

**Planning Commission Meeting
October 16, 2018 - 7:00 PM
City Hall - Council Chambers - SPECIAL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
AGENDA**

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. ROLL CALL/ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM**
- B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. October 2, 2018 draft Regular Meeting Minutes**

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Periodic update of City's Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)

Staff to provide additional information and discussion on proposed changes to the SMP based on state required changes and city-initiated changes.

B. Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element Amendment - Special Planning Areas

Amending the Special Planning Areas Designation Section and Map 1.3 "Designated Areas" of the City of Auburn Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element.

C. Continued Discussion of docket items for Annual comprehensive Plan Amendments - City initiated text and map amendments

Incorporation of City of Auburn Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan

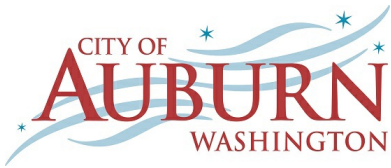
V. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Update on Community Development Services activities.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The City of Auburn Planning Commission is a seven member advisory body that provides recommendations to the Auburn City Council on the preparation of and amendments to land use plans and related codes such as zoning. Planning Commissioners are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council.

Actions taken by the Planning Commission, other than approvals or amendments to the Planning Commission Rules of Procedure, are not final decisions; they are in the form of recommendations to the city council which must ultimately make the final decision.



AGENDA BILL APPROVAL FORM

Agenda Subject:

October 2, 2018 draft Regular Meeting Minutes

Date:

October 9, 2018

Department:

Community Development

Attachments:

[Draft October 2, 2018 regular meeting minutes](#)

Budget Impact:

Current Budget: \$0

Proposed Revision: \$0

Revised Budget: \$0

Administrative Recommendation:

Planning Commission review and approve the October 2, 2018 minutes.

Background Summary:**Reviewed by Council Committees:**

Other: Planning

Councilmember:**Staff:**

Dixon

Meeting Date: October 16, 2018

Item Number:



October 2, 2018

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Judi Roland called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located on the first floor of Auburn City Hall, 25 West Main Street, Auburn, WA.

a.) ROLL CALL/ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Planning Commission Members present were: Chair Judi Roland, Vice-Chair Lee, Commissioner Mason, Commissioner Stephens, Commissioner Shin, Commissioner Khanal, and Commissioner Moutzouris.

Staff present included: Planning Services Manager Jeff Dixon, Senior Planner Thaniel Gouk, Senior Planner Dustin Lawrence, and Planning Administrative Assistant Kriss.

Members of the public present: There were no members of the public present.

b.) PLEDGE OF ALLEGEANCE

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 5, 2018

Commissioner Lee moved and Commissioner Khanal seconded to approve the minutes from the September 5, 2018 meeting as written.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. 7-0

III. PUBLIC HEARING

No items were brought forward for public hearing.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Periodic update of City's Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)

Senior Planner Thaniel Gouk led the discussion of the City's Shoreline Management Plan update. Staff reviewed the "Shoreline Environment" designation maps along with an explanation of the three "environment designations" within the SMP; "Shoreline Residential", "Urban Conservancy", and "Natural". These are like zoning districts in that they regulate land uses and certain development standards.

Staff reported that the city received a grant, \$25,000.00, from the WA State Department of Ecology (DOE) to assist the city with the update. The city entered a contract with the consulting firm: "The Watershed Company" who has worked with other jurisdictions on their SMP updates and this experience will be beneficial to the city as they work through the updates.

Staff explained the document is proposed to be updated in response to changes in state laws, as required updates listed in the "DOE Checklist", and there may be other updates that are recommended by staff.

The Commission and staff discussed the last time the "shoreline environment" designation maps were updated. Staff reported that the previous maps were from 2006 or 2007, prior to adoption of the Plan in 2009. Staff explained that not all of the maps will be updated but the information generated will be part of the city's mapping layer within the Geographic Information System (eGIS) staff relies upon for various information.

Staff explained that one of the staff recommended updates would include adding a map of easements that allow public access along the river shoreline. These historical easements were generally either created when lots were platted, or when the State of Washington negotiated directly with property owners to obtain easements along the Green River for public fishing.

Staff stated the updated map would likely not be published but be relied upon by staff for current information as far as easements along the Green River through an eGIS layer. The Commission and staff discussed how the easements along the Green River are generated.

Staff reviewed the "DOE Checklist", which lists changes in state laws. The checklist summarizes amendments to state laws, rules and applicable updated guidance adopted between 2007 and 2017 that may trigger the need for local SMP amendments. The form distributed was annotated by staff to indicate the changes needed.

After discussing Item 2017, c., 'exceptions to local review under the SMP', the Commission asked staff to provide a copy of the Ecology adopted rules that clarify exceptions to shoreline substantial development permits. A Planning Commissioner requested more information on what exceptions apply. Senior Planner Gouk confirmed he would provide that information at the next meeting.

The commission asked what "guidance" referred to under Item 2016, b. is. Staff explained, it is guidance provided for consultants for conducting reviews they perform on wetland boundaries as they classify (based on saturation, soils and vegetation).

As the Commission and Staff discussed 2007, a. clarification on "floodway" established in FEMA maps, or floodway criteria set in the SMA, Chair Roland expressed interest in having more information on this subject as the process continues. Staff explained that the city's Development Engineer is currently working on revisions to the city's floodplain administration regulations. Staff will be reviewing each of these sets of regulations for consistency and as they move through to the Commission.

Staff discussed 2007, c., Ecology's rule listing statutory exemptions from the requirement for a shoreline substantial development permit (SDP).

After completing review of the DOE Periodic Review Checklist, Commissioner Stephens asked if a copy of the current SMP was available for review. Staff confirmed that a copy is available and staff will send a hyperlink to the Commissioners for access to the SMP document.

B. Continued Discussion of docket items for Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments – City initiated text and map amendments

Staff provided continued discussion regarding the docket of items slated for the 2018 annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments.

Residential Transitional Overlay - Senior Planner Lawrence provided information regarding the Residential Transition (RT) Overlay, as part of the city-initiated map amendment. A Residential Transitional Overlay PowerPoint presentation was presented. Staff explained that as part of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan adoption, a Residential Transitional Overlay was added as a new mapped land use designation with its own set of policy statement.

This update established the framework for the city to create a new zoning designation and supplement existing zoning code requirements to assist with providing better transitions between different types of land uses.

Senior Planner Lawrence explained that the areas included in the RT Overlay had a previous land use designation of Single-Family. The current zoning of these areas included the R-1, R-5, and R-7 Residential Zones.

Staff reviewed the intent, approaches in other jurisdictions, and practical difficulties of the overlay. Examples were illustrated in the presentation provided to the Commission by staff. Staff reviewed options that staff believes will aid the city with in clarifying policy as the current policy may not be clear.

The Commission asked staff if the city had received any feedback from the public on the current policy and RT Overlay designation. Senior Planner Lawrence reported that the zoning in place currently is single-family, which is more restrictive. Discussions with citizens have been favorable and do not appear to be a burdensome, there is a potential for the property to be up-zoned, a benefit to those developing which does not seem to be restrictive.

Planning staff confirmed that no discussions with citizens provided negative feedback and because there are currently no specific zoning regulations to implement the RT Overlay in place, no specific commitment is available or has been made for potential development. Though the policy is in place within the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, no zoning designation has been completed. Senior Planner Gouk stated he received one phone call asking about the RT Overlay, but most persons seeking development are not aware the RT Overlay designation was established within the Plan.

Planning Manager Dixon explained, if the map designation through a text amendment is removed, the need for staff to provide subsequent zoning regulations will be eliminated. Staff believes it is duplicative of some of the existing regulations

in place that achieves similar outcomes. Though the RT Overlay could be refined, staff believes there are other ways to achieve the same dynamic of an overlay.

Three Private Map Amendments

Planning Services Manager Jeff Dixon stated this year's annual amendment would include three privately-initiated map amendments. A PowerPoint presentation was provided by staff for review of the private amendments:

CPM #2 – Senior Planner Gouk reported that CPM #2 is requested by Labrador Ventures LLC to change the designation of three undeveloped parcels totaling 1.89 acres NE of 40th and I ST NE from the “Residential Transition Overlay” to “Multiple Family Residential” and associated rezone from “R-7, Residential 7 dwelling units per acre” to “R-20, 20 Dwelling Units Per Acre”.

Staff reviewed the location of the map amendment and stated that in response to the required public notice one resident commented on the environmental SEPA decision. This resident lives to the south of the property and requested the trees be preserved on the property. Staff made contact with the commenter and explained the trees were not located on this property. A staff report with detail and a formal recommendation asking for approval will be provided at a future public hearing by staff.

CPM #3 – Senior Planner Lawrence reported that a Request by Auburn School District was received to change the designation of two developed parcels located west of Pioneer Elementary from “Single Family Residential” to “Institutional” and associated rezone from “R-7, 7 dwelling units per acre” to “I, Institutional” or “P-1, Public Use”.

Staff reported that the Pioneer Elementary would eventually be rebuilt; it was built back in the 50s and past its useful life. No comments from the community were received on the environmental SEPA decision.

Commissioner Shin stated he is recusing himself from CPM #3 and CPM #4 because the firm he is employed with does work for the Auburn School District.

CPM #4 – Senior Planner Lawrence explained that a request by Auburn School District was received to change the designation of four parcels (3 developed) located west of Kersey Way SE from “Residential Conservancy” to “Institutional” and the associated rezone from “RC, Residential Conservancy” to “I, Institutional” or “P-1, Public Use”.

Senior Planner Lawrence reported that comments were received in response to the environmental SEPA decision. These were mainly from property owners located in the subdivision to the west that expressed concerns about traffic, noise, and the visual impacts of a new school. Comments in support of the rezone/school were also received. Staff will subsequently provide copies of the comments in a more formal report that will include a staff recommendation.

The school district will be proposing to build an elementary school for approximately 850 children. City staff have been meeting with the school district to discuss the proposed permit application submittal and a schedule.

Commissioner Stevens asked if there would be a review of the traffic issues for the area since staff is processing the application for a map change and rezone. Staff reported that the school district has submitted a traffic study to accompany the map change application and city staff will be reviewing the traffic study and coordinating with Pierce County with any proposed road improvements.

Planning Manager Dixon reported that as part of the preliminary discussions for the construction, it has been recommended that a traffic light be installed at the single driveway along with widening of Kersey Way SE to provide turn lanes, specifically for access to the school. Due to the topography, most of the widening of turn lanes would take place on the school property on the south and west side of Kersey Way to accommodate those turn lanes.

Chair Roland asked if there was a public street of 57th ST SE for the location of the proposed school and Planning Manager Dixon responded, it is a private street that currently provides shared access to the three homes,.

In conclusion, staff commented that they will be bringing the school district and City capital facilities plans with a much larger packet that will include the details of all the city-initiated and privately-initiated amendments for the Commission's review. This will be provided within the working binder for a future meeting.

The Commission and staff discussed the timeline expected for the public hearing on the 2018 annual comprehensive plan amendments. Staff reported they would like to come back October 16th for staff to present on some of the remaining docketed items and then seeking to bring items forward for public hearing at the November 7, 2018 meeting.

V. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Planning Services Manager Jeff Dixon reported that a decision has been made by the Mayor to split the former Community Development and Public Works Department into two separate departments; the Department of Community Development as one and the Public Works Department. Jeff Tate has been promoted to the Director of Community Development. Ingrid Gaub has been promoted to Public Works Director.

At last night's City Council Meeting, October 1st, the Mayor announced an official proclamation designating October as "Community Planning Month".

At the October 8th City Council study session meeting, the zoning code amendment for a new definition for Nexus Youth and Families for "Community Support Facilities" will be discussed. The proposed amendment is scheduled for action October 15th by the City Council.

In follow up to a question at last month's meeting, the multi-tenant building and shopping center, which formerly housed Parker Paint store and the beauty school, across the street from the city's court building or police offices, at East Main Street and E Street, is

being updated with a new façade/facelift. The exterior of the building will be updated to dress up the exterior of the structure. An artistic rendition of the exterior elevation was provided by the architects and was shown on the screen.

As part of the façade improvement program, the Ryan Driessen Law Offices/building behind what used to be the Liberty Tax offices will receive a façade improvement. It is located at A Street SE, south of Main Street. Staff showed on the screen an artistic rendition of the exterior of the completed project from the architect.

Planning Manager Dixon reported that the senior housing project located directly south of city hall was submitted for design review, the city has recently issued the Design Review Decision. Currently the city is working on the review of grading permits for the project.

The building being developed at the SW Corner along S Division Street SW and 1st Street SW, submitted as “The Auburn Apartments”, recently submitted their building permit application. Staff provided the Commission with an artistic rendition of the exterior of the building being proposed for “The Auburn Apartments”. The builder is the same as completed the “Merrill Gardens at Auburn” project. However, this is not a senior housing project.

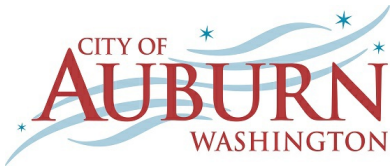
The Planning Commission members expressed a concern for that there is not enough downtown parking to support downtown businesses. Commissioner Lee expressed a concern for the aging and handicapped population, to walk a block or so may create accessibility issues and a hardship on the population.

Staff reported that within the DUC (Downtown Urban Center) parking is still required by city regulation to be constructed as part of development. Each of the projects that has been talked about is required to provide parking to support their use. The Commission and staff discussed the parking displacement issues issued by construction on what is currently surface lots. Staff provided information on parking options and issues with creating new parking as parking displacement takes place. Planning Manager Dixon stated that Sound Transit is pursuing an additional parking garage and the City is pursuing some replacement surface lots but it cannot fully compensate. He remarked the concerns regarding parking are noted.

The next meeting will be held October 16, 2018. The following meeting will be held Wednesday, November 7th, moving it to Wednesday due to November 6th being Election Day.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Chair Roland adjourned the meeting at 9:01 p.m.



AGENDA BILL APPROVAL FORM

Agenda Subject:

Periodic update of City's Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)

Date:

October 9, 2018

Department:

Community Development

Attachments:

[Memorandum and Exhibits](#)

Budget Impact:

Current Budget: \$0

Proposed Revision: \$0

Revised Budget: \$0

Administrative Recommendation:**Background Summary:**

Please see the attached memorandum and exhibits.

Reviewed by Council Committees:

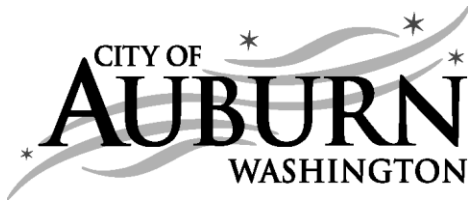
Other: Planning

Councilmember:**Staff:**

Gouk

Meeting Date: October 16, 2018

Item Number:



MEMORANDUM

TO: Judi Roland, Chair, Planning Commission
Roger Lee, Vice-Chair, Planning Commission
Planning Commission Members

FROM: Thaniel Gouk, Senior Planner, Department of Community Development

DATE: October 8, 2018

RE: Shoreline Master Program Periodic Update – Follow-up Info from October 2nd Meeting

At the October 2nd Planning Commission meeting, Staff discussed with the Commission several items related to the required Shoreline Master Program (SMP) updated, including an introduction to the SMP Designation Maps, updates that are mandated based on updates to State laws since 2008, and some optional updates that Staff recommends looking into.

The Commission also requested that Staff follow-up on some items that were discussed, including a link to the SMP document (emailed to Commissioners on 10/8/18) and more information on a few items from the Department of Ecology (Ecology) update checklist (Checklist). Ecology also provides a guidance document to accompany the Checklist which includes more in-depth information and background on each item in the Checklist. As the complete Checklist was provided to the Commission at the previous meeting, the complete guidance document is included as *Exhibit B*.

The additional information requested by the Commission is included in items A, B, and C, below and includes text from the Checklist first, then the text from the guidance document, followed by Staff comments.

A. Ecology Checklist, Item 2017(c), which reads: *“Ecology adopted rules that clarify exceptions to local review under the SMA.”*

Text from Ecology Guidance Document

2017 c. Exceptions to local review under the SMA

Ecology adopted WAC 173-27-044 to consolidate three separate laws that create special exceptions to applicability of local Shoreline Master Programs. The rule clarifies that requirements to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government to implement the SMA do not apply to:

- remedial hazardous substance cleanup actions (1994 law),
- boatyard improvements to meet NPDES requirements (2012 law), and
- certain WSDOT maintenance and safety projects and activities (2015 law).

Ecology also made housekeeping revisions to WAC 173-27-045, a separate rule that describes developments that are not required to meet SMA requirements. The revisions delete reference to RCW 90.58.390 (an emergency law that has since expired), and relocate the reference to the 1994 hazardous substance law to the new WAC 173-27-044.

Bills: [ESSB 5994](#), effective 7/6/2015, [EHB 2469](#), effective 6/7/2012. Laws: RCW [90.58.355](#); RCW [90.58.356](#); also see RCW [90.58.045](#); RCW [80.50](#). Rule: WAC [173-27-044](#) & WAC [173-27-045](#), effective 8/7/2017

Review considerations

The exceptions to SMP review covered under the statutes in these two rules apply whether or not they are included in local SMPs. However, to ensure the statutory directives are implemented consistently, Ecology recommends maintaining a section in their SMP that addresses these exceptions.

NOTE: We do not recommend the SMP combine these “exceptions” from SMA permit review directly into the list of “exemptions” from the requirement for a substantial development permit under [WAC 173-27-040](#). Projects that are listed as “permit-exempt” still need to meet substantive standards of the SMA – whereas for these projects there is no local review.

Example language

A local SMP may consolidate all the SMA exceptions to incorporate Ecology’s recently revised rules with all applicable statutes as follows:

(XX) Developments not required to obtain shoreline permits or local reviews

Requirements to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review to implement the Shoreline Management Act do not apply to the following:

- (i) Remedial actions. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.355, any person conducting a remedial action at a facility pursuant to a consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to chapter 70.105D RCW, or to the department of ecology when it conducts a remedial action under chapter 70.105D RCW.
- (ii) Boatyard improvements to meet NPDES permit requirements. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.355, any person installing site improvements for storm water treatment in an existing boatyard facility to meet requirements of a national pollutant discharge elimination system storm water general permit.
- (iii) WSDOT facility maintenance and safety improvements. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.356, Washington State Department of Transportation projects and activities meeting the conditions of RCW 90.58.356 are not required to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other local review.
- (iv) Projects consistent with an environmental excellence program agreement pursuant to RCW [90.58.045](#).
- (v) Projects authorized through the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council process, pursuant to chapter [80.50](#) RCW.

Staff Comments

Staff proposes to address this item by adding the example/recommended language to Section 4.2 'Applicability' of the SMP.

Section 4.2 would then read as follows:

4.2 Applicability.

- A. The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all shorelines, shorelands and associated wetland areas covered by the Shoreline Management Act of 1971 as follows:
1. All rivers and streams and their associated wetlands downstream from a point where the mean annual flow is 20 cubic feet per second or greater.
 2. All lakes and their associated wetlands which are 20 surface acres in size or larger.
 3. Shorelands and associated uplands extending 200 feet in all directions as measured on a horizontal plane from the ~~ordinary high water mark~~ OHWM; floodways and contiguous floodplain areas landward two hundred feet from such floodways; and all wetlands and river deltas associated with their streams, lakes, and tidal waters subject to the provisions of Chapter 90.58 RCW.
- B. All new development and uses occurring within shoreline jurisdiction must conform to Chapter 90.58 RCW, The Shoreline Management Act, Chapters 173-26 and 173-27 of the Washington Administrative Code, and this ~~s~~Shoreline ~~m~~Master ~~p~~Program.

C. Developments not required to obtain shoreline permits or local reviews.

Requirements to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review to implement the Shoreline Management Act do not apply to the following:

1. Remedial actions. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.355, any person conducting a remedial action at a facility pursuant to a consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to Chapter 70.105D RCW, or to the department of ecology when it conducts a remedial action under Chapter 70.105D RCW.
2. Boatyard improvements to meet NPDES permit requirements. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.355, any person installing site improvements for storm water treatment in an existing boatyard facility to meet requirements of a national pollutant discharge elimination system storm water general permit.
3. WSDOT facility maintenance and safety improvements. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.356, Washington State Department of Transportation projects and activities meeting the conditions of RCW 90.58.356 are not required to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other local review.
4. Projects consistent with an environmental excellence program agreement pursuant to RCW 90.58.045.
5. Projects authorized through the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council process, pursuant to Chapter 80.50 RCW.

- B. Ecology Checklist, Item 2007(a),** which reads: *“The Legislature clarified options for defining “floodway” as either the area that has been established in FEMA maps, or the floodway criteria set in the SMA.”*

Text from Ecology Guidance Document

2007 a. Options for defining floodway

The Legislature clarified options for defining “floodway” as either the area that has been established in Federal Emergency Management Agency maps, or the floodway criteria set in the SMA. The “SMA floodway” described in the SMA is essentially a biological definition, unlike the FEMA floodway which is derived from a model.

Bill: [HB 1413](#), effective 7/22/2007. Law: RCW [90.58.030](#).

Review considerations

Local governments should review their definition of “floodway” for consistency with the two options under this statute.

Example language

Option 1. If a local government elects to use FEMA maps to define the floodway, Ecology recommends the SMP include the following definition:

“Floodway” means the area that has been established in effective federal emergency management agency flood insurance rate maps or floodway maps. The floodway does not include lands that can reasonably be expected to be protected from flood waters by flood control devices maintained by or maintained under license from the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state.

The word “established” in this suggested definition is consistent with the SMA definition and “effective” indicates that the map is FEMA’s approved FIRM – not a preliminary or draft map – and also takes into account potential future changes to the maps. Reference to a specific dated version of the FIRM is not required.

Option 2. If the SMA floodway is used, the definition in the SMP should be consistent with RCW 90.58.030(2)(b)(ii).

The SMA floodway “...consists of those portions of a river valley lying streamward from the outer limits of a watercourse upon which flood waters are carried during periods of flooding that occur with reasonable regularity, although not necessarily annually, said floodway being identified, under normal condition, by changes in surface soil conditions or changes in types or quality of vegetative ground cover condition, topography, or other indicators of flooding that occurs with reasonable regularity, although not necessarily annually.”

Staff Comments

The SMP currently uses a version of “Option 2”, which fully reads:

“Floodway” means those portions of the area of a river valley lying streamward from the outer limits of a watercourse upon which flood waters are carried during periods of flooding that occur with reasonable regularity, although not necessarily annually, said floodway being identified, under normal condition, by changes in surface soil conditions or changes in types or quality of vegetative ground cover condition. The floodway shall not include those lands that can reasonably be expected to be protected from flood waters by flood control devices maintained

by or maintained under license from the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state.

As discussed during past meetings, the City's Floodplain Development Regulations will likely be updated in the next 6 months. Updated FEMA FIRMs (Flood Insurance Rate Map) are expected to be fully adopted by the federal government at the beginning of 2019, and the City's update would follow soon after. By switching from Option 2 to Option 1, the City could/would avoid needing to potentially change the existing definition within the SMP. In addition, the definition as used practically, is consistent with the verbiage in Option 1. Staff will be proposing to adopt Option 1.

C. Shoreline Exemptions

The third item that the Commission requested further information on was Ecology Checklist, Item 2007(c), which referred to fish habitat enhancement projects, and included a reference to developments that would be exempt from the SMP. Staff interprets this as a request to have a list of what is exempt from obtaining a Shoreline Substantial Permit; this information is provided in the following screenshot. A complete list of exemptions can be found in WAC [173-27-040](#).

"Substantial Development?" shall mean any development of which the total cost or fair market value exceeds ~~five~~^{seven} thousand ~~seven~~^{hundred and eighteen} ~~forty-seven~~^{forty-seven} dollars (~~\$7,047~~) (or the value as amended or adjusted for inflation per RCW ~~90.58.030~~^{90.58.030}-(3)-(e)) or any development which materially interferes with the normal public use of the water or shorelines of the state; except that the following shall not be considered substantial developments for the purpose of this chapter:

- A. Normal maintenance or repair of existing structures or developments, including damage by accident, fire, or elements;
- B. Emergency construction necessary to protect property from damage by the elements;
- C. Construction and practices normal or necessary for farming, irrigation, and ranching activities, including agricultural service roads and utilities on shorelands, and the construction and maintenance of irrigation structures including but not limited to head gates, pumping facilities, and irrigation channels. A feed lot of any size, all processing plants, other activities of a commercial nature, alteration of the contour of the shorelands by leveling or filling other than that which results from normal cultivation, shall not be considered normal or necessary farming or ranching activities. A feedlot shall be an enclosure or facility used or capable of being used for feeding livestock hay, grain, silage, or other livestock feed, but shall not include land for growing crops or vegetation for livestock feeding and/or grazing, nor shall it include normal livestock wintering operations;
- D. Construction on shorelands by an owner, lessee, or contract purchaser of a single family residence for his own use or for the use of his family, which residence does not exceed a height of thirty-five feet above average grade level and which meets all requirements of the state agency or local government having jurisdiction thereof, other than requirements imposed pursuant to this chapter;
- E. Construction of a dock, including a community dock, designed for pleasure craft only, for the private noncommercial use of the owner, lessee, or contract purchaser of single and ~~multiple~~^{multiple}-family residences. This exception applies if: in fresh waters, the fair market value of the dock does not exceed ten thousand dollars, but if subsequent construction having a fair market value exceeding five thousand dollars occurs within five years of completion of the prior construction, the subsequent construction shall be considered a substantial development for the purpose of this chapter;
- F. Operation, maintenance, or construction of canals, waterways, drains, reservoirs, or other facilities that now exist or are hereafter created or developed as a part of an irrigation system for the primary purpose of making use of system waters, including return flow and artificially stored ground water for the irrigation of lands;
- G. The marking of property lines or corners on state owned lands, when such marking does not significantly interfere with normal public use of the surface of the water;
- H. Operation and maintenance of any system of dikes, ditches, drains, or other facilities existing on September 8, 1975, which were created, developed, or utilized primarily as a part of an agricultural drainage or diking system;
- I. Site exploration and investigation activities that are prerequisite to preparation of an application for development authorization under this chapter, if:
 - 1. The activity does not interfere with the normal public use of the surface waters;
 - 2. The activity will have no significant adverse impact on the environment including, but not limited to, fish, wildlife, fish or wildlife habitat, water quality, and aesthetic values;
 - 3. The activity does not involve the installation of a structure, and upon completion of the activity the vegetation and land configuration of the site are restored to conditions existing before the activity;

4. A private entity seeking development authorization under this section first posts a performance bond or provides other evidence of financial responsibility to the local jurisdiction to ensure that the site is restored to preexisting conditions; and
 5. The activity is not subject to the permit requirements of RCW [90.58.550](#).
 - J. The process of removing or controlling an aquatic noxious weed, as defined in RCW [17.26.020](#), through the use of an herbicide or other treatment methods applicable to weed control that are recommended by a final environmental impact statement published by the department of agriculture or the department jointly with other state agencies under Chapter [43.21C](#) RCW.
 - K. Watershed restoration projects as defined herein. The City shall review the projects for consistency with the ~~s~~Shoreline ~~m~~Master ~~p~~Program in an expeditious manner and shall issue its decision along with any conditions within forty-five days of receiving all materials necessary to review the request for exemption from the applicant. No fee may be charged for accepting and processing requests for exemption for watershed restoration projects as used in this section.
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D. Public Participation Plan

One other item that Staff briefly mentioned at the last meeting was the Public Participation Plan for the SMP Update that the City's consultant Watershed has assisted in preparing. A draft version of this plan is attached as *Exhibit A*; please note that this is draft and has not yet been formally submitted to Ecology.

CITY OF AUBURN**SMP Periodic Update – Public Participation Plan**

Introduction

The City of Auburn is undertaking a periodic review of its Shoreline Master Program (SMP), as required by the Washington state Shoreline Management Act (SMA), RCW [90.58.080](#)(4). The SMA requires each SMP be reviewed, and revised if needed, on an eight-year schedule established by the state Legislature. The review ensures the SMP stays current with changes in laws and rules, remains consistent with other Auburn plans and regulations, and is responsive to changed circumstances, new information and improved data.

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to describe how Auburn will encourage early and continuous public input throughout the SMP review process, including the steps that Auburn will take to provide opportunities for public engagement and public comment, as well as Auburn contact information and web addresses.

This plan is a working document and will be adjusted as needed to provide for the greatest and broadest public participation over the course of the periodic review process.

1.0 Public Participation Goals

- Provide interested parties with timely information, an understanding of the process, and multiple opportunities to review and comment on proposed amendments to the SMP.
- Actively solicit information from citizens, property owners and stakeholders about their concerns, questions and priorities for the periodic review process.
- Encourage interested parties to informally review and comment on proposed changes to the SMP throughout the process and provide those comments to decision makers.
- Provide forums for formal public input at project milestones prior to decision-making by local officials.
- Consult and consider recommendations from neighboring jurisdictions, federal and state agencies, and Native American tribes.

2.0 Public Participation Opportunities

Auburn is committed to providing multiple opportunities for public participation throughout the process and will use a variety of communication tools to inform the public and encourage participation, including the following:

2.1 Website

Auburn's website will include a periodic review webpage where interested parties can access status updates, draft documents, official notices, minutes and other project information. It can be found at: <http://www.auburnwa.gov/SMP>. The webpage will be the primary repository of all information related to the periodic review process, including draft documents, official notices, a Frequently Asked Questions section, and other project information. The page will include who to contact for more information and an email link for questions and comments.

2.2 Notice mailing list

An email list of interested parties will be created, advertised and maintained by the Community Development Services Department and will be used to notify interested parties regarding periodic review progress and participation opportunities. Interested parties can be added to the list by contacting Thaniel Gouk, Senior Planner, at 253-804-5031 or tgouk@auburnwa.gov.

2.3 Open House

Auburn will initiate the periodic review with a community open house. Public comments received during the open house will be posted on the periodic review webpage.

2.4 Public Comment Periods and Hearings

The Planning Commission will be the primary forum for detailed review and recommendation to the Auburn City Council. The Planning Commission will conduct a public comment period and at least one public hearing to solicit input on the periodic review. Prior to the hearing, the Planning Commission will hold an introductory meeting to discuss the periodic review and proposed SMP revisions. This meeting will also be open to the public and likely scheduled to occur on the same evening as the Open House.

The Auburn City Council also will hold at least one introductory meeting before final adoption.

Auburn will coordinate with the Department of Ecology on public notification of comment periods and hearings to take advantage of Ecology's optional SMP amendment process that allows for a combined state-local comment period (WAC [173-26-104](#)).

Public notice of all hearings will state who is holding the comment period and/or hearing, the date and time, and the location of any public hearing. Notices will be published per official policy and comply with all other legal requirements such as the Americans with Disabilities Act. A notice will be sent to the email list (2.2, above) and the Department of Ecology.

2.5 News media

The local news media will be kept up to date on the periodic review process and receive copies of all official notices.

2.6 Social media

The City of Auburn will provide notice of public meetings and other opportunities for public participation via typical City public notice requirements, and in addition, its social media accounts, including Facebook, Next Door, and Twitter.

2.7 Ongoing Comment

All documents under consideration will be available on the periodic review webpage and available for review at Auburn City Hall. Interested parties will be encouraged to provide comments by letter or e-mail. All comments will be compiled and provided to the City Council and Planning Commission.

3.0 List of stakeholders

Auburn will reach out to the following stakeholders:

- Washington Department of Ecology
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Muckleshoot Tribe
- Puyallup Tribe
- City of Algona
- City of Covington
- City of Federal Way
- City of Kent
- City of Pacific
- King County
- Pierce County
- Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Green River Coalition
- Futurewise
- Puget Sound Energy
- Valley Regional Fire Authority

- Washington Environmental Council

4.0 Public Participation Timeline

The following is a general timeline including anticipated public participation opportunities. Auburn will coordinate with the Department of Ecology throughout the process. A detailed timeline will be posted on the periodic review webpage.

September	SMP Update Work Plan
October	Public Participation Plan Website launch Email notification sent to interested parties
October - December	Review SMP and other relevant City codes and policies
January	SMP Open House
February - March	Planning Commission review Planning Commission public hearing Public comment period on draft revisions
April - June	Environmental review (SEPA) Planning Commission recommendation to City Council City Council review and final action

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SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM PERIODIC REVIEW

Periodic Review Checklist Guidance

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Introduction

This document provides guidance for local governments on using the checklist required as part of the periodic reviews of Shoreline Master Programs (SMPs) under the Shoreline Management Act (SMA). The checklist and this guidance document will be amended regularly to stay current with amended laws and rules. Check to see if you have the most current version before starting your review. Work closely with the [Ecology regional shoreline planner](#) assigned to your jurisdiction throughout the review process.

The checklist is available as an MS Word document on Ecology’s webpage. For each year between 2007 and 2017 it provides a summary of state laws, rules and applicable updated guidance that may trigger the need for local SMP amendments. If a given year is not listed here, there were no state laws or rules or other applicable documents adopted or published during that year that would trigger a periodic review obligation.

Each item starts with a description of the item and a link to the relevant law, rule or document. This is followed by “Review Considerations” with general observations to aid local review. In some cases we include Administrative tips related to the law or rule. The descriptions here are not intended as a definitive or exhaustive analysis or interpretation of the item.

As described in Ecology’s rules, the checklist is used throughout the review process:

At the **beginning of the periodic review**, use the Review column to document review considerations and determine if local amendments are needed to maintain compliance. See WAC 173-26-090(3)(b)(i).

At the end of the review process, use the Action column to indicate where the SMP addresses applicable amended laws, or where no action is needed. See WAC 173-26-090(3)(d)(ii)(D) and WAC 173-26-110(9)(b).

This guidance includes a sample checklist for a hypothetical city. When conducting reviews, we recommend filling out the checklist for all the years listed. Some statutes provide options, and your jurisdiction may decide to adopt one of these options even if elected officials chose not to do so during a previous review. If an item has already been addressed simply note that in the review column. If an item is not applicable, indicate N/A. If you have questions, or suggestions for improving this guidance document, contact your [Ecology regional shoreline planner](#).

2017

2017a. Cost threshold for substantial development (\$7,047)

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) revised the cost threshold above which a development will require a Substantial Development Permit (SDP) to **\$7,047**. OFM is required to adjust the cost threshold for inflation every five years. (From 2012 – 2017 the amount was \$6,416.) The new threshold was effective September 2, 2017.

Law: RCW [90.58.030](#)(3)(e). State Register announcement: [WSR 17-17-007](#).

Review considerations

Local governments are required to apply the new threshold of \$7,047 starting September 2, 2017, regardless of the threshold amount that is included in their SMP.

If a local SMP includes a specific cost threshold, it should be revised to \$7,047. If an SMP does not include an absolute number but relies on reference to statute, no change to the SMP is required.

ADMINISTRATIVE TIP: Revise permit application forms, websites or other administrative documents to reflect the new cost threshold. There is no need to wait for an SMP amendment to revise administrative documents.

2017 b. Definition of development

Ecology amended permit rules to clarify the definition of “development” does not include projects that involve only dismantling or removing structures without any associated development or re-development. This is not really a new interpretation, it simply codifies the primary holding of the 1992 WA State Supreme Court decision *Cowiche Canyon v Bosley* (118 Wn.2d 801). Ecology included the clarification in rule to address a question about applicability of the SMA that arises frequently.

Rule: WAC [173-26-241](#)(3)(e), effective 9/7/2017.

Review considerations

It is not necessary to adopt this clarification into an SMP - local governments may look to the state rule to answer questions should they arise. However, if a jurisdiction finds the clarification helpful, it may be incorporated into the SMP.

Example language

If a local government chooses to incorporate this clarification, one option is to add a sentence in the SMP definition of development. For example:

(XX) “Development” means a use consisting of the construction or exterior alteration of structures; dredging; drilling; dumping; filling; removal of any sand, gravel, or minerals; bulkheading; driving of piling; placing of obstructions; or any project of a permanent or temporary nature which interferes with the normal public use of the surface of the waters overlying lands subject to the act at any stage of water level. “Development” does not include dismantling or removing structures if there is no other associated development or re-development.

