

## CHAPTER ELEVEN -- PLAN AMENDMENTS

This chapter provides information about the process for amending the Comprehensive Plan and related plans.

Appendix D includes, for reference, the adopting resolutions for all amendments to the Comprehensive Plan since its initial adoption in 1975. All amendments are incorporated into this revised Comprehensive Plan.

### I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### A. Growth Management Act Compliance:

All amendments to this Comprehensive Plan must conform with the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act, Chapter 36.70A RCW.

#### B. Timing:

1. Proposed amendments to this Comprehensive Plan will be considered no more frequently than once per year, and all proposals will be considered concurrently so the cumulative effect of the various proposals can be ascertained. Information about the County's annual schedule for processing Comprehensive Plan amendments is available from the Development Services Department. The table shown below describes, in general, the amendment review process.
2. The County may adopt amendments more frequently than once per year if an emergency exists, or if otherwise permitted by law.
3. In addition to the amendment schedule described above, the Comprehensive Plan will be amended every seven (7) years, beginning in 2004, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.130.

### II. TYPES OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

#### A. Multiple Processes

The Thurston County Comprehensive Plan is composed of numerous separate plan documents, including this Comprehensive Plan which focuses on the rural area, joint plans for each Urban Growth Area in the County, subarea plans for specific geographic areas of the County, and functional plans, such as the Sewerage General Plan and the Grand Mound Water General Plan. All plan amendments are considered only once per year. Joint plan amendments require review by both the County and the city or town for which the urban growth area is established. In some cases, the city, town, or County proposes the change; in other cases, the

amendment is proposed by a member of the public. All amendments are reviewed by the Thurston County Planning Commission, with final decision by the Board of County Commissioners.

For information about the different processes for amending the Comprehensive Plan, contact the Development Services Department or check the Department website [www.co.thurston.wa.us/permitting/](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/permitting/).

## **B. Legislative and Quasi-Judicial Amendments**

1. Whether a proposed action is characterized as legislative or quasi-judicial is a legal determination made on a case-by-case basis. A decision that formulates a general policy applicable to a broad class of situations and to a large number of parcels and persons, not readily identifiable, is generally legislative in nature.

A decision that applies an existing policy to a specific number of parcels in readily identifiable ownership is generally a quasi-judicial action. Furthermore, a decision which formulates policy yet affects relatively few individuals will generally be characterized as a quasi-judicial action, regardless of who applied for the change.

Plan amendments that apply to a specific site, frequently in conjunction with an identifiable development proposal, may be initiated by an applicant. For further information, contact the Development Services Department.

2. In evaluating whether a proposed amendment is quasi-judicial or legislative, the Development Services Department will use the criteria described in 1, above, and the following criteria:
  - a. Would the proposed amendment support or conflict with existing Comprehensive Plan goals and policies? Amendments that include or require changes to broadly applied policies are generally legislative amendments.
  - b. Would the proposed amendment support or conflict with existing interjurisdictional policies or agreements? Amendments that would require changes to such policies or agreements are generally legislative amendments.
  - c. Would the proposed amendment support or conflict with County-Wide Planning Policies? Proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments that would require amendments to the County-Wide Planning Policies are legislative amendments and cannot be initiated by an applicant.
  - d. Any amendments to urban growth area boundaries are generally legislative amendments.

**III. APPEALS**

**A. Growth Management Hearings Board Review:**

Challenges to amendments to the Comprehensive Plan or related plans that are within the jurisdiction of the Growth Management Hearing Board, shall be processed according to the law governing such challenges.

**B. Judicial Review:**

Judicial appeals to review any decision concerning the amendment of the Comprehensive Plan, including related plans, must meet all procedural requirements provided by law. The plaintiff bringing any such action shall pay the full cost of transcription of the record prepared for judicial review.

**Table 11-1:**

**GENERAL STEPS FOR ANNUAL  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS**

County-Initiated Amendments	Joint Plan Amendments	Quasi-Judicial Amendments
Staff Development of Proposals and Public Involvement	Staff Development of Proposals and Public Involvement	Applicant Prepares Complete Application and SEPA document(s)
Internal Staff Review	Cities/Towns Submit Amendments; Internal Staff Review	Internal Staff Review
Thurston County Planning Commission (TCPC) Briefing	Thurston County Planning Commission (TCPC) Briefing	Thurston County Planning Commission (TCPC) Briefing
TCPC Public Hearing(s) and Recommendation	TCPC Public Hearing(s) and Recommendation	TCPC Public Hearing(s) and Recommendation
Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Briefing	Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Briefing	Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Briefing
BOCC Public Hearing(s) and Action	BOCC Public Hearing(s) and Action	BOCC Public Hearing(s) and Action