



**CITY OF COVINGTON
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
CITY COUNCIL JOINT STUDY SESSION WITH PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Council Chambers – 16720 SE 271st Street, Suite 100, Covington
www.covingtonwa.gov**

Tuesday, January 12, 2016 – 5:45 p.m.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

The study session is an informal meeting involving discussion between and among the City Council, Commissioners, and city staff regarding policy issues. Study sessions may involve presentations, feedback, brainstorming, etc., regarding further work to be done by the staff on key policy matters.

OATH OF OFFICE TO NEWLY ELECTED COUNCIL MEMBERS

CALL CITY COUNCIL JOINT STUDY SESSION TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ITEM(S) FOR DISCUSSION

1. Planning Commission 2016 Work Plan (Hart)

PUBLIC COMMENT Speakers will state their name, address, and organization. Comments are directed to the City Council, not the audience or staff. Comments are not intended for conversation or debate and are limited to no more than four minutes per speaker. Speakers may request additional time on a future agenda as time allows.*

ADJOURN

Any person requiring disability accommodation should contact the City of Covington at 253-480-2400 a minimum of 24 hours in advance. For TDD relay services, please use the state's toll-free relay service at 800-833-6384 and ask the operator to dial 253-480-2400.

***Note* A Regular Council meeting will follow at approximately 7:00 p.m.**

Agenda Item 1

Covington City Council Study Session

Date: January 12, 2016

SUBJECT: JOINT MEETING WITH PLANNING COMMISSION TO DISCUSS 2016
PLANNING COMMISSION AND STAFF WORK PLAN

RECOMMENDED BY: Richard Hart, Community Development Director

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Priority Ranking of 2016 Planning Commission and Community Development Department Proposed Work Program and Staff Time Allocations

PREPARED BY: Richard Hart, Community Development Director

EXPLANATION:

At the beginning of each year, the Planning Commission (Commission) holds a joint study session with the city council to review and determine the work program tasks for the Commission and Community Development Department Staff (Staff) for the upcoming year.

The intent of the joint session tonight is to address the proposed Commission and Staff work tasks and priorities. The city council may reorder the priorities or add new tasks to the work plan throughout the year. However, with a finite number of work hours available, certain projects would have to be lowered in priority or additional staff resources would need to be made available.

Attachment 1 is the Commission's ranking of work plan priorities for 2016. The Commission ranked the priorities based on input from the staff, comments from the public (Master Builders Association), State legislative mandates, council requests and budget funding, and a desire to encourage economic development. As shown on Attachment 1, there are several high priority items that are carried over from 2015, that are a result of unforeseen changes in legislation, initial scopes being larger than anticipated, or staff hours not being available due to shifting priorities and/or resources.

The Commission's proposed work priorities for 2016 involve statutorily required elements such as the annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment docket; completion of the Growth Management Act (GMA) Comprehensive Plan Update and Implementation measures; adoption of a state mandated impact fee deferral program; adoption of state required new building codes; revision of our critical area ordinance, FEMA regulations, and Shoreline regulations; development of consolidated impact fee code revisions and SEPA process changes; and adoption of permanent marijuana regulations. Two additional high priority tasks are completion of the new sign code revisions based upon the recent Supreme Court decision and completion of the Hawk Subarea Plan Annexation, Development Agreement, and zoning changes. These nine (9) work tasks require the majority of the work hours in 2016, occupying 2200 of the 2900 available staff hours, leaving few additional hours for other tasks.

The Commission was then faced with several other work tasks which the council asked to be completed and for which they devoted dollars in various line item budgets, such as the electronic plan review system and the critical area/wetland monitoring system, both of which took an additional 450 hours of staff time.

Once hours were set aside for legislative and council budgetary mandated work tasks, there are approximately 250 staff hours remaining to complete four additional projects on the list. The Commission had a lengthy debate between the prioritization of the Park Impact Fee Code Changes and the study of reducing residential side yard setbacks requested by the Master Builders Association. The Commission decided to rank the study of reducing residential setbacks as a slightly higher priority, understanding the lower priorities, may not be completed in 2016 given unforeseen tasks that may also be added throughout the year. The general assumption is that our system in place today for collection of park impacts and the existing setback requirements are not prohibitive for future development.

Staff resource hours in 2016 will be slightly higher than in 2015 as we added some additional hours from the Senior Planner, Building Official, Associate Planner, and the Senior Permit Center Coordinator. However, it's obvious that some tasks will have to be delayed until 2017.

Monitoring work hours for each task will be very critical this year to track progress toward accomplishments. Staff always does a check-in with the Commission mid-year to evaluate completion of scheduled tasks matching available resources.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Request additional information or input from staff or the Commission.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact is expected beyond dollars already allocated within the 2016 Community Development Department budget.

CITY COUNCIL ACTION: Ordinance Resolution Motion Other

ASK QUESTIONS OF STAFF AND THE COMMISSION.

