

BRIEFING PAPER
City of Spokane
Plan Commission Workshop
Review/rewrite Policy LU 1.8
File Z19-020COMP
MAY 8, 2019

At this workshop, staff will present the Plan Commission subcommittee draft of proposed changes to LU1.8 General Commercial (attached).

The 60-day public comment period for the Annual Amendment Work Program is anticipated to begin in late May 2019. A workshops on all comprehensive plan amendments, including this one, are scheduled during that period; staff are scheduled to present again on this topic at a Plan Commission workshop on July 10, 2019.

Background

The 2019 Comprehensive Plan Annual Amendment Work Program includes review of Policy LU 1.8. In March 27, 2019 the Plan Commission a temporary subcommittee to help facilitate the Commission's review of Policy LU 1.8. The members of this committee are Commissioners Francis, St. Clair, and Painter. Council Member Mumm is the city council sponsor of this amendment.

The subcommittee met three times in April 2019, to work on the policy. A draft of the policy is attached.

The group established guidelines to help with review:

- This process is a relook at Policy LU 1.8, which is guided by Goal LU 1 Citywide Land Use. The amendment cannot be in conflict with the Centers & Corridors focused growth strategy that is a foundational principle in the goals and policies of Chapter 3 Land Use.
- The group decided that a goal of "high containment" in most consistent with Centers & Corridors.
- The group wanted a simple, clear and easy to understand policy.
- Depth of commercial development in policy (250 feet depth from arterial) was continued. This depth is to allow lower intensity commercial uses, but to discourage establishing a depth to accommodate a "big box" size which according to Goal LU3 should be directed to a regional center (CC Core) land use classification.

Relationship of this policy to Chapter 3 Land Use Goals

- In Chapter 3, Land Use, policies exist which describe the land use plan map categories. Under *Goal LU1 Citywide Land Use*, there are policies describing several commercial land use plan map designations. These designations include: General Commercial, Neighborhood Mini-Center, Neighborhood Retail, and Office. These policy descriptions provide guidance when evaluating proposed changes to the Land Use Plan Map.
- *Policy LU 1.8 General Commercial* describes the General Commercial land use category and describes some circumstances in which this category can be expanded while recognizing that the City's adopted focused growth strategy encourages and should incentivize growth toward the centers. Similar policies exist for other commercial land use categories, such as "Office" or "Neighborhood Retail".
- Existing land use patterns of commercial are recognized under the General Commercial Land Use category. The zoning categories of Community Business (CB) Zone and General Commercial (GC) zone are applied to this land use plan map category.
- Additionally, some Centers & Corridors (CC) zoning is applied over this land use category where "center's land use planning" has not occurred. When the City adopted the Centers & Corridors focused growth concept, new areas designated for commercial expansion were designated as "center core" (CC) on the land use plan map and not "general commercial" (GC).

During deliberations on November 19, 2018, the City Council directed staff bring forth a proposal to amend Policy LU 1.8 General Commercial in the City's Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Chapter. This policy was significantly amended in 2003 (ORD C33287) to add references to specific situations and traffic count numbers and can be a challenge to interpret and apply. Two applications during the 2017/2018 amendment cycle implicated LU 1.8 and required the Plan Commission to interpret the policy as applied to those applications.

Impact

This policy provides guidance to the Plan Commission and staff when reviewing proposed amendments to the Land Use Plan Map (Map LU1) to expand a "General Commercial" Land Use Plan Map designation. Clarifying the policy will be useful when there is interest in pursuing a land use plan map change.