allowed;
3. Add performance, density, open space, parking, and sewer connection standards consistent with state law; and
4. Ensure co-living housing is regulated no more restrictively than other multifamily residential uses.

**II. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL**

The proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment would amend several sections of the Sumner Municipal Code (SMC), including SMC 13.16, SMC Title 18, and chapters 18.14, 18.16, 18.29, 18.30, and 18.42, to implement state law on co-living housing and utilize the SSHA<sup>3</sup>P model code.

In summary, the Zoning Code Text amendments would:

### **1. Add New and Update Definitions (SMC 18.04)**

The following definitions within the Zoning Code would be added or updated for clarity, to reference or be consistent with definitions in state law:

- Co-living housing (New)
- Density (Amended)
- Kitchenette (New)
- Major transit stop (New)
- Multifamily dwellings (Amended)
- Rooming and Boarding House (Repealed)
- Sleeping unit (New)
- Shared kitchen (New)
- Define walking distance.

### **2. Permit Co-Living Housing in All Applicable Zones**

Co-living housing is required to be permitted in all zones where six (6) or more units of multifamily housing is allowed per structure. Therefore, co-living housing would be listed as a principal permitted use in:

- Medium Density Residential (MDR) & High Density Residential (HDR) (SMC 18.14)
- General Commercial & Neighborhood Commercial (SMC 18.16)
- Town Center Plan (SMC 18.29)
- East Sumner Urban Village Overlay (ESUV) (SMC 18.30)

### **3. Add Standards for Sleeping Units and Shared Kitchens**

Sleeping units and shared kitchens are a new concept and allowance and would be implemented as follows consistent with HB 1998. Standards include:

- Sleeping unit size  $\leq$  300 sq. ft.
- Private bathrooms required.
- No in-unit kitchens allowed; kitchenettes permitted.
- Shared kitchens required at a minimum ratio of 1 per 15 sleeping units and 1 per floor.

### **4. Define Density and Open Space**

Housing unit density and open space requirements are to be calculated as follows and show up in the definitions for "Density" (SMC 18.04) and as footnotes for each applicable zone:

- For density calculations, each sleeping unit = 0.25 dwelling units.
- Open space requirements for sleeping units =  $\frac{1}{2}$  the requirement for dwelling units.

### **5. Adjust Parking Standards (SMC 18.42)**

Parking standards would be changed to address co-living housing particularly as it relates to "sleeping units" and transit stops summarized below:

- Max of 1 stall per 4 sleeping units.
- No parking required for sites within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of a major transit stop.

## **6. Establish Sewer System Development Charge (SMC 13.16)**

Sewer system development charges are essentially “hook-up” fees and are paid at the time of construction or expansion of a structure and use. Sleeping units need to be included in this code as follows:

- Sewer ERU rate for co-living = 0.375 ERU per sleeping unit, consistent with the 50% cap in HB 1998.

The draft ordinance containing the amendments discussed above is presented in Exhibit A, attached.

## **III. ANALYSIS**

The proposal is consistent with state law (HB1998) and implements key housing and land use goals and policies in the City of Sumner Comprehensive Plan, as discussed below.

### **1. Consistency with State Law (HB 1998)**

The amendments directly implement the mandatory provisions of HB 1998 requiring jurisdictions to:

- Allow co-living where  $\geq 6$  multifamily units are allowed.
- Not impose higher development standards than multifamily housing.
- Limit parking requirements.
- Apply sewer connection fees at  $\leq 50\%$  of multifamily rates.
- Apply density at 0.25 DU per sleeping unit.

The draft ordinance is consistent with all statutory requirements.

### **2. Sumner Comprehensive Plan**

Sumner’s Comprehensive Plan has general policies related to Land Use, Governance Sub-element, Family and Human Services and Housing element that support this proposal:

#### **HOUSING ELEMENT**

The proposal is consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies and goals for establishing Housing Element as follows:

#### **1. Encourage public and private reinvestment in older residential neighborhoods and private rehabilitation of housing.**

- 1.7. Support the preservation of existing mobile home/manufactured home parks as affordable housing.

#### **2. Provide a range of housing types for all life stages and economic segments of the Sumner community.**

- 2.5. Plan for an adequate supply of land to accommodate projected housing needs for all income bands.
  - 2.5.1. Through the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code, Subdivision code, Design Guidelines, and other regulations and standards, allow for a variety of housing types and lot configurations including government-assisted housing; housing for moderate-, low-,

very low-, and extremely low-income households; manufactured housing; multifamily housing; group homes; foster care facilities; emergency housing; emergency shelters; permanent supportive housing; and duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes.

- 2.5.11. Consider implementing strategies such as an inclusionary housing program, minimum densities, density bonuses, adaptive re-use, and others to promote affordable housing.

#### **LAND USE ELEMENT**

The proposal is consistent with Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element policies and goals specifically:

**1. Provide for a variety of land uses in Sumner while preventing adverse impacts and ensuring consistent implementation of policies and regulations.**

- 1.3. Through the Land Use Element and Community Character Element, strive to balance residential, commercial, industrial and public land uses.

- 1.3.1. Periodically review development regulations to remove unnecessary requirements and to balance environmental protection, public participation, and housing and economic development goals.

- 1.7. Ensure new development is consistent with the policies of this Plan through implementation of regulations, programs, and project-specific review.

**CONCLUSION:** The co-living housing amendments would provide additional housing types and living arrangements that are likely to be more affordable than other housing types therefore promoting affordable housing for all life stages and income bands consistent with the goals and policies in the Housing Element. The co-living housing amendments would also provide for a variety of land uses striving to balance residential and other types of land uses throughout the City. Co-living housing would only be allowed in zones that allow for multiplexes of at least 6 units and therefore would focus this type of housing in areas of the city that allow for multi-family, apartments, and mixed use development. Co-living housing would not be allowed in industrial or interchange commercial areas to avoid conflicts with trucks, noise, and other impacts to residential living. The proposed amendments therefore are consistent with pertinent goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

#### **IV. SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) application was submitted on November 21, 2025 under application No. SEPA-2025-0010. A Determination of Non-Significance was issued on December 10, 2025, and published to the public and agencies. Comment period ends December 26, 2025.

#### **V. PUBLIC & AGENCY COMMENT**

No public or agency comments at this time.

#### **VI. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends discussing the proposal and asking questions.

**VII. PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

Planning Commission public hearing is scheduled for January 8, 2026, and a recommendation may follow.

**VIII. EXHIBITS**

- A. Draft Ordinance No. 2953