

LAND USE COMMITTEE
MAY 25, 2021
10:30 A.M. – 11:33 A.M.
REMOTE ONLY

COUNCIL PRESENT: COUNCILMEMBER COX (CHAIR) (JOINED AT 10:45 A.M.),
DEPUTY MAYOR PRATT, COUNCILMEMBER GREENSTEIN

STAFF PRESENT: SCOTT SPENCE, RICK WALK, RYAN ANDREWS, JESSICA BRANDT,
PERI EDMONDS

ACTION: APPROVE THE LAND USE COMMITTEE AGENDA
MOTION: MOTION MADE, SECONDED, AND CARRIED BY COUNCILMEMBER GREENSTEIN
AND DEPUTY MAYOR PRATT

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES

STAFF: RYAN ANDREWS, PLANNING MANAGER
JESSICA BRANDT, ASSOCIATE PLANNER
ACTION: INFORMATION ONLY

Staff presented updates on the following Comprehensive Plans:

Climate Mitigation Plan

The community was invited to a virtual open house April 1 to 30, where participants could learn about topics related to the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan (TCMP) and provide input on how local actions identified in the plan should be implemented in Lacey. Top action items included converting to EV fleets, green building technical assistance, and LED Lighting.

An online survey was also available April 1 to May 15, where 160 surveys were completed. Top priorities included renewable energy and a shift from fossil fuels.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on May 18 and received overwhelmingly positive and supportive comments.

The City used a variety of notification methods throughout the project, to get the word out to the public, including:

- Social media
- Coordinated with “Lacey Cares” campaign
- Elected and appointed officials shared links with their networks
- Community presentations to Olympia Master Builders, Panorama, and Thurston Climate Action Team
- Spring 2021 Stream Team Newsletter

- April 2021 “Lacey Life”
- Planning Commissioners handed out postcards at locations throughout the City
- North Thurston Public Schools “Peach Jar” announcements

More than 70% of the community was supportive of climate actions by the City and stated they were willing to take their own actions as well.

The TCMP is a policy framework to guide the city in achieving carbon reduction targets. The Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan will be integrated into the Environmental Element of the Comprehensive Plan after it is adopted by City Council.

The City Council will receive a briefing at the June 10, 2021, Worksession. Council will consider adoption of the TCMP at the July 15, 2021, Council meeting.

Housing Action Plan

In November 2019, the City of Lacey, in partnership with the Cities of Olympia and Tumwater, received a Grant Award from the Department of Commerce to develop a Housing Action Plan to meet the goals of HB 1923. The intent of HB 1923 is to encourage the construction of additional affordable and market-rate housing in a greater variety of housing types, and at prices that are accessible to a greater variety of incomes. Lacey Community and Economic Development staff have been coordinating with staff from Olympia and Tumwater to develop a draft Housing Action Plan that is now being reviewed through our local processes.

To support the effort, the Cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater contracted with the Thurston Regional Planning Council to develop:

- A Housing Needs Assessment, including a 25-year projection of housing affordability at different income levels;
- A Rental Survey to better understand what residents are paying for rent and how rents are changing; and
- A preliminary draft Housing Action Plan that can be tailored for use by each city that contains specific actions that can increase the stock of affordable housing.

The draft Housing Action Plan recommends actions the City could consider and also identifies whether or not the City has previously considered implementing the action. The Plan categorizes each action into the following:

1. Actions that increase the supply of permanently affordable housing for households that make 80 percent or less of the area median income.
2. Actions that reduce barriers for households to access housing and stay housed.
3. Actions that encourage expansion of the overall housing supply by reducing barriers to build all types of housing projects.
4. Actions that increase the variety of housing choices.
5. Actions that improve implementation of housing strategies through collaboration, public understanding, and continually building on resources.
6. Actions that would establish a permanent source of funding for low-income housing.

Public outreach was conducted including placing the draft Plan on the City’s website and social media, and was reviewed by the Government Affairs Committee of Olympia Master Builders,

and the Thurston Thrives Affordable Housing Team. It has also been broadly distributed to affordable housing providers and stakeholders for their review.

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the draft Housing Action Plan on May 18. Comments on homeownership support programs included partner with low-income housing developers to expand homeownership opportunities and establish a regional down payment assistance program.

Council will receive a briefing on the draft Housing Action Plan at the June 10, 2021, Worksession.

Urban Forest Management Plan

The Urban Forest Management Plan is the overarching policy document that guides the City's urban forestry vision and efforts. The City developed the Plan in 2006 and updated it in 2013 with the assistance of the City's contract forester, Galen Wright.

In keeping with the Plan's goal of updating the document every five years, it is now due again for review, along with the implementation regulations in LMC 14.32. The review process examines challenges, issues, and experiences related to the implementation of the Plan since its last update.

A tree task force was established to assist the Planning Commission in developing recommendations for changes to the Plan. The task force met five times and provided staff and City foresters input on policy and regulation issues and challenges.

The following high-level issues were identified by the task force early in their discussions:

- Enforcement of Tree Regulations
- Street Tree Program
- Private Property Trees and Consistent Application of Regulations
- Retention of Existing Trees Through Development Process
- Tree Education and Outreach
- Potential Establishment of Tree Board

During the month of April, staff engaged the community with educational information in Lacey Life, a tree survey and dedicated a section of the Climate Mitigation Plan Open House to trees. A State of the Trees Report is available on the City's website and was distributed through social media, a link in the Lacey Life newsletter, and emailed to HOAs and landscaping businesses in Lacey.

Highlights of the proposed draft amendments include:

Urban Forest Management Plan

- Introductory information about this update.
- Goals and Policies – added language about the importance of enforcement.
- Appendix 4 – planting details to match Development Guidelines and Public Works Standards.
- Tree protection specialists reviewed and updated where needed, recommended tree lists for street trees, parks, and residential uses.

Lacey Municipal Code 14.32

- Housekeeping items in definitions
- Exemptions
 - o Individual lot exemption – maintain tree density and require tree protection specialist review if removing more than 5 trees. Remove language for “5 trees every 36 months” allowance.
 - o HOA open spaces with forester review and replanting (discussion item).
 - o City owned property
- Remove a substantial portion of “Revegetation Options” section 14.32.069. City tree protection professionals determined it is no longer necessary to include the entirety of this language in the regulations.

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the draft Urban Forest Management Plan on May 18, 2021. Public comments included removing too many trees in the new development in NE Lacey, do not support amendments to exemptions that make it easier to remove more trees, more protection for exceptional trees, and stronger tree protection for Climate Mitigation Plan goals.

The Planning Commission will conduct a Worksession to discuss the Plan on June 1, 2021. The City Council will be briefed at the June 10, 2021, Worksession.