



# REGIONAL COMMERCIAL CLASSIFICATION - 36<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE

2016-17 LONGVIEW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## About Longview's Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive plans are intended to translate community values and goals into a framework for government decisions about how a city grows, how land is used, and all the other things typically found in a community such as housing, streets, utilities, parks and other public facilities, and public services – as well as how public dollars are spent. Plans look out ahead to how today's Longview residents want the city to look and function over the next 20 years. In concert with Longview's strategic plan, the comprehensive plan serves as a roadmap for achieving that vision.

Only a small part of Washington's growth management law applies to Longview and other cities within Cowlitz County, giving us more flexibility to respond to local priorities. The City's plan was last updated ten years ago, in 2006. At midway through the life of the plan, it's time to assess what's going well, and what we should change.

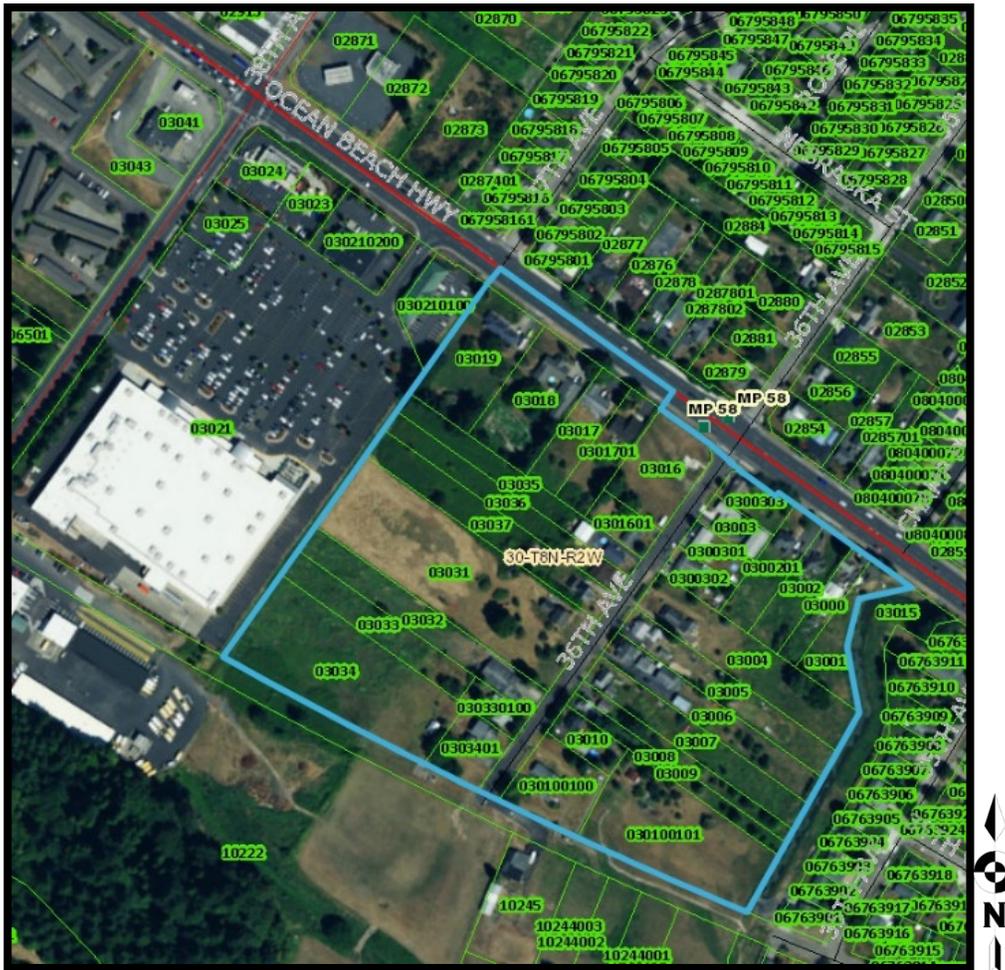
These conversations will help shape a plan that will best direct Longview's public policies, regulations, and public investments. Public hearings will follow once the new plan is drafted. Thank you for taking part!

## About the Regional Commercial Zone

Today's Regional Commercial (RC) zoning district is the product of the 2006 comprehensive plan, which noted increased development interest in large commercial centers and concluded that if Longview wanted to strengthen its position as a regional retail hub, it needed additional commercial land for large-scale uses. Areas intended to allow for growth of higher intensity, large-scale commercial developments were designated on Ocean Beach Highway at 38th Avenue (Walmart) and at 30th Avenue (today's Fred Meyer/Safeway/ Lowe's).

The RC zoning district was meant to include regional shopping, offices, professional services, entertainment facilities, and hotels. Allowed uses include big-box retail or grocery stores (at least 20,000 in size, or more as part of a large development, with no cap on size); large entertainment facilities, offices, and personal services (20,000 square-foot minimum); sit-down restaurants (5,000 square-foot minimum); and smaller retail or grocery stores (5,000 square-foot minimum), restaurants (including fast food), and fueling stations as part of a large development. Separate design and landscaping standards are in place to minimize the impact on nearby homes.

The RC zone covering Walmart and surrounding businesses also includes an approximately 26-acre residential area to the southeast that has some larger, undeveloped or underdeveloped tracts. It is only that latter portion that we're reevaluating as part of this comprehensive plan update. The existing single-family development is rather sparse, with considerable land that could be developed with additional homes.



What are we looking at?

While Ocean Beach Highway is heavily traveled, a lot of the traffic originates or is destined for places along the corridor. Most major retailers want to take advantage of not just customer demographics, but also proximity to their distribution centers and major freight routes such as I-5. Plus, prospective developers want shovel-ready properties rather than having to buy out individual lots and demolishing existing buildings. This has resulted in little or no additional development interest in this area, despite the zoning. Policies in 2006 allowed the RC zone to be expanded when, in part, conditions had changed since the original commercial boundary was set. Notably, this was before the economic downturn. Now, we're considering whether conditions have changed in a way that calls for scaling back the RC zone and returning the single-family portion to residential zoning, or modifying it in some other way.

What do you think?

- Is more regional commercial development along Ocean Beach Highway desirable today?
- Should the RC zone be scaled back to exclude the single-family portion, or left as is?
- If the residential area is removed, should it be zoned for higher-density residential?

Later thoughts? E-mail [steve.langdon@ci.longview.wa.us](mailto:steve.langdon@ci.longview.wa.us)