

# Copper Trails Amendment Report

July 27, 2015

## Proposal

The applicant, Inland Capital Mall LLC, requests amendment of the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Map of the Development Code to re-designate the area associated with two parcels totaling 3.5 acres along Capital Mall Drive to allow for professional office development. Specifically, the land use zoning of tax parcels 12816330102 and 12816330103 at 723 Alta Street and 3505 Capital Mall Drive would be changed from “Residential Multi-Family 24 units per acre” to “Professional Office – Multi-Family Residential.”

## Review Criteria

In reviewing a proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment the Planning Commission, and City Council, are to consider:

1. Does the proposed amendment or revision maintain consistency with other plan elements or development regulations? If not, are amendments or revisions to other plan elements or regulations necessary to maintain consistency with the current final docket that will be considered by the Planning Commission and the City Council?
2. Is the proposed amendment or rezone consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan?
3. Is the proposed amendment or revision consistent with the county-wide planning policies?
4. Does the proposed amendment or rezone comply with the requirements of the GMA?

A zoning map amendment is only to be approved if, at minimum, the proposal complies with subsections A through C below, with appropriate consideration to be given to D and E:

- A. The rezone is consistent with either the Comprehensive Plan including the Plan’s Future Land Use map as described in Olympia Municipal Code 18.59.055 or with a concurrently approved amendment to the Plan.
- B. The rezone will maintain the public health, safety, or welfare.
- C. The rezone is consistent with other development regulations that implement the comprehensive plan.

D. The rezone will result in a district that is compatible with adjoining zoning districts; this may include providing a transition zone between potentially incompatible designations.

E. Public facilities and services existing and planned for the area are adequate and likely to be available to serve potential development allowed by the proposed zone.

### Staff Analysis

This site was formerly part of the 270-acre Olympia Highlands Planned Unit Development (PUD) created in 1974, which encompassed the Capital Mall. By 1990 the PUD had been reduced to parcels west of Yauger Park, including this one, with various commercial and multi-family uses allowed on the remaining properties. Olympia's Comprehensive Plan of 1994 designated this area as a 'neighborhood village' site, but that approach proved impractical and soon after the site was re-designated for 'Multi-Family Office' uses. In 1997 this remaining portion of the PUD was repealed and properties along Yauger Way were rezoned to Medical Services with the remainder of the properties to the east zoned Residential Multi-Family 24 units/acre.

The Comprehensive Plan update adopted in December of 2014 included a new Future Land Use map generally reflecting this zoning. As shown in the excerpt below, the area along Yauger Way was designated for Professional Office and Multi-Family uses, properties within one-quarter mile Cooper Road were designated as part of the Urban Corridor associated with that arterial, and the remainder in-between – including the lots at issue -- were placed in the Medium Density Neighborhood category consistent with the RM-24 zoning. A 'Neighborhood Center' was also designated for this area.

The Comprehensive Plan describes these designations as:

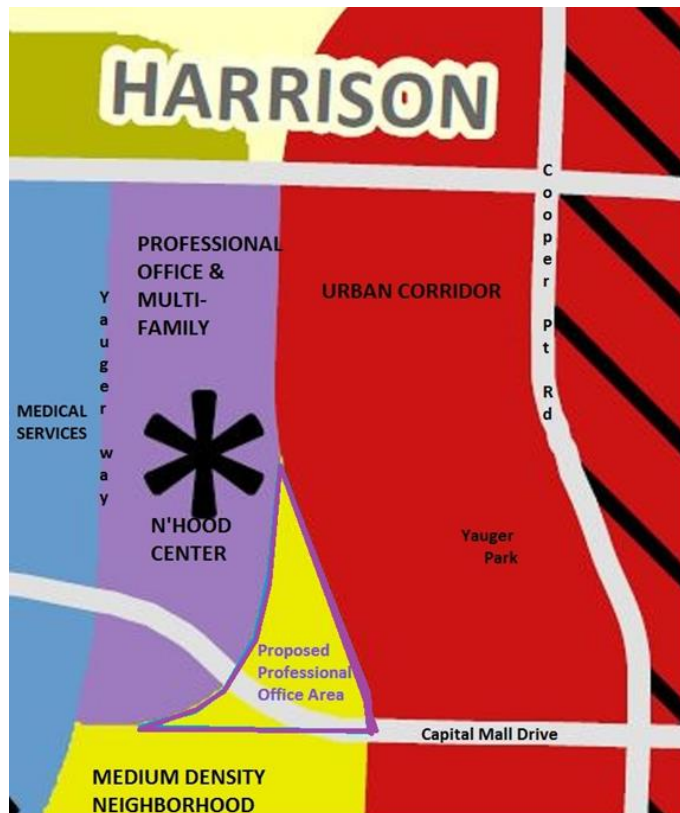
**Medium-Density Neighborhoods.** This designation provides for townhouses and multi-family residential densities ranging from thirteen to twenty-four units per acre. Specific zoning is to be based on proximity to bus routes and major streets, land use compatibility, and environmental constraints. Specific zoning will include minimum and maximum densities to ensure efficient use of developable land and to ensure provision of an adequate variety of types of housing to serve the community. Higher densities should be located close to major employment or commercial areas. Clustering may be permitted.

