



Zoning/Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Description

What is a Comprehensive Plan classification or Zoning designation?

The Comprehensive Plan (the Plan) is an official document that is adopted by the Board of County Commissioners to guide policy decisions related to the physical, social, and economic growth of the County. On November 1, 1976 the Cowlitz County Board of Commissioners adopted the County's first Comprehensive Plan, in an effort to provide a framework for decision-making for future growth and development. Based on this premise, all properties within Cowlitz County have been assigned a Comprehensive Plan classification. Some portions of the County are also zoned. Comprehensive Plan classifications provide a general description of the types of development envisioned for areas of the County. Zoning designations are more specific. Within the Land Use Ordinance (CCC 18.10), a list of all of the uses allowed in each zone, zoning maps, the building setbacks, the lot sizes allowed and other detailed information can be found. Information on the processes for review of different types of development and other related issues can also be found in this code.

Why would I need to make an amendment?

Cowlitz County's Land Use Ordinance lists permitted uses in various zoning districts. If the owner of a parcel desires to establish a use that is not permitted within the existing zoning designations, they may propose to change the designation placed on the property to allow the use that they desire. An applicant may also wish to make a change in the text of the Land Use Ordinance. For either of these, a zoning map amendment or text amendment is required (RCW 36.70.550, CCC 18.10.410-490). Likewise, an applicant may wish to change Comprehensive Plan classifications, or make a change in the text of the Comprehensive Plan. A Comprehensive Plan amendment is required to do so. Under state law, the County is required to ensure that development regulations are consistent with our Comprehensive Plan (RCW 36.70.545). This means that Comprehensive Plan amendments or zoning changes may be required to reconcile differences between the development regulations currently allowed, and details of your project proposal.

Review Process

Pre-Application

A pre-application meeting with staff is not required, but highly recommended. In this meeting, Planning staff can answer questions, help you determine what options are available for the development of your project, and guide you through the navigation of the application and review process. Staff from other county departments and relevant agencies will also be invited to give you the most complete picture possible of the review process. A Pre-Application application is available online. For assistance with this, please contact Permit Center staff at 360-577-3052 or permitinfo@cowlitzwa.gov.



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Application Submittal

The materials checklist in this packet will help you compile all the needed forms, documents and other materials necessary to move forward with a complete application. Once you have compiled all the necessary information and completed the application, you will submit the application to the Cowlitz County Department of Building and Planning. More information on application submittal can be found in CCC 18.02. Your application will be considered for review when it has been completed and all applicable fees have been paid. Information about fees can be found in this packet.

Application Review

Once your complete application has been submitted and all fees have been paid, your application will go through a review process.

First, Planning staff will review your application. At this point, staff will ensure that all required materials are present and legible. Staff will also review your narrative and the context of the proposed amendment. A summary of the steps taken to determine your application is complete can be found in CCC 18.02.

Then, staff will review your completed SEPA checklist. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requires that a review of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed amendment be conducted. County staff and interested agencies will review the checklist and the application to determine its compliance with applicable Federal, State and County Code. Cowlitz County must determine if there are possible significant adverse environmental impacts associated with each proposal. More specific information about the SEPA process is available in a separate handout available from the Permit Center.

Once the SEPA determination has been made by Cowlitz County, a 14-day public review period begins. The County will complete all public notification requirements in accordance with CCC 19.11.090.

After the SEPA determination has been made, staff will schedule an open record public hearing with the Planning Commission. Information about the Planning Commission can be found in CCC 18.03. Staff will also notify the applicant and adjacent property owners of the public hearing date, and publish and post legal notices.

Finally, Planning staff will prepare their recommendations to the Planning Commission in the form of a staff report. This staff report will be considered at the public hearing.

Planning Commission Public Hearing

The Planning Commission will recommend approval or denial of the application. Staff will then transmit that recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.



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Board of County Commissioners Public Hearing

The Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing. At this hearing, the Board will review recommendations and hear from Planning staff, hear from you (the applicant), and take public testimony from interested parties and the general public. The Board of County Commissioners will approve, approve with conditions or deny the application.

Application Approval

If your application is approved, Planning staff will make changes to the zoning map, ordinance text or Comprehensive Plan. Changes are complete once they are recorded on all applicable materials and documents. You will continue to work with Department of Building and Planning staff to obtain any further permits required for developing your project.

Review Time

Typically zoning and Comprehensive Plan amendments are completed within 90-120 days, although this time frame is subject to change depending on staff workload, size and complexity of the proposal, and completeness of application materials.

Fees

The following fees are required to be paid when the application is submitted:

Comprehensive Plan Amendment (Standalone):	\$3,000
Zoning Amendment (Standalone):	\$2,400
Comprehensive Plan & Zoning Amendment (Concurrent):	\$4,400
SEPA Determination:	\$450

Duration

Zoning map amendments, Land Use Ordinance text amendments, and Comprehensive Plan amendments are permanent unless amended at a later time.



Checklist

Submittal Checklist

The following items are required at time of submittal; please use this checklist as a guide. Please note that we cannot accept incomplete applications. When you submit your application, please include a copy of this notated checklist so we may ensure all documents are complete.

