INTRODUCTION TO LYNNWOOD

Lynnwood, WA is an ethnically-diverse community with a 2014 resident population of 36,275, located midway between Seattle and Everett.

Lynnwood developed as a suburban community along the Interurban streetcar line between Seattle and Everett, and along the Pacific Highway (SR-99), and later along Interstate 5 (I-5). Lynnwood incorporated in 1959 with an initial population of roughly 6,000. Lynnwood, named for the wife of realtor Karl O’Beirn, incorporated largely in order to prevent the relocation of run-down homes in the path of the soon-to-be-constructed I-5. See the Community Character Element for additional information regarding Lynnwood’s origins and history.

Prior to the construction of the region’s interstate freeways, Highway 99 (Pacific Highway or SR-99) served as the principal north-south travel route. Lynnwood properties along SR-99 were improved with automobile-oriented buildings and businesses such as motels, diners, and automobile service stations. Lying at the intersection of I-5 and I-405, Lynnwood was the logical site for a regional shopping mall. After the construction of Alderwood Mall, Lynnwood’s regional presence grew as more and more retail stores and service businesses chose to locate near Alderwood Mall. Today, Lynnwood is known for its wealth of shopping and services.

Lynnwood is also fortunate to be the home of Edmonds Community College (EDCC) and the administrative and support functions of Edmonds School District. These institutions offer family-wage jobs and nurture the intellectual awareness of the community.

During the first decade of the 21st Century, Lynnwood as a community made bold decisions regarding its future. Visioning and planning began to establish a central downtown neighborhood (City Center). The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) designated the Alderwood Mall area and City Center as a Regional Growth Center. Voters approved Sound Transit 2 that includes the extension of light rail service from Northgate (Seattle) to the Lynnwood Transit Center. Planning was begun to guide redevelopment of properties along Highway 99, Lynnwood High School (immediately north of Alderwood Mall), and the commercial area lying between the Mall and City Center (Alderwood-City Center Transition Area). A community visioning initiative was undertaken to forge a common vision for Lynnwood. The resulting 2009 Community Vision is described further below, and serves as the basis for the policies and strategies contained within this Comprehensive Plan.
LYNNWOOD MOVING FORWARD – OUR COMMUNITY VISION

In early 2009, the City Council approved a new Vision Statement for Lynnwood. A ‘vision’ is a realistic, credible, attractive future for our city. A vision statement articulates a destination toward which our city should aim—a future that in important ways is better, more successful, or more desirable, for our city than is the present. This Vision Statement, along with a set of Actions to begin to realize the Vision, was produced by a public visioning process.

Starting with a Listening Phase, the city hosted 29 face-to-face brainstorming sessions between late 2007 and early Spring of 2008, involving approximately 400 residents, business people, civic groups and city staff. People also submitted ideas through written answers to four visioning questions in the visioning guide pamphlet. Some citizens preferred to share ideas and opinions through the city website. This Phase produced over 4,000 ideas, comments, suggestions and constructive criticisms.

The second Phase of the Project “envisioned” the future for Lynnwood embodied in these 4,000 items. A committee of residents who had attended the Phase I meetings worked through the second half of 2008 to distill those 4,000+ items into a concise vision statement. The City Council’s adoption of Lynnwood Moving Forward: Our Community Vision was followed by incorporation of the Vision into this Comprehensive Plan later in 2009. The adopted vision statement is as follows:

**Lynnwood Moving Forward – Our Community Vision**

The City of Lynnwood will be a regional model for a sustainable, vibrant community with engaged citizens and an accountable government.

Our vision is…

- To be a welcoming city that builds a healthy and sustainable environment.
- To encourage a broad business base in sector, size and related employment, and promote high quality development.
- To invest in preserving and expanding parks, recreation, and community programs.
- To be a cohesive community that respects all citizens.
- To invest in efficient, integrated, local and regional transportation systems.
- To ensure a safe environment through rigorous criminal and property law enforcement.
- To be a city that is responsive to the wants and needs of our citizens.

*Adopted by the City Council January 26, 2009, reconfirmed March 16, 2015*

**PLANNED GROWTH: POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT & LAND AREA**

As specified by the GMA, Snohomish County has the authority to determine and specify Lynnwood’s land use capacity for (and acceptance of) future population and employment. Washington counties planning pursuant to the GMA have the responsibility and authority to: delineate urban growth areas, rural areas and resource areas; and to allocate levels of future growth to those areas. For Snohomish County, these decisions by the County Council follow fairly-complex processes of technical analysis,
with input from other agencies and entities including Snohomish County Tomorrow, PSRC, and local
governments. In allocating population and employment growth targets, Snohomish County follows the
provisions of GMA, Vision 2040, and the Countywide Planning Policies.

