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**COMMUNITY PLANNING &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

Creating Solutions for Our Future

Joshua Cummings, Director

November 4, 2021

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

Subject: 2020-2021 Official Comprehensive Plan Docket Item CP-19 Up Castle Site-Specific Land Use & Rezone Amendment

Dear Commissioners,

The Thurston County Planning Commission has completed its review of Comprehensive Plan Docket Item CP-19 Up Castle Land Use & Rezone Amendment.

The Planning Commission held three (3) work sessions on August 4, 17, and September 15, 2021, a public hearing on October 6, 2021, and a final work session on November 3, 2021. At the public hearing on October 6, 2021, the Planning Commission received significant public testimony regarding the proposal, with written 238 comments received prior to the close of the hearing and 12 oral comments received at the hearing. Comments received against 242 the proposal cited concerns over loss of agricultural lands, wide-reaching impacts of the code change, damaging impact of piecemeal industrial zoning changes, that the 2021 Buildable Lands study reports there is sufficient industrial lands, the need for a holistic county-wide review of supply and demand of industrial lands, and compliance with the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan and Growth Management Act. Comments in support of the proposal 8 cited that the proposal will generate jobs, is appropriate because it is in a federal economic opportunity zone and is adjacent to two railroads and an industrial site to the south, and that agricultural use in no longer pertinent to the parcels.

On November 3, 2021 the Planning Commission recommended no change to the existing land use and associated zoning of the property, and no change to the Thurston County Code:

“Move to recommend maintaining the current land use and zoning of the properties as Rural Residential/Resource – One Dwelling Unit per Five Acres (RRR 1/5) and recommend no changes to the existing code criteria under Chapter 20.29 TCC.”

The Planning Commission made an additional recommendation that the county conduct a study of industrial lands to determine the need for industrial lands in the rural area and appropriately site them after a countywide review:

“Move to recommend the County conduct a review of industrial lands availability countywide, including within rural and Urban Growth Areas, and if additional industrial lands are needed evaluate siting of new industrial lands with a comprehensive look at the whole County. Further recommend holding review of future individual industrial land use and rezoning requests until completion of study.”

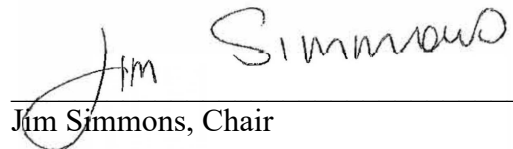
The Planning Commission produces these recommendations with the following findings:

Findings:

1. This recommendation reflects the Planning Commission’s consideration of significant public input and review of the proposed amendment.
2. The recommendation is consistent with the Growth Management Act 36.70A RCW.
3. The recommendation is consistent with the Thurston County County-Wide Planning Policies.
4. The Thurston County Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on October 6, 2021, as required by Thurston County Code Chapter 2.05 Growth Management Public Participation.
5. The Planning Commission finds that given the number of recent requests coming in to Thurston County that request to amend the land use and zoning of rural to industrial, a countywide study is appropriate to determine the need for rural industrial lands and consider siting after a holistic review if it is determined that there is a need.

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

Sincerely,



Jim Simmons, Chair

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