- ___ 1. **Application Form (included in this packet)**
 - Entire form completed and signed by the owner or applicant
 - Petition of Property Owners is included in the Application Form (must be completed and signed by *all* owners or applicants involved in the amendment)
 - Narrative description explaining the intent and purpose of the amendment. Use space on the Application Form and/or additional sheets.
 - Responses to the zoning/Comprehensive Plan amendment supplemental questions (the questions are on the application form, use additional sheets for response).

- ___ 2. **Current Deed (to be provided by you)**

- ___ 3. **Legal description of area to be amended (to be provided by you), obtained from one of the following:**
 - Title Company
 - Licensed Surveyor
 - Attorney
 - Recorded Deed(s)
 - Other sources as may be available

- ___ 4. **Copies of any (to be provided by you):**
 - Restrictions
 - Easements
 - Agreements
 - Covenants

- ___ 5. **List of Property Owners within 300 feet (to be provided by you):**
 - This can be obtained from the County Assessor's Parcel Search at [http://www.cowlitzinfo.net/applications/cowlitzassessorparcelsearch/\(S\(ytdwz0nnxnjlueb5degac55\)\)/Default.aspx](http://www.cowlitzinfo.net/applications/cowlitzassessorparcelsearch/(S(ytdwz0nnxnjlueb5degac55))/Default.aspx). The Department of Building and Planning will prepare the mailing list of property owners who need to be notified based off the list provided with your application. (Please use a separate sheet of paper).

- ___ 6. **Vicinity Map (to be provided by you)**



Checklist

- ___ 7. **Site Plan Showing *Existing* Conditions (to be provided by you):**
 - Layout and dimensions of **existing** parcels, to a measurable scale
 - Location of all existing structures, drainfields, and driveways, and their distances to property lines;
 - Location and dimension of all known easements on the property and adjoining the property, including public and private roads

- ___ 8. **Site Plan Showing *Proposed* Conditions (to be provided by you):**
 - Layout and dimensions of **proposed** parcels, to a measurable scale
 - Location of all existing structures, drainfields, and driveways, and their distances to property lines;
 - Location and size of all known easements on the property, including public and private roads

- ___ 9. **Completed SEPA Checklist (template may be obtained from the Permit Center)**
 - Include non-project supplement

- ___ 10. **Statement of Proposed Methods for Providing (to be provided by you):**
 - Potable Water
 - Sewage Disposal
 - Solid Waste Disposal
 - Stormwater Compliance

- ___ 11. **Letter of Authorization (included in this packet)**

- ___ 12. **Additional Studies (if requested, to be provided by you)**
 - Traffic Study
 - Market Analysis
 - Health Impact Assessment
 - Other studies as needed



Amendment Application

Applicant: Please print in ink or type. Planning staff will review this application upon at intake for completeness.

Owner/Applicant Information

Applicant/ Authorized Agent _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Daytime Telephone _____ Email Address _____

Property Owner (if different) _____

Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Daytime Telephone _____ Email Address _____

Property Information

Property Address _____ Community _____

Parcel# (s) _____

Section(s) _____ Township _____ Range _____

Total Acreage (of area to be amended) _____

Existing Land Use

___ Commercial ___ Residential ___ Mobile Home ___ Industrial ___ Agriculture ___ Forest

Other: _____

Adjacent Land Uses (within 300 feet of property boundaries)

North _____ Northeast _____

Northwest _____ South _____

Southeast _____ Southwest _____

West _____ East _____

Reason for Request (clearly respond to the following)

All rezones and Comprehensive Plan amendments must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; show a need for the reclassification; and demonstrate the reclassification furthers the public interest (health, safety, convenience and welfare). The questions below are intended to guide your request, they are not a substitute for County Code or State Law. **Please address these questions on a separate page(s).**

1. How does your rezone/Comprehensive Plan amendment request conform with the Comprehensive Plan land use classification, goals and policies, and locational criteria? (If a rezone proposal is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and amendment to the Plan will be necessary).
2. What physical, institutional, economic and/or other circumstances have changed since the current zoning/Comprehensive Plan classification was adopted? How have the changes created a need for the reclassification?
3. Why is the property not usable as presently zoned/classified? Tell us how you plan to use the property if it is rezoned/amended.
4. What is the relationship between the uses that could be permitted by the rezone or reclassification and the existing surrounding areas? Will they be compatible?
5. How would the proposed rezone/amendment further not only your own interests but also those of the surrounding properties and public as a whole? What impacts to the surrounding properties can be expected? (Some of this information may be provided in the SEPA checklist).
6. How will the rezone/amendment promote the public convenience, necessity and general welfare?
7. Explain if there are other reasons why you feel the application should be approved.

Ownership (list all persons owning an interest in the land)

NAME	ADDRESS, CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	PHONE NUMBER	% OF OWNERSHIP

Petition of Property Owners and Applicant Certification Agreement

The applicant(s) and owners hereby certify that the above statements and attached site plans and supporting documents transmitted herewith are true, and acknowledge that any permit issued on this application may be revoked if it is found that such statements are false. Applications for zoning map, land use ordinance and Comprehensive Plan amendments must be signed by no less than fifty-one percent (51%) of the property owners, representing at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the amendment area (CCC 18.10).

(Owner Signatures)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

(Applicant Signature)

_____ Date _____

(Print Name)

Office Use Only

Application Type _____ Date _____

Permit # _____ Accepted By _____
