

City of Laramie

Planning Division
P.O. Box C
Laramie, WY 82073

Planning: (307) 721-5207
Fax: (307) 721-5248

LARAMIE PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: February 9, 2026

STAFF REPORT

FILE: TA-26-02: 2026 UDC Text Amendment Update

REQUEST: An amendment to multiple Sections within Titles 8 and 15 of the City of Laramie Municipal Code

APPLICANT: City of Laramie

PURPOSE: To update Laramie Municipal Code as a necessary, regular practice

PREPARED BY: Philipp Gabathuler, Planning Manager, AICP

RECOMMENDED MOTION

Move to recommend that the City Council **approve** amendments to LMC Titles 8 and 15 for the purpose of updating definitions, uses, costs, dimensions, and design standards in the city code as recommended by staff.

APPLICABLE CODE SECTION(S):

Text Amendments must be reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council. The Planning Commission's action is forwarded to the City Council as a recommendation.

- Laramie Municipal Code Title 8, Health and Safety Code
- Laramie Municipal Code Title 15, Unified Development Code
- Wyoming State Statutes Title 15 Cities and Towns, Chapter 1, Article 5 Planning
- Wyoming State Statutes Titles 15 Cities and Towns, Chapter 1, Article 6 Zoning
- Laramie Comprehensive Plan

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY:

The present amendment is initiated by the City of Laramie as part of the continual effort to keep the Unified Development Code (UDC) accurate, correct concerns, and remove potential avenues of confusion. All prior revisions to LMC Titles 8 and 15 (Unified Development Code) can be found online at www.cityoflaramie.org/UDC.

The amendments included in this UDC Text Amendment reflect the collective work and coordination of City staff throughout 2025. These amendments and additions were prompted by project experience,

new business models, enquiries from the public, and staff’s constant effort to improve Laramie’s UDC as development continues to evolve.

For each proposed code change, each section will include where changes will occur, a brief description of why these changes are being made, the current code, and the proposed code changes. When changes are being suggested pieces being added will be identified with **bold and underlined** text, while suggested omissions are identified with ~~strike-out text~~. Ultimately the City Council will review suggested changes before the UDC is updated.

The code revisions are categorized into 2 groups:

- I. **Proposed Code Changes (Substantive Changes)** that reshape respective sections of the code.
- II. **Proposed Code Changes (Minor Changes)** that correct sporadic grammatical errors (and similar) or that have minimal impact on the functionality of the code.

I. **PROPOSED CODE CHANGES (SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES):**

1. **Amend Laramie Municipal Code Section 15.10.030.D.1.b.**

The purpose of this amendment is to clarify where a home occupation may occur on a residential property. The updated language explicitly confirms that home occupations may be conducted not only within the dwelling but also within an accessory structure, or as a combination of both spaces, provided the total area devoted to the use does not exceed one-half of the floor area of the principal structure. This clarification ensures that residents who rely on accessory structures—such as garages, studios, or workshops—may lawfully operate home occupations in those spaces while maintaining the intent that such uses remain incidental and secondary to the primary residential use.

Current Definition 15.10.030.D.1.c:

c. The total area used for the home occupation shall not exceed one-half the floor area of the user’s living unit

Proposed Definition 15.10.030.D.1.c:

c. The total area used for the home occupation, **whether located within the principal structure, within an accessory structure, or as a combination of both,** shall not exceed one-half (½) of the floor area of the principal structure.

2. Amend Laramie Municipal Code Section 15.14.120.B (Definitions) to Add a Definition for “Wall Area.”

The purpose of this change is to provide a clear, consistent, and measurable definition of “Wall Area” for use in calculating allowable wall-sign size. The existing Sign Code references wall area dimensions indirectly through sign area formulas but does not define the underlying measurement. This omission has led to confusion among applicants, inconsistent submittals, and interpretive difficulty for staff. Adding a formal definition ensures clarity, uniformity of review, and predictable implementation of wall-sign regulations.

Current Code 15.14.120.B:

The current Definitions subsection does not include a definition for “Wall Area.”

Proposed Addition to 15.14.120.B (Definitions):

60. “Wall area” means the total surface area of an exterior wall of a building, measured as the vertical plane extending from finished grade to the roofline and from one outside edge of the wall to the opposite outside edge. Wall Area includes windows, doors, trim, canopies, architectural projections, and other building features located on that wall. For purposes of calculating allowable wall-sign area, the Wall Area shall be the area of the wall to which the sign is attached and which faces a public street or the primary parking area.

