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CLARK COUNTY
WASHINGTON

COMMUNITY PLANNING

STAFF REPORT

TO: Clark County Planning Commission

FROM: Jeff Niten, Planner III

DATE: October 22, 2012

SUBJECT: AMENDMENTS TO THE 20-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH
MANAGEMENT PLAN DOCUMENT REGARDING THE
DISCOVERY/FAIRGROUNDS SUB-AREA PLAN (CPZ2010-00019)

Background

The Discovery/Fairgrounds sub-area is generally bounded by NE 164th Street on the south, NE 29th Avenue on the east, NW 11th Avenue on the west and NE 209th Street to the north. The 2007 Comprehensive Plan included the Discovery/Fairgrounds sub-area within the Three Creeks Special Planning Area.

Staff convened an advisory task force composed of property owners in the area, representatives from the Fairgrounds, Amphitheatre, City of Ridgefield, City of Battle Ground, City of Vancouver, Port of Ridgefield, Washington Department of Transportation, Clark Regional Wastewater District, and Fairgrounds Neighborhood Association. The task force met the first time on September 11, 2009 and met six times through November 19, 2009. Through the process the advisory group developed zoning recommendations grounded by the Board directive to enhance employment opportunities within the sub-area.

Staff held two public meetings. The first in conjunction with the Fairgrounds Neighborhood Association regular meeting held February 11, 2010. The second as a staff sponsored open house held March 16, 2010. Both meetings were very well attended.

On April 14, 2010 at work session staff was directed by the Board of Commissioners to cease work on the sub-area plan pending a review of employment zoning categories. This matter was heard at an already noticed public hearing before the Planning Commission on April 15, 2010, although testimony was taken no decisions or recommendations were made. The Planning Commission agreed to table the matter until the review of employment zones within the county was completed. That review is now complete and staff is bringing the matter back to the Planning Commission for consideration.

That review was subsequently completed, and staff is moving forward with the sub-area plan.

Proposed Actions

1. Amend the Comprehensive Plan map and the Zoning map to those designations and zones recommended by the task force.

APPLICABLE CRITERIA, EVALUATION AND FINDINGS

In order to comply with the Plan Amendment Procedures in the Clark County Unified Development Code (UDC 40.560.010), amendments to the Comprehensive Plan land use map must meet all of the criteria in Section G, Criteria for All Map Changes. Comprehensive Plan Text changes must meet the criteria in UDC 40.560.010(M)(2).

CRITERIA FOR ALL MAP CHANGES

- 1. The proponent shall demonstrate that the proposed amendment is consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA) and requirements, the countywide planning policies, the Community Framework Plan, Clark County 20-Year Comprehensive Plan, and other related plans.***

Growth Management Act (GMA) Goals

The GMA goals set the general direction for the county in adopting its framework plan and comprehensive plan policies. The GMA goals that apply to the re-designation of the Discovery/Fairgrounds sub-area are Goals 4, 5, and 10.

- (4) Housing Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.*

Finding: The proposed zoning amendments are consistent with the applicable State GMA Goal. The sub-area will have a variety of densities and housing types including multi-family zoning and opportunities for multi-family housing within the areas designated for Mixed Uses. Additionally, approximately 77.0 acres are recommended for R1-20 zoning. Allowing half acre, single family residential lots within the sub-area will allow the introduction of a possible equestrian overlay in the future should the community decide that is appropriate.

- (5) Economic Development Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services and public facilities.*

Finding: The proposed amendments are consistent with Goal 5 Economic Development. The proposed zoning and Comprehensive Plan designations increase business and employment opportunities within the Discovery/Fairgrounds sub-area plan boundary and are consistent with adopted comprehensive plan policies. Commercial jobs would be much lower (3,626 vs 6,849) and industrial jobs much higher (2,285 vs 622 under the existing).

- (10) Environment Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.*

Finding: The proposed amendments are consistent with this goal. The Discovery/Fairgrounds sub-area was approved for zoning at urban densities in September 2007 including a significant amount of land designated for Light Industrial uses (ML). The proposal for Discovery/Fairgrounds amends most of the Light Industrial property to Office Campus or Business Park uses recognizing the environmental constraints present in the sub-area. The

proposed designations allow for more environmentally compatible site design while producing more jobs per acre.

