

Element 1

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY



I. Framework

A. Preface

The nature of urban planning in the State of Washington has changed significantly in the last 25 years. State mandates and regional directives have significantly affected local planning policies and regulations. The most important of these changes at the state level was the adoption of the State Growth Management Act in 1990. For jurisdictions in the Puget Sound region, *Vision 2040* (an update to *Vision 2020*) has become the foundation for regional planning and guides many major planning decisions. And in Pierce County, jurisdictions have agreed to plan cooperatively under the County-Wide Planning Policies. While citizen vision remains the primary framework for individual community's future planning, attempts to accommodate state, regional and county goals, plans and policies have also influenced the form and content of Fife's Comprehensive Plan.

Change is consistent and is a part of everyday life. In Fife, as in most communities, the dominant characteristic of change is growth: growth in population, traffic congestion, economic activity, land consumption, and environmental impacts. As part of Pierce County, the City cannot avoid growth. The challenge for Fife is to direct growth in such a way as to take full advantage of its potential benefits, while managing it so that it is physically, socially, and environmentally acceptable.

It is now widely understood that what has been the traditional pattern of community growth and development is, in many ways, unsustainable. It creates inefficient use of land, insufficient re-investment in infrastructure, destruction of crucial natural resources, and stresses on environmental and human systems that cannot be continued indefinitely. The resultant losses of economic opportunity, natural environments, and sustainability could threaten the community's quality of life.

B. State Growth Management Act

Recognizing that uncoordinated and unplanned growth, together with a lack of common goals, can and has impacted the environment, economic development and high quality of life traditionally enjoyed by Washington citizens, the Washington State legislature adopted the Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1990.

The Act is intended to help communities find solutions to increased traffic congestion, urban sprawl, loss of forest and farm land, destruction of critical areas such as wetlands and wildlife habitats, threats caused by landslides, flooding and earthquakes, and provision of adequate supplies of safe drinking water. Another purpose of GMA is to balance the needs for economic development with preservation of the natural environment. It requires cities and towns to enact a number of technical programs to direct growth in an appropriate and sustainable manner. The Fife Comprehensive Plan serves as the local framework for these programs.

The fourteen goals stated in the Growth Management Act are:

1. Urban Growth.
2. Reduce Sprawl.
3. Transportation.
4. Housing.
5. Economic Development.

6. Property Rights.
7. Permits.
8. Natural Resource Industries.
9. Open Space and Recreation.
10. Environment.
11. Citizen Participation and Coordination.
12. Public Facilities and Services.
13. Historic Preservation.
14. Goals and Policies of the Shoreline Management Act.

The primary means of achieving the goals is through the completion and updating of comprehensive plans addressing land use, transportation, housing, utilities, parks and recreation, economic development, and capital facilities.

The overriding objective of the Growth Management Act is to give each community the tools it needs to access its goals for the future, to evaluate community assets, to create a comprehensive plan, and to develop implementation strategies through innovative techniques and regulations that allow the community to reach its own vision of the future.

C. Multi-County Planning Policies

The GMA also requires the development of multi-county planning policies for the Central Puget Sound Region, which consists of King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties. The policies describe regional objectives for issues and cross county boundaries and need inter-jurisdictional consistency. They were adopted in March of 1993 by the General Assembly of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) as an amendment to its *Vision 2020* (*Vision 2020* has since been updated by a document called *Vision 2040*). These multi-county policies cover the same topics required in county-wide planning policies. PSRC is an organization made up of representatives of local jurisdictions from the Central Puget Sound Region.

Vision 2040 is the regional growth and transportation plan for the Central Puget Sound region that anticipates accommodating 5 million people expected to live in the region by 2040. The concept of people, prosperity and planet provides a central theme for *Vision 2040*.

The goal of *Vision 2040* is to create more compact, people-oriented urban areas, thereby reversing trends that have resulted in the low density, automobile-dependent communities that are common today. *Vision 2040* provides for the designation of various levels of compact growth centers linked by an efficient, transit-based, multi-modal transportation system. It calls for cities and counties to commit to both the land use patterns and transportation investment priorities that support the compact growth centers concept.

