Project Narrative

For

Lockwood Terrace Subdivision

A Preliminary Type III Subdivision Application

Submitted to
City of La Center

September 2026

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General Information

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Project Contact:	PLS Engineering Jayson Taylor, PE 604 W Evergreen Boulevard Vancouver, WA 98660 (360) 944-6519 pm@plsengineering.com
Location:	NW 1/4, Section 2, T4N, R1E, W.M.
Address:	1518 NE Lockwood Creek Road, La Center, WA 98629
Project Size:	5.12 acres gross (223,140.6 sf)
Zoning:	Medium Density Residential (MDR-16)
Comprehensive Plan:	Urban Medium (UM)
Current Use:	Single-family residence
Parcel Numbers:	209083000 & 209044000
School District:	La Center
Water Purveyor:	Clark Public Utilities (CPU)
Sewer Purveyor:	City of La Center
Fire District:	Clark-Cowlitz Fire & Rescue (CCFR)
Case Number:	Pre-application Case No. 2026-009-PAC

Project Description

The Lockwood Terrace Subdivision proposes to divide approximately 5.12 acres into 34 single-family detached residential lots. The site consists of two parcels (209083000 and 209044000) that currently contain a single-family residence, a detached garage, and a barn, all of which are proposed to be removed with development. The comprehensive plan designation is Urban Medium (UM) with a Medium Density Residential (MDR-16) zoning designation.

The site slopes gently from north to south steepening to approximately 15% in the southern third near NE Lockwood Creek Road. The northern half of the site is timbered/undeveloped; the southern half is landscaped area around the existing residence. The parcel to the west is zoned Residential Professional (RP) and contains a single-family home. The parcels to the east are zoned Low Density Residential (LDR-7.5) and is vacant. Parcels to the south, across NE Lockwood Creek Road, are zoned LDR-7.5 and developed as the Lockwood Creek Subdivision. The parcel to the north is zoned Urban Public Facilities (UP) and is occupied by La Center High School, including a softball field directly adjacent to the site's north property line.

Transportation and Utilities:

NE Lockwood Creek Road forms the site's southern frontage. Half-width frontage improvements are proposed, including curb, gutter, sidewalk, street lighting, and street trees, consistent with the city's applied Minor Arterial "A" cross-section. A new mid-block crosswalk with ADA-compliant ramps is proposed on the south side of Lockwood Creek Road to improve pedestrian connectivity.

Internal access is proposed via two new public Local Access streets, East 5th Street and East 6th Street, connecting to a new Rural Minor Collector, Willow Avenue, which extends north from NE Lockwood Creek Road. Willow Avenue is proposed to run along the site's east property line to provide for a future public connection north to NE 339th Street, consistent with the city's long-range collector network.

Stormwater runoff will be collected, treated, and detained in an on-site facility located on the south end of the site prior to discharge into the existing stormwater main within NE Lockwood Creek Road, approximately 600 feet west of the site.

Clark Public Utilities (CPU) is the public water purveyor. The City of La Center is the public sewer purveyor; the project proposes to connect to the existing 8-inch gravity sewer main in NE Lockwood Creek Road. The existing on-site well and septic system will be removed with site development.

Critical Areas:

There are no know critical areas located onsite. Clark County GIS mapped potential landslide hazards on the south end of the site. A geotechnical engineering study (Earth Engineering, Inc.) has been prepared for the site. This report didn’t identify any hazards onsite and provides recommendations for site development.

Proposal & Code Compliance Discussion

In order to obtain preliminary plat approval, it is necessary to demonstrate how the proposal meets or exceeds each of the applicable approval criteria and various standards set forth in the La Center Municipal Code (LCMC). The following addresses these items, including a general description of how services will be provided to the site and how the proposal is consistent with all applicable provisions.

3.35 / 15.35 Impact Fees

Traffic, park, and school impact fees will be assessed and collected at building permit issuance for each of the 34 proposed lots under Chapter 3.35 LCMC (Traffic and Park Impact Fees) and Chapter 15.35 LCMC (School Impact Fees), at the applicable single-family detached rate.

