



Comprehensive Plan



Prepared by:
City of Centralia

Adopted by Centralia City Council – Fall of 2007

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“PRIVILEGED CENTRALIA”

A PREAMBLE TO CENTRALIA’S 2007 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THE 2007 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS THE VISION OF ONE OF WASHINGTON’S OLDEST CITIES, THE CITY OF CENTRALIA. THE CITY COUNCIL AND STAFF ARE COMMITTED TO THE CREATION OF A 21ST CENTURY CITY, BASED ON THE TRADITIONS AND VALUES OF THE CITY’S FOUNDERS. CENTRALIA IS COMMITTED TO CREATING A VIBRANT COMMUNITY, WITH THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF LIVABILITY. THE COUNCIL IS COMMITTED TO CREATING A COMMUNITY THAT CITIZENS WILL CONSIDER IT A SPECIAL PRIVILEGE TO LIVE AND WORK IN THE CITY. THE CITY OF CENTRALIA WILL RETAIN ITS COUNTRY CHARACTER WITH DIVERSE ETHNIC AND ECONOMIC NEIGHBORHOODS, WILL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP A THRIVING BUSINESS COMMUNITY, WILL AFFIRM AN ON-GOING COMMITMENT TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION, AND WILL CONTINUE AN INVESTMENT IN SIGNIFICANT CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, QUALITY EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS, AND MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS IN THE PROVISION OF GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES. IT IS THE GOAL AND OBLIGATION OF THE CENTRALIA CITY COUNCIL, AS IMPLEMENTED BY THE CENTRALIA CITY STAFF, TO CREATE THE MOST ENVIABLE AND LIVABLE SMALL CITY IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON.

AFFIRMED THIS 11th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2007

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CENTRALIA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

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I. DEFINITION AND PURPOSES OF PLAN

The City of Centralia seeks to provide a high quality of life for its residents, including: a safe and secure place to live, an economy that provides jobs, healthy and diverse neighborhoods, choices with respect to ways to get around town, excellent schools, a clean and healthy environment, and extensive and diverse recreational opportunities. The City government is responsible for developing policies, providing public facilities and services, and adopting rules to manage growth and development in a way that reflects community values. Since 1960, the Comprehensive Plan has served as the guide for Centralia’s growth and development.

Definition

The Comprehensive Plan is a broad statement of community goals and policies that direct the physical development of a city. The plan anticipates change and provides specific guidance for legislative and administrative decisions and actions.

The Comprehensive Plan has three general characteristics:

1. **Comprehensive.** The plan includes all geographical and functional elements that have an effect on a city’s development.
2. **Long-range.** The plan seeks to guide immediate change, while also looking beyond the present to anticipate future issues and identify strategies that will create a healthy, safe, and vibrant community.
3. **Flexible.** Planning is an active, continuous process. The plan will continue to evolve to reflect actual experiences, changing circumstances and citizen concerns. The annual amendment process and the GMA’s seven-year update requirement will ensure that the document remains a reflection of community priorities and values.

The Comprehensive Plan establishes the goals and policies to guide future decision-making concerning the physical, economic and social development of a city for the next 20 years. The plan demonstrates how many different factors – land use, housing, transportation,

capital facilities, public safety, parks, and so forth – must be coordinated to achieve the vision.

The goals and policies in this plan provide the basis for the adoption of regulations, programs, and services which are designed to implement the plan. The primary responsibility for formulating and updating the Comprehensive Plan rests with the Planning Commission with the assistance of the city planning staff and citizen input. The Commission is made up of citizens specifically appointed by the Mayor to make recommendations to the City Council for land use or policy changes to the plan. The final version of the Comprehensive Plan is adopted by the City Council as an official document of the City. The City Council effectively implements the Comprehensive Plan when they adopt the City's annual capital budget, land-use regulations, department work programs, and other legislative functions.

Purpose

The City's Comprehensive Plan is a 20 year vision that provides a basis for public and private interests to undertake projects with a consistent understanding of community goals, policies, and objectives.

The Plan functions as a working frame of reference for government officials and administrators by establishing policies and by specifying methods and standards for implementation of these policies. Public facilities and infrastructure (e.g. sewer, water, storm-water, streets, parks, libraries, and fire stations) can be planned and a program for land acquisition and construction prepared in advance, so that the services will be available when and where they are needed.

The Plan devises goals and policies which take into consideration public opinion about government priorities and the economic, physical and governmental factors that effect municipal decisions. These same community policies clarify the City's vision for individual property owners and private interest groups as they make decisions.

