



February 3, 2026

Tye Menser, Chair
Thurston County Board of County Commissioners
3000 Pacific Ave SE, Suite 110
Olympia, WA 98501

RE: 2026-2027 Thurston County Comprehensive Plan Preliminary Docket Review
Bar Holdings LLC: Tumwater Urban Growth Area Swap, Land Use Amendment, and
Rezone
Original Application for Comprehensive Plan Amendment – CPA-22 (November
2021)
Revised Application (December 2023)

E-mailed to tye.menser@co.thurston.wa.us

Dear Mr. Menser:

Thank you for providing the opportunity for the City of Tumwater to review and provide our comments to the Board of County Commissioners as part of the 2026-2027 Thurston County Comprehensive Plan Preliminary Docket, specifically on the Bar Holdings LLC: Tumwater Urban Growth Area Swap, Land Use Amendment, and Rezone Amendment (Comprehensive Plan Amendment – CPA-22 (filed November 2021 and revised December 2023)).

The Thurston County-Wide Planning Policies, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2015 and amended in 2025, establish the framework for coordinating the Thurston County and Tumwater's Comprehensive Plans and urban growth areas through the City of Tumwater and Thurston County Joint Plan. The Countywide Planning Policies support

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the coordination of County and City urban growth area planning efforts, particularly Section III.3.1.

Background

The Bar Holdings LLC amendment to the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan and the City of Tumwater and Thurston County Joint Plan is a citizen-requested amendment that was filed in 2021, added to the Official County Docket by the Board in 2022, amended by the applicant in 2023 to include a proposed urban growth area land swap under RCW 36.70A.130(3)(c), and kept on the docket by the Board in 2024.

The 93rd Avenue SE and Old Highway 99 SE amendment area that is proposed to be added to the City's urban growth area is immediately adjacent to the Tumwater southeastern urban growth area. The proposed 93rd Avenue SE and Old Highway 99 SE amendment area will move the County's urban growth boundary and expand the Tumwater urban growth area to the southeast to include Thurston County Assessor Parcel numbers 1719220101, 11719210100, and 11719240302, which is approximately 46 acres.

The Bar Holdings LLC amendment would change the current land use designations and zoning classifications of Thurston County Assessor Parcel number 1719220101 from Rural Residential Resource 1/5 (RRR 1/5) to Mixed Use (MU) and General Commercial (GC), and of Thurston County Assessor Parcel numbers 11719210100 and 11719240302 from Rural Residential Resource 1/5 (RRR 1/5) to Light Industrial (LI).

The proposed Black Lake Boulevard SW and Sapp Road SW amendment area to be removed from the City's urban growth area is within the City's western urban growth area. It will move the County's urban growth boundary to the east and north and remove eighteen parcels of approximately 65 acres and change the current land use designations and zoning classifications of eighteen parcels from Heavy Industrial (HI), Single Family Low Density Residential (SFL), and Greenbelt (GB) to Rural Residential/Resource 1/5 (RRR 1/5) and Rural Resource Industrial (RRI).

Tumwater originally provided comments on the Bar Holdings LLC amendment to the County in letters dated December 10, 2021, February 10, 2023, and March 13, 2024. We ask that these letters be included in the comments sent to the Board of County Commissioners for the 2026-2027 Thurston County Comprehensive Plan Preliminary Docket Review.

City of Tumwater's Position

The Tumwater Mayor and City Council support the vision for future development of the 93rd Avenue SE and Old Highway 99 SE amendment area in the conceptual plan presented by the applicants to the City in February 2024 and to the City Council on April 22, 2025. With the recent significant addition of hundreds of single-family housing units in southern Tumwater, having goods and services located much closer to these residents would reduce miles traveled, ease road congestion, and reduce carbon emissions.

The conceptual plan also included space for a YMCA, a project that Tumwater supports and has collaborated with the YMCA to help secure a suitable site.

A project such as this would also help to extend water and sewer utilities which could help with construction costs for a planned Tumwater School District elementary school in the area.

Next Steps

If the Board of County Commissioners chooses to keep the Bar Holdings LLC amendment on the 2026-27 Official County Docket, the City of Tumwater requests that an interlocal agreement be established between the City and the County to establish the collective and individual responsibilities for each jurisdiction as part of the amendment process and subsequent development of the site.

The plan presented by the applicant is a conceptual plan of what potentially could occur in the 93rd Avenue SE and Old Highway 99 SE amendment area if the amendment is approved and it overcomes any legal challenges. Approval of the Bar Holdings LLC amendment only changes the County Land Use and Zoning Maps; it would not guarantee that the proposed development of the 93rd Avenue SE and Old Highway 99 SE amendment area shown in the conceptual plan would occur. In fact, if ownership of the property changes, any of the range of uses allowed under Light Industrial (LI), Mixed Use (MU), and General Commercial (GC) could occur.

If the County supports the vision presented in the conceptual plan, Tumwater will seek a development agreement with the applicant as part of the amendment process to address how the project will follow City zoning and development standards, as well as the provision of water and sewer, annexation, and transportation improvements for the project.

Conclusion

The Mayor and City Council support mixed-use projects that create quality housing and employment opportunities and recognizes that a project that integrates significant community assets is a positive thing. The Mayor and City Council would like to work closely with the County and the applicant to ensure that County and City time and staff resources are spent wisely and result in a good outcome for all parties.

Thank you again for providing the opportunity to provide comments. If you have any questions or need additional information, please let us know. We ask that you continue to keep us informed of the status of the County's review process.

Sincerely,

Leatta Dahlhoff

Mayor, City of Tumwater

c. Leonard Hernandez, Thurston County, County Manager (Sent by e-mail to leonard.hernandez@co.thurston.wa.us)

Joshua Cummings, Thurston County, Assistant County Manager (Sent by e-mail to Joshua.cummings@co.thurston.wa.us)

Ashley Arai, Thurston County, Community Planning & Economic Development (Sent by e-mail to ashley.arai@co.thurston.wa.us)

Ana Rodriguez, Thurston County, Community Planning & Economic Development (Sent by e-mail to ana.rodriguez@co.thurston.wa.us)

Paul Simmons, City of Tumwater, City Administrator

Brad Medrud, City of Tumwater, Community Development Director