**Neighborhood Centers.** This designation provides for neighborhood-oriented convenience businesses and a small park or other public space. Although the locations shown on the Future Land Use Map are approximate, these centers should be along major streets and generally near areas of higher residential densities. The exact location and mix of uses of the centers in these areas will be established at the time of development approval. In general they should be focused on serving nearby residents, be well integrated with adjacent land uses, and have excellent pedestrian and bicyclist access with minimal car parking.

Professional Offices & Multifamily Housing. This designation accommodates a wide range of offices, services, limited retail uses specifically authorized by the applicable zoning district, and moderate-to-high density multifamily housing in structures as large as four stories.

Urban Corridors. This designation applies to certain areas in the vicinity of major arterial streets. Generally more intense commercial uses and larger structures should be located near the street edge with less intensive uses and smaller structures farther from the street to transition to adjacent designations. Particular 'nodes' or intersections may be more intensely developed. Opportunities to live, work, shop and recreate will be located within walking distance of these areas.

The proposed Future Land Use map amendment



Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan provides that, “More intensive development in commercial areas will increase their vitality and make better use of the City’s transit and street systems. For this reason, major new commercial areas are not to be created.” Land Use and Urban Design Goal 11 of the Plan is, “Adequate commercial land conveniently serves local and regional trade areas.” The policies associated with this goal include #11.3, “Work with developers to identify commercial areas for infill and redevelopment, to remove unnecessary barriers to this type of development, and to provide the infrastructure needed for intensive commercial and mixed use development.” And #11.9, “Outside urban corridors provide for low-intensity commerce

that depends on automobile access and allow wholesale businesses near major customers or where resulting traffic will not impact retail areas.”

The applicant’s proposal, in effect, would expand the Professional Office & Multi-Family area easterly and designate all properties along this portion of Capital Mall Drive to provide for commercial use options. As illustrated below, the specific parcels to be rezoned are currently surrounded by multi-family uses, including the Friendly Village Mobile Home Park. The current and proposed land uses zones are described in the development code as:

Residential Multifamily - 24 Units per Acre (RM-24). To accommodate predominantly multifamily housing, at an average maximum density of twenty-four (24) units per acre, in locations close (e.g., one-fourth (¼) mile) to major employment and/or shopping areas; to provide for development with a density and configuration that facilitates effective and efficient mass transit service; and to enable provision of affordable housing.

Professional Office/residential Multifamily District (PO/RM). This district is intended to: (a) Provide a transitional area, buffering residential areas from more intensive commercial uses. Development within this district should be compatible with residential uses and generate low vehicular traffic characteristic of less intrusive uses; and, (b) Provide for a compatible mix of office, moderate- to high-density residential, and small-scale commercial uses, in order to provide opportunities for people to live, work, and recreate in a pedestrian-oriented area.



The area in question is well-served by utilities and the adjacent street system, including Alta Drive, a “neighborhood collector,” and Capital Mall Drive, a “major collector.” All private and public utilities are available from Capital Mall Drive with no known capacity issues. No critical areas or other sensitive environmental features are known within the area.

The proposed Professional Office / Residential Multi-family (PO/RM) zone is one of Olympia’s least intensive commercial zones. (Only the ‘Neighborhood Retail’ zone is more restrictive with regard to uses.) For example, in addition to apartments and offices, the zone allows banks, personal services, small retail stores (up to 5,000 square feet), fitness centers, and – by special approval – congregate care, commercial recreation and restaurants without drive-thrus. , Buildings with heights of up to 60 feet are allowed, but extra setbacks are required adjacent to residential zones and ‘stepbacks’ are required for buildings over three stories. Although apartments are permitted, the zone has no specific minimum or maximum densities.

Olympia Municipal Code 18.59.055 provides that the following zoning districts are consistent with the current and proposed Future Land Use Map designations:

Medium Density Neighborhoods	Residential Multifamily – 18 Units per Acre Residential Multifamily – 24 Units per Acre
Professional Office & Multi-family Housing	Professional Office / Residential Multi-family

That code section also provides that the boundaries of the zones should fall within 200 feet of the land use designation, that zoning prior to January 1, 2015 may remain in the current locations, and that the neighborhood center designation may ‘float’ about four blocks or 1000 feet. Neighborhood centers are to range from 2 to 10 acres. Thus, this site could be designated as a neighborhood center and such a designation could be requested by the property owner regardless of the zoning.

Options

1. Recommend approval of both Plan and Zoning map amendments as proposed.
2. Recommend approval of the Future Land Use Map amendment, but recommend that the zoning not be changed at this time.
3. Recommend that the proposals be denied.

Note: the Commission may also offer a recommendation or opinion with regard to the Neighborhood Center alternative in combination with any of the options above.

Staff Conclusions

In the City staff’s opinion, a change in the designation of this area would not constitute a major new commercial area. Instead it would link the urban corridor of Cooper Point Road with the medical services area to the west. Existing streets would adequately buffer the northern lot from the adjacent multi-family housing, and similarly the southern lot is minimally directly adjacent to existing residential areas and development consistent with the PO/RM zoning could be designed to minimize land use conflicts. Accordingly, as summarized in the primary staff report, the City staff recommends approval.