Individuals and groups can determine how their own interests can best be served while remaining consistent with goals and policies of the plan. They are assured by the Comprehensive Plan that their investment to the land, will be protected by reasonable continuity.

The Comprehensive Plan is also an important tool to help the City identify challenges and take steps to remedy these challenges before reasonable and desirable solutions are beyond the community's economic capabilities. Planning is a crucial step in avoiding the pitfalls of uncoordinated policies and uncontrolled growth.

II. BACKGROUND

The history of comprehensive planning for the City of Centralia dates back to 1958 when community development meetings were held requesting citizens' input on the direction the City. A Comprehensive Plan was approved in 1960, and a zoning map was adopted in May

1962. The City also completed Comprehensive Plan updates in 1970 and in 1987. In 1994-96, the City Council, along with Centralia College, developed “Centralia 21st Century, A Visioning Project.” The project identified important areas of concerns for residents and businesses within the City. Out of the visioning process came goals for the future of Centralia. These goals served as the foundation for the Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1999.

Growth Management Act

The State of Washington enacted the Growth Management Act to advance the ideal of reducing urban sprawl. It was based upon a number of sub-goals and criteria for cities and counties. Counties and cities identified as “fast growing” were required to incorporate these goals and the methods for achieving them into a Comprehensive Plan consistent with the provisions and guidelines of the GMA. Centralia was included in the “fast growing” segment.

This version of the Comprehensive Plan updates the entire comprehensive planning document. This update is based on changes and revisions that have occurred over recent years and incorporates the elements required by the Growth Management Act which are described in greater detail further in this document. In general, the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Centralia provides:

- Policies and recommendations to direct public and private decisions affecting future growth and development;
- Goals and policies adaptable to the changing attitudes and resources of the region;
- A vision, based on community values and goals, of how citizens want Centralia to look and function in the future; and
- Guidelines for making decisions on growth, land use, transportation, public facilities and services, and parks and open space.

III. PLAN FORMAT AND CONTENT

Comprehensive Plan Elements

This Comprehensive Plan is divided into chapters dealing with specific issue areas:

- **Chapter 1 - The Framework Goals.**
This Section contains a general vision for Centralia and all of the goals that the community has formulated. Many of the goals are from the landmark 1999 Centralia planning process. The Goals in Chapter 1 are more general in nature than the specific policies found in the individual chapters of the plan. The framework goals provide guidance and direction in the development of this plan.
- **Chapter 2 - Environmental Element.**
This Element contains information about the environmentally sensitive lands within and adjacent to the City. It also contains goals and policies on how to protect these lands in the future.
- **Chapter 3 - Land Use Element.**

This Element contains the population growth forecasts, as well as residential, commercial, and industrial land supply and demand figures that are the foundation of the plan. The policies and criteria that are used to set the urban growth area (UGA) boundary are also established. The UGA boundary sets the limit of urban development and represents the anticipated city limits boundary during the 20-year planning period. Future annexations are included in this chapter.

- **Chapter 4 - Housing Element.**
The Housing Element contains an analysis of the existing housing stock in Centralia. It includes recent trends in population, income, and housing availability and affordability. The goals and policies in this chapter reflect the City's commitment to maintain a range of housing choices for residents of all economic levels.
- **Chapter 5 - Economic Development Element.**
This Element contains the direction, goals and policies the City would like to pursue in order to provide a stronger economy.
- **Chapter 6 - Historic Preservation Element.**
The Historic Preservation Element manifests Centralia's commitment to preserving the historical architectural and archaeological past of the City.
- **Chapter 7 - Public Facilities Element.**
This Element contains a description of public facilities and services including public safety, educational facilities, and essential facilities.
- **Chapter 8 - Utilities Element.**
The Utilities Element contains a summary of the major public utilities serving Centralia including water, sewer, electricity, stormwater, as well as private utilities such as natural gas, telephone (including cellular), cable television, and other utility providers.
- **Chapter 9 - Capital Facilities and Financing Element.**
This Element contains projections of future needs for facilities and services, integrates the location and capacity of the facilities with the Land Use Element, and provides a financing plan to prioritize and accomplish the projects. The policies in this chapter reflect a commitment to provide adequate, affordable public facilities and services to meet the primary needs of the City during the 20-year planning horizon.
- **Chapter 10 – Transportation Element.**
The Transportation Plan “Element” contains the policy base supporting the City's commitment to providing an interconnected, multi-modal transportation network. The chapter includes an analysis of the existing transportation system and projections of future needs. Alternative modes such as walking, bicycling and transit are supported by policies requiring coordination between land use patterns and transit routes and by completing an interconnected pedestrian and bikeway system.
- **Chapter 11 - Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element.**
This Element includes an inventory and the level of service standards for existing facilities, identification of deficiencies in the system, and projections for future needs.
- **Appendices -** Several documents are included in this plan as appendices:
 - A. City Council Resolution
 - B. 2005-2025 Lewis County Population and Economic Forecasts
 - C. Countywide Planning Policies as adopted December 18, 2006

