



Staff Report

October 16, 2023 Council Workshop Meeting

Suspension of Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Requests

Presenter: Alan Peters, Community Development Director

Time Estimate: 10 minutes

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BACKGROUND: CMC Chapter 18.51 provides a process for applicants to request individual amendments to the Comprehensive Plan as part of an annual review cycle. Applications are accepted in January of each year and then considered together by the Planning Commission and Council. Staff is proposing that Council suspend acceptance of annual review requests for 2024 and 2025 while the City completes its required Comprehensive Plan periodic review.

SUMMARY: The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that each city and county periodically review and, if needed, revise its comprehensive plan and development regulations to ensure that they comply with the GMA. As per the schedule provided in RCW 36.70A.130, the City of Camas is beginning a review that is due by June 30, 2025.

In addition to the major periodic reviews required by the GMA, the City also considers other updates to the Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis. This annual review process allows the City to amend its comprehensive plan quickly to be responsive to property owner desires, respond to changes in circumstances, and stay relevant to local needs. Per CMC 18.51.020, the City provides a one-month window in January of each year to receive applications for Comprehensive Plan amendments and then reviews any received amendments concurrently so that the cumulative effects of all the proposals can be ascertained. Decisions on annual requests are a legislative action made by Council after a recommendation by the Planning Commission.

Because the City (including Staff, the Planning Commission, Council, and the community at-large) will be occupied over the next two years with the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan and the development of the downtown subarea plan, Staff is proposing that Council suspend acceptance of annual review requests for 2024 and 2025. There are two reasons to consider this suspension. First, the comprehensive plan update and downtown subarea plans are significant projects that will require significant amounts of staff time. Second, the periodic update will provide an opportunity for the City to look comprehensively at the City's land use policies. Land use map changes or rezoning may occur as part of the update process, and property owners are encouraged to participate in the public process and may request amendments that can be considered as part of the overall plan update.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY: Suspending annual comprehensive plan amendment requests will allow the community to focus on the comprehensive plan periodic update while still providing opportunities for property owners to make amendment requests as part of the overall public process during the comprehensive plan review.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES: The comprehensive plan update will not be completed until June 2025, so any amendments to the comprehensive plan could not be enacted until then.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that Council adopt a resolution suspending annual comprehensive plan amendment requests for 2024 and 2025.