City of Lynden

Comprehensive Plan

2016 UPDATE

Adopted February 6, 2017

City of Lynden
300 4th St
Lynden, WA 98264
360-354-5532
Acknowledgements

Mayor Scott Korthuis

2016 City Council Members:
- Dave Burns
- Nick Laninga
- Gary Bode
- Jerry Kuiken
- Ron DeValois
- Toby Gelder
- Brent Lenssen

2016 Planning Commission:
- Diane Veltkamp (Chairperson)
- Blair Scott
- Tim Faber
- Matt Skinner
- Gerald Veltkamp
- Kyle Strengolt
- Brett Kok

City Administrator:
- Mike Martin

Planning Department Staff:
- Korene Samec – Interim Director
- Dave Timmer – City Planner

Assistance and Information also provided by:
- Steve Banham, Public Works Director
- Vern Meenderink, Parks Director
- Gary Baar, Fire Chief
- Jack Foster, Police Chief
- Christina Brewer, Public Works GIS Analyst
- Geoff Appel, AECOM consultant
# Table of Contents

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION and VISION 2036
- 1.1 What is a Comprehensive Plan? ............................................. 1
- 1.2 “Big Picture” Issues .......................................................... 2
- 1.3 Welcome to Lynden ............................................................. 3
- 1.4 Projecting our Population .................................................... 13
- 1.5 Lynden 2036: A Vision for the Community .......................... 13
- 1.6 Vision Goals and Policies .................................................... 14

## CHAPTER 2 – The LAND USE ELEMENT
- 2.1 Introduction ......................................................................... 25
- 2.2 UGA Existing Conditions: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ... 26
- 2.3 UGA Existing Conditions: THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT ........ 29
- 2.4 Existing Land Use in Lynden ................................................. 33
- 2.5 Projecting the Next 20 Years ................................................. 35
- 2.6 Land Use Goals and Policies ................................................. 40
- Figure 2.3 Lynden Zoning Map ................................................ 44
- Figure 2.4 Current Land Use Map ............................................. 45
- Figure 2.5.4 Future Land Use Map ............................................ 46

## CHAPTER 3 – The HOUSING ELEMENT
- 3.1 Introduction ......................................................................... 47
- 3.2 Geographic Context ............................................................. 47
- 3.3 Existing Conditions ............................................................... 48
- 3.4 Future Housing Needs .......................................................... 50
- 3.5 Housing Density and Design ............................................... 51
- 3.6 Affordable Housing .............................................................. 53
- 3.7 Housing Goals and Policies ................................................ 56

## CHAPTER 4 – The UTILITIES ELEMENT
- 4.1 Introduction ......................................................................... 58
- 4.2 Private Utility Services ........................................................ 58
- 4.3 Utility Goals and Policies ...................................................... 62

## CHAPTER 5 – The CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT
- 5.1 Introduction ......................................................................... 63
- 5.2 Public Utilities ..................................................................... 63
- 5.3 Public Services ..................................................................... 69
- 5.4 Inventory of Public Buildings .............................................. 73
- 5.5 Capital Facilities and Public Services Goals and Policies ........ 76

## Appendix A – The Transportation Element

## Appendix B – City of Lynden Park and Trail Master Plan (2014)

## Appendix C – County Wide Goals and Policies
CHAPTER 1 – Introduction and Vision 2036

1.1 What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a community’s land-use planning document that takes stock of the present conditions and looks to the future. It is a broad vision statement and a policy roadmap to help live up to that vision. It is meant to be used by city leaders, business owners, developers and citizens to guide decisions about a city’s growth and development.

Lynden’s Comprehensive Plan attempts to look 20 years into the future and helps to guide decision making on population growth, transportation needs, capital projects, housing options and design, economic development, and cultural and environmental enhancement. It is intended to help retain the city’s unique “community spirit, small town atmosphere and agricultural roots” as it faces the next 20 years of growth. But it is also meant to be a working document, encouraging adaptations to changing economic and social conditions.

1.1.1 Why Plan?

Of course, it makes common sense for a community to plan ahead. Every successful business and non-profit organization strategizes for the future, and even individual households spend a significant amount of effort taking stock of current conditions and planning for what is coming next. Similarly, cities need to make plans to manage growth, to promote economic development, and to protect their wealth of natural resources. A city must consider the “big picture” issues. Imagine the thousands of individual decisions that developers, businesses and individuals make that impact their own small corner of the city. It is up to the city to make sure that those decisions fit into that broader vision and context.

A comprehensive plan articulates a vision for what the city can become. It seeks to include residents in forming that vision and helps them realize that the vision is attainable. Good planning is inclusive of the city as a whole and how it is situated in the larger geographical context.

Of course, planning is more than just common sense, there are legal and financial reasons as well.

1.1.2 Legal

In 1990 the Washington State Legislature adopted the Growth Management Act (Chapter 36.70A RCW) requiring municipalities to work to manage growth in a coordinated fashion. It was designed to reduce urban sprawl, protect natural resources and enhance resident’s quality of life. It focuses urban growth in those areas already characterized by urban levels of service and density. The authority to designate urban
growth areas – places that should accommodate the projected growth of the state – was granted to the county, working in cooperation with the cities within its boundaries.

It also mandates that local governments complete a Comprehensive Plan and update it periodically. Lynden adopted its original Comprehensive Plan in 1995 and updated it in 2004. The 2011 legislature adopted new deadlines for updates. Lynden must confirm their latest update in 2016 and then every 8 years after that.

**1.1.3 Financial**

The way that cities grow and develop has major implications on the cost of providing and maintaining the public services that go along with that development. Inefficient development results in higher infrastructure, utility, and safety service costs. By planning for compact development, a variety of land use options, and by fully using and maintaining existing facilities and infrastructure, Lynden can better manage the cost of providing and maintaining public services for its residents.

**1:2 “Big Picture” Issues**

There are many “big picture” issues that a city faces as it seeks to manage growth and look to the future. Lynden is no different. Below is a list of issues that will impact the quality of life of Lynden residents as it grows. Intelligent planning needs to take these into account as it prepares for the future. Furthermore, while they can be seen as “negative” issues, perhaps a better way to see them is as opportunities for building a better city.

- **Changing Population:**
  Lynden’s population has doubled since 1990. More people means a greater variety of expectations for what they expect the city to offer. Additionally, the significant cultural changes that have occurred since Lynden’s original plan in 1995 means that the city needs to offer an increasing variety of programs, housing options, services, and businesses.

- **Economic Development:**
  Along with a growing population, opportunities for work and business also need to grow. Lynden is heavily dependent on the agricultural industry and needs to maintain and build that connection. It also needs to diversify its economic drivers, decrease retail competition with other regional municipalities, and expand the service economy for its residents.

- **Fiscal Sustainability:**
  The recession of the late 2000’s acted as a bit of a reset button for many municipalities as they were forced to deal with the impacts of the housing bubble and saw massive cuts in the financial resources available to provide public services. While currently experiencing a significant economic rebound, Lynden
needs to make sure it grows in an efficient manner so that it can continue to provide high quality services even when the overall economy struggles.

- **Health and Wellness:**
  It is increasingly clear that the development of cities impacts the health of its residents. A healthier population tends to be happier and more productive and reduces the cost of public and safety services. As it grows, Lynden needs to incorporate development ideas that foster good health for its residents.

- **Environmental Stewardship:**
  Agricultural lands surround the city and Lynden has committed itself to minimizing negative impacts to those lands as it decides where and how to grow. Additionally, Fishtrap Creek, a salmon bearing stream, bisects the city and the Nooksack River forms the city’s southern border. Their presence impacts development options but also offers unique recreational opportunities that can still be capitalized on.

- **Transportation:**
  The way that residents are able to move around the city has a big impact on their quality of life. As it grows the city needs to make sure that the new street systems make sense, that congestion is minimized and there are suitable options for mass transit, walking and biking within the city.

Lynden is a desirable community to live in. But like any city attempting to manage its growth, good planning plays a huge role in upholding its resident’s quality of life. The city needs to continually take stock of the things that are going well but also identify what should be done better. The Comprehensive Plan is a tool for doing this.

### 1.3 Welcome to Lynden

In 1871 Phoebe and Holden Judson found their “ideal home” in Lynden. Through their efforts and the efforts of many settlers thereafter, Lynden continues to be a satisfying place for its residents to live and a desirable place for many people to relocate. Lynden is known for its charming downtown – its shops, the incredible flower baskets and the unique architecture. Visitors notice the city’s cleanliness, the manicured lawns, the tree lined streets and the friendly people. To others, they remember the churches “on every corner” or the striking windmills that stand guard over the town. And every August, thousands of people create great memories at the Northwest Washington Fair. But, to the thirteen thousand people that live within the city limits and urban growth area, Lynden is the place they call their “ideal home.”

Since 1990, Lynden’s population has more than doubled in size. Lynden has added 6,713 people to its 1990 population of 6,452. People move here for a wide variety of reasons: the great school system, the slower pace of life, the small town atmosphere and the City’s agrarian setting. In 1995, the City Council adopted a vision statement to accompany the City’s Comprehensive Plan. This Vision Statement is summarized by this one sentence:
“The predominate objective of this vision is that Lynden retain its community spirit, small town atmosphere and agricultural roots.”

Lynden has been questioned about how the City will achieve these goals with continued growth. The answers to that depend on the community. The municipal government of Lynden cannot legislate a community spirit, nor can it identify all that makes a small town atmosphere. What the City can do is develop a growth management plan that encourages the community to hold on to those things it values like sound infrastructure, beautiful open spaces and thoughtful decision making. The residents’ attitude about the community accomplishes the rest.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to help others understand Lynden’s perspective on growth management. It will identify the tasks the City is undertaking through all their planning efforts to help the community achieve the vision originally adopted in 1995 and updated in 2004. It will show how Lynden is meeting the requirements of the Growth Management Act, how it is working to maintain the community’s quality of life and how the City works to preserve the natural resources that surround the community.

1.3.1 A History of Growth

The Judson’s settled Lynden in 1871 and people were attracted to the area based on their efforts to establish Lynden as a trade and educational center. Lynden was incorporated in 1891. By the time Washington had achieved statehood in 1889, Lynden had a population of more than 500 people.

Population growth from 1910 illustrates a slow but steady population increase through most of the 20th century which ended with a boom in the 1990s and continued into the 2000s. Lynden’s population continues to increase as it remains a desirable place to live and to raise a family. Of course, Lynden’s growth in land area has steadily increased as well. While acreage information for the early decades of the City is unreliable, in 1945 the city contained 501 acres. That has steadily increased (with significant annexations in the 1970s, 1990s and 2000s) to the current size of 3,375 acres.
Population density is influenced by annexations and the rate of population increase. It is one of the most important contributing factors that impacts the plan of the city. Where will people relocating here live? Managing density will impact how Lynden lives up to its vision. Does a denser city impact our small town atmosphere? Does a less dense city impact our agricultural roots? How does population density impact the agricultural lands that surround Lynden? During the adoption of Lynden’s original Comprehensive Plan, the City made certain that the community would not overconsume agricultural lands. In establishing its Urban Growth Area, the community chose to work to increase density to minimize sprawling into the surrounding agricultural lands. It adopted policies that restrict annexation until the land supply within the community is diminished. Coupled with the City’s strong position against the extension of utilities outside our city limits, this action has reduced the opportunity for urban sprawl around the City and within its Urban Growth Area (UGA).

In the 1970’s the City annexed more than 700 acres while the population increase remained steady. This, obviously, brought down the population density. While additional large annexations occurred in the 1990’s and 2000’s, the concurrent population boom during that time actually increased the population density. Lynden’s population density continues to increase. This is largely due to community planning initiatives since the 1995 Comprehensive Plan.
1.3.2 The Last 12 Years

Residential Development:

Since 2004 the city has annexed 545 acres into the city limits. A majority of these annexations were added for residential growth, though more than 100 acres were for industrial growth in West Lynden. Table 1.3.2 below show residential growth since 2004 in the 7 different sub-areas of Lynden. A more detailed discussion of Lynden’s sub-areas can be found in the Land Use Element (Chapter 2).

834 single family homes and 119 multifamily homes have been built since 2004. 73% of those were built in the either the North Lynden (321) or East Lynden (402) sub-areas. The North Lynden growth has seen continued development since the build out there in the 1990s. The East Lynden growth has largely been brand-new development that has occurred since these areas were annexed in 2002 and 2007.

It is expected that these two sub-areas will continue to see the majority of Lynden’s residential growth from now until the next Comprehensive Plan update in 2024.
Figure 1.3.2 Recent Housing Growth in the City of Lynden

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subarea</th>
<th>Single Family</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Multi-family</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (West Lynden)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (W Lynden Res)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Central Lynden)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (North Lynden)</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (NE Lynden)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (East Lynden)</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (South HBD)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>834</strong></td>
<td><strong>119</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public Infrastructure Development:

In order to prepare for continued growth and to allow the citizens the opportunity to realize the community's vision, the city has directly invested more than $52 million in public infrastructure. Listed below are a few of those projects.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
<th>Investment (Estimated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water Treatment Plant</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$35,068,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Street/Fishtrap Creek – New Bridge</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$ 3,050,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of Heusinkveld Farm (parks)</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$ 1,177,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Public Works Shop (purchased existing)</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>$ 1,175,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th Street Culvert Replacement</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$ 1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YMCA Re-roof &amp; Facility Improvements</td>
<td>2013 -2014</td>
<td>$     80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kok Road Replacement (including Pump Station #2)</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$ 2,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kok Road Bridge Replacement</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$ 2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th Street Bridge Reconstruction</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$ 1,050,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New City Hall</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$ 5,600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Downtown Restrooms</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$     250,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| TOTAL                                                       |                 | $53,450,000            |

Furthermore, the city has more than $14 million in future projects being planned. From several more street improvements, the East Lynden booster station for sewer, to the Pepin Creek Realignment which is the next stage in development in the north part of the city.

**Commercial and Cultural Development:**

In addition to direct investment in the community infrastructure, the City of Lynden transferred ownership of the historic City Hall to the Henry and Eleanor Jansen Foundation. By essentially donating the building valued at $250,000 to the foundation, the City and the community received much more in return. The $1.5 million renovation of the City Hall building and an adjacent building resulted in the Jansen Art Center; this was private investment in Lynden’s downtown. The completion and success of the Jansen Art Center has been the impetus for new investment in two other iconic downtown buildings. The Dutch Village Mall (i.e. The Windmill) was purchased by a local company and has recently completed some major repairs and renovations valued at more than $1.24 million. It houses an interior design company, several retail stores and a restaurant. The burnt shell of the Delft Square building was re-imagined in its former glory and in 2015 went through extensive reconstruction valued at $10 million. The final product turned out better than anyone imagined. It currently houses a 35 room
hotel, retail tenants and restaurants. This private investment into the heart of Lynden speaks to those qualities of community spirit and small town atmosphere that the community so wants to retain.

