



Cover Letter
Environmental Impact Statement (Final)
Code Amendment 2015-1 OCC 17A Zone Code
Proposed Revision to the Okanogan County Zone Code
June 30, 2016

To Interested Parties and Agencies

Okanogan County is pleased to transmit this Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the proposed revisions to the Okanogan County Zone Code OCC 17A. The proposed revisions to the zone code impact all areas of the County with the exception of the areas contained within the boundaries of the Reservation of the Colville Confederated Tribes. Within the CCT Reservation the County Zoning remains the Minimum Requirement District as before.

Okanogan County published a draft of the revised zone code and initiated a SEPA scoping period in October of 2015. The changes proposed in the revised zone code and the scoping comments received identified the issues that were reviewed in the draft EIS and subsequently this FEIS. Several of the key issues are:

- 1) Water quality and quantity
- 2) Air quality
- 3) Population trends and projections
- 4) Wildfire protection
- 5) Influence of other regulatory controls on environmental protection

The draft EIS considered the impacts of the preferred alternative. The no action alternative would be a return to pre-interim zoning which assigned the minimum requirement district zone to most of Okanogan County. The interim zone code as adopted increases lot size from the 1 acre found in the minimum requirement district to 5 and 20 acre lot sizes in substantial portions of the county.

In a prospective code to be applied county-wide there are an unlimited number of potential scenarios. The focus undertaken in the current review was on historic patterns to see where, if any, the old zone code districts in fact created significant adverse environmental consequences by reason of densities or uses allowed. None were identified by the County review nor by the comments submitted. Comments raised concerns about the possible impacts but could point to no historic conditions to suggest that the concerns were in fact reasonably probable under the growth

scenario of Okanogan County.

A return to pre-interim zoning would not achieve the objectives of the adopted comprehensive plan and no preferred alternative was found to have a sufficient environmental impact to warrant an alternate approach to achieve the same objective. As this is the case, the decision was made to conduct environmental review on the proposed draft which uses the interim zone code and its historical pattern of development throughout the County as a foundation for drafting and environmental review.

After review of comments received during the comment period and public hearings held by the Okanogan County Regional Planning Commission on April 11th, 28th, and May 2nd, 16th, 23rd, and June 16, 2016 changes to the Revised Zone Code OCC 17A were recommended by the planning commission. Upon review of the recommended changes, the SEPA Responsible Official determined the changes were within the range of considered alternatives so no significant change to the conclusions reached in the FEIS was warranted.

The FEIS responds to the comments received and as noted above reviewed the environmental impacts likely to be caused by implementation of the revised zone code OCC 17A. In each case, the SEPA Responsible Official determined there were no probable, significant, and adverse impacts attributed to implementation of the revised zone code, or those impacts that may occur were mitigated by adherence to existing regulation.

The Okanogan Board of County Commissioners has scheduled a public hearing for July 12, 2016 to take additional comments regarding the proposed revisions to OCC 17A. The FEIS was published on June 30, 2016.

Questions regarding Code Amendment 2015-1 may be directed to Angie Hubbard ahubbard@co.okanogan.wa.us or the above listed address. Questions concerning the environmental review process may be directed to Perry Huston phuston@co.okanogan.wa.us or the above listed address.

Sincerely,



Perry D. Huston