Local jurisdictions such as Lynnwood are obligated to plan for and accommodate (through reasonable
measures) the population and growth targets set forth by Snohomish County. This work includes land use
regulations and planned infrastructure that creates a theoretical capacity to satisfy the population and
employment target. Whether such growth actually occurs will be determined by economic and real estate
market conditions. Vision 2040 designates Lynnwood as a Core City, which are second in size to Urban
Centers.

Vision 2040 also designates 763 acres of Lynnwood (including Alderwood Mall, the Transition Area, and
the City Center) as one of the 20 Regional Growth Centers in the four-county planning area. Growth
Centers are expected to be areas of high-density/high-intensity land development served by robust transit
service.

The City of Lynnwood is required by the GMA to take reasonable measures to provide sufficient land
capacity to achieve the population and employment growth allocations specified by the Snohomish
County. This Comprehensive Plan and its implementing regulations (such as the Zoning Map and Zoning
Code) are consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies.

Lynnwood’s population and employment growth targets as prescribed by Appendix B of the Countywide
Planning Policies are summarized in the tables below. The methodology for calculating these targets
utilizes the City’s corporate limits as of December 2012. See the Land Use Element and the Countywide
Planning Policies for additional information regarding population and employment growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table IN-1. Lynnwood City Boundary - Population, Employment and Housing Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Countywide Planning Policies for Snohomish County, Appendix B, June 8, 2008 (Sno. Co. Amended Ord. 08-054) and June 30, 2013 (Sno. Co. Amended Ord. 13-032).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table IN-2. Lynnwood Unincorporated MUGA1 - Population, Employment and Housing Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 MUGA boundary as depicted by Countywide Planning Policies. MUGA boundary adopted by the City of
Lynnwood includes additional land area.
2 For 2025 targets, City and MUGA boundaries based upon boundaries as of April 2002.

Sources: Countywide Planning Policies for Snohomish County, Appendix B, June 8, 2008 (Sno. Co. Amended Ord. 08-054) and June 30, 2013 (Sno. Co. Amended Ord. 13-032).
Table IN-3. Lynnwood City and MUGA\(^1\) - Population, Employment and Housing Targets  
(Based upon Boundaries as of December 13, 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011 actual</th>
<th>2025</th>
<th>2035 (Initial)</th>
<th>2011-2035 Change</th>
<th>2011-2035 Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>60,632</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>88,584</td>
<td>27,952</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>27,772</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>48,110</td>
<td>20,338</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Units</td>
<td>25,249</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38,186</td>
<td>12,938</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) MUGA boundary as depicted by Countywide Planning Policies. MUGA boundary adopted by the City of Lynnwood includes additional land area.

Source: Countywide Planning Policies for Snohomish County, Appendix B, June 8, 2008 (Sno. Co. Amended Ord. 08-054) and June 30, 2013 (Sno. Co. Amended Ord. 13-032).

The geographic size of Lynnwood is expected to increase over time to the full extent of the Lynnwood Municipal Urban Growth Area (MUGA). The Lynnwood MUGA, designated by Appendix A of the CPPs, includes lands to the northwest and to the southeast. Below, an excerpt of Snohomish County’s MUGA Map depicts the Lynnwood MUGA as recognized by Snohomish County in 2013.

This Comprehensive Plan’s Land Use Element designates a larger Lynnwood MUGA than the Lynnwood MUGA established Snohomish County. In particular, Lynnwood’s preferred MUGA includes the “Gap Area” south of 148\(^{th}\) Street SW, and the “Overlap Area” to the east to the Mill Creek MUGA boundary.

Figure IN-1. Snohomish County MUGA Map (Excerpt, with Annotation)

Source: Appendix A, Countywide Planning Policies, September 2, 2013. Annotation by City of Lynnwood.

Population and employment growth targets are calculated independently, but the methodology for each calculation is based in part upon the community’s supply of land suitable for development and/or redevelopment. The targets are also apply to the land area within the City (as of 2012), and the Lynnwood MUGA recognized by Snohomish County.
The Land Use Element of this Comprehensive Plan calls for the majority of future population and employment growth to occur within the Lynnwood Regional Growth Center designated by PSRC and along the Highway 99 Corridor. This strategy will compliment other Comprehensive Plan Goals that call for preservation and protection of single family neighborhoods.

