

**CITY OF BREMERTON, WASHINGTON
PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM**

AGENDA TITLE:	Workshop for 2021 Comprehensive Plan Amendments Docket: Overview
DEPARTMENT:	Community Development
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Comprehensive Plan Amendment is a change to the City of Bremerton Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the City’s long-range plan used as a guide for the physical, economic, and social development of Bremerton.

Comprehensive Plan amendments are processed on an annual cycle as allowed by State Law. As the first step in this process, the City has invited the public to apply for proposed changes from August through November 15, 2020 for this year’s amendment docket. After the docket has been established with all the proposed amendments to be considered, the Bremerton Planning Commission will provide a recommendation of the amendments to the City Council who will make the final decision.

The 2021 Comprehensive Plan docket includes two City-initiated amendments for the Planning Commission’s consideration. There was no public request for amendments to be considered this year. The proposed amendments are:

- Develop housing displacement policies into the City’s Comprehensive Plan and their associated Zoning Code changes; and
- To incorporate the Charleston Area-wide Planning Study into the City’s Comprehensive Plan and associated Zoning Code changes.

Amendments to the City’s Comprehensive Plan are regulated by Bremerton Municipal Code 20.10 which outlines the process and criteria of approval.

This workshop’s intent is to summarize the Comprehensive Plan proposed amendments for the 2021 annual Comprehensive Plan docket, process, and anticipated schedule.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

Provide direction to Staff on proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments and provide feedback on the anticipated schedule and any questions regarding the process or amendments.

DECISION CRITERIA FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

The City of Bremerton's Comprehensive Plan establishes a blueprint for our future – a document that will guide the City in its decision making for the next 20 years. The Comprehensive Plan provides a set of policies that direct future growth and development. Additionally, the Plan identifies potential strategies that will help effectively guide City leaders in making substantive and thoughtful decisions for the community.

To update this document, per State laws and the City's code (BMC 20.10), the Comprehensive Plan may only be updated once a year (with a few exceptions such as a Subarea Plan adoption or emergency amendments to prevent or avoid imminent danger to the public). The City's window to accept applications for the 2021 annual Comprehensive Plan changes are between the first business day in August to November 16, 2020 (November 15 is the typical deadline, except when it falls on the weekend, they can apply that following business day). If an applicant "missed" the submittal date or submitted an incomplete application, the next opportunity to apply will be in August through November 15, 2021 to be considered for the subsequent year (for 2022).

As Planning Commission is considering the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments, the Commission will have to verify that the following has been considered (Bremerton Municipal Code (BMC) 20.10.080):

1. In considering the annual amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission shall consider all proposed amendments concurrently to assess their cumulative effect onto the City and the environment.
2. The Planning Commission may recommend, and the City Council may adopt or adopt with modifications, an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan if:
 - (a) There exists an obvious technical error in the pertinent Comprehensive Plan provisions; or
 - (b) All the following criteria have been met:
 - (1) The amendment is consistent with the Washington State's Growth Management Act (GMA);
 - (2) The amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan or other goals or policies of the City;
 - (3) If the amendment was reviewed but not adopted as a part of a previous proposal, circumstances related to the proposed amendment have significantly changed, or the needs of the City have changed, which support an amendment;
 - (4) The amendment is compatible with existing or planned land uses and the surrounding development pattern; and
 - (5) The amendment will not adversely affect the City's ability to provide urban services at the planned level of service and bears a reasonable relationship to benefitting the public health, safety and welfare.

Planning Commission shall consider the Comprehensive Plan proposed amendments through workshop(s) and a Public Hearing. Planning Commission will provide a recommendation to City Council regarding these amendments. Staff is anticipating the schedule for the proposed amendments to be the following:

- Workshops:
 - March 15, 2021 (this workshop), an overview of the proposed amendments.

