

**PLS**

**ENGINEERING**

**NARRATIVE**

**FOR THE**

**MILLER COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN AND ZONING MAP  
AMENDMENT**

Submitted to

**THE CITY OF VANCOUVER**

**FOR**

**SERGHEI COMARNITCHI**

**2804 NE 65<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite D**

**Vancouver, WA 98661**

**(360) 772-5563**

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## General Information

### Applicant:

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### Owners:

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#### **Haley Gibson**

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### Project Contact:

#### **PLS Engineering**

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<b>Location:</b>	SW ¼ of Section 8, T2N, R2E, WM
<b>Address:</b>	7318 NE 63rd Street Vancouver, WA 98662
<b>Project Size:</b>	4.17 acres
<b>Zoning:</b>	R-9
<b>Comprehensive Plan:</b>	UL
<b>Current Use:</b>	Single-family residences
<b>Tax Lot:</b>	105145000, 105150000, 105155000
<b>School District:</b>	Vancouver
<b>Elementary:</b>	Walnut Grove
<b>Middle School:</b>	Gaiser
<b>High School:</b>	Fort Vancouver
<b>Water District:</b>	Vancouver
<b>Sewer District:</b>	Clark Regional
<b>Fire District:</b>	Vancouver Fire
<b>Park District:</b>	B
<b>Transportation Impact Fee:</b>	Pacific

# Project Description

The Miller Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map Amendment proposes to rezone parcels 105145000, 105150000, and 105155000 from R-9 to R-30. This involves a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to move the parcels from an Urban Low to an Urban High designation. The site encompasses three parcels totaling approximately 4.17 acres. Currently the project site includes three separate owners. There is not a current plan for the development of all three parcels at this time. The larger parcel is being purchased by a developer and would be developed in the near future. The smaller parcels could be integrated into the development proposal or be developed separately. A formal application for site development will be submitted after the proposed comprehensive plan and zoning map amendment.

## Density:

With 4.17 acres, the site could accommodate a maximum of 125 units (30 units per acre). Under the current zone (R-9) the maximum density would be approximately 36 single family units (8.7 units per acre). The larger site could develop separately from the spaller parcels and would have a density range of 60-99 units. The existing constraints of the site have not been studied to the extent that a reliable future unit count can be provided. It would be best to assume the maximum density when evaluating potential impacts of the proposed rezone.

## Traffic Impacts:

Apartment buildings generate 6.74 average daily trips (ADT) per unit and single-family homes generate approximately 10 ADT per unit according to the ITE trip generation manual. The maximum possible development could generate up to 842.5 ADT, and development under the current zone would likely generate 360 ADT. The proposed rezone could result in a 57% increase in trips that would have otherwise been planned for in this area. A traffic study specific to the future development will be completed to ensure that the existing street system has adequate capacity for the increase in trips.

## Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map Amendment Approval Criteria

### VMC 20.285.050

The following discusses the criteria that must be addressed for a comprehensive plan and zoning map amendment, and how this proposal complies:

*A. Overall proposed map amendments reviewed under this chapter shall be approved only if demonstrated by the proponent to be in the public interest, as based on a review of all applicable principals from the following:*

*1. How the proposal is more consistent than the existing designation with applicable policies of the Vancouver strategic plan and comprehensive plan.*

**Response:** The request is consistent with Objective 6.2.1 of the Vancouver Strategic Plan: “Develop a broader range of housing choices through incentives, changes in regulations and implementation of the Affordable Housing Task Force recommendations.” The intent of this amendment would be to allow zoning that would increase the overall supply of housing in the city, which would result in lower purchase prices and rental costs. While this does not provide “affordable housing” it goes a long way to make housing more affordable. Since the adoption of the strategic plan housing prices have continued to soar. This is partly due to a high demand for housing in the Vancouver region that far outpaces the new housing supply. Apartment units will provide additional housing at a lower price point.