3. Amend Laramie Municipal Code Section 8.32.210.E. (Appeal Process; Hearing).

The purpose of this change is to clarify the proper venue for appealing a final decision of the Board of Appeals (Board of Adjustment). While Wyoming law directs such appeals to the District Court pursuant to the Wyoming Administrative Procedure Act (W.S. § 16-3-114), the current section does not specify this, which can cause uncertainty for property owners and enforcement staff. Adding this sentence increases transparency, provides clear procedural guidance, and aligns nuisance-related appeals with other municipal appeal processes and the Wyoming Procedure Ace.

Current Code 8.32.210.E:

E. After hearing the evidence and argument in the matter, the board of appeals (board of adjustment) shall make a finding as to the existence of a nuisance, and may make findings as to the abatement procedure proposed by the city or the alleged violator, the costs to be allocated to the parties if such has been abated by the city prior to the hearing and the time in which such abatement will be completed by the alleged violator, if not completed by the time of the hearing. If a nuisance is found to exist, the time for completion allowed by the board of appeals (board of adjustment) shall not exceed sixty days from the date of the final order.

Proposed Code Change 8.32.210.E:

E. After hearing the evidence and argument in the matter, the board of appeals (board of adjustment) shall make a finding as to the existence of a nuisance, and may make findings as to the abatement procedure proposed by the city or the alleged violator, the costs to be allocated to the parties if such has been abated by the city prior to the hearing and the time in which such abatement will be completed by the alleged violator, if not completed by the time of the hearing. If a nuisance is found to exist, the time for completion allowed by the board of appeals (board of adjustment) shall not exceed sixty days from the date of the final order.

Any party aggrieved by a final decision of the board of appeals (board of adjustment) may appeal the decision to the District Court of the State of Wyoming in accordance with W.S. § 16-3-114 of the Wyoming Administrative Procedure Act.

4. Amend Laramie Municipal Code Section 15.14.080.C.3 (Building Separation).

The purpose of this change is to remove the minimum five-foot building separation requirement from the development code so that separation between buildings on the same lot is governed exclusively by the life-safety standards of the International Building Code (IBC) and International Residential Code (IRC). Under the current language, any deviation from the fixed five-foot standard requires a variance, even in situations where IBC/IRC provisions—such as fire-resistance-rated exterior walls, protected openings, fire walls, or automatic fire-suppression systems—allow for closer separation distances. Eliminating this zoning requirement reduces unnecessary variance applications, aligns the development code with established building code practices, and ensures that building separation is determined by the appropriate building standards.

Current Code 15.14.080.C.3:

3. Separation

The minimum separation between buildings, including accessory buildings, on the same lot or development parcel is five feet.

Proposed Code Change 15.14.080.C.3:

~~3. Separation~~

~~The minimum separation between buildings, including accessory buildings, on the same lot or development parcel is five feet.~~

5. Amend Laramie Municipal Code Section 15.12.010.D (Dimensional Standards for Townhouse Structures).

The purpose of this change is to clarify that townhouse structures may be constructed across one or multiple platted lots. Existing subsection 15.12.010.D references minimum unit dimensions and infrastructure exceptions but does not explicitly address whether a single townhouse building may cross lot lines. This amendment provides clear guidance that townhouse structures may span multiple lots and that internal lot lines within such structures do not create additional setback requirements, provided all fire-resistance provisions of the International Building Code (IBC) applicable to townhouses are met. This improves clarity, reduces unnecessary variance requests, and aligns zoning and building-code standards.

Current Code 15.12.010.D:

D. Dimensional Standards for Townhouse Structures (Add number 3.)

Proposed Code Change 15.12.010.D:

D. Dimensional Standards for Townhouse Structures

3. Townhouse structures may be constructed across one or multiple platted lots, provided any internal lot lines within a townhouse structure are treated in accordance with applicable International Building Code (IBC) townhouse and fire-resistance requirements, and such internal lot lines shall not create additional setback requirements.

