



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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January 2, 2020

Commissioners & Director Wolniakowski  
Columbia River Gorge Commission  
PO Box 730  
White Salmon, WA 98672

(Sent to: [krystyna.wolniakowski@gorgecommission.org](mailto:krystyna.wolniakowski@gorgecommission.org) & [connie.acker@gorgecommission.org](mailto:connie.acker@gorgecommission.org))

Subject: Response to Gorge Commission request regarding urban area boundary revision needs

Greetings Commissioners and Director Wolniakowski,

Thank you for soliciting formal feedback regarding anticipated needs for Scenic Area urban area boundary (UAB) expansion in Wasco County. As you know, Wasco County contains two designated Scenic Area Urban Areas: Mosier and The Dalles (approximately 485 residents and 14,700 residents respectively).

This letter serves as the County's response to the four questions conveyed to gorge county planning directors to be discussed at your January meeting. Director Wolniakowski's request explained that the information received would be non-binding on the reporting jurisdictions and would be used to inform budget requests related to Commission staff workloads.

To inform this response, staff has coordinated with the cities of Mosier and The Dalles; the Port of The Dalles; Mid-Columbia Economic Development District; and Mid-Columbia Housing Authority. The Wasco County Board of Commissioners discussed the questions and staff's research at their November 6, 2019 meeting.

Mosier does not anticipate requesting a modification to their UAB within the next three years, but may look to pursue one after that - depending on development activities. They have also indicated there is at least one area of the existing UAB that appears to be an error and a change may be requested to the Commission as a correction.

The Dalles is currently gathering information necessary to inform the City Council's decision on whether to pursue future modifications of the current UGB and UAB. Steve Harris, Community Development Director for the City of The Dalles, provided the following responses:

1. *Is an UAB revision being discussed in your community and perhaps proposed by June 30, 2023? If maybe or yes, then go to next questions.*

"Yes, an UAB revision is currently being discussed, which may result in the submission of an application by June 30, 2023."

2. *What would be the purpose of the application? More commercial development? More housing, and if so, what type—single or multiple family dwellings? Public facilities? Schools? Other? Is there be adequate public infrastructure to accommodate growth?*

“Housing related studies (including a Residential Buildable Lands Inventory) completed by the City in 2016 and 2017, found that based on projected population growth rates the City has adequate “vacant” or “partially vacant” existing residentially zoned lands within the current UGB to accommodate the city’s projected 20 year growth rate.

The City recently completed (September 2019) Phase 1 of an EOA [Economic Opportunity Analysis] which examined employment and industry trends, and developed three commercial/industrial lands demand growth scenarios. Phase 2 of the EOA will include a commercial/industrial lands supply analysis to determine if there exists a 20 year supply of developable commercial/industrial lands within the current UGB. It is anticipated that this study will be completed in Q2 2020. It is unknown at this time if there is adequate public infrastructure to accommodate projected growth.”

3. *Is there a justification or demonstrable need that can be documented for the proposal to be considered (rising population trends, etc.)?*

“Phase 2 of the EOA will address this question, re commercial/industrial lands.”

4. *What is the acreage that would be requested, possible locations, and timelines for preparing the request?*

“Phase 1 of the EOA forecasts that approximately 1.6 to 2.0 million square feet of new commercial/industrial development would be needed between 2018-2038, equating to between 163 and 217 gross acres. Phase 2 of the EOA will analyze the existing supply of commercial/industrial lands to determine if the projected need can be met within current UGB. This work will be supplemented by the future Westside Area Study (scheduled to begin mid 2020). This study will examine current land use development patterns in the westerly portion of the community, as well as existing urban areas that are outside the current UGB/UAB (e.g., Murray’s Addition and Foley Lakes) and undeveloped areas that may lend themselves to future urbanization.”

Once available, the City’s studies will further inform whether Wasco County anticipates submission of an UAB expansion request before June 30, 2023.

Sincerely,



Angie Brewer, AICP  
Planning Director