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CLARK COUNTY
WASHINGTON

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Clark County Commercial Code Update Issue Paper

The Challenge

The county strongly supports commercial development and redevelopment of existing sites. The challenge is creating a development regulation that adequately provides for certainty among divergent stakeholders while avoiding unreasonable regulatory demands on the changing market conditions.

Issues

Does the county have too many commercial districts? Are the current commercial uses distinguished between commercial districts? How should commercial districts look? This paper looks to the 20-Year Comprehensive Growth Management Plan as a guide in developing recommendations to revise the commercial code.

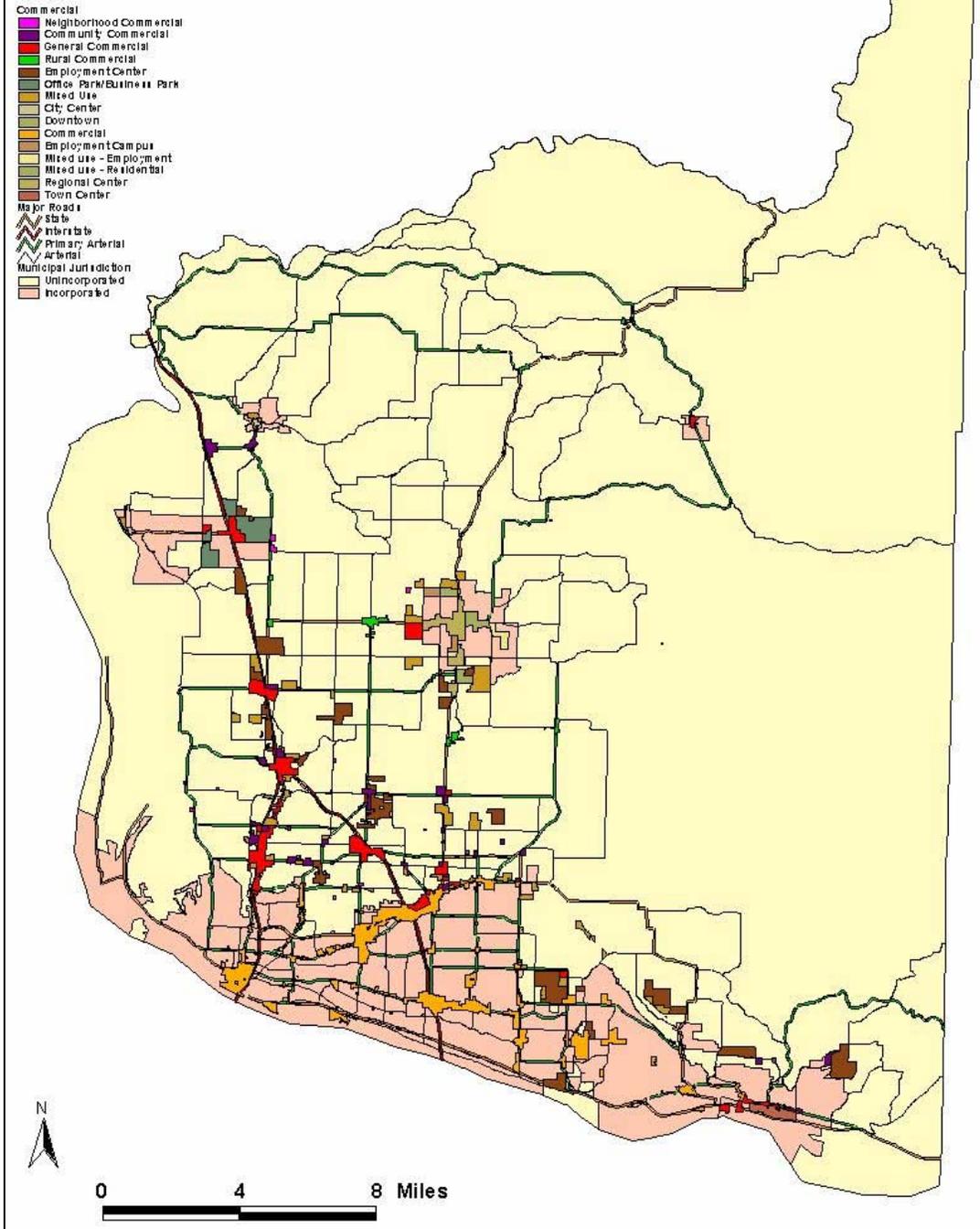
Background

The Comprehensive Growth Management Plan contains 20-year plan designations, location criteria, goals, and policies for Commercial land. For several years, Planning Commission and Community Planning have discussed the need to update the commercial code to reflect the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan, and provide a better mechanism for review during the annual review process. Clark County's commercial supply is shown in the map below. The commercial land designations are Neighborhood Commercial (NC), Community Commercial (CC), and General Commercial (GC). The Commercial designations (Appendix A) and the goals & policies (Appendix B) are presented to serve as a guide in revising the commercial code.

Update Process

Appendix C shows the commercial code update process, which will take between 12 – 18 months to revise the code. This update will also include reviewing other commercial land language identified in the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan such as creating criteria for a Market Analysis (please see Appendix D). A Market Analysis is also required per 40.560.010 (D)(3)(a)(5).

Clark County Commercial Land



Source: Clark County Community Planning

Note: Clark County has jurisdiction on land designated NC, CC, GC, RC, EC, & MX. All other land designations are shown to provide an over view of possible commercial areas.

Appendix A

20-YEAR PLAN DESIGNATIONS AND LOCATION CRITERIA

Neighborhood Commercial (NC)

These Commercial center areas provide services within walking distance for the frequent needs of the surrounding residents and are implemented by the Neighborhood Commercial base zone. These areas are located in the urban growth boundary and will generally be small areas which are generally designed to serve neighborhoods. Developments in these areas will be designed to be compatible with the surrounding residentially zoned neighborhoods.

