

# Welcome to Community Conversations

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CHAPTER 9 DISCUSSIONS, CITY OF ELLensburg COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

AUGUST 20 & SEPTEMBER 6

# AGENDA

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- Welcome and Ground Rules
  - What we are here to do/not do
  - Overview of Chapter 9, what does it say?
  - Where is this leading?
- Are we hearing you correctly?
  - Split into two groups depending on position
  - Validate your thoughts/add what's missing
- Nominate for Common Ground
- Closing

## INTRODUCTIONS AND RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

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- City introduction
- Who are the facilitators
- How will we operate together?

- *We are here to understand & explain, not convince*
- *Speak for ourselves*
- *Stick to the activity*
- *Respectful communication*
- *Confidentiality*
- *Civility*

# CHAPTER 9- IN SUMMARY- Three Goals

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**Goal 1:** Increase accessibility to City Services, Projects, Programs and Events

**Goal 2:** Foster Racial Understanding, Equity and Belonging within the Community

**Goal 3:** Increase accessibility to local services and community resources for all residents.

# WHAT'S IN CHAPTER 9 ?

## **Goal I: Increase accessibility to City Services, Projects, Programs and Events**

- Improve accessibility and translation services. Make government documents available in multiple languages and provide physical accommodations and assistance to ensure that all members of the public can access city services and facilities.
- Boost public engagement. Actively promote community projects, events, and recreational activities through various communication channels to encourage broad participation from the public.
- Train city staff and leaders. Equip city employees and elected officials with the necessary tools and training to promote and lead inclusive and equitable actions.
- Increase access to recreational activities. Regularly review the costs of city-sponsored recreation and leisure activities to ensure they are affordable and accessible to everyone.
- Encourage diverse leadership. Support civic education programs and actively work to increase diverse representation within local leadership, organizations, and agencies.

# WHAT'S IN CHAPTER 9?

## **Goal 2: Foster Racial Understanding, Equity and Belonging within the Community**

- Regularly support events and celebrations that highlight the variety of cultural traditions within the community.
- Encourage the creation of spaces where cultural foods and traditions can be shared among members of the community, as well as the creation of public spaces that are accommodating and accessible to all.
- Encourage increased communication and collaboration between the City gov't, CWU, businesses and education and social services sectors, through shared events, projects and outreach to help residents feel more comfortable visiting campus and non-resident students feel more comfortable within the community.
- Encourage City leadership to demonstrate support of marginalized groups through a variety of proclamations, and publicly speak to local actions that affect the diverse members of the community.
- Support the development of a framework to identify and address systemic inequalities within our local institutions.
- Collaborate with local organizations to help local businesses support diverse members of the community.

# WHAT'S IN CHAPTER 9 ?

## **Goal 3: Increase accessibility to local services and community resources for all residents.**

- Partner with health/social services to identify strategies for making their services accessible by all means of transportation.
- Advocate for low income, residential care facilities, and other housing for aging persons to be located close to services and amenities.
- Encourage and support programs that seek to provide residents with access to diverse health care providers who can respond to varying cultural and medical needs.
- Provide opportunities for healthy activity in safe and accessible public spaces for all residents.
- Encourage communication between local businesses, organizations and schools to coordinate food pantries and local food distribution.

# CHAPTER 9- IN SUMMARY

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**Goal 1: Increase accessibility to City Services, Projects, Programs and Events**

**Goal 2: Foster Racial Understanding, Equity and Belonging within the Community**

**Goal 3: Increase accessibility to local services and community resources for all residents.**

## **Action Items Listed:**

- Work with DEI Commission to review city policies
- Begin DEI training for city staff and elected officials
- Increase community engagement and social media outreach
- Review fees for city recreational activities
- Develop accountability framework
- Develop work plan for DEI Commission

# HOW DID WE GET HERE?

## **The City of Ellensburg Comprehensive Plan**

- City updates comprehensive plan every 10 years (state requirement)
- 20-year framework guiding community growth and development
- There are nine chapters. Chapter 9 is Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

## **Community Response**

- March-July 2025: City received numerous applications requesting elimination of Chapter 9 and received many letters and public comments on all sides
- July 21, 2025: City Council docketed Proposal 25-02 to address the applications

## **Organizing Community Input**

- Staff analyzed all written communications and testimony
- Organized feedback into main arguments FOR and AGAINST Chapter 9
- Today's session verifies these organized arguments.

# WHERE IS THIS ALL HEADING?

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- Common Ground Workshop with  
*Braver Angels*
  - Who are they?
  - How will it work
    - Values/Concerns/Solutions
  - How can I participate?



# Main points from each view.

## Pro- DEI Chapter

- **Promoting Inclusivity and Belonging:** The DEI Commission's work helps create a welcoming and accepting community where all residents feel valued.
- **Addressing Historical Inequities and Marginalization:** DEI efforts are necessary to address a history of systemic unfairness. The commission's work is seen to correct these issues and ensure everyone is treated as an equal citizen.
- **Supporting the Community Through Programs and Funding:** DEI Commission provides tangible support such as grant funding for various community groups and initiatives as specified in Chapter 9.
- **Benefitting the Entire Community:** DEI work strengthens the community. This includes attracting visitors and students who feel welcome, which can positively impact the local economy and make Ellensburg a place where people want to live.

