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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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Board of Commissioners

September 29, 2014

The Honorable Tom Mielke
Clark County Commissioner
Post Office Box 5000
Vancouver, Washington 98666

RE: 2016 Growth Management Periodic Update Deadline

Dear Commissioner Mielke:

We want to make you are aware of an important upcoming deadline that could affect your ability to apply for state infrastructure funding. The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that all cities and counties review and update their planning documents; these include comprehensive plans and development regulations, including your critical areas ordinance. Each city and county in the state is required to undertake this review process every eight (8) years, as outlined in the GMA (RCW 36.70A.130).

These updates are due for Clark County on **June 30, 2016**. This due date is coming soon. We want to make you are aware of this requirement so that your community can complete the work needed and maintain state funding eligibility. Many communities like yours are already underway. You may also be underway.

We have assigned Ike Nwankwo of our staff who will be contacting your staff to verify the status of your periodic update and provide any assistance we can offer with the update process.

What You Need To Do

There are four essential steps to the periodic update process: (1) Review, (2) Revise (if needed), (3) Legislative Action, and (4) Notify Department of Commerce.

1) Review: First, you must review the local planning documents you are required to maintain under the GMA to make sure they are current and meet all the state requirements. We provide a checklist you may use for this process, which will assist you in determining what to review and what changes may be needed. This review should also include a public hearing in front of your planning commission or council to give the public a chance to comment on any changes they think are needed. This is a very important step. Your public hearing, and the announcement of the hearing, must clearly state that this is part of the required GMA periodic review and update process. We recommend you read more about

this step on our web page: www.commerce.wa.gov/growth (under the topic “Periodic Update Process”).

2) Revise: If your review shows that you need to make changes to your plan or regulations, you will need to adopt these revisions. As with every amendment to your comprehensive plan or development regulations, you must provide notice to the state at least sixty (60) days prior to the planned adoption date (RCW 36.70A.106). As mentioned above, be sure to conduct an open and thorough public involvement program to enlist your community’s help in completing this review, as required by the GMA. Also be sure to list in your recitals that this action is part of the periodic update process.

3) Legislative Action: After reviewing, and revising (if necessary), your local plans and regulations, you must take legislative action to formally conclude the periodic review process. This means either (1) adopting an ordinance if there were revisions made, or (2) if your review concluded no changes are needed, adopting a resolution affirming your entire review process and declaring that your periodic update is complete.

The recitals of your ordinance or resolution should list the steps you took during the review, including the public hearing, to demonstrate everything you have done to accomplish the task. If your update is challenged, this is how you will demonstrate the actions you took as part of the periodic update. Such documentation has served other jurisdictions well in the past under similar circumstances. Our Commerce web site includes several examples of legislative actions for you to work from. We can also help you find an example that is right for you.

4) Notify Department of Commerce: Your final step to complete the periodic review process will involve submitting your work (including adopted ordinances or resolutions with findings or recitals) to our office in Commerce - Growth Management Services. You must send us notice no more than ten (10) days after final adoption by your legislative body (RCW 36.70A.106). We recommend you include a declaration of completion within your adopting ordinance or resolution, as well as within your final submittals, which explicitly states the required review and update process is complete. Again, we have sample language available to help guide you through this final step.

After we receive notice of adoption, we will confirm your status and send you a congratulatory letter indicating they you have completed this requirement. We also maintain on our web site a list of jurisdictions that have met this requirement.

How Commerce Can Help

We have experienced the same reductions that everyone in state and local government has faced during recent years. Unfortunately, we are unable to offer grant assistance for many of you in this review process. Our ability to provide direct staff assistance is also very limited right now. However, we are here to help, and we have developed a set of planning tools that are readily available on our Commerce, Growth Management Services web site.

Our specific written guidance on the periodic review and update process is available online, and you can access all of it through the web links below. Much helpful information, including

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sample material, is posted at this site for your convenience. If you need additional help, please ask; we look forward to assisting you!

Where to go for more Help and Information

Growth Management Periodic Update Information Page

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/Services/localgovernment/GrowthManagement/Growth-Management-Planning-Topics/Pages/GMA-Periodic-Update.aspx>

We recommend you start by reading our posted Guidebook: ***Keeping your Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations Current: A Guide to the Periodic Update Process under the Growth Management Act.***

Contact Commerce if you have any questions about or concerns about periodic review. Your contact for the periodic review is Ike Nwankwo. They can be reached at (360) 725-3056 OR ike.nwankwo@commerce.wa.gov.

Best Regards,



Jeffrey S. Wilson, AICP
Senior Managing Director
Growth Management Services

cc: Marty Snell, Community Development Director