8.60 Sign Regulations

No signs are proposed with this preliminary submittal. Per LCMC 8.60.060(3)(a), one illuminated freestanding sign may be placed at the subdivision's street entrance, not exceeding 32 square feet in area and 5 feet in height above average grade, and may not be located within the public right-of-way. If proposed at the time of sign permit, the sign will be sited outside sight-distance triangles per the Engineering Standards, its base landscaped consistent with LCMC 8.60.050 (landscaped area at least 80% of the sign face area), and its base/support constructed of an approved material (stone, brick, stucco, textured wood, tile, or textured concrete), with any illumination shielded and non-flashing.

Title 12 Streets, Sidewalks and Public Ways

LCMC 12.05 & 12.10 Street, Curbs, and Sidewalks

Street and Road Standards

This Chapter establishes right-of-way dedication and street improvement requirements; per LCMC 12.10.040, the physical design standards themselves are adopted by reference from the City of La Center Engineering Standards for Construction (Dec. 2022) and the WSDOT/APWA Standard Specifications. Table 2.1 of the Engineering Standards sets right-of-way width, pavement width, travel/turn/bike lane counts, sidewalk width, and design speed for each of the city's street classifications (Major Arterial, Minor Arterial, Minor Arterial "A," Rural Major Collector, Rural Minor Collector, Neighborhood Access, and Local Access).

NE Lockwood Creek Road forms the site's southern boundary and is classified Minor Arterial "A" (66-foot right-of-way, 48-foot pavement width: two 12-foot travel lanes, one 12-foot center turn lane, and two 6-foot bicycle lanes, per Engineering Standards Table 2.1). Per LCMC 12.10.190, half-width frontage improvements — curb, gutter, planter strip with street trees, a 6-foot sidewalk, and street lighting — are proposed along the site's frontage.

No direct lot access to NE Lockwood Creek Road is proposed; all lots take access from the internal public street network (East 5th Street, East 6th Street) classified as Local Access roadways (50-foot right-of-way, 32-foot pavement width) Will Rural Minor Collector C, respectively, per Engineering Standards Table 2.1.

Willow Avenue is proposed as a Rural Minor Collector (50-foot right-of-way, 32-foot pavement width). This roadway starts in the SE corner of the site and follows the eastern property line until curving toward the site to the east. This roadway alignment will facilitate a future roadway connection to NE 339th Street consistent with the city's long-range collector network.

Per LCMC 12.10.090(6), new intersections within new developments must be spaced 100 to 500 feet apart; the intersection of Willow Avenue with NE Lockwood Creek Road is located to provide approximately equal spacing between the adjacent intersections along NE Lockwood Creek Road, satisfying this standard. Sight distance at all internal and frontage intersections will meet the Engineering Standards' sight-distance criteria (Section 2.15) for each street's design speed. No road modification request is proposed with this application.

Per Clark-Cowlitz Fire & Rescue's (CCFR) pre-application comments, a development of 34 dwelling units served by a single access road requires an approved automatic fire sprinkler system in all dwellings per International Fire Code (IFC) Appendix D, Section 903.3.1.1, 903.3.1.2, or 903.3.1.3, in lieu of a second point of access. If a secondary point of access is not provided by final plat, automatic fire sprinklers will be installed in all dwellings consistent with this provision.

Transportation Concurrency

A Traffic Impact Study (PLS Engineering, dated July 17, 2026) was prepared for the project and concludes:

- The proposed subdivision results in a net increase of 33 dwelling units (34 new lots less 1 existing residence to be removed), generating an estimated 23 net new AM peak-hour trips, 31 net new PM peak-hour trips, and 300 net new average weekday trips.
- Site access is provided via a new public street connection (Willow Avenue) at NE Lockwood Creek Road.
- Of the six study intersections analyzed, all are projected to operate acceptably per City of La Center mobility standards through the 2028 horizon year, with the exception of NW Timmen Road/NW La Center Road, which is projected to exceed the city's mobility standard independent of this project's traffic; the city is separately pursuing a roundabout reconstruction of that intersection, and no additional mitigation is attributed to or required of this project.
- No turn-lane or signal warrants are met at the site access or at study intersections through the 2028 horizon year.
- Sight distance at the proposed site access exceeds minimum standards provided that on-site vegetation identified in the study is cleared or maintained per the report's recommendations.