This Comprehensive Plan and the functional planning documents adopted by reference in the Plan (e.g. Comprehensive Water Plan, Parks Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan) advances strategies within *Vision 2040* including, but not limited to:

- Well-designed pedestrian oriented Mixed Use development is provided for in a downtown environment to encourage services close to residences, transit use and the connection of centers (as also provided for in the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies).

- Walkability and other alternate modes of travel to motorized transportation are promoted through identification of needs and implementation strategies for non-motorized forms of transportation.
- In planning and providing for non-motorized transportation, low impact development, use of native vegetation, principles of healthy communities, climate change, air quality, and environmental sustainability are promoted.
- Housing unit and employment targets have been updated to account for countywide planning policies (2030) and Puget Sound Regional Council (2035) population and employment targets and demonstrated adequate capacity.
- The housing element provides techniques to expand housing production at all income levels to meet the diverse needs of both current and future residents.
- Our economic development element in the plan supports creating jobs, investing in all people, creating great communities, and maintaining a high quality of life.
- Our transportation element advances cleaner and more sustainable mobility, with provisions for complete streets, green streets, and context-sensitive design.
- Transportation planning with neighboring jurisdictions.
- Buildable land analysis and maps are identified to identify vacant and underutilized lands.

D. County-Wide Planning Policies

The Growth Management Act calls for counties and the communities within those counties to create and adopt a set of mutually agreed upon planning policies to guide the development of local comprehensive plans. The requirement is not for counties to dictate planning policy to local communities, but rather for neighbors to negotiate a framework for planning that is mutually beneficial. This requirement is a reflection of the growing awareness of the regional implications of many local planning decisions. The resultant common framework encourages consistency among the comprehensive plans.

The County-Wide Planning Policies for Pierce County were adopted by the County Council in the early 1990's, following ratification by the County's cities and towns. The Policies address the issues that uniformly affect the County as a whole, including affordable housing, agricultural lands, economic development, and fiscal impact, natural resources, open space, the protection of environmentally sensitive lands, siting of public facilities of a regional significance, health and well-being, transportation and many other items. Also included in the County-Wide Planning Policies is a process for determining the boundaries of urban growth areas.

Amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies occur from time to time and follow a ratification process.

II. Plan Summary

A. Citizen Participation

The Growth Management Act (GMA) places a high degree of importance on citizen participation and establishes early and continual citizen participation as the basis for the community's comprehensive planning process. The importance of citizen participation is reflected in Statewide Planning Goal 11 which states,

“(11) Citizen participation and coordination. Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.”

In addition, RCW 36.70A.140 entitled “Comprehensive Plans – Ensure public participation” requires that each county or city planning under the GMA have public participation program. RCW 36.70A.140 states, in part,

“Each county and city that is required or chooses to plan under RCW [36.70A.040](#) shall establish and broadly disseminate to the public a public participation program identifying procedures providing for early and continuous public participation in the development and amendment of comprehensive land use plans and development regulations implementing such plans. The procedures shall provide for broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives, opportunity for written comments, public meetings after effective notice, provision for open discussion, communication programs, information services, and consideration of and response to public comments...”

The foundation of the comprehensive plan must be the citizens’ vision for their community’s future. Appropriate tools and resources to move the community towards the goals set out in the comprehensive plan. To achieve this foundation, citizen participation is essential.

Fife's 1996 Comprehensive Plan was developed by a Comprehensive Plan Task Force, a group of local citizens who represent a diverse set of interests and points of view, with technical assistance from the City staff. The wider community was asked to give its input at various points along the way.

Various revisions to the Plan resulting in a 2005 plan update included the use of community surveys, public notices, public meetings and public hearings (including televised City Council meetings), workshops, newspaper articles, and all required legal notices. The result was an updated plan reflecting Fife's citizens’ vision for the future of their community including methods for reaching that future while meeting the challenges of guiding growth in the community in a positive and sustainable manner. The 2005 revision, however, maintained the 1996 Plan’s vision and most of the policies established by that Plan.