Community Framework Plan and Countywide Planning Policies

The Community Framework Plan encourages growth in centers, urban and rural, with each center separate and distinct from the others. The centers are oriented and developed around neighborhoods to allow residents to easily move through and to feel comfortable within areas that create a distinct sense of place and community. Policies applicable to this proposal include the following:

- 1.1.0 *Community Framework Plan Policies Urban Growth Area Centers (UGA) have a full range of urban level-of-services and can be divided into three main categories in the following density tiers:*

Vancouver Urban Growth Area is now or will be a major urban area activity centers with a full range of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, high capacity transit (HCT) corridors, schools, major cultural and public facilities. Major urban areas centers, have or will have, urban densities of development of at least 8 units per net residential acre (6 gross units per acre) as an overall average. Areas along high capacity transit corridors and priority public transit corridors may have higher than average densities while other areas would have lower densities (e.g. established neighborhoods and neighborhoods on the fringes of the urban area). Regional institutions and services (government, museums, etc.) should be located in the urban core.

Finding: The sub-area plan recommendations meet the intent of this policy. The advisory group has recommended zones for areas along major arterials and Interstate 5 for employment and major commercial uses, and higher density residential uses. Closer to the fringes of the urban area parcels are zoned for less dense single family residential uses.

- 2.1.0 *Communities, urban and rural, should contain a diversity of housing types to enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries and to ensure an adequate supply of affordable and attainable housing. Housing options available in the county include single family neighborhoods and mixed use neighborhoods (e.g., housing above commercial storefronts, traditional grid single family neighborhoods, townhouses, multi-family developments, accessory units, boarding homes, cooperative housing, and congregate housing).*

Finding: The sub-area plan recommendations meet the intent of this policy. There are a wide variety of zoning types available within the sub-area boundaries enabling citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries.

- 2.1.2 *Provide housing opportunities close to places of employment.*

1.2.0 *Community Framework Plan Policies Urban Growth Area Centers (UGA) have a full range of urban level-of-services and can be divided into three main categories in the following density tiers:*

Vancouver Urban Growth Area is now or will be a major urban area activity centers with a full range of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, high capacity transit (HCT) corridors, schools, major cultural and public facilities. Major urban areas centers, have or will have, urban densities of development of at least 8 units per net residential acre (6 gross units per acre) as an overall average. Areas along high capacity transit corridors and priority public transit corridors may have higher than average densities while other areas would have lower densities (e.g. established neighborhoods and neighborhoods on the fringes of the urban area). Regional institutions and services (government, museums, etc.) should be located in the urban core.

Finding: The sub-area plan recommendations meet the intent of this policy. The advisory group has recommended zones for areas along major arterials and Interstate 5 for employment and major commercial uses, and higher density residential uses. Closer to the fringes of the urban area parcels are zoned for less dense single family residential uses.

2.2.0 *Communities, urban and rural, should contain a diversity of housing types to enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries.*

Finding: A substantial part of the sub-area is zoned for Mixed Uses allowing a choice for citizens who desire to live close to potential employers.

4.1.0 *New developments are to protect and enhance sensitive areas and respect natural constraints.*

Finding: During the process of developing recommendations for zoning within the Discovery/Fairgrounds sub-area the areas with the greatest environmental constraints were considered. The recommendations for Business Park and Office Campus zoning adjacent to NE 10th Avenue were specifically developed to compliment future development with the environmental constraints associated with Whipple Creek.

5.1.3 *To reduce vehicle trips, encourage mixed land use and locate as many other activities as possible to be located within easy walking and bicycling distances from public transit stops.*

Finding: The task force recommended a substantial amount of Mixed Use zoning within the sub-area. Additionally, zoning current zoning at the intersection of NE 10th Avenue and NE 179th Street will provide substantial shopping opportunities close to residential areas. Finally, parcels on the south side of NE 199th Street and NE 10th Avenue are recommended for Community Commercial zoning to allow future residents and employees in the vicinity shopping opportunities close to residential areas and employment zones.

