



WALLA WALLA COUNTY

Community Development Department

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PRESS RELEASE

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2018 WALLA WALLA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATION AMENDMENT PROCESS

Walla Walla County has begun its annual consideration of Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulation amendments for 2018. Typically, the County would not be opening the application cycle until January 1st, but because our County Comprehensive Plan is due June 30, 2018 the application cycle needs to begin as soon as possible.

The amendment process is designed to solicit from the public, other governmental jurisdictions (e.g. cities), and other agencies and organizations, which can include the Board of County Commissioners, suggested changes to the Walla Walla County Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations for consideration.

Comprehensive Plan

The Walla Walla County Comprehensive Plan provides the policy framework for making land use and related decisions to accommodate the projected 20-year growth in the County. The plan applies to the unincorporated areas of the County only, including the urban growth areas (UGA) of College Place, Prescott, Waitsburg, and Walla Walla. However, each of our cities have their own comprehensive plans and separate amendment processes. The purpose of the comprehensive plan is to guide development in the County, including the unincorporated lands of the UGAs, as well as the unincorporated communities of Burbank, Dixie, Lowden, and Touchet. The Comprehensive Plan contains the goals and policies intended to guide land use planning in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

For the 2018 Comprehensive Plan amendment cycle, the types of applications that will be accepted will be limited to the following criteria:

1. Technical amendments to correct errors in policies or text; and
2. Technical amendments to correct mapping errors that do not require interpretation of the criteria for the various land use designations; and
3. Text or policy changes to resolve inconsistencies or unnecessary duplication among policies; and

4. Changes to comprehensive plan appendices; and
5. Site-specific land use map amendments that do not require substantive changes to existing policy language and that do not alter the urban growth area boundary except to correct a mapping error as provided in Section 14.10.015 (C) (2); and
6. Changes required by amendments to countywide planning policies; and
7. Other types of amendments as allowed by WWCC 14.10.030 including resolution of an emergency condition or situation that involves the public health, safety or welfare and when adherence to the amendment process set forth in the Code would be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, and amendments due to actions from the State legislature, and/or courts, and/or Growth Management Hearings Board;
8. Annual review amendments as provided in Section 14.10.015(C); and
9. Updates to a subarea plan; and
10. County proposed substantive changes to existing text or policy language including the introduction of new text or policy language; and
11. Non-county proposed substantive changes to existing text or policy language necessary due to the demonstrated consequences of adopted text or policy language not anticipated or contemplated when the text or policy language was last adopted; and
12. Land use map changes related to a proposed text or policy as provided in Sections 14.10.015D.3 and 14.10.015D.4; and
13. Land use map changes necessary due to changed conditions on the subject property or its surrounding area not anticipated or contemplated when the land use map designation for the property was last adopted. "Changed conditions" do not include actions taken by the current or former property owners to facilitate a more intense development of the property; and
14. Amendments to the urban growth areas for the cities of College Place and Walla Walla.

Development Regulations

The Development Regulations (County Code) are the tools that implement the Comprehensive Plan. They provide the regulatory controls for development and land use activities. They include the County's zoning code, critical areas regulations, shoreline master program, planned unit development ordinances, and subdivision ordinances. The County's development regulations are applicable only to the unincorporated lands in Walla Walla County, including the urban growth areas of the cities of College Place, Prescott, Waitsburg, and Walla Walla, also the Burbank UGA, and the rural activity centers (RAC) of Dixie, Lowden, and Touchet. The cities have their own development regulations, and separate amendment processes.

Amendment Application Process

To propose amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations please contact the staff of the Walla Walla County Community Development Department at 509-524-2610 for information on application submittal requirements. Applicants are strongly encouraged to meet with the agency's planning staff prior to submitting an application to obtain information on the application process, including timelines, and applicable fees.

Applications for Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulation amendments must be submitted to the Walla Walla County Community Development Department, 310 W. Poplar St., Suite 200, by 4:00 p.m., Thursday, November 30, 2017. A schedule will then be followed to comply with state requirements and the Walla Walla County Code to allow opportunities for public review and

comment. A series of public hearings, first for determining the amendments to be included on the 2018 docket, and later for consideration of the final docket, will be held by the Walla Walla County Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners (dates and locations to be announced later). The Board of County Commissioners makes the final decision to approve, or deny an amendment request. Written comments concerning the proposed amendments will be accepted via regular mail, e-mail, or delivered directly to the County Community Development Department. Also, comments (written and verbal) can be received at public hearings.

The Department's website (www.co.walla-walla.wa.us) will provide information on the amendment process, including information about the public participation process. The target for completion of proposed amendments is June 30, 2018.

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