In 2013 the City of Fife began the process for updating the Comprehensive Plan for the required GMA update (with a June 2015 completion deadline (RCW 36.70A.130)). An updated Public Participation Plan was prepared for the 2015 GMA update process recognizing, in part, the growing evolution of public participation techniques including, but not limited to, social media.

Public Participation techniques must be transparent and clear. The City will encourage and facilitate public participation in the planning process utilizing the objectives and techniques listed below, tailored to the complexity and nature of the specific plan and/or development regulation amendment. This recognizes that different levels of public participation techniques are appropriate for different plan and development regulation amendments.

For the purposes of complying with RCW 36.70A.140, the following constitutes the City’s Public Participation Program. The Public Participation Program is designed to meet the following objectives:

- Provide a roadmap for the public, outlining a clear and accessible public process.
- Outline a broad base of participants.
- Make a concerted and continuous effort to ensure that elected officials, advisory commissions/boards and staff are fully aware of and understand community and stakeholder concerns.
- Encourage participation among all age groups, specifically retired and young individuals.
- Meet the requirements of the Growth Management Act.

In order to ensure adequate public participation and notification, the City of Fife will use a range of public participation techniques. In developing the list of public participation techniques, it is recognized that different plan and/or development regulation amendments will warrant a specific Public Participation Program tailored to the amendment and its complexity. This evaluation will be done on a case by case basis to ensure proper public participation and public notification.

Public participation methods include, but are not limited to:

- Newspaper advertisements within the Tacoma News Tribune and Fife Flyer.
- Mailing notices to property owners and residences within a certain radius of site specific proposals.
- Public Workshops and Open Houses.
- Meetings with the City Council, Tree, Parks, and Planning Commissions.
- Public Hearings.
- Posting notices in general locations including City Hall, the Fife Library and the Fife Community Center.
- Notices and/or special videos on the cable access channel.
- Informational pages or notices on the City Website.
- Public Surveys.
- City social networking sites.
- Mayors Forum.
- Announcements at regional board or commissions.
- Booth at the Harvest Festival and other community events.
- Citizens Advisory Committees.
- Email listserv.

In addition to public hearings required by law, public participation will also be solicited through the SEPA process.

Since the time the Growth Management Act's initial adoption, the internet and social networking sites have become increasingly more popular. Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube and others may be utilized (where appropriate) to aid in public participation. Additional new techniques and methods to increase transparency and public participation will likely present themselves; the City will look to employ those opportunities in the future as appropriate.

B. Description of Planning Area

One of the goals of the Growth Management Act is to reduce inefficient sprawl development patterns by directing future growth into the existing city limits or into adjacent areas. The primary methods to accomplish this goal are (1) the encouragement of increased density within the existing city limits by infilling of vacant parcels and redevelopment of under-utilized properties; and (2) the designation of Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) for each community. Growth not facilitated by infilling must be directed into the remainder of UGA and will be discouraged outside of that area. Fife's planning area is the designated UGA.

The City of Fife's Urban Growth Area generally follows the area defined by the Puyallup River to the south, Freeman Road/82nd Avenue East to the east, Hylebos Creek and a portion of Fife Heights to the northeast, and the common city limit line with the City of Tacoma to the north and west (Map IN-1).

C. Plan Time Horizon

The GMA requires that the delineated UGA include areas and densities sufficient to accommodate the urban growth projected to occur in the next 20 years. Population projections are based upon data provided by the state Office of Financial Management (OFM) and the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and allocated by the Pierce County Council. This Plan is reviewed and updated periodically to maintain that 20 year planning period.

The time horizon for the 2015 GMA Plan update is 2035.

OFM population data indicates that the City of Fife's April 1, 2014 population is 9,405. With the 2015 GMA Update, the planning time horizon is 2035. PSRC forecast data indicates that in 2035 Fife will have 4,305 households, a total population of 9,515 and 20,350 employees.

D. Purpose and Intent

The Fife Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide the community's decision makers with guidelines regarding issues effecting the future shape, character and form of the City. It should be viewed as the means to realize the community's vision of its future. The Plan basically is a policy document supplemented by strategies for implementing community goals regarding change and growth in the planning area over the next 20 years. The citizens of Fife recognize the need to make informed decisions and to take logical steps to assure that, as their community grows and changes, the benefits and advantages of living in Fife are not lost and that managing growth to the maximum benefit of the community will result in a better place to live, work, and to do business.