2017 c. Exceptions to local review under the SMA

Ecology adopted WAC 173-27-044 to consolidate three separate laws that create special exceptions to applicability of local Shoreline Master Programs. The rule clarifies that requirements to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government to implement the SMA do not apply to:

- remedial hazardous substance cleanup actions (1994 law),
- boatyard improvements to meet NPDES requirements (2012 law), and
- certain WSDOT maintenance and safety projects and activities (2015 law).

Ecology also made housekeeping revisions to WAC 173-27-045, a separate rule that describes developments that are not required to meet SMA requirements. The revisions delete reference to RCW 90.58.390 (an emergency law that has since expired), and relocate the reference to the 1994 hazardous substance law to the new WAC 173-27-044.

Bills: [ESSB 5994](#), effective 7/6/2015, [EHB 2469](#), effective 6/7/2012. Laws: RCW [90.58.355](#); RCW [90.58.356](#); also see RCW [90.58.045](#); RCW [80.50](#). Rule: WAC [173-27-044](#) & WAC [173-27-045](#), effective 8/7/2017

Review considerations

The exceptions to SMP review covered under the statutes in these two rules apply whether or not they are included in local SMPs. However, to ensure the statutory directives are implemented consistently, Ecology recommends maintaining a section in their SMP that addresses these exceptions.

NOTE: We do not recommend the SMP combine these “exceptions” from SMA permit review directly into the list of “exemptions” from the requirement for a substantial development permit under [WAC 173-27-040](#). Projects that are listed as “permit-exempt” still need to meet substantive standards of the SMA – whereas for these projects there is no local review.

Example language

A local SMP may consolidate all the SMA exceptions to incorporate Ecology's recently revised rules with all applicable statutes as follows:

(XX) Developments not required to obtain shoreline permits or local reviews

Requirements to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review to implement the Shoreline Management Act do not apply to the following:

(i) Remedial actions. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.355, any person conducting a remedial action at a facility pursuant to a consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to chapter 70.105D RCW, or to the department of ecology when it conducts a remedial action under chapter 70.105D RCW.

(ii) Boatyard improvements to meet NPDES permit requirements. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.355, any person installing site improvements for storm water treatment in an existing boatyard facility to meet requirements of a national pollutant discharge elimination system storm water general permit.

(iii) WSDOT facility maintenance and safety improvements. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.356, Washington State Department of Transportation projects and activities meeting the conditions of RCW 90.58.356 are not required to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other local review.

(iv) Projects consistent with an environmental excellence program agreement pursuant to RCW 90.58.045.

(v) Projects authorized through the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council process, pursuant to chapter 80.50 RCW.

2017 d. Permit filing procedures

Ecology amended WAC 173-27-044 to incorporate a 2011 law relating to permit filing. These details are important because the date of filing establishes the start of the Shorelines Hearings Board appeal period. Changes include:

- "Date of filing" replaces "date of receipt" for shoreline permits sent to Ecology.
- Requires concurrent filing of permits if there are separate Substantial Development, Conditional Use Permits, and/or Variances.
- Ecology will notify local government and the applicant of the date of filing by telephone or electronic means followed by written communication.

The law clarified that local permit decisions shall be submitted to Ecology by return receipt requested mail. This intent is to bring consistency and predictability to the timing of the appeal period. Using return receipt mail allows local governments to calculate when the appeal period starts and ends without contacting Ecology on every permit. This also helps them administer other related

authorizations like building permits. Using return receipt mail allows local governments to control the timing of the SHB appeal for Shoreline Substantial Development Permits and creates a record of the transmittal, alleviating the scenario where a submittal is lost or delayed by the mail service.

Bill: [SSB 5192](#), effective 7/22/2011. Law: RCW [90.58.140\(6\)](#). Rule: [WAC 173-27-130](#)

Review considerations

The SMA amendment applied on its effective date in 2011, regardless of whether permit procedures are specifically outlined in local SMPs. However, if an SMP describes the permit filing process, it should be reviewed for consistency with the 2011 statutory amendments.

Example language

Below is an example of local permit filing procedures which incorporates the 2011 statute:

(XX) After all local permit administrative appeals or reconsideration periods are complete and the permit documents are amended to incorporate any resulting changes, [COUNTY/CITY] will mail the permit using return receipt requested mail to the Department of Ecology regional office and the Office of the Attorney General. Projects that require both Conditional Use Permits and or Variances shall be mailed simultaneously with any Substantial Development Permits for the project.

(i) The permit and documentation of the final local decision will be mailed together with the complete permit application; a findings and conclusions letter; a permit data form (cover sheet); and applicable SEPA documents.

(ii) Consistent with RCW 90.58.140(6), the state's Shorelines Hearings Board twenty-one day appeal period starts with the date of filing, which is defined below:

(A) For projects that only require a Substantial Development Permit: the date that Ecology receives the [COUNTY/CITY] decision.

(B) For a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) or Variance: the date that Ecology's decision on the CUP or Variance is transmitted to the applicant and [COUNTY/CITY].

(C) For SDPs simultaneously mailed with a CUP or VAR to Ecology: the date that Ecology's decision on the CUP or Variance is transmitted to the applicant and the [COUNTY/CITY].

2017 e. Forestry use regulations

Ecology amended forestry use regulations to clarify that a forest practice that only involves timber cutting is not considered development under the SMA and does not require permits, but forestry activities other than timber cutting may require a Substantial Development Permit (SDP). Ecology adopted this housekeeping amendment to address a regularly recurring question which is partly answered in Forest Practices Board laws and rules but not addressed in SMA rules. Forest Practices rule WAC 222-50-020(2) states "A substantial development permit must be obtained prior to conducting forest practices which are "substantial developments" within the "shoreline" area as those terms are

defined by the Shoreline Management Act.” The authority for that rule is RCW 76.09.240(6). Timber cutting alone is not development because it does not meet the statutory definition in RCW 90.58.030(3)(e)(a).

Rule: WAC [173-27-030](#)(6), effective 9/7/2017.

Review considerations

It is not necessary to amend local SMP forestry regulations to reflect this clarification. However, it could be helpful for jurisdictions with extensive commercial forestry, if questions about applicability of forest practices laws and rules arise frequently.

Sample language

The language from the revised rule could be incorporated into forest use regulations:

A forest practice that only involves timber cutting is not a development under the act and does not require a shoreline substantial development permit or a shoreline exemption. A forest practice that includes activities other than timber cutting may be a development under the act and may require a substantial development permit, as required by WAC 222-50-020.

2017 f. Lands under exclusive federal jurisdiction

Ecology amended a permit rule that addressed lands within federal boundaries to clarify that areas and uses in those areas that are under exclusive federal jurisdiction as established through federal or state statutes are not subject to the jurisdiction of the SMA. For example, exclusive jurisdiction is ceded to the United States in Rainier National Park (RCW 37.08.200), Olympic National Park (RCW 37.08.210), and for acquisition of land for permanent military installations (RCW 37.08.180).

Rule: WAC [173-22-070](#), effective 9/7/2017.

Review considerations

It is not necessary to amend local SMPs to reflect this clarification. However, it could be included if a jurisdiction faces questions about applicability of the SMP on lands with exclusive jurisdiction.

Sample language

The language from the revised rule could be incorporated as follows:

(XX) Areas and uses in those areas that are under exclusive federal jurisdiction as established through federal or state statutes are not subject to the jurisdiction of chapter 90.58 RCW.

Another option is to list the specific areas where the exclusive jurisdiction applies locally (e.g., National Park or military base).

2017 g. Nonconforming uses and development

Ecology revised its rules for nonconforming uses and development. The introductory paragraph of the rule was amended to clarify that unlike other permit and enforcement rules, this rule is a default rule that only applies if a local government has no provisions in their local SMP addressing nonconforming

Shoreline Master Program Periodic Review Checklist Guidance

Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program, September 20, 2017

uses. A primary goal of the revisions was to create separate sections for nonconforming uses, nonconforming structures, and nonconforming lots. Many of the clarifications in this default rule were borrowed from local government innovations developed during the comprehensive SMP updates.

Rule: [WAC 173-27-080](#), effective 9/7/2017

Review considerations

For local governments that adopted their own tailored provisions for nonconforming use and development during the comprehensive update, Ecology's rule amendments will have no effect.

This rule will apply where a local government either has no provisions for nonconforming use and development or has adopted WAC 173-27-080 by reference. Local governments that adopt this WAC by reference or included its provisions within their SMP should review the new rule to determine whether or how to modify how nonconforming use and development is regulated in their jurisdiction.

If a local government has already addressed nonconforming use and development but is considering adopting clarifications, review the revised rule for ideas. Below is a summary of changes from Ecology's previous nonconforming use and development rule to help identify what is different:

(1) Definitions

This section creates separate definitions for nonconforming "use," "structure" and "lots." In the previous version "use" and "structure" were combined into one definition, and the definition of "lots" had been incorporated into the regulation itself rather than having a separate definition.

(2) Nonconforming structures

§ (2)(a) clarifies that existing legal nonconforming structures may continue. This addresses a concern raised during comprehensive updates about the legal rights of nonconforming structures.

§ (2)(b) provides a general rule for expansions of nonconforming structures. The amendments clarify that enlargement or expansions should meet applicable provisions of the SMP. (Many comprehensively updated SMPs created specific allowances for expansion of nonconforming structures, embedded within specific use regulations.) It also clarifies a general rule that a variance would be required for expansions that increase the nonconformity if the SMP does not provide a specific allowance.

§ (2)(c) was not amended from the previous rule. It retains the existing authorization for expansions of preferred single-family residences or addition of appurtenances through a conditional use permit.

§ (2)(f) adds a qualifier to a previous provision that required any nonconforming structure that is moved any distance to meet all applicable provisions of the SMP. This provision was potentially a disincentive to move structures away from the shoreline in circumstance where all dimensional standards (e.g., buffer width) could not be met because of existing constraints (e.g., lot width, presence of a road). The proposed change requires a nonconforming structure that is moved to move "as far as practical" from the shoreline. This allows for the realities of any given parcel to be taken into account.

§ (2)(g) extends the time period for obtaining permits to replace damaged development from 6 months to 2 years. Even in normal circumstances applications can take 6 months to prepare, so a longer timeframe is warranted where a development has been damaged.

§ 3. Nonconforming uses

§ (3)(a) preserves the existing regulation which clarifies that existing nonconforming uses may continue.

§ (3)(b) sets out the general rule that nonconforming uses shall not be enlarged or expanded without a CUP, unless more specific regulations in the SMP apply.

§ (3)(c) modified an existing rule that said nonconforming rights expire if the use is discontinued for 12 months, by clarifying the nonconforming uses may be re-established through a CUP. It was also modified to clarify that water-dependent uses that are episodically dormant or include phased or rotational operations should not be considered “discontinued.”

Note the previous WAC 173-27-080(4) was deleted in its entirety. The rule had said if an updated SMP requires a CUP for an existing use, that use should be considered a nonconforming use. The previous rule was deleted because those uses should be treated no differently from other existing uses.

§ 4. Nonconforming lots

The only change was to move the definition into the definition section.

Example language

Local governments may incorporate the language from the revised rule either directly into their SMP, or by reference. If the provisions are incorporated directly they may be modified or tailored.

(1) Definitions

(a) "Nonconforming use" means an existing shoreline use that was lawfully established prior to the effective date of the act or the applicable master program, but which does not conform to present use regulations due to subsequent changes to the master program.

(b) “Nonconforming development” or “nonconforming structure” means an existing structure that was lawfully constructed at the time it was built but is no longer fully consistent with present regulations such as setbacks, buffers or yards; area; bulk; height or density standards due to subsequent changes to the master program.

(c) “Nonconforming lot” means a lot that met dimensional requirements of the applicable master program at the time of its establishment but now contains less than the required width, depth or area due to subsequent changes to the master program.

(2) Nonconforming structures

(a) Structures that were legally established and are used for a conforming use but are nonconforming with regard to setbacks, buffers or yards; area; bulk; height or density may continue as legal nonconforming structures and may be maintained and repaired.

(b) Nonconforming structures may be enlarged or expanded provided that said enlargement meets the applicable provisions of the master program. In the absence of other more specific regulations, proposed expansion shall not increase the extent of nonconformity by further encroaching upon or extending into areas where

construction would not be allowed for new structures, unless a shoreline variance permit is obtained.

(c) Nonconforming single-family residences that are located landward of the ordinary high water mark may be enlarged or expanded in conformance with applicable bulk and dimensional standards by the addition of space to the main structure or by the addition of normal appurtenances as defined in WAC 173-27-040 (2)(g) upon approval of a conditional use permit.

(d) A structure for which a variance has been issued shall be considered a legal nonconforming structure and the requirements of this section shall apply as they apply to preexisting nonconformities.

(e) In the absence of other more specific regulations, a structure which is being or has been used for a nonconforming use may be used for a different nonconforming use only upon the approval of a conditional use permit. A conditional use permit may be approved only upon a finding that:

(i) No reasonable alternative conforming use is practical; and

(ii) The proposed use will be at least as consistent with the policies and provisions of the act and the master program and as compatible with the uses in the area as the preexisting use.

In addition, such conditions may be attached to the permit as are deemed necessary to assure compliance with the above findings, the requirements of the master program and the Shoreline Management Act and to assure that the use will not become a nuisance or a hazard.

(f) A nonconforming structure which is moved any distance must be brought as closely as practicable into conformance with the applicable master program and the act.

(g) If a nonconforming development is damaged to an extent not exceeding seventy-five percent of the replacement cost of the original development, it may be reconstructed to those configurations existing immediately prior to the time the development was damaged, provided that application is made for the permits necessary to restore the development within two years of the date the damage occurred.

(3) Nonconforming uses

(a) Uses that were legally established and are nonconforming with regard to the use regulations of the master program may continue as legal nonconforming uses.

(b) In the absence of other more specific regulations in the master program, such uses shall not be enlarged or expanded, except upon approval of a conditional use permit.

(c) If a nonconforming use is discontinued for twelve consecutive months or for twelve months during any two-year period, the nonconforming rights shall expire and

any subsequent use shall be conforming unless re-establishment of the use is authorized through a conditional use permit which must be applied for within the two-year period. Water-dependent uses should not be considered discontinued when they are inactive due to dormancy, or where the use includes phased or rotational operations as part of typical operations. A use authorized pursuant to subsection (2)(e) of this section shall be considered a conforming use for purposes of this section.

(4) Nonconforming lot

A nonconforming lot may be developed if permitted by other land use regulations of the local government and so long as such development conforms to all other requirements of the applicable master program and the act.

2017 h. Periodic reviews

Ecology adopted rule amendments to clarify the scope and process for conducting periodic reviews of SMPs required by RCW 90.58.080(4).

Rule: WAC [173-26-090](#), effective 9/7/2017.

Review considerations

This rule describes the process local governments must follow when conducting periodic reviews. It is not necessary to include any of these new provisions in local SMPs – they provide direction on how to undertake the periodic review process. If an SMP describes the periodic review scope and procedures, consider reviewing that section of code for consistency with the periodic review rule.

Example language

If an SMP includes a description of periodic review procedures, and would like to add further clarification, one option would be to cite Ecology's WAC by reference. For example:

(X) The CITY/COUNTY will conduct the periodic review process consistent with requirements of RCW 90.58.080 and WAC 173-26-090.

2017 i. Optional SMP amendment process

This new rule establishes an optional SMP amendment process that allows for a shared local/state public comment period for efficiency.

Rule: WAC [173-26-104](#), effective 9/7/2017.

Review considerations

Local governments that want to use these provisions should review local amendment procedures to ensure there are no impediments to using this new option. (These provisions may be contained either in the SMP or elsewhere in the land use code.) A key consideration is coordinating with Ecology on the public comment period, as Ecology needs to send notice to the state interested parties list at the same time as the local governments notice. Note that the optional process also asks local governments to send a draft to Ecology for an initial determination before final local adoption. This has been a common practice on an informal basis for many years and can be done without amending the SMP.

2017 j. Submittal to Ecology of proposed SMP amendments

Ecology made a few minor amendments to WAC 173-26-110, the rule that describes what local governments provide to Ecology for final review of SMP amendments. The rule clarifies that submittals may be in digital form, and deleted the requirement to send two paper copies. It clarified that the submittal should include a summary of amendments made in response to public comments. It also clarified that local governments will submit their final periodic review checklist when taking action on the periodic review.

NOTE: Ecology also made a few housekeeping amendments to WAC 173-26-120, which describes the state process for reviewing SMPs. Those amendments should not trigger any amendments to SMPs. The one exception might be the clarification from statute that SMPs are effective 14 days after Ecology's approval letter - this was adopted by the Legislature as described under 2010 amendments.

Rule: WAC [173-26-110](#), WAC [173-26-120](#), effective 9/7/2017.

Review considerations

If a local SMP includes a description of the SMP submittal process, they should review the amendments for consistency.

2016

2016 a. Americans with Disabilities Act permit exemption

The legislature created a new shoreline permit exemption in 2016. Retrofitting an existing structure does not require a Substantial Development Permit (SDP) if the project is undertaken to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act or otherwise provide physical access to a structure by individuals with disabilities. The amended law was incorporated into Ecology's rule in 2017.

Bill: [SHB 2847](#), effective 6/9/2016. RCW [90.58.030](#)(3)(e)(xiii), WAC 173-27-040(2)(q).

Review considerations

This SMA amendment applied on its effective date, regardless of whether the exemption is specifically listed in the SMP. For SMPs that simply cite the RCW list of exemption, no change is needed.

For SMPs that spell out all the statutory exemptions, add the new exemption to the list.

Example language

Local governments may incorporate the revised rule directly into exemption language:

(xx) The external or internal retrofitting of an existing structure with the exclusive purpose of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.) or to otherwise provide physical access to the structure by individuals with disabilities.

2016 b. Wetlands critical areas guidance

Ecology published a revised *Wetlands Guidance for Critical Areas Ordinance Updates* in 2016. The new guidebook replaces the former “Guidance for Small Cities.” There are separate versions for Eastern and Western Washington. Ecology’s rule directs local governments to consult the department’s technical guidance documents on wetlands. The primary changes in this document are related to the new 2014 Washington state wetland rating system. Ecology’s 2003 rule directs local governments to use either the state wetland rating system, or to develop their own scientifically based method for categorizing wetlands.

Other changes addressed include: addition of a buffer table to be used if minimizing measures are not used; emphasis on the requirement to provide wildlife corridors where possible in exchange for buffer reduction; guidance on using wetlands for stormwater management facilities; revisions to exemptions for small wetlands; recommended language addressing agricultural activities in non-VSP jurisdictions; and addition of recent mitigation documents and guidance.

Rule: WAC [173-26-221\(2\)\(c\)\(i\)\(A\) and \(B\)](#); Guidance update: [Wetlands guidance document, June 2016](#); [2014 Wetland rating system manuals](#).

Review considerations

The updated wetlands guidance is directed at updating critical areas ordinances (CAOs). The key provision is the updates to the 2014 Wetland Rating System. Other guidance in the 2016 guidance document may also be applicable. How this guidance applies to individual local government will vary widely depending on how critical areas are addressed in the SMP. Consult Ecology’s regional planner for tailored assistance on potential SMP wetland revisions.

2015

2015 a. 90-day target for local review for WSDOT project

The Legislature adopted a 90-day target for local review of Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) projects. The law also allows WSDOT projects that address safety risks to begin 21 days after the date of filing if the project will achieve no net loss of ecological functions.

Bill: [ESSB 5994](#), effective 7/6/2015. Laws: [RCW 47.01.485](#); [RCW 90.58.140](#). Rule: WAC [173-27-125](#)

Review considerations

It is not necessary to include these provisions in SMPs, but a reference could help ensure SMPs are implemented consistent with the statute.

Example language

If a local governments chooses to incorporate this legislative direction into an SMP, one option is to use the following language from the revised rule.

(XX) Special procedures for WSDOT projects.

(i) Permit review time for projects on a state highway. Pursuant to RCW 47.01.485, the Legislature established a target of 90 days review time for local governments.

(ii) Optional process allowing construction to commence twenty-one days after date of filing. Pursuant to RCW 90.58.140, Washington State Department of Transportation projects that address significant public safety risks may begin twenty-one days after the date of filing if all components of the project will achieve no net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

2014

2014 a. Replacement docks on lakes and rivers

The Legislature revised the cost threshold for requiring a Substantial Development Permit (SDP) for replacement docks on lakes and rivers. The fair market value for purposes of an SDP exemption for a dock in fresh water is raised to \$20,000 (from \$10,000) in certain circumstances. To clarify how the new rule is different, here are the changes from the previous permit exemption law:

“This exception applies if either: (i) In salt waters, the fair market value of the dock does not exceed two thousand five hundred dollars; or (ii) In fresh waters the fair market value of the dock does not exceed: (A) twenty thousand dollars for docks that are constructed to replace existing docks, are of equal or lesser square footage than the existing dock being replaced; or (B) ten thousand dollars but for all other docks constructed in fresh waters. However, if subsequent construction having a fair market value exceeding two thousand five hundred dollars occurs within five years of completion of the prior construction, and the combined fair market value of the subsequent and prior construction exceeds the amount specified above, the subsequent construction shall be considered a substantial development for the purpose of this chapter.”

NOTE: The Legislature also directed to OFM the dollar thresholds after July 2018. Ecology will revise the checklist and this guidance document to reflect this change when the new number is effective.

Bill: [SHB 1090](#), effective 6/12/2014. RCW [90.58.030\(3\)\(e\)](#). Rule WAC [173-27-040\(2\)\(h\)](#).

Review considerations

This SMA amendment applied on its effective date, regardless of whether the exemption is specifically listed in the SMP. If an SMP simply cites the RCW for lists of exemption, no change is needed.

If an SMP repeats the WAC, modify the exemption section for consistency.

Example language

The new rule language could be incorporated directly into the SMP section on permit exemptions. For example:

(XX) Construction of a dock, including a community dock, designed for pleasure craft only, for the private noncommercial use of the owner, lessee, or contract purchaser of single-family and multiple-family residences. A dock is a landing and moorage facility for watercraft and does not include recreational decks, storage facilities or other appurtenances. This exception applies if either:

(i) In salt waters, the fair market value of the dock does not exceed two thousand five hundred dollars; or

(ii) In fresh waters the fair market value of the dock does not exceed:

(A) twenty thousand dollars for docks that are constructed to replace existing docks, are of equal or lesser square footage than the existing dock being replaced; or

(B) Ten thousand dollars for all other docks constructed in fresh waters.

However, if subsequent construction occurs within five years of completion of the prior construction, and the combined fair market value of the subsequent and prior construction exceeds the amount specified above, the subsequent construction shall be considered a substantial development for the purpose of this chapter.

2014 b. Floating on-water residences

The Legislature created a new definition and policy for “floating on-water residences (FOWRs).” FOWRs that meet the new definition and were legally established before 7/1/2014 shall be considered a conforming use, and must be accommodated through SMP regulations that will not effectively preclude maintenance, repair, replacement, and remodeling. This bill responded to concerns raised in Seattle regarding preservation of the existing floating home community. *(See provisions for “floating homes” under 2011 statutes. The statutes are similar but slightly different.)*

Bill: [ESSB 6450](#) effective 6/12/2014. Law: [RCW 90.58.270](#). Rules: Definition: [WAC 173-26-030\(3\)\(d\)\(18\)](#); Use regulation: WAC [173-26-241\(3\)\(j\)](#).

Review considerations

If a jurisdiction has no existing FOWRs, no amendments are needed.

If a jurisdiction has existing FOWRs, the SMP should include a reference to the statute, or a definition consistent with the statute, and a policy or regulation that clarifies the legal status of FOWRs. If the jurisdiction's SMP specifically regulates FOWRs, then the regulations should be reviewed to make sure they appropriately recognize on-going maintenance of FOWR. Local governments may apply reasonable SMP regulations, permit conditions, or mitigation that will not effectively preclude maintenance, repair, replacement, and remodeling of existing floating on-water residences and their moorages by rendering these actions impracticable.

Example language

The new statutory definition can be included in the definition section or in the Residential Use section of the SMP together with the new policy clarification. SMPs should already include a prohibition on establishment of new overwater residences, as the Legislative amendments did not change this long-standing policy. Additional policies or general development standards specific to floating on-water residence can be added if existing floating on-water residences will be managed by a local SMP.

An example of how an SMP could incorporate the new statute in the context of the existing prohibition on new floating homes:

(XX) “Floating on-water residence” means any floating structure other than a floating home, as defined by this chapter: (a) that is designed or used primarily as a residence on the water and has detachable utilities; and (b) whose owner or primary occupant has held an ownership interest in space in a marina, or has held a lease or sublease to use space in a marina, since a date prior to July 1, 2014.

(XX) New over-water residential developments are prohibited. Existing floating on-water residences legally established and moored within a marina within the [COUNTY/CITY] prior to July 1, 2014 are considered a conforming use and should be accommodated through reasonable permit conditions, or mitigation that will not effectively preclude maintenance, repair, replacement, and remodeling of existing floating on-water residences and their moorages by rendering these actions impracticable.

2012

2012 a. SMP appeal procedures

The Legislature amended the SMA to clarify SMP appeal procedures. These provisions are not about appeals of individual permits. They describe the appeal pathway after Ecology’s approval of a Shoreline Master Program. For jurisdictions “fully planning” under GMA, Ecology’s approval of an SMP is to the Growth Management Hearings Boards. For jurisdictions “partially planning” (Critical Areas and Resource Lands only), appeals are to the Shorelines Hearings Board.

Bill: [EHB 2671](#), effective 6/7/2012. Law: RCW [90.58.190](#)

Review considerations

This law should not affect most SMPs, which do not typically outline the SMP appeal process. If an SMP does describe the appeal steps for amendments to shoreline master programs, it should be reviewed for consistency with RCW 90.58.190.

2011

2011 a. Federal wetlands delineation manual

Ecology repealed the State Delineation Manual rule and replaced it with a rule requiring that identification of wetlands and delineation of their boundaries shall be done in accordance with the approved federal wetland delineation manual and applicable regional supplements.

Rule: WAC [173-22-035](#), effective 3/14/2011. Guidance: [Wetland Delineation Manual guidance](#).

Review considerations

All SMPs should use language from the new WAC because the state delineation manual rule has been repealed. Consult [Ecology’s website for wetland delineation manual guidance](#).

Example language

The following language should be included in the applicable section of the SMP (or the applicable critical areas code if wetland delineation is addressed in a CAO adopted by reference):

Identification of wetlands and delineation of their boundaries shall be done in accordance with the approved federal wetland delineation manual and applicable regional supplements.

2011 b. Geoduck aquaculture

Ecology adopted extensive new rules for new commercial geoduck aquaculture. This rule was adopted with advice from a stakeholder committee consistent with Legislative requirements of [RCW 43.21A.681](#).

Rules: WAC [173-26-020\(2\)](#); WAC [173-26-241\(3\)\(b\)](#), effective 3/14/2011.

Review considerations

If a local government has no saltwater shorelines, no SMP amendments are needed.

If a local government has saltwater shorelines, aquaculture regulations should be reviewed for consistency with the geoduck rules. Consult Ecology regional planner for recommendations.

Review for the following elements:

Review the **definition** of "aquaculture," to clarify it does not include wild geoduck harvest.

Review **siting considerations** to ensure commercial geoduck aquaculture is only allowed where sediments, topography, land and water access support geoduck aquaculture operations without significant clearing or grading.

Review **permit requirements**:

- Ensure that planting, growing, and harvesting of farm-raised geoducks requires a substantial development permit if a specific project or practice causes substantial interference with normal public use of the surface waters, but not otherwise. (The source of this provision was [Attorney General Opinion 2007 No. 1](#).) This provision clarifies that even though new geoduck operations require a CUP, in some cases they may also need an SDP but only if the project causes substantial interference with public access or passage.
- Ensure that local permit process provides public notice to all property owners within 300 feet of the proposed project boundary, and notice to tribes with usual and accustomed fishing rights to the area.
- The SMP should minimize redundancy between federal, state and local commercial geoduck aquaculture permit application requirements. Measures to consider include accepting documentation that has been submitted to other permitting agencies, and using permit applications that mirror federal or state permit applications (such as the JARPA form). Permit application requirements should be reviewed to ensure they include the following:
 - A narrative description and timeline for all anticipated geoduck planting and harvesting activities,

- A baseline ecological survey of the proposed site to allow consideration of the ecological effects,
- Measures to achieve no net loss of ecological functions consistent with the mitigation sequence described in Ecology rules [WAC- 173-26-201 (2)(e)], and
- A description of management practices that address impacts from mooring, parking, noise, lights, litter, and other activities associated with geoduck planting and harvesting operations.
- Ensure new geoduck aquaculture projects require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). However, local governments have discretion to determine whether to require a CUP for projects that convert existing non-geoduck aquaculture to geoduck aquaculture. Review for the following:
 - Subsequent cycles of planting and harvest shall not require a new CUP.
 - Applicants may submit a single CUP for multiple sites within an inlet, bay or other defined feature, as long as all sites are under control of the same applicant and within the same local government jurisdiction.
 - Review permit requirements to ensure the SMP allows work during low tides. SMP have discretion to require limits and conditions to reduce impacts, such as noise and lighting, to adjacent existing uses.
 - Local governments should establish monitoring and reporting requirements necessary to verify that geoduck aquaculture operations are in compliance with shoreline limits and conditions set forth in CUPs and to support cumulative impacts analysis.
 - Conditional use permits should be reviewed using the best scientific and technical information available.
 - Review requirements to apply best management practices to accomplish the intent of limits and conditions.
 - Local governments should review the detailed considerations found in WAC 173-26-241(3)(b)(iv)(L)(I)-(XII).

2011 c. Floating homes

The Legislature declared floating homes permitted or legally established prior to January 1, 2011, must be classified as a "conforming preferred use." SMPs may only impose reasonable conditions and mitigation that will not effectively preclude maintenance, repair, replacement, and remodeling of existing floating homes and floating home moorages by rendering these actions impracticable. The law includes a definition of "floating homes." This bill responded to concerns raised by the Seattle floating home community regarding preservation of historic floating homes.

Bill: [SHB 1783](#), effective 7/22/2011. RCW [90.58.270](#)(5 and 6). Rules: Definition: WAC [173-26-030\(3\)\(d\)\(17\)](#); Use regulation: WAC [173-26-241\(3\)\(j\)](#).

Review considerations

Local governments without floating homes need not amend their SMP to address this statute.

Jurisdictions with floating homes must include a definition consistent with the statute, and a policy or regulation that clarifies the legal status of floating homes. In addition, regulations that address floating homes should be reviewed to ensure the SMP only imposes reasonable conditions and mitigation that

will not effectively preclude maintenance, repair, replacement, and remodeling of existing floating homes and floating home moorages by rendering these actions impracticable.

Example language

The example definition can be included in the definition section or in the Residential Use section with the example policy statement. Note that SMPs should already include a prohibition on establishment of new overwater residences, as the Legislative amendments did not change this long-standing policy. Additional policies or general development standards specific to floating homes can be added if existing floating homes will be managed by a local SMP.

(XX) "Floating home" means a single-family dwelling unit constructed on a float, that is moored, anchored, or otherwise secured in waters, and is not a vessel, even though it may be capable of being towed.

(XXI) New over-water residences are not a preferred use and should be prohibited.

(XXII) A floating home permitted or legally established prior to January 1, 2011 is considered a conforming preferred use. "Conforming preferred use" means that applicable development and shoreline master program regulations may only impose reasonable conditions and mitigation that will not effectively preclude maintenance, repair, replacement, and remodeling of existing floating homes and floating home moorages by rendering these actions impracticable. Floating homes should be accommodated to allow improvements associated with life safety matters and property rights to be addressed provided that any expansion of existing communities is the minimum necessary to assure consistency with constitutional and other legal limitations that protect private property.

2011 d. Option to classify existing structures as conforming

The Legislature created a new option: SMPs amended after September 1, 2011 may classify legally established residential structures as conforming, even if they do not meet updated standards for setbacks, buffers, or yards; area; bulk; height; or density. Redevelopment, expansion and replacement is allowed, so long as it is consistent with the local SMP and No Net Loss requirements. Appurtenant structures are included; bulkheads and other shoreline modifications and over-water structures are excluded.

Bill: [SSB 5451](#), effective 7/22/2011. RCW [90.58.620](#). Rule: WAC 173-26-241(3)(j).

Review considerations

This law is optional. It is one way local government can address existing development. Local governments may also address existing structures by clarifying the existing rights and allowances for nonconforming use and development without changing the legal status.

2010

2010 a. Growth Management Act – Shoreline Management Act clarifications

Both the GMA and SMA were amended to resolve differing and occasionally contrary legal interpretations that had been issued at that time regarding the relationship between the laws.

The law included a number of provisions that clarified the applicability of SMA provisions during the interim period before Ecology approved a comprehensively updated SMP that are no longer applicable. For example, RCW 36.70A.480 clarifies that critical area regulations adopted under GMA apply within shorelines until Ecology approves a comprehensive SMP update. It also created special GMA provisions for existing “grandfathered” uses in the shoreline. The amendments clarified that critical areas in shorelines must be regulated to “assure no net loss of shoreline ecological function” as provided in Ecology’s SMP Guidelines rules. This provision applies to Ecology’s test for review of SMP amendments. The Legislature also amended the effective date for SMP amendments. The effective date is fourteen days from the date of Ecology’s written notice of final action to the local government stating Ecology has approved or rejected the proposed SMP.

Bill: [EHB 1653](#), effective 3/18/2010. Laws: RCW [90.58.610](#); RCW [36.70A.480](#). Rule: WAC [173-26-221\(2\)\(a\)](#).

Review considerations

The statutory amendments were effective immediately upon adoption independent of local SMPs. Jurisdictions with comprehensive SMP updates that were adopted before this law went into effect may consider reviewing how their SMP address critical areas. Key considerations include clarifying what critical area provisions are adopted by reference and whether or not exclusions apply. Contact Ecology’s regional planner for assistance.

If an SMP describes the “effective date” of SMP amendments, it should be revised to clarify SMPs are effective 14 days from Ecology’s written notice of final action.

2009

2009 a. Shoreline restoration projects within a UGA

The Legislature created new “relief” procedures for instances in which a shoreline restoration project within an Urban Growth Area creates a shift in Ordinary High Water Mark, and this shift creates a hardship for properties subject to new or extra regulation. The Legislature was responding to concerns that SMP regulations on the Duwamish River in Seattle and other urban rivers have in some cases stopped habitat restoration projects or resulted in a redesign that reduced the restoration benefits.

In most locations, the land area where shoreline regulations apply is measured 200 feet landward from the Ordinary High Water Mark. The new law could be applied in cases where a habitat restoration projects changes the location of the ordinary high water mark and therefore shifts the 200-foot area where shoreline regulations apply. Property owners may request relief from shoreline regulations

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triggered by a restoration project, if the regulations would “preclude or interfere with use of the property permitted by local development regulations, thus presenting a hardship to the project proponent.”

Applications for relief are filed with the local government as part of a required permit such as a shoreline permit (or a building permit if no shoreline permit is required). The request must meet the criteria outlined in the Act. After local approval, the request is submitted to Ecology for review and approval. A 20-day public notice period is required prior to Ecology’s decision, unless the relief issue is already addressed in an SMP. Ecology must act within 30 days of the close of the public notice period or within 30 days of receipt of the proposal if public notice is not required.

Bill: [HB 2199](#), effective 7/26/2009. RCW [90.58.580](#). Rule: WAC [173-27-215](#)

Review considerations

Local governments may want to include this option in local SMPs – though the process may be used even if the provision is not in the SMP.

Example language

Option 1. Adopt Ecology rule by reference. If a local government elects to incorporate Ecology’s rule by reference, a simple reference to the rules could be inserted into an applicable section of SMP code. For example:

(X) The [COUNTY/CITY] may grant relief from shoreline master program development standards and use regulations resulting from shoreline restoration projects within urban growth areas consistent with criteria and procedures in WAC 173-27-215.

