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Land Use & Environment Committee

Development Code Amendments for Comprehensive Plan Update Consistency

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Title

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Recommendation

City Manager Recommendation:

Briefing only; no action requested.

Report

Issue:

Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that development regulations be "consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan." Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.040. The City Council is expected to adopt an updated version of Olympia's Comprehensive Plan later this year. In anticipation of that action, the staff proposed and the Planning Commission is reviewing a set of development code amendments to maintain consistency between the regulations and the updated Plan. This briefing is intended to provide the Committee with an overview of that activity in advance of specific amendments being presented to the full Council in the coming months.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter:

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Background and Analysis:

Although GMA requires 'consistency' between the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations, the Act does not specify how quickly regulations must be amended when the Plan is revised. The City is seeking to minimize any period of inconsistency between the current regulations and the updated Plan now being considered by the City Council. Thus, as the updated Plan was being reviewed by the Planning Commission, the staff identified regulatory changes that might be needed to maintain such consistency. In 2013 the Council directed that the Commission and staff begin work on those code amendments so that they could be brought before the Council as soon as possible after the updated Plan was adopted.

That effort resulted in potential amendments being classified as either:

- 1) Probably needed for consistency and resulting from relatively noncontroversial amendments to the Plan, i.e., those Plan amendments likely to be approved by Council;
- 2) Probably needed for consistency, but where due to their controversial nature the Council's final decision might differ from the Commission's recommendation; or
- 3) Development regulation amendments not needed for strict consistency, but which may better implement the updated Plan.

For purposes of efficiency, those in the first group have been presented to the Planning Commission for review and public hearings while the Council reviewed the Comprehensive Plan update. Those in the second group are to be scheduled for Planning Commission review as soon as possible after the Council makes a decision on the Plan update. This report focuses on those two groups.

Those in the third group are expected to be prioritized as part of establishing the Planning Commission's and Community Planning and Development Department's 2015 work programs or in the upcoming new 'Action Plan' establishing the City's strategy for implementing the Plan. This third group may include amendments such as new scenic view regulations, a process for providing long-term development approval for campuses such as SPSCC, consolidation and revision of the HDC 1 and 2 zones, and revision of home occupation standards, as well as others being considered.

Near-term Issues

The first two groups include potential amendments of five development regulations:

#	Topic	Summary of Development Regulation Amendment	Related Plan Amendment	Status
1	Mixed Residential Threshold	Require variety of housing types in RM-18 and RMU zones when projects exceed 5 acres -- instead of 10 acres	Land Use & Urban Design Policy 16.12	Commission held hearing and issued recommendation
2	Rezone Criteria	Revised decision criteria to be applied when zoning map amendments proposed	Land Use Introduction - paragraph 10	Commission held hearing and issued recommendation
3	LOTT Rezone	Change zoning of wastewater treatment plant site from Industrial to Urban Waterfront	Change in Future Land Use Map	Commission held hearing and issued recommendation
4	Capitol Campus Rezone	Change zoning of all of Capitol Campus to 'Planned Unit Development'	Change in Future Land Use Map	Commission held hearing and issued recommendation
5	Design Review Areas	Expand Design Review to all commercial projects along public streets	Land Use & Urban Design Policy 6.1	Awaiting Council's Comprehensive Plan action

Schedule

Although a specific schedule has not been established, the staff anticipates scheduling items 1 through 4 above for Council consideration within weeks of the Council taking final action on the

Comprehensive Plan update. In addition, although not needed for consistency with the Plan, the Council will also be presented with the Planning Commission's related-recommendation regarding who - Commission or Hearing Examiner - should review 'rezone' proposals. Item 5 will probably be presented a few months later.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

All of these development code amendments, as well as the related Comprehensive Plan amendments, have been subjects of public interest. Among them, probably the rezone criteria and the scope of design review have received the most attention.

Options:

No action required; provide direction as Committee deems appropriate.

Financial Impact:

All amendments are within scope of existing Community Planning and Development budget.