New neighborhood commercial areas should generally be less than five acres in size, spaced less than five miles from similar uses or zones, serve a population of up to 10,000 and locate at neighborhood collector or larger crossroads. In addition, all new commercial applications should address the criteria in Additional Commercial, below.

Community Commercial (CC)

Commercial center areas provide services to several neighborhoods in urban areas of Clark County and is implemented with the Community Commercial or Limited Commercial base zones. New community commercial areas should generally be between five and 20 acres in size, spaced two to four miles from similar uses or zones, serve a population of 10,000 to 20,000 and locate at minor or major arterial crossroads. Limited Commercial zoning is limited to existing strip commercial areas and should not be used to implement any new Community Commercial plan designations. In addition, all new commercial applications should address the criteria in Additional Commercial, below.

General Commercial (CG)

This designation is applied to strip commercial areas as highway or limited commercial zoning. The strip commercial areas are generally characterized as narrow bands of commercial uses adjacent to major and minor arterial roadways. The 20-Year Plan strongly discourages additional strip commercial (highway or limited commercial base zones) being applied to new areas or extending existing strip commercial areas.

Additional Commercial Criteria

- Extension of those areas of strip commercial development designated General Commercial is discouraged by the 20-Year Plan. These strips attract traffic to the area and many businesses along the street become points of turning movements. This greatly reduces the traffic capacity of the streets and increases the potential number of traffic accident situations. Commercial strips are usually backed by residential uses which increases the number of residential-commercial conflicts unnecessarily. The commercial uses are oriented toward the street and usually pay little attention to the rear of the property abutting the residential uses.
- The strips along major roads are generally so long that available commercial

property exceeds the demand in the area and residential uses are left along the street, mixed with commercial activities. The linear nature of these developments, the number of driveways crossing sidewalks and the lack of alternative cross traffic or pedestrian circulation make these areas convenient and accessible only to automobile traffic.

- Provide a market analysis which identifies the need for the new commercial area/center.
- Provide a land use analysis of available commercially designated and zoned land in the market area of the proposed site and a determination of why the existing commercial land is inadequate.