Option 2. Incorporate Ecology’s rule into an SMP. A more elaborate option is to incorporate the rule provisions into their SMP. For example:

(X) Shoreline restoration projects—relief from shoreline master program development standards and use regulations.

(1) Purpose of section. This section incorporates statutory direction from RCW 90.58.580. In adopting RCW 90.58.580, the legislature found that restoration of degraded shoreline conditions is important to the ecological function of our waters. However, restoration projects that shift the location of the shoreline can inadvertently create hardships for property owners, particularly in urban areas. Hardship may occur when a shoreline restoration project shifts Shoreline Management Act regulations into areas that had not previously been regulated under the act or shifts the location of required shoreline buffers. The intent of this section is to provide relief to property owners in such cases, while protecting the viability of shoreline restoration projects.

(2) Conditions and criteria for providing relief. The [COUNTY/CITY] may grant relief from shoreline master program development standards and use regulations within urban growth areas when the following apply:

(a) A shoreline restoration project causes or would cause a landward shift in the ordinary high water mark, resulting in the following:

- (i) Land that had not been regulated under this chapter prior to construction of the restoration project is brought under shoreline jurisdiction; or
- (ii) Additional regulatory requirements apply due to a landward shift in required shoreline buffers or other regulations of the applicable shoreline master program; and
- (iii) Application of shoreline master program regulations would preclude or interfere with use of the property permitted by local development regulations, thus presenting a hardship to the project proponent;

(b) The proposed relief meets the following criteria:

- (i) The proposed relief is the minimum necessary to relieve the hardship;
- (ii) After granting the proposed relief, there is net environmental benefit from the restoration project;
- (iii) Granting the proposed relief is consistent with the objectives of the shoreline restoration project and consistent with the shoreline master program; and
- (iv) Where a shoreline restoration project is created as mitigation to obtain a development permit, the project proponent required to perform the mitigation is not eligible for relief under this section; and

(c) The application for relief must be submitted to the department of Ecology for written approval or disapproval. This review must occur during Ecology's normal review of a shoreline substantial development permit, conditional use permit, or variance. If no such permit is required, then Ecology shall conduct its review when [COUNTY/CITY] provides a copy of a complete application and all supporting information necessary to conduct the review.

(i) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (3) of this section, Ecology shall provide at least twenty days notice to parties that have indicated interest to Ecology in reviewing applications for relief under this section, and post the notice on its web site.

(ii) Ecology shall act within thirty calendar days of the close of the public notice period, or within thirty days of receipt of the proposal from [COUNTY/CITY] if additional public notice is not required.

(3) The public notice requirements of subsection (2)(c) of this section do not apply if the relevant shoreline restoration project was included in the [COUNTY/CITY] shoreline master program, provided:

- (a) The restoration plan has been approved by Ecology under applicable shoreline master program guidelines;
- (b) The shoreline restoration project is specifically identified in the shoreline master program or restoration plan or is located along a shoreline reach identified in the shoreline master program or restoration plan as appropriate for granting relief from shoreline regulations; and
- (c) The shoreline master program or restoration plan includes policies addressing the nature of the relief and why, when, and how it would be applied.
- (4) A substantial development permit is not required on land within urban growth areas as defined in RCW 36.70A.030 that is brought under shoreline jurisdiction due to a shoreline restoration project creating a landward shift in the ordinary high water mark.
- (5) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.
- (6) For the purposes of this subsection, "Shoreline restoration project" means a project designed to restore impaired ecological function of a shoreline.

2009 b. Wetland mitigation banks

Pursuant to RCW 90.84, Ecology adopted a rule for certifying wetland mitigation banks. The purpose of the rules is to encourage banking by providing an efficient, predictable statewide framework for the certification and operation of environmentally sound banks. The goal of the rule is to (a) Provide timely review of bank proposals; (b) Establish coordination among state, local, tribal, and federal agencies involved in the certification of banks; (c) Ensure consistency with existing federal mitigation rules; and (d) Provide incentives to encourage bank sponsors (sponsors) to locate and design banks that provide the greatest ecological benefits.

The extensive rule includes an overview section, outlines the certification process, describes how to establish and operate banks and use bank credits, establishes certification compliance requirements, describes the roles of the parties involved in a bank, and establishes an appeals process.

Law: [RCW 90.84](#). Rule: [WAC 173-700](#), effective 10/4/2009, WAC [173-26-221\(2\)\(c\)\(i\)\(F\)](#). Guidance: Ecology webpage on [wetland mitigation banks](#).

Review considerations

Ecology recommends local governments include SMP provision authorizing use of mitigation banks.

Example language

It is not necessary to adopt the contents of the state rule into SMPs. If mitigation banking is not already allowed in a CAO adopted by reference, a simple statement could be incorporated into applicable SMP section addressing wetlands compensatory mitigation:

- (x) Credits from a certified mitigation bank may be used to compensate for unavoidable impacts.

2009 c. Moratoria authority

This law adds moratoria authority and procedures to the SMA, including a maximum duration of 18 months at the local level, plus a six-month review period at Ecology for a local Shoreline Master Program amendment that is subject to a moratorium.

Review considerations

The moratoria procedures may be included in an SMP but it is not necessary – local governments can simply rely on the statute or adopt these provisions into other ordinances. Or local governments may incorporate statutory requirements into the SMP or other development regulations if desired, as long as they are consistent with the statute.

Bill: [HB 1379](#), effective 7/26/2009. Law: RCW [90.58.590](#). Rule: WAC [173-27-085](#)

Example language

If a local government elects to address moratoria authority, the following incorporates RCW 90.58.590:

(X) Moratoria authority and requirements

(1) [COUNTY/CITY] has authority to adopting a moratorium control or other interim control on development under RCW 90.58.590.

(2) Before adopting the moratorium must:

(i) Hold a public hearing on the moratorium or control;

(ii) Adopt detailed findings of fact that include, but are not limited to justifications for the proposed or adopted actions and explanations of the desired and likely outcomes;

(iii) Notify the department of Ecology of the moratorium or control immediately after its adoption. The notification must specify the time, place, and date of any public hearing.

(b) The public hearing must be held within sixty days of the adoption of the moratorium or control.

(3) A moratorium or control adopted under this section may be effective for up to six months if a detailed work plan for remedying the issues and circumstances necessitating the moratorium or control is developed and made available for public review.

(4) A moratorium or control may be renewed for one or more six-month period if [COUNTY/CITY] complies with the requirements in subsection (2) above before each renewal.

2007

2007 a. Options for defining floodway

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The Legislature clarified options for defining "floodway" as either the area that has been established in Federal Emergency Management Agency maps, or the floodway criteria set in the SMA. The "SMA floodway" described in the SMA is essentially a biological definition, unlike the FEMA floodway which is derived from a model.

Bill: [HB 1413](#), effective 7/22/2007. Law: RCW [90.58.030](#).

Review considerations

Local governments should review their definition of "floodway" for consistency with the two options under this statute.

Example language

Option 1. If a local government elects to use FEMA maps to define the floodway, Ecology recommends the SMP include the following definition:

"Floodway" means the area that has been established in effective federal emergency management agency flood insurance rate maps or floodway maps. The floodway does not include lands that can reasonably be expected to be protected from flood waters by flood control devices maintained by or maintained under license from the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state.

The word "established" in this suggested definition is consistent with the SMA definition and "effective" indicates that the map is FEMA's approved FIRM – not a preliminary or draft map – and also takes into account potential future changes to the maps. Reference to a specific dated version of the FIRM is not required.

Option 2. If the SMA floodway is used, the definition in the SMP should be consistent with RCW 90.58.030(2)(b)(ii).

The SMA floodway "...consists of those portions of a river valley lying streamward from the outer limits of a watercourse upon which flood waters are carried during periods of flooding that occur with reasonable regularity, although not necessarily annually, said floodway being identified, under normal condition, by changes in surface soil conditions or changes in types or quality of vegetative ground cover condition, topography, or other indicators of flooding that occurs with reasonable regularity, although not necessarily annually."

2007 b. List and map of streams and lakes

These rule amendments clarify that comprehensively updated SMPs shall include a list and map of streams and lakes that are in shoreline jurisdiction. (*The SMP list and map will then supersede the list in Ecology rules*). The amendments also clarify that if a stream segment or lake is subsequently discovered to meet the SMA criteria, the SMP shall be amended within three years of the discovery.

Rules: WACs [173-18-044](#); [173-18-046](#); [173-20-044](#); [173-20-046](#); and [173-22-050](#), effective 2/2/2007

Review considerations

If a jurisdiction has identified any new streams or lakes since the comprehensive update, the lists and maps should be updated.

2007 c. Fish habitat enhancement projects

Ecology's rule listing statutory exemptions from the requirement for an SDP was amended to include fish habitat enhancement projects that conform to the provisions of [RCW 77.55.181](#).

Review considerations

This SMA amendment applied on its effective date, regardless of whether the exemption is specifically listed in the SMP.

For SMPs that simply cite the RCW list of exemptions, no change is needed. For SMPs that list the exemptions in detail, review to ensure fish habitat enhancement projects are include.

Rule: WAC [173-27-040\(2\)\(p\)](#), effective 2/2/2007.

Example language

SMPs can include the lengthy exemption language directly from WAC 173-27-040, or may include a simple reference to the relevant Ecology WAC and WDFW statute. For example:

(x) Consistent with WAC 173-27-040, a public or private project designed to improve fish or wildlife habitat or fish passage, that conforms to the provisions of RCW [77.55.181](#)

Other review elements

In addition to ensuring consistency with changes to state laws and rules, local governments will review changes to their comprehensive plan or development regulations since their last SMP amendment and revise the SMP for internal consistency, where necessary. For example, consider zoning code amendments, annexations of shoreline areas, and amendments to critical area regulations.

Local governments should also incorporate changes deemed necessary to address changing local circumstances, new information or improved data. This is an intentionally broad review category and circumstances will vary widely. For example, an issue that might trigger a close review is a levee setback project or natural channel migration that brought significant new areas into shoreline jurisdiction.

Local governments may also review implementation challenges that have arisen since the comprehensive SMP update. Consider insights learned from permit review that could improve the efficiency or effectiveness of the SMP. Consider reviewing Administrative Interpretations that have been issued as a potential source of ideas to clarify the SMP.

The table below is one simple option for documenting these kinds of revisions. This table is likely too simplistic for more complex amendments. This table may be revised and modified as needed, or local governments may present information in whatever format makes sense. See WAC 173-26-090(3)(b)(i).

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SMP section	Summary of change	Review	Action

Example checklist

The following is an example checklist for a hypothetical City that comprehensively updated its SMP in 2015. This example illustrates how a checklist might look after final review and action at the end of the review process.

Review: The Review column is used at the beginning of the review process to document how the item applies to the city's SMP to determine if local amendments are needed to maintain compliance. In some cases the review may be iterative, if a review is extensive. This example checklist illustrates how the review column might be written at the end of the review process to capture the final city finding and recommendation for action.

Action: The Action column documents the City's final action, indicating a citation to where the SMP code addresses applicable amended laws, or indicates where no action is needed.

Row	Summary of change	Review	Action
2017			
a.	OFM adjusted the cost threshold for substantial development to \$7,047.	2015 SMP includes reference to previous \$6,416 cost threshold.	X.2.14: definition of Substantial Development amending SDP cost threshold to new inflation-adjusted amount of \$7,047 <i>NOTE:</i> City website and permit application forms were revised with new cost thresholds.
b.	Ecology permit rules clarified the definition of "development" does not include dismantling or removing structures.	2015 SMP does not clarify that removing structures does not constitute "development." This issue has come up at the counter frequently enough that staff recommend adding this optional clarification to the SMP.	X.2.10: amended definition of development to include Ecology example code.
c.	Ecology adopted rules clarifying exceptions to local review under the SMA.	Ecology's revised rule addressing exceptions incorporated a 2015 Legislative statutory exceptions for WSDOT projects that went into effect after the 2015 SMP was approved. Other statutory exceptions in WAC 173-27-044 and WAC 173-27-045 were in the SMP but included among the list of permit-exemptions.	X.2.15: statutory exceptions moved from list of permit exemptions to new section. X.2.17: Created new section consolidating all exceptions into new section based on Ecology example code.

Row	Summary of change	Review	Action
d.	Ecology amended rules clarifying permit filing procedures consistent with a 2011 statute.	2015 SMP describes filing procedures for permit by stating “permits shall be filed with Department of Ecology pursuant to WAC 173-27-130.” Ecology amendments apply to the city, but no local amendments are needed.	N/A. Note: Administrator amended the <i>SMP Staff Manual</i> to clarify concurrent filing of SDPs, CUPs and Variances.
e.	Ecology amended forestry use regulations to clarify that forest practices that only involves timber cutting are not SMA “developments” and do not require SDPs.	Not applicable. No commercial forestry in City.	N/A
f.	Ecology clarified the SMA does not apply to lands under exclusive federal jurisdiction	Not applicable. No lands with exclusive federal jurisdiction in city limits	N/A
g.	Ecology clarified “default” provisions for nonconforming uses and development .	2015 SMP includes tailored nonconforming use and development provisions.	No amendments needed. City will retain existing nonconforming use and development provisions.
h.	Ecology adopted rule amendments to clarify the scope and process for conducting periodic reviews .	2015 SMP already referenced statutory obligation to conduct reviews under RCW 90.58.080. City may follow Ecology procedures for conducting reviews without amending the SMP.	No amendments needed.
i.	Ecology adopted a new rule creating an optional SMP amendment process that allows for a shared local/state public comment period.	2015 SMP does not address the details of the SMP amendment process. Staff identified minor amendment to Land Use Code ZZ.24.10 defining the local amendment process to include reference to joint notice process for SMP amendments.	No amendment to SMP needed. Minor amendment to Land Use Code ZZ.24.10 added to the docket for amendments in 2019 to ensure the process for shared local/state comment period on SMPs is clear.
j.	Submittal to Ecology of proposed SMP amendments.	2015 SMP does not address the details of the SMP submittal process, relies on state rule.	No amendments to SMP needed. NOTE: Staff updated internal procedures manual to clarify SMP amendments are sent via email attachment rather than 2 paper copies.

Row	Summary of change	Review	Action
2016			
a.	The Legislature created a new shoreline permit exemption for retrofitting existing structure to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act .	2015 SMP does not include new permit exemption for retrofits to comply with ADA	X.2.15: new permit exemption added consistent with Ecology example code. NOTE: City website and permit application forms were revised with new cost thresholds.
b.	Ecology updated wetlands critical areas guidance including implementation guidance for the 2014 wetlands rating system.	City's 2017 Critical Areas Ordinance amended by Ord. 17-012 incorporated Ecology's new rating system and other clarifications. City had incorporated Ecology recommendations on wetlands (Ecology comment letter of July 12, 2017).	X.5.23: Updated date of Critical Areas Code adopted by reference
2015			
a.	The Legislature adopted a 90-day target for local review of Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) projects.	2015 SMP was adopted prior to effective date of 2015 legislation.	X.3.14: adopted Ecology example code incorporating direction to conduct review consistent with legislative targets.
2014			
a.	The Legislature raised the cost threshold for requiring a Substantial Development Permit (SDP) for replacement docks on lakes and rivers to \$20,000 (from \$10,000).	Incorporated into 2015 SMP.	N/A. Addressed during comprehensive update
b.	The Legislature created a new definition and policy for floating on-water residences legally established before 7/1/2014.	The city includes no floating on-water residences.	N/A
2012			
a.	The Legislature amended the SMA to clarify SMP appeal procedures .	SMP does not clarify SMP appeal process. City will rely on state laws and rules.	N/A

Row	Summary of change	Review	Action
2011			
a.	Ecology adopted a rule requiring that wetlands be delineated in accordance with the approved federal wetland delineation manual .	Incorporated into 2015 SMP.	N/A. Addressed during comprehensive update
b.	Ecology adopted rules for new commercial geoduck aquaculture .	No marine shorelines in city.	N/A
c.	The Legislature created a new definition and policy for floating homes permitted or legally established prior to January 1, 2011.	No floating homes in city.	N/A
d.	The Legislature authorizing a new option to classify existing structures as conforming .	Incorporated into 2015 SMP.	N/A. Addressed during comprehensive update
2010			
a.	The Legislature adopted Growth Management Act – Shoreline Management Act clarifications .	Incorporated into 2015 SMP.	N/A. Addressed during comprehensive update
2009			
a.	The Legislature created new “relief” procedures for instances in which a shoreline restoration project within a UGA creates a shift in Ordinary High Water Mark.	City had not incorporated this new statutory option in the 2015 SMP. An applicant had requested use of this process in 2017, and new staff were not aware of the provision. It is not necessary to include these into the SMP but including it will help ensure the option is better understood.	X. 17.3.7: SMP amended to include Ecology example code.
b.	Ecology adopted a rule for certifying wetland mitigation banks .	Incorporated into 2015 SMP.	N/A. Addressed during comprehensive update
c.	The Legislature added moratoria authority and procedures to the SMA.	Incorporated into 2015 SMP.	N/A. Addressed during comprehensive update

Row	Summary of change	Review	Action
2007			
a.	The Legislature clarified options for defining "floodway" as either the area that has been established in FEMA maps, or the floodway criteria set in the SMA.	Incorporated into 2015 SMP.	N/A. Addressed during comprehensive update
b.	Ecology amended rules to clarify that comprehensively updated SMPs shall include a list and map of streams and lakes that are in shoreline jurisdiction.	Incorporated into 2015 SMP.	N/A. Addressed during comprehensive update
c.	Ecology's rule listing statutory exemptions from the requirement for an SDP was amended to include fish habitat enhancement projects that conform to the provisions of RCW 77.55.181.	Incorporated into 2015 SMP.	N/A. Addressed during comprehensive update

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AGENDA BILL APPROVAL FORM

Agenda Subject:
Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element Amendment - Special
Planning Areas

Date:
October 9, 2018

Department:
Community Development

Attachments:
[Special Planning Areas - Memorandum](#)
[Attachment A](#)
[Attachment B](#)
[Attachment C](#)

Budget Impact:
Current Budget: \$0
Proposed Revision: \$0
Revised Budget: \$0

Administrative Recommendation:

Background Summary:

Please see the attached memorandum and attachments.

Reviewed by Council Committees:

Councilmember:

Staff:

Teague

Meeting Date: October 16, 2018

Item Number:



Memorandum

To: Judi Roland, Chair, Planning Commission
Roger Lee, Vice-Chair, Planning Commission
Planning Commission Members

From: Alexandria Teague, Planner II, Department of Community Development

Date: October 8, 2018

Re: Text and Map Changes to the Special Planning Areas section of the Land Use Element
(City File No. CPM18-0002 P/T #6)

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

By Ordinance No. 6584, the City of Auburn adopted a new Comprehensive Plan at the end of 2015 that included a revised section in the Land Use Element titled "Special Planning Area Designation". The Special Planning Area Designation section provides descriptions, designation criteria, and policies for each of the four (4) types of special planning areas. The four types of special planning areas include:

- districts,
- subareas,
- impression corridors, and
- gateways.

The special planning areas known as "subareas" are further broken down into five (5) different types of subareas:

- "Identified Areas",
- "Designated Areas",
- "Designated Areas – Economic Development Strategy Areas",
- "Designated Areas – Areas of Concern", and
- "Adopted Areas".

These Special Planning Areas, discussed in Attachment A, are areas within the City of Auburn that warrant additional emphasis in planning, investments, and policy development.

The policies contained within the Special Planning Area Designation section are intended to identify, provide guidance for, and deal with the unique problems or opportunities that exist in certain specific locations within Auburn. This section is "...useful in developing and applying implementing tools (such as zoning provisions); for interpreting the associated land use designation Map (i.e. the Comprehensive Plan Map) as it applies to specific regulatory decisions or development proposals; and in adjusting or amending the associated land use designation map when changing conditions or land use markets warrant" (*Chapter 14 - Comprehensive Plan Map, Land Use Element, Amended 2011, pg. 14-1*). While the majority of the Special Planning Areas Designation section is derived from Chapter 14

“Comprehensive Plan Map”, of the previous, now archived, Comprehensive Plan, and was updated for inclusion in the new Comprehensive Plan, it is in need of revision to improve its clarity and readability.

PROPOSAL

For the purpose of summarizing the changes for Planning Commission review, the proposed revisions to the Special Planning Area Designation section have been categorized into “minor revisions” and “major revisions”.

1.0 Minor revisions: minor revisions consist of the following changes:

- 1.1 Reorganization of designation criteria and policies;
- 1.2 Renumbering of designation criteria and policies;
- 1.3 Re-categorization of “Subareas”; and
- 1.4 Improving the section nomenclature (e.g. making sure titles are the same).

2.0 Major revisions: major revisions consist of the following changes:

- 2.1 Addition of policy language for “Designated Areas”;
- 2.2 Removal of Auburn Environmental Park/Green Zone as a “Designated Area – Economic Development Strategy Area”;
- 2.3 Identification of priority impression corridors; and
- 2.4 Identification of priority gateways;

ATTACHMENT A REVISION LEGEND

Revisions in shown in Attachment A follow the guidelines below:

- Insertions are shown in green, underlined text.
- Additions to inserted text is shown in green, underlined, bold **text**.
- Deletions are shown in red, strikethrough ~~text~~.
- Moves from are shown in blue, strikethrough ~~text~~.
- Moves to are shown in blue, underlined text.

1.0 MINOR REVISIONS

1.1 Reorganization of designation criteria and policies

Most of the revisions in Attachment A, fall under the category of reorganization. Throughout the entire Special Planning Areas Designation section, text was moved from one area to another to improve the reading flow of the document. Blue text is that which already exists in this section; specifically, text moved from one location is shown in blue, strikethrough ~~text~~, and the location it was moved to is shown in blue bold, underlined **text**.

1.2 Renumbering of designation criteria and policies

Due to the reorganization of the entire Special Planning Areas Designation section, the policies were renumbered to maintain sequential numbering.

1.3 Re-categorization of “Subareas”

Within the five previously mentioned subareas, 28 different and distinct subareas exist. The current Comprehensive Plan Special Planning Areas Designation section lumps all of the 28 subareas, with the exception of the three “Areas of Concern” into one category called “subareas”. This method of categorization while simple, does not allow the City (staff) to denote the different types of subareas. There is a need to distinguish and denote the subareas into specific categories as not all types of subareas feature the same concerns, issues, long term focus, or and goals. Denoting the specific types of subareas is necessary because it helps inform or outline the focus of the particular subarea. For example, the “Areas of Concern” are denoted as a specific type of subarea in the current Comprehensive Plan. Denoting “Areas of Concern” as a specific type of subarea is important because it informs staff and decision-makers that the long term focus of these areas is to improve the infrastructure within these areas.

Therefore, subareas have been re-categorized into three categories: one (1) general category, and two (2) subcategories. The two (2) subcategories of subareas are proposed as “Areas of Concern” and “Economic Development Strategy Areas”. As mentioned above, “Areas of Concern” are a specific subcategory because it identifies areas in which the infrastructure needs to be improved prior to or in conjunction with future redevelopment of the area. “Economic Development Strategy Areas” have been identified as a specific subcategory as these areas warrant a particular focus on economic growth and development. It should be noted that the “Areas of Concern” and “Economic Development Strategy Areas” were identified and discussed in Chapter 14, the “Comprehensive Plan Map” chapter of the previous, now archived, Comprehensive Plan (amended in 2011). Chapter 14 of the archived Comprehensive Plan helped inform which subareas should be categorized as “Areas of Concern” and “Economic Development Strategy Areas”.

1.4 Improving the section nomenclature (e.g. making sure titles are the same)

Several titles or terms were modified in order to either clarify or ensure that the nomenclature of the section was consistent. For example, the title for the “Areas of Concern” was formally changed to “Designated Areas – Areas of Concern” to reinforce the fact that they are a subcategory of subareas.

2.0 MAJOR REVISIONS

2.1 Addition of policy language for “Designated Areas”

The current Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2015 under Ordinance No. 6584, does not contain specific policies for the “designated subareas”. While the previous, now archived, Comprehensive Plan (amended 2011) featured policies for each “designated area” these were removed during the update of the current Comprehensive Plan. However, Staff has concluded that having specific policies for the designated areas is necessary. The purpose of a subarea is to anticipate, support, and guide long-term growth and redevelopment through planned development and a unique vision for how that area should look and function in the future. Therefore, without specific policies for each designated area, Staff cannot anticipate or identify unique problems or characteristics for a particular area.

Specific policies for the “designated” subareas, including Auburn Municipal Airport, BNSF Rail Yard, Stuck River Road, Lakeview, Mt. Rainier; the “Economic Development Strategy Areas” were added under the “Designated Areas Policies” (page 9) discussion in Attachment A. Note that the majority of the changes are shown in green as the text for the policy language was derived from the previous, now archived, Comprehensive Plan. Minor changes, shown in green, underline bold **text**, were added to a few of the designated areas policies. The purpose of these minor changes is to update or provide clarification to the policy.

2.2 Removal of Auburn Environmental Park (AEP)/Green Zone as a “Designated Area” from the designated areas list.

The AEP/Green Zone designated area was originally an “Economic Development Strategy Area” special planning area within the previous, now archived Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the AEP/Green Zone was to “...create an economically enhanced area that complements the Auburn Environmental Park and sustains environmentally sensitive industries”. To complement the designation of this area as an economic development strategy area, in 2006 (Ordinance No. 6036), the City adopted the EP, Environmental Park zoning district (EP zone), and a majority of the area was zoned EP. The EP zone was intended to focus on medical, biotech and “green” technologies including energy conservation, engineering, water quality, and similar uses.

Its designation as a special planning area was carried over in the current Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2015 (Ordinance No. 6584). Specifically, in the current Comprehensive Plan it is a “designated area”. However, since the current Comprehensive Plan was adopted, the portion of the area zoned EP has been rezoned to M-1, Light Industrial (rezoned in 2017 under Ordinance No. 6660). The area was rezoned from EP to M-1 due to the lack of private sector investment into the privately owned properties within the EP zone, while substantial investment within the nearby M-1 and M-2 zoned properties occurred. Therefore, the focus on medical, biotech and “green” technologies or environmentally sensitive industries was no longer viable. Consequently, the need for the area to remain as a designated area or economic development strategy area no longer exists. Therefore, the proposal is to remove the AEP/Green zone from the list of designated areas and removed it from Map 1.3, the “Special Planning Areas – Designated Areas” map, of the Comprehensive Plan. Attachment B depicts the removal of the AEP/Green Zone from the list of designated areas.

2.3 Identification of priority impression corridors

The City of Auburn adopted a new Comprehensive Plan at the end of 2015 (Ordinance No. 6584) that included a new section in the Land Use Element titled “Special Planning Area Designation”. Impression corridors were adopted as a new special planning area within the new Comprehensive Plan. Impression corridors are aligned with a particular street, trail, river, stream, or specific linear corridor. The purpose of the impression corridors is to identify the key passageways in which residents, businesses, and visitors move throughout the City. Currently, 25 impression corridors are identified in the special planning area designation section of the Comprehensive Plan. While each of these corridors are key passageways throughout the City, due to the sheer number of impression corridors, some focus and refinement of priority corridors is necessary. Distinguishing key corridors provides direction to the City on which impression corridors take precedent. Priority is given to the impression corridors that are a part of a subarea.

2.4 Identification of priority gateways

The City of Auburn adopted a new Comprehensive Plan at the end of 2015 (Ordinance No. 6584) that included a new section in the Land Use Element titled “Special Planning Area Designation”. Gateways were adopted as a new special planning area within the new Comprehensive Plan. Gateways are specific places, intersections, or blocks within the City. Gateways are essential locations because they constitute the first impression of Auburn. Currently, eight (8) gateways are identified in the special planning area section of the Comprehensive Plan. While each of the gateways constitutes a “first impression” into the City, the identification of key gateways is necessary. Distinguishing key gateways provides direction to the City on which gateways take precedent. Priority is then given to the gateways that are along a priority impression corridor. Priority gateways function as an entrance to an impression corridor.

NEXT STEPS

Staff would like to proceed with publishing a hearing notice and conducting a hearing on these changes to the Comprehensive Plan for the November 7th Planning Commission meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

A – Proposed Changes to Special Planning Areas Section of the Land Use Element

B – Existing & Revised Special Planning Areas Map 1.3

C – Special Planning Areas Maps 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 (*FOR REFERENCE ONLY – no changes proposed*)

ATTACHMENT A - Proposed Changes to Special Planning Areas

Designation Section of the Land Use Element

ATTACHMENT A REVISION LEGEND

Revisions in shown in Attachment A follow the guidelines below:

- Insertions are shown in green, underlined text.
- Additions to inserted text is shown in green, underlined, bold **text**.
- Deletions are shown in red, strikethrough ~~text~~.
- Moves from are shown in dark blue, strikethrough ~~text~~.
- Moves to are shown in dark blue, underlined text.

Special Planning Area Designation

Description

“Special Planning Areas” ~~are~~ consist of Districts, subareas, Impression Corridors, and Gateways within Auburn that warrant additional emphasis in planning, investments, and policy development. Each may be recognized separately within the Comprehensive Plan, as an Element of the Comprehensive Plan, or as an subarea plan (discussed below). There are a variety of reasons for designating and distinguishing a special planning area, and once designated, a variety of potential outcomes. Reasons for designating a special planning area include:

- _____ Areas of high visibility and traffic. These areas create an impression or image of Auburn. It is therefore particularly important to ensure that they are attractive and well maintained. Examples include Auburn Way South and associated major highway on- and off-ramps.
- Land use activities that warrant joint planning between the City and owner/operator. In addition to developing approaches and strategies for the ~~core~~ land use activity, there may be additional emphasis on ensuring compatibility with surrounding land uses. Examples include, Green River College, the Auburn Municipal Airport, and Emerald Downs Thoroughbred Horse Racetrack.
- Neighborhoods in which a resident and merchant live and conduct daily business and leisure. Neighborhoods may also be distinguished by physical setting, physical separations, and similarity over an area. Examples include downtown, Lea Hill, and Lakeland.
- Areas with a focused desire to create greater physical and economic cohesiveness. These may be large planned developments or clusters. Examples include the Auburn North Business Area and Mt. Rainier Vista.
- Areas with an existing *built environment* or an existing regulatory framework that does not, in itself, meet the expectations of the seven values that underscore the Comprehensive Plan. Examples include the need for multimodal connections between West Hill and Lea Hill to north and downtown Auburn.

Designation Criteria

1. Districts: ~~↗~~ The geographic limit of districts and areas that make up ~~the~~ this category of Special Planning Areas extends beyond an alignment with any particular street, trail, river, stream, or other linear corridor. Districts may contain other smaller Special Planning Areas, such as subareas. Additionally, districts are generally consistent with the geography of one of the eight “neighborhoods”¹ identified in the 2014 *City of Auburn Community Vision Report*. Generally speaking, districts are identified for the purpose of creating identity. This means that the land use designations and overarching policies and implementing regulations are not going to change from one district to the next. Instead, Districts are important for event planning, establishing park and open space level-of-service standards, and promoting community identity.

¹ The eight “neighborhoods” are identified for comprehensive planning purposes only, as neither the City nor its neighborhoods have elected to officially designate the boundaries of City neighborhoods.

Districts (see Map 1.2)

- West Hill North Auburn
- Lea Hill
- Downtown
- South Auburn
- Plateau
- Lakeland
- Southeast Auburn

2. Subareas: Subareas are smaller in geography than a district. Though relatively large, multiple subareas may be located within a single district. Subareas allow for the refinement and recognition of existing unique characteristics within a district. Subareas are intended to anticipate, support, and guide long-term growth and redevelopment through planned development and a unique vision for how that area should look and function in the future. It can also be used to provide flexibility when there is uncertainty regarding how an area may be most appropriately developed in the future.

Uses and intensities within Special Planning Areas are determined for each area through individual planning processes. ~~Subarea planning emphasizes infrastructure development, appropriate land uses, connectivity throughout the planned area, and connections to multimodal transportation opportunities outside of the planned area. Each Subarea Plan must be consistent with the general goals, objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.~~

~~Thirty two~~ Twenty-eight (28) subareas currently exist. ~~(including the nine economic development strategy areas discussed below).~~ These subareas are categorized into five different types of subareas: ~~as~~

- Identified Areas; ~~↗~~
- Designated Areas; ~~↗~~ Adopted Areas;
 - Economic Development Strategy Areas (a “Designated Areas” sub-category); ~~and~~

○ Areas of Concern (another “Designated Areas” sub-category); and

- Adopted Areas.

~~Subareas can move through the process of Identification, Designation, and Adoption by official action of the Auburn City Council in (three) stages or by a single action. Uses, intensities, and infrastructure development determined for each subarea or planned area through individual planning processes. Connectivity throughout the planned area, and connections to multimodal transportation opportunities outside of the planned area are also emphasized through the individual planning process. The result of each individual planning process is the adoption of Comprehensive Plan element or subarea plan for the particular subarea by City Council. Each Plan element must be consistent with the general goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, and~~
~~oOnce adopted, subarea plans are intended to guide the future development of each respectively adopted subarea. -on a planned basis.~~

Identified areas have been identified as a subarea within the Comprehensive Plan. Designated Areas have been designated on the Comprehensive Plan Map, which defines detailed boundaries of the area. Adopted Areas include an Adopted Subarea Plan incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan that establishes the purpose of its designation, goals and policies, and implementation strategies. **Areas of Concern, discussed in further detail below, are established because they represent areas that require a close assessment of and an emphasis on infrastructure development and planning.**

~~Subareas can move through the process of Identification, Designation, and Adoption by official action of the Auburn City Council in (three) stages or by a single action. Once adopted, subarea plans are intended to guide the future development of each respectively adopted subarea on a planned basis. Uses and intensities within Special Planning Areas are determined for each area through individual planning processes. Each Subarea Plan must be consistent with the general goals, objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Key policies of the six Subarea Plans are listed below.~~

~~As an adopted document of the Comprehensive Plan, the Subarea Plans are subject to a re-view, and if necessary, revision to address changes in conditions, issues, or even characteristics of the planned areas. A review and revision of Subarea Plan will also include the review and, if necessary, a revision of zoning regulations and design standards. Updated and future Subarea Plans will either supplement existing goals, policies, and implement strategies, or replace existing Comprehensive Plan designations and policies.~~

In 2005, City Council adopted six Economic Development Strategy Areas under Resolution No. 3944. These areas, initially identified by a focus group of diverse business and community interests, are targeted for population and employment growth within the planning horizon of the City’s 20-year growth target (2031). Two additional economic development strategy areas were identified in 2010. In 2012, the City Council added another economic development strategy area, revised the planning horizon to 50 years, and modified the boundaries of the economic development strategy areas to correlate the areas with areas with priority business sectors. The boundaries of the economic development strategy areas are incorporated as subarea plans of the Comprehensive Plan.

Areas of Concern are established because they represent an area that features a lack in the infrastructure and services (e.g. municipal water and sewer service, urban roads, traffic demand, and storm water management) necessary to support increase in density or other development. While this Plan may not fully represent the intensity of uses that could ultimately be supported in these areas (in part due to the

current weakness of the City's infrastructure to support future growth). Development intensification within the Area

of Concern needs to be coordinated with the necessary infrastructure and services to support growth.

Subareas

Identified Areas

2a. Identified Areas: Identified areas ~~have been~~ are identified as a subarea within the Comprehensive Plan, but have not been established on the Comprehensive Plan Map. Therefore, the specific and detailed boundaries of an identified subarea have not been defined. Identification of a subarea within the Comprehensive Plan occurs by official action of the City Council.

Identified Areas:

- Auburn Golf Course
- GSA/Boeing
- Green River College
- Mary Olsen Farm
- Les Gove Campus
- Emerald Downs
- Auburn High School

Designated Areas (see Map 1.3)

2b. Designated Areas: Designated Areas have been designated on the Comprehensive Plan Map, which defines the specific and detailed boundaries of the area. Designation of an area on the Comprehensive Plan Map occurs by official action of the Auburn City Council. It is intended that future development of these areas will be guided by individual Plan element or subarea plan of the Comprehensive Plan. ~~Updated and future~~ The future Ssubarea Pplans will either supplement existing goals, policies, and implement strategies, or replace existing Comprehensive Plan designations and policies for the area within the specific and detailed boundary.

