



## Planning Commission

# Comprehensive Plan for the Olympia Urban Growth Area - A Joint Plan with Thurston County

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### Title

Comprehensive Plan for the Olympia Urban Growth Area - A Joint Plan with Thurston County

### Recommended Action

Information only. No action requested.

### Report

#### Issue:

Information regarding the joint plan for the Olympia Urban Growth Area.

### Staff Contact:

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### Presenter(s):

Joyce Phillips, Senior Planner

### Background and Analysis:

The City of Olympia and its Urban Growth Area (UGA) are comprised of about 16,000 acres of land. Of that, approximately 12,000 acres are in the city limits while the remaining 4,000 acres are in the UGA. These lands are in the jurisdiction of Thurston County and the County retains the decision-making authority on land use proposals.

In general, unincorporated lands in UGAs are intended to develop in a manner consistent with city standards, so that when these lands are annexed into the city they match the character and development standards of the city.

Thurston County and the cities within it have a long history of addressing regional issues together. In 1995 the Cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Thurston County, which addressed Urban Growth Area Zoning and Development Standards. In 1998, the Planning Directors from the cities and county signed a second MOU specific to the implementation of the first MOU.

Additionally, the County and all of the cities within it have also agreed to Countywide Planning

Policies, which were originally adopted in 1992. The County Wide Planning Policies, or CWPPs, are the shared planning policies that address growth management issues for the seven jurisdictions within Thurston County - Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, Bucoda, Rainier, Tenino, and Yelm - as well as the County itself. Each county planning under the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A) must develop a framework of such policies in collaboration with its cities and towns to ensure the region's comprehensive plans and policies are consistent across common boundaries. The CWPPs were amended in November of 2015 to incorporate the Foundational Principles and Polices of "Creating Spaces: A Sustainable Development Plan for the Thurston Region."

These coordination efforts continue. With the City of Olympia completing its major Comprehensive Plan Update in December of 2014, and Thurston County working on its major Comprehensive Plan update currently, staff in all jurisdictions are working to update the joint plans. The current joint plan between Olympia and Thurston County is based on Olympia's former plan. It included a symbol next to the goals and policies that were meant to apply in the UGA. The city's current proposal is a separate plan, one that includes all of the text, goals, and policies of the city plan, with only text that is specifically explicit to city programs, or lands or development types not anticipated in the UGA, removed. The city proposed a "stand alone" plan this time because so much of the content and explanation for the goals and policies is included in the text of the plan - not only in the element chapters but also in the Community Values & Vision chapter. The comprehensive plan was written in consideration of the city limits and the UGA and included input from people outside of the city limits. Therefore, city staff proposed a more complete comprehensive plan to serve as the joint plan for the UGA.

**Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

None specifically known at this time. As the County reviews the joint plan and considers it for adoption, there will be a public outreach and public hearing process. Neighborhood and community interests, to the extent that they may have changed since the City adopted its plan late in 2014, will become more apparent through the process.

**Options:**

Information only.

**Financial Impact:**

None. Coordination with Thurston County on the joint plan for the Urban Growth Area is included in the Department's base budget.

**Attachments:**

None.