Appendix B

Chapter 1

GOAL: Land use patterns and individual developments should be locationally and functionally integrated to reduce sprawl, promote pedestrian and transit use and limit the need for automobile trips and to foster neighborhood and community identity.

1.4 Policies

- 1.4.3 Promote the development of identifiable residential neighborhoods and shopping districts through the encouragement of more compact development patterns, and the use of shared design and landscaping characteristics and the development of landmarks.
- 1.4.4 Compact nodal commercial development shall be encouraged. Strip-type commercial development shall be discouraged.
- 1.4.5 Commercial developments should utilize shared facilities and infrastructure, including but not limited to common wall structures, shared parking lots, access points, sidewalks, signs or innovative design features.
- 1.4.6 Commercial development should be designed and located as follows:
 - Features to both allow for and encourage pedestrian access to and between commercial developments and roadways shall be provided.
 - Storefront design with zero or minimal front setbacks should be used. Frontal parking should be minimized. Side or rear lot parking should be encouraged.

Chapter 3

RURAL CENTERS

GOAL: Maintain the character of the designated Rural Centers within the surrounding rural area that is appropriate in character and scale in the rural environment.

3.2 Policies

- 3.2.2 Rural Centers should serve the following purposes:
 - provide a focus for the surrounding rural area that is appropriate in character and scale in the rural environment;
 - provide appropriate commercial and industrial lands for job growth opportunity and developments to serve adjoining rural areas and for tax base to support schools districts;
 - provide services to tourists and other visitors recreating in the area; and,
 - provide an opportunity to develop facilities that can function as a community center in those areas where an incorporated town no longer serves that role for the surrounding area.
- 3.2.4 Rural commercial development should support the needs of rural residents and natural resources activities rather than urban area uses. Strip-type development should be discouraged.
- 3.2.8 Encourage uses, such as rural commercial, post offices, veterinary clinics, day care, small medical practices and schools that provide employment,

shopping services and housing opportunities within Rural Centers. The scale should be compatible with surrounding roads and utilities, which reinforce the rural character and distinct sense of community.

- 3.2.10 Commercial activities in rural areas should be located in Rural Centers. Commercial uses supporting resource uses, such as packing, first stage processing and processing which provides value added to resource products may occur in resource areas.

Chapter 9

GOAL: Provide commercial sites adequate to meet a diversity of needs for retail, service, and institutional development in Clark County.

9.4 Policies

- 9.4.1 In cooperation with local jurisdictions, maintain an adequate supply of commercial lands within designated urban growth areas, based on average absorption rates of the last five years plus an appropriate market factor.
- Designate sufficient commercial land for the 20-year planning period, preferably located within designated urban growth areas.
 - Discourage removal of commercial land from the inventory that results in a less than 10-year supply of commercial sites.
 - Update inventories of commercial lands at least every ten years.
 - Encourage infill and redevelopment of underutilized commercial sites.
- 9.4.2 Locate convenience-oriented retail and service developments adjacent to residential neighborhoods; encourage small-scale neighborhood commercial uses directly within residential areas.
- 9.4.3 Encourage commercial and mixed-use developments located on current or planned transit corridors; encourage transit-oriented site planning and design.
- 9.4.4 Maintain design guidelines to ensure that commercial projects are developed with minimal impact on surrounding land uses, are consistent with related community appearance/design guidelines, and assure pedestrian as well as vehicular access.
- 9.4.5 Permit home occupations that are consistent with the character of adjoining residential properties and neighborhoods.

Chapter 11

County 20-Year Planning Policies

GOAL: Natural features of Clark County should be incorporated into design and development.

11.1 Policies

- 11.1.3 Natural land features should be recognized and integrated into the placement of buildings and in site planning. Streams, hillsides and unique vegetation should be considered strong design determinants and incorporated into the overall plan.
- 11.1.4 The siting of buildings should take advantage of river, mountain, lake and agricultural/pastoral views.

