

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION TO LYNNWOOD

Since Lynnwood's incorporation in 1959, local residents have experienced dramatic changes in the community and throughout our county and region. During its fifty years as a city, the Lynnwood area has been transformed from a quiet rural community of farms and forests to a thriving city of 35,230 people.

What was once just a stop along the highway between Seattle and Everett is now a major center of transportation and commerce. Lynnwood has matured into a full service city of stable neighborhoods, attractive parks and recreational facilities, quality educational facilities, professionally-staffed administrative/police/fire/public works facilities, all of which are providing a wide range of opportunities to the residential and business communities at large.



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 that are available for use by both public and private sectors of our community.

The Plan was developed to comply with the State's Growth Management Act of 1990 and its subsequent revisions. It must also be consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies of Snohomish County and with the plans of our neighboring jurisdictions.

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

- **Formalize goals and policies:** The City's primary land use and development related goals, objectives and policies are formalized in this document, providing officials with a consistent policy source for making decisions and directing programs and activities.
- **Implement the mandates of GMA:** This Plan was prepared in compliance with the Growth Management Act and is consistent with the goals and requirements of the Act.
- **Promote the public health, safety and welfare:** The Comprehensive Plan establishes development guidelines, levels of service standards, and encourages development that complies with those standards in appropriate locations throughout the community.
- **Encourage coordination:** The Plan anticipates future development, population growth and the needs of our community for all major municipal services. It then helps coordinate the provision of needed services to meet those needs. 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.

The Comprehensive Plan has the following four 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.
- **Implementable:** 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.
- **Flexible:** The Plan provides for periodic reviews and amendments 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.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

The Plan is organized into functional “elements”, or chapters. Each element includes a summary of issues, brief descriptive information, data, maps and text to support its goals, objectives and policies. The following is a brief description of the primary elements of this Plan:

- **Land Use:** This element describes the planned use of all lands within the City, including the type, scale, design, density and intensity of development. The element consists of the text and a citywide Future Land Use Plan map.
- **Transportation:** The current and future motorized and non-motorized transportation needs of the City are addressed in this element, which also includes levels of service (LOS) standards for the street system, public transit, and commute trip reduction programs.
- **Housing:** This element describes the status of the City's housing stock, the ability of our residents to afford housing in Lynnwood, preservation of established neighborhoods and the preferred design, style and density of future housing.
- **Parks, Recreation and Open Space:** This element defines current and future needs for parklands, recreation and active and passive open space. It reflects the Parks Department's Comprehensive Plan for Parks and Recreation.
- **Cultural and Historic Resources:** This new element was intended to separate cultural and historic issues that were previously part of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element. This element will grow through subsequent amendments.
- **Environmental Resources:** This “optional” element was adopted in 2002 to efficiently focus the City's environmental information, goals and policies, to include “best available science” policies, and provide a foundation for environment-related regulations and actions.
- **Economic Development:** With several important economic activities in progress in 2000, the need for greater emphasis on economic development planning led to the creation of this element. It later became a state-mandated plan element. This element underwent a major revision in 2005 to coordinate with the Economic Development Action Plan that was adopted the previous year. This element provides economic policy guidance through five overarching “Guiding Themes”, as well as goals, objectives and policies.
- **Capital Facilities & Utilities:** This element combines two mandatory elements of GMA to provide a foundation for needed municipal facilities and services. It includes an assessment of current and future needs, our ability to handle planned growth and development, and levels of service standards for the primary utilities. Closely related to this element are the Six-year and Long-range Capital Facilities Plans (CFP) for all City utilities, facilities, buildings and lands. This element was updated in 2001 to include an Essential Public Facilities Siting process, which was revised in 2006 to comply with state law.
- **Implementation Element:** There are many ways to make the Plan successful over time. This element directs the Plan's implementation in the most appropriate ways and identifies some of the options and implementation procedures, including the annual plan amendments procedures and schedule. A five-year Implementation Program is included.

BACKGROUND REPORTS

The Comprehensive Plan is policy-oriented. To make it lean and easy to read and understand, much of the data, analyses and other supporting documentation is contained in separate "Background Reports". These reports are not intended for adoption so they can be continually updated as new information becomes available.

