



JEFFERSON COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

621 Sheridan Street • Port Townsend • Washington 98368
360/379-4450 • 360/379-4451 Fax
www.co.jefferson.wa.us/commdevelopment

Memorandum: 2006 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle

To: Jefferson County Board of Commissioners (BoCC), County Administrator, Planning Commission, and Interested Parties
Fr: Department of Community Development (DCD) Long-Range Planning (LRP)
Date: March 22, 2006
Re: DCD review of Preliminary Docket for 2006 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle and recommendation for Final Docket

Attachments: Item 1: 2006 Preliminary Docket
Item 2: 2006 List of LRP Ongoing Programs and Pending Projects

Background

Pursuant to Chapter 18.45 of the Unified Development Code (UDC), Title 18 of the Jefferson County Code (JCC), DCD is charged with the task of reviewing suggested amendments on the Preliminary Docket for the Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle and preparing a report concerning which suggested amendments should be placed on the Final Docket. In so doing, staff is required to address the need, urgency and appropriateness of each suggested amendment and to include the following considerations in their recommendation:

1. The availability of sufficient DCD staff to substantively review the suggested amendments and manage the public review process.
2. Anticipated DCD cost and budget for processing the suggested amendments.

These recommendations consider the proposed amendments in the context of available resources.

Suggested Amendments

There are two (2) suggested Comprehensive Plan amendments on the Preliminary Docket (see attached Item 1). One of these amendments is proposed by a current Planning Commissioner; the other is proposed by DCD. Complete copies of each application have been provided to the Planning Commission and the BoCC. There is a webpage dedicated to the 2006 Cycle that can be accessed from the County homepage: www.co.jefferson.wa.us.

In addition to the two suggested amendments, Jefferson County has received five (5) formal site-specific amendment applications for a grand total of seven (7) proposed amendments. Pursuant to the UDC, site-specific applications are automatically included on the Final Docket.

Discussion of DCD Staff Sufficiency

DCD's Long-Range Planning (LRP) division currently consists of three full-time community planners, one part-time project coordinator, and one part-time Planning Commission Secretary. Based on our 2006 list of ongoing Long-Range Planning programs and projects (see attached Item 2), LRP is responsible for over 15 broad program-based items, including Planning Commission staffing, and multiple project-based items. Inclusion of suggested amendments on the Final Docket must involve consideration of LRP resources and workload.

Anticipated DCD Cost and Budget

The March 22, 2000 Cost Analysis done for the 1999/2000 Comprehensive Plan Amendment process showed a total cost of \$31,700 for 14 Comprehensive Plan amendments with an average review cost of \$2,265 per amendment. Using the average cost of \$2,265 per amendment, review of the five formal site-specific amendments required to be on the final docket would cost approximately \$11,325. However, one of the site-specific amendments, MLA06-87, is for a Master Planned Resort (MPR) at Black Point in Brinnon. Designation of a new MPR is a large-scale proposal relative to a more typical site-specific amendment. Evaluation of the proposal is dependent upon cost sharing with the proponents. The current LRP staff resources, even when combined with Development Review Division (DRD) resources with respect to evaluation of a Master Plan and review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), are insufficient to complete review of this proposal without additional resources. In this case, the proponents will be covering additional costs; nonetheless, the scale, complexity, and controversy of the proposal will be a challenge to DCD this year.

Assuming the average cost of a Comprehensive Plan amendment is the same for a suggested amendment, including the two suggested amendments on the Final Docket would result in a total estimated cost for processing all seven amendments on the Docket of \$15,855 (assuming that additional costs for MPR review are covered by the proponents).

Planning Commission Work Plan

In addition to staff time, it should be noted that all Comprehensive Plan amendments require review by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will need to consider other issues during this year, including, but not limited to, code amendment proposals related to the "Omnibus" package on remand from the BoCC and "best available science" and critical areas in relation to a 2006 settlement agreement to an earlier Hearings Board petition. The Planning Commission also needs to begin working on draft proposals for potential refinement and consideration in 2007. Based on budgetary restrictions and in an effort to save costs, DCD has adopted a Service Policy limiting Planning Commission meetings to twice per month. The number of suggested amendments included on the Final Docket directly affects the Planning Commission's ability to provide thorough and thoughtful amendment review.