In 2014, the City convened several public workshops to discuss long-term goals and priorities and near-term funding priorities. The discussions during, and outcomes from, those workshops confirmed that the 2009 Community Vision remains valid. Those workshops served as components of the public participation initiative for the 2015 Comprehensive Plan.

PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Lynnwood's Comprehensive Plan is the official public policy document to guide the City's growth and development over the coming years. Adopted by the City Council, the Plan contains text, statistics and maps for use by all sectors of our community.

A fundamental purpose of this Plan is to satisfy the planning requirements mandated by the Washington State Growth Management Act (primarily contained in Chapters 36.70A-C RCW) and related provisions. For instance, Lynnwood must adopt a comprehensive plan that is consistent with and implements PSRC’s Vision 2040 and the Countywide Planning Policies of Snohomish County.

The Comprehensive Plan serves a wide range of purposes and functions, including:

- **Formalize goals and policies:** This Comprehensive Plan can serve as a central compendium of the City’s adopted goals, objectives and policies, reflective of community visioning and strategic planning, providing a central source of policy and guidance for decision-making, adoption of rules and regulations, directing programs and activities, and the allocation of resources.

- **Expression of community values and preferences:** The contents of this Comprehensive Plan reflect citizen participation and input gathered during a multitude of individual initiatives and also the public participation related to the preparation and adoption of the Plan itself.

- **Implement the goals and requirements of GMA:** As mentioned above, this Plan was prepared in compliance with the Growth Management Act and is consistent with the goals and requirements of the Act. This includes ensuring consistency with the multi-county and countywide planning policies called for by GMA, and consistency with the plans of affected jurisdictions and agencies.

- **Promote the public health, safety and welfare:** The Comprehensive Plan establishes policies for land development, level of service standards for public infrastructure and services, and encourages coordination between land use and public infrastructure and services.

- **Encourage regional and local coordination:** The Plan anticipates future development, population growth and the needs of our community for all major municipal services. The draft Plan was prepared with consideration of the plans and programs of other agencies and organizations, and the draft Plan was made available for review and comment. For example, this Plan reflects the provisions of plans adopted by agencies such as: WA Department of Commerce; PSRC; Snohomish County; nearby municipalities; special purpose districts; the Lynnwood Public Facility District; utility providers; Tribes; and all City Departments.

- **Coordinated implementation:** This Comprehensive Plan helps coordinate the provision of needed services, resources, and legislation to best accomplish the City objectives as influenced by the regional and local coordination described above. Such tools as the Zoning Code, City budget, the
Capital Facilities Plan, six-year Transportation Improvements Plan and other programs work together to implement the Plan in a coordinated manner.

- **Provide the basis for goals and policies**: The Comprehensive Plan provides a goal-oriented foundation for a variety of regulations, programs and actions.
- **Environmental protection and avoidance of adverse impacts**: Within this Plan are policies and strategies that support protection of natural and built environments, the conservation of resources, avoidance of adverse environmental impacts, and the intent of the community to preclude unmitigated significant adverse impacts.

**CHARACTERISTICS**

The Comprehensive Plan has the following five primary characteristics:

- **Comprehensive**: The Plan includes the most important functional components that have bearing on the provision of municipal services and the use and development of land, including land use, transportation, capital facilities, housing, utilities, parks, economics, cultural, historic and environmental.
- **Long-range**: The Plan must evaluate past, present and future conditions in order to define goals, issues and opportunities for the next twenty years.
- **Achievable**: To be effective, the Plan must be realistic and capable of being carried out. The Plan includes policies and programs for regulations, public expenditures and private development that have been analyzed for their implications and consistency. Over time, as the Plan is continually reviewed and revised, objectives and policies will become increasingly measurable and predictable in their pursuit of the City’s long-range vision and goals.
- **Responsive**: The Plan provides for periodic review and amendment to respond to changing conditions, citizens’ concerns, political preferences and new concepts. To be effective, the Plan must continue to reflect the needs and values of the Lynnwood community.
- **Incorporation by Reference**: This Plan incorporates by reference several policy documents and strategic plans adopted by the City with broad participation. This approach provides both clarity and economy. Readers will find articulate references to topic-specific plans, reports and studies that might otherwise need to be contained herein to satisfy GMA provisions.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN AND ELEMENTS**

