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City of Chehalis

Planning Commission

Staff Report

May 10, 2022

To: Planning Commission
 From: Tammy Baraconi, Planning and Building Manager
 Date: May 10, 2022
 Subject: 2022 Updates to Comprehensive Plan Elements and Capital Improvement Plan

Introduction

The is required to review and amend the Comprehensive Plan at minimum at least once every five years to ensure that it remains compatible with current conditions within the Community. (CMC 17.09.210(L)) The last time the Comprehensive Plan was partially updated was in 2017. The current proposal affects the Land Use and Housing Element, the Historic Preservation Element, and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

The Land Use Element (LU) currently contains information pertaining to Historic Preservation. For purposes of clarity and to ease future updates, an Historic Preservation Element (HP) is being proposed. The purpose of the HP is to guide and inform decision making on codes and design guidelines moving forward. Working with the Historic Preservation Commission staff developed a draft for the HP. This Element then went to the Historic Preservation Commission on February 17, 2022 for a public hearing. The Commission at that time voted unanimously to recommend approval of this Element to the Planning Commission.

The Land Use Element (LU) is meant to generally guide development throughout the city. LU addresses residential, commercial, and industrial uses. That is why the Land Use map is found in this element of the Comp Plan. Currently LU only addresses land use issues within City Limits. It does not address development patterns in the Urban Growth Area (UGA). Since the majority of land within the city limits is developed and most of our current development occurs within the UGA, staff believed that for an accurate view of what issues we currently face within the community must include the UGA. No goals or policies were changed or added to LU.

Besides the addition of two new zoning classifications, another notable change within the LU is population projections.

City and UGA Population Projections – 2040

	Current Population	Rate of Growth	2040 Population
City of Chehalis	7,350	1.25%	9,307
Chehalis UGA	2044	6.57%	7,298

The LU also identifies a shortage of residential, commercial and industrial land.

Single Family homes:

1. Average density = 4 du/ac
2. Additional lots for dwelling units needed by 2040 = 1,088
3. Gross amount of land needed $(1088/4) = 272$ acres

4. Add market factor $(283.5 \times 1.25) = 340$ gross acres of residential land needed
 6. Land available (69% of 179 acres) = 124 acres
- Residential land deficit $(124 - 340) = -216$ net acres

The same methodology, when applied to the need for land for multi-family development, yields this result:

1. Average density = 12 du/ac
2. Additional dwelling units needed by 2040 = 489
3. Gross amount of land needed $(489/12) = 41$ acres
4. Add market factor $(42.5 \times 1.25) = 51$ gross acres needed
5. Land available (31% of 179 acres) = 56 acres
6. Multi-family residential land surplus $(56 - 51) = +5$ net acres of land

For Commercial Land

1. Jobs created per acre = 20
2. New jobs projected = 4,870.5
3. Land needed $(4,870.5/20) = 243.52$ acres
4. Add market factor $(243.52 \times 1.25) = 304.41$ gross acres of commercial land needed
5. Vacant city zoned commercial land/industrial (excluding critical areas) = -841.59 acres
6. Subtract available land from land needed $(-841.59 - 304.41) = -1146$ net acres of commercial land needed

For Industrial Land

1. Average jobs created per acre = 4.5
2. New jobs projected = 4,002
3. Land needed $(4,002/4.5) = 889.3$ acres
4. Add market factor $(889.3 \times 1.25) = 1111.7$ gross acres of industrial land needed
5. Vacant city zoned industrial/commercial land (excluding critical areas) = 270.211 acres
6. Subtract available land from land needed $(270.11 - 1111.7) = -841.59$ net acres of industrial land needed

The Housing Element (H) is also meant to guide development throughout the city. Housing is an essential part of living and working within our community. A lack of sufficient housing can cause businesses to not have enough employees. Too much housing and we lose land that could be used to develop businesses. As with LU, Housing only addresses the housing issues within the city limits. And again, since most of the land within the city limits is developed, if we are going to add necessary housing, we can only do that in the UGA. That means we need an analysis of the housing stock within the city limits and UGA combined to give us an accurate picture of whether we have enough housing or not. No goals or policies were changed or added to the H.

