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COMMUNITY PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Creating Solutions for Our Future

Joshua Cummings, Director

August 3, 2022

Thurston County Board of Commissioners
2000 Lakeridge Drive SW
Olympia, WA 98502

Subject: Planning Commission recommendation to repeal and replace the Shoreline Master Program (Title 19 TCC)

The Thurston County Planning Commission has completed its review of the repeal and replacement of the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) (Title 19 TCC). This item is on the 2022-2023 Development Code Docket as item A-6.

The Planning Commission held eighty-one (81) work sessions from June 2017 through August 3, 2022, to consider the SMP update. The SMP update reflects both comprehensive and periodic updates required by state law. A public hearing was held on October 20, 2021, with several follow-up work sessions. Over 300 written comments were received in response to the Planning Commission's public hearing draft, and 27 people provided public testimony during the hearing. General themes included, but were not limited to:

- Questions about how the update would apply to specific properties or projects
- Support for specific buffer options in the draft
- Support for specific development standards in the draft
- Concerns about proposed shoreline environment designations (SEDs) for specific shoreline reaches, and requests to revisit these proposals
- SMP should ensure protection of natural systems
- Questions about how no net loss requirements are addressed in draft
- Comments on which activities should require permits, and how permits should be processed
- Questions on accuracy of maps depicting shoreline jurisdiction or SEDs
- Maintaining existing development on property should be allowed
- SMP should use an alternative term in place of "nonconforming"
- Questions about how the update affects property taxes or property values
- SMP should not be more restrictive than state requirements
- Companion educational pamphlet must be completed simultaneously with update
- Concerns about how the SMP update applies to agriculture

- Agricultural activities should be maintained and encouraged
- Concern about impacts posed by aquaculture operations and how they are regulated

There was also extensive written public comment received in response to prior drafts of the SMP.

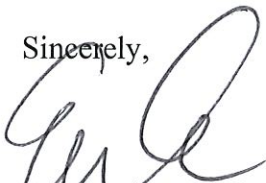
After thoughtful consideration of public comments, staff analysis, and shoreline guidance from the Legislature and Department of Ecology, the Planning Commission recommends approval of the comprehensive and periodic updates by majority vote (5-3), with the following findings:
Findings:

1. The Board of County Commissioners is encouraged to examine stormwater issues, policies and regulations outside SMP jurisdiction.
2. The Board of County Commissioners should consider projected impacts of climate change when reviewing the SMP update.
3. A companion pamphlet on a variety of topics should be developed to guide implementation of the SMP and comprehension by the general public. This should remain a priority to complete once the SMP update is largely completed.

In addition, a Minority Report was submitted on August 8, 2022, (provided as Attachment A) to explain why two of the dissenting members of the Planning Commission felt this request should not be approved.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed amendments. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Eric Casino, Chair

cc: Thurston County Planning Commission
Ramiro Chavez, County Manager
Joshua Cummings, Director
Travis Burns, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

Attachments:

- A. Minority Report dated August 8, 2022
- B. Majority Recommendation – Proposed SMP update