REVIEWED BY: City Manager, Finance Director

ATTACHMENT 1

**Final Community Development Department & Planning Commission
Work Program Items for 2016.**

Work Program Item - 2016		Requirement Type	Staff Hours
1.	GMA Required 7-Year Comprehensive Plan Update -Adoption & Implementation [Completion of tasks from 2015]	State Legislature	100
2.	Hawk Property Development Agreement, Annexation, and Clean-Up of Zoning Code References	Council/Private Developer	300*
3.	Comprehensive Plan & Development Code Regulation Amendment Annual Docket for 2016 (Anticipating Pros Plan/Parks Updates) Annual Work Task	State Legislature	300
4.	Impact Fee Deferral Program	State Legislature	400
5.	Adoption of New Building Codes	State Legislature	50
6.	Critical Area Ordinance Revisions (CMC 18.65) FEMA & Shoreline [Carry-over from 2015]	State Legislature	250*
7.	Develop Consolidated Impact Fee Zoning Code Revisions from Comprehensive Plan Policies and SEPA Process Changes in Title 18	State Legislature	350
8.	Medical Marijuana, Collective Gardens & Dispensary Moratorium Extension/Code Changes for Permanent Marijuana Zoning Regulations	State Legislature	100
9.	Sign Code Changes for Civic, Government and Non-Profit Signs CMC 18.55 [Carry-over from 2015]	Council/Supreme Court	350
10.	City Electronic Plan Review System	Council	200*
11.	Critical Area/Wetland Monitoring System	Council/Staff	250*
12.	Study Reducing Residential Side Yard Setbacks from 7.5 ft. to 5.0 ft. with Planning Commission (CMC 18.30) [Carry-over from 2015]	Private/Master Builders	250
13.	Park Impact Fee Code Changes [Carry-over from 2015]	Council	300
14.	Fire Impact Fee Changes Working with Kent Regional Fire Authority [Carry-over from 2015]	Interjurisdictional / Kent RFA	200
15.	Consider Zoning Code Amendments for Wind Turbines in Residential Zones	Council Member	100
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED WORK HOURS FOR 2016 PROPOSED PROGRAMS</u>			3500
<u>TOTAL ESTIMATED WORK HOUR AVAILABLE FOR 2016</u>			2900

Work Program Notes

Available Staff Hours

Available hours in 2016 for work program items with proposed staffing levels are approximately **2900 hours**. These **2900 hours** reflect the total hours each community development staff position can devote to Long Range Planning/Special Projects as follows: 40% Director, 75% Senior Planner, 20% Principal Planner, 25% Associate Planner, 10% Building Official, and 5% Permit Center Coordinator. The remaining percentage of staff time is devoted to development services which is responsible for permitting, plan review, counter assistance, public inquires, code implementation and other administrative duties (copy, scan, forms, webpage etc.) directly related to general customer service and development review. In addition, the Director has other department administrative functions and responsibilities.

Although some of the proposed tasks are policy and development related programming, such as the impact fee deferral program and adoption of new building codes, the task is considered a long range action, and ultimately the hours to complete the task are deducted from development services fund activities. Further, most of the community development department staff are salaried employees, with the exception of the senior and associate planner, so there is limited, if any, opportunity for paid overtime.

Attorney Review Hours

Not included within the 3500 hours of proposed work tasks are city attorney review hours. Our proposed work plan has to be accounted for in the attorney's work program hours. The availability of attorney review hours may affect the timeline for any public hearing, ordinance adoption and implementation, and in some cases change the overall priority due to other conflicting or higher priority citywide work tasks of the city attorney.

Benchmark for Comparison

The 2015 Planning Commission Work Program consisted of 12 work items with 3100 hours, and staff was only able to complete 6 items. The 2014 Planning Commission Work Program contained 9 work items with 2700 hours and only 7 were completed. The 50% completion rate in 2015 was due to various delays such as priority shifts, attorney availability, delays with consultants and reprogramming, larger project scope than anticipated, and limited staff availability due to an increase in development services permit activity.

Work Plan Summary

There are six carry-over items from 2015 into 2016. They include completion of the critical area ordinance revisions; continuation of the temporary sign code amendments; completion of the Parks Impact Fee Ordinance and code amendments; institution of a new Fire Impact Fee Ordinance; the Master Builders request to study reducing side yard setback requirements in residential zones; and developing code amendments for wind turbines in residential zones.

The Hawk Property development agreement and annexation application process (2nd item on the list) is an ongoing work task that is developer driven and, at the earliest, may be completed in the summer of 2016. This task requires substantial attorney time, which is captured by the developer; however, since it's developer driven, it is hard to quantify the timing of the work.

Work tasks with an asterisk (*) indicate tasks that have been allotted funds in the 2016 budget to help with consultant time. These four tasks include: Impact Fee Deferral Program, City Electronic Plan Review System, Critical Area/Wetland Monitoring System, and Comprehensive Plan Implementation. The council allocated limited funds to these programs which will free up some staff hours. The hours reflected in the program tasks are reduced accordingly to account for consultant time; however, these funds are limited, and staff will still be required to manage the tasks (administration, review, and planning commission & city council actions). It seems logical that these four tasks should be on the final list of tasks to be accomplished.

Prioritization

The Planning Commission and City Council must carefully prioritize these proposed tasks to stay within the **2900 hours** available for work, choose to delay some work tasks until 2017, or create additional resources to address the work program tasks. Additional resources may include allocating additional funds for consultants, requiring privately-initiated code changes to follow the code amendment process, which includes payment of fees by the private entity to capture the city's costs for processing. If a private entity formally applies for a code amendment process and pays the required fees, it is guaranteed to be a work plan item.

Based on the availability of **2900 staff hours**, approximately 11 or 12 of the 15 work tasks could be accomplished in 2016. Three or four would have to be delayed until 2017. We anticipate that staff time and Planning Commission responsibilities will fluctuate throughout the completion of these work items with efficiencies in some areas and additional work tasks in other areas based upon public input, and final scope of work for each task. Staff will provide a mid-year update on work program progress and percentage completion to the Planning Commission and City Council.