ENVIRONMENTAL (SEPA) REVIEW

All Comprehensive Plan amendments are subject to SEPA environmental review. The City's 5-year update, completed in 2001, utilized a new SEPA tool called the Non-project Review Form, or NPRF. Lynnwood worked with the State Dept. of Ecology as a pilot project to test the new format and process. The NPRF process worked well for Lynnwood. Unfortunately, the project was dropped by DOE prior to completion and implementation. Subsequent reviews have followed the traditional SEPA process.

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Lynnwood's Citizen Involvement Program is reviewed each year. During the Five-year Plan Update in 2001, the program's structure was adopted as part of this section of the Comprehensive Plan. The Citizen Involvement Program was designed to cover state requirements and the requirements of the Lynnwood Municipal Code, LMC 18.04.060 (Public Participation Process, Review by Planning Commission, and City Council).

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. Citizen involvement is not only a good idea – it's essential to the planning process and a requirement of the GMA. Lynnwood's Program consists of the following three policies:

1. The City shall exceed the mandates of Washington State in our program to involve the public in the continuing review and periodic update of our Comprehensive Plan.
2. The City shall encourage public participation in all phases of the planning process and offer extensive opportunities for communication and involvement, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Establish 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 community meetings for discussion and exchange of ideas.
 - Conduct neighborhood meetings in schools or other suitable facilities for the convenience of attendees and to facilitate informal discussion.
 - Conduct "open house" type meetings for discussions with staff, review of maps and proposals, and to disseminate handout information.
 - Publicize early in the process to allow adequate time for response.
 - Seriously consider and respond to all comments received.

- 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 lists (of interested or affected people and organizations)
 - Press Releases to local newspapers
 - Cable Access Television station public notices
 - City Web Site – Info on the planning process, schedules and involvement opportunities
 - Bulletin Boards in public places

A VISION FOR LYNNWOOD

What is a vision for a community?

A 'vision' is a realistic, credible, attractive future for our city. It 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.

In early 2009, the City Council approved a new Vision Statement for Lynnwood. This 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 preferred to share their ideas online through the portion of the city website dedicated to the visioning process. 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 summer and fall of 2008 to distill those 4,000+ items into a concise vision statement. That work produced the following Vision Statement:

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.*

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Each element of the Plan contains goals, objectives and policies to guide decisions related to City growth and development. To ensure a consistent understanding of these terms, the following definitions were used in formulating the statements in this Plan:

Goal: A statement that describes the desired future. It is an ideal that may be difficult or impossible to achieve, but it describes the community's vision and provides direction for planning objectives, policies and actions. In some cases, the Plan will also include "subgoals" which are more focused goals with shorter terms.

Objective: A statement that describes how the goal will be achieved within the restrictions of time, available information, projections and planning assumptions. It represents the maximum realistic level of attainment within the planning period.

Measurable Objective:

An objective statement may include measurements to indicate when the intended result will be achieved, by whom, at what location, at what cost, etc. Many of the objectives in the Comprehensive Plan have been modified to include measurements. This will increase predictability and assist in the scheduling and budgeting of major projects and improvements.

Policy: A specific statement intended to guide actions aimed at achieving the goal and its objectives. Policies imply commitment. They either provide clear guidance for decision-making, or provide clear responsibilities to be implemented. Policy-based activities can often be measured and used to track progress toward achieving the goal and its objective(s).

THE GOALS OF GMA

The Growth Management Act originally included 13 planning goals. Shoreline Management was later added. The goals are summarized as follow:

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

CONCURRENT PLANNING PROGRAMS

Snohomish County's Vision:

Following a public "visioning" process, Snohomish County adopted the Vision 2020 plan in 1990. This regional vision was intended to guide local planning, particularly transportation planning, within Snohomish County.

Snohomish County Tomorrow Goals:

Since 1989, our local communities have been working together in a collaborative planning process known as "Snohomish County Tomorrow" (SCT). This process brings together the County's vision of its future and the broad goals of GMA. Through this process, the County has developed goals, policies and implementation strategies consistent with the basic GMA goals.

