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CLARK COUNTY  
WASHINGTON

COMMUNITY PLANNING

## STAFF REPORT

TO: Board of Clark County Commissioners

FROM: Clark County Planning Commission

DATE: November 20, 2012

SUBJECT: AMENDMENTS TO THE 20-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH  
MANAGEMENT PLAN DOCUMENT REGARDING THE SALMON CREEK SUB-  
AREA PLAN (CPZ2012-00014)

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### Recommendation

The Planning Commission heard this case on November 15, 2012 and recommends **approval** of the sub-area plan by a 4 -1 vote.

### Background

The Salmon Creek sub-area is generally bounded by Salmon Creek and Interstate 205 on the south, Interstate 5 to the west, approximately NE 58<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the east, and NE 190<sup>th</sup> Street alignment to the north. The 2007 Comprehensive Plan included the Salmon Creek sub-area within the Three Creeks Special Planning Area.

Staff convened an advisory task force composed of property owners in the area, representatives from Clark Regional Wastewater District, Department of Health, Washington Department of Transportation, City of Vancouver, Washington State University - Vancouver, and Legacy Salmon Creek Medical Center. The task force met the first time on February 24, 2010 and met eight times through June, 2010. Through the process the advisory group developed zoning recommendations grounded by the Board directive to enhance employment opportunities within the sub-area.

The proposed plan is also consistent with the Washington State University – Vancouver vision for future campus development. Staff developed a proposal for a (U) University District that is intended to provide long-term opportunities for educational and related uses within the community.

Staff held a public meeting with the Fairgrounds Neighborhood Association regular meeting held September 10, 2009.

On April 14, 2010 at work session for the Discovery Fairgrounds sub-area plan staff was directed by the Board of Commissioners to cease work on all sub-area planning pending a review of employment zoning categories. The Planning Commission agreed to table the matter until the review of employment zones within the county was completed.

That review is now complete and staff is bringing the matter back to the Planning Commission for consideration.

## Proposed Actions

1. Amend the Comprehensive Plan map and the Zoning map to those designations and zones recommended by the task force.
2. Adopt the proposed (U) University District as developed and recommended by the Planning Commission.

## **APPLICABLE CRITERIA, EVALUATION AND FINDINGS**

In order to comply with the Plan Amendment Procedures in the Clark County Unified Development Code (UDC 40.560.010), amendments to the Comprehensive Plan land use map must meet all of the criteria in Section G, Criteria for All Map Changes. Comprehensive Plan Text changes must meet the criteria in UDC 40.560.010(M)(2).

### **CRITERIA FOR ALL MAP CHANGES**

- 1. The proponent shall demonstrate that the proposed amendment is consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA) and requirements, the countywide planning policies, the Community Framework Plan, Clark County 20-Year Comprehensive Plan, and other related plans.***

### **Growth Management Act (GMA) Goals**

The GMA goals set the general direction for the county in adopting its framework plan and comprehensive plan policies. The GMA goals that apply to the re-designation of the Discovery/Fairgrounds sub-area are Goals 4, 5, and 10.

- (4) Housing Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.*

Finding: The proposed zoning amendments are consistent with the applicable State GMA Goal. The sub-area will have a variety of densities and housing types including multi-family zoning and opportunities for multi-family housing within the areas designated for Mixed Uses.

- (5) Economic Development Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services and public facilities.*

Finding: The proposed amendments are consistent with Goal 5 Economic Development. The proposed zoning and Comprehensive Plan designations increase business and employment opportunities within the Salmon Creek sub-area plan boundary and are consistent with adopted comprehensive plan policies. The proposal for the Salmon Creek sub-area creates a (U) University District zone which is intended to provide long-term opportunities for educational and

related uses within the community. In addition, the (U) University District is intended to create predictability of institutions of higher learning in the planning process.

- (10) *Environment Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.*

Finding: The proposed amendments are consistent with this goal. The Salmon Creek sub-area was approved for zoning at urban densities in September 2007. The proposal for Salmon Creek creates a (U) University District zone recognizing the environmental constraints present in the sub-area. The purpose of this section is to allow development to occur in a manner that does not adversely impact the community and provides and protects the natural and physical assets of the community.

### **Community Framework Plan and Countywide Planning Policies**

The Community Framework Plan encourages growth in centers, urban and rural, with each center separate and distinct from the others. The centers are oriented and developed around neighborhoods to allow residents to easily move through and to feel comfortable within areas that create a distinct sense of place and community. Policies applicable to this proposal include the following:

- 1.1.0 *Community Framework Plan Policies Urban Growth Area Centers (UGA) have a full range of urban level-of-services and can be divided into three main categories in the following density tiers:*

***Vancouver Urban Growth Area*** is now or will be a major urban area activity centers with a full range of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, high capacity transit (HCT) corridors, schools, major cultural and public facilities. Major urban areas centers, have or will have, urban densities of development of at least 8 units per net residential acre (6 gross units per acre) as an overall average. Areas along high capacity transit corridors and priority public transit corridors may have higher than average densities while other areas would have lower densities (e.g. established neighborhoods and neighborhoods on the fringes of the urban area). Regional institutions and services (government, museums, etc.) should be located in the urban core.