**Planning and Legislative Activity:**

Finally, the City of Lynden has not been idle in its planning efforts since the last comprehensive plan update. Some of the planning projects and issues the City has tackled are listed below:

- Adopted a “Right to Farm” ordinance in 2013 (Ordinance 1430).
- Updated and improved the commercial and industrial zoning codes to reflect changing market demands and current standards.
- Updated all residential zoning codes.
- Created a new residential zoning code that allows for mixed single family and multi-family residential uses.
- Developed a new Shoreline Master Program that is currently being reviewed by the Department of Ecology.
- Explored opportunities for setbacks from agricultural lands.
- Created a medical services overlay zoning to allow the development of campus style medical services in a variety of areas.

### 1.3.3 Demographic Profile

To further understand the growth and needs of the community, the City must also look at the demographic characteristics of the City and how they have changed over time. This information is useful in planning schools, parks, health care and identifying other needs the community may have. Below the chart shows specific numbers of individuals and their percentage of the total population from each age class. It exemplifies the population growth in each age class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Breakdown</th>
<th>1990 Census</th>
<th>2000 Census</th>
<th>2010 Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 5</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 14</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>1446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 24</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>1173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>1044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>1255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>1026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 64</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 74</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 to 84</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 and older</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following chart shows the percentage of Lynden’s population by age group. It shows Lynden’s population stabilizing over time with the 2010 distribution being spread more evenly across the age groups than previous years. This follows similar patterns of age that are seen in Washington State and Whatcom County as the baby boom generation moves up in the age categories.

The changes in population can also be characterized by other demographic measures to describe Lynden’s changing population. The next table tracks some of the social and economic measures found in the census to show how Lynden is changing as it grows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Type</th>
<th>1990 Census</th>
<th>2000 Census</th>
<th>2010 Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-family</td>
<td>11.20%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Size</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Family Size</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Tenure</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School plus</td>
<td>74.70%</td>
<td>85.60%</td>
<td>90.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree or higher</td>
<td>14.60%</td>
<td>26.90%</td>
<td>26.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Housing and Income      |             |             |             |
While both Whatcom County and Lynden have seen dramatic population growth in the last 40 years, Lynden has grown at a higher rate. Consequently, the proportion of the overall county population attributable to Lynden has risen significantly during the past four decades to nearly 6%. Coordinating planning between the county municipalities is also important.

The tables below show a variety of demographic information for Lynden as determined by the United States Census Bureau.
The 2010 U.S. Census details population characteristics for Lynden residents. The predominantly white (89.7%) population has slightly more female (53.2%) than male persons (46.8%). The median age of citizens is 38.6, although Lynden has a large population over 65 years (19.6%). Lynden is frequently characterized as a family oriented community and most families own their own homes (66.8%). Over 60% of household residents are married and the average household size is 2.6 persons. Following the City’s cultural theme, just over 30% of citizens still claim Dutch ancestry.

According to American Community Survey information, the 2014 median household income was estimated to be $59,021. 8.6% of the population is considered to be living at poverty level. 90.7% of residents have at least a high school degree, while 26.1% have a bachelor’s degree or higher.
What can the City learn from this information?

1. Our population is stabilizing across age groups.
2. Our population 45 and 65 has increased substantially since 1990.
3. A majority of the population (57%) is under 45 years old.
4. The percentage of persons living in a family household is declining, but the household size is remaining steady.
5. The level of education for our residents is increasing.
6. Home ownership has remained steady, although the average mortgage payment and housing costs are increasing rapidly.
7. The median home value has increased dramatically since 1990 and 2000.
8. The average travel time to work is 23 minutes – a slight increase since 2000.

Obviously, this is not a conclusive list of what is known about Lynden, but it does help the Planning Commission, City Council and City staff to identify the trends and consider the needs of the community in the future.

1.4 Projecting our population

Lynden has coordinated with Whatcom County and other municipalities to decide on an estimate for population growth throughout the County until 2036. Using this projection Lynden is expecting to add more than 6,400 people to its Urban Growth Area. More detailed discussion on this estimate can be found in Chapter 2 Land Use.

What does this allocation mean as the Comprehensive Plan is being updated?

It means Lynden needs to plan for the addition of more than 6,400 people into its Urban Growth Area. It needs to consider deeply where these 6,400 people will live and work, where they will want to buy their groceries, to get a cup of coffee, or to take a walk in a park. It will need to think about the industrial and business capacity of the city, where will businesses expand or relocate? And how will these people travel around the city to go about their daily lives?

Can Lynden grow, develop and add 6,400 more people and continue to maintain its vision? How can it retain its “community spirit, small-town atmosphere, and agricultural roots” as it looks decades ahead?

1.5 Lynden 2036: A Vision for the Community

The citizens of Lynden have worked together to compose a vision for the City in the years to come. The predominate objective of this vision is that Lynden retain its community spirit, small town atmosphere and agricultural roots. The definitions of these ideals may be found in the following goals for the future of Lynden, they could not be based on numbers or even entirely on the past experience of a small town. These goals are specifically related to the implementation and achievement of Lynden’s Vision.
They will be accompanied by a specific set of policies to ensure that the quality of life in Lynden does not diminish with the increase in population.

Lynden’s sense of community spirit has been enhanced and encouraged through acts of caring and kindness, a sense of community trust and understanding, a strong attitude of volunteerism and citizenship. The small town atmosphere is illustrated by organized community activities and a feeling of teamwork to confront common goals, as well as a feeling of ownership in the future of the City of Lynden. These values grew from a tradition of faith and will remain the cornerstone of Lynden’s heritage. The evidence of Lynden’s agricultural roots remain in its economy - from the implement dealers, the Darigold tower, and the new Preferred Freezer building. Furthermore, its ongoing commitment to protecting the surrounding agricultural lands will maintain that connection into the future.

The fundamental goal of Lynden’s citizens and decision-makers is to sustain Lynden for future generations. The provision of attractive housing affordable to all ages and incomes and addressing the diverse needs of the population are part of Lynden’s mission for the future. Being good stewards of the environment and the economy are essential to preserving the City's sense of community, security and its unique identity.

These goals will endure throughout the years as the Comprehensive Plan is completed, implemented and revised. The vision for Lynden will be the basis for decisions in the years to come. The vision, which is adopted as a portion and a foundation of the Comprehensive Plan, will remain as a focal point in the plan throughout any and all revisions.

The officials and the citizens of the City of Lynden take ownership of this Comprehensive Plan and are dedicated to the goals of this vision. Policies will be implemented to ensure that these goals are attained and that Lynden’s quality of life is enhanced in future years. Lynden is committed to continuing a positive working relationship with Whatcom County to ensure and enable the implementation of those goals and policies that may reach outside the borders of the City limits.

1.6 VISION GOALS AND POLICIES

1.6.1 Vision Policies

1. The Vision Statement for the Comprehensive Plan will be consulted by City staff, the decision-makers, and the public when reviewing proposals to ensure the vision is both met and preserved.

2. Elected officials and City employees will continue the open door policy to encourage citizens to actively participate in the implementation and pursuit of the goals of the Vision Statement.
3. Ensure that City Hall maintains a “User Friendly” attitude and that due process is followed in all departments.

4. The City of Lynden will advocate the preservation of agricultural land and will work to encourage agricultural resource, research, and service industries to locate within the City, as well as agricultural related “value added” industries.

5. The City of Lynden will support the efforts of farmers to gain sufficient water rights.

6. The City of Lynden will work with business owners and citizens throughout the City to complete an Economic Development Plan to ensure the future economic health of the City and to create a business friendly atmosphere.

7. The City of Lynden will work with business owners and citizens to develop a plan to enhance commercial centers, as well as the park and civic center that are proposed for the corners of 4th Street and Grover Street.

8. The City of Lynden will work with concerned citizens to develop a plan to create aesthetically pleasing streetscapes and urban forestation.

9. The City of Lynden will continue to actively support public safety and crime prevention programs and will design safe public facilities.

10. The City of Lynden will continue to work to increase the amount of parks and open spaces, as well as the development of a citywide trail system.

11. The City of Lynden will work with citizens to ensure that all citizens of Lynden have an opportunity to obtain housing that is clean, safe, and within a price range which is fair and reasonable as defined in the Housing Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

1.6.2 THE 13 GROWTH MANAGEMENT GOALS & POLICIES

The Growth Management Act established 13 goals to guide the local governments in the planning process as required in RCW 36.70A.020. Lynden’s Comprehensive Plan meets these goals, with City compliance and community planning policies. Additional community based planning goals are outlined throughout the elements of the Comprehensive Plan as applicable. The 13 GMA goals, with Lynden’s Policies and Community Value Statements, are as follows:

1. **Urban Growth:** Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.

   **Community Value Statements**

   *The City of Lynden will encourage growth to occur in a timely fashion to allow the community to assimilate the changes which occur with growth.*
1A. The City of Lynden will not extend urban services, including water and sewer, outside the Urban Growth Area unless such an extension is necessary to protect the health of nearby residents. In addition, the City will require annexation as a condition of utility extensions within the unincorporated Urban Growth Area. This limits the scope of development that may occur outside an urban growth area through the appropriate phasing of development.

1B. Lynden has increased the density in several areas throughout the City to provide housing and promote infill where services currently exist. Additionally, the City has established the desired density within the UGA to be an average of five units per acre.

1C. The City will promote development in the City in an orderly and timely fashion, while maintaining the quality of life found in the City of Lynden, and practicing accepted planning methods.

1D. The City will work to conserve rural and agricultural lands by coordinating with Whatcom County to limit urban development outside of the designated Urban Growth Areas.

1E. The City of Lynden will designate an Urban Growth Area that will meet the needs of the projected population that is adopted by resolution of the City Council.

2. **Reduce Sprawl:** Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low density development.

   **Community Value Statements**

   The City of Lynden is working to reduce urban sprawl by encouraging development within the urban area of the City, and discouraging leap frog development of single family neighborhoods. The City also is encouraging infill of vacant or underdeveloped lots within the current City limits.

2A. The City of Lynden will not perpetuate urban sprawl by providing water or sewer services to urban uses outside the urban growth area. This provision does not restrict the City of Lynden from providing water to surrounding rural water associations according to approved contracts or from extending services at a rural level of service for health reasons.

2B. The City of Lynden will target an average net residential density of five units per acre within the City limits and urban growth area.

2C. The City of Lynden will actively pursue the infill of vacant and undeveloped land within the corporate city limits by offering various incentives such as reduced development standards and lot size credits for the development of residential property that is not financially...
feasible to develop at current standards. Additionally, the City will work to maximize opportunities for development of under-utilized areas available for commercial and industrial development.

2D. The City of Lynden will follow an established annexation policy and formula to ensure the orderly conversion of land within the urban growth area to urban land uses.

2E. The City of Lynden will maintain a lot inventory, or land supply, sufficient for five years of growth, at the densities designated through the Comprehensive Plan. The City will also focus on the Boundary Review Board criteria for the recommendation of future annexations as well as the issues of capital improvements and financing. Where the establishment of a logical boundary for an annexation, the development of capital improvements, or environmental enhancements may cause the City to exceed the necessary acreage for the adopted land supply, the City will consider whether phasing future development is appropriate.

2F. The City of Lynden will work to achieve and maintain a ratio of two acres of residentially zoned land for every acre of non-residentially zoned land, or 33% of the land area zoned for non-residential use.

3. **Transportation:** Encourage efficient multi-modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with County and City Comprehensive Plans.

*Community Value Statements*

*The City of Lynden will encourage the efficient multi-modal transportation systems in cooperation with regional transportation goals, as well as County and City Comprehensive Plans.*

3A. The City of Lynden will work with the Whatcom Transit Authority to encourage the use of alternative methods of transportation including: public transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel by providing adequate trails and bicycle racks, and a park and ride facilities for transit use.

3B. The City of Lynden will participate in regional transportation planning efforts to ensure that regional projects are coordinated to promote cost savings and, where appropriate, cost sharing.

3C. The City of Lynden has adopted a Transportation Plan and will actively pursue the implementation of that plan to provide residents with a safe and efficient transportation system.
4. **Housing:** Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage the preservation of existing housing.

*Community Value Statements*

*The community of Lynden will work to provide creative opportunities for affordable housing, for all income levels, with the emphasis toward ownership.*

4A. The City of Lynden will consider other creative methods, such as cluster housing, cottage housing, accessory housing, and transfer of development rights to increase density and promote the opportunity for ownership of single-family homes.

4B. The City of Lynden will continue to pursue housing options within the city that are consistent with the community’s aesthetic values and provide opportunities for home ownership.

4C. The City of Lynden will seek to maintain a ratio of seventy-five percent single family homes and twenty-five percent of multi-family units.

5. **Economic Development:** Encourage economic development throughout the State that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this State, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth, all within the capacities of the State’s natural resources, public facilities and public services.

*Community Value Statements*

*The City of Lynden will promote the diversification of its economy through the encouragement of sustainable industrial and commercial growth. Those industries and commercial activities which do not preclude the economic choices of future generations and that emphasize and support agriculture will be especially encouraged.*

*The City of Lynden will work to provide opportunities for “livable-wage” jobs for residents of the City and surrounding community.*

5A. The City of Lynden will work to achieve the maximum level of economic well-being for all citizens within the City through the establishment of a stable and diverse economy.
5B. The City of Lynden is promoting economic development by zoning land suitable for commercial and industrial development west of the Guide Meridian.

5C. The City will encourage employment opportunities for the increasing population, unemployed and disadvantaged persons, and replace those jobs lost due to the changing needs of the agricultural industry.

5D. The City of Lynden will ensure that the location and character of land uses optimize the potentials for economic benefit, as well as protecting the City’s open space and natural resources.

5E. The City will work to promote businesses which provide additional services to the growing community, as well as promote tourism.

5F. The City will continue to recognize its partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to staff and support the Lynden Economic Development Team, whose primary function is to implement the City’s Economic Development Plan.

5G. The City will work to maintain a positive business climate that is consistent, responsive to the needs of the business community, and affordable to business owners.

6. **Property Rights:** Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.

   **Community Value Statements**

   The City of Lynden will ensure that private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation. The process to determine just compensation, for private property needed for public use, will be conducted through public hearings.

   6A. The City will only use the condemnation process as a last resort when considering the acquisition of property for public purposes.

   6B. The City will follow all appropriate legal processes, and will obtain the necessary appraisals to ensure that the rights of private property owners are protected.
7. **Permits:** Applications for both State and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.

   7A. The City of Lynden processes all permits in a timely and fair manner. Any necessary State permits may require a somewhat longer process time. The City allows State and local permits to be applied for concurrently where appropriate.

   7B. The City of Lynden will ensure adequate staffing to provide the level of service expected by the public when reviewing permit applications.

8. **Natural Resource Industries:** Maintain and enhance natural resource based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries.

   8A. The City of Lynden realizes that its growth may influence natural resource industries. Therefore, the City will continue to work to protect resource lands and critical areas through the City’s critical area ordinance, as well as through compliance to the regulations of the State Environmental Policy Act as they pertain to the City’s growth.

9. **Open Space and Recreation:** Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water and develop parks.

   9A. The City of Lynden has adopted a Park and Trail Master Plan and will act to implement the goals developed within that plan. The City of Lynden will continue working with the Lynden Regional Park and Recreation District to pursue park development within the City and the surrounding district.