*2. How the proposal is more consistent than the existing designation with each of the following objectives as applicable:*

*a. Encourage more intensive development to locate in major urban centers and corridors, particularly downtown Vancouver. Encourage development of distinct neighborhoods served by commercial nodes, and discourage urban sprawl and strip commercial development;*

**Response:** The site is within 0.25 miles of NE Andresen Rd. and approximately 2 miles from the nearest access to I-205, both major corridors in the area. Higher density residential development in this area would discourage urban sprawl.

*b. Provide development of uses which are functionally integrated with surrounding areas and neighborhoods in terms of local shopping, employment, recreational or other opportunities;*

**Response:** The site is within 0.5 miles of Raymond E. Shaffer Community Park and 1.5 miles from Orchards Community Park, providing ample recreational opportunities. Vancouver Mall, Costco and Home Depot are nearby providing employment and local shopping opportunities. A higher density multi-family residential development would integrate well with these areas.

*c. Provide development which is compatible and integrated with surrounding uses in terms of scale, orientation, pedestrian enhancements, and landscaping;*

**Response:** The south end of the site is bounded by NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, a collector arterial. South of the street are existing townhome and apartment developments. West of the site is a fire station. North and east of the site are existing single-family residences. This site is well positioned to be developed with a higher intensity use that will not have a significant effect on the existing neighboring uses. The site will have direct access to NE 63<sup>rd</sup> street and will not take access from the existing single-family residential streets.

*d. Conserve or enhance significant natural or historical features;*

**Response:** The applicant will hire a biologist to delineate any possible critical areas onsite and will work to avoid or minimize impacts where feasible.

*e. Provide adequate provision of transportation, water, sewer, and other public services;*

**Response:** Site access will be provided directly from NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street. Water mains are located in NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street NE 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue adjacent to the site. CRWWD will be the sanitary sewer purveyor. Sanitary sewer lines run along both NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street and NE 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

*f. Provide significant family wage employment opportunities and broadening of the Vancouver economy;*

**Response:** Not applicable, this is a proposal for residential zoned property.

*g. Provide for the formation and enhancement of neighborhoods and communities; and*

**Response:** The redevelopment of these parcels will result in an attractive development at the corner of two arterial streets.

*h. Provide affordable or below-market-rate housing opportunities.*

**Response:** The proposal does not include affordable or below-market-rate housing, but the increase in housing supply will help make housing more affordable in the area. Apartments are an attractive affordable alternative in today's market.

*3. Scope of review. Review and evaluation of proposed comprehensive plan or zoning map changes shall consider both the likely and possible future use of the site and associated impacts.*

**Response:** The applicant intends to provide apartment units after the comprehensive plan and zoning map change approval. The request is a change from a lower density to a higher density, however it is still a residential zone so only residences will be proposed. Impacts created would be those of a higher density residential development, with typical impacts to local schools, emergency services and streets. Impact fees will be required to be paid to offset these impacts.

*4. Cumulative Impacts.* The review of individual comprehensive plan map or policy amendments, other than exceptions noted in VMC [20.285.040](#), shall also consider the cumulative transportation, land supply, and environmental impacts of other plan amendments proposed within the same annual cycle. (Ord. M-3922 § 13, 07/06/2009; Ord. M-3701 § 9, 05/02/2005; Ord. M-3643, 01/26/2004)

**Response:** The impacts of this development will need to be reviewed in conjunction with the other plan amendments within this review cycle.

## ZONING MAP AMENDMENT APPROVAL CRITERIA

VMC 20.285.060.A. sets out the applicable zoning map amendment approval criteria not involving associated comprehensive plan map amendments.

This proposal is required to demonstrate the following:

1. How the proposal is more consistent with applicable policies of the Vancouver strategic plan and comprehensive plan than the existing designation; and
2. That a change in circumstances has occurred since the existing designation was established.

### A. Consistency with Vancouver Strategic Plan

The City adopted a 2016-2021 Strategic Plan, and updated it in November 2018. The city is currently working on a new Strategic Plan, but it has not yet been adopted.

The request is consistent with Objective 6.2.1:

- 6.2.1 Develop a broader range of housing choices through incentives, changes in regulations and implementation of the Affordable Housing Task Force recommendations. Page 23.