While the primary basis of the Plan is community goals and values, the Plan's framework is within the state requirements for managing growth as outlined in the Growth Management Act and other state, county, and local legislation. The Plan represents the City's efforts to comply with these requirements.

E. Consistency

A fundamental concept of the Growth Management Act is its consistency requirements. As provided for in WAC 365-196-210 (8), consistency is defined as follows:

“(8) "Consistency" means that no feature of a plan or regulation is incompatible with

any other feature of a plan or regulation. Consistency is indicative of a capacity for orderly integration or operation with other elements in a system.”

The GMA consistency requirements cuts across several aspects of the comprehensive plan including:

- Internal consistency: Comprehensive plans must be internally consistent (WAC 365-196-500). This requirement means that differing parts of the comprehensive plan must fit together so that no one feature precludes the achievement of any other.
- Comprehensive Plan/Development Regulation consistency: Development regulations must be consistent with and implement the Comprehensive Plan.
- Inter-jurisdictional Consistency: Each county or city comprehensive plan must be coordinated with, and consistent with, the comprehensive plans of other counties and cities that share common borders or related regional issues with that county or city.

As provided for in WAC 365-196-500(4), the City of Fife will conduct a consistency review with each amendment to the comprehensive plan and/or development regulation. At a minimum, any amendment to the comprehensive plan or development regulations will be reviewed for consistency. Decisional criteria for amendments to the comprehensive plan and to development regulations will require a review for consistency with the comprehensive plan to ensure internal consistency and comprehensive plan-development regulation consistency.

Proposed plan amendments will be sent to the county and cities that share common borders with Fife for review and comment prior too adoption to promote inter-jurisdictional consistency. Plan amendments that are not internally consistent and development regulations which are not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan will not be approved.

F. Plan Amendment Process

Amendments to the Plan will be necessary from time to time in response to monitoring and evaluation and/or changing conditions or needs of the community. The process for initiating amendments follows statutory requirements as set forth in the State of Washington’s Planning Enabling Act (RCW 36.70 and 36.70A) and the State Environmental Policy Act, which is the same process used in adopting the Plan itself. Proposed amendments to the Plan may be considered no more than once each year. All proposed amendments must be considered concurrently so that the cumulative effect of the proposals can be determined.

