

# LINCOLN/LANCASTER COUNTY PLANNING STAFF REPORT

for August 6, 2003 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

P.A.S.: Misc#03007

**PROPOSAL:** To establish a new fee for Comprehensive Plan amendments.

**CONCLUSION:** The proposed new \$250.00 fee will not have a significant impact on the cost of housing and development, but will assist in reducing the cost of planning services to the general tax payers. Comprehensive Plan amendments requested by individuals generate considerable costs in terms of processing and staff time.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval

## **LEGAL DESCRIPTION:**

The establishment of a fee for Comprehensive Plan amendments is proposed to be done by a resolution of the City Council and County Board. Comprehensive Plan amendments are neither zoning nor subdivisions action, so amendments to those portions of either City or County codes would not be appropriate.

## **ANALYSIS:**

1. The increase in the fees will increase revenue from persons others than the general tax payer without significantly increasing the cost of housing and development. At the present time, Comprehensive Plan amendments are reviewed by numerous departments and agencies including Public Works & Utilities, County Engineer, Parks and Recreation, Lincoln City Library, Fire, Police, Health, LES, and Law Departments and other County, State and Federal agencies. Even with the new fee, the revenue collected would cover a very small portion of the total cost in processing the applications.
2. In the past year, the Planning Department processed 10 amendments proposed by private persons or corporations. The expenses involved in processing these Comprehensive Plan amendments include:
  - C preparation of staff reports
  - C photocopying reports for distribution
  - C staff time placing reports and application material on the Internet
  - C newspaper advertisement for a public open house
  - C staff time spent at open house to answer questions about applications
  - C staff time meeting with applicants to discuss applications
  - C legal ads and staff time for Planning Commission public hearing

- C staff time in County Board and City Council briefings and public hearings
3. For Comprehensive Plan amendments, staff does not post signs or send out letters to adjacent property owners.
  4. In the past year, ten Comprehensive Plan amendments were received by other City and County governmental agencies including: Public Works and Utilities, Parks and Recreation Department, Lower Platte South Natural Resources District, the County Board, Lancaster County Agricultural Society and the City of Hickman. In the past, the University of Nebraska - Lincoln has also requested an amendment.
  5. When the applicant is another City, County, State or Federal agency, that is tax supported, then it is appropriate to not collect a fee at this time. These other agencies share information and work with Planning Department staff without charging any fees.
  6. The most common type of amendment request is by private individuals for large commercial or industrial projects. In the 2003 Annual Review, eleven amendments from private individuals or companies were processed. These projects often involve more staff time than other types of requests. Commercial and industrial projects also require more time be spent answering questions from adjacent property owners and neighborhood associations. These requests can lead to separate informational meetings or neighborhood meetings on the proposal.
  7. The proposed fee would be the same amount proposed for change of zone text amendments and other miscellaneous applications.

**PROPOSAL:**

The City Council and County Board authorize the Director of Planning to collect a \$250.00 fee for proposed amendments to the Lincoln/ Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan.

City, County, State or Federal agencies that request Comprehensive Plan amendments shall not be subject to the fees.

Prepared by:

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Stephen Henrichsen, AICP  
Special Projects Manager

**DATE:** July 28, 2003

**APPLICANT:** Director of Planning Marvin S. Krout

**CONTACT:** Stephen Henrichsen  
Planning Department  
555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
441-6374, shenrichsen@ci.lincoln.ne.us

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