Clark County 20 Year Comprehensive Plan

The Clark County Comprehensive Plan contains many policies that guide urban form and efficient land use patterns. The most relevant goals and policies applicable to this application are as follows:

Goal: Land use patterns and individual developments should be locationally and functionally integrated to reduce sprawl, promote pedestrian and transit use and limit the need for automobile trips and to foster neighborhood and community identity.

1.4.1 *Interrelated uses should generally be encouraged to locate in close proximity of each other:*

- *Frequently used commercial activities and residential areas they serve should be allowed and encouraged to locate near to one another.*
- *Schools or other frequently used public facilities and the residential areas they serve should be allowed and encouraged to locate near to one another.*
- *Commercial, industrial or other employers and the residential areas they serve should be allowed and encouraged to locate near to one another, as long as negative impacts from non-residential uses on the residential areas are mitigated.*

1.4.2 *Encourage mixed-use developments, which provide opportunities to combine residential, commercial or other used within individual structures, or within adjacent structures or developments.*

Finding: The recommended zoning in the sub-area has a substantial amount of acres designated Mixed Use. Additionally, commercial uses are recommended for areas near residential uses.

Conclusion: Criterion 1 has been met.

2. The proponent shall demonstrate that the designation is in conformance with the appropriate locational criteria in the plan.

Finding: The proposed zoning pattern is consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan designations.

Conclusion: Criterion 2 has been met.

3. The map amendment or site is suitable for the proposed designation and there is a lack of appropriately designated alternative sites within the vicinity.

Finding: The proposed zoning designations reflect task force and community input, and are appropriate for the sub-area.

Conclusion: Criterion 3 has been met.

4. The plan map amendment either: (a) responds to a substantial change in conditions applicable to the area within which the subject property lies; (b) better implements applicable comprehensive plan policies than the current map designation; or (c) corrects an obvious mapping error.

Finding: The proposed amendments better implement the applicable comprehensive plan policies than the current zoning map designations. Much of the area designated for

Light Industrial is not suitable for large industrial development due to the proximity of Whipple Creek and its associated wetlands. The Light Industrial zoning is inconsistent with topographic, environmental and circulation constraints. The proposed zoning designations take all of these factors into account.

Conclusion: Criterion 4 has been met.

- 5. Where applicable, the proponent shall demonstrate that the full range of urban public facilities and services can be adequately provided in an efficient and timely manner to serve the proposed designation. Such services may include water, sewage, storm drainage, transportation, fire protection and schools. Adequacy of services applies only to the specific change site.**

Finding: The determination was made that the full range of public facilities and services could be made available in 2007 when this area was brought into the urban growth boundary. urban services are provided south of 179th Street and can easily expand with development. Additionally, a majority of the sub-area will remain in Urban Holding until it is demonstrated that transportation facilities are adequate.

Conclusion: The applicable criteria for approval of the comprehensive plan map amendments have been met.