Designated Areas (see Map 1.3):

- ~~————~~ Auburn Environmental Park
- Auburn Municipal Airport
- ~~————~~ 15th St SW/West Valley Hwy N
- BNSF Rail Yard
- ~~————~~ A St SE
- Stuck River Road

- M St SE
- SE 312th/124th Ave
- Auburn Way South Corridor
- Auburn Way North Corridor
- Lakeview
- NW Manufacturing Village
- Mt. Rainier

2b(1). Designated Areas - Areas of Concern:

Areas of Concern are a specific type (or subcategory) of designated area. Areas of Concern are established because they represent an area that features a lack in the infrastructure and services (e.g. municipal water and sewer service, urban roads, traffic demand, and storm water management) necessary to support increase in density or other development. These areas require a close assessment of and an emphasis on infrastructure development and planning to support further development. While this Plan may not fully represent the intensity of uses that could ultimately be supported in these areas (in part due to the current weakness of the City's infrastructure to support future growth). Development intensification within the Area of Concern needs to be coordinated with the necessary infrastructure and services to support growth.

Designated Areas – Areas of Concern (see Map 1.3)

- AWS/Auburn Black Diamond Rd.
- Pike Street NE
- 8th Street NE

2b(2). Designated Areas - Economic Development Strategy Areas: The Economic Development Strategy Areas are a specific type (or subcategory) of designated area. In 2005, City Council adopted six Economic Development Strategy Areas under Resolution No. 3944. These areas, initially identified by a focus group of diverse business and community interests, are targeted for population and employment growth within the planning horizon of the City's 20-year growth target (2031). ~~Two additional economic development strategy areas were identified in 2010. In~~ By 2012, the City Council added three additional ~~another~~ economic development strategy areas, , bringing the total to nine (9) strategy areas. ~~revised the planning horizon to 50 years, and modified the boundaries of the economic development strategy areas to correlate the areas with areas with priority business sectors.~~

During the City's 2015 update of the Comprehensive Plan the list of economic development strategy areas to reflect current conditions and status of these areas. As such, two of the original six economic development strategy areas was removed from the list. The Urban Center, one of the original six development strategy areas, was removed as it is no longer a designated area. The Urban Center, also known as "Downtown Auburn" or the "Downtown Urban Center" is an adopted area (since 2001) and features its own subarea plan. The Auburn Environmental Park (AEP)/Green Zone has also been removed as an economic development strategy area. The AEP/Green Zone economic development

strategy area was previously zoned EP, Environmental Park Zone. The intent of this zone was to encourage economic development in the form of medical, biotech and “green” technologies including energy conservation, engineering, water quality and similar uses. Through Ordinance No. 6660 City Council rezoned the AEP/Green Zone from EP, Environmental Park Zone to M-1, Light Industrial, hereby effectively removing the need to designate the AEP/Green Zone as an specific economic development strategy area.

The current economic development strategy areas are included below. The boundaries of the economic development strategy areas are incorporated as designated subareas - “Designated Areas – Special Planning Areas” map of the Land Use Element. ~~plans of the Comprehensive Plan.~~

Designated Areas – Economic Development Strategy Areas (see Map 1.3)

- A St SE (corridor)
- Auburn Way South (AWS) Corridor
- Auburn Way North (AWN) Corridor
- M St SE (between AWN and AWS)
- SE 312th/124th Ave
- NW Manufacturing Village
- 15th St SW/West Valley Hwy N

Adopted Areas (see Map 1.4)

2c. Adopted Areas: Adopted Areas include an Adopted Subarea Plan incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan that establishes the purpose of its designation, goals and policies, and implementation strategies. Adoption of a subarea plan occurs by official action of the City Council. As an adopted document of the Comprehensive Plan, the subarea Plans are subject to a review, and if necessary, revision to address changes in conditions, issues, or even characteristics of the planned areas. The review and revision a subarea Plan will also include the review and, if necessary, a revision of zoning regulations and architectural design standards.

Adopted Areas (see Map 1.4)

- Downtown (Ordinance No. 5549)
- Auburn Adventist Academy (Resolution No. 2254)
- Auburn North Business Area (Resolution No. 2283)
- Lakeland Hills (Resolution No. 1851)
- Lakeland Hills South (County H.E. Case Z15/ UP70)
- Northeast Auburn (Ordinance No. 6183)

Areas of Concern

AWS/Auburn-Black Diamond Rd.

~~Pike Street NE~~

~~8th Street NE~~Auburn Way South Corridor

~~Auburn Way North Corridor~~

3. Impression Corridors: Impression corridors are aligned with a particular street, trail, river, stream, or specific linear corridor. Some corridors may be part of a subarea, in which case the Impression Corridor policies are additive to ~~the a Subarea-subarea P~~ plan. Impression corridors enhance the areas in which residents, businesses, visitors move throughout the City. The benefit of an impression corridor is two-fold: residents know that the City is invested in the aesthetic of main thoroughfares and businesses can build off of the design and aesthetic provided by the impression corridor. Improvements or modification to impression corridors consist of aesthetic signage, landscaping, and monument features, and the rehabilitation or removal of existing buildings and property. Impression Corridor boundaries and policies are formally designated by adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Priority is given to the impression corridors that are a part of a subarea. Priority impression corridors are the thoroughfares in which residents, businesses, visitors move throughout a specific subarea. The priority impression corridors are italicized below.

Impression Corridors (see Map 1.5)

- Auburn Way North
- Auburn Way South
- Auburn Black Diamond Road
- A Street SE/Auburn Avenue
- C Street SW
- Division Street
- M Street/Harvey Road
- Main Street
- 8th Street NE
- 15th Street SW
- West Valley Highway
- 15th Street NW/NE
- 8th Street NE
- Main Street
- Division Street
- 132nd Street SE
- SE 320th Street

- _____ SE 312th Street

- _____ SE 304th Street

- ~~M Street/Harvey Road~~

- _____ R Street

- _____ Lake Tapps Corridor

- _____ ~~West Valley Highway~~

- _____ ~~Auburn Black Diamond Road~~

- _____ Green River Road

- _____ 37th Street NW

- _____ S 277th Street

- _____ Interurban Trail

- _____ Green River

- _____ White River

- _____ Mill Creek

4. Gateways: Gateways are specific places, intersections, or blocks within the City. These essential locations are established because they constitute the first impression into of Auburn. Gateways are intended to create a “welcome” into distinct areas of the City or into the City itself. They are therefore highly important to plan, construct, maintain, and enhance their appearance and function. Gateway locations and policies are formally designated by adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. Priority is given to those gateways that are along an priority impression corridor. Priority gateways function as a entrance to an impression corridor. The priority gateways are italicized below.

Gateways (see Map 1.6)

- _____ Auburn Way North and Auburn Avenue (*where the roads converge*)

- _____ East Main Street and M Street NE/SE (*at the intersection*)

- _____ ~~All roads with an entry into the city~~

- _____ Auburn Way South ~~between and~~ 4th Street SE ~~and~~

- _____ *Auburn Way S and 6th Street SE*

- _____ West Main Street between C Street NW and B Street NW

- _____ All roads with an entry into the city

- _____ Hwy 167 Off Ramps

- SR 18 Off Ramps

Implementing Designations

Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Master Plans

Policies

District Policies.

LU-123 Through regulation, capital investment, and community planning, identify, promote and market district identity.

Subarea Policies.

LU-124 Each subarea will contain a description of its purpose, boundary, and its own vision, goals, policies and strategies.

Designated Areas Policies.

LU-125 BNSF Rail Yard - This approximately 150 acre Special Planning Area is located in the south-central portion of the City and surrounded by SR-18 to the North, Ellingson Road to the South, C Street SW to the west and A Street SE to the East. The Special Planning Area should consider both sides of C Street and A Street. Consideration should be given to:

1. The needs of Burlington Northern.
2. Providing pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular access across the site to connect the southeast and southwest sides of the city.
3. Providing a more visually appealing "entry corridor" into the City from the south along A and C Streets.
4. Allowing for a mix of uses including single and multifamily development and commercial and industrial uses where appropriate.

LU-126 Stuck River Road - A portion of the Stuck River Road Special Planning Area is currently the site of a large sand and gravel mining operation. This area and other adjacent land comprising a total of approximately 664 acres has been designated as a long term resource area (mineral resource area), so development of the Special Area Plan for this area should be a low priority as mining is expected to continue on this site for as long as 30 years. The land uses for the Stuck River Road Special Planning Area will be determined through the subarea planning process and the City Council's adoption of the subarea plan. Potential land uses applied through the subarea planning process could include single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, institutional, and recreational. Some light industrial uses may be appropriate for consideration and designation through the subarea planning process if the uses are "industrial or business park" in character, conducted entirely within an enclosed building, and exhibit a high degree of performance standards and are non-nuisance in nature and if appropriately limited in extent and location. A mix of housing types ranging from single family residential to multi-family residential is appropriate for this planning area.

The subarea plan should be adopted taking into consideration the period during which mining is expected and the intent of the ultimate development of the area. An active permit has been processed by the City with respect to the mining activity on a portion (approximately 664 acres) of the mineral extraction operation. The permit process should continue, however, any permit for mining in the mineral resource area should be granted for the life of the resource, with reviews conducted periodically (every five years) to determine whether changes in the originally proposed mineral extraction operation have arisen and give rise to the need for additional or revised permit conditions to address the new impacts (if any) of any such changes. Any permit applications for additional acreage within the mineral resource area shall be processed by the City. Development of this area should not occur until adequate public facilities are available to support the development consistent with City concurrency policy.

The City recognizes the potential for expanding the Stuck River Road Special Planning Area to include additional land east of Kersey Way and north of the Covington-Chehalis power line easement, and will consider a proposal by all affected property owners. If the area is expanded, the number of non-multiple family, non-manufactured home park dwellings units may be increased proportionate to the increase in acreage. Any such proposal shall specifically apportion the types and quantities of development to occur within each separate ownership.

LU-127 Lakeview - The Lakeview subarea is currently the site of two independent sand and gravel mining operations. While mining activity continues in the eastern operation, indications in 1995 are that the western operation has ceased. Activity in the western portion is now limited to a concrete batch plant and future site reclamation. Following reclamation, the area should be developed as a primarily single family residential neighborhood of low to moderate urban density. A planned development would be particularly appropriate for this approximately 235 acre site. The permitted development density of the site will depend heavily upon the ability of the transportation system near the site to handle the new uses. Consideration shall be given to the environmental, recreational and amenity value of White Lake, the historical and cultural significance, **as well as tribal ownership and jurisdiction of the Muckleshoot Tribe** in the development of the Lakeview Plan element. Permit applications have been accepted and are currently being processed by the City with respect to the mining activity on the eastern portion of the area. The permit process should continue, however, any permit for continued mining in this portion of the area should be limited to 10 years to encourage completion of the mining, and subsequent reclamation by the property owner in preparation for development. The Lakeview Plan element should be adopted prior to the City's acceptance or processing of any other permit applications for the mining operation in the Lakeview Special Planning Area. The environmental information and analysis included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Lakeview (November 1980), shall be considered in the development of the Lakeview Plan element. While heavy commercial or industrial uses would not be appropriate as permanent uses of this area, conversion of the area now zoned for heavy industry to office commercial (or similar) uses would be appropriate.

LU-128 Mt. Rainier Vista - This 145 acre subarea is located south of Coal Creek Springs Watershed. Overall development of the Mt. Rainier Vista subarea plan shall be consistent with the following conditions:

1. Primary consideration in use and development of the property shall be given to protection of Coal Creek Springs' water quality. Development types, patterns and standards determined to pose a substantial risk to the public water source shall not be allowed.
2. The maximum number of dwelling units will be determined as part of any sub-area plan process. Dwelling units shall be located within portions of the property where development poses the least risk of contamination for Coal Creek Springs. Lands upon which any level of development would have a high risk for

contaminating the water supply shall not be developed, but would be retained as open space. The development pattern shall provide for a logical transition between areas designated for rural uses and those designated for single family residential use. All dwelling units shall be served by municipal water and sanitary sewer service, and urban roads. If 53rd Street S.E. is the major access to serve the Special Planning Area, the developer will be responsible for developing the street to urban standards, from the property owners' eastern property line that abuts 53rd Street, west to the intersection of 53rd and Kersey Way.

3. Percolation type storm sewer disposal systems shall not be permitted. All surface water drainage shall be conveyed consistent with the City's current storm drainage standards. Treatment of stormwater shall occur prior to its discharge to any surface water body, consistent with standard public works or other requirements in general effect at the time of development.

4. The site shall be zoned temporarily, at one unit per four acres, until the sub-area plan is completed and the long-term urban zoning determined.

5. The Mt. Rainier Vista special planning area boundary may be modified through the development of the subarea plan.

6. The Mt. Rainier Vista and Stuck River Road Special Planning Areas shall be coordinated subarea plans.

LU-129 Auburn Municipal Airport Area - The area east of Auburn's Municipal Airport is an features industrial land use designations. While industrial type uses are now located here, the area is highly suited for air related activities. The City will encourage use in this area to take advantage of its proximity to the Airport **and control adverse effects to airport operations.**

Designated Areas - Areas of Concern Policies.

~~LU-150~~130 —AWS/Auburn Black Diamond Rd – The area between Auburn-Black Diamond Road and the Burlington Northern Railroad currently lacks urban facilities necessary to support urban development. Major development proposals shall be carefully assessed under SEPA to ensure that the development can be supported by the available facilities. Once property owners are able to demonstrate to the City that they can provide urban services (municipal water and sewer service, urban roads and storm water management) necessary to support the intensity of development proposed within the entire area, the Plan designation and zoning for this area should be changed to an urban residential or commercial classification. The appropriate classification(s) shall be determined after a review of the development proposal and the pertinent Comprehensive Plan policies.

~~LU-151~~131 – Pike Street NE – The area located north of 8th NE, east of Harvey Road, and south of 22nd NE is inadequately served by residential arterials. No increase in density or other development which would increase traffic demand in this area should be approved.

~~LU-152~~132 8th Street NE – The areas paralleling 8th Street NE located between Auburn Way and M Street are designated for multiple family residential while 8th Street NE is designated as a minor arterial. However, the road is not currently constructed to this standard and is not able to support current traffic demand adequately. The Plan designation would greatly increase traffic volumes. Implementation of the Plan designations should not occur until 8th Street NE is constructed to the adequate arterial standard and water service is upgraded. Up zones should not be granted from current zoning until these stems are upgraded or guaranteed.

Designated Areas - Economic Development Strategy Areas Policies.

LU-133 – The City should adopt a formal subarea plan for each of the seven economic development strategy areas (listed below) as an element of the Comprehensive Plan. Each economic development strategy area subarea plan should identify the uses, intensities, and infrastructure development necessary to support the types of business and activities that are most consistent with community aspirations. Each subarea plan should address and include policies regarding the expected level of housing density (or residential growth targets) and employment growth targets.

- Auburn Way South Corridor
- Auburn Way North Corridor
- NW Auburn Manufacturing Village
- 15th St. SW/C St. SW/West Valley Hwy. N
- A St. SE
- SE 312th St. /124th Ave SE
- M St. SE between Auburn Way N and Auburn Way S

Adopted Areas ~~Subarea Plan Policies. Subarea plans are components of the Comprehensive Plan.~~

LU-134~~25~~ Adoption or revision of a subarea plan will be treated as a comprehensive plan amendment and will comply with the Growth Management Act, Countywide planning policies, Vision 2040, and the Core Comprehensive Plan.

LU-126 Auburn Adventist Academy - Adopted under Resolution No. 2254 on November 14, 1991. The Auburn Adventist Academy is primarily a secondary school operated by the Washington Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists. Since the school is sited on a larger complex that formerly housed a mill, the Academy has also sought to include industrial uses that support the mission of the school. The industrial uses provide employment opportunities, learning experiences, and vocational education for students of the Academy. The re-use of existing buildings and redevelopment of buildings lost to a fire in 1989 are the focal points of the industrial development. In addition to institutional and industrial uses, the Academy is also interested in agricultural uses for commercial and vocational purposes and currently operates a landing strip for aviation training. The plan focuses on providing predictability to planning, zoning, subdivision, and development decisions made by the City.

LU-135~~27~~ Auburn North Business Area - Adopted under Resolution No. 2283 on March 2, 1992. The Auburn North Business Area Special Planning Area Plan was the result of a comprehensive planning study due to increased development pressure north of the Central Business District. Since the Central Business District, which contains Downtown, the core of Auburn, is adjacent to these areas, future development in this area is crucial. A comprehensive and cohesive direction was also needed based on increased development proposals and rezone requests. In addition to development concerns, many of the considerable undeveloped parcels contain wetlands. All of these factors made development controls beyond zoning and development regulations advisable.

LU-136~~28~~ Lakeland Hills - Adopted under Resolution No. 1851 on April 18, 1988. Lakeland Hills area lies between the Stuck River and the southern City limits of Auburn in the most southwestern part of the City. The area consists of planned residential and commercial subdivisions, and is

predominately residential in nature, offering a range of housing types, including single family and multi-family dwellings. The Lakeland Hills Plan was intended to provide long-term predictability to both the City and potential developers. As a planned community, development and design must be consistent with the policy guidance of the Lakeland Hills Plan.

LU-13729 Lakeland Hills South - Approved under Pierce County Hearing Examiner Case Z15/UP70. Lakeland Hills South lies south of the Lakeland Hills special plan area and is the most southwestern part of the City. The area is predominately residential, allowing for a range of housing types, with commercial uses, including Lakeland Town Center, in the center. Nonresidential uses, including civic, religious, and municipal services are allowed throughout the area through an Administrative Use Permit. Unlike Lakeland Hills, Lakeland Hills South was accepted into Auburn as a Planned Unit Development (PUD). The Lakeland Hills PUD, originally the Lakeland Hills South Planned Development District (PDD), was approved under Pierce County Hearing Examiner Case no Z15-UP70 in 1990. Lakeland Hills South PUD is intended to provide enhanced flexibility to develop a site through innovative and alternative development standards. As a PUD, specific development and design standards are prescribed.

LU-1380 Auburn Downtown Plan (Urban Center) - Adopted under Ordinance No. 5549 on May 21, 2001. Downtown Auburn is the business, governmental, and cultural hub of Auburn, its physical and cultural heart. Many stores, restaurants, service providers, and small offices are well-represented throughout this district. Downtown hosts many community events and activities, such as the weekly Auburn International Farmers Market in the summer, Soundbites! Concert Series (in the City Hall Plaza) and the Veterans Day Parade. Downtown features public art that includes temporary installations such as Pianos on Parade and a permanent outdoor Downtown Sculpture Gallery with rotating pieces. This dynamism is possible because the district is a collection of uses that co-exist in close proximity to one another. Due to the value, importance, and complexity of this district, The Auburn Downtown Plan identified four general needs to be addressed by the plan:

- Update of the existing plan in order to continue Downtown revitalization
- Concern over the reopening of Stampede Pass
- Multiple large projects proposed for Downtown
- Scarce private investment

In conjunction with project-based items, a regulatory element that emerged from the goals of the Auburn Downtown Plan was the Downtown Urban Center (DUC) zoning district, which was established in 2007. While the DUC zoning district is intended specifically to address the needs of downtown, though the implementation of policies identified by the Downtown Auburn Plan, many challenges related to public and private investment, development, and strategic planning have yet to be addressed as downtown has evolved.

LU-13931 Northeast Auburn Special Plan Area – Adopted under Ordinance No. 6183 on June 5, 2008. The Plan was prepared in fulfillment of the policies included in the Comprehensive Plan for the area between Auburn Way North and the Green River, south of 277th Street (52nd Street NE) and north of approximately 37th Street NE in the City of Auburn (Map No. 14.2). The planning area was narrowed to an area covering approximately 120 acres, north of 45th Street NW and between Auburn Way North and the existing I Street NE right-of-way. The Northeast Auburn/Robertson Properties Special Area Plan focuses on proposed development of the Auburn Gateway project area, a 60-acre group of properties owned or under consideration for purchase by Robertson Properties Group, owners of the Valley 6 Drive-In Theater. The plan calls for a mix of office, retail, and multifamily development

under a new zoning designation (C-4, Mixed Use Commercial) for the central portion of this planning area, created to accommodate mixed use development. The plan calls for phased development in coordination with the provision of new roads, stormwater and other utilities, and flood management measures.

Impression Corridor Policies.

LU-140~~32~~ Create specific plans for each identified corridor, outlining development policies and regulations, necessary capital improvements, and implementation strategies. In the absence of any specific corridor plans, this section contains general policies that are to be applied within designated impression corridors.

LU-141~~33~~ Coordinate corridor planning, design, construction, and maintenance with other agencies, such as BNSF, the Muckleshoot Indian Reservation, and the Washington State Department of Transportation. Where one agency may more effectively manage the corridor, management or ownership consolidation is appropriate.

LU-142~~34~~ Promote the elimination or renovation of existing derelict or unmaintained structures, signs, fences, and properties along impression corridors through regulatory or enforcement mechanisms

LU-143~~35~~ Work with private and public property owners to educate, create incentives, and enforce regulations that are intended to improve the overall appearance of identified corridors.

LU-144~~36~~ Emphasize the design, orientation, construction materials, landscaping, and site layout for development proposals of new and existing buildings along impression corridors. New construction and the renovation of existing buildings create important opportunities for enhancing the appearance of impression corridors.

LU-145~~37~~ Establish regulations that ensure coordinated, attractive commercial signage is of an appropriate size and quantity. Signage regulations along these corridors may be different than those in other areas.

LU-146~~38~~ Take advantage of opportunities to provide informational signs, wayfinding signs, and traffic control signs that are attractive, useful, and integrated into a larger citywide signage plan or policy.

LU-147~~39~~ Outdoor storage of materials, inventory, and other goods and off-street surface parking should be located at the rear of the property. If outdoor storage cannot be located in the rear of the property, then it should be screened from view from adjacent rights-of-way.

LU-148~~0~~ Design, construct, and enhance impression corridors to accommodate multimodal uses.

LU-149~~1~~ Design and construct vehicular access points in a manner that consolidates access points serving multiple uses.

LU-150~~42~~ Signage, landscaping, and monument features should be used to establish prominent access points.

LU-151~~43~~ Discourage aerial utilities.

LU-152~~44~~ Invest in impression corridors by acquiring rights-of-way, constructing and widening sidewalks, installing landscaping, building center medians, constructing parklets, providing street furniture, and constructing other improvements.

Gateway Policies. ~~Gateways are specific places, intersections, or blocks within the City. These essential locations are established because they constitute the first impression into of Auburn. Gateways are intended~~

~~to create a “welcome” into distinct areas of the City or into the City itself. They are therefore highly important to plan, construct, maintain, and enhance their appearance and function. Gateway locations and policies are formally designated by adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.~~

LU-153~~45~~ Prioritize by rank all gateways and develop potential opportunities and designs for each location.

LU-154~~46~~ Develop land use regulations that incorporate gateway priorities and concepts into private development proposals that are located at identified gateways.

LU-155~~47~~ Coordinate with the Washington State Department of Transportation to understand options and implement actions at gateway location. Many of the gateway locations are within the WSDOT right-of-way.

LU-156~~48~~ Develop design layouts for gateway locations. Designs will identify key areas that greet residents and visitors as they enter the City or downtown center, opportunities for signage and monument features, and landscaping.

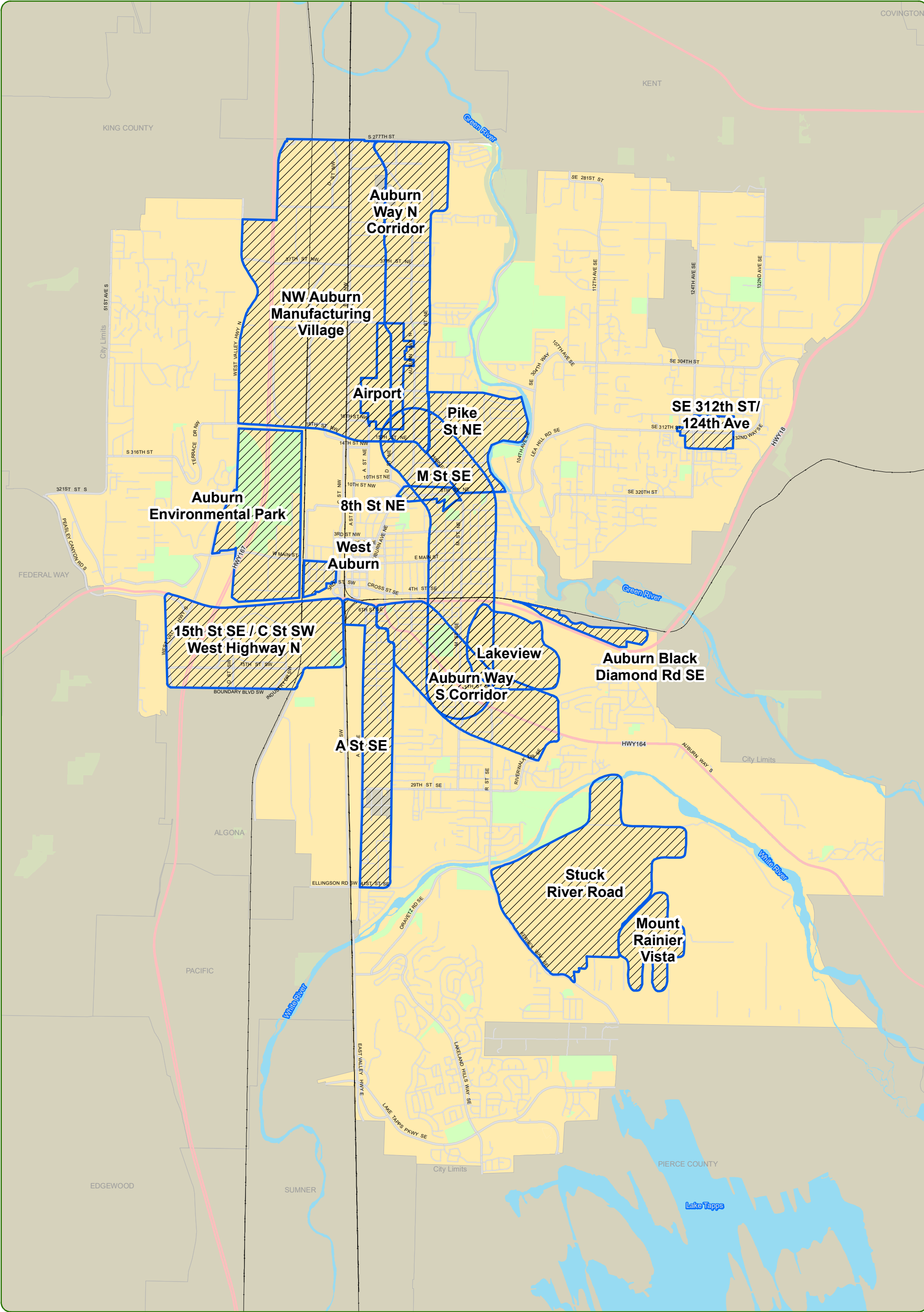
LU-157~~49~~ Maintain established gateways.

~~**Areas of Concern Policies.** These areas represent areas requiring a close assessment of and an emphasis on infrastructure development and planning to support further development.~~

~~LU-150 AWS/Auburn Black Diamond Rd — The area between Auburn Black Diamond Road and the Burlington Northern Railroad currently lacks urban facilities necessary to support urban development. Major development proposals shall be carefully assessed under SEPA to ensure that the development can be supported by the available facilities. Once property owners are able to demonstrate to the City that they can provide urban services (municipal water and sewer service, urban roads and storm water management) necessary to support the intensity of development proposed within the entire area, the Plan designation and zoning for this area should be changed to an urban residential or commercial classification. The appropriate classification(s) shall be determined after a review of the development proposal and the pertinent Comprehensive Plan policies.~~

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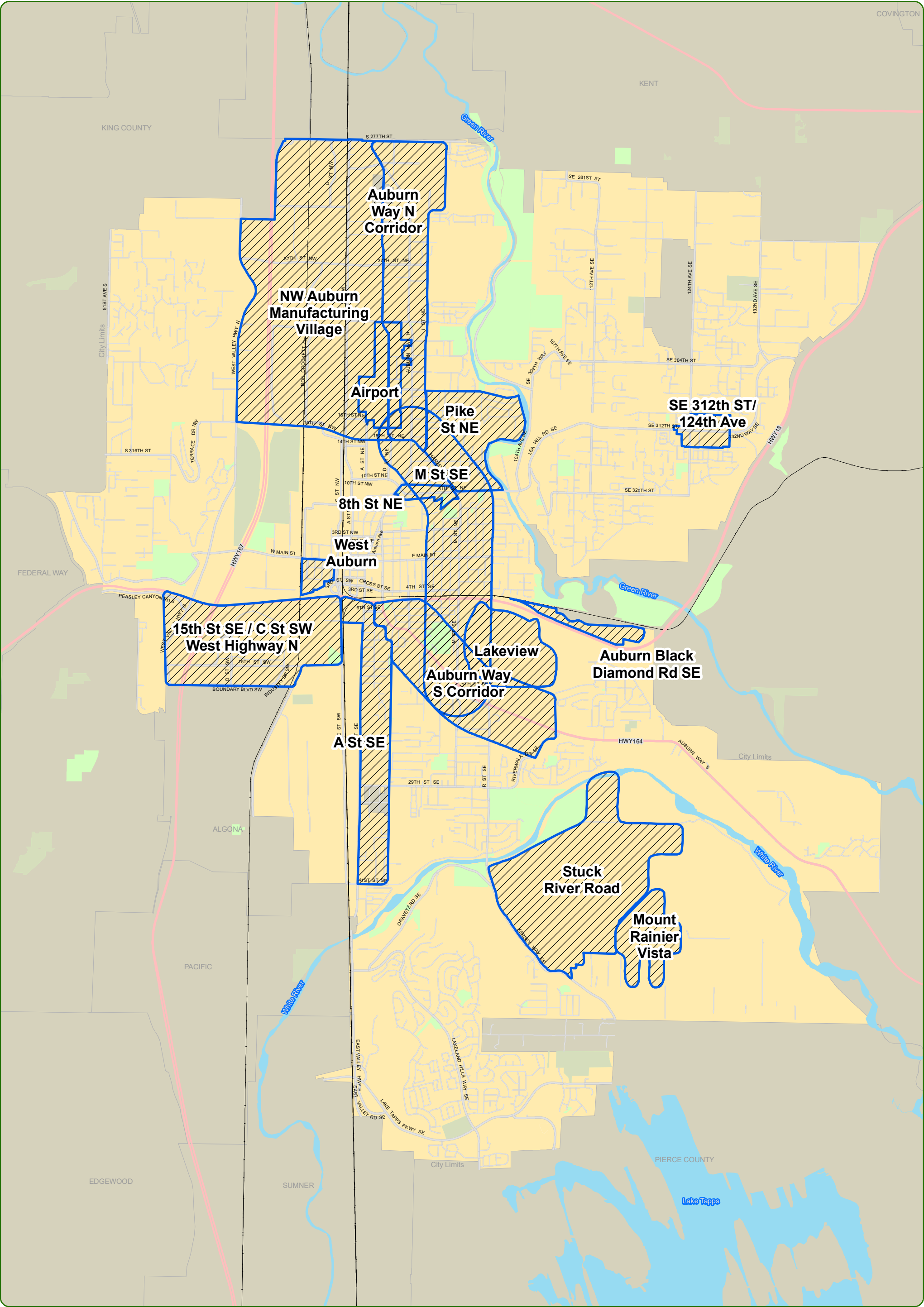
Designated Areas

Special Planning Areas
(Map 1.3)

 Designated Areas



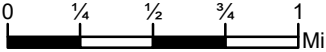
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The City of Auburn makes warranties as to its accuracy.