Countywide Planning Policies:

Snohomish County met the GMA requirement for Countywide Planning Policies by using the adopted SCT goals as the framework and attaching policies and supplemental policies to provide local level detail that each jurisdiction could use to comply with GMA through their own plans. The adopted Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) provide a framework for the coordinated development of both county and city comprehensive plans. They address a number of issues, including the orderly provision of urban services, the siting of public capital facilities, countywide transportation facilities, affordable housing and joint city/county planning within UGAs.

General Policy Plan:

Generated from the Countywide Planning Policies and organized around the required Comprehensive Plan elements, this document includes all the goals, objectives and policies that apply to unincorporated areas of the County. The County's Comprehensive Plan underwent its 10-year update in 2005.

Consistency with other Jurisdictions:

Our Comprehensive Plan must be coordinated with, and consistent with, the comprehensive plans of other counties or cities with which we have common borders or related regional issues. [RCW 36.70A.100] This doesn't mean that we can't pursue our own visions or be unique in our own ways. It does mean that we will consider how our Plan proposals might affect our neighbors and will coordinate with them on matters of mutual interest.

Population Forecasting:

The County's General Policy Plan is based on the 20-year population projection provided by the State Office of Financial Management (OFM). Distribution of that population projection is based

on Vision 2020, the regional growth and transportation strategy and on the Countywide Planning Policies.

MANAGING OUR GROWTH

Growth may be inevitable – but it is also manageable. The primary purpose of the Growth Management Act, and of our Comprehensive Plan, is to manage our future growth to ensure that it will result in a better and stronger community. Setting "targets" for population and employment growth is a step toward managing our future. Our county's population, housing and employment growth will be directed toward designated "centers" and, more generally, the Urban Growth Areas (UGAs).

Growth Projections and Allocations:

RCW 36.70A.215 requires certain counties and their cities to establish a program to evaluate the availability of land for development or redevelopment in relation to projections and allocations of future growth. This program, known as "buildable lands program", is overseen by Snohomish County Tomorrow and produces updated growth allocations and development capacity projections every five years. The last analysis was completed in 2008.

Population Targets:

The State Office of Financial Management (OFM) projects the population growth of counties. Snohomish County Tomorrow then allocates its projected population to areas that can best accommodate it. Growth capacity is becoming increasingly limited in our southwest UGA.

Table Int-1: Population Growth Allocations	
2006 – City	35,230
2025 – City	43,782
Growth – City	8,552
2006 – MUGA	23,431
2025 – MUGA	38,725
Growth – MUGA	15,294
Source: Final Buildable Lands Report (2007)	

The most-recent allocation of growth targets occurred in 2006. That update produced the growth of population shown in Table 1-1 to the City of Lynnwood and the Lynnwood Municipal Urban Growth Area.

It is expected that over half of this population growth will locate in the City Center, as the City Center Subarea Plan EIS projects that redevelopment of the City Center could accommodate up to 3,000 new multiple family dwelling units by 2020, representing a population of about 5,400 new residents.

The remainder of this population growth would be accommodated in the rest of the City by either: A) development of the (limited) undeveloped land in the City; B) redevelopment of sites that were not originally developed at the allowable density, or C) re-designation and development of properties where residential development is not now allowed (such as portions of the Highway 99 corridor and/or portions of the current Lynnwood High School site). The City is scheduled to make decisions on future land use designations for these locations in the next 12-18 months.

Employment Targets:

Nearly all (96%) of job growth will occur in the Urban Growth Areas, which include all the cities. Employment growth projections are not directly linked to population. Instead, they are based on commercial and industrial land availability, zoning, new development potential, etc. Lynnwood has an abundance of commercial zoning and significant potential for job growth. As with population growth, much of the employment growth is expected to locate in the City Center Subarea. The Subarea Plan EIS projects that redevelopment of this area could create about 9,000 new jobs. The rest of this job growth would locate in existing commercial areas through either business growth or redevelopment of low-intensity commercial areas, such as the Highway 99 corridor.

Table Int-2: Employment Growth Projections	
2006 – City	27,336
2025 – City	38,550
Growth – City	11,214
2006 – MUGA	29,926
2025 – MUGA	43,950
Growth – MUGA	14,036
Source: Final Buildable Lands Report (2007)	

In 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, operate a 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, we intend to manage our future growth in ways that are most beneficial to the entire Lynnwood community and its residents. This Comprehensive Plan will provide the needed guidance.