- May 17, 2021 (workshop) further analysis on proposed amendments.
- Additional workshop in June if need be or desired.
- Environmental Review: Following the Workshops, Staff will conduct environmental review and submit the draft amendments to local and state agencies, and the tribes for agency review.
- Public Hearing for Planning Commission: earliest opportunity would be Summer 2021
- City Council Decision via Public Hearing: after Planning Commission provides a recommendation - anticipated late Summer 2021 (or Fall).



PROPOSED AMENDMENTS: OVERVIEW

For 2021 annual Comprehensive Plan docket cycle, there are two City-initiated amendments to revise the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code:

- Develop housing displacement policies into the City’s Comprehensive Plan and their associated Zoning Code changes; and
To incorporate the Charleston Area-wide Planning Study into the City’s Comprehensive Plan and associated Zoning Code changes.

In the following section, Staff will provide background, preliminary analysis and details on the proposal. Through this process the City will update the Comprehensive Plan’s policies and the associated Zoning Code development regulations concurrently to maintain consistency through the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code.

Website links to see the current documents:

- Bremerton’s Comprehensive Plan:
<http://www.ci.bremerton.wa.us/185/Comprehensive-Plan>
- Bremerton’s Zoning Code:
<http://www.ci.bremerton.wa.us/399/Zoning-Code-Map>
- Charleston Area-wide Planning Study:
 - <http://www.bremertonwa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8221/Charleston-Areawide-Planning-Report-PDF>

TOPIC #1 – Housing Displacement Proposal

As projects around the City redevelop, there will be people and families that will be displaced with this new development. The proposal is to add housing displacement policies to the Comprehensive Plan and to developed associated regulations in the Zoning Code to consider strategies to minimize displacement of residents during development.

This proposal is facilitating one of [Mayor Wheeler’s 2021 Initiatives](#), which is the following:
“Work on strategies for residents displaced by new developments”.

What does the City’s current codes have for this item?

The City’s current Comprehensive plan is silent on housing displacement policies.

As for the Zoning Code, it is also silent. However, the City has adopted the Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) per [Bremerton Municipal Code \(BMC\) 3.78](#), which includes displacement regulations. When a project is approved under a multifamily tax exemption program, the value of eligible housing improvements is exempted from property taxes, typically for 8 or 12 years (this tax exemption stimulates the construction of multifamily housing). Through the MFTE program, the City has already enforced displacement regulations. The MFTE displacement regulation of BMC 3.78 states:

“Tenant Displacement Prohibited. The project must not displace existing residential tenants of structures that are proposed for redevelopment. If the property proposed to be rehabilitated is not vacant, an applicant shall provide each existing tenant housing of comparable size, quality, and price and a reasonable opportunity to relocate.”

This existing regulation may be expanded to the City’s zoning code for other redevelopment projects. *Important clarification – there is no proposed change the MFTE program through this process.*

Why?

The City has many older structures, and in certain circumstances, it is cost prohibitive to retrofit existing buildings and therefore they are most often torn down when redeveloping. As identified in the Bremerton Comprehensive Plan Housing Appendix, “The City of Bremerton has the largest inventory of aging housing in the County. In City of Bremerton [as of 2013], 77.3% of housing units were built before 1980 and 22.4% were built in 1939 or earlier.” The following table is from the Housing Appendix that further explains those numbers:

Year Structure Built	Number	Percent
Total Number of Housing Units	17,396	
Built 2010 to 2013	119	0.7%
Built 2000 to 2009	1,195	6.9%
Built 1990 to 1999	1,214	7.0%
Built 1980 to 1989	1,436	8.3%
Built 1970 to 1979	2,568	14.8%
Built 1960 to 1969	1,837	10.5%
Built 1950 to 1959	1,977	11.4%
Built 1940 to 1949	3,154	18.1%
Built 1939 or earlier	3,896	22.4%