Designated Areas

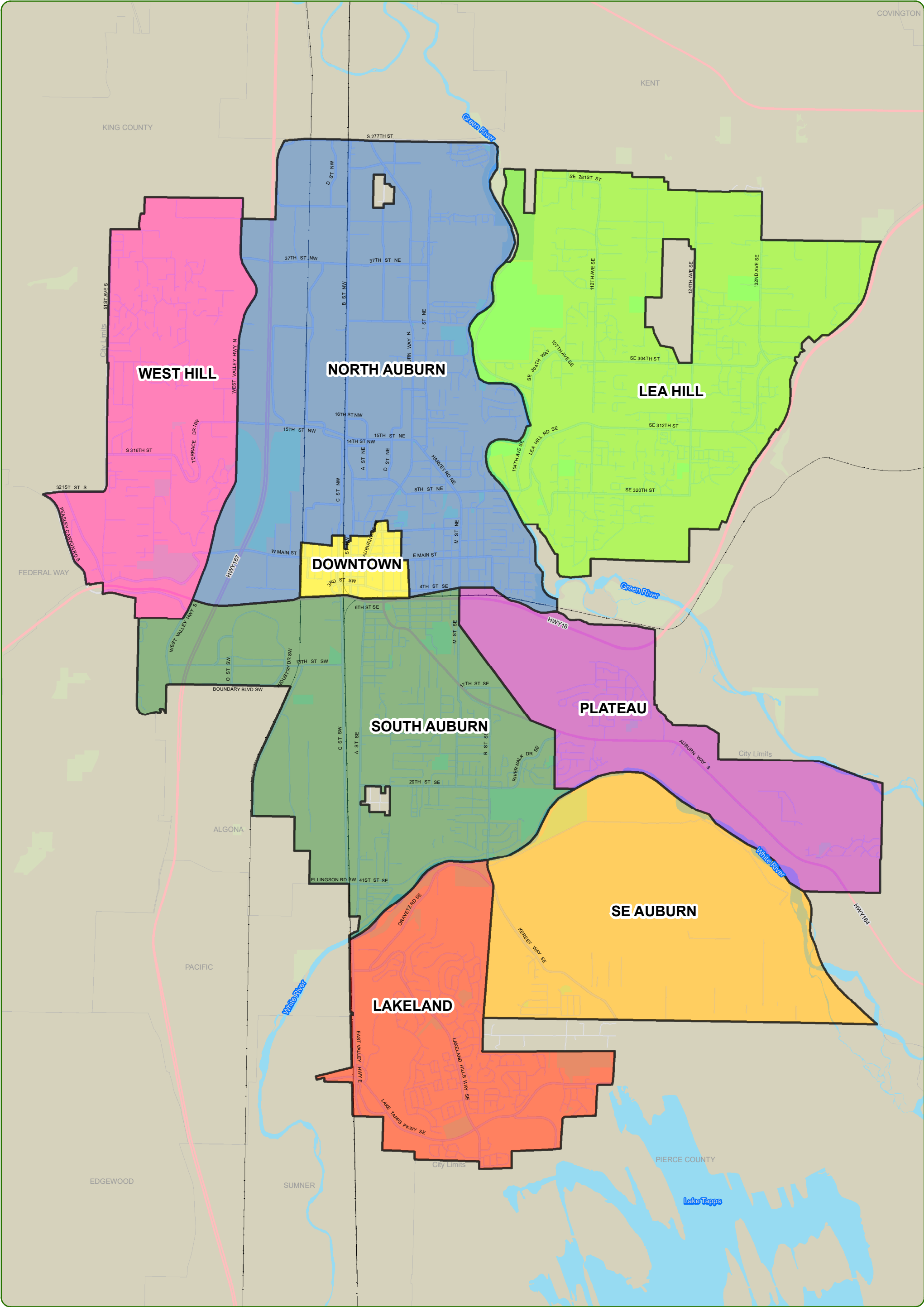
Proposed Special Planning Areas
(Map 1.3)

 Designated Areas



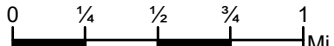

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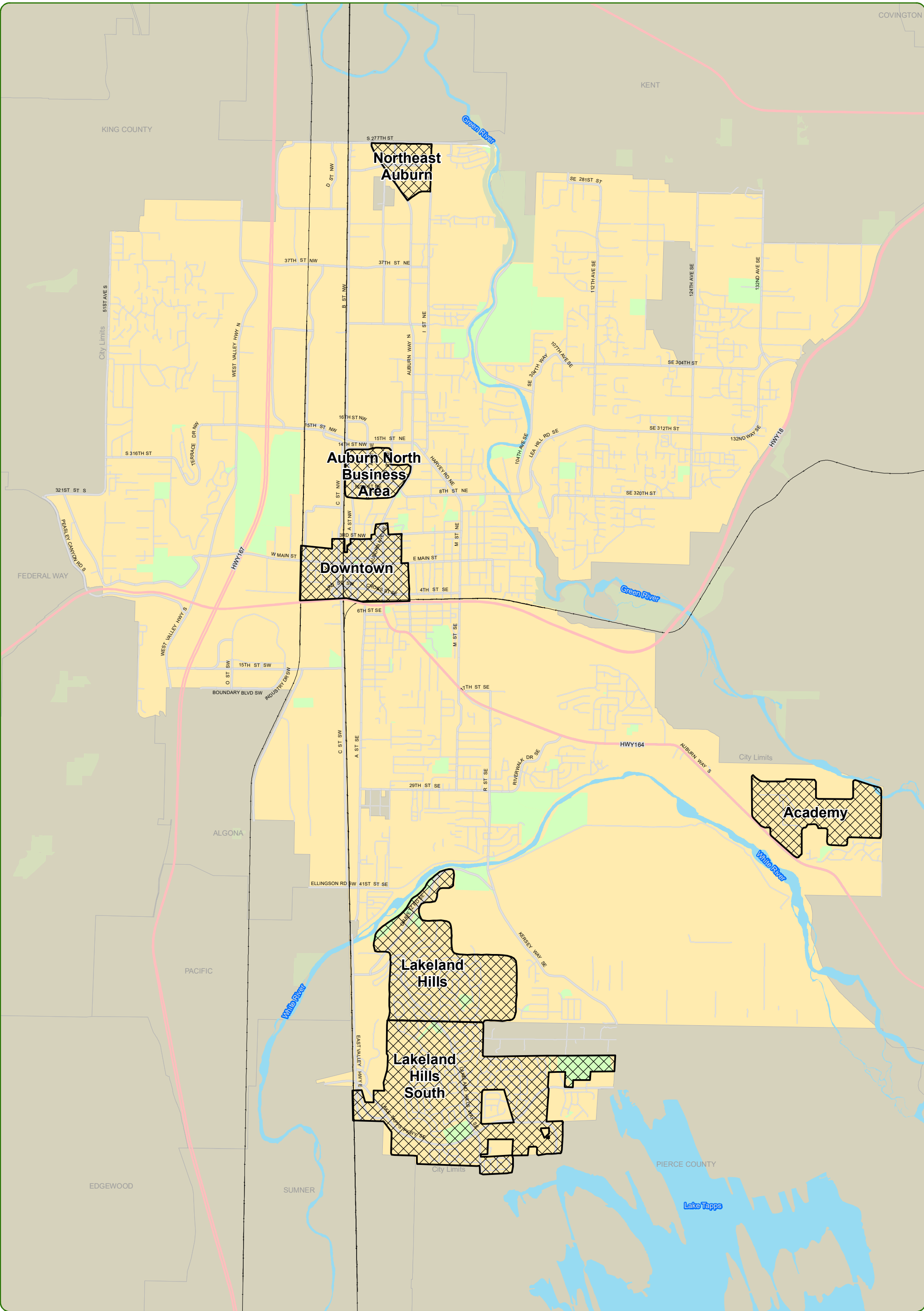
Districts

Special Planning Areas
(Map 1.2)



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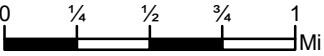


Adopted Areas

Special Planning Areas

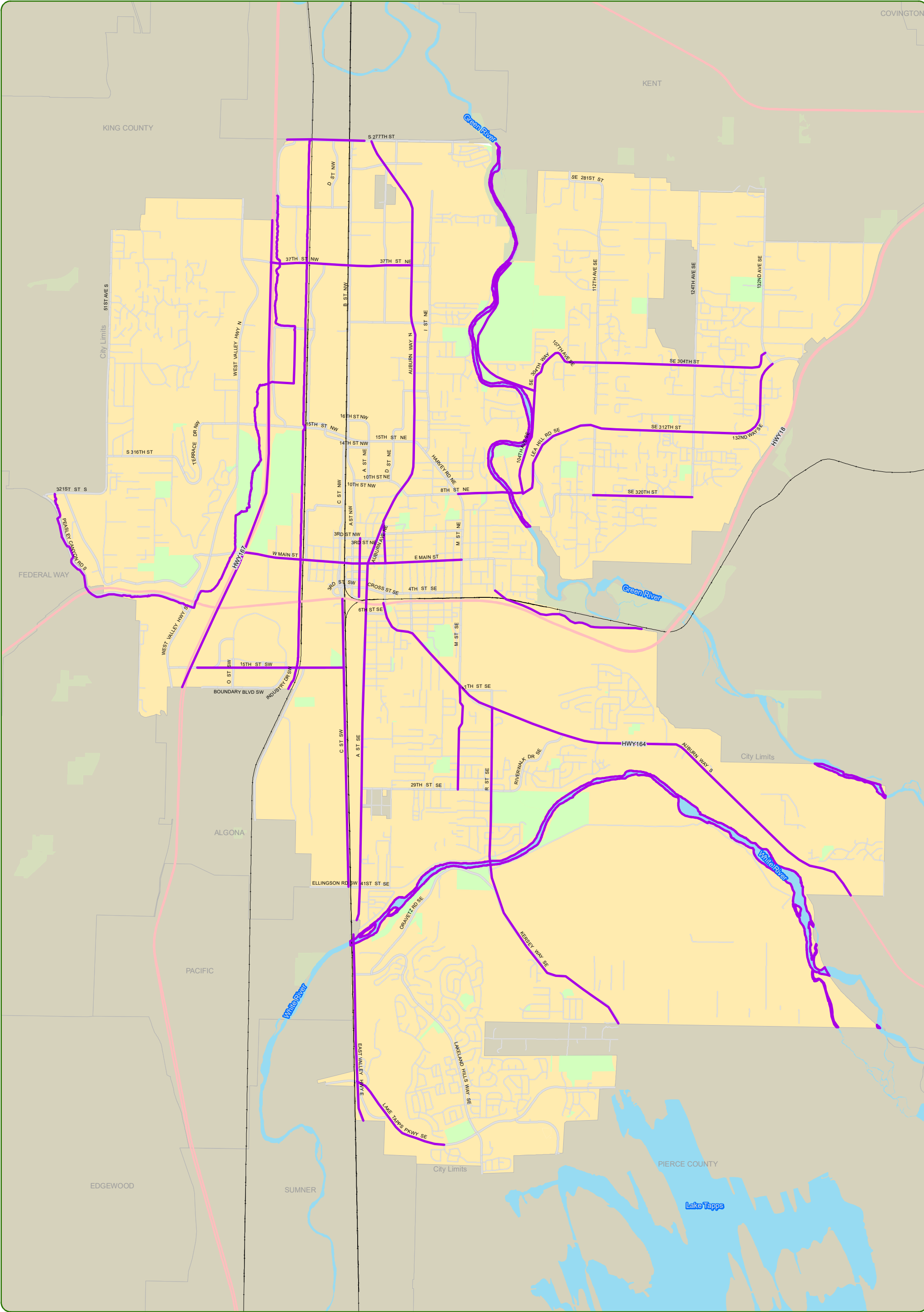
(Map 1.4)

 Adopted Areas



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Impression Corridors

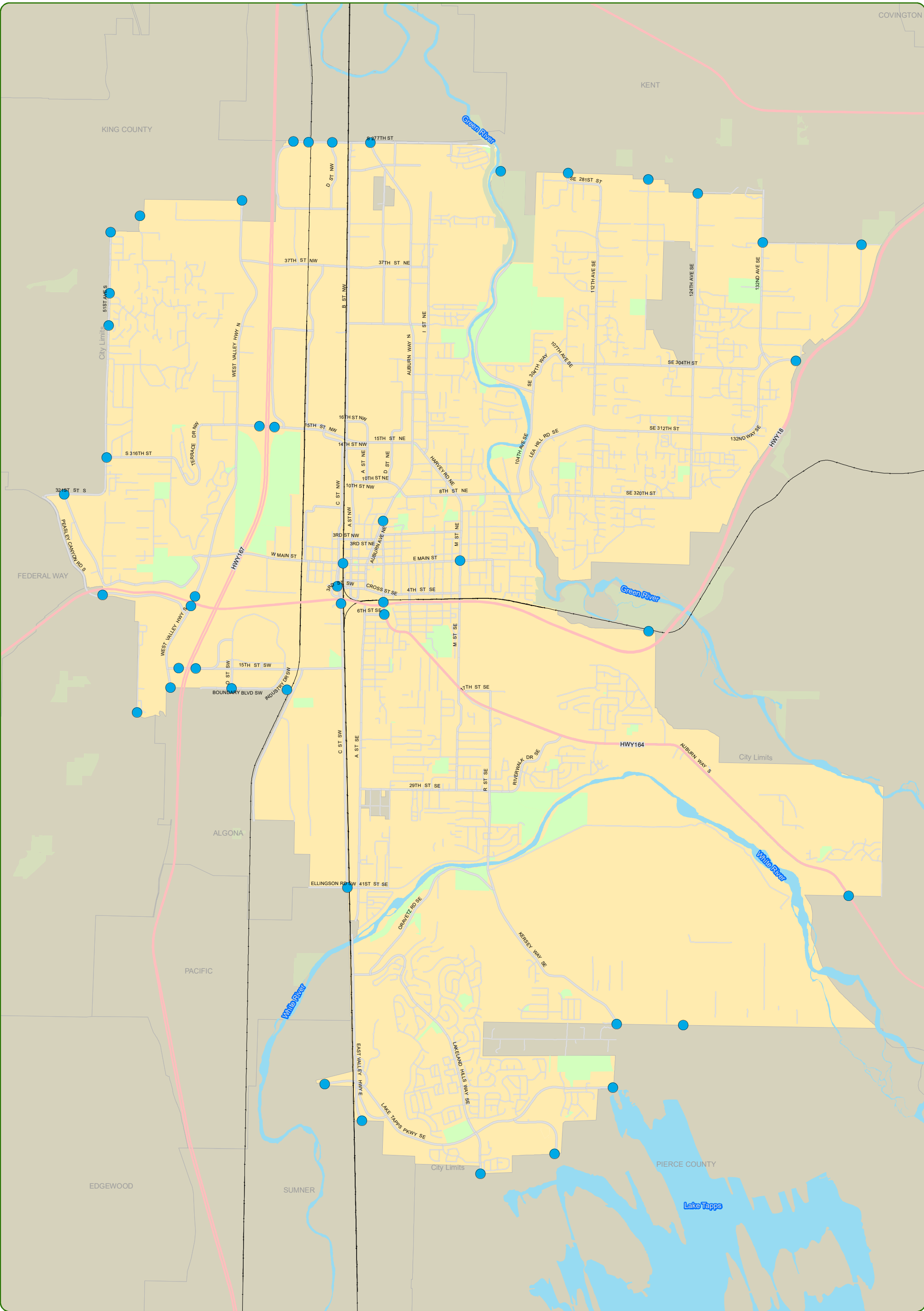
Special Planning Areas (Map 1.5)

— Impression Corridors



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● Gateways

Gateways

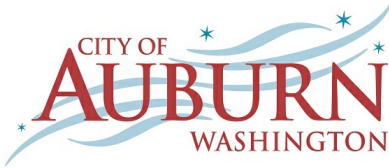
Special Planning Areas
(Map 1.6)



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The City of Auburn makes warranties as to its accuracy.



AGENDA BILL APPROVAL FORM

Agenda Subject:

Continued Discussion of docket items for Annual comprehensive Plan Amendments - City initiated text and map amendments

Date:

October 9, 2018

Department:

Community Development

Attachments:

[Attachment A](#)

[Attachment B](#)

[Attachment C](#)

Budget Impact:

Current Budget: \$0

Proposed Revision: \$0

Revised Budget: \$0

Administrative Recommendation:**Background Summary:**

In the fall of 2015, the City of Auburn embarked on a process to develop an Economic Development Strategic Plan. The Plan development was guided by the City's Economic Development section of the Administration Department and prepared for the purpose of guiding the City's economic development and activities and investment over the next decade. To assist in this endeavor, the City hired a team of expert consultants in specialized subject areas that included TIP Strategies (an economic development consultant), Heartland (a real estate advisory & investment consultant), and the Retail Coach (a retail recruitment & development consultant). This consultant team ("Team") built on the then, recent "Imagine Auburn" public outreach and participation plan that had been implemented for the preparation of the city's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The City's Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Ordinance No. 6584 on December 4, 2015.

The development of the resultant, Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan, took 11 months to prepare and included its own outreach effort to inform its contents. The Team conducted extensive public input reaching out to more than 200 employers, community and regional leaders, residents, and other stakeholders. The Team also prepared a detailed analysis of demographic, economic, and market data for the City and regional context. The research and methodology are described on Page 8 of the Plan. The goals and strategies were also informed by the consulting team's knowledge of trends and best practices that shape economic development outcomes and programs across the nation. The result is a set of strategies and actions that will propel the City of Auburn forward towards its vision for 2025. The Findings of the investigative effort are described starting at Page 11 of the document.

The timing of the preparation of the Plan was timely due to both the then, recent adoption of the guiding document--the City's Comprehensive Plan--and due Auburn's key location in the path of path of growth radiating from Seattle and the assets and attractiveness of Auburn as expressed by some important early development projects. In addition, this Plan is more

extensive in scope and greater in depth than preparation of past economic development strategy document efforts by the City.

DISCUSSION

At the October 16th, 2018 Planning Commission meeting, staff would like to introduce and discuss some text changes to the City's Comprehensive Plan to recognize and incorporate the City's Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan. A summary of the City's Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan is provided at Pages 1 through 4 of the document. For this discussion, in addition to a copy of the Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan, the following excerpts of the City's Comprehensive Plan documents will be provided showing ~~strike through~~ and underline changes to show deletions and additions, respectively:

- Volume 6 - The Economic Development Element, Pages ED-1 through ED-6.
- Core Plan, Policy Elements Section, - Economic Development Policy Element, Pages C4-16 through C4-17.
- Appendices (While this document is not provided, it is intended to be updated to add to the listing, the Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan.), Page A-1

Please note that due to incompatibility of the word processing software used for publishing the Comprehensive Plan document and the editing software to show strike through and underline changes to show deletions and additions to show the Planning Commission, the formatting does not show properly. Because of the two-column format used in the Comprehensive Plan document, many words that were hyphenated due to line breaks continue to inaccurately show as hyphenated when no longer at the end of a line. There are also a few other formatting issues. These formatting corrections will be made in the final version.

Key Changes/Points:

As part of the 2018 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments, the city seeks to change the Comprehensive Plan to recognize and incorporate the Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan. The main changes to the Comprehensive Plan document include:

- Change wording to ensure consistency and agreement with the Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan. It is appropriate to change the Comprehensive Plan to ensure consistency.
- Update information due to the passage of time.
- Update wording to increase clarity and understanding.
- Align the policy statements with the strategies/actions listed in the Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan. However, since the Comprehensive Plan document is a policy document while the Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan is an

implementation tool, not every strategy or action listed will have will have a corresponding policy statement.

- Also, please note that because the documents were prepared at different times and have different source information that is important to the context of each document, the statistics cited may not always agree between the two documents.
- The Comprehensive Plan continues to reference an earlier city-prepared year 2005 Economic Development Strategies Brochure since some of the mapped “special planning areas” continue to be referenced within the Comprehensive Plan and show on the accompanying maps. It is appropriate to continue to reference to this earlier document as a source of this historical information and ensure consistency.
- The Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan contains a future action of identifying and designating “target investment areas” as smaller geographic areas of the city to be to be determined and targeted for directing growth. The purpose and criteria for designating these future areas is described on Page 28.

Next Steps:

Staff would like to proceed with publishing a hearing notice and conducting a hearing on these changes to the Comprehensive Plan for the November 7th Planning Commission meeting.

Attachments:

Attachment A - Volume 6 - The Economic Development Element of the Comp. Plan
Attachment B - Core Plan, Policy Elements Section - specifically the Economic Development Policy Element of the Comp. Plan
Attachment C - Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan

Reviewed by Council Committees:

Other: Planning

Councilmember:

Staff:

Dixon

Meeting Date: October 16, 2018

Item Number:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ELEMENT
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Values	ED-3
Planning Approach (Goal 17)	ED-4

VOLUME 6

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

VISION

Auburn is a community ~~that has~~ with a robust and diverse economy where businesses seek to locate, ~~that~~ people desire to visit, and ~~where~~ residents enjoy a range of commercial offerings. Businesses that locate in Auburn find it easy to enter the marketplace, encounter ideal conditions for their long-term success, and become rooted and involved in the community. Visitors continue to return to Auburn because of its high-quality natural resources, parks, public spaces, and commercial attractions. Residents choose to live in Auburn because of the diverse, family wage employment opportunities, and access to entertainment, restaurant, retail, and services.

Conditions and Trends

Historical Trends: Historically, a variety of factors have shaped Auburn's economy. At the turn of the 20th century, the City offered services to support agriculture and the railroads. Downtown offered a full range of services and retail opportunities. In later years, automotive sales became a significant factor.

As urbanization of the region expanded to include Auburn, the vitality of downtown Auburn was impacted by new shopping malls that were located outside the community, and by changes in retail trends. At the same time, Auburn saw increased importance as a home to large industrial and warehousing operations. This same period saw the growth of retail along commercial "strips" such as Auburn Way and 15th Street NW. Large retailers such as Fred Meyer, and many major supermarket chains, chose to locate in the community.

The development of the SuperMall of the Great Northwest (now called The Outlet Collection) in the 1990s led to Auburn becoming a major player in the regional retail market. Auburn shoppers no longer needed to leave the City to visit retail malls for many of their purchases. During that same decade, Emerald Downs and the Muckleshoot Casino also contributed to commercial recreation facilities in Auburn and their associated employment growth.

Today, Auburn provides approximately 41,000 jobs for residents throughout the region. Auburn has a strong industrial sector that includes Boeing, the General Service Administration, and numerous warehouse and distribution facilities. Multicare and a growing medical office community also provide a significant number of jobs. The retail and service sectors are expanding as small businesses are created. Educational uses such as the Auburn School District and Green River College also add to the area's employment base.

While development has continued throughout the City, downtown Auburn remains the heart and soul of the community. With its historical character and pedestrian-oriented development pattern, downtown Auburn reflects many of the qualities that other communities are seeking to achieve. Given its urban center designation, Auburn Station, and the incentives the City has in place, downtown Auburn remains poised for continued revitalization.

Employment Growth: Between 1995 to 2013, the number of jobs located in Auburn increased by 46%. While historically manufacturing jobs were the largest category, the 2010 Census indicated that service jobs were the most dominant, followed by manufacturing. The remaining job categories all experienced job growth. The number of retail jobs increased substantially, as did jobs in warehousing, transportation, and communication industries.

It is expected that Auburn's employment base will continue to grow in the future. The King and Pierce County Countywide planning policies project that Auburn's job base will increase by just over 20,000 jobs through 2031. It should be noted that this number is not a maximum, but rather the City's most recent assigned share of future projected growth ~~by in the~~ County.

Retail Sales: Auburn's business community is keeping pace with both Auburn's population growth and its increasing number of affluent households. Between 2005 and 2008, retail sales in Auburn increased by roughly 7% or 8% per year. Following implementation of streamlined sales tax in 2008 and the global economic decline, sales tax revenues dropped by 16.5% in 2009. Since 2009, revenues have increased by 34%.

Streamlined Sales Tax: The state of Washington adopted "streamlined sales tax" (SST) legislation in 2008. Prior to streamlined sales tax, sales tax collection in Washington State was based on site of origin rather than site of delivery. Under the SST tax structure, sales tax is collected at the site of delivery rather than at the location from which items are shipped. This change in tax structure has put Auburn at a disadvantage and negatively impacts its tax revenue.

Specifically, Auburn and similar cities have historically invested in infrastructure to support businesses engaged in warehouse and distribution activities that ship goods to other destinations. Another concern for Auburn and similar cities that have invested in infrastructure include how the debt that has already been extended for such infrastructure will be paid and how the loss of a significant source of revenue will affect bond ratings.

Based on the potential passage of SST, the Auburn City Council approved Resolution No. 3782 in November 2004. Resolution No. 3782 outlines an approach and actions the City will take related to land use planning, zoning and other matters in the event a streamlined sales tax proposal or other similar proposals that change the tax structure are adopted.

Because of the state of Washington's implementation of sales tax mitigation payments to cities such as Auburn, the impact resulting from streamlined sales tax has been somewhat lessened. However, the continued availability of these payments is not certain due in part to the State's current and anticipated fiscal challenges. In addition, the amount of payments does not equal the total loss in revenue to the City. The City's economic development strategies are dependent upon the City being able to continue a strong public investment program in infrastructure and services. The City's ability to continue this public investment is contingent upon maintaining solvent public revenue streams, particularly sales tax. Sales tax is the largest source of monies to the City's General Fund, approximately 30 percent in 2010. The City anticipates that current and long-term fiscal challenges facing the state of Washington will likely results in the dissolution of the current sales tax revenue mitigation program. The eventual loss of the aforementioned sales tax revenue will directly and adversely affect the City's ability to adequately fund the capital infrastructure and services necessary to support the realization of the City's economic development strategies. This is especially applicable to industrial areas supporting warehouse and distribution centers that are origin based in nature.

In 2005 the City of Auburn brought together a focus group of diverse business and community interests that identified several economic development areas within the City. The focus group's effort is reflected in an *Economic Development Strategies document (brochure)* that includes strategies and actions needed to affect necessary change for specific strategy areas within the city. Implementation of these strategies is intended to enable the City to achieve the City's economic development potential. Implementation of actions and strategies in the *Economic Development Strategies* is appropriate and reflected in various elements of the Auburn Comprehensive Plan.

Since the development of the previous 2005 Economic Development Strategies brochure document, additional "economic development strategy areas" have been identified to include the SE 312th Street/124th Avenue SE corridor within the ~~recently~~ annexed portion of Lea Hill and M Street SE between Auburn Way

North and Auburn Way South.

These “economic development strategy areas” are identified as a subcategory of the Special Planning Areas described in Volume 1, Land Use Element.

introduCtion

In October of 2015 the City of Auburn initiated the process for developing a Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan (TEDSP) to guide the City's economic development activities over the next 10 years (to the year 2025). The Plan was completed in November of 2016 and will outlines a key set of strategies and actions within four focus areas that build upon the City's current asset base and assist the City in overcoming challenges. The plan will-sets forth strategies to also-facilitate the growth and expansion of existing industry and business sectors as well as promote investment in targeted-redevelopment in target investment areascorridors. Finally, the TEDSPstrategic-plan will-addresses both the needs and the impediments of existing business while defin- ing strategy approaches for attracting and cultivating new businesses.

The first phase of the TEDSP project development involved a consulting team of technical experts conducting will-involve a comprehensive communitywide stakeholder input process and included detailed community analyses that will allow the team to understand Auburn's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. In the next phase of the project, the team will-identifiedy and refined the City's most promising economic development opportunities by conducting a market capacity study, perception study, and target industry analysis. In the last phase of the project, the team will-identifiedy specific goals, strategies, and actions to capitalize on the City's its opportunities. The TEDSPfinal-plan will-includes an implementation matrix that identifies assigns-responsibility and prioritizes timing into short-, mid-, and long-term timeframes., outlines timing, and estimates costs.

The TEDSP project aims to better position recognizes the City of Auburn as a great places to live, learn, work, and play. The Plan will balances the needs of existing businesses with the need to expand and diversify the City's employment base. The recommended strategies and actions will increase employment in the City

as well as its commercial tax base.

The TEDSPplan-will-be-was completed and approved by Resolution No. 5256 of the Auburn City Council on November 21, 2016 by August 31, 2016. The Economic Development Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan is will-be amended to incorporate the findings, specific goals, strategies, and actions of the Ten 40-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan following City Council approvalas a supplementary report incorporated in the Appendix.

Auburn's economic base drives and shapes the community and region. Auburn residents and the surrounding region benefit from the jobs and services Auburn's economic base offers. Through the payment of sales, property and other taxes, the City of Auburn can fund and provide services and public facilities that Auburn residents demand and/or require.

It is clearly in the City's best interest to maintain and expand our economic base in unison with implementing all of the goals of this Comprehensive Plan. This section of the Comprehensive Plan will help to define the City's goals and policies in this vital area.

Values

Character: Our cultural diversity has been leveraged to bind our community, expand our market, and celebrate cultural traditions.

Wellness: We are a safe community with walkable commercial districts where the perception and reality are that crime activity is low and public safety staffing meets or exceeds the community's expectations.

Service: Our economic development strategies focus on both, supporting the existing business community; as well as as-a-result, recruitment of new businesses to expand and diversify the City's quality of place. ~~is minimal because businesses desire to locate here.~~

Economy: We are able to measure and achieve defined targets for manufacturing, service, and retail jobs and revenues.

Celebration: We actively promote our local businesses and have been successful at making our residents more aware of what is available locally as well as attracting visitors from beyond our City.

Environment: Our economy is growing and diversifying because of our efforts to protect our rivers, streams, wetlands, and other environmental resources.

Sustainability: Residents are staying in Auburn to work and shop, and we are widely considered a regional dining, shopping, and entertainment destination.

Planning Approach

To ensure the long-term economic health of the City and the region through a diversified economic base that supports a wide range of employment opportunities for Auburn's residents and those of the region, and through the promotion of quality industrial and commercial development that matches the aspirations of the community.

Objectives and Policies

Objective 9.1. Promote a diversified economic base capable of withstanding changes in interest rates, inflation, tax structure and market conditions.

Policies

- ED-1 City promotion of new industry shall be directed at attracting business that diversifies the City's tax base, offers secure, quality employment opportunities, is sensitive to community values, and promotes the development of attractive facilities.
- ED-2 Emerald Downs, the Muckleshoot Casino, and the Outlet Collection offer opportunities for economic diversification that should be optimized by the City.
- ED-3 The importance of downtown Auburn as a unique retail environment and subregional center of commerce should be considered in the City's economic plan.

Objective 9.2. Produce commercial and industrial siting policies that are based on the assessment of local needs and the availability of transportation and other infrastructure required to serve it.

Policies

- ED-4 Development of industrial areas should be based on performance standards appropriate for their sites, with appropriate flexibility within those standards to accommodate changing market conditions.
- ED-5 Revitalize depreciated and/or obsolete commercial and industrial sites through innovative regulations that redesign such sites in accordance with modern design

standards and industrial/commercial uses.

- ED-6 Land uses that serve regional needs and purposes (such as major industrial plants) must be separated from community-serving uses in order to minimize traffic and other conflicts.

Objective 9.3. Develop and implement effective land use policies and economic development strategies that provide long-term and stable employment, increase per capita income, and reduce the tax burden of Auburn residents.

Policies

- ED-7 Auburn should continue to provide an economic base not only for the Auburn area but also for the South King County and North Pierce County regions.
- ED-8 Implementation of economic development programs shall be consistent with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. ~~this plan.~~
- ED-9 The City has developed a Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan (TEDSP) and should develop a formal economic development strategy incorporated as a supplementary report in Appendix n—element—of the Comprehensive Plan. ~~The TEDSP that~~ specifically identifies the types of businesses that are most consistent with community aspirations, and sets forth lay out a program to attract those businesses.
 - a. The City should work cooperatively with other governmental agencies in its economic development efforts, including the Muckleshoot Tribe, King County, Pierce County, the Port of Seattle, and the State of Washington.
 - b. The City should implement its economic development strategy through partnerships with private sector organizations.
 - c. Identified in the 2005 *Economic Development Strategies* brochure documents are six strategy areas and two additional strategy areas. These

City of Auburn Comprehensive Plan
economic development strategy areas
target increase in population and
employment growth to ~~that~~ meet the
City's 20-year (2031) growth target.
Subarea plans

should be developed for these strategy areas. The economic development strategy areas are as follows:

- Auburn Way North Corridor
- Auburn Way South corridor
- Urban Center
- Auburn Environmental Park and Green Zone
- 15th Street SW/C Street SW/West Valley Highway/SuperMall
- A Street SE corridor
- SE 312th Street/124th Avenue SE corridor
- M Street SE between Auburn Way North and Auburn South

ED-10 Ensure that the economic development strategies and actions as set forth in the Ten-Year Economic Development Strategy Plan are periodically reviewed at regular intervals~~regularly~~ in order to be flexible and respond to changes in the market.

ED-11 The City should support economic development activity through workforce development programs to provide training and employment with work~~with~~ the private sector, school districts, and Green River College ~~to develop programs to provide training~~. Consideration of the special needs of economically disadvantaged residents and neighborhoods, and people with physical impairments and developmental disabilities, should be included in these programs.

ED-12 Engage with agencies that support multimodal transportation infrastructure including Puget Sound Regional Council, Sound Transit, King Co. Metro and Pierce Transit. The City should continue to advocate for funding to support transportation improvements ~~Support continued development of the Sound Transit Commuter Rail system~~ as an important means of expanding the City's and the region's economic base.

ED-13 City infrastructure plans and programs should consider economic development plans and programs.

ED-14 Implement the recommendations of the City's 2005 Economic Development Strategies brochure, including the addition of the SE 312th Street/124th Avenue SE corridor, and M Street SE between Auburn Way North and Auburn Way South. The City's 20-year housing and employment growth shall be concentrated in these economic development strategy areas.

ED-15 Warehouse and distribution land uses are not preferred long-term economic development and land use priorities for industrially zoned areas of the City, due to: the loss of sales tax revenue associated with the State's implementation of streamlined sales tax legislation in 2008; no substantive contribution to an increase in per capita income for Auburn residents; no reduction in the tax burden of Auburn residents; low employment densities, lower property values; and land use inefficiencies.

ED-16 Increasing the utilization of land for manufacturing and industrial land uses should be the City's preferred economic development and land use priority for industrially zoned areas of the City that are currently dominated by warehouse and distribution land uses. The City should promote and create incentives for new manufacturing and light industrial uses, and for the gradual conversion of existing warehouse and distribution land uses to manufacturing and sales tax generating industrial land uses.

ED-17 To support continued sales tax revenue growth opportunities in the City, those areas currently dominated by existing warehouse land uses that abut existing commercial retail areas, and that could take advantage of this proximity to realize substantive value by changing to commercial retail uses, should be considered for changes in the Comprehensive Plan and zoning designations that would facilitate the conversion of these properties to commercial retail use.

ED-18 Regulatory and financial incentives will be identified and implemented where appropriate to provide increased opportunities and encourage the establishment of new or expanded manufacturing

and industrial uses and jobs in the City.

~~ED-19 Support workforce development programs to help all Auburn residents find stable, well-paying employment in a wide range of industries.~~

Objective 9.4. Maintain an adequate supply of land to support future economic development and to assure the availability of economic opportunities for future generations.

Policies

ED-20 Economic development programs should be viewed as a way to shape the character of the City's future economy, rather than merely a way to respond to market trends as they occur.

ED-21 Land suitable for large-scale development in the ~~areas region-serving area~~ of the City ~~that contain regional-serving uses~~ should be identified and designated for economic development.

- a. The integrity of large contiguously owned properties suitable for industrial use should be conserved by the use of appropriate industrial subdivision standards.
- b. The City should identify and ~~assist in resolution~~ assist in ~~of~~ any environmental constraints affecting such land by means of appropriate environmental review procedures as early as technically feasible.
- c. The need to support such land with the necessary infrastructure should be considered in the development of the City's public facility plans.

- d. Innovative and flexible development regulations should be utilized to enable the development of environmentally constrained sites while protecting those characteristics.

Objective 9.5. Utilize the City's unique environmental opportunities and planned infrastructure to build on and support economic development efforts.

Policies

ED-22 Integrate the Auburn Environmental Park into the City's economic development ~~strategies of~~ strategies by encouraging compatible ~~high-tech~~ sustainable businesses to locate in its vicinity.

ED-23 Utilize the future extension of I Street NE as an economic development opportunity. Development of I Street NE should establish it as a stand-alone corridor and not a "back side" to Auburn Way North. Conditional use permit applications for commercial uses and nursing homes along this corridor, whose impacts can be adequately mitigated, should be supported.

ED-24 Use the M Street SE underpass and the development of the M Street SE and R Street SE bypass connection as opportunities to create and encourage the clustering of complementary businesses and services in that area.

IMAGINE AUBURN

CITY OF AUBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

CORE PLAN



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goals

Character: Our cultural diversity has been leveraged to bind our community, expand our market, and celebrate cultural traditions.

Wellness: We are a safe community with walkable commercial districts, where both the perception and the reality are that crime activity is low and public safety staffing meets or exceeds community expectations.

Service: Our economic development strategies focus on supporting the existing business community; and on recruitment of new businesses that diversify tax base and revitalize target areas. Recruitment is facilitated by as a result, ~~recruitment is minimal because~~ businesses desire to locate here.

Economy: We are able to measure and achieve defined targets for manufacturing, service, and retail jobs and revenues.

Celebration: We actively promote our local businesses and have been successful at making our residents more aware of what is available locally as well as attracting visitors from beyond our City.

Environment: Our economy is growing and diversifying because of our efforts to protect our rivers, streams, wetlands, and other environmental resources.

Sustainability: Residents are staying in Auburn to work and shop, and we are widely considered to be a regional dining, shopping, and entertainment destination.

Description

Auburn's economic base drives and shapes the community and region. Auburn's residents and the surrounding region benefit from the jobs and services Auburn's economic base offers. Through the payment of sales, property, and other taxes, the City of Auburn can fund and provide services and public facilities that Auburn residents require.

It is in the City's best interest to maintain and expand our economic base in unison with implementing all of the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. This section of the plan will help to define the City's goals and policies in this vital area.

Policies

1. Attract high-wage employment opportunities and sales tax generating businesses to diversify the City's economic base and generate positive secondary benefits for the community.
2. Assist business organizations in developing and implementing new or improved product development opportunities to increase sales tax revenue collections.
3. Dedicate resources to pursue an expanded economic development program for the City.
4. Develop a stronger and unified ~~clear and elaborate~~ City branding strategy along with a more positive perception and sense of community.
5. Create an economic development toolbox comprising programs and incentives to reduce financial, regulatory, and operational constraints for existing or new business growth and expansion.
6. Prioritize the installation of key infrastructure at a few "target investment areas" ~~identified employment areas~~ to facilitate development of these economic centers.

economic Development action Plan	Lead	Partners
Short Term (2016–2018)		
Adopt and implement a City 10-year Economic Development Strategic Plan	Mayor's Office	City Council, CDPW*, Finance
Moderate Term (2019–2025)		
In 2021, update Economic Development Policy Element.	Mayor's Office	City Council, Planning Commission, City Attorney, CDPW
In 2022, update city zoning regulations to be consistent with update to Economic Development Element	Mayor's Office	City Council, Planning Commission, City Attorney, CDPW
Long Term (2026–2035)		
In 2028, update Economic Development Element.	Mayor's Office	City Council, Planning Commission, City Attorney, CDPW
In 2029, update city zoning regulations to be consistent with update to Economic Development Policy Element	Mayor's Office	City Council, Planning Commission, City Attorney, CDPW

* CDPW = Community Development and Public Works.

PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

Goals

Character: A mix of small urban parks, natural areas, sports complexes, and community buildings offers a full range of recreational services.

Wellness: Parks are well advertised, maintained, and are safe locations during all hours.

Service: Parks and park programming are accessible to all segments of the population.

Economy: Our parks and natural spaces are a major reason cited by businesses and residents for choosing to locate here and choosing to stay.

Celebration: A mix of large and small parks is being used for local, neighborhood, citywide, and regional events.