6. Amend Laramie Municipal Code Section Table 15.06-1: Summary Table of Review Procedures

The purpose of this amendment is to correct the Final PUD review procedure in Table 15.06-1: Summary Table of Review Procedures so that it accurately reflects the approval authority established in LMC 15.06.060.C.3. The current table incorrectly lists the City Council as the final decision-making body for Final Planned Unit Developments. However, the development code clearly states that a Final PUD shall be approved by the Department, under the authority of the City Manager's Office, to ensure compliance with the conditions and stipulations of the approved Preliminary PUD Ordinance. This amendment updates the table to match the governing text, clarifies the administrative nature of Final PUD approval, and ensures consistency between the review table and the body of the code. The final plat associated with a PUD is separately reviewed and approved by the City Council, and that approval incorporates the conditions established through the approved PUD process.

Current Table 15.06-1: Summary Table of Review Procedures

TABLE 15.06-1: SUMMARY TABLE OF REVIEW PROCEDURES										
<i>D = Decision (Responsible for Final Decision) R = Review (Responsible for Review and/or Recommendation) A = Appeal (Authority to Hear/Decide Appeals) ✓ = Required</i>										
Procedure/Applicable Section of Code	Section	Pre-Application Meeting	Review and Decision-Making Authority				Notices			Lapse of Approval
			City Manager's Office	Board of Adjustment	Planning Commission	City Council	Published	Written (mailed)	Posted	
Text Amendments/15.06.060.A			R		R	D	✓			N/A
Rezoning/15.06.060.B		✓	R		R	D	✓	✓	✓	N/A
Planned Unit Development (PUD) /15.06.060.C	Preliminary Development Plan	✓	R		R	D	✓	✓	✓	5 years [1]
	Final Development Plan		R		R	D	✓	✓	✓	N/A

Proposed Table 15.06-1: Summary Table of Review Procedures

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Procedure/Applicable Section of Code	Section	Pre-Application Meeting	Review and Decision-Making Authority				Notices			Lapse of Approval
			City Manager's Office	Board of Adjustment	Planning Commission	City Council	Published	Written (mailed)	Posted	
Text Amendments/15.06.060.A			R		R	D	✓			N/A
Rezoning/15.06.060.B		✓	R		R	D	✓	✓	✓	N/A
Planned Unit Development (PUD) /15.06.060.C	Preliminary Development Plan	✓	R		R	D	✓	✓	✓	5 years [1]
	Final Development Plan		R D		R	D	✓	✓	✓	N/A

II. PROPOSED CODE CHANGES (MINOR CHANGES):

1. Amend Laramie Municipal Code Section 15.14.050.i.2.c.v.

The purpose of this amendment is to correct and clarify the bollard specification in LMC 15.14.050.i.2.c.v. The existing text contains a typographical error that misstates the bollard dimensions, creating confusion about the required protective standard. The revised language specifies six-foot-tall, four-inch-diameter, concrete-filled steel pipe bollards, reflecting the actual design intent: that each bollard be installed with approximately two feet buried and four feet remaining above ground. This update ensures the code accurately conveys the intended protective function and installation standard for enclosure protection.

Current Definition 15.14.050.i.2.c.v.:

(iv) All enclosures shall include at least two 6"x48" steel pipe, concrete filled bollards or other protection mechanism as approved by the Public Works Department located a minimum of 4 inches from the rear wall to prevent interior wall damage.

Proposed Definition 15.14.050.i.2.c.v.:

(iv) All enclosures shall include at least two ~~6"x48" steel pipe, concrete filled bollards~~ **six-foot-tall, four-inch-diameter concrete-filled steel pipe bollards** or other protection mechanism as approved by the Public Works Department located a minimum of 4 inches from the rear wall to prevent interior wall damage.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

This amendment was legally advertised in the Laramie Boomerang on January 21, 2026. Staff has received no comments regarding this proposed amendment to Laramie Municipal Code.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

The amendment is found to be in accordance with substantive and procedural requirements and necessities in City of Laramie code and best planning practice.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The amendment is proceeding in accordance with applicable law, including Wyoming State Statutes Titles 15 Cities and Towns, Article 5 Planning and Wyoming State Statutes Titles 8 and 15 Cities and Towns.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Move to recommend that the City Council **approve** amendments to LMC Titles 8 and 15 for the purpose of updating definitions, uses, dimensions and design standards in city code as recommended by staff.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. No Attachments