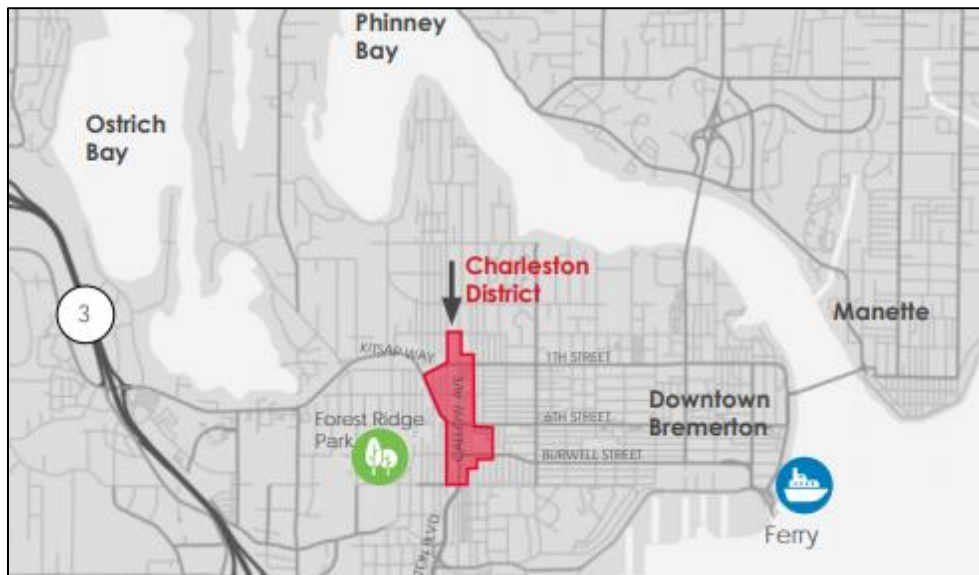
As Bremerton is seeing a growing trend of redevelopment and we acknowledge that the City will see more existing aging units be torn down it is important for the City to consider what policy and regulations should be adopted to address housing displacement.

Important Note – Per the [City of Bremerton & Kitsap County’s Affordable Housing Recommendation Report](#), it identifies a key point about displacement, “Jurisdictions in Kitsap County need to make changes to meet housing needs (jurisdictions will need to triple their annual housing production to accommodate the anticipate growth). Rising prices, rents, displacement, and households falling into homelessness are likely to continue if jurisdictions cannot increase housing production at all levels.” The City has made many recent updates to allow more housing, please see the [Infill Toolkit](#), and will continue to take items to the Planning Commission to help address the housing shortage. This displacement effort will be just one leg of the stool to City of Bremerton housing.

TOPIC #2 – Charleston Area-wide Planning Study

In 2017, the City received US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment and Area-Wide Planning grant. This grant was concluded in 2020, and one of the resulting products is the subject of this Comprehensive Plan amendment - the [Charleston Area-wide Planning Study](#) (also called “AWP” through the Study and in this report). Section 1.2 of the AWP provides a thorough description of the grant’s objectives for the Brownfield Challenge, and the Area-wide Planning effort.

To support the public engagement, a market assessment was conducted to identify the opportunities and barriers to redevelopment in and around the focus area, which is further described in Section 4.1. Public engagement was conducted to develop a vision and community priorities for the Charleston District Center (further details in Section 5.3 of the AWP). To implement this AWP’s, the proposal is to include the AWP’s vision and recommendations to the City’s Comprehensive Plan and make the associated Zoning Code changes.



The focus area for the Charleston Area-wide Planning Study is highlighted in red. Callow Avenue is the main north/south route through this district.

What does the City's current codes have for this item?

The Charleston AWP's Section 2.4 does a thorough job at describing the City's current Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code in relation to this Study. To summarize:

- The Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Element provides general goals, policies, and character description for the Charleston District Center, which is the area considered in the Charleston AWP. This information can be found on pages LU-19 and LU-20 within the [Land Use Element](#).
- Within the Zoning Code, this area is zoned and mapped as the District Center Core (DCC) and is regulated by [BMC 20.70](#).

What changes will be considered through the annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments?