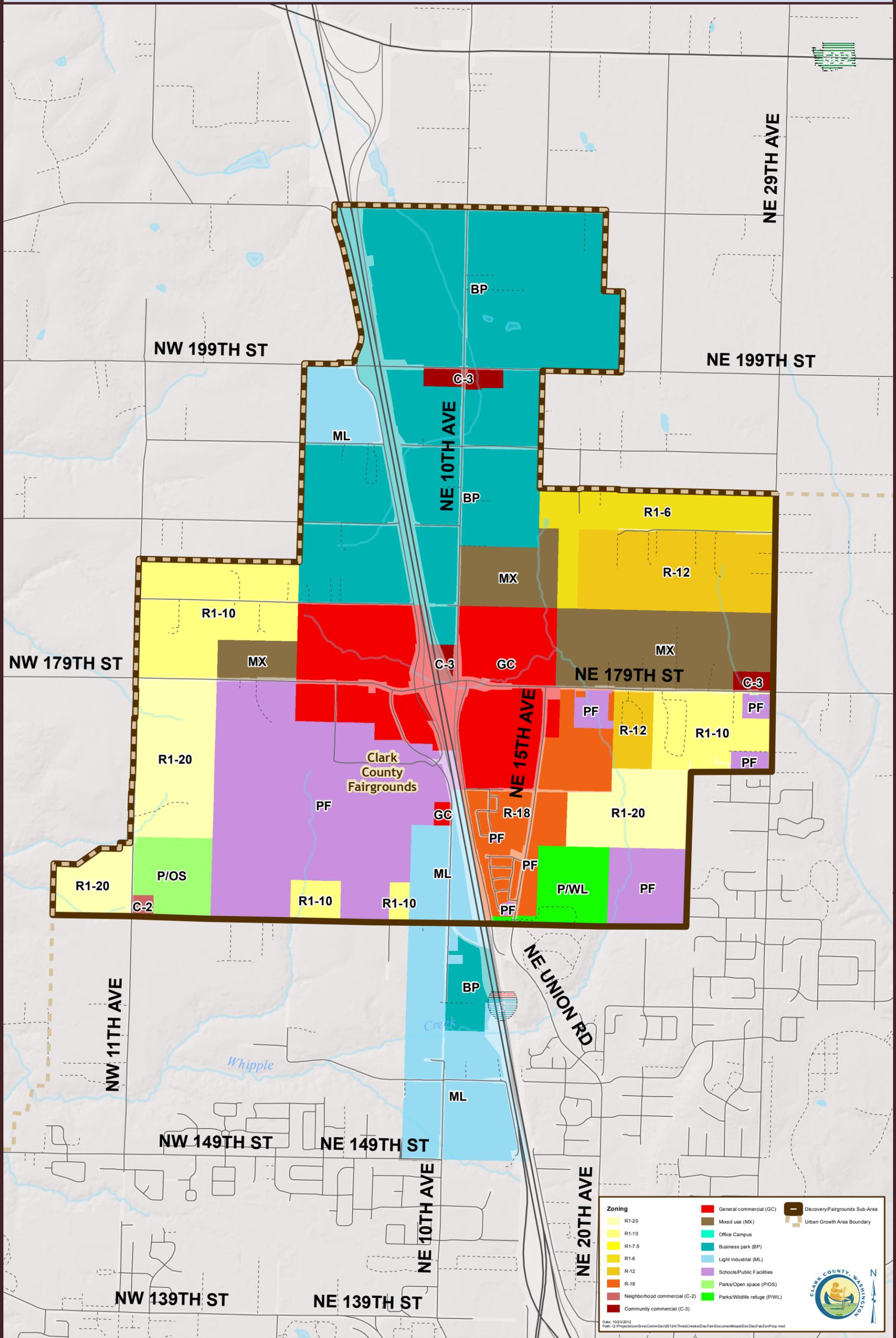
RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSIONS

As a largely rural area prior to the adoption of the 2007 update to the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan Discovery/Fairgrounds has a rural road network. Plans exist to upgrade capacity on NE 179th Street from NE Delfel Road to NE 15th Avenue within the next 10 years. Eventually the upgrade will continue to NE 50th Avenue, but the timeline for that segment of the project is not firm.

The advisory group advocates, in the strongest possible terms, the inclusion of a bridge within the Transportation Capital Facilities Plan to connect NE 10th Avenue across Whipple Creek. A bridge in this location will promote economic development within the Discovery/Fairgrounds sub-area as well as those parcels to the south. A bridge at the location will improve traffic flow to and from the Fairgrounds and Amphitheatre making both venues more visitor friendly. Additionally, a north/south corridor adjacent to Interstate 5 would provide some relief for the intersection of NE 179th Street/NE 10th Avenue/Interstate-5.

Based upon the information and the findings presented in this report and in the supporting documents, staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of **APPROVAL** to amend the Comprehensive Plan Map and Zoning Map and to adopt the recommendations of the task force for the Discovery/Fairgrounds sub-area.

Discovery/Fairgrounds Sub-Area Plan Proposed Zoning



Zoning		Discovery/Fairgrounds Sub-Area
R1-20	General commercial (GC)	Urban Growth Area Boundary
R1-10	Mixed use (MX)	
R1-7.5	Office Campus	
R1-6	Business park (BP)	
R1-12	Light industrial (ML)	
R-18	Schools/Public Facilities	
Neighborhood commercial (C-2)	Parks/Open space (P/OS)	
Community commercial (C-3)	Parks/Wildlife refuge (P/WL)	

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