Department of Community Development Final Docket Recommendation

Following are summary descriptions of the two suggested amendments on the Preliminary Docket and staff comments on each in relation to project demand on available resources:

1. **MLA06-78** proposed by Planning Commission Member Dennis Schultz suggesting the following: 1) Where there is currently a combined land use and zoning map that resides in the Comprehensive Plan, create two distinct maps—the more general land use designations for the Comprehensive Plan and the more specific zoning classifications and associated development densities to reside in the UDC. The result would be that requests for change in zoning density within a land use designation (e.g., Rural Residential) could be processed outside of the annual Comprehensive Plan amendment cycle. Amendments to the UDC would continue to involve public review through the Planning Commission and a legislative decision by the BoCC.

Comment: Staff anticipates that this proposal would command a fair degree of County resources to implement, including GIS and mapping resources from the Department of Central Services. Consideration of the line-in/line-out text amendment proposal itself is unlikely to require significant staff and Planning Commission time; it is the required follow-up work and the potential concurrent work that would appear to be more time-consuming. For example, implementation of this proposal would necessarily include corresponding amendments to the development code and significant map work. A survey of the code would be needed to ensure consistent references to two distinct maps—one being the Comprehensive Plan map of land use designations and the other being the zoning map to be housed within the development code itself or in some other capacity (other than part and parcel of the Comprehensive Plan). Such a survey is also most likely needed for the Comprehensive Plan itself, work which would either be conducted concurrent to review of this proposal in 2006 or added to the Docket for 2007. Additionally, code amendments would follow that establish the process and criteria by which proposed *rezones* would be reviewed, as opposed to site-specific Comprehensive Plan amendments (i.e., changes to the map of Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations). Finally, the map of Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations itself would need to be changed to reflect the

distinction between a more general land use map in the Comprehensive Plan and a more specific zoning map, one that included a variety of densities and classifications within a general land use designation. This work would either be concurrent in 2006 or subsequent in 2007.

These comments are not reflective of the potential merit of the proposal, but rather an acknowledgment of the additional work that staff anticipates is needed either concurrently with consideration of the proposal or subsequent to adoption.

2. **MLA06-86** proposed by Jefferson County DCD suggesting the following: 1) Changes to narrative and policy language in the Comprehensive Plan to support development of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program for moving development rights from “sending” areas to “receiving” areas under procedures and criteria to be developed for the UDC. Additionally, changes to policy language concerning the annual review of applications for increased development densities for parcels designed Rural Residential, as well as a potential connection between these types of request and a TDR program.

Comment: Staff anticipates that review of the proposed text amendments to the Comprehensive Plan would not require significant use of resources. The development, establishment and implementation of a TDR program is a separate question and would command a fair degree of County resources. The suggested amendment is meant to elaborate upon existing Comprehensive Plan policy with respect to the potential for a TDR program to be used as a tool to meet Comprehensive Plan goals. In this vein, TDR-related language is proposed to be added to numerous sections of the Plan, where TDR-related language is currently limited in its appearance in the Plan. The proposed TDR language and “fix” language related to Rural Residential upzones has already been developed and, apart from refinement, staff would not anticipate the need for a substantial amount of time dedicated to review of this proposal. The decision to dedicate resources to actual development of a TDR program is a distinct matter. Work toward the establishment of a TDR program could occur in 2006 or be postponed until 2007 or beyond. This work would include development and consideration of a code amendment proposal that would carry procedural details and criteria associated with application of a TDR program to land use decisions.

The TDR aspect of this proposal is intended to strengthen and broaden language related to the potential use of a TDR program in Jefferson County. There is already Plan policy that enables the development of a TDR program, should resources be so directed. Staff considers the proposed policy language related to Rural Residential rezones to be of high importance in light of recurring problems involving Plan interpretation with respect to site-specific Rural Residential rezone applications.

Conclusion

Based on an assessment of DCD staffing levels, anticipated cost and budget, current countywide budget conditions, and the merits of the two proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments, staff recommends that both of the suggested amendments be included on the Final Docket. If both suggested amendments are docketed by the BoCC, the Final Docket would be composed of a total of seven items when combined with the five site-specific applications that are automatically included. Both of the suggested amendments are anticipated to command resources. MLA06-86 is a more complete proposal at this time than MLA06-78 in the sense that no concurrent work is needed, apart from review of the proposals themselves. Both proposals require follow-up administrative tasks and corresponding code amendments.

[End]