The Charleston AWP provided a few suggestions that will help remove impediments and facilitate new or redevelopment in one of the City's key Center. The following is a summary of the proposed revisions to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code:

Comprehensive Plan Edits:

- Add a policy to reference the Charleston AWP within the Comprehensive Plan or incorporate its significant components/findings in the Comprehensive Plan (and do not reference the AWP). If the City chose the latter, the remaining items would need to incorporate into the District Center Core Designation in the Comprehensive Plan (page LU-19 and LU-20):
 1. Add the Community Vision for this area that was developed through this process:

“Rediscover Charleston as a distinctively creative historic district that celebrates its eclectic, imaginative, and artisan character through capital investments, local traditions, diverse tenants, and quality housing.”
 2. Policy to Support Interim Uses in Charleston such as food truck courts or pop-up outdoor markets. Furthermore, the DCC zone imposes specific site design criteria that are appropriate for permanent structures but may be problematic for interim/temporary uses.
 3. Designate and plan for the Wycoff Artisan/Live-Work District. The Charleston AWP planning study recommends the creation of an artisan / live-work overlay district along Wycoff Avenue and the surrounding properties. The overlay should allow for indoor light manufacturing and live-work environments.
 4. Add policy to provide parking flexibility for infill projects. Many of the existing commercial sites in Charleston are small, devoid of on-site parking, and have 100 percent site coverage; thus, leaving no opportunity for new on-site parking lots. While the current code does not require additional on-site parking for non-conforming structures/sites, any building increase or additional dwelling units would trigger requirements for additional on-site parking. There is an opportunity to add more clarity to the City's parking standards to allow for minor building expansion without providing additional parking.
 5. Policy to get Streetscape design for the redevelopment for this area. Great streets support vibrant neighborhoods, create positive perceptions, and provide access to businesses and destinations. One community planning strategy is to

focus on streetscape enhancements on Callow Avenue and Wycoff Avenue with landscaping, new sidewalks, lighting, and decorative details so that the public realm is attractive, functional, and reflects the area's intended character. This may include updating the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the hiring of a professional to provide that expertise and assist through the public process for the acceptance of the streetscape.

6. Policy to support recreational enhancements to the area and important gathering places in the Center. This could include such ideas as the (1) Charleston Triangle Pocket Park, (2) Forest Edge, (3) Artist Tunnel in Wycoff Avenue Underpass, (4) improve Bremerton Gateway entrance, and (5) Town to Forest Urban Trail from Callow to Forest Ridge Park.

Zoning Code Edits (to the BMC Title 20)

- Update BMC 20.70 entitled District Center Core
 1. Adopt zoning standards for an overlay district that include design requirements and allowable land uses (e.g., indoor light manufacturing and live-work units)
 2. Zoning standards to allow interim uses in Charleston
- Adjusting Parking Standards for Charleston to support the Comprehensive Plan policy.

The other important items in the AWP, but may, or may not require a Comprehensive Plan or Zoning Code amendment, are the following:

- Proactive Market Opportunity Sites for Infill and Adaptive Reuse Projects
 - Recommends creating Information/Fact Sheets for each opportunity site.
- Support Community Stewardship and governance in Charleston. Example to look at is the Downtown or Manette Business Associations.
- Develop a formal district brand for Charleston. Charleston should have a district brand that builds upon the community's vision and markets the neighborhood to both City-wide and regional audiences. The brand will help tell the outside world what Charleston has to offer in terms of businesses, urban character, amenities, and lifestyle. In successful business districts, outsiders know what to expect of the area by its name, logo, and business collaboration. There is an opportunity for the future business/neighborhood association to develop a unique brand that is conveyed through a logo, area banners, promotional items, and community events. The City should aid and recognize the brand through technical support, policy documents, and long-range planning.

ORDER OF THE DAY

The Planning Commission shall consider the amendment proposals, receive public comments, and direct staff regarding what additional information and analysis is needed to assist the Commission to make an informed recommendation to the City Council later this year. No decisions will be made at this workshop and staff will be conducting detailed analysis over the next several months.