



August 15, 2024

Councilmember John O'Callahan  
City of Tenino  
149 Hodgden Street S  
Tenino, WA 98589

Dear Councilmember O'Callahan:

I am writing on behalf of the Thurston Chamber of Commerce to encourage the Urban Growth Management (UGM) Subcommittee to promptly proceed with a process to amend the County Wide Planning Policies (CWPP) specifically concerning Urban Growth Area (UGA) land swaps.

The Thurston Chamber understands that recent changes in State law (RCW 36.70A.110(3)(c) and RCW 36.70A.110(8)) established criteria by which UGA land swaps can be considered during periodic comprehensive plan updates and annual reviews of comprehensive plan amendments. Our review of the legislative intent favoring UGA land swaps was to allow for greater jurisdictional flexibility concerning UGA boundary adjustments. We believe that amending the CWPP to align with current State law will enable Thurston County to be more responsive to the current housing crisis and enable the County and cities to efficiently and effectively meet current and future GMA goals and aspirations.

The Thurston Chamber requests that the UGM Subcommittee proceed with a sense of urgency in this matter. Any delay on the part of the Committee only serves to further aggravate and impair the community's ability to address the well-documented housing crisis across the region. We fully encourage all efforts by the UGM Subcommittee to proceed immediately with amending Thurston County's CWPP and to recommend that the Thurston County Board of Commissioners adopt the following policies:

**Policy 2.5:** Revision to an Urban Growth Boundary considered during a periodic update as established by RCW 36.70A.130(5)(b) proposing to swap land inside an urban growth boundary for land outside an urban growth boundary, must demonstrate consistency with the requirements of 36.70A.130(3)(c) and these County-Wide Planning Policies.

**Policy 2.6:** Revision to an Urban Growth Boundary considered as part of the County's annual review in accordance with RCW 36.70A.130(2)(a) proposing to swap land inside an urban growth boundary for land outside an urban growth boundary, must demonstrate consistency with the requirements of RCW 36.70A.110(8) and these County-Wide Planning Policies.

The Thurston Chamber of Commerce encourages the UGM Subcommittee to take up the UGA land swap changes prior to the planned complete review of the CWPPs. We support the commitment of staff resources to this effort with the intent that UGA land swaps become a new land use mechanism to correct the current housing crisis.

Please contact us by emailing DSchaffert@thurstonchamber.com or calling (360) 357-3362 if you have questions about the Chamber's position on this item. Thank you for considering this input.

Sincerely,

Doug Mah, Director, Public Policy

Cc: David Schaffert, President and CEO  
Thurston Chamber Board of Trustees