Environment: Parks, open spaces, and natural areas are designated, designed, and maintained in a manner that respects the environment and natural setting.

Sustainability: Park development and maintenance has an identified long-term funding source that ensures that the system grows and improves.

Description

Parks, arts, open space, and recreation facilities are an essential amenity to maintain a high quality of life in the community. As the population of Auburn grows, the demand for parks, recreational programs, arts and culture, and open space will continue to increase. To maintain Auburn's quality of life, the supply of parks and programs must keep pace with the demand associated with a growing population.

NOVEMBER 16, 2016



CITY OF AUBURN, WASHINGTON

TEN-YEAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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TIP STRATEGIES, INC. is a privately held economic development consulting firm with offices in Austin and Seattle. TIP is committed to providing quality solutions for public and private-sector clients. Established in 1995, the firm's primary focus is economic development strategic planning.

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HEARTLAND

HEARTLAND is a Seattle-based real estate advisory and investment firm with over 30 years of experience designing, analyzing, and implementing strategies to manage risk and optimize value in all aspects of both the built and natural environment. Our five business lines include public-sector advisory, private-sector advisory, capital markets, brokerage services and investment.

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TheRetailCoach

RETAIL COACH is a premier national retail recruitment and development consulting firm, founded by C. Kelly Cofer, President and Chief Executive Officer. Since 2000, The Retail Coach has provided the research, relationships and strategies to achieve retail recruitment and development results that have helped more than 350 communities throughout the US become better, stronger places to live and work through an expanded sales tax base.

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The Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan was adopted by the Auburn City Council in Resolution No. 5256 on November 21, 2016.

Auburn City Council: Largo Wales, Claude DaCorsi, Bill Peloza, Yolanda Trout-Manuel, John Holman, Rich Wagner, Bob Baggett

RESOLUTION NO. 5 2 5 6

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
AUBURN, WASHINGTON, APPROVING THE CITY OF AUBURN
TEN-YEAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

WHEREAS, in the fall of 2015, the City of Auburn embarked on a process to develop an Economic Development Strategic Plan; and

WHEREAS, it was intended that this plan could provide a guideline for the City's economic development activities over the next decade; and

WHEREAS, to assist in this endeavor, the City hired a team that included TIP Strategies, Heartland, and the Retail Coach. Building on the recent Imagine Auburn Comprehensive Plan, the consulting team developed this strategic plan with the input of more than 200 stakeholders and based on findings from a detailed analysis of demographic, economic, and market data; and

WHEREAS, the goals and strategies were also informed by the consulting team's knowledge of trends and best practices that shape economic development outcomes and programs across the nation. The result is a set of goals, strategies, and actions that will propel the City of Auburn forward towards its vision for 2025; and

WHEREAS, the City's development and adoption of this strategic plan is timely. Auburn is in the path of growth and has already attracted high-profile investments in multi-family housing (Trek Apartments and Merrill Gardens), manufacturing (Orion Industries), and community services (Junior Achievement); and

CITY OF AUBURN

WHEREAS, these successful investments highlight Auburn's competitive advantages, its central location, historic downtown, regional transportation linkages, and access to labor; and

WHEREAS, the spillover growth from Seattle is just beginning in Auburn. With large tracts of land coming into to play, such as the 129-acre General Services Administration (GSA) Complex and the 70-acre Valley Drive-In, and the momentum that has already built up around Auburn, the City is wise to contemplate how it wants to grow so it can be better positioned to guide its future; and

WHEREAS, Auburn can and should harness Seattle's success to shape its own economic development future as a vibrant, connected City with a strong and diverse employment base; and

WHEREAS, the City of Auburn should also build opportunity from within by encouraging companies to start, stay, and grow in the City. All of this work must be accomplished without losing sight of its purpose: to benefit the citizens of Auburn and provide employment opportunities for the children that grow up there; and

WHEREAS, this work will take discipline and direction, leadership and collaboration, and patience and perseverance across the City and multiple partners. The City of Auburn's Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan provides the foundation and lays out the framework to coordinate the City's transformation into a unique and thriving hub in the Seattle-Tacoma region.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUBURN, WASHINGTON, HEREBY RESOLVES as follows:

CITY OF AUBURN

Section 1. That the Economic Development Plan, a copy of which is attached hereto, marked as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein by this reference, is adopted as the City of Auburn Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Section 2. That the Mayor is authorized to implement such administrative procedures as may be necessary to carry out the directives of this legislation.

Section 3. That this Resolution shall take effect and be in full force upon passage and signatures hereon.

Dated and Signed this _____ day of _____, 2016.

CITY OF AUBURN

NANCY BACKUS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Danielle E. Daskam, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Daniel B. Heid, City Attorney

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the fall of 2015, the City of Auburn embarked on a process to develop an economic development strategic plan. This plan will provide a guide for the City's economic development activities and investment over the next decade. To assist in this endeavor, the City hired a team that included TIP Strategies, Heartland, and the Retail Coach. Building on the recent Imagine Auburn Comprehensive Plan, the consulting team developed this strategic plan with the input of more than 200 stakeholders and based on findings from a detailed analysis of demographic, economic, and market data. The goals and strategies were also informed by the consulting team's knowledge of trends and best practices that shape economic development outcomes and programs across the nation. The result is a set of goals, strategies, and actions that will propel the City of Auburn forward towards its vision for 2025.

The City's development and adoption of this strategic plan is timely. Auburn is in the path of growth and has already attracted high-profile investments in multi-family housing (Trek Apartments and Merrill Gardens), manufacturing (Orion Industries), and community services (Junior Achievement). These successful investments highlight Auburn's competitive advantages—its central location, historic downtown, regional transportation linkages, and access to labor. But the spillover growth from Seattle is just beginning in Auburn. With large tracts of land likely to be redeveloped, such as the 129-acre General Services Administration (GSA) Complex and the 70-acre Valley Drive-In, and the momentum that has already built up around Auburn, the City is wise to contemplate how it wants to grow so it can be better positioned to guide its future.

Auburn can and should harness Seattle's success to shape its own economic development future as a vibrant, connected City with a strong and diverse employment base. It should also build opportunity from within by encouraging companies to start, stay, and grow in the City. All of this work must be accomplished without losing sight of its purpose: to benefit the citizens of Auburn and provide employment opportunities for the children that grow up there.

This work will take discipline and direction, leadership and collaboration, and patience and perseverance across the City and multiple partners. The City of Auburn's Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan provides the foundation and lays out the framework to coordinate the City's growth as a unique and thriving hub in the Seattle-Tacoma region.

AUBURN'S TARGET INDUSTRIES

As part of the analysis, the consulting team examined industry data, Auburn's competitive positioning, as well as available buildings and sites in order to identify a set of industries to target with marketing and outreach efforts related to business attraction. A look at the top ten traded industry clusters reveals the growth potential for four key sectors in Auburn's economy:



MANUFACTURING



**DISTRIBUTION,
LOGISTICS &
TRANSPORTATION**



**OFFICE-USING
BUSINESSES**



RETAIL

Within each of these broad sectors, niches were identified that are good fits for Auburn and likely to expand in Auburn. Detailed information on each of the sectors can be found in Appendices C and F.

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY: FOCUS AREAS & STRATEGIES

The strategic plan is structured around four focus areas that have the potential to set the stage for Auburn's success through a more robust, proactive, and focused economic development program. The four areas were derived from key findings from an analysis of the City's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The SWOT analysis summarizes the input of more than 200 stakeholders and augmented by the results of the various analyses carried out by the consulting team that were components of the planning process. The strategies that support each of the four areas will help address Auburn's primary weaknesses and position it to capitalize on its principal opportunities.

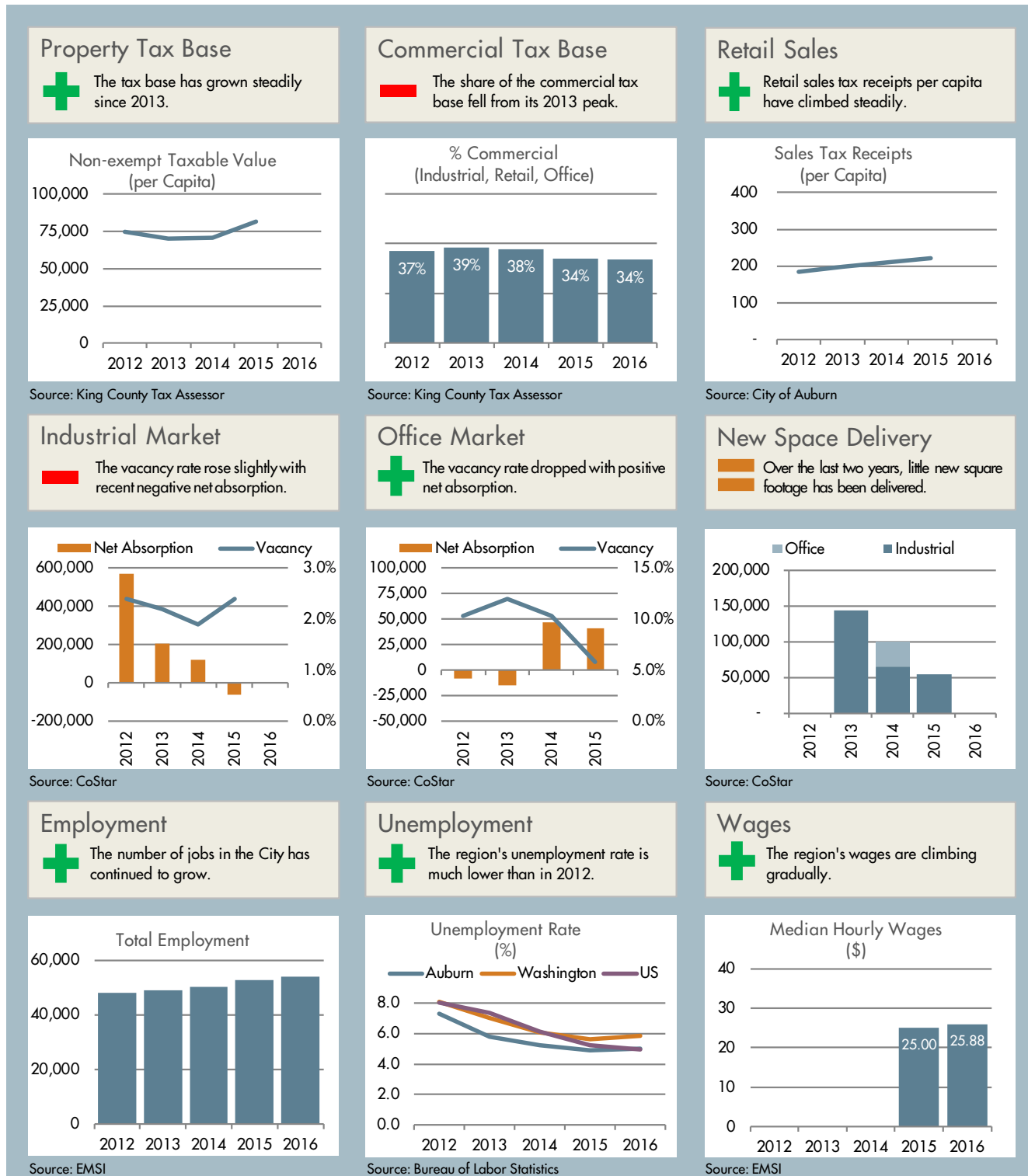
These focus areas and their supporting strategies are summarized below. Detailed actions for each of the strategies are provided on pages 4 through 36 of the Strategic Plan.

 <p>1. DELIVERY <i>A comprehensive service delivery system that actively identifies and advances economic development opportunities in Auburn</i></p>	 <p>2. PRODUCT <i>An inventory of sites, a business climate, and a physical environment that foster business growth and ensure a resilient employment base</i></p>
<p>1.1 Value-Added Services. Clearly define the services that the City of Auburn provides to businesses both directly and through partnerships</p> <p>1.2 Local Business Visitation. Formalize a business visitation program in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to track trends among Auburn employers and identify any businesses in need of assistance</p> <p>1.3 Business Recruitment. Recruit new businesses, including retail, to Auburn to provide better economic opportunities and enhance Auburn's quality of place</p> <p>1.4 Catalyst Projects. Identify and advance catalyst projects that will facilitate Auburn's evolution</p> <p>1.5 Strategic Relationships. Foster relationships with key entities that support economic activity in the City</p>	<p>2.1 Labor Market Information. Design and maintain information resources that demonstrate Auburn's strength in terms of its access to skilled labor</p> <p>2.2 Deal-Ready Sites. Ensure a supply of deal-ready sites to accommodate new business investment in Auburn</p> <p>2.3 Economic Development Toolbox. Create a robust toolbox to influence economic development outcomes</p> <p>2.4 Continuous Process Improvement. Evaluate and continue to improve the City's land use and building permit process and performance</p> <p>2.5 Zoning Modification. Reevaluate zoning districts and modify certain aspects of the code</p> <p>2.6 Cost Comparison. Annually compare Auburn's development/impact fees, tax rates, and rebate programs to peers</p>

 <p>3. PLACE <i>Attractive gateways, impression corridors, and destinations that define the character of Auburn</i></p>	 <p>4. MESSAGING <i>A coordinated marketing and branding campaign that elevates Auburn's reputation among internal and external audiences</i></p>
<p>3.1 Strategic Investment. Create a target investment program to guide infrastructure investments that enhance Auburn's economic development opportunities</p> <p>3.2 Regional Transportation. Maintain and enhance regional transportation connections to ensure ease of travel to, from, and within Auburn</p> <p>3.3 Downtown Revitalization. Continue to invest in downtown revitalization</p> <p>3.4 Auburn Way South Revitalization. Designate Auburn Way South as an additional Targeted Investment Area</p> <p>3.5 Destination Connections. Create stronger connections between Auburn's primary tourism assets and develop new assets to attract more visitors to Auburn</p> <p>3.6 Regional Tourism. Strengthen regional tourism connections</p>	<p>4.1 Brand Enhancement. Develop a stronger brand for Auburn and reinforce this with unified messaging across organizations</p> <p>4.2 Internal Image. Build a more positive perception and a greater sense of community among Auburn residents through a strong partnership with the Auburn Reporter and other local media outlets</p> <p>4.3 Social Media. Continue to strengthen the City's social media strategy to improve Auburn's internal and external perceptions</p> <p>4.4 Public Relations. Launch a formal public relations campaign to change the region's perception of Auburn</p> <p>4.5 Real Estate Market Reports. Develop a system for effective communication to the marketplace that educates businesses, developers, and brokers on opportunities available in the City</p> <p>4.6 Strategic Outreach. Reach out to decision makers in the target industries to encourage them to consider expanding or relocating in Auburn</p>

The City of Auburn's Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan is an ambitious plan that will require specialized staff and additional resources to implement. The transition to a more robust and proactive economic development program necessitates additional capacity in deal making; economic and market research; prospecting and prospect management; real estate finance; as well as marketing and outreach. Most municipally run economic development departments or offices that undertake this type of comprehensive economic development program are staffed by three to four specialists. Over the next three years, the City of Auburn must build up its economic development capacity, both in terms of staff and operating budget, in order to execute on these recommended strategies. The ideal staffing pattern would be an experienced economic developer supported by three economic development specialists (business development, marketing, and redevelopment) in addition to the tourism coordinator and real estate analyst.

Successful implementation will require not only additional resources but also an evaluation system that will demonstrate progress and provide feedback to the City about which strategies are working and which must be strengthened. Below is dashboard of outcome measures that should be tracked over the course of implementation. A more comprehensive list of metrics and measurement tools can be found on page 51.



INTRODUCTION

The City of Auburn (the City) benefits from a number of advantages including a rich cultural and economic history and a hard-working, civic-minded community. Auburn takes pride in its unique history while looking to the future. The annual Veterans Day Parade is an example of the value placed on family, community, and country by the City. From its origins as a farming community that capitalized on its access to rail, the City has transformed into a center for industry. The City's manufacturing sector expanded and includes one of Boeing Commercial Airplanes' most essential fabrication sites and the largest airplane parts plant in the world. The community's commitment to quality of place is demonstrated by the Auburn Environmental Park (a 200-acre passive open space and educational facility located one mile west of downtown) and the attention to detail given to civic spaces in recent downtown redevelopment projects. Nothing could be more emblematic of the community's focus on its future than Junior Achievement's World Learning Center in Auburn, which holds the successful BizTown and Finance Park programs that serve children around western Washington. The Innovation Partnership Zone further illustrates Auburn's forward-thinking approach and demonstrates its focus on economic success through partnerships.

Even with all of its successes, the City understands that the only path to a sustainable, healthy economy is through good jobs and a diversified economic base. Leaders have seen firsthand what happens when a single concentration of businesses in one industry is too large. The region boasts one of the country's largest clusters of distribution centers, of which the City has historically held a major concentration. These facilities were attracted to the area due to exceptional highway access and close proximity to two deep-water ports and an international airport. Despite low employment per building area, relatively low wage jobs, and the strain they place on city transportation infrastructure, these centers benefited the City because of the large amount of sales tax revenue they generated. However, in 2008, changes made by the Washington State legislature impacted these revenues. These changes redefined how the point-of-sale location was determined, moving it away from the distribution point. As a result, the City found itself facing all of the challenges of the industry without the associated tax revenue.

The City is at a pivotal time in its history. Over the last several years, remarkable development has taken place. New buildings have emerged and more are planned in and around the authentic downtown, like the recently completed 126-unit Trek Apartments, the 129-unit Merrill Gardens at Auburn that is currently under construction, and the 592-unit multifamily and senior housing development called the Reserve. New businesses are building and expanding in the community, such as Orion Industries' 100,000 square foot manufacturing facility that employs 265 people. Momentum has been built through hard work from elected leaders, City staff, and visionary business leaders and investors. With growth from Seattle spilling southward, the City will no doubt continue to see its own growth accelerate over the next ten years.

With the opportunity to shape its own future in mind, the City of Auburn embarked on a process to develop a ten-year economic development strategic plan to formalize its economic development program and transform it into a proactive, entrepreneurial effort. This plan will provide a guide for the City's economic development activities and investment over the next decade.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

To assist in the development of the strategic plan, the City hired a team that included TIP Strategies, Heartland, and the Retail Coach. The scope of work was comprehensive and ambitious and took place over the course of eleven months. The pieces of the scope are described below:

- **Deep dives into the economic context and Auburn’s real estate market fundamentals:** This task required an in-depth analysis of Auburn’s position in the region versus its peer communities from the standpoint of demographics, schools, housing, job growth, tax rates and fees, and industrial and office markets (rents, stock, age, and development). The findings from this task painted a clear picture of Auburn’s strengths and weaknesses within the region.
- **A regulatory review:** A review of the regulatory environment (both policy and process) provided insights into any constraints to development in Auburn.
- **A market capacity study:** Heartland estimated the square footage of office and industrial space needed to meet the demand from projected job growth and compared this figure to the amount of square footage the remaining developable land could support. This comparison provides a tool to evaluate whether or not Auburn can support future job growth.
- **An analysis of retail opportunities:** The Retail Coach defined Auburn’s retail trade areas and analyzed the demographics and psychographics of these areas to identify potential retailers that would be a good fit for Auburn. They assisted the City in creating and distributing customized marketing materials to these target retailers and worked with the City to identify potential sites for interested retailers. Their deliverables provide tools for the Economic Development Division and community partners to use when recruiting retail. These tools include demographic profiles for the retail trade areas, an interactive mapping application, and general instructions on how to use the information to target retailers.
- **A perception survey:** A survey to regional commercial real estate brokers documented the perceptions they hold about Auburn.
- **An assessment of Auburn’s competitive positioning:** This task assessed Auburn’s relative positioning based on the top ten factors that are important to corporate site selection and location.
- **Target industry analysis and profiles:** TIP analyzed industry clusters and segments to identify industry niches to target for business recruitment. Once the categories of industries and specific niches were identified, detailed profiles were created as a tool for the Economic Development Division as they develop industry knowledge and position Auburn for success in targeted business recruitment.
- **A review of key marketing materials:** The City’s online presence is the most important tool for the Economic Development Division to support its outreach activities. TIP evaluated the existing economic development webpage and made recommendations to improve its effectiveness.
- **Organizational recommendations:** TIP evaluated the City’s capacity to implement the strategic plan and made recommendations for resources needed from an operational standpoint.

The resulting deliverables are included as supporting documentation and analysis. In addition, the team conducted extensive public input, reaching more than 200 employers, community and regional leaders, residents, and other stakeholders. The key findings from both of these exercises are summarized in the next section.

KEY FINDINGS

The key findings below provide the City, the Economic Development Division, and its economic development partners information about Auburn's competitive positioning—from both a business attraction and a development standpoint. It also identifies major constraints or barriers to economic development as well as key opportunities.

Demographics. The City of Auburn has been growing rapidly, adding almost 18,000 new residents over the last ten years. According to Esri, a leading data provider, the population of Auburn is expected to reach almost 85,000 residents by 2020. With a median age of 33.5 years old, Auburn's population is relatively young and the senior (age 65+) is smaller than many of its peers in the region. However, Auburn's population has lower educational attainment levels than many of its regional peers and has lower median household incomes.

Workforce. More than 37,000 residents are part of Auburn's labor force. However, Auburn-based employers draw labor from a large area that extends across densely populated areas of the Seattle-Tacoma region. In fact, more than 35,000 workers commute into Auburn each day for work while more than 25,000 workers leave Auburn for jobs outside of the city limits. Auburn's position within the region and its access to labor is one of its greatest strengths from a business attraction standpoint. Within a 45-minute drive time, there are an estimated 1.5 million workers.

Economy. Auburn has a diverse economic base with notably strong manufacturing and retail sectors. Auburn's employment base grew by more than 6,500 jobs (14 percent) between 2010 and 2015 and is projected to add another 6,400 over the next ten years. Though Auburn's manufacturing sector remains strong, the sector's outlook is largely dependent upon Boeing specifically and the aerospace industry more generally.

Tax Base. Sales tax and property tax revenues account for more than two-thirds of the City's sources of funds. This structure highlights the importance of a robust retail sector and a healthy commercial tax base. Motor vehicle sales are a vital part of the City's retail tax revenue. Industrial uses, aerospace-related being one of the largest, are the most prominent segments of the commercial tax base. The City's dependence on motor vehicle sales and aerospace could leave the City's revenue at-risk in light of current trends in these two industries.

Quality of Place. Auburn is fortunate to have a strong and improving school district and Green River College to provide educational opportunities and workforce training. Relatively low and declining crime rates and a wide array of recreational and entertainment amenities support a high quality of life. Downtown Auburn is one of the City's most unique and distinguishing features. Although conditions in the downtown have improved greatly over the last few years, much opportunity remains. The state of Auburn Way South, as one of the main perception corridors in the City, is an area with great potential and in need of significant enhancement. The issue of homelessness remains a problem both in Auburn and in the greater region.

Real Estate Market & Product. Auburn is a regional industrial center with a large stock of space 20 to 30 years old. Auburn's industrial rents are the third highest in the South Sound subregion and its vacancy rate is one of the lowest. Its office market is relatively small and most of the square footage was built before 1990, but its vacancy rate is one of the lowest and its rents are about average for its peer group. Auburn's low vacancy rates and lack of available buildings are its major constraints to job growth and economic diversification.

Regulatory Environment. Auburn's regulatory environment was found to be comparable to its peer communities. Permitted uses are generally flexible. Height is prescriptive and massing is flexible for most zoning

categories. Parking requirements are comparable to peers. The development process is relatively predictable and responsive. Auburn's fee structure makes it "average" in terms of the cost of doing business.

Market Capacity. Auburn's developable lands that are zoned for industrial and office uses are adequate to support Auburn's projected job growth over the next ten years. Opportunities for growth include the redevelopment of Valley 6 and the GSA Property as well as further development in Downtown Auburn and around the airport. The conversion of warehouse space to manufacturing represents another opportunity for strengthening and diversifying the tax base.

Retail Market. Auburn's primary retail trade area, which is the draw area for the "everyday shopper," has a population of 169,377 with median household incomes of more than \$70,000. Auburn's retail trade area, which is the draw area for its destination retailers such as those at the Outlet Collection, has a population of 525,778 with median household incomes of about \$68,000. The most significant areas of retail leakage were food and beverage stores, foodservice and drinking places, building material and garden equipment stores, and general merchandise stores.

Site Selection Competitiveness. Auburn is fortunate to be in a region that is known for being a magnet for world-class talent and companies. This regional strength can put Auburn on the list in the competition for business recruitment. Within the Seattle-Tacoma region, Auburn stands out for its central location, access to labor, and quality of life. The City's willingness and creativity in offering business assistance is another strength. The lack of available buildings and sites is Auburn's primary constraint.

Broker & Developer Perception. Among the more than 50 brokers who participated in an online survey, their perception of Auburn is more negative than their perception of regional peers. Respondents' perception of Auburn's business climate is more negative than other South Sound peers. In addition, respondents ranked the likelihood of clients considering Auburn for projects as lower than its peers. Among developers interviewed, there was more awareness of opportunities to invest in Auburn and the developers held a more favorable perception of Auburn's business climate. Promoting a more positive perception of Auburn and making sure brokers and developers in the region are aware of Auburn's value proposition is a significant opportunity.

Target Industry Analysis. Auburn's greatest opportunities for business expansion and attraction are still related to manufacturing and warehousing. Within these sectors, there are opportunities to expand and diversify into new or growing areas. In manufacturing, Auburn has a robust supply chain that supports the aerospace sector. These specializations and capabilities can support a wide range of innovative manufacturers. Auburn has the elements to become a regional hub for innovative "makers", but must work to build its reputation in this regard. Auburn is the heart of the regional distribution network. While warehousing uses are the dominant use currently, there is an opportunity for Auburn to deliberately grow its base of employers that support transportation and warehousing such as third-party logistics providers, wholesale trade agents and brokers, and transportation arrangement. The City's desire to increase its base of office-using businesses will require a degree of "market-making" as Auburn has a very small existing office market. The Sounder Station and the associated Transit-Oriented Development as well as the future redevelopment of the Valley 6 Drive-In are Auburn's key office opportunities. Finally, targeting retailers and restaurants will continue to be an opportunity for Auburn and an important component of diversifying and growing Auburn's tax base. Retail recruitment will also play a vital role in the revitalization of Downtown and Auburn Way South and in enhancing Auburn's quality of place, in general.

Marketing Tools. Websites are the single most important marketing and outreach tool in economic development. The City of Auburn's primary online presence for economic development is through www.auburnwa.gov. The Economic Development Division is under the "Doing Business" section and reflects the consistent look and feel of the City's website. While most all of the useful elements of an economic development website are there in www.auburnwa.gov/doing_business/economic_development.htm, it is difficult to find certain key information or requires many clicks to find it. Reorganizing and optimizing the City's economic development online presence will improve the effectiveness of Auburn's economic development marketing and outreach efforts.

Organizational Capacity. The City of Auburn's Economic Development Division is a division of the Administration Department and is staffed by an economic development manager with a part-time contractor. Recently, a real estate analyst was transferred from Facilities to the Economic Development Division and a part-time tourism coordinator has been hired to support tourism promotion. This lean division is supported by many contributions of other departments, most directly by the Community Development and Public Works Department and the Finance Department. Under this current organizational structure, the City does not have excess capacity to implement a strategic plan or staff a proactive, entrepreneurial economic development initiative. Many peer cities both inside and outside of the region staff their departments with three to four economic development professionals or specialists and additional administrative support as needed.

THE RESPONSE

The City's decision to develop and adopt a ten-year economic development strategic plan speaks to its acknowledgement that shaping Auburn's future requires a formalized economic development program. Such programs have systematic processes for generating leads, managing prospects and projects, and providing a clear set of value-added services. Leads are generated through marketing and outreach efforts, and relationship management is an essential building block of a high-quality lead generation network. Leads are converted to prospects and projects through effective sales, and the depth of knowledge from the findings of this body of work informs and enhances the economic development team's ability to articulate Auburn's value proposition. In addition, forward-looking economic development programs build in mechanisms for identifying transformative projects that, if realized, would attract additional private investment to the City. Finally, the most successful programs recognize that strong partnerships greatly increase the impact and reach of their programs. All of these aspects of economic development programs are grouped into the strategic plan's first focus area: **Delivery**.

Sales and marketing of any kind requires a clearly defined "product." In economic development, the "product" is the real estate as well as the assets, amenities, business climate, and other factors that influence the attractiveness of the real estate. Auburn's greatest strength is its access to a large labor pool. The City can make sure that its workforce strengths are documented and packaged well as a means of product enhancement. One of Auburn's primary constraints is the lack of available buildings and sites that are "deal-ready." This constraint is notable because businesses cannot expand or locate where there are no appropriate sites. Generating leads is futile if there is not suitable real estate. Auburn's business and regulatory climate is not a constraint, but there are a few changes and enhancements that could make it even better. Auburn can directly influence its supply of available sites and buildings and can ensure that its business climate is competitive and supportive of responsible business growth. Strategies related to product enhancement and development are grouped into the plan's second focus area: **Product**.

Quality of place is important to both business and talent retention and attraction. A community’s assets and amenities are central to its quality of place and define the community’s character. A programmatic process for defining target areas and making strategic investments can have a transformative impact on a community’s quality of place. Downtown Auburn and Auburn Way South are the two areas that stakeholders prioritized for investment. Better connecting these and other assets can be a way of building critical mass that can propel Auburn to the tipping point. Strategies pertaining to enhancing Auburn’s quality of place are grouped into the third focus area: **Place**.

A clear barrier to Auburn’s success that came across through stakeholder input is the perception that internal and external audiences hold of the City. This perception can be influenced through branding, consistent messaging, as well as social media and public relations campaigns. More targeted outreach is needed to change perceptions and build awareness of Auburn among the regional real estate community and companies in the target sectors. Strategies to change this perception and reach target audiences are grouped in the fourth focus area: **Messaging**.

These four focus areas define the structure of the plan. Each area was chosen for its potential contribution to moving Auburn forward towards its vision for the future. Each area also directly addresses an existing barrier to economic development and positions Auburn for future success.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: FOCUS AREAS	
	1. Delivery: A comprehensive service delivery system that actively identifies and advances economic development opportunities in Auburn
	2. Product: An inventory of sites, a business climate, and a physical environment that foster business growth and ensure a resilient employment base
	3. Place: Attractive gateways, impression corridors, and destinations that define the character of Auburn
	4. Messaging: A coordinated marketing and branding campaign that elevates Auburn’s reputation among internal and external audiences

THE REPORT

On the following pages, we define discuss Auburn’s economic development vision. Then, we present each focus area with the strategies, actions, projects, and partnerships that support it. After discussing the recommended strategies, we propose responsible parties and a timeline for implementation as well as an organizational structure and resource plan for the City to expand its capacity dedicated to economic development.

The detailed findings and deliverables associated with each task in the scope of work are contained in a separate report of supporting documentation and analysis. Within this section of appendices are additional implementation tools to support the economic development team, such as strategic considerations in the target industry profiles and retail market analysis. There is also additional information that can and should inform how the economic development team positions Auburn in its marketing and outreach activities. The wealth of information contained in these pages should be a valuable resource to the implementation team.

VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A clear vision and guiding principles provide an overarching direction for strategic plans. In 2015, Auburn set out a vision for itself in the Comprehensive Plan. This vision was established through the Imagine Auburn visioning exercise and developed in the context of the Washington State Growth Management Act, King and Pierce County Planning Policies, and the Puget Sound Regional Council's VISION 2040.

The vision that emerged was:

"In 2035, Auburn is a city of connected and cherished places, from a vibrant downtown to quiet open spaces and everything in between, where a community of healthy, diverse, and engaged people live, work, visit, and thrive."

Along with this statement, the Comprehensive Plan set out a series of values that encapsulated the vision and formed an evaluation and decision-making framework for future city policies, regulations, initiatives, and investments. Each of these values is defined in detail in the Comprehensive Plan, which provides a very useful reference point for this economic development strategic plan. The value and vision from the Comprehensive Plan provides a clear guide for economic development activities over the next ten years and beyond.

Auburn's seven value statements are:

- 1. Character.** Developing and preserving attractive and interesting places where people want to be.
- 2. Wellness.** Promoting community-wide health and safety wellness.
- 3. Service.** Providing transparent government service.
- 4. Economy.** Encouraging a diverse and thriving marketplace for consumers and businesses.
- 5. Celebration.** Celebrating our diverse cultures, heritage, and community.
- 6. Environment.** Stewarding our environment.
- 7. Sustainability.** Creating a sustainable future for our community.

In addition to these value statements, the "Economy" value statement and description is further fleshed out with the articulation of a vision statement in the economic development element of the Comprehensive Plan. This vision statement is:

"Auburn is a community that has a robust and diverse economy where businesses seek to locate, people desire to visit, and residents enjoy a range of commercial offerings. Businesses that locate in Auburn find it easy to enter the marketplace, encounter ideal conditions for their long-term success, and become rooted and involved in the community. Visitors continue to return to Auburn because of its high-quality natural resources, parks, public spaces, and commercial attractions. Residents choose to live in Auburn because of the diverse, family wage employment opportunities and access to entertainment, restaurant, retail and services."

The vision above paints a picture of a vibrant commercial, employment, entertainment, and recreation center that has a regional draw. It is a magnet for businesses, talent, and visitors due to its high quality of place, diverse employment opportunities, and various entertainment and recreation options.

It is with this vision and values in mind that the strategic planning process of Auburn’s ten-year economic development plan was defined. The process was driven by the understanding that achieving Auburn’s vision will take a deliberate, sustained, and strategic approach to economic development.

This planning effort builds off the Imagine Auburn initiative by adopting a simplified economic development vision and guiding principles that are consistent with the overarching vision laid out in the Comprehensive Plan, but narrower in scope and specific to this planning effort. This statement and principles will guide the economic development strategy and will help the City articulate its competitive advantages and its intentions. The framework that encompasses the City’s economic development approach is presented below.

VISION

Auburn is the City that Works

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1.

A vibrant, connected, healthy community for residents to live, visitors to enjoy, and businesses to thrive

2.

A robust, diverse employment base that provides good economic opportunities for residents and supports high-quality city services

3.

A strong educational system that prepares residents with skills that Auburn-based employers seek

This simplified economic development vision is an acknowledgement of Auburn’s heritage as an agricultural and manufacturing center and to the strong work ethic of its residents. It also speaks to the City’s willingness to partner with the private sector to achieve its vision. The guiding principles define the City’s goals for its community, employment base, and educational system. The goal for the community is to be vibrant, connected, and healthy, in terms of both its residents and its physical environment. The employment base is to be diverse, resilient, and sustainable, supporting both current and future residents of Auburn. The educational system is aligned with employers’ needs, with a strong workforce development component and a K-12 system that prepares students with 21st Century skills. This vision and these guiding principles form the foundation of Auburn’s Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan.



FOCUS AREA 1. DELIVERY

A comprehensive service delivery system that actively identifies and advances economic development opportunities in Auburn

Auburn is fortunate to be in the path of growth, and, in the past years, the City has successfully set the stage for increased investment. As a result, the interest in and momentum around Auburn have been increasing and continue to build.

In 2014, Auburn's population was almost 76,000. By 2020, Esri, a leading demographic data provider, estimates that Auburn's population will be nearly 85,000. With the cost of housing continuing to climb throughout the Seattle region, Auburn and its South Sound peers will likely see population growth accelerate even more than these conservative projections predict.

Currently, the City is a net importer of labor with more workers commuting to Auburn for jobs each day than leaving. As new residents move into the community, Auburn's economic development activities will influence whether there are job opportunities for these new residents in Auburn or whether they will commute outside the city limits for work.