While adding the UGA to the data, the H element also addresses recent changes to State Law, requiring us to begin planning for several types of housing, not just single family. While the bulk of this work will be done in 2025 when the city is mandated to do a more complete review of the comp plan, staff has begun reviewing some of that data today.

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is the one item that is required to be updated annually. The purpose of the CIP is to show what work projects staff finds necessary to keep the city functional. The role of the Planning Commission for the CIP is to review it and ensure that work proposed is consistent with proposed changes to the zoning map. For example, in this CIP you will notice that there are no projects for Stormwater. In this case we lack the items because of staffing issues, not a lack of projects. It would be appropriate for the PC to question this issue and even recommend that projects be found to include prior to this item being heard by the City Council. Unfortunately, it is not an opportunity for you to comment on costs or items that do not directly affect development. Those items are solely within the purview of the city council.

Public Notification and Comment

Public notice was published in The Chronicle on April 26, 2022 and posted on the City’s website.

Environmental Review

Environmental review will occur after the Planning Commission has made a recommendation and prior to the maps going to the Department of Commerce for review.

Process

After the public hearing phase is complete with the Planning Commission, the process moving forward will occur as follows:

1. Environmental review will be conducted and a SEPA decision will be issued.
2. The WA Dept of Commerce will have 60 days to review the proposed changes.
3. After Commerce has completed their review, it will come back to the city for a public hearing with the City Council.
4. The public hearing with the City Council will allow the public another opportunity to comment on the proposed changes.
5. The City Council will vote to approve, deny, table, or amend the ordinance that will update all of the Comp Plan elements including the CIP. It will go into effect 7 days after the ordinances are published in The Chronicle.

Staff Analysis and Recommendation

As per CMC 17.09.210(K) the following criteria must be met for approval of modifications or amendments to the Land Use Map or Zoning Map.

K. Decision Criteria. The planning commission may recommend, and the city council may approve with modifications, an amendment to the plan if:

1. There exists an obvious technical error in the pertinent comprehensive plan provision; or

Staff finds that the new updates include information from the UGA making the Comp Plan a more accurate representation of development in the city.

2. The applicant has carried the burden of proof and produced evidence sufficient to support the conclusion that the application merits approval or approval with modifications; and

Staff finds that this proposal is primarily proposed by City Staff. We further find that there is sufficient evidence to support the recommended conclusion.

3. The amendment bears a substantial relation to public health, safety and welfare; and

Staff finds that the changes will not impact public health, safety, or welfare.

4. The amendment addresses changing circumstances or the needs of the city as a whole; and

Staff finds that recent changes in the housing market warrant these changes for the city as a whole.

5. The amendment is compatible with the provisions of the comprehensive plan or other goals and policies of the city; and

Staff finds these changes to be compatible with the established goals and policies of the city.

6. If applicable to an identified property, the amendment is compatible with adjacent land use and surrounding neighborhoods; and

Staff finds that this item is not applicable to the proposed changes in this hearing.

7. The amendment will not result in development which will adversely impact community facilities, including, but not limited to, utilities, transportation, parks or schools.

Staff finds that the proposed changes to the Land Use Element, Housing Element, Historic Preservation Element, and the Capital Improvement Plan will not adversely impact community facilities including but not limited to, utilities, transportation, parks, or schools.

Staff recommends approval of the proposed changes to the Land Use Element, Housing Element, Historic Preservation Element, and the Capital Improvement Plan as presented.

Suggested Language

If Approve

Make a POSITIVE recommendation to the City Council for the proposed changes to the Land Use map and Zoning map subject to the following condition(s):

The three comp plan elements were approved by the Planning Commission with no conditions. The CIP was approved with the condition that items be added prior to submittal to the City Council for approval.

If Deny

Make a NEGATIVE recommendation to the City Council for proposed changes to the Land Use map and Zoning map for the following reason(s):

If Table

Make the motion to TABLE the proposed changes to the Land Use map and Zoning Map for the following reason(s):