The Plan is organized into topical “elements”, or chapters. Each element includes a summary of issues and background information, data, maps and text supportive of the element’s goals, objectives and policies. The elements of this Plan are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Page</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Land Use</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community Character</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Economic Development</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Transportation</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Parks, Recreation and Open Space</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Housing</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Environment</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Capital Facilities and Utilities</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Implementation</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Comprehensive Plan Elements are organized as follows:

**Introduction**: (optional) Background information relevant to the Element, in narrative format.

**Finding**: (optional) Statement of fact that establish context and background relevant to that Element’s Goals, Policies and Strategies.

**Goal**: Statement of aspiration for a future condition or outcome. A Goal describes a future circumstance that the City intends to realize. Accordingly, it is expected that the City of Lynnwood will assign some level of resource or influence to accomplish the Goal. It is expected that future decisions and actions by the City will promote realization of the Goal.

**Policy**: Statement of community preference or intent regarding a particular issue or topic. The Policy provides direction to City officials and the general public when more than one approach or option is feasible. Policies guide decision-making toward realization of a Goal.

**Strategy**: Statement of specific actions to be taken by the City and/or community. Strategies may include activities, programs, projects, or services of with measurable or recognizable outcomes. Strategies provide guidance to Departments regarding desired initiatives and endeavors desired by the community. Implementation of a Strategy promotes realization of a Goal.

**RELATION OF THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO OTHER PLANS, REPORTS, TECHNICAL STUDIES AND LEGISLATION**

A comprehensive plan is *comprehensive* in that its goals, policies and strategies are established with a general understanding of all areas of municipal governance. In a literal sense, a comprehensive plan is not likely to be comprehensive in its *content* since the scope and breathe of municipal interests is vast. Comprehensive plans, by nature, are policy-oriented, and reliant in large part upon other documents that precede and succeed the planning process. The policies and preferences contained here stem from knowledge gained from past work, including information gleaned from technical studies, adopted plans, adopted regulations, and public participation. Similarly, implementation of this Comprehensive Plan will involve studies, plans, reports, and legislation prepared in the future. It would not be feasible to incorporate all of those supporting documents here.

The comprehensive planning process is iterative. This particular version of Lynnwood’s Comprehensive Plan was not created from scratch, but instead represents a compendium of community decisions made over decades. It is likely that the 1994 Comprehensive Plan, which has served as the basis for this Plan, was created using an earlier rendition of Comprehensive Plan. This means that a new Comprehensive Plan is more refinement than revolution.

Citizens look to their local government to be responsive when new issues arise. Cities and counties planning under the GMA must prepare, adopt, and implement change more frequently than the annual comprehensive plan amendment authorized by GMA.

For all of these reasons, a significant percentage of a community’s planning documents are not fully integrated into, and published as part of, a comprehensive plan. These plans, studies, and reports are instead incorporated by reference or practice.

Most City programs, services, and initiatives are intended to improve environmental conditions, respond to socio-economic issues, or to improve the delivery of municipal services or the functionality of municipal infrastructure. The GMA requires that comprehensive plans and development regulations protect critical areas. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requires that new land use policies and
regulations undergo environmental review to assess the potential for adverse impacts. As a result, the
provisions of the Lynnwood Comprehensive Plan and corresponding development regulations typically
improve environmental conditions.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (SEPA)**

Comprehensive plans and related development regulations are subject to SEPA environmental review
(State Environmental Policy Act). SEPA checklists that identify potential adverse impacts and proposed
mitigation measures are prepared by City staff for proposed amendments to Lynnwood’s Comprehensive
Plan and development regulations. The Community Development Director, acting as the City’s SEPA
Responsible Official, issues a threshold determination following review of the SEPA checklist and the
consideration of related information.

Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) have been prepared for larger initiatives, including the 1994
Comprehensive Plan, City Center SubArea Plan (2004), the Highway 99 Subarea Plan (2011), and
Lynnwood Place (2012).

Lynnwood’s Comprehensive Plan must be consistent with regional plans that were the subject of
extensive environmental review. Environmental impact statements were prepared for regional plans such
as the Snohomish County Comprehensive Plan, and PSRC’s Vision 2040 and Transportation 2040.