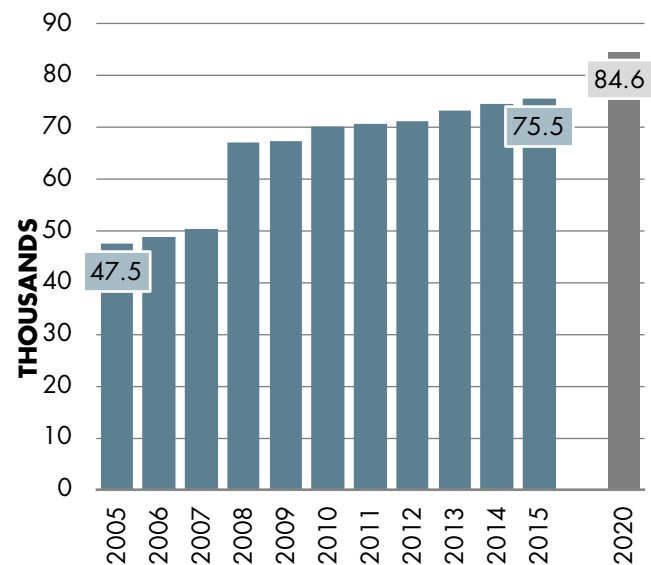
According to EMSI, a leading economic and labor market data provider, the City is projected to add over 6,400 jobs over the next 10 years. This number is also likely conservative. The actual number and composition of jobs could change dramatically with a targeted, entrepreneurial economic development program.

The City's current economic development resources and structure allow the City to be responsive to opportunities that come its way. It has a proven track record of dedication and creativity that has yielded impressive results to date. However, the current program does not provide the capacity needed for the City to be proactive in seeking out the opportunities that it wants. To transform Auburn's economic development delivery system to be both responsive and proactive, the City will need to augment its program with additional resources and stronger partnerships. This will position the City to better support the attraction, formation, retention, and expansion of businesses that form the economic backbone of the community and provide more and better economic opportunities for Auburn residents.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- ① New & Improved Website (1.1)
- ② Structure for Identifying and Realizing Catalyst Projects (1.4)

FIGURE 1. CITY OF AUBURN, WA
ANNUAL ESTIMATES JULY 1 OF EACH YEAR



Source: The Washington State Office of Financial Management, Forecasting and Research Division. Projections via Esri.

- 1.1. Value-Added Services.** Clearly define the services that the City of Auburn provides to businesses both directly and through partnerships. The list below lays out the value-added services that the City and its partners can or do provide existing businesses and businesses looking to relocate to Auburn. The City's economic development webpage should be organized around these areas. (See Appendix G for more recommendations on the website)

Value-Added Service Area	Supporting Actions
RELOCATION ASSISTANCE: <i>Activities include: site selection, development services, incentives</i>	<p>1.1.1. Utilize the IPZ Taskforce as TEAM AUBURN to help sell Auburn to prospects. Organize regular meetings of these team members to keep them informed of the prospect pipeline, meetings with prospects, and potential recruitment trips. Educate the team members on Auburn's value proposition and the associated messaging to present a unified voice to prospects.</p> <p>1.1.2. Continue to assist prospects in finding suitable sites, navigating the development process in Auburn, and securing available incentives from local and state sources</p>
SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE: <i>Activities include: incubator management, 3No Networking, workshops and technical assistance, access to capital</i>	<p>1.1.3. Launch and manage a business incubator</p> <p>1.1.4. Continue to organize weekly 3No Networking at Auburn-based businesses</p> <p>1.1.5. Continue to partner with the Small Business Assistance Center at Green River College on technical assistance and workshops for small businesses</p> <p>1.1.6. Establish partnerships with area SBA lenders, community development financial institutions, and other nonprofit microlenders to provide better access to capital for businesses that do not qualify for bank financing</p> <p>1.1.7. Assemble a list of revolving loan funds and other financing resources that are available to Auburn-based businesses (a good start can be found here: http://www.oria.wa.gov/?pageid=737)</p>

Value-Added Service Area	Supporting Actions
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: <i>Activities include: custom training, talent pipeline partnerships</i>	<p>1.1.8. Continue to partner with Green River College and WorkSource to provide customized training</p> <p>1.1.9. Strengthen the partnership between Auburn Public Schools, Green River College, and Auburn’s business community by organizing industry sector partnerships that explore workforce demand, critical occupations, and available curricula</p>
INFORMATION RESOURCES AND PUBLICATIONS: <i>Activities include: demographic and economic data, real estate market information, retail trade area data, supplier database, investment opportunities</i>	<p>1.1.10. Maintain a catalog of information and resources relevant to economic development on the City’s webpage</p> <p>1.1.11. Employ data such as CoStar, the King County Assessor database, and City-managed development tracking datasets to establish systems that regularly collect and visualize market trends, including new development, asking rents, vacancy rates, absorption, sales activity, and sales and leasing activity. Update and review this data at least quarterly and distribute the findings to stakeholders as part of the effort to espouse “Why Auburn” to the regional real estate community</p> <p>1.1.12. Update retail trade area data on an annual basis and make this accessible to stakeholders and partners electronically</p> <p>1.1.13. Provide profiles on the City’s target investment areas (See <i>Strategy 3.1</i>). These should include a map, basic information, public investment projects, as well as resources and tools available for private projects</p>

1.2. Local Business Visitation. Formalize a business visitation program in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to track trends among Auburn employers and identify any businesses in need of assistance

- 1.2.1.** Establish a visitation protocol, a list of information to be collected during each visit, and set a goal how many businesses each year. Visiting four to eight businesses each month is a reasonable goal that would allow the City to reach a critical mass of employers.
- 1.2.2.** Create a database of Auburn-based employers with the City’s business license database, paying particular attention to the inclusion of employers in key economic drivers (business & professional services, manufacturing, healthcare, distribution)

- 1.2.3.** Using CoStar or other sources, identify employers who have leases that will be expiring in the next two or three years to be prioritized for visitations
 - 1.2.4.** Maintain detailed notes on visits in the economic development project database to document the relationship over time
 - 1.2.5.** Compile information collected from visits to track trends among employers and distribute these findings to stakeholders, such as local and regional economic development partners, the mayor, the city council, and city department heads, in an annual report and presentation
- 1.3. Business Recruitment.** Recruit new businesses, including retail, to Auburn to provide better economic opportunities and enhance Auburn's quality of place
- 1.3.1.** Strengthen relationships with brokers, developers, and industry associations in the metro area and create an education outreach program targeted to these groups to ensure that Auburn stays top of mind for business relocation. NAIOP (Commercial Real Estate Development Association), International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC), and Urban Land Institute (ULI) are important organizations in which to be actively involved. In addition, industry associations, such as the Pacific Northwest Aerospace Alliance, the Aerospace Futures Alliance and the Center for Advanced Manufacturing Puget Sound, are also good vehicles for cultivating strong relationships.
 - 1.3.2.** Cultivate strong partnerships with the Economic Development Council of Seattle & King County, the Economic

RETAIL RECRUITMENT

Retail recruitment will be an important part of Auburn's business attraction activities. An expanded and more robust retail sector not only generates sales tax for the City but also augments the City's quality of place by providing additional amenities. Thus, retail recruitment reinforces the City's efforts to diversify the tax base, attract new employers and residents, as well as revitalize target areas such as downtown and Auburn Way South.

As part of this strategic planning process, the Retail Coach (TRC) defined Auburn's primary retail trade area and retail trade area. For each area, TRC summarized key demographic characteristics, examined the retail opportunities, and established the major psychographic profiles. These analyses are provided both online and in Appendix C.

TRC then identified target retailers, created custom retailer feasibility packages for each retailer, and sent these packages to the real estate departments of each of the retailers. Any leads that came about from this outreach were referred to the City's Economic Development Office.

In addition, TRC created retail market profiles that the City and its partners can use to reach out to additional retailers.

Finally, TRC made recommendations on how the City can best approach retail recruitment:

1. Continue to focus on the recruitment of developers, as they tend to drive much of the retail development in Washington.
2. Attend ICSC RECON every year as well as ICSC regional events taking place in Washington, Oregon, and California throughout the year.
3. Sell Auburn to retailers and developers as a Primary Trade Area population of 169,377 and not as a community population. For those larger and destination retailers, use the Retail Trade Area population of 525,778.
4. Continue to use the Cell Phone Shopper Analysis as a tool to combat retailers' perceptions of store spacing issues.
5. Build awareness of Auburn among national retailers by advertising in publications such as the Dallas Business Journal, New York Business Journal, Shopping Centers Today, etc.
6. Maintain awareness of retail incentives being offered by other communities in the region and consider using similar incentives sparingly in cases that would significantly expand the retail trade area or generate a great deal of new tax revenue.

Development Board for Tacoma-Pierce County, the Washington State Department of Commerce, the Port of Seattle, the Northwest Seaport Alliance, the Greater Seattle Trade Development Alliance, and Challenge Seattle to identify co-marketing opportunities and joint trade missions in order to strengthen Auburn's lead generation network

- 1.3.3.** Join the coalition of local governments and organizations that represent the communities of the greater South Sound region (from Des Moines south to Olympia). This effort is in the process of being formed and will be centered on growing the South Sound economy and addressing unique economic challenges and opportunities
- 1.3.4.** During business visitations (*see Strategy 1.2*), ensure that Auburn-based businesses are aware of the value-added services that the City provides and have information on the different economic development initiatives. This group of business leaders can serve as an indirect salesforce (e.g. they can generate leads among their peers) if they are saying positive things about Auburn's business climate and economic development opportunities
- 1.3.5.** Cultivate relationships among promising young companies across the metro who are currently involved in incubator or accelerator programs. Market Auburn as an inviting "landing pad" where they can grow in a supportive environment that is well-located, accessible, and affordable
- 1.3.6.** Actively prospect among companies in target industries (*See Appendix F*)

1.4. Catalyst Projects. Identify and advance catalyst projects that will facilitate Auburn's evolution

- 1.4.1.** Work with city council and department heads to identify and prioritize potential catalyst projects, ensuring that the projects also align with all department activities. The Livable City Year provides an opportunity to vet projects in 2016-17 and can be a starting point for this project list
- 1.4.2.** Hold quarterly work sessions with this group to learn from guest speakers about what other communities are doing and to brainstorm what Auburn could do. Guests could include staff from other cities, urban planners, or economic developers that could share their experiences with the group
- 1.4.3.** From the project list generated in the quarterly sessions, prioritize projects based on feasibility, expense, time frame, impact, and alignment with Auburn's focus areas
- 1.4.4.** For the two or three top ranked projects, attain formal approval from department heads and the city council to move them forward
- 1.4.5.** Create project teams for each approved project of three to five individuals responsible for implementation
- 1.4.6.** Maintain a tool that tracks progress on project implementation, and report progress and outcomes at the quarterly meetings
- 1.4.7.** Build awareness of these projects and report the successful implementation of any projects through the public relations campaign (*See Strategy 4.4*)

- 1.5. Strategic Relationships.** Foster relationships with key entities that support economic activity in the City. These include:

- 1.5.1. Puget Sound Energy:** Energy availability and cost to deliver are common questions from businesses looking to locate in an area. The City should be able to connect prospective businesses with the appropriate PSE staffer to have questions quickly addressed. The City should be aware of planned improvements to the system
- 1.5.2. Muckleshoot Tribe:** The Tribe is a major property owner in the City and has shared its economic development goals. The City should work together with the Tribe to ensure that planning activities with overlapping interests are cooperatively discussed and considered
- 1.5.3. Port of Seattle:** As part of the Port's Century Agenda, it is seeking to help add 100,000 jobs in the next 100 years. To do this, it has stated an interest in assisting cities with unlocking industrial property and positioning it for redevelopment. Land around the airport and in northwest Auburn that is challenged with wetlands may be opportunity areas
- 1.5.4. King County:** Work with the County on improving the stormwater function in the area west of SR 167
- 1.5.5. Army Corps of Engineers:** Establishing a working relationship with the ACE regarding wetland delineation and mitigation strategies is important for proactively assisting developers seeking to improve land with wetlands. The early involvement of the ACE should improve permitting efficiency
- 1.5.6. Transportation:** Engage with agencies that support multimodal transportation infrastructure including PSRC, Sound Transit, King County Metro, and Pierce Transit. The City should continue to advocate for funding to support transportation improvements



FOCUS AREA 2. PRODUCT

An inventory of sites, a business climate, and a physical environment that foster business growth and ensure a resilient employment base

Economic development takes place in a competitive environment. This competition often starts on a global scale and continues down to specific sites as companies filter out possibilities based on their operational needs. Area Development's 2015 Survey of Corporate Executives ranked respondents' top site selection criteria. The top ten criteria are presented in Figure 2.

Auburn's primary strength, and the strength of the South Sound region, is its access to skilled labor. In the 145 zip codes that are within about a 45-minute drive of Auburn, there are 1.5 million workers. Over 800,000 of these workers fall into the "middle skills" segment of workers. In fact, Auburn has very good access to hard-to-find skillsets such as customer service representatives, truck drivers, registered nurses, maintenance and repair workers, and various types of technicians that support manufacturing operations.

Auburn's primary constraint is the availability of sites and buildings with vacancy. This constraint is important because a community's inventory of sites and buildings determines whether or not it can enter into the competition for business investment.

The majority of the other site selection factors distinguish regions across the country from one another. In that regard, Auburn is fortunate to be located in a region that is a magnet for talent and investment, which provides it with an advantage over communities of similar size in less competitive regions.

Within the Seattle–Tacoma Metro area, the competition to attract businesses is stiff, and communities must differentiate themselves to stand out from their peers. At this level, local incentives, business climate, available amenities, reputation, and relationships often play a large role in determining where a project lands. With a concentrated effort to make enhancements in each of these areas, Auburn can significantly improve its competitive positioning among its regional peers.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- ① Labor Profile (2.1)
- ② Deal-Ready Site Inventory (2.2)

FIGURE 2. TOP SITE SELECTION FACTORS
FIRST QUARTER 2016

FACTOR	AUBURN RATING
1. Availability of skilled labor	●
2. Highway accessibility	◐
3. Quality of life	◐
4. Occupancy or construction costs (Seattle MSA)	◐
5. Available buildings	◐
6. Labor costs (Seattle MSA)	◐
7. Corporate tax rate	◐
8. Proximity to major markets	●
9. State and local incentives	◐
10. Energy availability and costs	◐

Scale: ● = Excellent; ◐ = Poor

Source: Area Development's Survey of Corporate Executives, TIP Strategies Research.

2.1. Labor Market Information. Design and maintain information resources that demonstrate Auburn’s strength in terms of its access to skilled labor

2.1.1. Maintain up-to-date labor market information on Auburn and its laborshed and make this information available on the economic development website as well as in a report format. This information can be obtained through paid data sources such as EMSI or from free sources such as the Employment Security Department, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Census Bureau’s On the Map application

2.1.2. For target industries, create profiles that highlight the availability of relevant occupations as well as training programs and other workforce development resources

2.2. Deal-Ready Sites. Ensure a supply of deal-ready sites to accommodate new business investment in Auburn

2.2.1. Maintain an inventory of Auburn’s most important parcels and sites – those with high-impact development or redevelopment potential or that are located in strategic areas.

2.2.2. Among the eight sub-areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan, focus on the airport area, Emerald Downs, the GSA Property, and Northwest Auburn as key planning areas with high commercial development potential. Appendix F details industries that would be a good fit for Auburn and how Auburn and these planning areas should be positioned to attract these industries

2.2.3. Work with relevant land owners or brokers to package these sites with highly informative information packets (electronic) (*see Site Packaging to the right*) and actively promote these sites to prospective businesses and regional brokers

2.2.4. Encourage the land owner and broker to list the site on the City’s inventory of buildings and sites

SITE PACKAGING

In the past five years, there has been a proliferation of site certification programs across the US. To be certified, landowners collect vital information and conduct some of the preliminary studies necessary for site development. While the mechanics of these programs vary widely from place to place, the primary value of the certification programs is the depth of information available on these key sites. An inventory of sites with this kind of information available can provide a community an edge over competition.

Below is a list of the information that should be collected on key sites, to the extent that it is available:

- Ownership status
- Description of parcel(s), including current uses, zoning, special zones, and current assessment information
- Boundary survey
- Phase I environment audit/assessment
- Geo-technical studies
- Topographical analysis and maps
- Aerial photography
- Engineered site development plans
- Detailed analysis of site development cost
- Complete information on pricing
- Utility services, including types of services and name of providers
- Industrial power quality
- Transportation access

- 2.2.5.** Meet with institutional investors and owners of underperforming properties to make the case for additional investment to increase their yields
- 2.2.6.** Facilitate the conversion of industrial buildings that are currently used for warehousing and distribution to manufacturing or other sales tax generating uses by identifying and tracking conversion opportunities based on:
- Physical building characteristics;
 - Current ownership (proactive outreach to understand motivations and offer support);
 - Current tenancy;
 - Anticipated utility undergrounding requirements; and
 - Whether land area can support a manufacturing parking ratio

FIGURE 3. INDUSTRIAL AND OFFICE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREAS



- 2.2.7.** Work with land owners to facilitate conversion opportunities, redevelopment of high-potential parcels, or the assembly of multiple parcels by addressing barriers where possible and connect them with local developers and real estate investors who seek these kinds of opportunities
- 2.2.8.** Maintain a database, as part of the economic development project database, of all known businesses seeking additional space in the region to make connections with property owners in Auburn as space becomes available
- 2.2.9.** Work with the ACE and King County to identify and implement strategies that may unlock wetland/storm water impaired areas of the City where appropriate.
- 2.2.10.** Evaluate the feasibility of annexing some or all of the areas adjacent to the City that are in unincorporated King County as a means of improving Auburn's commercial land base. Two of the three areas highlighted in **Figure 3** are located within the urban growth area (UGA), and one is located outside the UGA.

2.3. Economic Development Toolbox. Create a robust toolbox to influence economic development outcomes

- 2.3.1.** Catalog all tools available. The Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) has a good database: <http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Economic-Development/Financing-Economic-Development/Funding-Sources-for-Economic-Development-Financial.aspx>. For each tool, summarize how it works and how can be used
- 2.3.2.** Consider and evaluate the feasibility of the following programs:
 - As part of the pending 2017/2018 DUC code updates, the permitting of taller buildings that could provide structured parking in the building podium and improve the likelihood of project feasibility
 - A property tax abatement program similar to the Multifamily Tax Exemption for properties looking to convert existing warehouses to manufacturing uses. This would need to be piloted with approval from the State Legislature
 - A Landscape Conservation and Local Infrastructure Program (LCLIP), which allows the City to access County property tax revenues to support needed infrastructure improvements
 - Public Development Authorities (PDA) for areas such as the airport that may leverage revenue bonds.
 - New Market Tax Credits (NMTC) for commercial projects (nmtccoalition.org)
 - Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) grants for transportation projects
- 2.3.3.** Collect examples of communities who use these tools in an innovative way to support projects that advance their economic development goals and share these with relevant City stakeholders
- 2.3.4.** Ensure that city council and City staff are well-informed of the type and use of financing tools available to municipalities

- 2.3.5.** Establish a policy that sets out the City's goals for the use of these various tools as well as a process and framework for evaluating projects
- 2.3.6.** Adopt the guideline for effective and responsible incentives use (*See guidelines listed in call-out*)
- 2.3.7.** Adopt a comprehensive fiscal and economic impact tool to measure the return on investment for projects being evaluated. Impact Datasource or InformAnalytics are two examples
- 2.3.8.** Create content for the City's website and for brochures that allows owners and developers to understand the tools and programs that may be available for their project and how it relates to their pro forma
- 2.3.9.** Develop a clear flowchart that establishes the process that owners and developers will need to follow to obtain assistance in order to set realistic expectations

2.4. Continuous Process Improvement. Evaluate and continue to improve the City's land use and building permit process and performance. Projects that require key decisions from multiple departments have reportedly been slowed by an inefficient decision making process. To address this:

- 2.4.1.** Continue to employ the permitting performance tracking system to understand performance. This should track the progress of a permit and allow the applicant to know in real time which department(s) are reviewing the permit and when a decision is to be made.
- 2.4.2.** Develop a regular report based on information from the tracking system that allows the development community and city staff to understand how efficiently permits are being processed.
- 2.4.3.** Create a map-based report with supporting tables that tracks all major commercial developments in the City including new construction and major renovations. This should be updated quarterly and be made available to the public.

GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIBLE INCENTIVE USE

- Incentives should be aligned with the city's economic development goals.
- Upfront data and analysis can reduce risk and improve outcomes.
 - Due diligence that includes background research on applicants and business case analysis for projects seeking major discretionary incentives help communities make good decisions.
 - Evaluating project attributes relative to economic development goals and quantifying fiscal and economic impacts of proposed investments enable economic development organizations to determine whether projects can generate net benefits for the community.
 - Good analysis can help explain and build support for decisions.
- Define performance requirements and monitor compliance with performance agreements to assess whether project milestones were reached.
- Be prepared to report on who is receiving incentives, how much is being spent, and the results of that spending.
- Establish policies to protect the community in the case of non-performance.
- Regularly (every three to five years) evaluate the city's portfolio of incentives to understand which programs are most helpful in achieving economic development goals.

Source: www.smartincentives.org.

- 2.4.4.** Consider reviewing the fee structure associated with permit reviews. Currently the fee covers three review iterations. A stepped fee structure that increases with each review would create an incentive for the applicants to thoroughly incorporate code requirements prior to plan submittal.
- 2.4.5.** Establish precedents log that may be used for future staff to reference how certain situations that share similar conditions were addressed previously. This would create a mechanism to retain institutional knowledge and serve as reference for staff to provide developers and their design team with a clearer idea as to how react to its proposal.. This should track the progress of a permit and allow the applicant to know in real time which department(s) are reviewing the permit and when a decision is to be made.

2.5. Zoning Modification. Reevaluate zoning districts and modify certain aspects of the code

- 2.5.1.** Expand the Downtown Urban Center (DUC) zoning district to include the logical adjacent areas. To enact this change, cooperation with the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) will be necessary.
- 2.5.2.** Consider zoning modifications related to height and parking discussed in Appendix B to improve project feasibility
- 2.5.3.** Add flexibility to the industrial land use code to allow for more yard storage and permitted uses such as building contractors in districts that are currently more restrictive. Such added flexibility could better support desirable business activity without undermining the intent of the original restriction. See Appendix B for more information
- 2.5.4.** Consider an overlay on the Landing Field (LF) zone and adjacent commercial properties to permit airside supportive land uses around the airport

2.6. Cost Comparison. Annually compare Auburn's development/impact fees, tax rates, and rebate programs to peers

- 2.6.1.** Conduct research on regional peers to identify any rate changes or fee changes and record in a business climate database, which can be created with information from this strategic plan
- 2.6.2.** Document any significant changes and distribute a summary report to relevant department heads
- 2.6.3.** Work collectively to resolve any issues revealed by this research exercise
- 2.6.4.** Publicize the areas where Auburn stands out among its peer group to the regional real estate community



FOCUS AREA 3. PLACE

Attractive gateways, impression corridors, and destinations that define the character of Auburn

Auburn’s Comprehensive Plan designated special planning areas—districts, sub-areas, impression corridors, and gateways—because they warrant additional emphasis in planning, investments, and policy development. Prioritizing the underperforming special planning areas for additional investment and coordinating these investments with other economic development activities can hasten the transformation of these areas into community assets. Together, these areas define rich character areas in Auburn and play a large role in shaping people’s perceptions of the City.

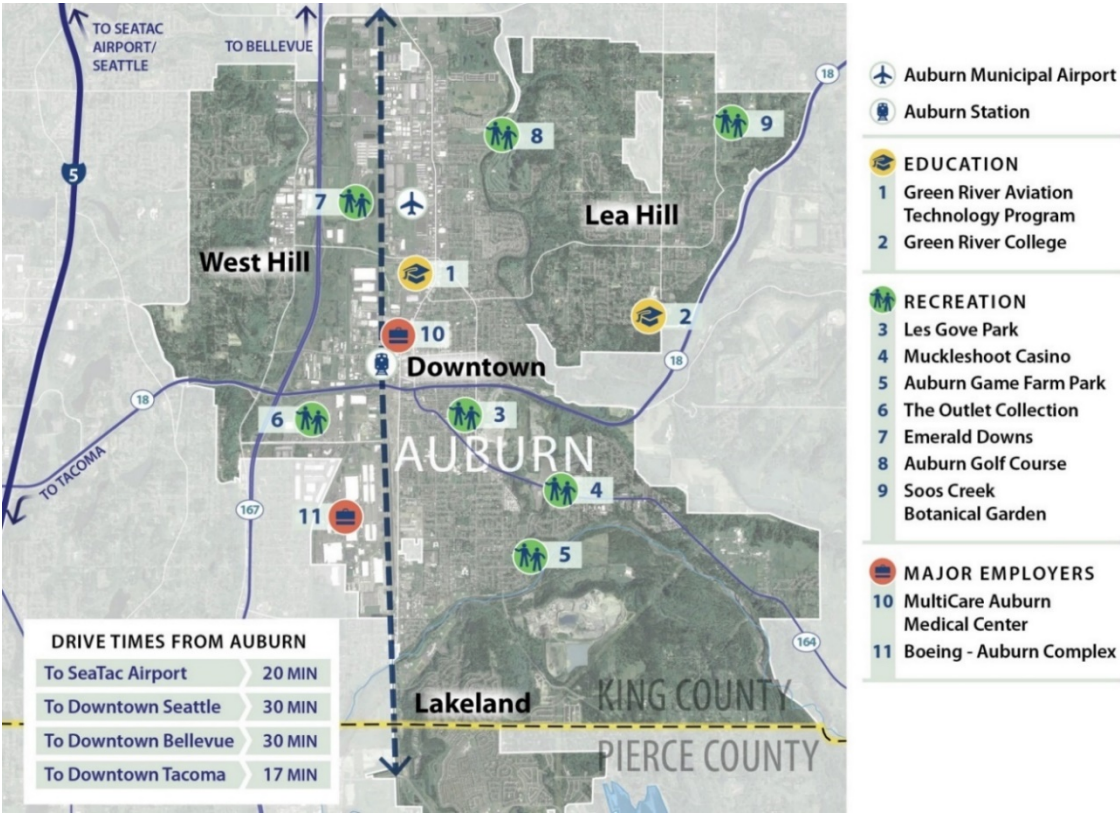
PRIORITY PROJECTS

- 1 Downtown Revitalization (3.3)
- 2 Target Investment Program (3.1)

Auburn is also fortunate to have an array of destinations that draw visitors to Auburn from across the region, including an authentic downtown and a number of different recreational amenities. The map in Figure 4 lists the various assets and amenities. These regional amenities enhance the quality of life of Auburn residents and attract visitors to Auburn.

However, many of these special planning areas and amenities lack connectivity, both socially and physically. Working to connect these different areas and amenities and adding to the inventory of destinations could greatly enhance Auburn’s reputation in the regional tourism and real estate markets.

FIGURE 4. AUBURN ASSET/CONTEXT MAP



Source: Heartland Research.

3.1. Strategic Investment. Create a target investment program to guide strategic infrastructure investments that enhance Auburn’s economic development opportunities.

3.1.1. Create a cross-departmental forum for identifying and prioritizing areas for targeted infrastructure investment

3.1.2. Evaluate market-challenged areas for their potential to attract private investment through targeted public investment projects and designate two or three areas as “Target Investment Areas” based on the criteria below:

- Does this (or could this) area function as a vital gateway, impression corridor, or destination for Auburn?
- Are there sites in the area with high redevelopment potential?
- Are there barriers to redevelopment that can be addressed by infrastructure investments?
- Would investment in the area yield net benefits to Auburn (cost-benefit analysis)?

3.1.3. Align the City’s resources, both planning and programmatic, around the Target Investment Areas to ensure they reinforce capital investments

3.1.4. Tailor a suite of services and/or incentives that is available to support private sector projects in the Target Investment Areas in order to overcome real or perceived market gaps

3.1.5. Package the information and actively market the areas to potential investors and other stakeholders (*See Strategy 2.2.1*)

SPOKANE’S TARGET INVESTMENT PROGRAM

Adopted in 2011 and further refined in 2013, the Spokane Targeted Investment Program seeks to align public investments in economic development, neighborhood planning, community development, and capital improvements with private investments. The goal of this program is to increase the impact of the City’s investments, resulting in more opportunities for business growth and better residential living environments.

The strategy is designed around four pillars:

Revitalization Planning: Implementing the City’s Comprehensive Plan, identifying neighborhood opportunity areas, and aligning different implementation tools;

Targeted Area Development: Creating tailored investment strategies, integrating plans and projects from different City departments, utilizing local nonprofit support, and creating market-driven economic opportunities;

Financial Incentive Planning: Compiling a comprehensive list of available incentives, aligning growth strategies, stressing the “Window of Opportunity” to investors, and creating sustainable and dedicated funding sources for target areas; and,

Economic Development Assistance: Packaging incentives and project portfolios for interested applicants, marketing and outreach activities, and responding to project and stakeholder needs.

The program was initially piloted on two target areas. In 2015, it was expanded to six target areas. To staff the program, there is one incentives expert and a designated expert for each of the target areas. Each area has a separate webpage with news and announcements, project descriptions and maps, and a detailed prospectus.

In addition to its own resources, the City has successfully secured a number of grants to help address some of the challenges in the targeted areas, including brownfield planning and redevelopment, transportation, and other technical assistance.

Through various outreach activities, Spokane’s city staff has promoted awareness of the program and the special incentives available. As a result, there has been an uptick in pre-development applications in certain target areas and increased transactions and building rehabilitation in others. In one of the areas, the business association has requested the creation of a Business Improvement District to support the city’s efforts in their area.

3.2. Regional Transportation. Maintain and enhance regional transportation connections to ensure ease of travel to, from, and within Auburn

- 3.2.1.** Prioritize improvements on and around Auburn Way North and Auburn Way South and a better connection from SR-167 connection to downtown
- 3.2.2.** Continue to partner with Sound Transit to secure adequate parking around the Sounder station as well as convenient service and better multi-modal connectivity to downtown and other Auburn destinations
- 3.2.3.** Continue to improve the Auburn Municipal Airport by conducting a needs assessment of businesses located in Auburn and in the immediate region to understand whether they could use an enhanced airport for business purposes and what improvements would be needed

3.3. Downtown Revitalization. Continue to invest in downtown revitalization

- 3.3.1.** Optimize regional multimodal downtown connectivity both to and from the City to ease travel times and improve the downtown experience
- 3.3.2.** Re-evaluate the Business Improvement Area to look at how ratepayers are assessed, who is being assessed, and how the funds can best be used. This is a valuable tool for downtown revitalization but it is currently being underutilized
- 3.3.3.** Develop an investment brochure (electronic and print) for downtown that features a map of the Downtown Urban Center; key data and statistics; overview of public investment; available incentives; photographs that highlight new investment and potential investments; and a map with available parcels
- 3.3.4.** Publicize a comprehensive list of incentives available to support projects in the Downtown Urban Center both in the brochure and on the City's website. These include the following benefits:
 - Downtown-Specific
 - Multi-Family Tax Exemptions
 - Storefront Improvement Program

DOWNTOWN AUBURN REVITALIZATION

Downtown Auburn is one of the City's greatest assets as few suburban cities have an authentic, historic downtown. Over the past six years, the City has invested millions of dollars in projects to set the stage for increased growth downtown. As a result, a number of large scale projects have been completed or are underway, including the Trek Apartments, Merrill Gardens, and the expansion of Multicare. The core of Main Street, however, remains an underperforming diamond in the rough.

To address this challenge, revitalization efforts should focus on the section of Main Street from Division Street to E Street SE. This corridor should have a carefully curated tenant mix that is anchored by deliberately spaced businesses. These anchor tenants should generate foot traffic for the other storefronts in between them. Together, the tenant mix of Main Street Auburn should create a unique retail and entertainment destination that supports surrounding employers and housing developments and draws people downtown.

While events can help raise awareness of downtown's businesses, it will have more impact at this stage of downtown revitalization to work directly with building owners and brokers to target specific businesses in order to enhance the area's tenant mix.

- Downtown Zoning and Design Standards
- A Comprehensive Environmental Impact Review
- Excess Stormwater Capacity

City-Wide

- Deferred Impact Fee and System Development Charges
- Construction Sales Tax Exemption
- Small Business Assistance Program
- New Market Tax Credits (for qualifying Census tracts)
- No Business and Operations Tax

3.3.5. Continue to partner with the Auburn Downtown Association to support existing small businesses downtown and to recruit targeted retailers and tenants downtown

3.3.6. Continue to actively seek investors and developers for downtown projects

3.3.7. Approach successful restaurateurs and local retailers both in Auburn and the Greater Seattle region to ask if they would be interested in expanding downtown

3.4. Auburn Way South Revitalization.

Designate Auburn Way South as an additional Targeted Investment Area

3.4.1. Complete the Auburn Way South Corridor Plan

3.4.2. Develop an investment brochure (electronic and print) for Auburn Way South to highlight the opportunities that are identified in the corridor plan. Include a map; renderings of potential projects; key data and statistics; and an overview of public investment and available programs

3.4.3. Strengthen the City's partnership with the Muckleshoot tribe around the revitalization of this corridor

3.5. Destination Connections. Create stronger connections between Auburn's primary tourism

THE PEARL'S FOOD ENTREPRENEUR KIOSK



In San Antonio, Texas, the historic Pearl Brewery has been revitalized to create a vibrant entertainment district. Anchored by the Culinary Institute of America, the Pearl features a number of innovative dining concepts. One of these is the kiosk pictured above. During the weekly farmers' market at the Pearl, a featured chef takes over the kiosk and tests a menu on the farmers' market patrons. Customers order at the counter and enjoy their meal at the adjacent outdoor seating area. The kiosk provides food entrepreneurs with space to innovate as well as a built-in customer base. This opportunity to test and sharpen restaurant concepts in the kiosk has bolstered the burgeoning "foodie" culture that is one of the defining features of the Pearl.

assets and develop new assets to attract more visitors to Auburn

- 3.5.1.** Develop and market packages that include visits to three or four tourism destinations to offer to both residents of and visitors to the metro area (e.g. Golf & Gamble, Shop & Slots, Music & More)
- 3.5.2.** Coordinate a brewery and distillery tour. Green River Cyclery has regular tours to breweries and would have good insights into how this would work
- 3.5.3.** Consider creating a food entrepreneur kiosk downtown where a guest chef can serve a featured menu. This could be a way of fostering the growth of unique restaurants in Auburn and could address the need for a sit-down restaurant for business lunches
- 3.5.4.** Explore the feasibility of a hop-on/hop-off tour or shuttle that runs between the Outlet Collection, the golf course, downtown, the casino, White River Amphitheater, and Emerald Downs to facilitate visitors' movement from one place to another

3.6. Regional Tourism. Strengthen regional tourism connections

- 3.6.1.** Evaluate the potential benefits of establishing a Tourism Promotion Area that includes neighboring communities
- 3.6.2.** Establish a regional partnership of communities to jointly promote the South Sound as a tourism destination



FOCUS AREA 4. MESSAGING

A coordinated marketing and branding campaign that elevates Auburn's reputation among internal and external audiences

Auburn has a strong heritage and history that define a unique character and foster community pride. While Auburn faces challenges, its citizens see great opportunity. The word cloud below is how Auburn's residents perceive Auburn today.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- ① Brand Enhancement (4.1)
- ② Target Industry Outreach (4.6)



Auburn is in the midst of an exciting transformation. There are numerous positive changes going on right now in the City, and residents recognize this momentum and the potential for improvement. The word cloud below is how Auburn residents describe Auburn in ten years.



Though positive words dominate these word clouds, a number of negative perceptions are held both by Auburn residents, by the larger region, and by the regional real estate community. These perceptions are largely influenced by media reports on crime in Auburn and by under-performing impression corridors and gateways that lead to Auburn's tourism destinations. These negative perceptions undermine Auburn's potential. There is also a large number of residents in the greater Seattle area that have no knowledge of Auburn and hold a neutral perception. Auburn must work to change these neutral and negative perceptions to positive ones. In doing so, the City should also build awareness of Auburn as a destination – for recreation, living, and business investment.