   9B. The City of Lynden will work with Whatcom County and surrounding communities to coordinate linked greenbelt corridors along the Nooksack River and as identified within Whatcom County’s Park and Recreation Plan.

10. **Environment:** Protect the environment and enhance the State’s high quality of life including air and water quality, and the availability of water.

    **Community Value Statements**

    The City of Lynden should provide an effective stewardship of the environment to protect critical areas and conserve the City’s natural resources and provide the City’s residents with a continued high standard of living.
10A. The City of Lynden will consider opportunities for owners of private property to preserve open space as a visual amenity through techniques such as conservation easements, transfer or purchase of development rights, and density bonuses.

10B. Lynden will adopt land development regulations which ensure the protection of the attributes, functions and amenities of the natural environment under all projected growth scenarios. These regulations will incorporate requirements, as feasible, that encourage LID techniques to facilitate mimicking the natural site drainage prior to development. This will ensure that development complies with stormwater regulations such as those implemented to meet National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Permit requirements.

10C. Lynden will support the efforts of the region to protect and maintain water rights for the City and local farmers.

10D. Lynden will work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions both within municipal operations and within the community by considering those actions included in Resolution 823 of the Lynden City Council, adopted on June 8, 2010. These actions include:

- Adopt and enforce land-use policies that reduce sprawl, reserve open space and create compact, walk-able urban neighborhoods;
- Encourage high-density, mixed use and infill development and creative use of brown-field or under-utilized properties within the city;
- Maintain healthy urban open spaces, promote tree planning to increase shading and to absorb CO2;
- Promote transportation options such as bicycle trails, commute trip reduction programs and encourage carpooling and the use of public transportation;
- Continue to provide safe and convenient access for pedestrians and bicyclists to, across and along major arterials;
- Build all new publically funded buildings with a cost-effective, energy efficient design;
- Evaluate opportunities to increase efficiency in water and wastewater systems and maintain and operate them at peak efficiency. When cost-effective options are possible, the one using the least amount of energy shall be preferred;
- Make energy efficiency a priority through building code improvements, retrofitting city facilities with energy efficient lighting and urging employees to conserve energy and money;
• Encourage energy conservation practices in buildings by raising the awareness of employees’ own energy use;
• Educate employees about trip reduction, anti-idling, car-pooling and other emissions reducing actions in order to increase the average fuel efficiency of municipal fleet vehicles;
• Continue Lynden’s water conservation program that includes tiered rate structures for water use and restricts time of use for landscape watering;
• Promote and expand the increase in recycling rates in City operations and in the community as well as reducing the amount of waste produced.

11. **Citizen Participation and Coordination**: Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.

**Community Value Statements**

*The City of Lynden is committed to finding ways to further open positive channels of communication with the community. The City will consider a variety of methods of communication, such as the addition of a community newsletter or a page in the local newspaper as well as the use of the City’s web page and social media networks in order to engage all members of the Lynden community.*

11A. The City of Lynden will continue to work with interested citizens of the Lynden Community in developing and amending the Comprehensive Plan, as well as any other planning effort.

11B. The City of Lynden will work with citizen groups to sponsor Town Hall meetings where citizens and civic leaders have the opportunity to discuss the issues which concern the growth, development, and character of the City.

11C. Lynden will actively promote interagency cooperation by continued involvement in intergovernmental committees and cooperatives such as the Small Cities’ Caucus, Growth Management Oversight Committee, Watershed Inventory Resource Area Planning Group, NPDES Phase II Stormwater Partnerships, and Whatcom County Conservation and Watershed Improvement Districts.

11D. Lynden recognizes the need for volunteers and the enormity of their contributions. The City will make every effort to recognize these people for the time and effort they contribute.

11E. The City will continue to sponsor citizens’ task forces to consider complex issues and planning topics.
11F. The City of Lynden provides notification of, by ordinance, dates for public hearings, and provides notification for dates of public meetings in local papers and through other public means of communication.

12. **Public Facilities and Services:** Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time that the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing the current service levels below locally established minimum standards.

**Community Values Statements**

The City of Lynden will provide the community with sufficient police and fire protection to ensure the community’s safety. In addition, the community will be provided with appropriately scaled and quality City facilities, such as the library, senior center, parks and city hall.

12A. The City of Lynden requires adequate levels of service be provided at or above minimum standards and concurrent with development. Developers shall provide information regarding the impact the proposed development will have on public facilities and services.

12B. The City of Lynden has a long standing policy of requiring developers to extend and improve all affected infrastructures and to have these extensions and improvements run concurrent with development; the quality of which must meet or exceed accepted minimum levels of service standards.

12C. Siting of public facilities will be done as a conditional use within community regulations.

13. **Historic Preservation:** Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.

**Community Comments and Policy Statements**

The City of Lynden has adopted a historic preservation ordinance and the Waples Building at the northeast corner of Front Street and 5th Street has been placed on the National Historic Register. The proposed Urban Growth Boundary does include two important sites: the Indian Burial site to the east of the current City limits and the Century House to the south. If future sites are found, the city will make every effort to preserve the site in its original condition.

13A. The City of Lynden will encourage the protection of special historic, architectural, aesthetic or cultural resources through the adoption of a historic preservation plan and the designation of historic landmarks,
such as the Historic Business District on Front Street, the Lynden Pioneer Museum, and Berthusen Park.

13B. The City of Lynden will work to become a Certified Local Government, assist the newly formed Lynden Historic Preservation Commission to uphold the Historic Preservation Ordinance, to identify and register appropriate properties onto the Lynden Register of Historic Places, and to designate eligible properties for Special Valuation for rehabilitation projects.
CHAPTER 2 – The Land Use Element

2.1 Introduction

The Land Use Element takes stock of how land is currently being used in Lynden and determines how the land will be used in the future as the City plans for its predicted growth. It recognizes that land is a finite resource and the manner in which it is developed and used impacts every aspect of the city: economic, public safety, roads and utilities, and quality of life.

The continued growth within Lynden will obviously impact the look and feel of Lynden. More than 6,400 people are estimated to find their new homes in Lynden over the next 20 years. More than 2,100 jobs will be created over that same time period. Accommodating the residential, employment, and recreational needs for these people will alter the landscape. Open fields within the Urban Growth Area will be filled with houses, apartment buildings, and commercial space. Creative residents will figure out ways to fill in vacant lots in already developed neighborhoods. Downtown and commercial areas on the edge of town will continue to evolve and make changes based on community needs. There is no doubt that Lynden will look different in 20 years than it does in 2016.

The Land Use Element provides a plan for how this change will occur. It gives the city, its government officials, its developers, builders, and all of its residents a guide for growth. It acknowledges that change will occur and attempts to minimize conflicting land uses so that the City’s vision can still be met.

The Land Use Element, like all the other chapters of the Comprehensive Plan, are not static. They require constant refinement and adaptation both to opportunities and obstacles. For example, the 2004 plan gave a detailed plan for several of Lynden’s sub-areas. While these are not specifically updated for this plan, in the coming years they will be addressed.

2.1.1 The Growth Management Act

The 1990 Growth Management Act (GMA) addressed a problem that at the time was considered the haphazard and often chaotic development of land within Washington State. This lack of coordination was having a negative impact on the health, safety and quality of life of residents. The GMA was adopted in an effort to force municipalities to focus growth in already “urban” areas and to plan for future growth in a thoughtful manner.

The Growth Management Act requires cities to include a land use element that designates the general distribution for housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open spaces, public utilities, public facilities, and other land uses. The land use element shall include population densities, building intensities, and estimates of future population growth. It should also provide for the protection of public water supplies and address drainage, flooding, and storm water run-off issues. (from RCW 36.70a.070(1)).
Furthermore, the GMA recognizes the importance of coordinating growth between municipalities. Lynden fully agrees with this coordination and has adopted the Whatcom County-wide Planning Policies. These refined policies give a framework for organization amongst the varied County municipalities. These policies and their development offer a coordinated path forward so that competition can be minimized and the broader geographical context is considered. The Whatcom County-wide Planning Policies are included in Lynden’s Comprehensive Plan as Appendix C.

2.1.2 Lynden’s Urban Growth Area (UGA)

Lynden’s Urban Growth Area was initially established as a requirement of the GMA in 1997. It was established with the concern that Lynden will limit its impact to the surrounding agricultural areas as long-term growth occurs. In 2009, the UGA was expanded and a UGA reserve was added in order to support forecasted growth. In 2015, Lynden proposed three changes to its UGA in order to meet the forecasted land capacity needs. Further analysis of these changes can be found in 2.3 below.

2.2 UGA Existing Conditions: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

2.2.1 Natural Resource Lands

Resource lands are used for agriculture, forests, fisheries, and mining.

Agricultural Land in Lynden and Vicinity

Lynden is located in the heart of the fertile Nooksack Valley and is surrounded by agricultural land. The quality of agricultural land within and surrounding Lynden is a primary consideration in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan. It is a major factor in the consideration of the City’s Growth Boundaries, as stipulated in the Growth Management Act.

The Whatcom County Planning Department prepared The Lynden-Nooksack Valley Sub-Area, Background Document in December, 1983. The prime farmlands of Whatcom County as derived from the Soil Survey of Whatcom County are defined as follows:

Class 1: Prime Farmland
Class 2: Prime When Drained
Class 3: Prime When Protected From Flooding
Class 4: Prime When Irrigated
Class 5: Prime When Drained and Protected from Flooding

The report states: Prime Farmland class, capability class and subclass, and yields per acre all relate to native soil properties and management considerations. However, there are differences in the categories. The Prime Farmland Classification identifies soils which currently are productive agricultural soils or have the potential to be so when
drainage, irrigation or protection from flooding is employed. Capability class and subclasses relate to the existing condition of the soil, and indicate general types of suitable crops and management concerns. Yields per acre enumerate specific crop yields in "best management practice" for soils currently in cultivation.

Maps developed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service shows that Lynden is surrounded by prime farmlands except in the area between the City limits and Badger Road, east of Double Ditch Road, as well as a small area west of the Guide Meridian. As a result, almost any growth outside the City’s current boundaries will take prime farmlands.

**Forests**

No working timberlands exist within the City limits or the Urban Growth Area.

**Fisheries**

Several salmon species are known to spawn in Fishtrap Creek and Double Ditch, including two ESA listed species, the Puget Sound Steelhead and the fall Chinook. In 2009, 20 percent of the Nooksack River basin’s steelhead spawning population was found to be using Fishtrap Creek for spawning grounds. The other two creeks whose watersheds are within the City of Lynden are Kamm Creek and Duffner Ditch Creeks; both of which provide fish habitat. Finally, many of the ditch networks, Assink, Benson, Bender, and Depot, that both surround and enter the City provide rearing habitat for anadromous and resident fish species.

**Mineral Lands**

According to the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Interim Urban Growth Areas in Whatcom County*, Lynden is not known to possess any mineral lands.

### 2.2.2 Critical Areas

In 2002, the City contracted W. Perry Welsh, Jr. and Sehome Planning & Engineering to jointly construct a Critical Areas Inventory for Lynden and the UGA. Under the GMA, cities must identify wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, and other critical areas. Critical areas within Lynden and the Urban Growth Area were identified through aerial mapping and field survey.

Lynden’s Critical Area Ordinance is due for an update in 2017.

**Wetlands**

Most wetlands in Lynden and the Urban Growth Area are associated with riparian systems on Duffner Creek and Fishtrap Creek. Riparian wetlands can also be found in lower segments of Double Ditch Creek. Wetlands include forested, scrub shrub, and emergent wetlands. Several slope wetlands are present in sloping areas along
floodplain areas. A few units that were mapped as wetlands, based on ponds, may be man-made and not regulated.

Fish & Wildlife

Fishtrap Creek and Double Ditch provide spawning and rearing habitat for two ESA listed fish species, steelhead and fall chinook. Other anadromous fish, such as coho and chum, spawn and rear in these watercourses and some of the other “ditches”. These are primarily north of the city but they continue into the city limits and provide rearing habitat for anadromous and resident fish. Portions of Duffner Creek also support resident fish. Lamprey species are common in these watercourses and two species of rare sucker, the Nooksack Dace and Salish Sucker have been observed in Fishtrap and Double Ditch Creeks (North Lynden WID, *Drainage and Fish Habitat Management Plan 2010*).

According to the *Lynden-Nooksack Valley Sub-Area* report there are no endangered plants in the area, but the agricultural fields are used as a dry land feeding area for migratory birds. The animals included in the distributed land habitat are listed as: opossums, shrews, moles, bats, Eastern cottontails, Mountain beaver, gophers, beaver, skunk, Bushy tailed woodrats, voles, Deer mice, weasels, coyotes, Red foxes, and Black-tailed deer, hawks, Blue grouse, California quail, Ring-necked pheasants, killdeer, gulls, doves, owls, Common nighthawk, Rufous hummingbirds, flickers, woodpeckers, kingfishers, Say’s phoebes, Horned larks, swallows, Purple martins, jays, ravens, crows, chickadees, bushtits, Bewic’s wrens, robins, thrushes, kinglets, water pipits, waxwings, starlings, warblers, meadowlarks, and are mentioned in *Whatcom County Wildlife Resources*, 1976.

Geologically Hazardous Areas

Six geologic hazard units are catalogued, including steep slopes, ravines associated with streams, and areas mapped with organic soils, such as mulch and peat deposits. The presence of steep slopes area indicated by topographic features which are apparent on the USGS maps for the vicinity. Presence of organic soils (muck) is based on the NRCS Soil Survey. This study used large-scale mapping to identify potential geologic hazard areas and did not result in a comprehensive evaluation of geologic hazards based on site specific land review.

Flooding

The City of Lynden has adopted the Flood Insurance Rate Maps and the regulations for monitoring flood hazards recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Additionally, the adopted Critical Area Ordinance provides buffers, riparian areas and other methods to control flooding within the City and its Urban Growth Area.

One area, one that is particularly important to the next stage of Lynden’s residential growth is the area north of Main St between Double Ditch Road and Benson Rd. Since the 2004 update, this area has seen two dramatic floods associated with winter storms.
In January 2004 and 2009 winter floods inundated huge areas of agricultural land, roads, and many residents' basements. The 2016 Van Zee annexation sits right in the center of where this flooding occurred. The city is at the forefront of large project, the Pepin Creek project, to relocate the ditches from these two roads into a “natural” channel that would hold excess water during flood events. It would also improve fish habitat, enhance the riparian zone, and create recreational opportunities for the residents of the new developments in this area. Furthermore, it will allow the City to make improvements to these roads that are currently not at city standards.

Archeological Sites and Aquifers

The City currently does not have any site of archeological or historical significance within the City limits that are registered with the State Historical Preservation Office. However, there is an Indian cemetery in the 2007 annexed portion of the City limits and the Century House just south of the City limits. The Waples Building in downtown Lynden is listed on the National Historic Register. The Historic Business District, which is essentially downtown Lynden, contains a rich history in its buildings. Additionally, the Berthusen Barn located within Berthusen Park – operated by the City but outside the City limits and Urban Growth Area, was listed on the National Historic Register list in 2003. The Lynden Museum on Front Street also preserves items from Lynden’s past and displays what life used to be like in this town.