Title 13 Public Utilities

LCMC 13.10 Sewer & Water System Rules and Regulations

Clark Public Utilities (CPU) will provide public water service to the site. Water system design (main sizing, fire flow, and meter requirements) is reviewed and approved by CPU to its own standards (Engineering Standards §1.10.A.5) rather than under LCMC Title 13. A CPU Water Availability Letter was provided to the applicant at the pre-application conference and is included with this application.

The City of La Center will provide public sanitary sewer service. The project proposes to connect to the existing 8-inch gravity sewer main in NE Lockwood Creek Road.

Existing wells or septic systems on the site will be removed with site development.

Title 15 Buildings and Construction

LCMC Chapter 15 documents a variety of requirements related to buildings and structures. Individual homes will be constructed under separate building permits and will comply with the La Center Building and Specialty Codes adopted at LCMC 15.05.030, currently the 2021 IBC, IRC, IFC, UPC, IMC/IFGC, IECC (Washington State Energy Code), International Property Maintenance Code, and International Existing Building Code, each with Washington State and City amendments, in effect at the time of the building permit submittal

Fire protection and access will comply with the International Fire Code as amended by LCMC 15.05.030(3) and administered by Clark-Cowlitz Fire & Rescue (CCFR), including the fire apparatus access and sprinkler requirements. Per LCMC 15.05.030(3)(b)(iv)(B), fire hydrants serving the proposed single-family lots will be spaced no more than 500 feet apart, with no dwelling more than 400 feet from a hydrant, as a condition of subdivision approval.

18.10 – General Provisions

The City of La Center Development Code (LCMC Title 18) regulates land use and development within city limits. LCMC 18.110 establishes the official zoning map and districts. The subject parcels are designated Medium Density Residential (MDR-16) on the city's zoning map, with a comprehensive plan designation of Urban Medium (UM).

18.140 – Medium Density Residential District (MDR-16)

Single-family detached dwellings are a permitted use in the MDR-16 district. The applicant proposes 34 single-family detached lots.

Density: Gross site area: 5.12 acres
Net area for density calculation: 3.94 acres
Allowed density range (SF detached): 8–12 du/net acre
Proposed density: approx. 8.6 du/net acre

LCMC Table 18.140.030 — Dimensional Requirements (single-family detached)

	Required	**Proposed**
Min. Lot Area	3,000 sf	3,039–7,865 sf
Max. Lot Area	15,000 sf	7,865 sf (largest lot)
Min. Lot Width	30'	30’
Min. Lot Depth	60'	90’
Front Setback	10' (25' if abutting arterial/collector)	10' / 25' as applicable
Garage Setback (front)	20'	20'
Garage Setback (alley)	3'	N/A — no alleys proposed
Side Setback	4'	4'
Street Side Setback	10'	10'
Rear Setback	10'	10'
Max. Lot Coverage	60%	60% or less
Max. Building Height	35'	35' or less

"Beveling" Requirement (LCMC 18.140.030(2)):

The site shares a direct (non-street-separated) property line with the LDR-7.5 district along its east boundary. Per LCMC 18.140.030(2), MDR-16 lots abutting an LDR district along a shared property line must be sized at no less than 90% of the abutting LDR zone's minimum lot area (7,500 sf minimum), requiring perimeter lots of at least 6,750 sf. The lots along the site's east boundary are sized at 6,750 sf or greater, meeting this standard directly. Density transfer under LCMC 18.140.030(3) remains available as an option but is not utilized or required for this proposal.

18.245 – Landscaping

Per LCMC Table 18.245.060, an MDR-16 site abutting LDR-7.5 requires an L1 buffer (5-foot minimum) along the shared property line, whether or not separated by a street. Along the north property line, which abuts the UP-zoned La Center High School site, an L2 buffer (5 feet, if separated by a street) or L3 buffer (10 feet, if not separated by a street) applies.

The applicant proposes the minimum required L1 buffer (5 feet) along the east property line and the minimum required L3 buffer (10 feet, not separated by a street) along the north property line. The site sits at a lower elevation than the adjacent softball field, and additional landscape buffering is not expected to meaningfully reduce the potential for stray balls onto the site.