- 11.1.5 Retention of existing mature vegetation should be encouraged and included as a design element in the site plan. Every effort should be made to preserve existing trees over 8" in diameter.

GOAL: Development in urban areas and rural centers should incorporate a diversity of uses designed in a manner that provides for a sense of community, supports the human scale and allows for efficient transportation options.

11.2 Policies

- 11.2.1 Institute a design review process to review commercial, industrial and mixed use developments, except individual single-family residential, duplex or triplex units, in major urban activity centers, mixed use designated areas, special planned subarea districts, and transit corridors.
- 11.2.2 Develop design criteria for infill, multi-story, mixed uses and other commercial uses that utilize regional architectural styles and are at a human scale.
- 11.2.5 Revise the zoning ordinance and develop standards to prevent additional commercial strip development.
- 11.2.6 In urban and rural centers concentrate special activities and services to form a community focus. Develop standards for urban and rural centers that maintain the unique character of the center, e.g., public commons, storefronts, setbacks, landscaping and pedestrian orientation.
- 11.2.7 Develop pedestrian and bicycle corridors between schools, housing, within neighborhoods and rural centers.
- 11.2.8 Promote the development of identifiable residential neighborhoods and shopping districts through the encouragement of more compact development patterns, the use of shared design and landscaping characteristics, and development of landmarks.

Appendix C

Update Process

Part I: Commercial zone review

- A. Technical committee (TC)
 - 1. Review public input about current commercial development conditions
 - (a) Information already gathered from Team 99 and Public forums
 - 2. Consider concerns while identifying draft version of commercial zones
- B. Planning Commission (PC) Work session
 - 1. Present TC findings to PC
 - 2. Recommend draft commercial zones

Part II: Commercial Uses review

- A. Technical committee
 - 1. Review uses set out in Table 40.230.010-1
 - 2. Create revised draft use list
- B. Planning Commission Work session
 - 1. Present TC findings to PC
 - 2. Recommend draft commercial uses zones

Part III: Review Commercial zones and uses

- A. Technical committee
 - 1. Review draft commercial zones and uses
 - 2. Create draft uses allowable in various zone districts
- B. Planning Commission Work session
 - 1. Present TC findings to PC
 - 2. Recommend draft uses allowable in various zone districts

Part IV: Design Standards and Design Guidelines

- A. Technical committee
 - 1. Review design standards
 - 2. Research potential draft design standards
 - 3. Recommend draft design standards
- B. Planning Commission Work session
 - 1. Present TC findings to PC
 - 2. Recommend draft design standards

Part V: Planning Commission Determinations

- A. PC hearing to present draft revised commercial code

Part VI: Board Determinations

- A. Board work session to present update PC recommendations
- B. PC recommendation on the commercial code update is presented to Board for approval in public hearing

Appendix D

Annual Review/Zone Change Application

Market Analysis



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Development Services Division
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1300 Franklin Street
Vancouver, WA 98660
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Market Analysis

What is a Market Analysis?

According to the Urban Land Institute, a real estate market analysis is the identification and study of demand and supply, generally for a specific product. The demand side consists of the users who are buyers or renters of real estate. The supply side consists of existing properties and properties expected to enter the market before or during the same period as the subject project. A Market analysis is the combination of supply and demand analyses in the decision making process.

Why do I need a Market Analysis?

The Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan states that all new commercial applications should provide a market analysis that identifies the need for the new commercial area/center.

What questions will a Market Analysis answer?

According to the Urban Land Institute, a market analysis answers three basic questions: (1) Will users exist to rent or buy the proposed project? (2) How fast, and at what rent or price, will the proposed project be absorbed in the market? (3) How may the project be planned or marketed to make it more competitive in its market? For the purposes of a market analysis the county is only interested in addressing the first two questions.

What information is required in a Market Analysis to identify and study demand?