In early 2016, the City adopted a new Historic Preservation Ordinance and began the process of becoming a Certified Local Government, setting up a Historic Preservation Commission. This commission will work to create a Lynden Historic Places Register and uphold the ordinance. This is a big step in further identifying and protecting historic structures and landmarks in the city.

The City has a surface water source, the Nooksack River, for its potable water supply. Lynden has also adopted the Washington State Department of Ecology Stormwater Management Manual for the Puget Sound Basin to regulate all runoff, for the protection of surrounding watersheds and aquifers, as well as a stormwater management plan for the City.

2.3 UGA Existing Conditions: THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

2.3.1 Zoning and Land Use

Since the 2004 Comprehensive Plan Update, the City has adjusted its zoning code to remain relevant with modern zoning codes and plans. It dropped the RM-5 zone. It updated the Industrial Zone changing the I-1 and I-2 to an ID (Industrial District) and IBZ (Industrial Business Zone). Finally, it updated the Commercial Zone, dropping the CS-1, CS-2, CS-3 and adding the CSL (Local Commercial Services) and CSR (Regional Commercial Services). The land use plan and zoning ordinance are used to guide orderly development of land based on projected growth and population estimates for the City.
The City of Lynden has existing policies surrounding the use of public lands for utility and transportation corridors, sewage treatment and stormwater management facilities, as well as for schools, recreation, and other public uses. These policies can be found in various elements of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, as well as in separate management/land use plans and regulations, and in local ordinances for the community.

This Comprehensive Plan establishes a range of Future Land Use (FLU) designations that reserve land within the UGA for a variety of land uses, including agriculture, residential, commercial, industrial, and public. Under each FLU designation, one or more zoning designations may be established by the Lynden Municipal Code (LMC), which contains development regulations specifying allowed uses, density, setbacks, building heights, and other building and site design requirements. Table 2.3 below summarizes the FLU designations and corresponding zoning, as well as a summary of the total existing zoned acreage for each category within the City Limits (excluding the unincorporated UGA). Note that FLU designations apply to all areas within the UGA.

While AG (Agriculture) is being included in the FLU for the 2016 update, there are zero acres within the city that are agriculture zoned and zero planned on being designated as such in the future. But, because of Lynden’s connection to agriculture, further public discussion is needed prior to completely removing that designation from the LMC or potential future considerations.

**Table 2.3 Future Land Use and Zoning Designations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Land Use (FLU)</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Zoning</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Existing Acreage in City Limits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AG (Agriculture)</td>
<td>Reserved for agricultural land uses within the City and Urban Growth Area until other land uses are planned with the necessary extension of streets and public utilities.</td>
<td>A-1</td>
<td>Zoned for agricultural land uses within the City and Urban Growth Area until other land uses are planned with the necessary extension of streets and public utilities.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL (Low Density Residential)</td>
<td>Maintains stable, low-density, largely single-family neighborhoods, while providing a range of housing types and prices.</td>
<td>RS-100</td>
<td>Requires a minimum lot area of 10,000 sq. ft. and allows for 4 D.U./acre.</td>
<td>1,935.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RS-84</td>
<td>Requires a minimum lot area of 8,400 sq. ft. and allows for 4.5 D.U./acre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Land Use (FLU)</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Zoning</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Existing Acreage in City Limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS-72</td>
<td></td>
<td>RS-72</td>
<td>Requires a minimum lot size of 7,200 sq. ft. and allows for 5 D.U./acre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMD</td>
<td></td>
<td>RMD</td>
<td>A zoning designation that allows up to a maximum of 8 units/acre and encourages the integration of single family and multi-family homes within neighborhoods.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM (Medium Density Residential)</td>
<td>Provides higher density housing options and a range of housing types to accommodate future growth.</td>
<td>RM-1</td>
<td>Up to 2 units/building, with a development density of 8 D.U./acre.</td>
<td>441.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RM-2</td>
<td>Up to 4 units/building, with a development density of 12 D.U./acre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RM-3</td>
<td>Up to 12 units/building, with a development density of 16 D.U./acre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RM-4</td>
<td>Up to 50 units/building, with a development density of 24 D.U./acre.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MH</td>
<td>The primary use is modular and mobile homes, but also includes mobile home parks that meet or exceed the minimum requirements of RS-72 zone.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Land Use (FLU)</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Zoning</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Existing Acreage in City Limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TR</td>
<td>Provides and regulates buildings and/or structures where travel trailers and recreational vehicles are permitted. This zone may also be used for travel trailer and recreational vehicle camping, tent camping and camping cabins.</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM (Commercial)</td>
<td>Provides for commercial activity and employment growth including office and retail uses.</td>
<td>HBD</td>
<td>HBD</td>
<td>482.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBD</td>
<td>This is the zone of the City’s original economic activity. It is an active mix of professional offices and residences, personal services and small retail.</td>
<td>HBD</td>
<td>HBD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSL</td>
<td>Local scale retail development (stores less than 65,000 square feet), medical, professional and financial services.</td>
<td>CSL</td>
<td>CSL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR</td>
<td>Primary location for businesses that support both the local and regional trade through the development of large format retail and regional commercial stores.</td>
<td>CSR</td>
<td>CSR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND (Industrial)</td>
<td>Provides employment growth for industrial and some commercial uses.</td>
<td>ID</td>
<td>ID</td>
<td>331.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>This industrial zone permits a variety of industrial uses, controlled primarily by performance standards.</td>
<td>ID</td>
<td>ID</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Land Use (FLU)</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Zoning</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Existing Acreage in City Limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBZ</td>
<td>A light industrial zone that permits a mixture of industrial and commercial uses.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUB (Public)</td>
<td>Provides public land needed to supply public facilities, services, and public open space.</td>
<td>PU</td>
<td>Regulates public and quasi-public areas such as parks, open space areas, public buildings, and the Northwest Washington Fairgrounds.</td>
<td>183.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.3 Current Lynden Zoning Map**

See Figure 2.3 Lynden Zoning Map that is included at the end of this chapter.

### 2.4 **EXISTING LAND USE IN LYNDEN**

Table 2.4 below summarizes the existing land use within the UGA. The acreage figures are based upon the land use codes recorded with the Whatcom County Assessor and may not coincide with the zoning map.

**Table 2.4 Estimated Acreage Per Land Use 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>City Limits</th>
<th>Unincorporated UGA</th>
<th>Total UGA Acreage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>328.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>335.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>61.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>134.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>134.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family</td>
<td>1,178.3</td>
<td>106.8</td>
<td>1,285.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Family</td>
<td>174.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>177.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>92.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use</td>
<td>Acres</td>
<td>Zoned Land</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairgrounds</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemeteries</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Course</td>
<td>143.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>143.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Services</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Whatcom County Assessor Land Use Codes and the City of Lynden Planning Department.

### 2.4.1 Commercial and Industrial Use

The City’s current actual land use acreages show commercial and industrial uses occupying 335.9 and 61.6 acres, respectively. The City actively pursues opportunity to increase the commercial and industrial zoned land being utilized for economic development.

**Historic Business District or HBD**

The Historic Business District is the zone where the City’s economic activity originated. It is intended to be an active mix of professional offices and residences, personal services and small retail establishments serving the employees and residents of the area. Emphasis on the City’s cultural history is anchored by the Pioneer Museum and the Windmill Inn. Storefronts and streetscapes encourage pedestrian activity.

**Local Commercial Services or CSL**

The purpose of the CSL zone is to provide a location for local scale retail development (stores less than 65,000 square feet), medical, professional and financial services. Development in this zone should focus on pedestrian connectivity to the surrounding area and mixed use development is encouraged. This zone, together with the Historic Business District, provides the primary location for civic and social activity within the community.

**Regional Commercial Services or CSR**

The purpose of the CSR zone is to support the development of large format retail and regional commercial development. This zone is located where larger parcels and arterial streets are available to support the traffic and land needs for these types of uses. This zone provides the primary location for businesses serving both the local and regional trade area.
2.4.2 Schools

There are 3 school systems in Lynden:

1. Lynden Public Schools, limited to the Lynden School District, currently has: three elementary schools (Bernice Vossbeck, Fisher, and Isom Elementary) with 1,360 students, one middle school (grades 6-8) with 606 students, and a high school (grades 9-12) with 809 students. It also runs the Lynden Academy an Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) program. There are 258 K-12 students in this program. Lynden passed a school bond in 2015 which will build a new (replacement) middle school on the east side of the city as well as rebuild Fisher Elementary. These are scheduled to open during the 2017-2018 school year.

2. Lynden Christian School students come from all over Whatcom County. The Lynden Christian School campus is centrally located with 3 schools on their property - an elementary school with 416 students, a middle school with 298 students and the high school with 344 students. Total enrollment in 2016 was 1058. It also runs a recycling center and second hand thrift store.

3. Cornerstone Christian School is a small private school located in the NE part of the city. Its building location was a part of the East Lynden annexation in 2007. Students primarily live within the city limits but some come from the surrounding north county area. The total enrollment is 121 students divided amongst grades 1-12.

Figure 2.4. Land Use in Lynden

See Figure 2.4 Land Use Map that is included at the end of this chapter.

2.5 Projecting the Next 20 Years

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires each county and city to look at least twenty years into the future and make accommodations for the growth that is projected to occur. Additionally, GMA planning goal 11 requires coordination between jurisdictions in the planning process (RCW 36.70A.020 (11)) and that county and city comprehensive plans must be coordinated and consistent when they share common borders or related regional issues (RCW 36.70A.100). Therefore, Whatcom County and the cities have undertaken a joint planning process to allocate population and employment growth in their respective Urban Growth Areas.

The population and employment growth allocation process followed 2 phases

Phase I - As an initial step in this process, the cities and County jointly funded a report entitled “Whatcom County Population and Employment Projections and Urban Growth
Allocations – Phase I Technical Report” (BERK, July 22, 2013). This report shows how future population and employment growth would be allocated to UGAs if based primarily on historical shares.

Phase II - Cities and County are not required to plan for the future based solely upon past trends. Local government goals and policies, public input, infrastructure availability, land capacity, and other factors are also taken into consideration. Existing interlocal agreements indicate that the County and cities will work together to develop proposed population and employment allocations to UGAs. At the request of the County, each city developed recommended population and employment allocations for their respective UGAs.

**Lynden**

An average growth of almost 3.5% since 1980 has made Lynden one of the fastest growing communities in the county. Actual growth has almost always exceeded expectations. The City has adopted a lower growth rate (1.9%) than the city has experienced over time. For Lynden, that amounts to slightly more than 6,400 new residents by 2036 using the high projection or 1.9% per year. The 1.9% rate is based on the Office of Financial Management (OFM) and the consultants Berk and Associates’ assumption that growth in Washington State as a whole will slow.

- Between 1990 and 2010, the City’s growth rate has only been at or below 1.5% per year in Census correction years, and in 2008.
- The average growth rate for Lynden between 2000 and 2013 has been 2.7%
- The average number of people added to the City between 2000 and 2013 has been 285.

Should Lynden continue to grow at a higher rate, the City will need to determine whether it needs to accelerate plans to accommodate the growth, continue to increase density and continue to promote multi-family housing, or begin to find ways to limit growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UGA Population Allocation Proposal</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Phase II - Preliminary City Proposal (Technical Report High)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Phase I - Technical Report Medium Growth Allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Difference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In comparing the Phase 1 and Phase II allocation decisions, the City determined to use the Technical Report High allocation and plan for 6,403 people to move to Lynden.
### WHATCOM COUNTY POPULATION ESTIMATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(with UGA’s)</td>
<td>(Until 2036)</td>
<td>(with UGA’s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellingham</td>
<td>93,107</td>
<td>35,918</td>
<td>129,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birch Bay</td>
<td>7,737</td>
<td>8,113</td>
<td>15,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaine</td>
<td>5,177</td>
<td>3,412</td>
<td>8,589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherry Point</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia Valley</td>
<td>3,204</td>
<td>1,701</td>
<td>4,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everson</td>
<td>2,670</td>
<td>1,136</td>
<td>3,806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferndale</td>
<td>12,778</td>
<td>6,833</td>
<td>19,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lynden</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,879</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,403</strong></td>
<td><strong>19,282</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nooksack</td>
<td>1,436</td>
<td>1,176</td>
<td>2,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumas</td>
<td>1,449</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>2,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unincorporated</td>
<td>65,318</td>
<td>65,506</td>
<td>205,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total County</strong></td>
<td><strong>205,800</strong></td>
<td><strong>86,149</strong></td>
<td><strong>291,949</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BERK, 2013

#### 2.5.1 Summary of UGA changes since the 2009 UGA review

In 2015, Lynden proposed 3 changes to its UGA, the largest is changing the UGA reserve (155) acres to actual UGA. The other 2 additions are not for residential growth. Based on the 2013 Berk Report and County’s land capacity analysis, the UGA before these changes held enough land to accommodate 5,385 people, less than the 6,400 people that are expected to move to Lynden in this planning period. Adding the 155 acre UGA reserve to the UGA brings the UGA land capacity up to 6,472 people which is enough to accommodate the projected population growth.

This addition is strategically positioned for the next stage of residential growth for the City. It is between Double Ditch Road and SR 539 and is located within the Pepin Creek project area. The Pepin Creek project is a regional habitat improvement project that will move fish bearing waters away from the roadways (where it is currently impounded in ditches) into a new stream channel. This channel will increase flood water capacity, offer recreational opportunities for the new developments, and provide improved fish habitat for resident and anadromous fish. Furthermore, it will allow the City to improve Double Ditch Road and Benson Road to urban standards.

The second addition to the UGA is a small (0.4 acres) portion of a parcel that has been in the City limits that was “legally” described as being outside the city and not in the
UGA. This parcel had been the old waste water treatment plant that was no longer in use and was deemed surplus. It was sold to an adjacent landowner. The 0.4 acres portion of the parcel was not legally described to be within the City when it was annexed in 1967. The current UGA change is an attempt to reconcile the parcel differences. The southern half of this parcel is in the 100-year Nooksack River floodplain and will include a floodplain covenant to restrict development within the floodplain.

The third addition to the UGA is a 38 acre parcel that is already owned by the city and used for regional stormwater detention. Since it is owned by the city it makes sense to designate it in its UGA. The parcel is within the 100-year floodplain so will include a floodplain covenant to restrict its use to the stormwater detention that it already is.