Per LCMC 18.140.040(3), a minimum of 15% of net project acreage will be landscaped, all buffer areas will be landscaped with live vegetation, and street trees will be planted at a minimum 2-inch caliper on 30-foot centers within planter strips along all public street frontages. Individual lot landscaping will be installed consistent with LCMC requirements at the time of building permit and confirmed prior to final occupancy of each home.

18.350 – Tree Protection

All trees on site are proposed to be removed to accommodate the residential development, grading, and street network. A Type II tree cutting permit will be obtained concurrently with the preliminary plat for removal of any tree exceeding 10 inches in diameter at breast height (DBH), consistent with LCMC 18.350. A tree protection plan has been submitted that was prepared by landscape architect per LCMC 18.350.060. The applicant will demonstrate that no reasonable alternative exists to the proposed tree removal, consistent with LCMC 18.350.080, given that the site must be graded and platted to accommodate the approved lot yield and street network. Mitigation for trees 10 inches DBH or greater that are removed will be provided per LCMC 18.350.050, at a ratio of one replacement tree (2-inch caliper deciduous or 6-8 foot evergreen) per tree removed, through on-site replanting.

18.242 – Parks and Open Space

This section applies to MDR-16 developments of 35 or more dwelling units. The proposed subdivision consists of 34 lots and therefore falls below this threshold.

18.280 – Off-Street Parking and Loading

Per LCMC Table 18.280.040, single-family detached dwellings require 2 parking spaces per unit. With 34 proposed dwelling units, 68 parking spaces are required. Each lot will provide 2 off-street parking spaces, consisting of at least a single-car garage and driveway space for at least one additional vehicle.

18.320 – Stormwater and Erosion Control

A Preliminary Stormwater Plan and Technical Information Report have been prepared for the project consistent with LCMC 18.320.200. Water quality treatment facilities are sized to the 6-month, 24-hour design storm per LCMC 18.320.210, using best management practices consistent with the Department of Ecology Puget Sound manual referenced in the code.

A geotechnical evaluation (Earth Engineering, Inc.) found on-site soils (elastic silt) unsuitable for infiltration, with measured infiltration rates of 0.1–0.2 inches per hour. Stormwater will therefore be collected, treated, and detained in an on-site facility on the south end of the site prior to discharge to the existing stormwater main within NE Lockwood Creek Road, approximately 600 feet west of the site. Discharging to the existing main avoids the flooding conditions the city has identified along the roadside ditch.

18.300 – Critical Areas

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas

The site is mapped within a Category 2 Critical Aquifer Recharge Area per LCMC 18.300.090(1). Residential development is not subject to additional CARA permitting requirements within a Category 2 area, and no Category I (wellhead protection) area is mapped on the site.

Geologically Hazardous Areas

A geotechnical engineering study (Earth Engineering, Inc. dated May 6, 2026) was prepared for the site addressing geologic hazard requirements under LCMC 18.300.090(4), including the site's seismic hazard designation (IBC Site Class D). The report concludes that no known active faults exist within one mile of the site and that liquefaction is unlikely given the stiff soil conditions encountered. The project will be designed and constructed in accordance with the geotechnical report's recommendations.

18.30 – Procedures

The proposed preliminary plat is a Type III land use process under LCMC 18.30.030 and 18.210.020, requiring a public hearing before the City's hearings examiner. A pre-application conference was held on March 25, 2026 (City of La Center Case No. 2026-009-PAC), with the city's written summary issued April 2, 2026. The application will be processed consistent with the Type III review timeline in LCMC 18.30.100, including technical completeness review, public notice, a hearing before the hearings examiner, and issuance of a written decision.

18.225 – Legal Lot Determination

A legal lot determination (Type I process) is being processed concurrently with the preliminary plat application to confirm that at least one of the onsite parcels qualify as a legal lot of record under LCMC 18.225. Per LCMC 18.225.010(4), the application includes a deed history of the parcel back to 1969.