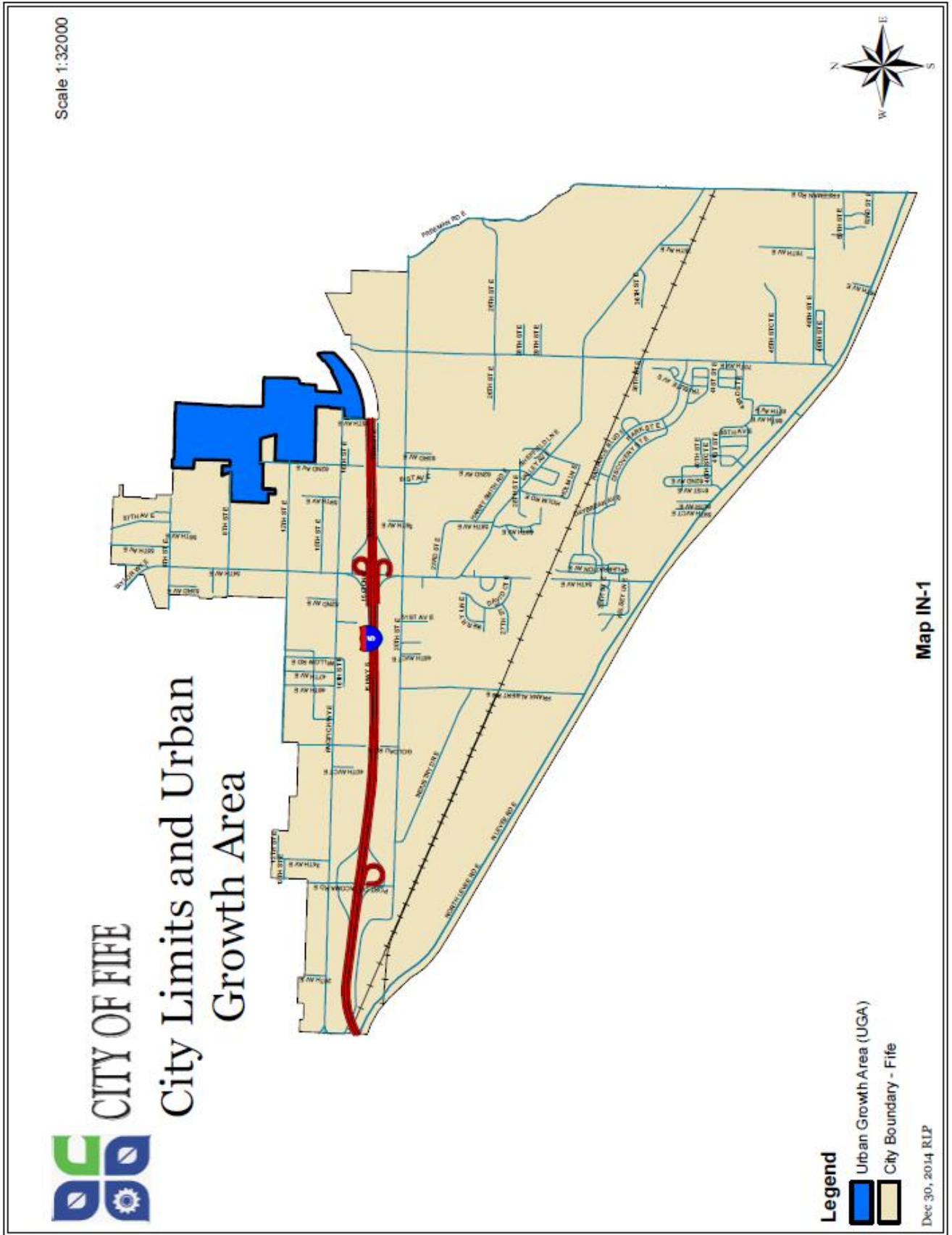
The comprehensive plan was developed and adopted after significant study and public participation. The principles, goals, objectives and policies contained therein shall be granted substantial weight when considering a proposed amendment. Therefore, the burden of proof for justifying a proposed privately initiated amendment rests with the applicant, who must demonstrate that the request complies with and/or relates to the following decision criteria:

1. The proposed change will further and be consistent with the goals, policies and implementation measures of the comprehensive plan;
2. The proposed change is consistent with the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies and Multi-County Planning Policies;
3. Adequate capacity to provide public facilities and services exists;

4. A determination of change or lack of change in conditions or circumstances has occurred that dictates the need for a proposed amendment;
5. For comprehensive plan land use map amendments, that the proposed land use designation is adjacent to property having a similar or compatible designation, or other conditions are present to ensure compatibility with surrounding properties;
6. If applicable:
 - a. Assumptions upon which the comprehensive plan is based are found to be invalid; and/or,
 - b. For map amendments, the current land use designation was clearly made in error or due to an oversight; and/or,
 - c. A question of consistency exists between the comprehensive plan and Chapter 36.70A RCW, the countywide planning policies for Pierce County, as appropriate, and Vision 2040: Growth and Transportation Strategy for the Puget Sound Region.

Proposed amendments to the Plan receive public review by the Fife Planning Commission and City Council on an annual basis. Both the Commission and Council review of proposed amendments require adequate public notice and hearings for public comments. They must be adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan and may require corresponding changes to development regulations.