**Figure 2.5 UGA Additions**

![Urban Growth Additions](image)

**2.5.3 Land Capacity Analysis Overview**

A land capacity analysis compares the proposed growth allocations to the capacity of the UGA to accommodate growth. The land capacity analysis is an important tool for sizing UGAs. Land capacity analysis results for the Phase II City Proposal, based upon existing UGA boundaries, including the change to the UGA reserve, are shown below. The analysis shows that the capacity of the current UGA with the recent changes is sufficient for the project population growth.
### Residential Land Capacity Analysis Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Population Growth <strong>Capacity</strong> of existing UGA</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,472</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Population Growth <strong>Allocation</strong> Proposed</td>
<td>6,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Surplus (Deficit)</strong></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Commercial/Industrial Land Capacity Analysis Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Employment Growth <strong>Capacity</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,667</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Employment Growth <strong>Allocation</strong> Proposed</td>
<td>2,157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Surplus (Deficit)</strong></td>
<td>(490)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The land capacity analysis shows the City is proposing an urban growth area that is short of land for as many as 490 jobs. The City is not proposing to increase the size of the urban growth area to account for that projected demand at this time. Lynden has a broad range of employee to square feet ratios. From small retail uses that are employee dense, to very large cold storage facilities or farm equipment dealerships that are employee light. The range makes it difficult to define the exact land needs over time.

The City also recognizes that some of the biggest employers are not located within Commercial or Industrial zones. Two new schools are being constructed, assisted living and skilled nursing facilities (which employ many people) are currently located in residential zones.

#### 2.5.4 Density

In order for Lynden to continue to move toward its density targets of 5 dwelling units per acre, it will need to consider methods of increasing density throughout the current city limits and plan for higher density development in newly incorporated areas. Developing at higher density will allow the City to maintain its desire to protect the surrounding agricultural lands. Several methods for increasing density within the city are discussed in the Chapter 3 The Housing Element.

Assumed Density is the density needed within new development areas to bring current densities up to the density goals. Lynden’s land capacity analysis shows that the assumed density of future development in its UGA is over 7 dwelling units per acre. This means that the new UGA additions for residential growth will need to be developed at a fairly high density to help Lynden reach its goal. This is a topic that city officials and the public should continue to discuss as this level of density will look different from existing development.

**Figure 2.5.4 Future Land Use in Lynden**

*See Figure 2.5.4 Future Land Use in Lynden that is included at the end of this chapter.*
2.6 LAND USE Goals and Policies

In order to preserve Lynden’s character and the residents’ quality of life; and to meet the goals outlined in Vision 2036, the Growth Management Act, and the Whatcom County County Wide Planning Policies, the City of Lynden hereby establishes the following goals and policies relating to the purpose and pattern of growth in the Urban Growth Area, the annexation of those areas to the City of Lynden, the process to amend the comprehensive plan, and the future land use within the City.

Although the City of Lynden does not have approval authority over development applications in unincorporated UGA areas, Lynden will encourage Whatcom County to plan jointly for the area through the adoption of inter-local agreements as required by the County Wide Planning Policies and a sub-area plan that directly addresses Lynden’s Urban Growth Area.

Goal LU-1: The City of Lynden will establish an Urban Growth Area that provides a supply of land adequate to accommodate projected population and employment growth over the 20-year planning period.

Policies
1A. Establish an Urban Growth Area that supplies a land supply adequate for Lynden’s future growth and is consistent with the County Wide Planning Policies.

1B. Residential land will be zoned to achieve and maintain an average density of 5 units per acre within the Urban Growth Area, while maintaining the small town atmosphere of Lynden.

1C. The availability of commercial land will be preserved to provide sufficient capacity for growth that accommodates the 20-year employment growth projections.

1D. Public land will be preserved or acquired, if necessary, to provide public facilities, services, and public open spaces necessary to serve projected growth and maintain a high quality of life.

1E. Changes to land uses throughout the City should carefully consider the proximity to urban services necessary to serve the new land use. This may include public transit, shopping and personal services and adequate public utilities.

1F. Zoning changes, whether they are implemented through the comprehensive planning process or through a site specific rezone, should consider the impacts on the established neighborhoods surrounding the change.
1G. The development potential of any individual property under the land use
designations of this Comprehensive Plan shall be based on the net buildable area
of that property, and shall be further subject to clustering, planned unit
development and low impact development provisions, availability of necessary
utilities, critical area regulations, impact mitigation, and other applicable
development policies, regulations and standards.

1H. The City will engage in cooperative planning, including the use of inter-local
agreements, with Whatcom County for those areas within the unincorporated
Urban Growth Area.

1I. To ensure that adequate public facilities are available to serve new growth and
development, the City of Lynden should consider funding mechanisms including
impact fees, Local Improvement Districts (LIDs), connection fees, or other
mitigation or system fees allowed by state law.

Goal LU-2: Phase annexations and development within the Urban Growth Area to
ensure consistency with the Vision, Goals, and Policies of this Comprehensive
Plan, and prioritize infill development over expansion into agricultural and rural
lands.

Policies

1A. The City of Lynden will encourage annexation of land that has been developed in
manner consistent with the goals and purposes of this Comprehensive Plan and
the Growth Management Act. The City of Lynden will review development
applications in the Urban Growth Area to encourage development patterns
consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

1B. The City of Lynden will encourage the residential annexation of lands zoned UR-4,
R5-A, and R2-A under Whatcom County zoning prior to the annexation of lands
designated as AG, except where public health and safety requires the urban
services provided by the City (i.e. sanitary sewer).

Goal LU-3: Maintain the agricultural roots of Lynden by preserving working the
working agricultural lands that are vital to Lynden’s character and economy.

Policies
1A. The City of Lynden has adopted an ordinance supporting agriculture and the right to farm in areas surrounding the City. The City will also require a covenant on all development adjacent to agricultural lands acknowledging the potential impacts of farming practices on urban uses and recognizing the farmers’ rights to utilize those practices that are necessary to the agricultural use.

1B. The City of Lynden will work with Whatcom County to establish a program for the transfer of development rights, as well as identify areas appropriate to receive that increased density. The City will also work with Whatcom County to identify creative ways to fund the purchase of development rights in areas that are in danger of conversion to urban uses.

Goal LU-4: Ensure that new development maintains the small-town atmosphere and community spirit that define Lynden.

Policies

1A. The City of Lynden shall consider the historical mixture of land uses and design elements in developing and implementing regulations in order to preserve the small town character.

1B. The City of Lynden will consider changes to land use regulations that will help preserve the character and quality of life of the community.

Goal LU-5: Implement planning and design strategies that promote physical activity and maintain a healthy community.

Policies

1A. Provide a variety of outdoor open spaces that allow for the active and passive enjoyment of all ages.

1B. Provide an interconnected network of sidewalks, trails, walking and bicycling paths, and bicycle lanes, that allow for non-motorized transportation or recreation between neighborhoods and commercial centers.
1C. Ensure the safety of pedestrian and bicyclists by providing lighting, signage, and protection from vehicle traffic.

Goal LU-6: Protect and preserve natural resources and environmentally critical areas, while ensuring private property rights.

Policies

1A. The City of Lynden will encourage the preservation and protection of critical areas within the Urban Growth Area and will advocate the annexation of land that has provided reasonable buffers for sensitive areas.

1B. The City of Lynden will consider changes to land use regulations that will a) protect the natural resources within the city and the surrounding area, and b) implement the goals of the Growth Management Act and stormwater control regulations.

1C. Land use and development regulations will allow property owners reasonable use of their private property and avoid unconstitutional taking of private property for public use without just compensation.
Figure 2.4 City of Lynden Current Land Use
Figure 2.5.4 Future Land Use in Lynden’s UGA
CHAPTER 3 – The Housing Element

3.1 Introduction

Access to sufficient housing is a fundamental human need but also a foundational component to a strong and stable community. A community’s residents will need access to a variety of housing options at a variety of price points in order to supply the diversity of housing needs that are seen in a community.

3.1.1 The Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that cities encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the state’s population, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage the preservation of existing housing stock. The Housing Element addresses existing housing conditions, takes stock of housing supply, addresses needs that are not being met, encourages the preservation of existing neighborhood character and identifies conditions and opportunities available to develop additional housing in the city.

As Lynden grows and with the always changing cultural, economic and social realities, the city’s housing needs are also changing. As the city’s demographic profile stabilizes, as housing prices continue to rise, and as the city continues to be attractive as both a retirement community and a great place to raise a young family, the city will need to adapt its new housing options to these realities. Furthermore, as the city makes efforts to increase its density to 5 units/acre it will need to be intentional about considering minimum densities in new developments, supporting multifamily development and look for intelligent ways to promote infill development.

3.2 Geographic Context

Whatcom County’s population is approximately 207,000 residents. 57% of these people are distributed across 7 municipalities (or Urban Growth Areas) with Bellingham being by far the largest population center. Nearly 6% in Whatcom County live in Lynden. 43% of Whatcom County residents live in unincorporated areas in the county.

Whatcom County prepared an extensive document, the Whatcom County Housing Analysis 2015, as a part of its Comp Plan update. It has a wealth of information on demographics, population growth, households, and housing cost burdens.
Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Lynden in its Geographical Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lynden</th>
<th>Whatcom</th>
<th>Washington</th>
<th>USA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent 65+</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Size</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>2.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Households</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married Family</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Non-Family Households: “65+ and live alone”</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language other than English</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent in single family units</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent in Multifamily of 20+ units</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent owner occupied</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median House Value</td>
<td>$275,000</td>
<td>$277,000</td>
<td>$262,100</td>
<td>$176,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent renter occupied</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median rent</td>
<td>$857</td>
<td>$890</td>
<td>$973</td>
<td>$904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median per capita income</td>
<td>$25,430</td>
<td>$26,530</td>
<td>$30,742</td>
<td>$28,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent in Poverty</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the highlights indicate that a significant percentage of Lynden residents are over 65 years old. Additionally, a high percentage of Lynden households are married families. And finally, housing costs are high across the board in Washington State, Lynden included.

3.3 Existing Conditions

After a slowdown in the late 2000’s, Lynden has again begun adding housing units quite rapidly. Lynden has added 306 single family houses and 149 multi-family units since 2010.

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a Census Bureau program that produces population, demographic and housing estimates for municipalities across the nation. It is based on broad survey methodology and actual census data. Their housing characteristics survey for 2010-2014 gives a detailed picture of the current housing stock in Lynden.
Table 2: Housing Types in Lynden

Table 2 shows the number of single family residences (73%) and how the multifamily (27%) units are distributed. Duplexes, triplexes, and four-plexes combine to total 615 units, with an average occupancy rate of slightly above 90%. Housing complexes that consist of five or more individual units make up 14.9% (784 units) of the City’s total housing units. With a 94% occupancy rate, these complexes house nearly 1,200 residents.

Table 3: Number of housing units in Lynden built by decade

Table 3 shows the distribution of housing units by decade. The majority of housing units were built in the 2000 to 2009 decade, followed by the 1990 to 1999 decade. A significant number of units were also built in the 1980 to 1989 and 1990 to 1999 decades. The distribution shows a decline in the number of units built in the 1970 to 1989 and 1960 to 1969 decades, with a minimal number of units built in the 1940 to 1949 and 1939 or earlier decades.
Table 3 shows the large number of housing units built since 1980 which obviously corresponds to the population boom during that same period. The decrease in the 2000’s parallels the economic recession late in that decade which dramatically slowed new housing construction.

Table 4: Percentage of Income that Lynden Residents Spend on Housing Costs

Table 4 shows the significant number of residents that are considered “cost burdened”. More than 35% of homeowners with a mortgage pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs. More than 50% of renters pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs. These families likely have difficulty affording other needs such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.

3.4 Future Housing Needs

Based on Lynden’s projection to add more than 6,400 people to the City, it is important to consider where their housing needs will be met as well as what it will look like. At the current household size of 2.6 people per household the expected number of housing units needed is 2,463 units. In order to meet the City’s density goals and to continue to provide a variety of housing types in the city, the percentage of multi-family units in the new UGA additions will be higher than the current 27%.

Using Lynden’s land capacity analysis, the City can make assumptions for what the new housing can and should look like to meet our density needs. With the recent additions, the current UGA has the capacity to house nearly 6,500 people. Its dwelling unit capacity is 2,864 units, higher than the projected need. In order to meet its density
goals the percentage of single family to multi-family residences will need to adjust to an approximate 60% single family (1,644) to 40% multi-family (1,220) rate. The UGA has the capacity to hold that many homes. Reaching those levels will require forethought and using some planning tools that Lynden has not used before.

3.5 Housing Density and Design

Since the city’s original Comprehensive Plan in 1995, the issue of density has been an important topic. Even then, the community expressed an interest in increasing density if that meant protecting the surrounding agricultural lands. The question is how to promote increased density and also continue to maintain existing neighborhood character.

In 2004, the City adopted various development regulations that have supported increasing the average residential density and ensuring that the character of the community is not lost. The RMD zone provides design guidelines and flexibility within the regulations to encourage better design and character within the neighborhoods.

Design issues have always been important in Lynden. In 1993, the City established a Design Review Board, initially with the purpose of reviewing renovation plans in the Historic Downtown. Today the DRB is tasked with reviewing all commercial plans and any multi-family building with more than two units. The intent of this level of review is to ensure the community’s character and aesthetic values are met.

Prior to the 2004 update, the City held a visual preference forum that reviewed issues of density, design and the City’s goals for housing. The participants in this survey agreed that the City should preserve the aesthetic character of the community and that a variety of housing types and styles should be available within the community. Neighborhoods with positive streetscapes (street trees, landscaping and sidewalk separated from the street) scored quite well with the participants, even coupled with higher density development. Too much landscaping and reduced front yard spaces scored low with participants: comments indicated that the neighborhood felt crowded and confined. It is safe to assume these same preferences apply today.

Participants in the workshops were encouraged by the number of development concepts that provide alternative designs and increased density without seeming to degrade value and character. It was also recognized that it will be a challenge to introduce new development concepts in established neighborhoods.

Strategies to consider for meeting the challenge of design and density include the following:

1. Develop urban design standards for new subdivisions to encourage development that compliments Lynden’s character and surrounding areas.

2. Develop zoning standards and design guidelines for a variety of housing types, including mixed uses in the downtown area and cottage housing.
3. Implement a transportation plan that encourages efficient circulation, pedestrian connections, and safe travel for all who use the system.

3.5.1 Further Planning Tools for Increasing Density

Lynden’s population density has been rising since 1980 but it is still under 4 units per acre. The original (1995) Comprehensive Plan goal of increasing Lynden’s density to 5 units/acre remains. Understandably, housing development is primarily driven by maximizing profit so municipalities need to first plan for increased density as they expand into unoccupied portions of the Urban Growth Area. But, cities also need to provide incentives for increasing density in existing neighborhoods. What are some planning tools that could be used to help reach that goal?

The Zoning Code

Altogether changing the current zoning code to decrease the minimum lot size would likely have the most dramatic impact on future density. For example, decreasing the lot size minimums in the RS zones would open the door for smaller lot sizes than are currently allowed. The city could decrease the RS-72 (7,200 sqft minimum) to an RS-68 (6,800 sqft minimum). Or the city could rezone some of the RS-100 (10,000 sqft) to a smaller minimum. This same approach could be taken with the RM zones where the city could increase the number of multifamily units allowed within the RM zones. Of course, these types of changes tend to generate controversy so they would need to be approached with caution and wisdom.

As the city continues to annex and plan for development in undeveloped portions of its Urban Growth Area, it will need to determine the appropriate zoning designations for those areas. It can select the higher density zoning designations (both RS, RM or RMD) in these new areas.