Currently, the organizations that define the City of Auburn's brand identity, both internally and in the Seattle region, are not unified. The City of Auburn's tagline is "more than you imagined." This tagline is also shared by the Auburn Tourism Board. The Auburn Downtown Association and Chamber of Commerce, however, each have unique logos and brands that are distinct from the City's. On social media, the Auburn Police Department, the City of Auburn, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Innovation Partnership Zone have active presences that are also distinct. A more unified, collective voice and identity that spans all of these entities could be more effective in changing the internal and external perceptions of Auburn.

4.1. Brand Enhancement. Develop a stronger brand for Auburn and reinforce this with unified messaging across organizations

- 4.1.1.** Adopt a new tagline. "More than you imagined" implies that people already hold a negative perception of Auburn
- 4.1.2.** Coordinate a consistent marketing theme and campaign that applies across the City, economic development, the Chamber of Commerce, the Auburn Downtown Association, and the Auburn Tourism Board
- 4.1.3.** Regularly (quarterly or annually) create talking points for community leaders and partner organizations that highlight positive developments in Auburn, success stories, and why it is a desirable place to visit, live, work, and invest
- 4.1.4.** Invest in a wayfinding and placemaking strategy to reinforce this brand across Auburn

4.2. Internal Image. Build a more positive perception and a greater sense of community among Auburn residents through a strong partnership with the Auburn Reporter and other local media outlets including public radio, community websites, and social media outlets

- 4.2.1.** Profile positive developments in Auburn that feature City investments, new businesses, and other economic development successes in order to build awareness of the City's positive momentum
- 4.2.2.** Publish interviews of Auburn residents that highlight the things they like to do in Auburn and good memories of Auburn in order to strengthen the community's pride and cohesion

4.3. Social Media. Continue to strengthen the City's social media strategy to improve Auburn's internal and external perceptions

- 4.3.1.** Develop a more consistent and strategic economic development voice across social media platforms, in particular LinkedIn and Twitter in order to develop a greater awareness of economic development activities in Auburn

4.3.2. Leverage 3No Networking to distribute more positive stories about Auburn and Auburn’s business culture

4.3.3. Connect with Auburn’s key influencers through social media and push out positive content through this network. Content can be about economic development successes, business climate, and other aspects of the City’s transformation

4.3.4. Launch a hashtag campaign (#ThisIsAuburn or #AuburnWorks or #AuthenticAuburn) related to Auburn’s brand that helps promote positive perceptions

4.4. Public Relations. Launch a formal public relations campaign to change the region’s perception of Auburn

4.4.1. Focus on earned media as a strategy to educate the region about Auburn’s positive attributes. Earned media refers to publicity gained through promotional efforts other than advertising, as opposed to paid media, which refers to publicity gained through advertising.

4.4.2. Build awareness of Auburn as a destination for visitors, for residents, and for business investment by making these audiences aware of community assets, the housing market, transportation linkages, and investment opportunities

4.4.3. Create a buzz about Auburn, particularly in the Seattle-Tacoma metro area by publicizing stories in local and regional news outlets that demonstrate what a great location Auburn is. These stories could feature the City’s success stories and relocations (be sure to highlight specifics about Auburn’s assets that enable its companies to succeed). They should also highlight growth in Auburn, including the investment downtown and companies who have invested in Auburn

KEY INFLUENCERS DEFINED

The term “key influencers” is often part of social media strategy. These individuals are active online and are followed by a target audience. Connecting with these individuals allows a campaign to reach these audiences and push content to them. Social media analytics tools, such as FollowerWonk and Klout, can be used to identify key influencers.

AUBURN’S TOP 10 ASSETS

The City has a distinct value proposition and competitive positioning that it must articulate when “selling” itself to brokers, site selectors, and prospects.

1. **ACCESS TO SKILLED LABOR** to support industrial activities
2. **CENTRAL LOCATION** between ports, transportation assets, and anchor cities (Seattle and Tacoma)
3. An **AUTHENTIC AND HISTORIC DOWNTOWN** with a Sounder Station
4. **BROAD AND DEEP SUPPLY CHAIN** to support manufacturing
5. **RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT AMENITIES** – parks, casino, race track, golf course, shopping
6. **GREEN RIVER COLLEGE** is a partner in workforce training
7. **UP AND BNSF** rail lines and BNSF is expanding
8. A strong and stable **INDUSTRIAL MARKET**
9. **A DIVERSE COMMUNITY** with a strong sense of pride
10. A city government that is **A WILLING PARTNER**

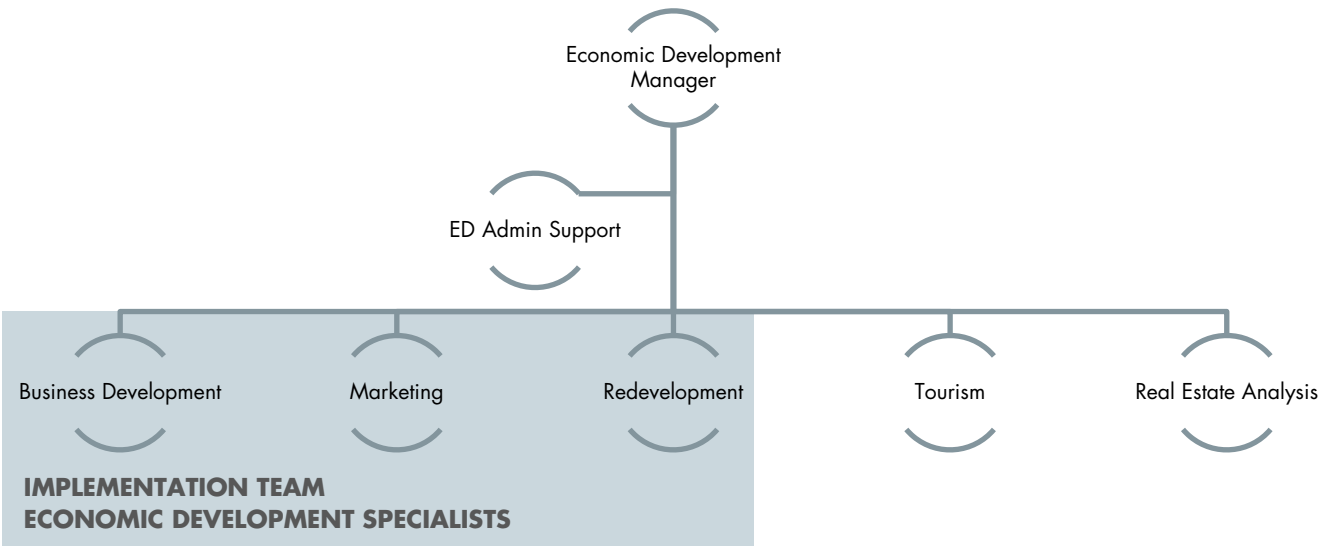
- 4.4.4.** Generate press releases and blog posts that promote opportunities to visit, live, invest, and work in Auburn
- 4.5. Real Estate Market Reports.** Develop a system for effective communication to the marketplace that educates businesses, developers, and brokers on opportunities available in the City
 - 4.5.1.** Transition the internal market tracking system used to evaluate market benchmarks to publish a regular report that can be distributed to the business, brokerage, and development community
 - 4.5.2.** Conduct regular forums with commercial brokers to discuss Auburn perceptions, opportunities, and regional activity
- 4.6. Strategic Outreach.** Reach out to decision makers in the target industries to encourage them to consider expanding or relocating in Auburn
 - 4.6.1.** Leverage Auburn’s community of business leaders and executives to reach peers in their networks by cultivating stronger relationships and keeping them well-informed of Auburn’s strengths and resources available for economic development
 - 4.6.2.** As part of TEAM AUBURN, have a core team of executives who are willing to meet with prospects and help sell Auburn
 - 4.6.3.** Attend key trade shows in target industries and use these events as opportunities to gather industry intelligence and make person-to-person connections. Leave behind compelling marketing collateral with industry players
 - 4.6.4.** Join regional economic development trade missions in collaboration with regional and state economic development organizations whenever possible
 - 4.6.5.** Take advantage of Seattle’s position as a global destination for conferences. Follow the regional conference schedule and look for opportunities to meet with prospects while they attend conferences in the region
 - 4.6.6.** When traveling, schedule appointments with any local executives in target industry sectors that are in the area

IMPLEMENTATION AND ORGANIZATION

The Auburn Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan is ambitious. It will require a transition of the current economic development infrastructure to a cohesive department with additional capacity and expertise. This will allow the City of Auburn to have one of the most robust and entrepreneurial economic development programs in the region. The City’s investment in economic development will yield a return that will strengthen the City’s tax base, create economic opportunities, and transform the City to a vibrant and connected hub in the Seattle-Tacoma metro area.

STAFFING

The recommendations below are based on the consulting team’s knowledge of organizational best practices and a review of peer city budgets and staffing.



Recommended Staffing Structure. The structure above would provide the capacity to implement the strategic plan. The Manager, who leads the team, is an experienced economic developer that has led teams successfully in complex transactions, innovative program management, and effective communications with stakeholders. The Business Development position has expertise in prospect management, deal making, business visitation, and economic development analysis and research. A Marketing position carries out all outreach and marketing activities. The Redevelopment position has expertise in real estate development and real estate finance. An administrative assistant supports the team. In addition, the tourism coordinator position that is funded by the LTAC, and the real estate analyst, transferred from facilities, are now part of the team. This provides the opportunity of greater integration of these functions with economic development.

This staffing structure would provide the City with the capacity to conduct ongoing research to support business recruitment and retention/expansion activities and to consistently produce and deliver content to support a marketing and outreach strategy. Both of these functions enable economic development programs to identify prospective companies and establish/maintain relationships with these potential prospects. This structure also provides the department with the capacity to build a much stronger referral network that consists of local business

leaders and regional real estate brokers and developers. The outcome of this increased capacity should be more and higher-quality prospects and projects, which should accelerate investment and job creation in Auburn. The Redevelopment expertise provides economic development programs with an enhanced ability to identify redevelopment opportunities, structure deals, and complete projects. An in-depth knowledge of financing tools available in the State of Washington and at the Federal Government should enable Auburn to access capital to support redevelopment opportunities.

The additional staffing will cost about \$436,000 annually once the Economic Development Division is fully staffed in 2019.

Operating Budget. Funding the additional functions of the ED Division's programs will require an additional \$78,000. This includes a \$60,000 marketing and outreach budget that can be used for public relations, marketing materials (including web design), social media, trade show travel and attendance, and limited advertising. An additional \$18,000 for data services, memberships, and market and economic research would cover a subscription to Hoovers.com, on-going consulting services, and memberships to NAIOP and ICSC.

Budget Summary. The additional staffing requirements and operating budget will likely require up to a total of \$514,000 annually by 2019.

IMPLEMENTATION

Because of its ten-year scope, this strategic plan has a long list of strategies and actions. Implementing these will take time and can only be done as resources and capacity are added. To implement this plan, the City should first focus on reorganizing itself to be consistent with the strategic direction of the plan. Adding a staff person dedicated to business development will enable the deployment of the program foundations, which should directly correlate with increasing investment into the City. The marketing position will enable the City to implement Focus Area 4 more fully. Redevelopment expertise will allow the City to advance further in the implementation of Focus Areas 2 and 3.

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ <i>POTENTIAL PARTNERS</i>	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-tem (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
OPPORTUNITY 1: DELIVERY					
Strategy 1.1. Clearly define the services that the City of Auburn can provide to businesses both directly and through partnerships.					
1.1.1. Organize regular meetings of the IPZ taskforce as TEAM AUBURN to keep them informed of the prospect pipeline, meetings with prospects, and potential recruitment trips	Manager & Business Development	<div></div>			
1.1.2. Continue to assist prospects in finding suitable sites, navigating the development process in Auburn, and securing available incentives from local and state sources	Manager & Business Development	<div></div>			
1.1.3. Launch and manage a business incubator	Manager & Business Development / SBDC		<div></div>		
1.1.4. Continue to organize weekly 3No Networking at Auburn-based businesses	Manager & Marketing / SBDC	<div></div>			
1.1.5. Continue to partner with the Small Business Assistance Center at Green River College on technical assistance and workshops for small businesses	Manager & Marketing / Chamber ADA	<div></div>			
1.1.6. Establish partnerships with area SBA lenders, community development financial institutions, and other nonprofit microlenders to provide better access to capital for businesses that do not qualify for bank financing	Business Development / SBDC			<div></div>	

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ POTENTIAL PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-term (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
1.1.7. Assemble a list of revolving loan funds and other financing resources that are available to Auburn-based businesses	Business Development / SBDC			■	
1.1.8. Continue to partner with Green River College and WorkSource to provide customized training	Manager	■			
1.1.9. Strengthen the partnership between Auburn Public Schools, Green River College, and Auburn's business community by organizing industry sector partnerships that explore workforce demand, critical occupations, and available curricula	Manager / WorkSource Workforce Development Council			■	
1.1.10. Maintain a catalog of information and resources relevant to economic development on the City's webpage	Business Development	■			
1.1.11. Track and report market trends at least quarterly and distribute the findings to stakeholders as part of the effort to espouse "Why Auburn" to the regional real estate community	Business Development		■		
1.1.12. Update and distribute retail trade area data annually	Business Development	■			
1.1.13. Provide profiles on the City's target investment areas	Business Development			■	
Strategy 1.2. Formalize a business visitation program to track trends among Auburn employers and identify any businesses in need of assistance					
1.2.1. Establish a visitation protocol, a list of information to be collected during each visit, and set a goal how many businesses each year.	Business Development / Chamber		■		
1.2.2. Create a database of Auburn-based employers with the City's business license database	Business Development		■		
1.2.3. Using CoStar or other sources, identify employers who have leases that will be expiring in the next two or three years to be prioritized for visitations	Business Development		■		
1.2.4. Maintain detailed notes on visits in the economic development project database to document the relationship over time	Business Development / Chamber		■		
1.2.5. Compile information collected from visits to track trends among employers and distribute these findings to stakeholders in an annual report and presentation	Business Development / Chamber		■		

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ POTENTIAL PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-tem (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
Strategy 1.3. Recruit new businesses, including retail, to Auburn to provide better economic opportunities and enhance Auburn’s quality of place					
1.3.1. Strengthen relationships with brokers, developers, and industry associations in the metro area and create an education outreach program targeted to these groups	Manager		<div></div>		
1.3.2. Cultivate strong partnerships with regional organizations to identify co-marketing opportunities and joint trade missions	Manager			<div></div>	
1.3.3. Join the coalition of local governments and organizations that represent the communities of the greater South Sound region	Manager		<div></div>		
1.3.4. During business visitations, ensure that Auburn-based businesses are aware of the great services that the City provides and have information on the different initiatives	Business Development		<div></div>		
1.3.5. Cultivate relationships among promising young companies across the metro	Business Development			<div></div>	
1.3.6. Actively prospect among companies in target industries	Business Development		<div></div>		
Strategy 1.4. Identify and advance catalyst projects that will facilitate Auburn’s evolution					
1.4.1. Work with city council and department heads to identify and prioritize potential catalyst projects	Manager			<div></div>	
1.4.2. Hold quarterly meetings with this group to learn from guest speakers about what other communities are doing and to brainstorm what Auburn could do	Manager			<div></div>	
1.4.3. From the project list generated in the quarterly sessions, prioritize projects based on feasibility, expense, time frame, impact, and alignment with Auburn’s opportunity areas	Manager / Department Heads			<div></div>	
1.4.4. For the two or three top ranked projects, create a project team of three to five individuals responsible for implementation	Manager / Department Heads			<div></div>	
1.4.5. Maintain a tool that tracks progress on project implementation, and report progress and outcomes at the quarterly meetings	Admin			<div></div>	

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ POTENTIAL PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-tem (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
Strategy 1.5. Foster relationships with key entities that support economic activity in the City					
1.5.1. Initiate and cultivate relationships.	Manager	<div></div>			
OPPORTUNITY 2: PRODUCT					
Strategy 2.1. Design and maintain information resources that demonstrate Auburn’s strength in terms of its access to skilled labor					
2.1.1. Maintain up-to-date labor market information on Auburn and its laborshed and make this information available on the economic development website as well as in a report format	Business Development / WorkSource		<div></div>		
2.1.2. For target industries, create profiles that highlight the availability of relevant occupations as well as training programs and other workforce development resources	Business Development / WorkSource		<div></div>		
Strategy 2.2. Ensure a supply of deal-ready sites to accommodate new business investment in Auburn					
2.2.1. Maintain an inventory of Auburn’s most important parcels and sites – those with high-impact development or redevelopment potential or that are located in strategic areas.	Real Estate & Redevelopment			<div></div>	
2.2.2. Among the eight sub-areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan, focus on the airport area, Emerald Downs, the GSA Property, and Northwest Auburn as key planning areas with high commercial development potential	Real Estate & Redevelopment / Community Development & Public Works			<div></div>	
2.2.3. Work with relevant land owners or brokers to package these sites with highly informative information packets (electronic) and actively promote these sites to prospective businesses and regional brokers	Real Estate & Redevelopment			<div></div>	
2.2.4. Encourage the land owner and broker to list the site on the City’s inventory of buildings and sites	Real Estate & Redevelopment			<div></div>	
2.2.5. Meet with institutional investors and owners of underperforming properties to make the case for additional investment to increase their yields	Manager & Redevelopment				<div></div>

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ POTENTIAL PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-term (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
2.2.6. Facilitate the conversion of industrial buildings that are currently used for warehousing and distribution to manufacturing or other sales tax generating uses	Redevelopment				■
2.2.7. Work with land owners to facilitate conversion opportunities, redevelopment of high-potential parcels, or the assembly of multiple parcels by addressing barriers where possible and connect them with local developers and real estate investors who seek these kinds of opportunities	Redevelopment				■
2.2.8. Maintain a database as part of the CRM of all known businesses seeking additional space in the region to make connections with property owners in Auburn as space becomes available	Business Development			■	
2.2.9. Evaluate the feasibility of annexing the areas adjacent to the City that are in unincorporated King County as a means of improving Auburn's commercial land base	Manager				■
Strategy 2.3. Create a robust toolbox to influence economic development outcomes					
2.3.1. Catalog all tools available in the state	Business Development / Finance		■		
2.3.2. Consider and evaluate the feasibility of the additional programs	Manager / Finance		■		
2.3.3. Collect examples of communities who use these tools in an innovative way to support projects that advance their economic development goals and share these with relevant City stakeholders	Business Development / Finance		■		
2.3.4. Ensure that city council and City staff are well-informed of the type and use of financing tools available to municipalities	Manager / Finance		■		
2.3.5. Establish a policy that sets out the City's goals for the use of these various tools as well as a process and framework for evaluating projects	Manager / City Council, Finance		■		
2.3.6. Adopt the guideline for effective and responsible incentives use	Manager / City Council, Finance		■		

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ POTENTIAL PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-term (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
2.3.7. Adopt a comprehensive fiscal and economic impact tool to measure the return on investment for projects being evaluated	Manager / Finance		■		
2.3.8. Create content for the City's website and for brochures that allows owners and developers to understand the tools and programs that may be available for their project and how it relates to their pro forma	Business Development / Finance		■		
2.3.9. Develop a clear flowchart that establishes the process that owners and developers will need to follow to obtain assistance in order to set realistic expectations	Business Development / Finance		■		
Strategy 2.4. Evaluate and continue to improve the City's land use and building permit process and performance.					
2.4.1. Continue to employ the permitting performance tracking system to understand performance	Business Development / Community Development & Public Works		■		
2.4.2. Develop a regular report based on information from the tracking system that allows the development community and city staff to understand how efficiently permits are being processed	Business Development / Community Development & Public Works		■		
2.4.3. Create a map-based report with supporting tables that tracks all major commercial developments in the City including new construction and major renovations	Business Development / Community Development & Public Works		■		
2.4.4. Consider reviewing the fee structure associated with permit reviews	Manager / Community Development & Public Works		■		
2.4.5. Establish precedents log that may be used for future staff to reference how certain situations that share similar conditions were addressed previously	Business Development / Community Development & Public Works		■		

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ POTENTIAL PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-tem (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
Strategy 2.5. Re-evaluate zoning districts and modify certain aspects of the code					
2.5.1. Expand the Downtown Urban Center (DUC) zoning district to include the logical adjacent areas	Manager / Community Development & Public Works			■	
2.5.2. Consider zoning modifications related to height and parking to improve project feasibility	Manager / Community Development & Public Works		■		
2.5.3. Add flexibility to the industrial land use code to allow for more yard storage and permitting uses such as building contractors in districts that are currently more restrictive	Manager / Community Development & Public Works		■		
2.5.4. Consider an overlay on the Landing Field (LF) zone and adjacent commercial properties to permit airside supportive land uses around the airport	Manager / Community Development & Public Works		■		
Strategy 2.6. Annually compare Auburn’s development/impact fees, tax rates, and rebate programs to peers					
2.6.1. Conduct research on regional peers to identify any rate changes or fee changes and record in a business climate database, which can be created with information from this strategic plan	Business Development / Finance, Community Development & Public Works			■	
2.6.2. Document any significant changes and distribute a summary report to relevant department heads	Business Development / Finance, Community Development & Public Works			■	
2.6.3. Work collectively to resolve any issues revealed by this research exercise	Business Development / Finance, Community Development & Public Works			■	

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ POTENTIAL PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-term (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
2.6.4. Publicize the areas where Auburn stands out among its peer group to the regional real estate community	Business Development & Marketing			■	
OPPORTUNITY 3: PLACE					
Strategy 3.1. Create a target investment program to guide strategic infrastructure investments that enhance Auburn's economic development opportunities					
3.1.1. Create a cross-departmental forum for identifying and prioritizing areas for targeted infrastructure investment	Manager / Mayor's Office				■
3.1.2. Evaluate market-challenged areas for their potential to attract private investment through targeted public investment projects and designate two or three areas as "Target Investment Areas"	Redevelopment				■
3.1.3. Align the City's resources, both planning and programmatic, around the Target Investment Areas to ensure they reinforce capital investments	Manager / Department Heads				■
3.1.4. Tailor a suite of services and/or incentives that is available to support private sector projects in the Target Investment Areas in order to overcome real or perceived market gaps	Manager & Redevelopment				■
3.1.5. Package the information and actively market the areas to potential investors and other stakeholders	Redevelopment & Marketing				■
Strategy 3.2. Maintain and enhance regional transportation connections to ensure ease of travel to and from Auburn					
3.2.1. Prioritize improvements on and around Auburn Way North and Auburn Way South and a better connection from SR-167 connection to downtown	Manager / Community Development & Public Works	■			
3.2.2. Continue to partner with Sound Transit to secure adequate parking around the Sounder station as well as convenient service and better multi-modal connectivity to downtown and other Auburn destinations	Manager / Community Development & Public Works	■			

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ POTENTIAL PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-term (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
3.2.3. Continue to improve the Auburn Municipal Airport by conducting a needs assessment of businesses located in Auburn and in the immediate region to understand whether they could use an enhanced airport for business purposes and what improvements would be needed	Business Development / <i>Auburn Municipal Airport</i>			■	
Strategy 3.3. Continue to invest in downtown revitalization					
3.3.1. Optimize regional multimodal downtown connectivity both to and from the City to ease travel times and improve the downtown experience	Manager / <i>Community Development & Public Works</i>	■			
3.3.2. Re-evaluate the Business Improvement Area to look at how ratepayers are assessed, who is being assessed, and how the funds can best be used	Business Development / <i>Finance ADA</i>		■		
3.3.3. Develop an investment brochure (electronic and print) for downtown that features a map of the Downtown Urban Center; key data and statistics; overview of public investment; available incentives; photographs that highlight new investment and potential investments; and a map with available parcels	Marketing / <i>ADA</i>		■		
3.3.4. Publicize a comprehensive list of incentives available to support projects in the Downtown Urban Center both in the brochure and on the City's website	Marketing / <i>ADA</i>		■		
3.3.5. Continue to support existing small businesses downtown and to recruit targeted retailers and tenants downtown	Business Development / <i>SBDC ADA</i>	■			
3.3.6. Continue to actively seek investors and developers for downtown projects	Manager, Redevelopment / <i>ADA</i>	■		■	
3.3.7. Approach successful restaurateurs and local retailers both in Auburn and the Greater Seattle region to ask if they would be interested in expanding downtown	Redevelopment / <i>ADA</i>			■	

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ <i>POTENTIAL PARTNERS</i>	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-tem (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
Strategy 3.4. Designate Auburn Way South as an additional Targeted Investment Area					
3.4.1. Complete the Auburn Way South Corridor Plan	Redevelopment / <i>Community Development & Public Works</i>			<div></div>	
3.4.2. Develop an investment brochure (electronic and print) for Auburn Way South to highlight the opportunities that are identified in the corridor plan	Marketing / <i>Community Development & Public Works</i>			<div></div>	
3.4.3. Strengthen the City’s partnership with the Muckleshoot tribe around the revitalization of this corridor	Manager / <i>Mayor’s Office</i>			<div></div>	
Strategy 3.5. Create stronger connections between Auburn’s primary tourism assets and develop new assets to attract more visitors to Auburn					
3.5.1. Develop and market packages that include visits to three or four tourism destinations to offer to both residents of and visitors to the metro area (e.g. Golf & Gamble, Shop & Slots, Music & More)	Tourism		<div></div>		
3.5.2. Coordinate a brewery and distillery tour. Green River Cyclery has regular tours to breweries and would have good insights into how this would work	Tourism		<div></div>		
3.5.3. Consider creating a food entrepreneur kiosk downtown where a guest chef can serve a featured menu	Tourism		<div></div>		
3.5.4. Explore the feasibility of a hop-on/hop-off tour or shuttle that runs between the Outlet Collection, the golf course, downtown, the casino, White River Amphitheater, and Emerald Downs to facilitate visitors’ movement from one place to another	Tourism		<div></div>		

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ <i>POTENTIAL PARTNERS</i>	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-tem (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
Strategy 3.6. Strengthen regional tourism connections					
3.6.1. Evaluate the potential benefits of establishing a Tourism Promotion Area that includes neighboring communities	Manager, Tourism			■	
3.6.2. Establish a regional partnership of communities to jointly promote the South Sound as a tourism destination	Manager, Tourism				■
OPPORTUNITY 4: MESSAGING					
Strategy 4.1. Develop a stronger brand for Auburn and reinforce this with unified messaging across organizations					
4.1.1. Adopt a new tagline.	Manager / <i>Mayor, City Council, Department Heads</i>		■		
4.1.2. Coordinate a consistent marketing theme and campaign that applies across the City, economic development, the Chamber of Commerce, the Auburn Downtown Association, and the Auburn Tourism Board	Marketing		■		
4.1.3. Regularly (quarterly or annually) create talking points for community leaders and partner organizations that highlight positive developments in Auburn and why it is a desirable place to visit, live, and invest	Marketing		■		
4.1.4. Invest in a wayfinding and placemaking strategy to reinforce this brand across Auburn	Manager, Marketing / <i>Community Development & Public Works</i>				■
Strategy 4.2. Build a more positive perception and a greater sense of community among Auburn residents through a strong partnership with the Auburn Reporter and other local media outlets					
4.2.1. Profile positive developments in Auburn that feature City investments, new businesses, and other economic development successes in order to build awareness of the City’s positive momentum	Marketing		■		
4.2.2. Publish interviews of Auburn residents that highlight the things they like to do in Auburn and good memories of Auburn	Marketing		■		

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ <i>POTENTIAL PARTNERS</i>	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-tem (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
Strategy 4.3. Continue to strengthen the City’s social media strategy to improve Auburn’s internal and external perceptions					
4.3.1. Develop a more consistent and strategic economic development voice across social media platforms, in particular LinkedIn and Twitter in order to develop a greater awareness of economic development activities in Auburn	Marketing		<div></div>		
4.3.2. Leverage 3No Networking to distribute more positive stories about Auburn and Auburn’s business culture	Marketing	<div></div>	<div></div>		
4.3.3. Connect with Auburn’s key influencers through social media and push out positive content through this network	Marketing		<div></div>		
4.3.4. Launch a hashtag campaign related to Auburn’s brand that helps promote positive perceptions	Marketing		<div></div>		
Strategy 4.4. Launch a formal public relations campaign to change the region’s perception of Auburn					
4.4.1. Focus on earned media as a strategy to educate the region about Auburn’s positive attributes	Marketing		<div></div>		
4.4.2. Build awareness of Auburn as a destination for visitors, for residents, and for business investment by making audiences aware of community assets, the housing market, transportation linkages, and investment opportunities	Marketing		<div></div>		
4.4.3. Create a buzz about Auburn, particularly in the Seattle-Tacoma metro area by publicizing stories in local and regional news outlets that demonstrate what a great location Auburn is.	Marketing		<div></div>		
4.4.4. Generate press releases and blog posts that promote opportunities to visit, live, invest, and work in Auburn	Marketing		<div></div>		
Strategy 4.5. Develop a system for effective communication to the marketplace that educates businesses, developers, and brokers on opportunities available in the City					
4.5.1. Transition the internal market tracking system used to evaluate market benchmarks to publish a regular report that can be distributed to the business, brokerage, and development community	Business Development, Real Estate, Marketing		<div></div>		
4.5.2. Conduct regular forums with commercial brokers to discuss Auburn perceptions, opportunities, and regional activity	Business Development, Real Estate, Marketing		<div></div>		

	RESPONSIBLE STAFF/ <i>POTENTIAL PARTNERS</i>	TIMEFRAME			
		Ongoing	Short-tem (Years 1-2)	Mid-Term (Years 3-5)	Long-Term (Years 5-10)
Strategy 4.6. Reach out to decision makers in the target industries to encourage them to consider expanding or relocating in Auburn					
4.6.1. Leverage Auburn’s community of business leaders and executives to reach peers in their networks by cultivating stronger relationships and keeping them well-informed of Auburn’s strengths and resources available for economic development	Manager	<div><div></div></div>			
4.6.2. As part of TEAM AUBURN, have a core team of executives who are willing to meet with prospects and help sell Auburn	Business Development		<div><div></div></div>		
4.6.3. Attend key trade shows in target industries and use these events as opportunities to gather industry intelligence and make person-to-person connections	Manager, Business Development		<div><div></div></div>		
4.6.4. Join regional economic development trade missions in collaboration with regional and state economic development organizations whenever possible	Manager, Business Development / <i>Mayor’s Office</i>		<div><div></div></div>		
4.6.5. Take advantage of Seattle’s position as a global destination for conferences	Business Development		<div><div></div></div>		
4.6.6. When traveling, schedule appointments with any local executives in target industry sectors that are in the area	Business Development		<div><div></div></div>		

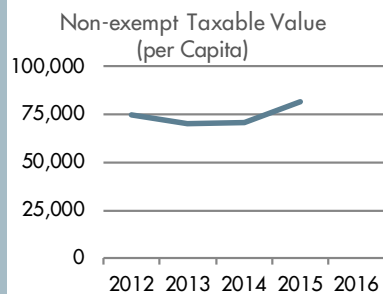
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT

To understand the impact of the City's economic development efforts and to track success, it is important to monitor a set of key performance indicators. Below is a set of indicators that are tied to three topics directly related to the strategies contained in this plan: 1) tax base; 2) real estate market; and 3) economic opportunity.

Property Tax Base



The tax base has grown steadily since 2013.

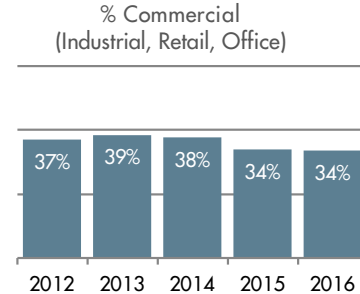


Source: King County Tax Assessor

Commercial Tax Base



The share of the commercial tax base fell from its 2013 peak.

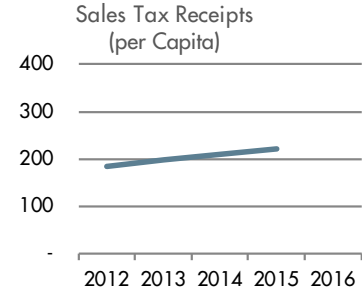


Source: King County Tax Assessor

Retail Sales



Retail sales tax receipts per capita have climbed steadily.

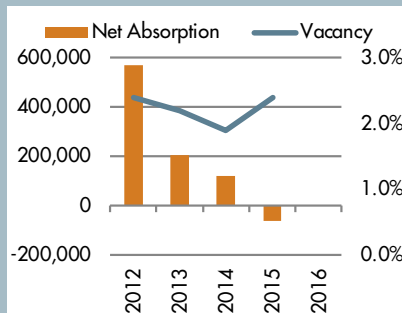


Source: City of Auburn

Industrial Market



The vacancy rate rose slightly with recent negative net absorption.

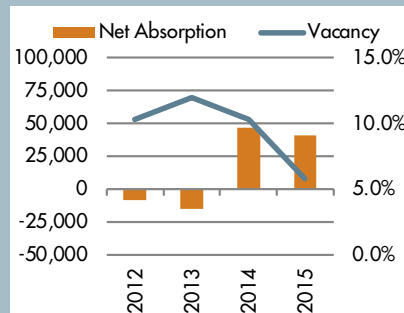


Source: CoStar

Office Market



The vacancy rate dropped with positive net absorption.

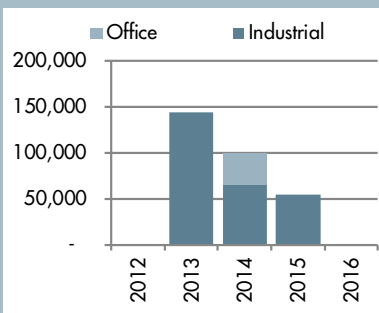


Source: CoStar

New Space Delivery



Over the last two years, little new square footage has been delivered.



Source: CoStar

Employment



The number of jobs in the City has continued to grow.

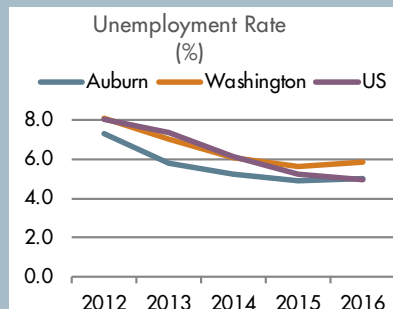


Source: EMSI

Unemployment



The region's unemployment rate is much lower than in 2012.

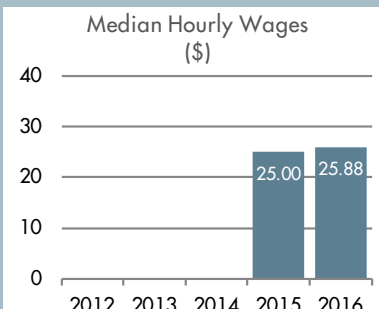


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Wages



The region's wages are climbing gradually.



Source: EMSI

In addition to these key performance indicators, the City should monitor output measures related to these topic areas and other strategies. Suggested measures include:

- Jobs created and average wages- only projects that the ED Division managed
- Private investment overall and by target area
- Square feet of distribution conversions
- Return on investment (ROI) on any incentives (fiscal & economic impact)
- Industrial and office lease rates
- Broker activity
- Restaurants and retailers – new and closed
- Employment by sector
- Wages by sector
- Earned media
- Web traffic

It will also be useful to track some of these metrics for peer cities and the metro area to provide context for Auburn's performance.

Being able to drill down further to get behind the key performance indicators will allow the City to evaluate strategy implementation and make tweaks to the strategic plan as necessary. This feedback loop is how the strategic plan transforms into a living document that will maintain relevancy over the ten-year period.

The Economic Development Office should be responsible for maintaining updating these metrics on an on-going basis with the assistance from the consulting team, as needed.

CONCLUSION

The City of Auburn should be commended for their recognition of the importance of economic development strategic planning at this juncture in Auburn's history and in the context of a booming regional economy. With the plan in place, the City will be positioned to transition its economic development program to a more robust and comprehensive program that will allow it to influence its own economic development future. The implementation and monitoring of the plan will be the next phase. This work will take discipline and direction, leadership and collaboration, and patience and perseverance across the City and with multiple partners. The City of Auburn's Ten-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan provides the foundation and lays out the framework to coordinate the City's continued evolution into a unique and thriving hub in the Seattle-Tacoma region.