



City of La Center



10 Government

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Good Government and Governance

The goal of the [La Center](#) city government is to provide open, transparent, [responsive, effective,](#) and accountable public service [to its citizenry and business community.](#) In La Center, citizens' voices matter [and public participation is highly encouraged and valued.](#) City Council meetings are well attended, [and people never fail to speak during the community members actively participate in the](#) public comment period set aside at every meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission.

The five-member City Council is the legislative body [of the City](#) and sets policies for the City of La Center by ordinance, resolution, and motions decided by a majority vote. Council terms are four years in length. The La Center Planning Commission consists of six citizen volunteers, [including five regular Planning Commissioners and a Planning Commission Alternate. Members are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council.](#) The role of the Planning Commission is [to](#) be a positive link between the community and city government by focusing on land use issues and regulations affecting the health, safety, and quality of life of residents and businesses. [Planning Commission terms are five years and members are ideally appointed in staggered years so that more than one or two appointments expire in any given year.](#)

[With respect to Growth Management and planning, the Planning Commission has a special role to analyze and organize information and data relating to land use and forwarding recommendations to the City Council. This involves matters dealing with land use, zoning, transportation, public safety, and overall health and vitality of the City itself. The Planning Commission also reviews applicable plans, programs, and recommendations from La Center citizens to help guide development of potentially annexable properties and to better serve a growing community.](#)

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Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments

[The City shall only consider amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Capital Facilities Plan no more frequently than once every year. All proposals shall be first considered by the Planning Commission with a recommendation made to the City Council, which shall make a final decision. All proposals submitted in a calendar year shall be considered concurrently so the cumulative effects of various proposals can be ascertained under a single review. However, amendments may be considered more frequently than once per year under the following circumstances, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.130\(2\)\(a\):](#)

- » [The initial adoption of a subarea plan;](#)
- » [The development of initial subarea plan for economic development located outside of the 100-year floodplain;](#)

- » The adoption or amendment of a Shoreline Master Program under procedures set forth in RCW Chapter 90.58;
- » The amendment of the capital facilities chapter of a Comprehensive Plan that occurs concurrently with adoption or amendment of the city budget; or
- » The adoption of Comprehensive Plan amendments necessary to enact planned action under RCW 43.21.440.

As otherwise provided above, emergency amendments or revisions or resolution(s) to appeal a Comprehensive Plan filed with the Growth Management Hearings Board may occur after appropriate public participation. Emergency amendments are those as set forth by WAC 365-196-650(4).

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Goal 10.1 Procedural Goal

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La Center shall plan for the community in an open and objective manner. The City will strive to have maximum citizen input, including for vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, so that its decisions will benefit the community as a whole.

Procedural Policies

Policy 10.1.1 La Center shall s~~trive for the~~ maximum long-term benefit of the community as a whole, rather than any individual(s) ~~or individuals~~, when developing and implementing the Comprehensive Plan and associated ordinances, and when processing land use applications upon completion of the Comprehensive P~~lan~~ and ordinances.

Policy 10.1.2 La Center shall ensure that u~~nder no~~ circumstances will any individual(s) ~~or individuals~~ be deprived ~~from of~~ obtaining all economic use of their property, as defined by state and federal law, due to governmental action.

Policy 10.1.3 La Center shall c~~onduct the~~ crafting, adoption, development and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and associated ordinances and the processing of land use applications in an open, objective, and public manner.

Policy 10.1.4 The city~~La Center~~ shall make an effort in its public participation process for plan amendments to include as broad a range of citizens and representatives of the La Center community as is reasonably possible. Representatives should include tribes, government agencies, businesses, school districts, Group A public water systems, organizations to comprehensive plans development regulations, other applicable stakeholders and landowners, and vulnerable populations and overburdened communities. The City shall ensure coordination between the community and other jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.

Policy 10.1.3—

~~Policy 10.1.4~~Policy 10.1.5 La Center shall d~~evelop, update, and/or~~ implement a zoning ordinance, development regulations, and a land use review processes ~~which that~~ allows for location of uses in a manner consistent with the community's vision and the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan ~~and implementing ordinances~~.

~~Policy 10.1.5~~ **Policy 10.1.6** La Center shall pProcess and render decisions for land use applications in an objective, open, consistent and professional manner, with full opportunity for public comment and input, in accord with the substantive and procedural goals and standards of the Comprehensive Plan and associated implementing ordinances. ~~All land use decisions shall be enforced to the fullest extent possible.~~

~~Policy 10.1.6~~ **Policy 10.1.7** La Center shall rRequire new development to pay an appropriate share of development costs and impact fees, including extension and improvement of public facilities and, where required, mitigate the adverse impacts of development on neighboring properties and the UGA Urban growth area as a whole.

~~Policy 10.1.7—Adopt zoning or other ordinances necessary to implement this Comprehensive Plan.~~

Policy 10.1.8 La Center shall rRevise the Comprehensive Plan annually or on an emergency basis, as necessary.

Goal 10.2 Governmental Coordination Goal

La Center shall maximize governmental efficiencies and minimize duplication of public service efforts.

Governmental Coordination Policies

Policy 10.2.1 La Center shall wWork cooperatively with Clark County in the implementation of the County-wide Planning Policies.

Policy 10.2.2 La Center shall wWork with the State of Washington and affected local units of government, including the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, to ensure that all public planning efforts are coordinated.

Policy 10.2.3 La Center shall ensure that its~~The La Center Urban Area~~ Comprehensive Plan is designed to be consistent with the Clark County Comprehensive Plan ~~and, to the extent reasonable and practicable, should be interpreted consistent with one another.~~

Policy 10.2.4 ~~Essential state and regional public facilities are depicted on the La Center Capital Facilities Plan maps.~~

- ~~» In the event that additional, essential state or regional facilities are identified, a plan amendment shall be required.~~
- ~~» When siting state and regional public facilities, land use compatibility, economic, social and environmental impacts shall be considered. The siting of these facilities shall be consistent with the La Center comprehensive plan, capital facilities plan and development regulations. The City shall not construe its planning documents to preclude the siting of essential public facilities as defined by RCW 36.70A.200(1) and (2).~~
- ~~» State or regional facilities which generate substantial travel demand shall be sited along or near major public transit corridors and shall mitigate their adverse impact to the La Center transportation system.~~

~~Policy 10.2.5~~Policy 10.2.4 ~~La Center shall amend the La Center Urban Area's~~
Comprehensive Plan and Capital Facilities Plan based upon changing circumstances or public need.

- » A plan amendment may be initiated by public bodies or private individuals in a manner consistent with [State law and](#) Title 18 of the La Center Municipal Code.
- » Amendments shall be consistent with the language and intent of applicable state or federal law and the City Council shall make a finding of compliance with such laws prior to adopting a plan amendment.
- » Prior to adopting a plan amendment, the City shall notify Clark County of its intent to amend the plan and of the substantive content of the amendment. Prior to adoption of any plan amendment, the City shall make a finding that the plan amendment is consistent with the goals and policies of the La Center ~~Urban Area~~ Comprehensive Plan and applicable portions of the Clark County Comprehensive Plan and County-wide Plan Policies.
- » Plan amendments, other than emergency amendments [pursuant to RCW 36.70A.130 and WAC 365-196-640\(4\)](#), shall be considered in conjunction with the annual update of the La Center ~~Urban Area~~ Comprehensive Plan.