- D. City of Centralia Land Supply Methodology Report produced by JD White Company a division of Berger-Abam Engineering Inc. May 2007
- E. Centralia Comprehensive Plan Environmental Review
- F. Public Participation

IV. RELATIONSHIP OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO OTHER PLANS

The following plans and documents relate to the development and implementation of the updated Comprehensive Plan.

1. **Lewis County Comprehensive Plan.** The Lewis County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in April, 2002.
2. **Port of Centralia Comprehensive Plan.** The current Port Comprehensive Plan was adopted in November 1990 and revised in November 1994, September 1996, March 2003, and in September 2006.
3. **City of Centralia Water Plan.** The Water Plan was adopted in December 2005
4. **Surface/Storm Water Management Plan.** The Storm Water Management Plan should be adopted in winter of 2007 or spring of 2008.
5. **General Sewer Plan and Wastewater Treatment Plant Facilities Plan.** The Plan was approved and adopted in the Spring of 2000.
6. **City Light and the Yelm Project Comprehensive Plan.** The City Light Plan was approved in December 2002.
7. **Airport Master Plan/Chehalis-Centralia.** The Airport Master Plan was approved Fall 2001.
8. **Parks and Recreation Plan.** The Parks and Recreation Plan (Element)
9. **Transportation Plan.** The Transportation Plan (Element)
10. **Downtown Centralia Revitalization Plan, Phase I.** The Phase I Revitalization Plan was approved in June 2003.
11. **Downtown Centralia Revitalization Plan, Phase II.** The Phase II Revitalization Plan was approved in October 12, 2004
12. **Centralia School District Capital Facilities Plan.** The Capital Facilities Plan for the Centralia School District should be approved in the summer/fall of 2007.
13. **Centralia College Master Plan.** The Centralia College Master Plan was approved on September 2002
14. **Solid Waste Management Plan.** The Plan was approved by the County Commissioners in April 2000.
15. **Transit Development Plan.** The Transit Development Plan 2007-2012 was approved March 2007.

V. RELATIONSHIP TO THE STATE GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT AND COUNTY-WIDE POLICIES

State law requires Centralia's Comprehensive Plan be consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA) and the Lewis County-wide Planning Policies (CWPPs).

In 1990, the State Legislature adopted the GMA in an effort to encourage managed growth in Washington. For the first time in the state's history, all urban counties and their cities were required to plan comprehensively and for the future.

The GMA contains 14 goals that were intended to “guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plan and development regulations of counties and cities required to plan under the act.” (RCW 36.70A.020).

1. To guide urban growth to areas where urban services can be adequately provided;
2. To reduce urban sprawl;
3. To encourage efficient multi-modal transportation systems;
4. To encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population;
5. To encourage economic development throughout the state;
6. To assure private property is not taken for public use without just compensation;
7. To encourage predictable and timely permit processing;
8. To maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries;
9. To encourage retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities;
10. To protect the environment and enhance the state's quality of life;
11. To encourage the participation of citizens in the planning process;
12. To ensure adequate public facilities and services necessary to support development;
13. To identify and preserve lands and sites of historic and archaeological significance;
14. To provide consistency between shoreline management and growth management by considering the goals and policies of a shoreline master program for a county or city, approved under Chapter 90.58 RCW, as an element of the county or city's comprehensive plan.

The GMA also requires urban counties and their cities to jointly develop policies that are to be used to “establish a county-wide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed...” (RCW 36.70A.210). In 1993, Lewis County and cities within the county developed the Lewis County-wide Planning Policies (CWPPs). The CWPPs were reviewed and updated and then adopted in December 2006. These policies are included as part of the 2007 Centralia Comprehensive Plan and are attached as Appendix C. The County with the support of all the cities, will continue to work to amend and update the policies as needed.