PLAN AREA MAP – Map IN-1



G. Plan Elements

This Comprehensive Plan was developed in accordance with Section 36.70A.070 of the Growth Management Act (GMA) to address growth issues in the City of Fife and its entire Urban Growth Area. This update of the City's 2015 Comprehensive Plan represents the community's policy plan for growth and development over the next 20 years. The City is interdependent with many other communities and the long term planning for the City needs to include adaptability to unexpected or rapid changes. Therefore, rather than simply prioritizing actions, this Plan assists in the management of the City by providing policies to guide decision making. This Plan includes the following elements:

- Introduction and Summary
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Housing
- Utilities
- Parks and Recreation
- Capital Facilities
- Economic Development

H. Other Comprehensive Plan Studies

Subsequent to the adoption of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan, the Fife City Council has also adopted the following Comprehensive Plan studies on the dates listed:

- Water System Plan – 2009
- Sewer System Plan – November 24, 1998 (Sewer Plan amendment to address Edgewood service area (approved 2015); General Sewer System Plan being updated in 2015)
- Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan – 2014 (adopted in 2015)
- Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan – 2002 (plan update in 2015)
- Transportation Plan – December 10, 2002 (Updated during 2013/2014 and to be adopted in 2015).
- Facilities Study and Needs Assessment – July 2009
- Shoreline Master Program – 2012 (adopted February 2013)

These studies are considered supplemental to and part of this Comprehensive Plan.

I. Vision Statement and City Council Goals

As the foundation of the plan, the Comprehensive Plan Task Force developed the following "vision statement" that describes the community the citizens want Fife to be like in the future:

“Fife will be a city where there is balance between residential, commercial, and industrial growth and a city with a wholesome, restful, neighborhood-like atmosphere.”

The Comprehensive Plan includes goals and policies that, used as a strategic plan of action, can move the City toward a future described by the vision statement.

City Council goals are adopted on an annual or bi-annual basis. The City Council goals provide a greater degree of direction and focus on emerging and long term efforts.

The City Council's 2015-2016 Goals include the following goal statement:

"Fife will be a vibrant community in which to live, work, shop and play with interconnected green infrastructure, open space and robust commercial and industrial areas that support a great quality of life and promotes a city of neighbors."

J. Key Concepts (Definitions)

Several important terms are incorporated in the Vision Statement. An understanding of the meaning of these terms and other terms used in the plan is crucial to understanding the vision of the community.

Balance: the proportioning of each element of the community and environment to exist in a complementary and tolerant relationship.

Neighborhood: an area primarily devoted to residential use that can include small-scale businesses serving the local community and that is protected by elimination of through traffic, encouragement of strong landscaping standards, an orientation toward children and family activities, and provision of common areas or open space areas to create an environment conducive to social interaction.

Wholesome: a community atmosphere in which personal safety is assured and positive interaction between neighbors is facilitated, including a family orientation encouraging parks, playgrounds, and separation of traffic from family facilities.

Restful: an absence of noise, excessive light, and other disturbances caused by traffic, industrial activity, night life, and railroad activity and including an emphasis on open space and view protection.

K. Framework Policies for the Comprehensive Plan

1. Provide a means for the City to reach its desired future.

The overriding goal of this Plan is to provide a means for shaping City policies and land use decisions in a manner that enables the community to reach the future described by the citizens in the Vision Statement.

2. Manage growth in a logical, sustainable manner.

The Plan provides for the growth of the community in a manner that allows the maintenance of economic well-being, healthy, functioning environmental systems, and a sustainable high quality of life. The intent of this Plan is to meet and/or exceed the goals for planning established by the Washington State Growth Management Act and all related legislation.

3. Provide for citizen involvement.

Ongoing public involvement in the planning process is encouraged by providing a formal process

for reviews and updates of this Plan. The development of the Fife area is continuously monitored by the City staff to ensure that growth is occurring in an orderly fashion and is not adversely affecting the City's ability to provide adequate services and facilities. An annual growth report should be written by City staff and presented to the Planning Commission and City Council for their review.

4. Conduct coordinated planning.

In recognition of the regional nature of many planning and growth issues, the City of Fife actively engages in communication and cooperation with Pierce County and adjoining jurisdictions, state and federal agencies, and the Puyallup Tribe to ensure the orderly development of the area.

5. Control urban sprawl through the designation of an urban growth area, use of concurrency requirements, and other methods.

The Plan provides for development patterns that are compact and unscattered through the designation of an appropriately sized Urban Growth Area.