In the final 2016 report the Affordable Housing Task Force discussed potential tools and programs to increase the supply of affordable housing units in the city. One of the high priority items discussed amending zoning/development regulations to encourage affordable housing options.

Option for Council Consideration	Description	Estimated Time for Staff to Develop and Present to Council	City Direct Costs/ Staff Time	Cost to Property Owner/ Developer	Potential to Increase Affordable Units	Considerations and Details Additional information to follow based on Council guidance and staff analysis.	Task Force Priority
<b>EXPAND SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING</b>							
Amend zoning/ development regulations to encourage affordable housing options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow/promote alternative housing, e.g.:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cluster/cottage housing</li> <li>○ Corner-lot duplexes</li> <li>○ Micro-housing and single room occupancy (SRO) housing</li> <li>○ Shared housing, including rooming/boarding houses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reduced parking requirements</li> </ul>	Medium to Long	\$\$	\$	Medium	<p><b>Details:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be effective at increasing overall supply over a long period of time, but affordability not guaranteed</li> <li>• Marketing incentives/opportunities to property owners and developers</li> <li>• Can use current staff, but may be contracted out</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires determination of priorities among several options</li> <li>• Need to determine appropriate level of incentives</li> </ul> <p><b>Task Force comments:</b> Support for allowing a wider variety of housing types and sizes. This option may also provide low-income homeownership units, an opportunity to address affordable housing apart from rentals.</p>	High

The intent of the option would be to increase overall supply of housing in the city which would result in lower purchase prices and rental costs. While this does not provide “affordable housing” it goes a long way to make housing more affordable. Since the adoption of the strategic plan housing prices have continued to soar. This is partly due to a high demand for housing in the Vancouver region that far outpaces the new housing supply.

In response to the strategic plan and the Affordable Housing Task Force recommendations, the City Council studied and approved housing code updates. The Housing Code Updates webpage states the following as a purpose of the update:

“Vancouver, like many communities, is facing a housing crisis. As the city continues to grow, there is a desire and need for new types of housing that would allow residents to live more affordably while also maintaining neighborhood livability. However, current city zoning rules prohibit many of these

housing options. Changes to the development code can create opportunities for the private sector to deliver a more diverse, affordable housing stock.”

The project goals of the housing update are stated as the following:

“The goal of the project is to update City codes to allow for different, smaller and more affordable types of housing choices. Many are recommended in the Affordable Housing Task Force report (2016) and many are similar to what is allowed in Clark County and other Washington cities nearby and statewide.”

The specific goals include:

- Allowing for the development of diverse housing types to meet changing demographic needs and consumer preferences
- Expanding market rate, middle income, and affordable housing choices
- Maintaining neighborhood livability with incremental, rather than wholesale, change
- Providing more opportunities for people to live near where they work and attend school, and reduce costly commutes
- Facilitating development in areas with full existing public services

The current proposal is consistent with this plan and will help meet the City’s goals. The general proposal associated with the zone change will accomplish the following:

- The Miller Rezone project will add diversity to the housing options in the immediate vicinity of the site.
- The rezone will not have a large effect on adjacent homes as the proposed access is directly from an arterial street.
- The future project would match the style of apartments to the south and could result in an attractive development at the corner of two arterial streets.
- The site is located near schools, stores, and public transport that has the potential to reduce costly commutes.
- The project in is an area with full existing public services.

## **B. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan**

The applicant is requesting a concurrent change in the Comprehensive Plan designation. The current and proposed plan designations are residential and are compatible. The proposed plan results in a higher density, but can be designed to have less of an impact on the neighboring lower density community.