Density Bonuses

This is a method for allowing more density than is permitted by code in exchange for the development providing some sort of public good, most often for affordable housing. This is seen as an incentive for developers as they can increase the number of allowable units on the property which would increase profit. This is beneficial to municipalities because it incentivizes affordable housing development and these bonuses are provided at zero cost to the municipality.

Lynden currently allows density bonuses in its Planned Residential Developments (PRD) when they provide a certain amount of land for common use (either open space or community facilities). If a PRD sets aside 10% of the land for common use it can increase the base density by 5%. If they set aside 20% they can increase the base density by 10%.
Inclusionary Zoning
Inclusionary zoning is a regulatory tool that requires development to include an established percentage of units as affordable housing which tends to be higher density development. The costs of providing affordable units is offset with density bonuses. The affordability levels for this requirement are also designated by the local government to target specific income levels (for households earning a specific percentage of the median income or a range of percentages). Often times the resale price of these units are restricted for a certain number of years. This tool needs to be enacted through a local ordinance and generally only applies to new developments at or above a certain size (ie. 20 or 50 units).

Lynden does not currently use this tool.

Land Assembly / Graduated Density Zoning
This tool is often used to promote infill development and is likely more appropriate in large urban centers. Often, high density development in urban centers is prohibited by the inability to assemble large enough parcels of land together for a higher density redevelopment. The developer’s plans are often stymied by holdout parcels. Graduated Density Zoning is a planning tool that allows higher densities for larger properties. So larger properties are allowed to increase density depending on their size. The increase in density on that larger property also increases the value. In this manner, it incentivizes cooperation between possible holdouts because if they hold out they will be left with a smaller parcel and therefore a less valuable parcel.

This tool is likely not as appropriate for a small city like Lynden which is not going to have the demand for large scale high density redevelopments. But it is a possible tool that could be used for smaller redevelopment projects that might occur in the future.

3.6 Affordable Housing
Similar to the density topic, the issue of affordability in housing is an increasingly important topic. Housing costs continue to rise in Washington State in general and specifically in Whatcom County and Lynden. While the typical Lynden resident has also seen an overall increase in their average income that increase has not kept pace with the rising housing cost. The rising housing costs disproportionately impact lower income residents and first-time home buyers. It makes it more difficult to enter the housing market so young adults and lower income residents will be more inclined to rent or relocate elsewhere rather than buy.

Table 4 (above) shows that more than 35% of homeowners and 55% of renters in Lynden pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Actually, most of those pay 35% or more of their income. This is further exemplified in a simple analysis of the
current median mortgage payment ($1,593) which is 32% of the current median income ($4,918/month). Essentially, there are a significant number of Lynden residents that are in an “unaffordable” housing situation. People that pay above 30% of their income on housing costs are considered “cost burdened” meaning they are more likely to face difficult financial choices in meeting their basic needs. Of course, as that percentage increases those choices are going to be more frequent.

Lynden currently has a very limited supply of “affordable” housing projects. Many apartment complexes allow their tenants to pay rent with available housing assistance. There are two rental complexes (Apple Valley with 28 apartments and River House Apartments with 50 apartments) that offer subsidized housing rates for senior and disabled residents. There are zero examples of single family home developments that have been specifically targeted to the lower income, first-time home owner, or fixed income residents.

Affordable housing was considered an issue in when Lynden adopted the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. From the “cost burdened” numbers, it is apparent that housing affordability is still a major issue. There are some planning tools that could be further considered to help alleviate some of the housing burden.

3.6.1 Further Planning Tools for Affordable Housing

Density and affordability often go hand in hand. Obviously large lots with large houses are going to be more expensive than small houses on small lots. So most of these tools were already discussed in the above “increasing density” section.

The Zoning Code
Decreasing minimum lot sizes in the residential zones both increases density and decreases development costs. So, while not specifically an affordable housing tool, the actual zoning code impacts housing costs. This could be done in new development areas as the city expands into the unoccupied UGA or targeted by local ordinance in certain areas within the city.

Inclusionary Zoning
This was discussed above but is a specific development tool that can be enacted only by a local ordinance. It is a requirement applied to development projects greater than a specified size where a percentage of the units need to be “affordable” units. The costs of providing those affordable units are offset by density bonuses.

Affordable Housing Districts
This is a planning tool used to target a specific area of the city where affordable housing development should/can occur. Generally, within these areas, special zoning exemptions can be granted. Examples of exemptions might be the relaxing of height restrictions or decreasing the parking requirements of a development. These
exemptions are designed to decrease development costs. While this tool is most often used in large cities, it could be used to varying degrees in a small city such as Lynden. Perhaps by coupling with tax breaks or decreasing impact fees there might be a developer willing to build higher density, smaller, entry-level homes.

Adaptive Reuse
These projects create new housing in already existing buildings that were formally used for commercial, public or industrial purposes. They might require a zoning variance or additional city assistance but can be affordable because of the existing infrastructure that is already present.

Financial Assistance to the Resident
There are a multitude of financial assistance programs (federal/state) available to low income renters and first time home buyers. The barrier to the resident may be finding out what is available and navigating the process of eligibility to the programs. Lynden currently does not administer any local assistance programs.

Lynden Housing Task Force
It has been suggested that a Housing Task Force be appointed by the Lynden City Council. The goal of the task force would be to complete a comprehensive inventory of Lynden's housing supply, research and determine possible solutions for the current housing affordability issue, develop housing priorities and strategies that are consistent with Housing Element Goals and Policies, monitor the effectiveness of the proposed strategies, document the need of and land available for affordable housing, and finally, report to and draw upon the community throughout the process. This task force would assist the community in determining what will work best and continue to involve citizens in the planning for the future of their City.
3.7 HOUSING GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal H-1: Maintain and enhance the quality of existing neighborhoods.

Policies

1.1. Establish standards for infill development that ensure compatibility with the character of existing neighborhoods.

1.2. Enhance and maintain public rights-of-way, parks, and open spaces by providing sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and other amenities.

1.3. Provide buffers, including landscaping, between commercial, industrial, or higher density land uses and existing residential neighborhoods.

1.4. Solicit neighborhood and community comment on proposed plans in existing residential neighborhoods.

Goal H-2: Provide a mix of single-family and multifamily homes that achieves the density necessary to accommodate projected population growth over the 20-year planning period.

Policies

2.1. Zoning should be applied to ensure that future residential development over the planning period is composed of approximately 60% single-family units and 40% multifamily units.

Goal H-3: Provide for a wide variety of housing types, including low cost housing, for different needs and desires in appropriate locations.

Policies

3.1. Allow multi-family housing to be dispersed throughout the City as long as the character of existing neighborhoods is maintained.

3.2. Encourage use of the Planned Residential Development ordinance, which allows for diversification of housing types and the preservation of open space.

3.3. Provide zoning that allows for mixed density neighborhoods.

3.4. Where the Planning Commission and the City Council finds that there are adequate reasons for such designation. These reasons may include special topographical conditions, geographic location, and the creation of large planned unit residential developments.
3.5. In order to provide for a wide choice of housing types and costs, the City of Lynden will allow, in appropriate areas, alternative residential housing units such as group and cooperative housing, assisted living facilities, mobile and modular homes.

3.6. The City of Lynden encourages the construction of new senior housing, and may allow bonuses such as lesser parking requirements and increased density to encourage this type of housing.

3.7. The community of Lynden will provide creative opportunities for affordable housing, for all income levels, with the emphasis toward ownership, for at least 80% of those households who: 1) are at or below 80% of median income for Whatcom County, 2) and whose shelter costs exceed 30% of gross income.

3.8. The City of Lynden will encourage the inclusion of affordable housing units or lots in developments by granting some special exceptions to a developer. These exceptions include smaller lots, higher density, reduced impact fees, or other exceptions as deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission and the City Council.

3.9. Redevelopment or infill development that creates new multifamily housing should be permitted at the fringes of existing industrial or commercial areas.

Goal H-4: Establish standards for multifamily housing that ensure its compatibility with the existing character of Lynden.

Policies

4.1. Provide architectural standards and architectural review of new multifamily development.

4.2. Ensure that new multifamily housing is integrated with existing neighborhoods, through its siting and design.

4.3. Provide buffers and greenbelts between multi-family and single family residences.

4.4. Ensure compatibility of scale, massing, setbacks, and other architectural elements between new multifamily development and existing adjacent single-family housing.
CHAPTER 4 – The Utilities Element

4.1 Introduction
The Growth Management Act requires the City to include a Utilities Element in its Comprehensive Plan. It should consist “of the general location, proposed location, and capacity of all existing and proposed utilities, including, but not limited to, electrical lines, telecommunication lines, and natural gas lines.” This element includes the above mentioned private utilities as well as cable television and solid waste disposal.

Utility providers are typically responsible for planning for the future demands on the services they provide, however, this element gives the City the opportunity to work with utility providers for better efficiency of these services. This plan is intended to support the providers in offering utility service on demand to existing and future customers. By planning with these providers the city hopes to minimize any negative effects that might result from this provision.

Public utilities (water, sewer, stormwater) are covered in Chapter 5 The Capital Facilities Element.

4.2 Private Utility Services

There are a number of private utility operators in Lynden. Puget Sound Energy is the main purveyor of electrical power. Cascade Natural Gas provides natural gas in the city. Phone, internet and cable TV services are primarily provided by Frontier and Comcast. Wireless phone service is provided by a variety of carriers.

Because these are customer driven private utilities, they are responsible for their own planning to keep up with demand. The City of Lynden works with these utilities to ensure efficient infrastructure and protection of the environment as these services are provided. Investor-owned utilities in the State of Washington are regulated by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). Utilities under the jurisdiction of the WUTC must provide suitable facilities to supply service-on-demand. State law regulates the rates and charges, services, facilities and practices of utilities. Any change in policy regarding customer charges or the provision of services requires WUTC approval.

4.2.1 Electrical Systems

The City of Lynden holds a franchise agreement with Puget Sound Energy (PSE) which gives the authority to provide electrical power to its customers within Whatcom County and specifically, in Lynden’s UGA. It provides for the transmission, distribution and sale of electrical energy for power, heat, and lighting.
PSE has nearly 100,000 customers in Whatcom County, more than 1,100 miles of overhead distribution lines, 700 miles of underground lines, and more than 200 miles of high-voltage transmission lines. There are 35 distribution substations and 9 transmission substations in Whatcom County.

A majority of PSE’s generating capacity comes from hydropower projects, including the Upper Baker dam in eastern Whatcom County. Other power-generating facilities in Whatcom County include 4 natural gas plants and 3 anaerobic digester plants on local dairy farms. Much of the region’s overall power is transmitted from Canada and other parts of Washington on high-voltage lines largely owned by the Bonneville Power Administration. While PSE generates some of its own power, it also purchases power from other facilities.

PSE maintains an adequate level of service throughout Whatcom County and is continually maintaining and upgrading its service infrastructure as needs are perceived. At this time, no deficiencies exist or are expected to exist within the planning period.

Finally, PSE actively promotes energy conservation methods with its customers. It connects local customer-owned generation systems to its grid (ie. rooftop solar). Many of its customers participate in its Green Energy Program which provides grants for high-visibility solar projects in the region. PSE also sponsors educational programs that advocate for energy efficiency and conservation and a continual increase in renewable energy opportunities.

4.2.2 Natural Gas

Cascade Natural Gas (CNG) Corporation is an investor owned company that provides natural gas service to the City of Lynden. It is regulated by several agencies. The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission regulates the rate and charges imposed on customers. CNG must also meet requirements established by the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 and alternative electricity generation policies of the Northwest Power Planning Council.

CNG is a customer driven utility so they expand their services based on current development needs. Their system fully meets existing demand. As Lynden grows, CNG is reactive to on-the-ground development. If upgrades or increased capacity needs are required as development occurs, they make those upgrades accordingly.

CNG is meeting the existing conditions and demands for natural gas. It is likely that demand for natural gas will continue to increase during the planning period as it is considered a “cleaner” heat source than other fossil fuel sources. As the region works to deal with the impacts from a changing climate, the demand for natural gas will likely increase.
CNG is able to respond to increasing demands based on market factors. When a facility is reaching its capacity they may extend services by:

1) Increased distribution and supply pressure on existing lines
2) Adding new distribution and supply mains for reinforcement
3) Increasing existing distribution system capacity by replacing with larger mains
4) Adding district regulators from supply mains to provide sources for meeting the needs of new development

4.2.3 Internet Access and Telecommunications

Based on the last 20 years, it is likely that no other private utility will see more changes in the next 20 years than internet and telecommunications. Since Lynden’s original 1995 Comprehensive Plan, the internet has radically impacted daily life. High speed internet service is now an essential utility for both business and residential life.

Currently, there are several options for residents to subscribe to internet service and much of it is based on customer choice to meet their own needs. Many municipalities are still considering the most effective way to ensure that their residents have affordable access to high speed internet. During this planning period, Lynden will need to consider additional methods for increasing and improving access. One method that some municipalities are using is offering public wifi networks that residents and businesses can access. Furthermore, Lynden should consider development regulations that require new development to include fiber-optic infrastructure within the public right of way and then replace or add that infrastructure to old right of ways as street improvements occur.

Mobile phone devices were relatively rare in 1995. Today more than 90% of American adults own a mobile phone and a large majority of those are “smart phones” which are able to access the internet. Mobile phone devices are now ubiquitous and the next 20 years are sure to bring many changes to these devices.

The popularity of mobile phones has resulted in a dramatic decline in land line phones. At the time of the last Comp Plan update in 2004, 90% of homes had land line phone service. In the decade since, that number has decreased to close to 50%. That number is sure to continue its decline.

4.2.4 Cable Television

Cable television service is often provided by the same internet and phone providers. Comcast and Frontier Communications provide cable service, while DirectTV and Dish Network provide satellite television service. These companies provide service in a competitive environment and no deficiencies currently exist. In the next 20 years, these services will likely change in many ways reacting to customer demand and providing adequate levels of service to their customers.
4.2.4 Solid Waste Disposal

The City of Lynden does not possess its own solid waste disposal facility, however, it is serviced by Nooksack Valley Disposal (NVD) under a franchise agreement with the city. NVD is located at 250 Birch Bay-Lynden Road and services the city’s UGA. NVD follows the plan laid out by the Whatcom County Solid Waste Comprehensive Plan which was a cooperative effort between Whatcom County and several of the cities within the County.

NVD is a collection company with a dropbox/transfer facility that provides garbage, recycling, and yard waste pickup for its customers. NVD delivers its garbage collection to Recycling and Disposal Services, Inc, a transfer facility in Ferndale, WA. From there it gets transferred to a landfill in Arlington, Oregon where the climate is suitable for a solid waste landfill. The traditional recycling material (paper, cardboard, glass, cans and plastic) is delivered to Northwest Recycling in Bellingham for processing. The yard waste pickup is delivered to Green Earth Technology, just outside of Lynden where they make a high quality mulch product.