VI. CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

A successful comprehensive plan must involve considerable citizen input. The City of Centralia has made every effort to make the planning process accessible to its citizens and is committed to doing so in the future. This 2007 update has been based upon extensive

public involvement. The City anticipates that all future updates will likewise involve considerable citizen input..

The Centralia Comprehensive Plan was prepared by city staff with review, input and recommendations from concerned citizens, the Planning Commission, and the City Council. The Planning Commission has the responsibility to conduct the planning process, review the results, and to formulate recommendations for the City Council's consideration.

Adoption by the City Council is necessary to make the Comprehensive Plan an official city policy document. The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that the Council's action to adopt the plan must be based on the "early and continuous citizen participation". This provision ensures that the plan represents the community's "informed consent" with respect to community goals and values.

This 2007 Comprehensive Plan update is based on an extensive public involvement process that included open houses, public meetings with community groups, and Planning Commission and City Council hearings and work sessions.

Public involvement activities included:

- **Planning Commission Hearings and Public Work Sessions, 2006-07.** The Planning Commission is comprised of seven (7) residents living in the City or the Urban Growth Area. They volunteer their time to advise the City Council on comprehensive planning, land use codes, and other planning issues. During a series of meetings, the Commission reviewed each plan chapter, considered public comment and testimony as they developed findings, conclusions and recommendations. The updated Comprehensive Plan chapters were reviewed by the Centralia Planning Commission in a total of 9 public meetings and 2 public hearings.
- **Community Meetings, 2006-07.** Throughout the process, city staff met with a number of individual groups and agencies to keep them informed of the Comprehensive Plan update and seek input during the process. These individual groups included: the Centralia Chamber of Commerce, Lewis County Economic Development Council, and the Lewis/Olympia Master Builders Association.
- **City Council Hearings and Work Sessions, 2006-07.** Beginning in May 2006, the City Council held a total of 7 public meetings and 2 public hearings on the Comprehensive Plan, as well as many work sessions to review the updates to the Plan. The Council accepted written comment throughout the process.
- **Website.** Throughout the process, the City has posted the draft Comprehensive Plan and land use maps on the City's website at www.cityofcentralia.com, inviting public comment and feedback.

Public participation in the comprehensive planning processes is required as a matter of law and policy. The City is committed to public involvement in the planning process. The City will continue to make every effort to involve citizens in the process of developing and updating the Comprehensive Plan and subsequent zoning and development regulations.

VII. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

A comprehensive plan means little if it is not implemented. To be successful, the plan must be implemented by the combined efforts of individuals, neighborhoods, civic groups, and local government. Many of the plan's goals and policies reflect this shared responsibility.

City government has the primary responsibility to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The City's two main implementation activities are regulating and managing development, and funding capital improvements such as infrastructure. The GMA requires local governments to make sure that their regulations and capital budgets reflect the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Land Use Regulations

The City must create and/or update regulations to ensure that growth and development is consistent with the community's values and goals as expressed in the Comprehensive Plan. These regulations include zoning, subdivision, building and environmental codes, historic preservation and design review guidelines and standards.

Capital Budgets and Spending

As communities experience growth, new schools, parks, libraries, streets, utilities, and additional police and fire services are needed to serve the increasing population. The Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) of this plan lists the city facilities that will be needed over the next 20 years to serve the growing population. The City Council updates the CFP yearly as part of the budget process. In addition to ongoing needs for repair and maintenance, the list of capital facility improvements includes the projects that will be needed to support growth in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

VIII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Throughout the 20-year life of the Comprehensive Plan, monitoring and evaluation should be periodically conducted to assess the effectiveness of the goals and policies, and to identify new practices or ideas that may need to be added in order to produce a result consistent with the GMA, the community's visions and values, and changing needs and priorities. Population growth, land supply, development patterns and densities are particularly important to monitor on an ongoing basis to test growth projections and other assumptions.

Amendments

Comprehensive plans can be amended no more than once a year under the GMA. There is a process in place for residents to request amendments to the text in the Comprehensive Plan (Centralia Municipal Code 20.96).

Updates

Although comprehensive plans may be amended yearly, the Growth Management Act requires cities to fully review and update their plans at least every seven (7) years (RCW 36.70A.130).

The framers of the Comprehensive Plan recognize that the world changes, sometimes rapidly, and that plans, procedures, and policies must also change. It should be recognized that the Comprehensive Plan is a guide for the future. New conditions may require examination of adopted goals and policies.