**Table 1-5. Vancouver comprehensive plan land use designations**

Comprehensive Plan designation	Corresponding Zoning	General Intent
<b>Residential</b>		
Urban Lower Density	R-2, R-4, R-6, R-9	Predominantly single-family detached residential development, with some allowances for duplexes, townhouses, and single-family homes on small lots using infill standards
Urban Higher Density	R-18, R-22, R-30, R-35, MX	Predominantly apartments and condominiums, with some allowance for attached housing (such as duplexes, townhouses, and small-lot single-family homes) and mixed use

This request furthers the Community Development policies on page 1-14 to 1-15 of the Comprehensive Plan:

*CD-2 Efficient development patterns Encourage efficient development throughout Vancouver to ensure achievement of average density of 8 units per acre set by countywide planning policies. Encourage higher density and more intense development in areas that are more extensively served by facilities, particularly transportation and transit services.*

Response:

- The site is near a full-service grocery store/commercial area, elementary school, community park, and C-Tran Bus route 78 on NE Andresen Rd.
  - Safeway and Walgreens are both approximately 1/4 mile from the site. This is approximately a 5-minute walk. There is also a Starbucks (inside Safeway), Chase Bank, State Farm Insurance, The UPS Store, Sprint Store, Great Clips, Nail Salon, Drive through Coffee, and Subway.
  - Walnut Grove Elementary is south of the site.
  - Raymond E Shaffer Community Park is located approximately 1/4 mile to the southeast. This is a 10-acre park that connects to another 7-acre park to the south.
  - C-Tran Bus route 78 stops at NE Andresen Rd and NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street. This is less than a 1/2 mile from the site.
    - The northbound and southbound busses arrive every 30 min from 6:00am to 9:00am and 3:00pm to 6pm
    - The northbound and southbound busses arrive every 60 min from 9:00am to 3:00pm and 6:00pm to 10pm

*CD-3 Infill and redevelopment- Where compatible with surrounding uses, efficiently use urban land by facilitating infill of undeveloped properties, and redevelopment of underutilized and developed properties. Allow for conversion of single to multi-family housing where designed to be compatible with surrounding uses.*

Response:

- This is a relatively small infill project, where the intent is to convert the existing underutilized land into an apartment housing project.

In addition, the request fulfills both CD-9, facilitating compatible uses adjacent to each other, and CD-10, placing housing near services (complementary land uses).



Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan contains the City’s Housing element. The Plan recognizes the need for diverse housing:

*As the baby boom generation ages over the next 20 years, there is likely to be a greater need and demand for smaller units, retirement homes, and assisted living.  
Page 3-3.*

The plan notes that most residential housing is single-family housing (57%). *Id.* Housing affordability is also a City concern:

*The Growth Management Act requires local jurisdictions to demonstrate that regulations allow and encourage housing for all economic segments of the community. Table 3-3 provides a breakdown of local households by income ranges, and the general share of Vancouver housing they can afford to buy or rent without having to spend more than 30% of their income.*

There are several policies that would be furthered by this request, including:

*H-1 Housing options  
Provide for a range of housing types and densities for all economic segments of the population. Encourage equal and fair access to housing for renters and homeowners.*

*H-2 Affordability  
Provide affordable housing by formulating innovative policies, regulations and practices, and establishing secure funding mechanisms. Target affordability programs toward households with incomes below the median.*

### **C. Change in Circumstances**

The proposed zone change is in response to the current housing shortage and affordability crisis that is currently occurring in SW Washington. This shortage of housing within the area that the subject property lies represents a change in conditions or circumstances since the zoning designation was established. The proposed zone change will result in additional housing units that will increase the housing supply in the area and contribute to improving housing affordability.

According to the 2016 Affordable Housing Task Force Report issued by the City of Vancouver, it was noted that:

*Vancouver, Washington and the surrounding communities are experiencing an unprecedented demand for rental units. In June 2015, the vacancy rate in Vancouver was just below 2%, down from 3.8% at the end of 2010.1 The tightening market has led to a dramatic increase in rents. Between October 2014 and October 2015, the increase in median rent for a 2-bedroom, 1-bath unit in Vancouver was the highest in the nation at 15.6% (a jump from \$900 to \$1,040 per month). Page 2.*

While this report was issued in 2016, conditions have not improved in recent years. This report recognizes that higher densities can promote more affordable housing.

## **CONCLUSION**

Approval of this application would result in a development that can be served by existing urban public services and will provide more flexibility in density and housing types, resulting in more affordable housing.