

# Clark County Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update

Planning for growth 2015 – 2035

Countywide Planning Policies – Issue Paper 6

## Purpose

The purpose of this issue paper is to discuss the role of Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), which coordinate comprehensive plans of jurisdictions in the same county for regional issues or issues affecting common borders (RCW 36.70A.100).

Comprehensive plans are the long-term policy documents used by each jurisdiction to plan for its future. They include strategies for land use, housing, capital facilities, utilities, transportation, economic development, and parks and recreation (as well as a rural element for counties only) (RCW 36.70A.070). Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) establish a countywide framework for developing and adopting county and city comprehensive plans.

## Background

In July 2013, Clark County began the process of updating its Comprehensive Growth Management Plan to meet the 2016 periodic update requirement of Chapter 36.70A.140 RCW. Several issue papers have already been prepared to allow the Board to make decisions about the update:

- Issue Paper 1 - Comprehensive Plan Overview: A summary of the county's Planning Assumptions, 2013 vacant and buildable lands model (VBLM) inventory and population and employment projections.
- Issue Paper 2 – Population and Job Projections: Background information for a discussion with the cities and the town of Yacolt on population and job planning assumptions for 2015-2035. On Jan. 21, 2014, the Board adopted the state Office of Financial Management's (OFM) medium population projection of 562,207 for the 20-year period ending 2035 (Res. 2014-01-09).
- Issue Paper 3 – Employment forecast based on input from Washington Employment Security Department (ESD). It was revised as Issue Paper 3.1 to include the 2014 VBLM information. On April 29, 2014, the Board adopted the high employment forecast of 91,200 net new jobs for the 20-year period ending 2035 (Res. 2014-04-01).
- Issue Paper 4 – Population and Job Allocation: On June 24, 2014, the Board identified the methodology for allocating growth by UGA and adopted preliminary allocations for initial review (Res. 2014-06-17). It was revised as Issue Paper 4.1 to reflect the additional capacity for population and jobs not captured by the vacant land model and presented at a BOCC Worksession on September 24, 2014. Following the 2015 assessor's population update, the issue paper was revised as Issue Paper 4.2. (Res. 2015-04-05).
- Issue Paper 5 – SEPA Scoping: On July 16, 2014, the Board discussed the environmental impact review process under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and directed staff to proceed to scoping on development of alternatives.
- Issue Paper 5.1 provides a partial list of what has transpired from July 17, 2014 through March 11, 2015. (Res. 2015-04-06).

## Methodology

RCW 36.70A.210(1) describes the relationship between comprehensive plans and CPPs. It says that:

*a "countywide planning policy" is a written policy statement or statements used solely for establishing a countywide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted pursuant to this chapter. This framework shall ensure that city and county comprehensive plans are consistent as required in RCW 36.70A.100. Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the land use powers of the cities".*

The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 365-196-305 states that:

*"the primary purpose of CPPs is to ensure consistency between comprehensive plans of counties and cities sharing a common border or related regional issues. Another purpose of county-wide planning policies is to facilitate the transformation of local governance in the urban growth area, typically through annexation to or incorporation of a city, so that urban governmental services are primarily provided by cities and rural and regional services are provided by counties".*

WAC 365-196-510 says that:

*"interjurisdictional consistency should be met by the adoption of comprehensive plans, and subsequent amendments, which are consistent with and carry out the relevant county-wide planning policies and, where required, the relevant multi-county planning policies. Adopted county-wide planning policies are designed to ensure that county and city comprehensive plans are consistent".*

To meet this stated goal, some of the CPPs do more than meet the Growth Management Act (GMA) mandate of ensuring consistency of comprehensive plans. The CPPs also provide to Clark County jurisdictions direction that is necessary for the coordinated implementation of GMA goals and the Community Framework Plan Policies (CFPPs). Thus, in the context of state law, administrative guidance, and the goals of the Community Framework Plan, the CPPs have been developed to accomplish the following functions:

- Meet a specific requirement to ensure consistency between County and city comprehensive plans (RCW 36.70A.100);
- Satisfy other GMA mandates;
- Maintain ongoing efforts, through the Community Framework Plan, to plan cooperatively for countywide initiatives; and
- Support local implementation of the Comprehensive Growth Management Plans that seeks to promote compact urban development in a sustainable manner.

The CPPs encourage flexibility in local interpretations to support diverse interests throughout the county.

## Framework for Amendment to Countywide Planning Policies

Countywide Planning Policies adopted pursuant to the Growth Management Act may be reviewed and amended by Clark County and reviewed by the municipalities in the County during a comprehensive plan update process. In 1994 Clark County and local cities jointly adopted Countywide Planning Policies and accompanying Community Framework Plan policies, as required by RCW 36.70A.100 and 36.70A.210. These cover land use, housing, resource lands, rural lands, transportation, capital facilities,

utilities, parks and open spaces, annexation, economic development, critical areas, community design, and historical preservation. Modest updates were made in each subsequent countywide planning update.

## Policies for Update and Ratification

Although local Countywide Planning Policies and Community Framework Plan policies provide a foundation for local coordination, they should be periodically monitored for ongoing applicability and effectiveness. Currently, there is no specific amendment procedure in the policies to amend them, so the following is proposed:

1.1.XX An amendment to any Countywide Planning Policy or Community Framework Plan policies may be initiated by any local jurisdiction

1. The proposed amendment shall include the following:

(a) the exact language of the proposed amendment (shown in "strike out" for deletions and "underline" for additions); and

(b) a brief explanation of the need for the proposed amendment, including the factors, data, or analyses that have changed since the adoption of the Countywide Planning Policies and/or the experiences with the existing Countywide Planning Policies that have prompted the proposed amendment.

2. A proposed amendment to the Countywide Planning Policies or Community Framework Plan policies shall be initially referred to the City-County Joint Staff Coordination Team for analysis and recommendation to the County Board of Councilors. The Board will make a recommendation that will be forwarded to all jurisdictions for legislative action within 120 days.

3. The amended CPP or CFP will become effective when ratified by Clark County and a majority of the other jurisdictions casting a vote. Each jurisdiction has a single vote. Such vote shall occur within 120 days from the date of the recommendation of the Board of Clark County Councilors.

4. Amendments to Countywide Planning Policies may be included in the county's annual comprehensive plan update process or during the periodic comprehensive plan update.

## NEXT STEPS

The PC will hold a hearing on July 30, 2015 followed by a BOCC hearing on August 18, 2015, to hear testimony from the public.