The following materials are required:

- Overall economic trends, employment trends, projections of economic activity, and growth patterns;
- Delineation of primary trade area and accessibility pattern;
- Population, household, and employment growth trends and projections for each trade area, as well as household characteristics such as household type (families, singles, etc.), age, including trends and projections;
- Income characteristics for trade area including household, family, and per capita totals, disposable income trends, purchasing power, and future projections (current, three year and five year);

- Demographic data for any sources of patronage other than the resident population in the trade areas: tourists, workers, and convention and business travelers; and
- Expenditure patterns and trends by type of goods and services in trade area.

What information is required in a Market Analysis to identify and study supply?

The following materials are required:

- Location, characteristics, and sales figures of competitive commercial centers/areas in the trade area;
- Commercial space availability, absorption (number of acres), and sales trends by commercial category in the trade area;
- Characteristics and status of proposed and planned commercial development in the trade area, as well as availability of other vacant, zoned sites that could likely become competitive commercial development; and
- Estimated market share (capture rate) and sales per square foot, and recommended characteristics, anchor tenants, and sizing of the center or centers, depending on the scenarios being considered.

Note: This handout is not a substitute for county code. For more detailed information, please refer to Clark County Code 40.560.010

Public Service Center
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1300 Franklin Street
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Web Page at: <http://www.clark.wa.gov>



ADA COMPLIANCE PROGRAM:
For an alternate format, contact the Clark County ADA Compliance
Office, V (360) 397-2375-2025; TTY (360) 397-2445; E-Mail:
ADA@clark.wa.gov

**MARKET ANALYSIS
ANNUAL REVIEW/ZONE CHANGE
APPLICATION
SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

The following checklist identifies information to be included with the application. All bulleted items must be submitted before the application will be determined “**Fully Complete.**” All bulleted items must be submitted, as applicable, but are not a “Fully Complete” requirement. (**Note: The Pre-Application Conference Report will indicate any additional/exempted submittal requirements.**)

At the time of application, only **one copy of the main submittal** with original signatures, shall be submitted and bound by a jumbo clip or rubber band. One copy of any **special studies** (e.g., market analysis, transportation analysis, etc) shall also be submitted but bound separately.

Once the original application contains all the required information, the applicant will be contacted to submit additional copies of the main submittal and any special studies with revisions.

1. DEMAND ANALYSIS

Demand analysis will include the following:

- Economic trends;
- Trade area;
- Population, household, and employment growth trends and projections in trade area;
- Income characteristics for trade area;
- Demographic data for any sources of patronage other than the resident population in the trade areas; and
- Expenditure patterns and trends by type of goods and services in trade area.

2. SUPPLY ANALYSIS

- Location, characteristics, and sales figures of competitive commercial centers/areas in the trade area;
- Commercial space availability, absorption, and sales trends by commercial category in the trade area;
- Characteristics and status of proposed and planned commercial development in the trade area;
- Availability of other vacant, zoned sites that could likely become competitive commercial development;
- Estimated market share (capture rate) and sales per square foot; and
- Recommended characteristics, anchors, and sizing of commercial center or centers.

3. SUBMITTAL COPIES:

- ___ One copy of the main submittal, **bound by a jumbo clip or rubber band**, with original signatures; and,
- ___ One copy of any special studies (e.g., market analysis, transportation analysis, etc) and **bound separately**.

When all required information is submitted with the original application, the applicant will be directed to submit five (5) additional individually bound copies of the **main submittal**, including copies of the “Developer’s GIS Packet”. The applicant will also be directed to submit additional individually bound copies of any special studies as identified below. These copies must contain any revisions or additional information required in the Fully Complete review, and bound using jumbo clips, stapled, comb or spiral binding, etc.

Copies of any special studies (as identified within the “Pre-Application Report”) as following:

- 1 original – Market Analysis.
- 2 reduced copies of 11” x 17" for all sheets larger than 11” x 17.”

Staff Notes:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

This application was determined to be Counter Complete on: ____/____/____

Community Development Specialist: _____

**ANNUAL REVIEW/ZONE CHANGE APPLICATION
FEE SCHEDULE**