



Land Use & Environment Committee

Thurston County Joint Plan Update Briefing

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Title

Thurston County Joint Plan Update Briefing

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive a briefing on the Thurston County Joint Plan Update and provide guidance.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a briefing on the Thurston County Joint Plan Update.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Joyce Phillips, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development

Background and Analysis:

Thurston County and the City of 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 Joint Plan for the UGA was developed cooperatively, and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners as part of its Comprehensive Plan. 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, city staff submitted the City's Comprehensive Plan with only 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 to coordinate a joint public outreach effort and to provide 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 winter.

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:

None. City staff work on the Joint Plan is incorporated into the work program funded by the current and proposed city budgets.

Attachments:

None