## Anti - DEI Chapter

- **Government Scope & Role Concerns:** City government should focus on essential services rather than social policy initiatives. The proper role of local government is to provide core municipal services.
- **Legal Authority Concerns:** DEI policies may create legal risks for the city and exceed proper municipal authority. Compliance with federal guidelines should be prioritized.
- **Budget & Spending Concerns:** Public funds should be directed toward essential city services rather than DEI programs and commission activities.
- **General Opposition to DEI:** DEI concepts and policies should be eliminated from city government entirely.
- **Constitutional Protections & Legal Redundancy:** Existing constitutional protections and federal laws provide adequate safeguards without additional DEI policies. DEI chapters are not required elements of comprehensive plans. *(created 8/20/25)*
- **Process & Administrative Violations:** The city failed to follow established procedures and deadlines in handling comprehensive plan amendment applications, raising questions about fair administration.*(created 8/20/25)*

# Tonight's process- 20-30 minutes

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- Validate what has been submitted to public record- not debate
- Split into two groups based on *your position*
- Use dots/post it notes to confirm values and concerns are represented
- Questions?

# Nominate for Common Ground

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- Someone who is passionate but reasonable/solution oriented
- Nomination form
  - Think of folks who are in this room or couldn't attend
  - Could absolutely be you!
- Common Ground Workshop, October 4, 10am-3:30pm
  - Pre register

# Tonight's process- 20-30 minutes

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- Validate what has been submitted to public record- not debate
- Split into two groups based on *your position*
- Use dots/post it notes to confirm values and concerns are represented
- Questions?

## How to use the dots and notes



**Help Us Get This Right-** We've identified main arguments for removing/keeping/amending Chapter 9 based on written communication submitted to the City. Your job is to tell us if we captured your position accurately.

### Walk Through All *and* Mark Your Response at Each Poster



**GREEN DOT** = "Yes, this captures my position accurately"

- Place on posters that represent your views
- You can agree with multiple categories.



**RED DOT** = "No, this doesn't represent my view"

- Place on posters that mischaracterize your position
- Help us understand what we got wrong



**STICKY NOTE** = Add what's missing/What is wrong

- Write corrections: "This category should say..."
- Add missing arguments: "You didn't include..."
- Clarify nuances: "I agree with this BUT..."

### Important Reminders

- ✓ You can place multiple green dots if several categories fit your position- *but 1 per poster only*.
- ✓ Be honest - this helps design better community conversations
- ✓ Add sticky notes even for categories you agree with if something's missing
- ✓ Stay focused on the specific content of Chapter 9

## Walk Through All and Mark Your Response at Each Poster on your position

 **GREEN DOT** = "Yes, this captures my position accurately"

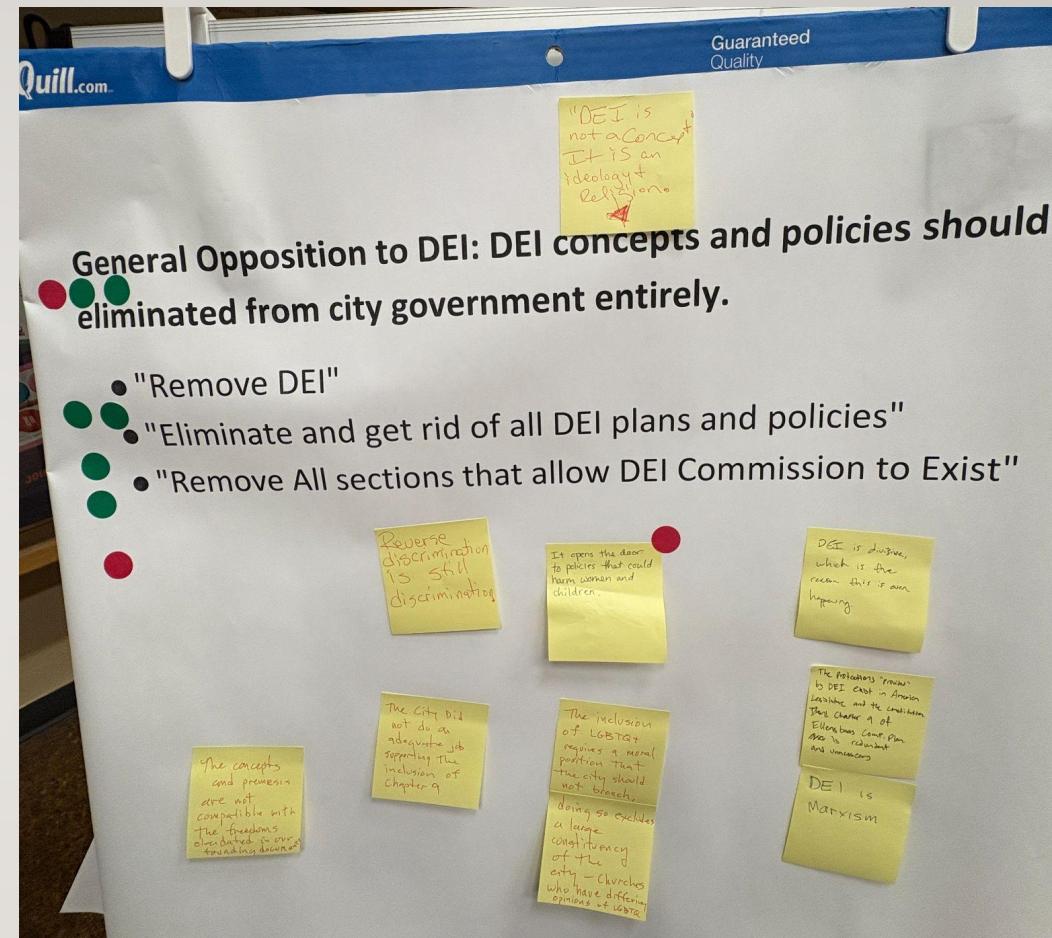
- Place on posters that represent your views
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Dots indicate the *accuracy* of the argument.

Not votes. Not, "most dots wins"



## RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

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- *Civility*

# Main points from each view.

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THANK YOU!

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