



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY, TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

128 - 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW • PO Box 42525 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2525 • (360) 725-4000

March 16, 2009

The Honorable Ron Harding  
Mayor of Yelm  
Post Office Box 479  
Yelm, Washington 98597

RE: Proposed amendments to Yelm's comprehensive plan

Dear Mayor Harding:

Thank you for sending Growth Management Services the proposed amendments to the Yelm comprehensive plan we received on February 11, 2009. We recognize the substantial investment of time, energy, and resources that these documents represent, and we appreciate the opportunity to comment.

These amendments propose to change the population projections in the Land Use Element from the current 2030 projection of 11,480 people – to a 2028 population of 22,400. This is a substantial change from what is currently in the Land Use Element and has implications throughout the rest of the comprehensive plan. As new population projections are adopted, the Growth Management Act (GMA) requires consistency throughout the comprehensive plan for transportation, housing, and economic development, and for capital facilities such as parks, water, and sewer. We suggest that if you adopt changes of this magnitude in your plan, that you also start planning updates to the rest of your plan to make the population projections consistent throughout the plan and ensure you are planning for needed public facilities and services.

You will have an opportunity to fully integrate the comprehensive plan for the entire community as you plan for the next update of the plan and development regulations required by RCW 36.70A.130. This update is required by December 1, 2011, and we expect to be able to provide planning grants after July 1, 2009. At this point in time, we suggest you start developing a list of comprehensive plan elements and development regulations that will need updating to be consistent with these revised population projections and will implement plan goals and policies.

Future residents and their businesses will be able to look at your comprehensive plan and see your vision for what the community will be like in 20 years – and see where the water comes from, what the level of service for parks is, how sewage is treated, what the traffic is like. The comprehensive plan is intended to be a comprehensive summary about the community's growth over planning period. It should create realistic expectations for the future and provide information which can inform decisions about investing in a home or a business in Yelm.

Your Capital Facilities Plan element does not currently contain the information required by the GMA such as adopted level of service for capital facilities, nor projections of need over the 20-year planning period. It should identify capital facilities needs over the next 20 years, and include a strategy to pay for these facilities as growth occurs for at least the next six years. RCW 36.70A.070(3) requires that the capital facilities element include:

1. An inventory of existing capital facilities owned by public entities, showing the locations and capacities of the capital facilities including water, sewer, storm water, park facilities, or other public facilities needed to support the plan's projected growth.

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2. A forecast of future need - normally based on 20-year population projections and adopted levels of service, population densities, and distribution of growth over the planning period. The capital facilities element should show how the jurisdiction is planning to provide adequate water supply, sewage treatment, or other needed public facilities to support the plan's projected 20-year growth. Planning for adequate public facilities involves a comparison between what is needed over the 20-year life of the plan compared to what is currently available. If additional capacity is needed, the plan should identify the additional needed capacity and include an overall strategy for closing the gap between what is needed and what is available. This may include system or demand management strategies.
3. Proposed locations of expanded or new capital facilities.
4. A six-year plan (at least) included that will finance planned capital facilities within projected funding capacities identifying sources of public money for such purposes. This capital facilities plan should include a plan for all expenditures of public funds for capital facilities including water, sewer, transportation, etc.

We would be happy to assist you to identify needed updates to your plan, and provide you with tools to complete the update.

Thank you for submitting these amendments to our office, and providing us with the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions or concerns about our comments or any other growth management issues, please call me at 360.725.3064. We extend our continued support to the City of Yelm in achieving the goals of growth management.

Sincerely,



Anne Aurelia Fritzel  
Senior Planner  
Growth Management Services

AAF:lw

cc: Grant Beck, Community Development Director, City of Yelm  
Tami Merriman, Associate Planner, City of Yelm  
Kathy McCormick, Senior Planner, Thurston Regional Planning Council  
Leonard Bauer, AICP, Managing Director, Growth Management Services  
David Andersen, AICP, Plan Review and Technical Assistance Manager, Growth Management Services