

**2009 Proposed Amendments to the Covington Comprehensive Plan
Final Public Comment Opportunity November 24, 2009**

The following seven proposals for amendments to the Covington Comprehensive Plan (CP) were received by the January 30, 2009 deadline and were formally “docketed” for review and action by the City Council on March 24, 2009. All annual amendments to the Comprehensive Plan must be considered concurrently. These seven proposals constitute the final docket for 2009 and were reviewed by the Planning Commission at a public hearing on October 15, 2009. They have been recommended to the City Council for adoption and will be considered by the Council at a public hearing on November 24, 2009. City Council is scheduled to take final action on all “docketed” Comprehensive Plan Amendments on December 8, 2009. Additional meetings with Council discussion may also be considered by the City Council prior to December 31, 2009, but they must formally take action to approve, deny, modify or defer such Comprehensive Plan Amendments prior to December 31, 2009.

Written comments from interested individuals on any of these proposed amendments are welcome during the final comment period and public hearing scheduled for November 24, 2009. Comments may be provided in writing or via email to Richard Hart at rhart@ci.covington.wa.us or may be dropped off at Covington City Hall, 16720 SE 271st Street, Suite 100, Covington, WA 98042, prior to 5:00 PM on November 23, 2009. The full text and attachments for the seven (7) Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments are also available for viewing at City Hall or on the City’s website.

Questions about these proposed amendments may also be directed to the specific contact person listed below.

Summary of Proposed Amendments

I. Kent Fire Department: Updating of Fire Department Information in Capital Facilities Plan Element Sections 10.1, 10.4.1, 10.17 (CFP 2.4 and CFP 3.1), and Table 10.2.

This proposal would amend the text of the Capital Facilities Plan Element (Chapter 10), in Section 10.1 to provide updated titles of fire agencies, location of fire stations, and numbers of current personnel for the combined agency of Kent Fire Department and Fire District 37.

The proposal would also replace the existing text of 10.4.1 with new language regarding the recently opened Fire Station 78, and regarding the need and approximate cost for a second Covington Fire Station in the future. In addition, it would add new language to 10.17 CFP 2.4 and replace CFP 3.1. The amendment adopts *District 37’s Concurrency Plan* and *District 37’s Mitigation and Level of Service Contribution (LOSC) Policy* by reference.

Contact Person: Larry Raible, Fire Marshall lraible@ci.kent.wa.us

II. Covington Public Works Department: Compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II requirements

This proposal would amend parts of Surface Water Resource Element (Chapter 8), and Capital Facilities Program Element Sections 10.9 and 10.13, and Table 10.4.

The Surface Water Element of the Comprehensive Plan and a portion of the Capital Facilities Plan Element addressing surface water require updating primarily for continued compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Permit requirements mandated by Congress under the Clean Water Act and governed by the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE). The current Surface Water Element

references the *King County Surface Water Design Manual* which does not meet the NPDES Phase II permit requirements. Instead, the proposed text will reference the approved Department of Ecology *Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington*. Also, the Surface Water Capital Projects list needs to be updated to address deficiencies identified as part of the NPDES process. This involves the re-evaluation of regional storm water facilities and their feasibility as the City makes the transition to low-impact development practices.

The purpose of the NPDES requirements is to provide controls to prevent harmful pollutants from washing into local water bodies or infiltrating into aquifer recharge areas. The proposed amendments would bring the Comprehensive Plan into compliance with the most recent federal and state laws and standards for stormwater management.

Contact: Don Vondran, City Engineer dvondran@ci.covington.wa.us

III. Community Development Department: Adoption of a new Economic Development Element

This proposal would add a new Economic Development Element (Chapter 12) to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Washington State Legislature adopted the Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1990, and economic development elements were optional for local jurisdictions. To date, the City of Covington Comprehensive Plan has not included an economic development element. In 2002, the Legislature recognized the need to more "strategically position our state and local communities to compete successfully in a changing economy" by making economic development a required element of the local comprehensive plan (RCW 36.70A.070).

The proposed element establishes local goals, policies, objectives, and provisions for economic growth and vitality and a high quality of life. The element includes: (a) a summary of the local economy such as population, employment, payroll, sectors, businesses, sales, and other information as appropriate; (b) a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy, defined as the commercial and industrial sectors and supporting factors such as land use, transportation, utilities, education, work force, housing and natural/cultural resources; and (c) an identification of policies, programs, and projects to foster economic growth and development and to address future needs.

This element is consistent with the Washington State Growth Management Act, the Covington City Council's Vision Statement for the community, and more recent economic development initiatives of the City Council and Covington Economic Development Council.

Contact Person: Shalini Bansal, Economic Development Manager
sbansal@ci.covington.wa.us

IV. Community Development Department: Revising Downtown Zoning Goals & Policies and Creation of a Town Center Focus Area

This proposed amendment would totally revised the Downtown Element (Chapter 4) based upon the recommendations from a recently completed Downtown Plan & Zoning Study prepared by AHBL Planning.