NVD is meeting the current solid waste disposal demands and has room for the expected population increase. As with other private utilities, NVD is customer driven and meets demand as development occurs. NVD currently serves 3,650 homes with garbage and recycling pickup. Just over 40% of those also subscribe to their yard/food waste service. In 2015, Lynden customers disposed of 2,620 tons of waste, recycled 660 tons of traditional materials and recycled 1,411 tons of yard/food waste. From this info, the average Lynden household disposes 119 lbs of garbage and recycles 95 lbs per month.

The City of Lynden maintains a seat on the county-wide Solid Waste Executive Committee (SWEC). This committee was established in 1991 by interlocal agreements between the county and cities and its members are the County Executive and the Mayor of each city. They meet at least once per year to review, comment and approve solid waste budgets, plans, policies and operations. In the past, Lynden has been represented on the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) which was established by RCW 70.95.165. SWAC is an advisory committee made up of local citizens, public interest groups, business, the waste management industry, and local public officials. It assists in the development of programs and policies concerning solid waste handling and disposal, and to review and provide comment to proposed rules, policies and ordinances.
4.3 Utility Goals and Policies

Goal U-1: Coordinate with private utility providers to ensure high-quality service for customers within the Lynden UGA and meet the demands of projected population growth.

Policies:
1D. The City should cooperate and maintain open communications and data sharing with private utility companies who provide utility service within the Lynden UGA.

1.2 The City will encourage residents to appropriately locate underground utilities prior to construction projects occurring.

Goal U-2: Consider methods for increasing and improving access to high-speed internet service.

Policies:
1A. Consider developing public Wi-Fi networks that residents and businesses can access.
1B. Consider development regulations that require new development to provide fiber-optic infrastructure in public rights-of-way.

Goal U-3: Consider methods for the promotion of energy conservation and solid waste recycling programs.

Policies:
3.1 Encourage the use of construction designs and materials that are consistent with energy efficiency standards.

3.2 Work with solid waste utility providers to offer an increasing number of recycling options that can help to decrease the amount of waste that ends up in the landfill.
CHAPTER 5 – The Capital Facilities Element

5.1 Introduction
The Growth Management Act requires the Capital Facilities Element to include:

- An inventory of publically owned facilities and identify any deficiencies.
- A forecast for future needs of these facilities.
- A 6-yr financing plan for future capital facilities.

The City of Lynden is responsible for ensuring that development occurs concurrently with the public facilities needed for safety and efficiency. The public utilities that are provided by the city include water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater handling capabilities. Public services that help to provide security and recreational activities include police, fire, and parks. Transportation planning is also a public service and is included, separately, as Appendix A of this Comprehensive Plan Update.

Since the 2004 Update, Lynden has invested significantly into its capital facilities. It built a new library building, a new city hall, and a new water treatment plant. It has upgraded bridges, streets, and purchased land for new parks. The School District, which is responsible for its own capital planning, has begun the construction of two new schools. Of course, over the next 20 years, Lynden will continue to see capital improvement and maintenance projects taking place. This public infrastructure helps lay the foundation for the high quality of life in Lynden.

5.2 Public Utilities
Lynden owns and operates its sewer, stormwater and water utilities. They operate in a self-sustaining manner, customers are charged monthly for each utility service and for initially installing connections to each system.

The City Public Works Department manages, operates, maintains and improves these utility systems. The City Finance Department is responsible for billing, collection, accounting and financial reporting. The City Council exercises its authority in setting user rates, fees and charges for these utilities systems and in approving the capital improvements necessary to provide proper service to the community as it grows.

5.2.1 Water Utility
The City of Lynden water system serves its entire UGA and a scattering of residents outside of the UGA that were connected to the City’s water system because of environmental health concerns. The total population within its service area is expected to increase to 19,575 by 2036. This number is slightly larger than the UGA’s allocated population growth due to the existing population that is served outside of the UGA service area.
The water system consists of a water intake structure on the south side of the Nooksack River near the Hannegan Road Bridge that directs raw water into the newly built (2015) water treatment plant. The system has two booster pump stations, two storage reservoirs (total nearly 9 million gallons of capacity) and 81 miles of water mains that range in size from 2 to 20 inches. The City’s new 8 million gallon per day treatment plant doubled treatment capacity and includes grit removal and sedimentation basins equipped with plate settlers to handle the heavy sediment load from the Nooksack River. The facility also features high rate deep bed gravity filters and a combination of UV disinfection and chlorine to disinfect the water.

As stated above, the service area is projected to increase to 19,575 by 2036. With that increase, the daily demand is projected to increase to an average of 2.44 million gallons per day with a maximum peak demand of 6.35 million gallons per day. The current system can handle that demand and the City has surplus storage capacity to meet existing and future storage requirements. As shown in Table 5.2.1a, the City’s existing 8.58 million gallon storage capacity provides a surplus of 2 million gallons. In the City’s considered opinion, it has sufficient water rights to meet current and projected future demand. The Department of Ecology does not share the City’s opinion on the extent of City water rights. However, the City and Department of Ecology continue to work together toward water right solutions to produce new water rights and water availability for the City pursuant to a Memorandum of Agreement entered in 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.2.1a Water Storage Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2036 Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Available Storage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Required Storage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The City has proposed several capital projects to improve its water system during the 20-year planning period. These include acquiring additional water rights, making necessary pressure zone adjustments, studying locations for future storage sites, and other distribution system upgrades and improvements. The six-year Capital Improvement Plan estimates that these projects will cost approximately $4,164,180. An additional $4,300,000 (in 2016 dollars) in improvement costs is estimated for the period from 2022-2036. The City has a plan to acquire funding sufficient to cover these costs through a combination of state grants, loans or bonds, and revenue from rates, charges, and reserves.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.2.1b Capital Improvement Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Water Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Condensate Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure Zone Adjustment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Main and Distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Estimated Cost</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The City of Lynden has been working with a contracted consultant to deliver the final Water System Plan Update in early 2017. It will be adopted and approved by the City Council at that time. The information above was provided as a Technical Memo from the consultants to summarize the required components of the City’s Comprehensive Plan update (RH2 Technical Memorandum, Water System Plan Update, June 21, 2016).

5.2.2 Sewer Utility
The City of Lynden provides sewer collection and treatment facilities for property within the city limits and plans for future collection and treatment to the city’s UGA upon annexation. The City also operates permitted composting facilities for the beneficial use of biosolids. The allocated population projection for those that are connected to sewer matches the 19,282 high growth allocation used elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan update.

The City owns and operates 4.3 miles of force mains, ranging in size from 3 – 12 inches and 57.3 miles of gravity sewer ranging in size from 6 - 24 inches. The sewer system also includes 14 pump stations. Flow from the entire collection system is directed into two main sewer trunks, located just south of the Historic Business District, prior to being combined just upstream of the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) influent pumps. The WWTP is located at 800 S 6th St near the southern boundary of the city limits. The WWTP includes an influent pump station, headworks with auger-type screens and grit removal, three anoxic selector tanks, two oxidation ditches, two secondary clarifiers, effluent cloth disc filters, a UV disinfection system, effluent Parshall flume, a chlorine system for treating in plant re-use water, effluent pump station, sludge thickening and digestion, sludge dewatering, and composting facilities. It is designed to deal with a maximum monthly flow of 2.18 million gallons per day and a peak hourly flow of 6.82 million gallons.

In order to meet projected demand over the 20-year planning period, the City is proposing capital projects to one pipe downstream of Pump Station 4 that will need a size upgrade, improvements and refurbishing of most of the City’s pump stations and several process and operational improvements to the WWTP. These are listed in Table 5.2.2a below. All of the city’s pump stations and force mains are considered adequate for the projected demand.
Table 5.2.2a Summary of WWTP improvement needs (copied from the BHC Consultants Technical Memorandum, General Sewer Plan Update, June 2, 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Issue Classification</th>
<th>Issue Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influent</td>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Maximum month TSS load projected to exceed the current permitted capacity of 8,000 lbs/day by 2021.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O&amp;M</td>
<td>Unable to monitor waste load in real-time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxidation Ditches</td>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Capacity of existing oxidation ditches is projected to be reached by about 2025.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O&amp;M</td>
<td>Unable to turn down brush rotors when air demand is low to save energy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O&amp;M</td>
<td>Brush rotors need rehabilitation to improve reliability and reduce maintenance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Clarifiers</td>
<td>O&amp;M</td>
<td>Clarifier mechanisms need to be rehabilitated and recoated for continuing long-term service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effluent Filtration</td>
<td>O&amp;M / Redundancy</td>
<td>Projected flows currently exceed firm capacity of the effluent filters, but filtration is currently not needed to meet permit limits. As loading on the secondary clarifiers increase in the future, filtration is expected to contribute more to maintaining effluent quality. Additionally, the existing cloth media needs replacement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UV Disinfection</td>
<td>O&amp;M / Redundancy</td>
<td>Existing UV disinfection system is near the end of its useful life and replacement will improve performance, reduce energy use and labor requirements and add reliability through redundancy in power and controls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outfall</td>
<td>O&amp;M</td>
<td>Outfall needs to be modified or relocated to reduce headloss, which will also reduce energy use associated with effluent pumping, and help relieve backups in the upstream “COW” water outfall from Darigold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sludge Thickening</td>
<td>Redundancy</td>
<td>Replace the existing dry polymer system with an emulsion polymer system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sludge Digestion</td>
<td>O&amp;M</td>
<td>Required air flow rate currently exceeds firm capacity of digester blowers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sludge Dewatering</td>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Insufficient dewatering capacity for projected sludge load by about 2026.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O&amp;M</td>
<td>Insufficient dewatered sludge storage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The CIP for the 6-year and 20-year planning period address the identified needs. Table 5.2.2b below lists the proposed projects. The 6-year CIP estimates these projects to cost approximately $2,220,000, while the longer-term projects will require an additional $4,890,000. The City proposes to fund these projects with a combination of loans or
bonds or revenue from rates, charges, and reserves. The City of Lynden General Sewer Comprehensive Plan is scheduled to be adopted by the City Council in 2016.

**Table 5.2.2b CIP for Sewer System upgrades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gravity Main Downstream of Pump Station 4</td>
<td>$1,050,000</td>
<td>Upsize approximately 1,600 linear feet of pipe from SSMH-210 to SSMH-200 from 8-inch diameter to 12-inch diameter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6-Year Capacity Related CIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection and Conveyance System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravity Main Downstream of Pump Station 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WWTP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WWTP Facility Plan</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>Prepare a facility plan in preparation for future improvements and to rerate the permitting influent TSS load.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UV System Replacement</td>
<td>$730,000</td>
<td>Replace the existing UV disinfection system to improve operations, efficiency and redundancy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Digester Blower</td>
<td>$290,000</td>
<td>Add another blower to increase firm capacity to meet projected future air flow requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20-Year Capacity Related CIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrofit Oxidation Ditches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand and Retrofit Effluent Filtration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand Sludge Dewatering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5.2.3 Stormwater Utility**

The City of Lynden’s stormwater system consists of run-off collection drains, pipes, open channels, regional detention ponds, and Low Impact Development (LID) methods such as bioswales and rain gardens. The City is responsible for stormwater facilities
within the City right-of-way or within drainage easements in favor of the City. The public system is operated, maintained and upgraded by the City Public Works Department.

Private stormwater systems also exist within the City. Homeowners associations and/or businesses are responsible for the capture and detention of stormwater on their properties. These private stormwater facilities are regulated by the Lynden Municipal Code (LMC Chapt 8) and are held to the standards described in the 2005 edition of the Department of Ecology Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington. The most recent edition of that manual will be adopted by the City with code revisions scheduled for 2017. While not common, there are some instances where an association may enter into a maintenance agreement with the City.

Since much of Lynden’s development occurred prior to the current stormwater regulations, the City has inventoried the existing system and continues to update the drainage maps with field-truthed data. The City of Lynden will meet projected demand through a combination of the capital projects noted below and developer-constructed improvements required to accommodate stormwater runoff generated by proposed new development.

There are several improvement and maintenance projects being planned for in the 20-year planning period. The 6-year CIP has several projects intended to address the capacity of the conveyance system, water treatment, groundwater monitoring, and other issues. The total cost of these projects is approximately $18,292,000 and will be funded through a combination of local funds, state funding (Department of Ecology) and conservation district funding. The City of Lynden Stormwater Comprehensive Plan is scheduled to be adopted by the City in 2016.

**Table 5.3.2a Stormwater Utility Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Estimated Construction Costs</th>
<th>Estimated Consulting Costs</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Potential Funding Source</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BC Avenue</td>
<td>$580,000</td>
<td>$185,000</td>
<td>30% Design</td>
<td>Local Funds</td>
<td>Within 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>State: Ecology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Drive</td>
<td>$145,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>5% Design</td>
<td>Local Funds</td>
<td>Within 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>State: Ecology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic BD Tributary Conveyance</td>
<td>$565,000</td>
<td>$190,000</td>
<td>50% Design</td>
<td>Local Funds</td>
<td>Within 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>State: Ecology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic BD Treatment Facility</td>
<td>$900,000</td>
<td>$90,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Local Funds</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Constructed</td>
<td>State: Ecology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Lynden Annex</td>
<td>$650,000</td>
<td>$175,000</td>
<td>50% Design</td>
<td>Local Funds</td>
<td>Within 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>State: Ecology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Local Funds</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynden Industrial Retrofit</td>
<td>$1,600,000</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
<td>Local Funds: Ecology</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepin Creek</td>
<td>$8,202,000</td>
<td>$1,730,000</td>
<td>State: Ecology</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Lynden Regional</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>Local Funds: Ecology</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Creek Neighborhood</td>
<td>$540,000</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
<td>Local Funds: Ecology</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th to 10th Street, Front to Judson</td>
<td>$TBD</td>
<td>$120,000</td>
<td>State: Ecology</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkview Drive</td>
<td>$365,000</td>
<td>$160,000</td>
<td>Local Funds: Ecology</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Private Partnership on Fairground</td>
<td>$TBD</td>
<td>$165,000</td>
<td>State: Ecology, Conservation District</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundwater Monitoring</td>
<td>$TBD</td>
<td>$TBD</td>
<td>Local Funds: Ecology</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Public Services

5.3.1 Parks

In 2014, the City adopted the City of Lynden Park and Trail Master Plan which gives a detailed picture and vision for managing the City’s public parks. It creates clear policies for meeting the community’s adopted level of service. That plan is included as Appendix B in Lynden’s Comprehensive Plan.

Currently, City Park, Bender Field Recreation Complex, Patterson Park, Greenfield Park, North Prairie and Centennial Park are managed by the City. This is 72.4 acres within the city limits. At 2013 population numbers there were approximately 5.7 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. This is above the national standard of 5 acres per 1,000 people, although the City has set its desired level of service at 7 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents.