18.210 – Subdivision Provisions

This narrative and the accompanying application materials demonstrate that the proposed preliminary plat satisfies the approval criteria of LCMC 18.210.040, including compliance with:

- Chapter 12.05 LCMC (Sidewalks) and Chapter 12.10 LCMC (Public and Private Road Standards) - address above
- Chapter 18.300 LCMC (Critical Areas) - addressed above;
- Chapter 18.310 LCMC (SEPA) - addressed below;
- Chapter 18.320 LCMC (Stormwater and Erosion Control) - addressed above;
- Chapter 15.05 LCMC (Building Code and Specialty Codes) - addressed below;

- Chapter 15.35 LCMC (School Impact Fees) - addressed above; and
- LCMC Title 18 - as addressed throughout this narrative.

The project makes appropriate provision for potable water supply (Clark Public Utilities), sanitary sewer disposal (City of La Center), roads, and drainage. Students living in the proposed subdivision will attend La Center schools; La Center High School is directly adjacent to the site. No phasing is proposed; the subdivision will be constructed and platted as a single phase. Preliminary plat approval will expire five years from the date of the final decision unless extended, consistent with LCMC 18.210.050 (see also RCW 58.17.140(3)(a)).

18.240 – Mitigation of Adverse Impacts

LCMC 18.240 authorizes the city to identify and require mitigation of direct impacts of the proposed development on public facilities and services, including streets, drainage, parks, and schools, considering predevelopment versus post-development demand and the cumulative effect of the proposed development. The direct impacts of the subdivision are addressed through the frontage and internal street improvements, stormwater facility, sewer connection, and impact fees discussed throughout this narrative. No voluntary payment agreement in lieu of dedication or improvements (LCMC 18.240.040) is proposed at this time.

18.310 – SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act)

The proposed subdivision exceeds the City of La Center's four-unit categorical exemption threshold and is therefore subject to environmental review under LCMC 18.310, which adopts SEPA (RCW 43.21C) and WAC 197-11 by reference. A SEPA environmental checklist will be submitted concurrently with the preliminary plat application. The comment periods for SEPA and the land use application will run concurrently, and the hearings examiner will not issue a final decision until the SEPA threshold determination comment period has closed, consistent with LCMC 18.30.100(4)(b)(iii).

18.360 – Archaeological Resource Protection

An Archaeological Predetermination Survey and formal survey (Applied Archaeological Research, Inc., Report No. 3105b, dated July 27, 2026; DAHP Project No. 2026-05-03406) was completed for the site consistent with LCMC 18.360. The survey included 22 shovel test probes and identified a new pre-contact archaeological site (45CL1654), consisting of a low-density scatter of lithic debitage in disturbed contexts. The three existing on-site structures were evaluated and found not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The report recommends that site 45CL1654 be addressed through careful surface scraping in advance of or during development, to be performed under a permit issued by DAHP, and that construction crews stop work and notify the Clark County Archaeological Permit Coordinator and DAHP immediately if any additional archaeological materials or human

remains are discovered, consistent with WAC 25-48. The AAR report and associated historic property inventory forms have been submitted to DAHP; DAHP acknowledged receipt (email dated September 3, 2026) and is routing the materials to its Built Environment reviewers.

RCW 58.17

Per RCW 58.17.110, the City may not approve this preliminary plat unless it determines that appropriate provisions are made for "the public health, safety, and general welfare, for open spaces, drainage ways, streets or roads, alleys, other public ways, transit stops, potable water supplies, sanitary wastes, parks and recreation, playgrounds, schools and schoolgrounds," including safe walking conditions for students who walk to school, and that the public interest will be served by the subdivision. This narrative and the accompanying application materials demonstrate these appropriate provisions throughout, including roads and frontage improvements, stormwater drainage, potable water (Clark Public Utilities), sanitary sewer (City of La Center), and schools (La Center School District, whose high school directly adjoins the site). Per RCW 58.17.140(3)(a), the resulting preliminary plat approval will be valid for five years from its date of approval (see also LCMC 18.210.050, above).

La Center Comprehensive Plan

The proposed subdivision is consistent with the Urban Medium (UM) comprehensive plan designation and supports the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and the Growth Management Act by providing additional housing within the city's designated urban growth area, served by adequate public facilities and services.