This will include specifying the location of a new Town Center and specific goals and policies relating to a new Town Center. Currently the Comprehensive Plan allows a wide variety of uses that do not specifically relate to an identified Town Center site and do not have a unified structure centered around a public gathering place. Such high intensity uses

within a town center focus area will enhance the identity of downtown, create a unique gathering place for downtown Covington, and provide economic benefit to the community.

Currently the downtown vision outlines four different focus areas implemented with 12 different zoning districts. The focus areas are likely to change, specific uses will change, and heights, setbacks, densities, and design standards will be modified. Specific development standards for multi-story commercial/residential mixed-use developments appropriate for a pedestrian-friendly town center around a public gathering place will be considered. Further, the vision statement and implementation section will be expanded.

Contact: Richard Hart, Planning Manager rhart@ci.covington.wa.us

V. Community Development Department: Revisions to the Land Use Element and Revision of Goals, Policies and Permitted Uses in a variety of Land Use Categories Throughout the Community.

This proposal would amend the Land Use Element (Chapter 2) and Downtown element (chapter 4) including goals and policies, the Future Land Use Map, including downtown zones and focus areas, the Transportation Map, the Signature Streets, Gateways & Public Places Map and Implementation measures.

Currently a wide variety of land uses are allowed in the land use policies and some conflicts exist between residential, commercial and office uses. Specifically, the appropriate use and location of industrial uses in the downtown will be modified or eliminated, and appropriate development standards will be considered and added, to reduce internal land use conflicts with other appropriate downtown uses and surrounding residential uses and zones. In addition, specific development standards for multi-story commercial/residential mixed-use developments appropriate for a pedestrian-friendly town center will be considered and new locations will be identified. Further, the vision statement & implementation sections will be modified.

Contact: Salina Lyons, Senior Planner at slyons@ci.covington.wa.us

VI. Community Development Department: Revision of Transportation Element, Circulation Maps and CIP projects for both the downtown and surrounding Community.

This proposal would amend the Downtown Transportation Element (Chapter 5) and various sections of the Downtown Element (chapter 4) related to transportation and parts of the Capital Facilities Element (Chapter 10) related to transportation facilities and implementation.

These changes are intended to provide an improved vision for circulation and street grid in the downtown area that will complement the development of a new Town Center, relieve traffic conditions on SE 272nd, improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, and provide for better transit access. The goal is to improve the economic viability and attractiveness of the entire downtown, by making it easier to enter, move around, and exit. It will involve amendments to the text, maps and figures. In order to implement the new vision, there will also be a need for amendments to the Capital Facilities Element (Chapter 10) to add new CIP Projects for streets, trails, open space, and other infrastructure.

Salina Lyons, Senior Planner, at slyons@ci.covington.wa.us and Don Vondran, City Engineer, at dvondran@ci.covington.wa.us

VII. Community Development Department: Revision of Land use Policies relating to the Urban Separator Zone, Creation of a Planned Urban Development (PUD) Land Use Category, and Re-designation of King County Property Known as “Calhoun Gravel Pit” from Urban Separator (US) to (PUD)

This proposal would amend the Land Use Element (Chapter 2) to add Section 2.6.14. This section will be entitled Planned Urban Development (PUD). Tables 2.5 and 2.6 will be revised to include a PUD category. In addition land use policies 19.1 through 19.4 will be amended and revised to allow changes to the Urban Separator Zoning.

The new Planned Urban Development category is intended to provide the opportunity for the City to designate certain areas that will be developed according to a coherent plan which will integrate a mix of uses that could include residential, commercial, office park, public use, active open space, and conservation areas. Property owners would work with the City to develop such a plan. The plan will establish conditions for subsequent land use approvals implementing the PUD. These will include promoting coordinated infrastructure and project-phasing based on the adequacy of public services, implementing open space protection tailored to the PUD, establishing a range and intensity of land uses for the PUD appropriate to the site, providing diversity in housing types and affordability within the PUD, and promoting site design that supports and encourages the use of transit and non-motorized transportation modes. Permits for development within the PUD will be subject to standardized and consolidated review in accordance with the plan, and as described in the Covington Municipal Code.

King County is in the process of disposing of their property (“Calhoun Pit”) that lies east of 160th Ave SE and north of SE 272nd Street in an area that is currently designated as Urban Separator. The area to the southeast is part of the downtown zone DN 2. The area directly south of the King County site is zoned DN 3. Because of its immediate proximity to the DN zones, its frontage on 272nd, and its potential as a large, undeveloped site for integrated, multi-use development, it is suitable for designation as a Planned Urban Development (PUD) area rather than the Urban Separator Zone (US). This proposal would re-designate this property as a PUD Zone.

Contact: Richard Hart, Planning Manager, at rhart@ci.covington.wa.us