In order to maintain that level of service with the projected 20-year growth allocation, the city will need to add an additional 63 acres of parkland during the planning period. The Park’s Department also maintains the existing Jim Kaemink trail that winds through the city. The 20-yr plan includes the design and construction of 10 additional miles of trails. The projected acquisition and development cost throughout the planning period is $16,065,400.
Table 5.3.1a Parks Development Cost Summary through 2036

*LOS Acres refers to the number of acres needed to reach the desired 7 acres/1000 residents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>UGA Population</th>
<th>Current Acres</th>
<th>LOS Acres</th>
<th>Additional Acres</th>
<th>Property Cost</th>
<th>Development Cost</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>12,879</td>
<td>72.40</td>
<td>90.15</td>
<td>17.75</td>
<td>$1,775,300</td>
<td>$1,775,300</td>
<td>$3,550,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>13,111</td>
<td>72.40</td>
<td>91.78</td>
<td>19.38</td>
<td>$1,937,575</td>
<td>$1,937,575</td>
<td>$3,875,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>14,334</td>
<td>91.78</td>
<td>100.34</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>$856,225</td>
<td>$856,225</td>
<td>$1,712,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2024</td>
<td>15,671</td>
<td>100.34</td>
<td>109.70</td>
<td>9.36</td>
<td>$935,900</td>
<td>$935,900</td>
<td>$1,871,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2029</td>
<td>17,133</td>
<td>109.70</td>
<td>119.93</td>
<td>10.23</td>
<td>$1,023,400</td>
<td>$1,023,400</td>
<td>$2,046,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2034</td>
<td>18,731</td>
<td>119.93</td>
<td>131.12</td>
<td>11.19</td>
<td>$1,118,600</td>
<td>$1,118,600</td>
<td>$2,237,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2036</td>
<td>19,282</td>
<td>131.12</td>
<td>134.97</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>$385,700</td>
<td>$385,700</td>
<td>$771,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Costs: $16,065,400

Park’s funding is generated through discretionary City funds as allocated by City Council (property, sales, excise taxes, etc), user fees (athletic playfields), park impact fees, grants, general obligation bonds, and gifts through estates.

The City is also trustee for the 236 acre Berthusen Park, which is outside the City and UGA limits, but is included in the Parks and Trails Master Plan. Finally, since the adoption of the Park’s Master Plan, the City acquired 40 acres on the NW side of town that is located in the UGA but just outside of the current city limits. The property is currently in the planning and development stage for public access. It will be annexed in during the planning period.

5.3.2 Fire

As of April 2016, the City is served by a combination department with 11 Career Firefighters, 18 Volunteer Firefighters, the Fire Chief, an Assistant Fire Chief and an Office Manager. The 8,900 square foot fire station, across from the City Library, houses one 1750/gpm fire engine and a 95’ platform ladder truck, two aid units and two command units. The Fire Department maintains mutual aid agreements with the other 12 Fire/EMS County agencies for all fire, hazardous materials, and EMS-related emergencies.

The department is divided into three shifts, each having a lieutenant. Pagers and two-way radios with specified and licensed frequencies provide communication within the department.

The department consists of both fire and EMS services. As of April 2016, 85% of calls are EMS-related. The call volume increases annually. The department responded to 1650 calls in 2015 and maintains an average 4.5 minute from dispatch to on-scene arrival time.

The Lynden Fire Department maintains the adopted Whatcom County levels of service for fire protection. For Lynden, this is an urban level of service which is an expected response time of 8 minutes, 80% of the time. It currently meets those standards.
In order to maintain that level of service in light of the projected growth, the Fire Department is proposing several capital projects over the planning period. In addition, The Lynden Fire Department will continue to work with the Public Works Department to identify and address pressure flow concerns throughout the City and specifically in East Lynden.

The City of Lynden Fire Capital Facilities Plan was adopted by the City Council in June, 2016. It is available for reference.

Table 5.3.2 Fire Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enclose Station Man Doors</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace SCBA Fill Station</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add/Replace Pumper Truck</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$450,000</td>
<td>General/IF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace Overhead Door #5</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add New Ambulance</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
<td>IF/AUF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Truck Bay to S end of stat.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>General/IF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remount Ambulance</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>General/AUF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace Command Unit</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace Pickup</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Station/Training Facility or acquire Northwood St</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td>IF/AUF/General or Bond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace Pumper Truck</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>$600,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace SCBA Air Compressor</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace Command Unit</td>
<td>2024</td>
<td>$73,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace Ladder Truck</td>
<td>2027</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
<td>General or Bond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace Ambulance</td>
<td>2029</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>General/AUF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace Pickup</td>
<td>2030</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Pumper Truck</td>
<td>2032</td>
<td>$700,000</td>
<td>General/IF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Command Unit</td>
<td>2032</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>General/IF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace Fill Station</td>
<td>2033</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace Command Unit</td>
<td>2036</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Capital Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$7,448,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The city anticipates that it will meet those revenue needs over the 20-year planning period through a combination of:

- Property Tax Revenues
- Sales Tax Revenues
- Impact Fees
- Ambulance Utility Fee Revenue (EMS Only)
- Transport Fee Revenue
- Fire Marshall Service Fee Revenue
- Grants
- Bonds

5.3.3 Police

The Lynden Police Department consists of 15 police officers, 2 reserve officers, 1 codes enforcement officer, 3 support staff and 8 members of Lynden’s S.T.A.R.S (Senior Traffic and Residential Security) group.

The department moved into the newly purchased 13,000 square-foot police headquarters on 19th St. in 2004. This building and property will meet projected demands through the planning period.

The Lynden Police Department has jurisdiction within the City Limits, however there is a mutual aid agreement with the Whatcom County Sheriff’s Department, US Border Patrol, and Washington State Patrol.

The Police Department maintains a level of service of 1 officer for every 900 residents, which currently is adequate. That is significantly higher, though, than the general accepted rule for urban areas of 1 officer for every 700 residents. As the city grows over the next 20 years, it expects to add between 7-12 officers in order to ensure a proper level of service.

The Lynden Police Department has an agreement with the US Border Patrol Communications Center for its dispatch service. It does not track response times but the Department saves approximately $160,000 per year through this agreement.

5.3.4 Schools

There are 3 school systems in Lynden. They are responsible for their own capital planning, though the City has an interest in helping them provide a high quality education for its residents. In the 20-year planning period, they are likely to add additional school buildings to meet the projected demand.

4. Lynden Public Schools, limited to the Lynden School District, currently has: three elementary schools (Bernice Vossbeck, Fisher, and Isom Elementary) with 1,360 students, one middle school (grades 6-8) with 606 students, and a
high school (grades 9-12) with 809 students. It also runs the Lynden Academy, which is an Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) program which acts as a bridge between homeschool families and the public school. There are 258 (k-12) students in this program. Finally, Lynden passed a school bond in 2015 which will build a new (replacement) middle school on the east side of the city as well as rebuild Fisher Elementary. These are scheduled to open during the 2017-2018 school year.

5. Lynden Christian School students come from all over Whatcom County. The Lynden Christian School campus is centrally located with 3 schools on their property - an elementary school with 416 students, a middle school with 298 students and the high school with 344 students. Total enrollment in 2016 was 1058. It also runs a recycling center and second hand thrift store.

6. Cornerstone Christian School is a small private school located in the NE part of the city. Its building location was a part of the East Lynden annexation in 2007. Students primarily live within the city limits but some come from the surrounding north county area. The total enrollment is 121 students divided amongst grades 1-12.

5.4 Inventory of Public Properties/Buildings

5.4.1 Library
The Lynden Library at 216 4th Street opened to the public in 2003. The building was built to meet the city's library demand through the mid-2020s. The 15,578 square foot building is owned by the City of Lynden and operated by Whatcom County Library System (WCLS). Modern technology has changed the way that residents use and interact with their library. The WCLS has adapted to these demands and will continue to do so as those demands change. Anticipated repairs in the near future include upgrades to public restrooms and replacement of windowsills that have been affected by water damage.

As of October 2016, the Lynden Library is open seven days a week for a total of 63 hours. Library patrons check out over 500,000 items a year and visit the Lynden Library more than 190,000 times annually. WCLS staff present a variety of public programs for all ages weekly – from Toddler Storytimes to Lego Club to Teen Anime Club and several book clubs. The Lynden Library received a Mora Award from the American Library Association’s REFORMA division in 2012 for its outstanding efforts promoting family literacy through its El Día de los Niños / El Día de los Libros program. Meeting rooms at the Lynden Library are regularly reserved by civic groups and other organizations.

5.4.2 Lynden Cemetery
The Lynden Cemetery is part of the Whatcom County Cemetery District #10, which also includes Greenwood Cemetery southwest of Lynden in the County. The cemetery was
founded in 1889 by the Masons and Odd Fellows, who kept up the property until 1974 when it became a part of the newly formed Whatcom County Cemetery District #10.

The Lynden Cemetery is located at the western entrance to the city on the southeast corner of Guide Meridian Road and Front Street. It is listed on the Washington State Register of Historic Places and contains burial plots from many of Lynden’s earliest residents.

According to the Whatcom County Cemetery District 10, there are 5,790 plots available in the 2 cemeteries although 2,365 of those are located in the non-conventional Urn Garden. That means there are 3,425 available conventional casket plots in their district. With the projected growth in the county and specifically in Lynden over the next 20 years, there is sufficient burial space. Over the planning period, the City will need to work with the Cemetery District to consider long-term options for additional land for burial spaces.

5.4.3 Lynden Pioneer Museum
The Lynden Pioneer Museum was founded in 1976 with an initial donated collection of horse drawn buggies. Since then, the museum has acquired an impressive collection of early pioneer items, military history exhibits, and other local historical items.

The City of Lynden owns the 12,456 square foot building. The Lynden Heritage Foundation, a registered 501c(3) non-profit organization, independently operates the museum and makes long-term planning decisions for the museum.

5.4.4 Lynden Municipal Airport (Jansen Field)
The Lynden Municipal Airport is located between Benson and Depot Roads, just south of Sunrise Drive with a physical address of 8635 Depot Road. The airport handles small private aircraft and has fueling facilities (100LL). The airport has a Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI) system which provides approach guidance, a lighted wind indicator, a rotating beacon, and an Automated Unicom that provides up to date wind and temperature information. There are adjacent private hanger facilities, but no major passenger or airfreight facilities exist at the airport. The City also owns a 5 acre parcel directly west of the runway that provides a safety buffer as airplanes approach the runway.

The Lynden Municipal Airport was deeded to the City by Lynden Transport, Inc. and is currently operated by the City of Lynden with the assistance of an appointed Airport Advisory Board. The asphalt runway is 2,425 feet in length and 40 feet in width.

There are several Capital Improvement Projects that will likely take place during the planning period. They are: pavement maintenance, runway lighting conversion to LED, security and weather cameras, and drainage improvements. The City will apply for Washington DOT Aviation Division grants to fund these projects.
5.4.5 Lynden YMCA
The city owns the 18,055 square foot Lynden YMCA building located at 100 Drayton Street. Activities and events are operated by the Whatcom Family YMCA. The facility includes a gymnasium, fitness room, pool, racquetball courts, tennis courts, and multipurpose room. The YMCA organizes youth sports activities for hundreds of Lynden’s youth every year. The pool was built in 1962 and was covered in 1980. The facility has lasted beyond its life span and it continues to offer a valuable service to the community. Further discussion is required to determine future needs and replacement possibilities. In 2014, Lynden residents voted down a bond to move and rebuild a YMCA center in downtown Lynden. Since then, the City has focused budget funds on maintenance activities to continue to stretch the lifespan of the building.

5.4.6 Lynden Community Center/Senior Center
The City of Lynden owns the 11,253 square foot Lynden Community Center building located at 401 Grover St, though it is an independent 501c(3) non-profit organization. The Community Center offers programs and activities for all Lynden residents but are specifically oriented toward Lynden’s senior residents. It also operates a noon meal program (by donation) and offers home delivery meals to homebound members. The building has a recreational center, educational rooms, and a cafeteria.

The Community Center operates independently and is governed by a volunteer board. They are responsible for long-term planning decisions. The building is fairly out of date and there are an increasing number of parking issues with its location downtown. The city will need to remain in communication with the Community Center over the planning period to make sure it continues to meet the demands of the community.

5.4.7 City Hall
The nearly 23,000 square foot Lynden City Hall was opened in 2008. The 3 story building houses 4 city departments located at 300 4th St: Administration, Finance, Public Works (administration) and Planning. City Hall currently houses 24 employees and will have adequate space for the necessary employee additions over the next 20 years.

The 4,400 square foot City Hall Annex building is located at 205 4th St and is used for City Council, Municipal Court and Planning Commission meetings. While its audio/visual equipment gets regular upgrades, its capacity and use is expected to be sufficient for the planning period.
5.4.8 Other City-owned Buildings

Public Works Department

Water Treatment Plant: The 26,300 square foot Water Treatment Plant was opened in 2015. It is located at 524 Riverview Road near the southern boundary of the city limits.

Wastewater Treatment Plant: The 26,280 square foot Wastewater Treatment Plant was opened in 2002. It is located at 800 S 6th St on the southern boundary of the city limits.

Public Works Shop: The 10,070 square foot Public Works Shop was purchased by the city in 2015. It houses crew offices and storage for equipment and machinery. It is located at 745 E Badger Road.

Parks Department

Park’s Shop: The 3,200 square foot Park’s shop building houses employee offices and storage area for machinery and equipment.

Parking Lots

The City of Lynden owns and maintains 5 downtown parking lots in (or very near) the Historic Business District. These are: (total of 181 spaces)

1. Lot directly west of 311 Front St which has 20 spaces
2. Lot directly west of 504 Front St which has 20 spaces
3. Lot at 4th and Front St which has 30 spaces
4. Lot at 7th and Front St which has 40 spaces
5. Lot at City Hall (300 4th St) which has 71 spaces

The issue of adequate downtown parking will be needing attention as there are perceived parking deficiencies during certain times. The planning department is scheduled to begin to study this issue early in the planning period.
5.5 Capital Facilities and Public Services Goals and Policies

Goal CFP-1: Construct, improve, or maintain capital facilities and provide public services at levels-of-service that ensure a high quality of life for the projected population of the Lynden UGA throughout the 20-year planning horizon.

Policies

1C. Implement the 6-year CIPs for the public water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater systems to ensure adequate supply capacity to meet projected demand, while meeting applicable water quality standards.

1D. Secure funding sufficient to acquire an additional 63 acres of park land over the 20-year planning period.

1E. Secure funding for the Fire Department CIP in order to maintain targeted response times.

1F. Coordinate with the WCLS to ensure the Lynden Library meets demand throughout the 20-year planning period.

1G. Apply for WSDOT Aviation Division grants, as necessary to implement improvements to the Lynden Municipal Airport.

Goal CFP-2: Ensure that essential public facilities are developed in a manner consistent with the character of Lynden and consistent with requirements of state law.

Policies

1A. Ensure that neither the Comprehensive Plan nor development regulations preclude the siting of an essential public facility or make the siting of an essential public facility impossible or impracticable, as defined in WAC 365-196-550(3).

1B. Develop and adopt regulations that ensure that facility siting is consistent with all adopted City ordinances and the adopted City Comprehensive Plan.
Appendices:

Appendix A The Transportation Element
Appendix B City of Lynden Parks and Trail Master Plan 2014
Appendix C County Wide Planning Policies