



Comprehensive Plan Amendments

PB-12

Community Development Department

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15.250.090 Comprehensive plan amendments – Type V review process.

A. Purpose. A comprehensive plan amendment or review is a mechanism by which the city may modify the text or map of the comprehensive plan in accordance with the provisions of the Growth Management Act, in order to respond to changing circumstances or needs of the city, and to review the comprehensive plan on a regular basis.

B. Initiation of text and map amendments.

1. The city's comprehensive plan shall be subject to continuing evaluation and review by the city. Any amendment or revision to the comprehensive plan shall conform to RCW Chapter 36.70A.
2. Comprehensive plan amendments may be initiated by citizens, by the planning commission or other boards and commissions of the city, city staff, city council, or any other interested persons including applicants, hearing examiners and staff of other agencies. The proposed amendments or revisions to the comprehensive plan shall be docketed and considered by the city no more frequently than once every year except that amendments may be considered more frequently under the following circumstances:
 - a. The initial adoption of a subarea plan. Subarea plans adopted under this section must clarify, supplement, or implement jurisdiction-wide comprehensive plan policies, and may only be adopted if the cumulative impacts of the proposed plan are addressed by appropriate environmental review under Chapter 43.21C RCW;
 - b. The development of an initial subarea plan for economic development located outside of the one hundred year floodplain in a county that has completed a state-funded pilot project that is based on watershed characterization and local habitat assessment;
 - c. The adoption or amendment of a shoreline master program under the procedures set forth in Chapter 90.58 RCW;
 - d. The amendment of the capital facilities element of a comprehensive plan that occurs concurrently with the adoption or amendment of a county or city budget; or
 - e. The adoption of comprehensive plan amendments necessary to enact a planned action under RCW 43.21C.440, provided that amendments are considered in accordance with the public participation program established by the county or city under RCW 36.70A.130(2)(a) and all persons who have requested notice of a comprehensive plan update are given notice of the amendments and an opportunity to comment.
3. All docketed amendment proposals shall be considered by the city concurrently so the cumulative effect of the various proposals can be ascertained. However, the city may adopt amendments or revisions to its comprehensive plan that conform with RCW Chapter 36.70A after appropriate public participation whenever an emergency exists or to resolve an appeal of a comprehensive plan filed with the growth management hearings board or with a court.
4. The city shall periodically review the densities permitted within its boundaries, and to the extent to which urban growth has occurred within the city according to the timetable established by the Growth Management Act. The city shall revise its projected population figures a minimum of every 10 years to accommodate the urban growth projected to occur in the city for the succeeding 20 year period.

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C. Procedures. Comprehensive plan amendments are subject to the Type V review process with the following variations:

1. A complete application for a comprehensive plan amendment shall be made on the comprehensive plan amendment form provided by the Ellensburg community development department. Additional supporting materials, such as photographs, statistics, etc. shall be included with the application;
2. The city will accept applications for comprehensive plan amendments between January 1 and June 30 of every year. The start of that acceptance period shall be advertised in accordance with the city's noticing requirements;
3. In the city council's first regular meeting in July, the city council shall review the proposed amendments timely submitted for consideration to be docketed for review that year. Each proposed amendment shall be accompanied by the amendment application materials and a staff discussion of the proposed amendment with a recommendation on whether or not the proposed amendment is an appropriate amendment subject and is ready for consideration to be docketed for review that year;
4. Within 15 days of the docketing date, the proposed amendments chosen to be docketed by city council shall then be transmitted to the SEPA responsible official for SEPA review and to the planning commission for review at a public hearing, and a 60-Day Notice of Intent to Adopt Comprehensive Plan or Development Regulation amendments shall be sent to the Washington State Department of Commerce. The city council may also request other city boards or agencies or other governmental entities to provide comments and recommendations on proposed comprehensive plan amendments. The comments and recommendations must be submitted to the city by the date of the planning commission's hearing unless the city grants an extension of time. Letters of support or objection to a proposed comprehensive plan amendment may be filed by any interested party. The letters must be filed by the date of the city council public hearing unless an extension of time is granted;
5. The SEPA responsible official shall issue a SEPA threshold decision on the docketed amendments on or before the second Friday in August;
6. The planning commission shall schedule and hold a public hearing on the docketed amendments and shall then make a recommendation to city council prior to council's first regular meeting in October. The planning commission shall make one of 4 decisions in considering comprehensive plan text and map amendments:
 - a. Approval in the form submitted for public hearing;
 - b. Approval with changes;
 - c. Approval in part; or
 - d. Disapproval;
7. A public hearing to consider the docketed amendments shall be scheduled for city council's first regular meeting on October. Any appeal of the SEPA Threshold Determination shall also be heard at that public hearing;
8. The city council, after a recommendation from staff and the planning commission, and after holding a public hearing, shall make one of the following decisions:
 - a. Approval in accordance with the findings and recommendations submitted by the planning commission;
 - b. Approval with modifications;
 - c. Refer all or part of the plan text or map amendment proposal back to the planning commission;
 - d. Refer all or part of the plan text or map amendment proposal to the following year's annual amendment process; or
 - e. Disapprove.

If the city council's decision is to refer the amendment request back to the planning commission, the council must specify which matters it wishes reconsidered by the planning commission. The final form and content of the comprehensive plan is determined by the city council; and

9. The comprehensive plan together with any and all amendments shall be provided to the city clerk to be placed in a permanent file and made available for public inspection. The city shall also transmit a complete and accurate copy of its comprehensive plan amendments to the Washington State Department of Commerce within 10 days of adoption in accordance with state law.