



Land Use & Environment Committee

Review Thurston County Joint Plan Update

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Title

Review Thurston County Joint Plan Update

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive an update on the Thurston County Joint Plan and discuss. Provide staff direction and guidance. No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Whether to discuss the progress of adopting an updated Thurston County Joint Plan.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Leonard Bauer, Deputy Director, Community Planning and Development
Joyce Phillips, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development

Background and Analysis:

Thurston County and Olympia have a long history of cooperative planning, especially as it relates to the unincorporated portions of the City's Urban Growth Area (UGA). Thurston County and the cities within its borders have developed Countywide Planning Policies under the Growth Management Act that encourage and support coordinated planning. A Memorandum of Understanding was reached to identify roles and responsibilities to carry out the coordinated planning.

The County maintains land-use authority and permitting responsibilities in the UGA. The intent is that the zoning and development standards in these areas will be the same or nearly the same as that of the City of Olympia.

The last time the County and City adopted a Joint Plan, it was accomplished by the County identifying which of the City's goals and policies it was adopting for the UGA. These goals and

policies were identified by inclusion of an asterisk next to the goal or policy in the City's plan.

The City had an extensive Comprehensive Plan update process with much input from the public. This led to the adoption of the City's new plan in 2014. The Plan is more integrated and contains much context for the goals and policies in its narrative. Therefore, when city staff submitted a new proposed Joint Plan in May 2017, it was much more robust than the existing Joint Plan. Essentially, the city staff submitted the City's Comprehensive Plan with text that was specific to a city action or a city program removed.

Thurston County staff provided comments back to the City in April 2018. City staff provided a response in June that requested to retain much of the language the County staff had proposed to strike. In some cases, we suggested modifying the goal or policy language so the County's role would be to support the City's efforts to accomplish the goal or policy. We've offered to meet with County staff once they have had the opportunity to review our response, in order to discuss areas where we may not be in full agreement regarding language to be removed.

Ultimately, it will be the decision of the Board of County Commissioners as to what is in the final adopted Joint Plan.

We have begun conversations with County staff about how to best coordinate a joint public outreach and opportunities for public comment. This includes looking into opportunities for a joint meeting or public hearing before the Thurston County and City of Olympia Planning Commissions. Such an effort may begin this fall.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

The Joint Plan is likely to be of interest to many Olympia and Thurston County residents, especially those living within the Urban Growth Areas.

Options:

1. Provide direction to city staff on the development and adoption of the Joint Plan.
2. Provide direction to city staff on the joint public participation components of the Joint Plan.
3. Provide direction to city staff on the joint public participation components of the Joint Plan and its development and adoption through Thurston County.

Financial Impact:

Development and staff coordination of the new Joint Plan is included in the Department's base budget.

Attachments:

[Link to Thurston County Comprehensive Plan Update webpage](#)