



City Council

Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Schedule for 2015

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Title

Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Schedule for 2015

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to set Monday, March 2, 2015, as deadline for submitting preliminary proposals for Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments and to direct staff to proceed with review schedule as outlined in staff report.

Report

Issue:

Washington's Growth Management Act provides that in general a city's Comprehensive Plan can be amended only once each year. Accordingly, all proposed amendments are to be collected into one review process. To that end, Olympia's code directs that the City Council shall set an annual 'due date' for proposing such amendments. The staff proposes that for 2015 that deadline be 5:00 p.m., Monday, March 2.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Todd Stamm, Principal Planner

Background and Analysis:

Washington's Growth Management Act provides that a city like Olympia must review and evaluate its Comprehensive Plan about every eight years. Olympia concluded such a 'periodic' review in December of 2014. In addition, the Act provides that cities may, but need not, consider annual Plan amendments. Subject to specific exceptions, the Act provides that any proposed 'annual' amendments must be 'collected' into one annual review with a schedule 'broadly disseminated' to the public. (RCW 36.70A.130)

Chapter 18.59 of the Municipal Code outlines Olympia's Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment process. Proposed amendments may be submitted at any time. However, so that proposals are collected into an annual set, the code provides that the City Council shall set an annual submittal deadline. This deadline has varied, but most often it has been in early November.

The subsequent review process includes a preliminary review where the City Council decides which proposals should be considered - commonly known as 'screening.' Those not eliminated at the screening step are then analyzed in detail and subject to Planning Commission public hearings, review and recommendations. The full process leading to one collective final decision by the City Council has varied from eight to fifteen months.

Because the Comprehensive Plan was being updated, no separate annual amendments were entertained in 2013 or in 2014. Few proposals to amend the recently-updated Plan are expected in 2015. Nonetheless, staff believes that an opportunity to submit proposals should be provided. Thus the staff proposes the 2015 schedule outlined below. Note that only the submittal deadline is formally set by the Council. Other dates are approximate and flow from that initial deadline. A more detailed schedule will be established by staff following Council approval of the initial deadline.

Proposed Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Schedule for 2015

- Late January - public announcement of schedule
- **March 2, 2015** - deadline for public to submit preliminary proposals (no charge)
- Early April - City Council 'screening' review of preliminary proposals, i.e., determination whether City should consider each proposal
- Early May - final individual proposed amendments due (with \$240 fee)
- May & June - City staff analysis and environmental review of proposals
- July to September - Planning Commission review and public hearings
- October and later - Council review and decisions

This is likely to be a unique (one-time) schedule resulting from the December adoption of the updated Plan. It should conclude by the end of the calendar year. Because amendments often affect the unincorporated urban growth area adjacent to Olympia, the City staff will be working with County staff to establish a routine schedule to deploy after June 30, 2016 - when all GMA-related updates must be complete.

Neighborhood/Community Interests:

A couple individuals have inquired about the possibility of submitting Plan amendment proposals in 2015. Public interest will depend on specific proposals to be considered.

Options:

1. Set March 2, 2015, as due-date for annual Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals.
2. Set alternative date as deadline for submitting such proposals.
3. Decline to consider Plan amendment proposals in 2015.

Financial Impact:

No impact - processing annual plan amendments is part of standard Community Planning and Development budget.