6. Provide for the conservation of natural resource lands.

In recognition of the importance of natural resource lands for the economic success and continued quality of life for residents, the region, and the state, the Plan provides for the preservation of such lands and their protection from inappropriate development.

7. Protect sensitive environmental areas.

Recognizing the importance of critical environmental systems such as wetlands, habitats, and creeks to economic success, sustainability of human activities, and continued quality of life of the people of Fife, the region, and the state, the Plan takes steps to identify such lands in Fife and protect and preserve them from inappropriate development.

8. Provide for the coordinated sustainable economic health of the community.

The plan provides measures for maintaining the health of the local economy, including balancing competing interests of residents with those of the business community, reducing regulatory hindrances to successful economic activity, and actively promoting local economic activity.

L. The Goals of the Comprehensive Plan

Land Use

- Maintain a reasonable and sustainable land use pattern as growth occurs while discouraging sprawl.
- Maintain land use policies and patterns that adequately protect and preserve environmental systems and amenities including wetlands, floodplain areas, shorelines, seismic hazard areas, and fish and wildlife habitats.
- Provide for a balance between residential and commercial/industrial growth.
- Provide for a wholesome neighborhood-like atmosphere in residential areas with recreational opportunities for residents.
- Maintain quiet residential streets.
- Conserve agricultural land.
- Maintain a Public Use/Open Space Zone.

- Protect views and open space and retain natural areas.
- Maintain a Land Use Plan Map.
- Maintain and update as necessary development/design standards for commercial and industrial areas.
- Maintain and implement the City's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.
- Encourage the development of quality industrial areas through master planning.

Transportation

- Provide for a well-connected, efficient transportation system that offers choices in travel modes, seeks to reduce traffic congestion in Fife, and reduces dependence on the single occupancy vehicle.
- Establish and enforce level of service standards and concurrency management strategies to manage traffic congestion and encourage a multimodal transportation system.
- Promote and encourage the use of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies to reduce traffic in the City.
- Actively pursue agreements with adjacent and regional jurisdictions to mitigate traffic impacts in Fife caused by development in nearby areas.
- Maintain an environmentally sustainable transportation system, addressing sensitive habitat corridors, and air quality requirements.
- Use transportation planning and projects to support and implement the City's Strategic Plan.

Housing

- Provide for adequate housing for all income ranges.

Utilities

- Maintain consistency between utility providers and the City's plans for growth.
- Provide cost-effective utility services.
- Protect the environment while providing for utility facilities.
- Recycle and reduce solid waste.
- Provide reliable, cost-effective water service throughout the City.
- Reduce unnecessary or wasteful consumption of water.
- Protect the quality of groundwater and minimize damage from flooding by implementing an effective surface water management program.

Parks and Recreation

- Acquire and develop a high-quality, diversified system of parks, recreation facilities and greenways that is attractive and safe and provides equitable access to all residents.
- Protect and manage the city's natural and cultural resources and environmentally sensitive lands to highlight their uniqueness and preserve local history.
- Develop a high-quality system of shared-use trails that connect recreational facilities with developed neighborhoods and business centers in coordination with the City's system of sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

- Provide a varied, interesting and evolving menu of recreational activities, healthy lifestyles and cultural events that accommodate a spectrum of ages, interests and abilities and promote Fife's identity and brand as a livable city.
- Encourage meaningful public involvement in park and recreation planning and engage residents through department communications.
- Provide a parks and recreation system that is efficient to maintain and operate, provides a high level of user comfort, safety, and aesthetic quality, and protects capital.
- Plan for and develop high-quality parks, trails and recreation facilities throughout the City.
- Ensure that planning for parks, recreation and opens space supports, is consistent with and implements broader elements of the City's community and economic development vision.
- Achieve, maintain and protect a healthy and diverse urban forest through sound, affordable and proper urban forestry planning and operational practices.
- Provide clear leadership that supports and promotes the PRCS Board and the Department to residents, stakeholders, partners and City Council.

Economic Development

- Improve the local economy meeting the needs of local residents and businesses and providing for a sustainable tax base.