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**City of Westport**

# Press Release

## **The Public is Invited to Participate as the Planning Commission begins review of the City's Comprehensive Plan.**

**October 7, 2011:** The City of Westport has begun a review and update of the City's Comprehensive Plan which was adopted in 1998. The plan represents the official statement by the city council to be used as a policy guide for the physical, economic and social development of the city. The plan establishes goals, objectives, and policies for the city upon which future decisions should be evaluated. Among other items, the plan should be seen as policy, that is, the communication of the long term values and aspirations.

Normally people think of the zoning code as the guidelines for development; however the zoning code is the set of development standards and regulations that implement the policies established in the comprehensive plan. The plan is organized into ten chapters that focus on specific aspects of development. These include land use, circulation, economic development, community appearance and natural resources, area wide development and shorelines goals and policies.

The planning commission, over the next several months will review and discuss each section to determine whether it sets the right vision for the city and whether the goals and objectives are still applicable. They will also consider whether additions need to be made to each section, as well as whether additional chapters need to be added to discuss issues not currently included. After completing the review and update, the planning commission will submit a draft to the city council for consideration and adoption. After adoption of a new plan, a review of the current zoning code and policies will be completed and modifications made to make them consistent with the updated comprehensive plan.

According to Randy Lewis, City Administrator, "there isn't a mandatory date for the completion of this review and the planning commission has indicated they want to take the

time necessary to do a thorough job. The current schedule is to review one chapter per monthly meeting. They may choose to schedule additional special meetings, which will be announced by public notices if additional work is necessary. The meetings will be held in a workshop style where the public can listen, ask questions and discuss. They will not be public hearings with formal testimony.”

Additional information, including a copy of the city’s current comprehensive plan and zoning code can be found on the city’s website at [www.ci.westport.wa.us](http://www.ci.westport.wa.us). We are working on putting as much information on the website to make it as useful as possible to the public. There will be information on meetings, topics, and methods of providing public comments, especially for those that can’t attend the meetings.

The planning commission meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 6 pm in the council chambers at 740 North Montesano Street. The first review session is scheduled for October 18<sup>th</sup> and will discuss the background and organization of the plan as a whole and focus on the first chapter which is the introduction to the plan. The public is strongly encouraged to attend as many of these meetings as possible since the updated comprehensive plan will establish a vision for the city for the coming years.