Finding: The sub-area plan recommendations meet the intent of this policy. The advisory group has recommended zones for areas along major arterials and Interstate 5 for employment and major commercial uses, and higher density residential uses. There is also a recommendation for Business Park zoning adjacent to Washington State University to the east across NE 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue accompanied by both Mixed Use and multi-family residential uses.

- 2.1.0 *Communities, urban and rural, should contain a diversity of housing types to enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries and to ensure an adequate supply of affordable and attainable housing. Housing options available in the county include single family neighborhoods and mixed use neighborhoods (e.g., housing above commercial storefronts, traditional grid single family neighborhoods, townhouses, multi-family*

*developments, accessory units, boarding homes, cooperative housing, and congregate housing).*

Finding: The sub-area plan recommendations meet the intent of this policy. There are a wide variety of zoning types available within the sub-area boundaries enabling citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries.

*2.1.2 Provide housing opportunities close to places of employment.*

Finding: A substantial part of the sub-area is zoned for Mixed Uses and higher density residential uses allowing a choice for citizens who desire to live close to potential employers.

*4.1.0 New developments are to protect and enhance sensitive areas and respect natural constraints.*

Finding: During the process of developing recommendations for zoning within the Salmon Creek sub-area the areas with the greatest environmental constraints were considered.

*5.1.3 To reduce vehicle trips, encourage mixed land use and locate as many other activities as possible to be located within easy walking and bicycling distances from public transit stops.*

Finding: The task force recommended a substantial amount of Mixed Use and multi-family zoning within the sub-area. Additionally, the (U) University District was developed with the intent to allow development to occur in a manner that does not adversely impact the community and protects the natural and physical assets of the community.

### **Clark County 20 Year Comprehensive Plan**

The Clark County Comprehensive Plan contains many policies that guide urban form and efficient land use patterns. The most relevant goals and policies applicable to this application are as follows:

***Goal: Land use patterns and individual developments should be locationally and functionally integrated to reduce sprawl, promote pedestrian and transit use and limit the need for automobile trips and to foster neighborhood and community identity.***

*1.4.1 Interrelated uses should generally be encouraged to locate in close proximity of each other:*

- Frequently used commercial activities and residential areas they serve should be allowed and encouraged to locate near to one another.*
- Schools or other frequently used public facilities and the residential areas they serve should be allowed and encouraged to locate near to one another.*
- Commercial, industrial or other employers and the residential areas they serve should be allowed and encouraged to locate near to one another, as long as negative impacts from non-residential uses on the residential areas are mitigated.*

- 1.4.2 *Encourage mixed-use developments, which provide opportunities to combine residential, commercial or other used within individual structures, or within adjacent structures or developments.*

Finding: The recommended zoning in the sub-area has a substantial amount of acres designated Mixed Use. Additionally, commercial uses are recommended for areas near residential uses.

Conclusion: Criterion 1 has been met.

- 2. *The proponent shall demonstrate that the designation is in conformance with the appropriate locational criteria in the plan.***

Finding: The proposed zoning pattern is consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan designations.

Conclusion: Criterion 2 has been met.

- 3. *The map amendment or site is suitable for the proposed designation and there is a lack of appropriately designated alternative sites within the vicinity.***

Finding: The proposed zoning designations reflect task force and community input, and are appropriate for the sub-area.

Conclusion: Criterion 3 has been met.

- 4. *The plan map amendment either: (a) responds to a substantial change in conditions applicable to the area within which the subject property lies; (b) better implements applicable comprehensive plan policies than the current map designation; or (c) corrects an obvious mapping error.***

Finding: The proposed amendments better implement the applicable comprehensive plan policies than the current zoning map designations. Creation of a (U) University District will create predictability for educational institutions in the planning process.

Conclusion: Criterion 4 has been met.

- 5. *Where applicable, the proponent shall demonstrate that the full range of urban public facilities and services can be adequately provided in an efficient and timely manner to serve the proposed designation. Such services may include water, sewage, storm drainage, transportation, fire protection and schools. Adequacy of services applies only to the specific change site.***

Finding: The determination was made that the full range of public facilities and services could be made available in 2007 when this area was brought into the urban growth boundary.

Conclusion: The applicable criteria for approval of the comprehensive plan map amendments have been met.

## **RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSIONS**

Based upon the information and the findings presented in this report and in the supporting documents, the Planning Commission recommends **APPROVAL** of the amendments to the Comprehensive Plan Map and Zoning Map and to adopt the recommendations of the task force for the Salmon Creek sub-area.

Additionally, the Planning Commission recommends **APPROVAL** of the (U) University District, with changes proposed by staff including dormitories and public schools within the District as reflected in the University District use table.