



JEFFERSON COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Administrator's Report on the Suggested Amendments 2008 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle

To: Jefferson County Board of Commissioners (BoCC), County Administrator, Planning Commission, and Interested Parties
Fr: Stacie Hoskins, Planning Manager
Date: April 1, 2008
Re: DCD review of Preliminary Docket for 2008 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle and Administrator's Report for the 2008 Final Docket

Background

Pursuant to Chapter 18.45 of the Jefferson County Code, 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:

- a) The availability of sufficient DCD staff to substantively review the suggested amendments and manage the public review process.
- b) Anticipated DCD cost and budget for processing the suggested amendments.

These recommendations consider the proposed amendments in the context of need, urgency, and appropriateness, and also based upon available resources.

Suggested Amendments

There are three (3) suggested Comprehensive Plan amendments on the Preliminary Docket (see attached). Two of these amendments are proposed by the Planning Commission; the third 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 2008 Cycle that can be accessed from the County homepage:

<http://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/commdevelopment/complan.htm>

In addition to the three suggested amendments, Jefferson County has received ten (10) formal site-specific amendment applications for a total of thirteen (13) proposed amendments. Pursuant to JCC 18.45.050(3), 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 four full-time planners, and one full-time Planning Clerk. Based on the 2008 list of ongoing Long-Range Planning programs and projects, LRP is responsible for over twenty (20) broad program-based items, including Planning Commission staffing, and multiple project-based items. Urgency of some projects and state requirements often direct the focus of the LRP work plan. Inclusion of suggested amendments on the Final Docket shall consider 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. An application fee of \$2,503 has been collected for each site-specific amendment. Some applications have the potential to require much more personnel time and expense due to the public interest in these applications. The scale, complexity, and potential controversy of some of the proposals will be a challenge to DCD staffing this year. Specifically, the cost of staffing to process the Industrial Land Bank, Iron Mountain Quarry, and side-by-side proposals exceeds the aforementioned estimated cost per application. Current DCD staff resources may be insufficient to complete review of these proposals without additional resources.

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, substantive review and public process related to:

- the Shoreline Master Plan update;
- the proposed Port Hadlock and Irondale Urban Growth Area's capital facilities plan for sewers;
- changes to the Comprehensive Plan's UGA element to reach compliance with the Growth Management Act through the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board;
- Master Planned Resort development agreement, zoning code, zoning map with associated supplemental EIS.

The Planning Commission meeting schedule includes two meetings per month.

A review of the 2007 Planning Commission schedule of tasks argues for a reduced work plan, as 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 three suggested amendments on the Preliminary Docket and staff comments on each in relation to project demand with respect to need, urgency, and appropriateness, and in the context of available resources:

1. **MLA07-104** proposed by Jefferson County DCD, requesting the following: The designation of an Industrial Land Bank, a provision of the Growth Management Act under RCW 36.70.A.367, to provide additional employment opportunities for citizens. This amendment proposal was approved for carry-over from the 2007 cycle.

Administrator's Recommendation: Staff recognizes that this proposed amendment will command a substantial degree of County resources to implement. On January 28, 2008, with adoption of Ordinance No. 02-0128-08, the BoCC approved carrying over this amendment from the 2007 docket due to its intention to focus staff energies on accomplishing the designation of specific sites in 2008 for a major industrial employer.

In 2007 Governor Gregoire signed HB 1965-2007-08, a bill which lifted the "sunset" provision for the ILB designation, extending the statutory authority into 2008. When the bill was signed, DCD committed to carrying over work on MLA07-104 from the 2007 amendment cycle into the 2008 amendment cycle. Staff concurs with the BoCC decision, and recommends including the suggested amendment on the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Final Docket.

2. **MLA08-98** proposed by the Planning Commission, requesting the following: 1) Identify inconsistencies between the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Development Code. 2) Propose alternative language to rectify the inconsistencies.

Administrator's Recommendation: The 7-year update per RCW 36.70A.130(4)(a) is due to be completed on December 1, 2011. To meet this deadline whereby the Planning Commission reviews and, if necessary, recommends revisions to the Comprehensive Plan in accordance with JCC 18.45.050(4)(a), the Planning Commission "shall complete its assessment of the Comprehensive Plan by November 1st of the year prior to the assessment." To allow sufficient time for Planning Commission review and public involvement, staff recommends that the Planning Commission postpone this amendment application and combine it with work on the Periodic Assessment, commencing in Spring 2009.

Staff anticipates that this proposal would also command a substantial degree of County resources to implement. As indicated above, including the item on the 2009 Work Plan would lead to greater efficiency when combined with work on the Periodic Assessment.

Staff cannot support additional committees formed by the Planning Commission without additional Long-Range Planners and administrative support.

3. **MLA08-99** proposed by the Planning Commission, requesting the following: Relocate density changes within a zone from the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan to the Unified Development Code, with the goal of promoting increased efficiency in planning and public processes. by Jefferson County, requesting the following:

Administrator's Recommendation: Staff anticipates that this proposal would command a substantial degree of County resources to implement, and recommends not including the proposal on the 2008 Comprehensive Final Docket.

Staff cannot support additional committees formed by the Planning Commission without additional Long-Range Planners and administrative support. Staff suggests that this proposal could also be analyzed as part of the Periodic Assessment, referenced in the first paragraph in #2 above.

Conclusion

Based on an assessment of need, urgency, and appropriateness, as well as considerations of DCD staffing levels, anticipated cost and budget, and current countywide budget conditions, staff recommends that only one of the suggested amendments, MLA07-104, be included on the Final Docket, work on which is currently underway from 2007. If all three suggested amendments are docketed by the BoCC, the Final Docket will be composed of a total of thirteen (13) items when combined with the ten (10) site-specific applications that are automatically included. For the aforementioned reasons, DCD recommends that the Final Docket be limited to a sum total of eleven (11) amendment proposals. Should the Board decide to include the two remaining suggested amendments or the Planning Commission deems additional committees necessary, we recommend the Board grant DCD the authority to obtain additional staffing.

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the suggested amendments on April 16, 2008.

Per JCC 18.45.060(4)(a), "The Board of County Commissioners may adopt the Planning Commission's recommended Final Docket without a public hearing; however, in the event that a majority of the Board of County Commissioners decides to add or subtract suggested amendments, it shall first hold a public hearing..."