



Planning Commission

Recreational Vehicle Parks in the Urban Waterfront Zoning District - Recommendation

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Title

Recreational Vehicle Parks in the Urban Waterfront Zoning District - Recommendation

Recommended Action

Conduct deliberations and make a recommendation to the Olympia City Council regarding proposed amendments to Chapter 18.06 of the Olympia Municipal Code (OMC). If approved, the proposed amendments would allow recreational vehicle parks as a permitted use in the Urban Waterfront zoning district, and establish related development standards.

Report

Issue:

Whether to recommend that the Olympia City Council approve the proposed code amendments.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Cari Hornbein, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development

Background and Analysis:

The City of Olympia received an application from the Port of Olympia to amend Chapter 18.06 of the Olympia Municipal Code. The proposed amendments would allow recreational vehicle (RV) parks as a permitted use in the Urban Waterfront zoning district and establish related development standards. Details of the proposed amendments can be found in Attachments 1 and 2.

The public hearing was held on July 19 and deliberations started but continued to the August 2nd meeting. During their deliberations, Commissioners were interested in learning more about other land uses permitted in the Urban Waterfront zoning district, and the relationship of the proposed action to other plans including the Comprehensive Plan, Shoreline Master Program, Downtown Strategy, and the Port's long-term plans. Staff compiled a list of resources and website links, and emailed this information to Commissioners on Friday, July 23 (see Attachment 3).

Review Criteria

OMC 18.58 outlines procedures for rezones and text amendments, but does not establish review

criteria. In the absence of criteria, the proposed amendments can be evaluated based on the purpose statement of the Urban Waterfront zoning district (OMC 18.06.020.B.4):

- a. Integrate multiple land uses in the waterfront area of downtown and the West Bay in a way that improves the City's appeal and identify as the Capital City on Budd Inlet.
- b. Encourage high-amenity recreation, tourist-oriented, and commercial development which will enhance public access and use of the shoreline.
- c. Encourage development that protects views of Budd Inlet, the Olympics, Mt. Rainer, and the Capitol, and preserves a sense of openness on the waterfront.
- d. Encourage water-dependent and water-related development (as defined in the Shoreline Master Program) on shoreline property and permit light manufacturing uses which support nearby industrial and marine related uses.
- e. Provide shoreline public access to significant numbers of the population, which is a major goal of the Shoreline Master Program. It is also the intent of this district to integrate the policies of the Shoreline Master Program into zoning designations applicable to waterfront properties. It is not the intent of this district, however, to make the restrictions of the SMP legally applicable outside the shoreline management zone.

Urban Waterfront Uses

The Urban Waterfront zoning district allows a wide variety of land uses, all of which can be found in Table 6.01 (see Attachment 2). Examples include eating and drinking establishments, office uses, art galleries, museums, commercial recreation and fitness, marinas, parks, multifamily development, retail uses, hotels/motels, personal services, and public facilities.

Relationship to other Plans

Shoreline Master Program: In addition to meeting the requirements of the Urban Waterfront district, development within 200 feet of the shoreline must comply with the Shoreline Master Program (SMP). The city recently completed a periodic review of the SMP, with changes going into effect in June (see Attachment 4 for link to SMP). All development along the shoreline must be consistent with shoreline policies and standards including but not limited to shoreline ecological functions, shoreline setbacks, vegetation conservation, building height, and public access.

One of the recent amendments clarified that camping is a type of water-oriented recreation. A definition of 'camping facilities' was also added, establishing a 15-day length of stay and including recreational vehicles as a type of camping facility (see pages 11 and 29, 2021 SMP). Water-oriented recreation is allowed in both the Marine Recreation and Urban Intensity shoreline environments (see Attachment 5 for table of permitted uses and activities, and Attachment 6 for a map of shoreline environments).

Comprehensive Plan: The Urban Waterfront zoning district reflects the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The Urban Waterfront future land use designation is described as providing "for a compatible mix of commercial, light industrial, limited heavy industrial, and multifamily residential uses along the waterfront" (see Attachment 7 for link to Comprehensive Plan). The purpose statement for the Urban Waterfront district in OMC 18.06.020 provides additional criteria for establishing permitted uses.

Downtown Strategy: The Downtown Strategy (DTS), adopted in 2017, prioritizes actions to implement the Comprehensive Plan vision and goals for Downtown Olympia (see Attachment 8 for link to the DTS). Although not part of the primary focus area, Port-owned properties north of Marine Drive (excluding the marine terminal) are considered part of the Waterfront Character Area (map can be found on p. 11 of the DTS Summary). One of the goals of this area is to increase waterfront recreational opportunities as well as creating connections to downtown, marinas, and other attractions.

Port of Olympia: Links to the Port's website and planning documents were provided to Commissioners following the public hearing. Port staff plan on attending the August 2 meeting and will be available for questions.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Written comments have been received from the public regarding the proposed code amendments (Attachment 9). Comments opposed to the proposed amendments expressed concerns regarding consistency with both the Port's and City's plans, consistency with the Shoreline Master Program, loss of open space, stormwater runoff, sea level rise, climate change, and light and noise pollution. One comment cited increased visitors to the downtown core as a benefit of the proposed amendments.

Options:

1. Recommend approval of the code amendments to City Council as proposed.
2. Recommend approval of the code amendments with modifications.
3. Do not recommend approval of the proposed amendments.

Financial Impact:

The process of reviewing the proposed code amendments is covered in part by the application fee and the Community Planning and Development Department's base budget.

Attachments:

1. July 19, 2021, OPC Meeting Packet
2. OMC 18.06.040, Table 6.01, Permitted and Conditional Uses
3. Email to Commissioners, July 23, 2021
4. Shoreline Master Program Webpage with Link to 2021 SMP
5. OMC 18.20.620, Table 6.1, Uses and Activities
6. Map of Shoreline Environments, Budd Inlet
7. Link to Online Comprehensive Plan
8. Downtown Strategy Webpage with Links to Summary and Individual Chapters
9. Updated Public Comments