All land development and new construction must comply with adopted environmental regulations. For
example, demolition of existing buildings must comply with air quality regulations administered by the
Puget Sound Clean Air Agency. Lynnwood’s critical area regulations protect environmentally-sensitive
areas such as wetlands, streams, steep slopes, and aquifer recharge areas. Changes to streets and
sidewalks must be consistent with adopted design standards and the requirements of Lynnwood’s
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit as approved by the U.S.
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). New buildings must contain energy conservation features
specified by the International Energy Conservation Code. Lynnwood’s street and utility infrastructure
improvements are guided by detailed facility plans that adhere to adopted levels of service (LOS) and
applicable environmental controls. For larger developments in Lynnwood, an environmental checklist
and threshold determination are required.

This Comprehensive Plan was prepared consistent with SEPA requirements. Given: a) the relatively-
minor extent of substantive change set forth in this iteration of the Comprehensive Plan; and b) the
extensive mitigation that is integrated into already-adopted plans and regulations, the SEPA Responsible
Official concluded that a new EIS was not warranted. See Community Development file ERC_____-
2015 for more information.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Lynnwood’s public participation program is an essential component of community planning and of this
Comprehensive Plan. Public outreach and input associated with other City projects and programs is
relevant here. Lynnwood exceeds the requirements of both in the amount of advertising that is normally
done, the number of public meetings and other involvement opportunities, open discussion, and
opportunities to provide comments at any time via regular mail, e-mail or voice mail. Lynnwood’s Public
Participation Program for the Comprehensive Plan is guided by the following objectives/policies:

1. The City shall exceed the mandates of Washington State in our program to involve the public in the
   preparation and periodic update of our Comprehensive Plan.

2. The City shall encourage public participation in all phases of the planning process and take proactive
   measures to facilitate public awareness and involvement, including, but not limited to, the following:
Utilize the Planning Commission as the primary public forum where all Comprehensive Plan related discussions are open to public observation and, whenever appropriate, public involvement.

Conduct open and inclusive community meetings for presentation of substantive information, data, and concepts, public review and comment, and a constructive exchange of ideas and opinions.

For issues unique to a specific area(s), conduct community meetings in neighborhood schools or other suitable facility to facilitate attendance and discussion.

Conduct "open house" type meetings for discussions will staff, review of maps and proposals, and to disseminate handout information.

Publicize early in the planning process to allow adequate time for response.

Carefully consider all comments received. When appropriate, provide written analysis/response.

Encourage written and verbal comments.

Establish a 24-hour telephone and/or e-mail address "hot-line" for public comments.

3. The City shall use, as appropriate, the following methods to advertise meetings, inform the public and disseminate planning information:

- Newspaper Display Advertisements
- Newspaper Legal Notices
- Direct mail to property owners, tenants, businesses, etc.
- Direct mail/email to affected agencies and organizations
- Press Releases to local newspapers
- Publication in newsletters of the City and other organizations
- Announcement via City email broadcasts
- City Web Site – Info on the planning process, schedules and involvement opportunities
- Public posting of announcements

GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT GOALS

For informational purposes, the goals of the Growth Management Act (GMA), as specified by RCW 36.70A.020 and RCW 36.70A.480, are summarized below. These goals are used to guide the preparation of Lynnwood’s Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.

1. Encourage development in urban areas with existing or planned facilities and services.
2. Reduce urban sprawl.
3. Make adequate provision of efficient multimodal transportation systems.
4. Make affordable housing available to citizens of all income levels.
5. Promote economic opportunity.
6. Respect private property rights.
7. Ensure predictability and timeliness in permit review processes.
8. Conserve natural resources.
9. Retain open space and provide recreational opportunities.
10. Protect and enhance the environment.
11. Provide opportunities for citizen participation in the planning process.
12. Make adequate provision of necessary public facilities and services.
13. Preserve historic and archaeological resources.
14. Shoreline Management Act (SMA) goals specified by RCW 90.58.020.

CONCLUSION

Our community of Lynnwood is located at a major transportation crossroads and surrounded by growing cities and unincorporated urban areas. Lynnwood is a convenient and desirable place to live, work, shop, conduct business, attend college, visit parks, play golf and participate in other activities. People want and need to be here for a wide variety of reasons. Lynnwood has a lot to offer.

Through the efforts of our citizens, community organizations, professional staff and our appointed and elected officials, Lynnwood will plan for and manage community growth and change. This Comprehensive Plan and Lynnwood Moving Forward – Our Community Vision will provide the needed guidance.