



City Council Committee Meeting Agenda

Community Development Committee

This meeting will be conducted by telephone and online,
connection information will be posted on the City Website –
<https://www.stanwoodwa.org>

Thursday March 3, 2022, at 5:00 PM

1. Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Plan
2. Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement
3. Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code Update Consultant Selection
4. Farmers Market Lease

Community Development Committee

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87272884720?pwd=dDlXcXNqUVgzSDdMT1RmSG5icHZtdz09>

Webinar ID: 872 7288 4720

Passcode: 351185

Telephone: (253) 215-8782



**CITY OF STANWOOD
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

DATE: March 3, 2022

SUBJECT: March CDC Agenda Topics

FROM: Patricia Love, Community Development Director

Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Plan

The Growth Management Act requires each city and county to review and update their Comprehensive Plans at least once every eight years. The legislature set a staggered schedule for cities and counties throughout the state to update their plans. Jurisdictions within King, Pierce, Kitsap and Snohomish County are required to update their plans review by June 30, 2024. The legislature is currently reviewing a funding package that may extend that date till December 30, 2024.

The Growth Management Act requires local governments to create and broadly disseminate a Public Participation Plan that describes how the city will conducts its Comprehensive Plan Update outreach efforts. Attached is a draft of the proposed Public Participation Plan. The Planning Commission will be reviewing the proposed plan at the March 14, 2022 meeting and a public hearing has been scheduled for the City Councils April 14th meeting.

Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement

One of the first steps in drafting a Comprehensive Plan is preparing a clear vision statement. This statement should be descriptive, yet concise, focusing on the values of the community. All other goals and polices are then built upon the guidance of the vision statement. Effective vision statements include three parts:

1. Vision Statement
2. Mission of the Organization
3. List of Core Values

Using the 2015 vision statement as a starting point, the attached proposed one-page vision, mission and core values statement is presented for the Commission's consideration. Also attached is the 2015 Comprehensive Plan vision statement for comparison.

Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code Update Consultant Selection

As part of the upcoming Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code updates, a request for proposals (RFP) were advertised for each project. We received two submittals on each project.

For the **Comprehensive Plan Update**, Blueline Group and their team were selected.

Team Member	Role
Blueline Group	Primary Consultant and Project Lead
FCS Group	Economic Analysis of Land Use Options
LDC, Inc	Comprehensive Plan and Policy Support
Raedeke Associates, Inc	Environmental Review

Their scope of work is being negotiated, but general work elements include:

1. Economic Analysis of Land Use Options

Conduct an economic land use analysis of existing and future uses with recommendations on the appropriate distribution of residential, commercial, industrial, mixed-use, and open space uses. The primary focus will be on the downtown area, the uptown commercial areas and urban growth areas where new and redevelopment opportunities could occur in the future based on implementation of the Puget Sound Regional Council Vision 2050 goals and policies for housing, population, and infrastructure.

2. Comprehensive Plan Update

Update and revise the Comprehensive Plan consistent with the City's vision, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Policy and Plan Review Process under Vision 2050, and the Snohomish County Planning Policies for compliance with the Growth Management Act and certification by PSRC. Work under this task will include:

- Re-design the Comprehensive Plan document, including development of the format and layout, as well as production of high-quality illustrations and graphics. This re-design should be reader friendly, graphically engaging, and tell the story of Stanwood's past and future.
- Identify outdated, redundant and inconsistent policies and background text within the existing document and recommend fresh approaches to develop a more user-friendly document that contains relevant data in both graphics and text that relays information in a non-statistical format.
- Evaluate land use growth alternatives consistent with PSRC Vision 2050 and Snohomish County Population Allocation process. Formulate strategies necessary to foster successful implementation of the Plan that accommodates required growth while preserving Stanwood's community vision.
- Update and describe city demographics in a graphical context using recent census or other relevant data sources.
- Prepare population, land use, housing and economic estimates for the five, ten and twenty year planning horizons. This work should consider land use options and future growth trends for the city's eastern urban growth area.
- Update the Comprehensive Plan Elements, associated policies, and appendices to reflect past changes, future trends and desired outcomes of the community to ensure internal and external consistency.
- Re-evaluate the zoning overlay strategy and determine if the overlays are necessary or if they can be integrated into the city's zoning regulations.

- Prepare and conduct a city-wide survey to obtain community feedback on needed infrastructure improvements such as road and drainage improvements.
- Using the information obtained from the survey and other sources, update the Capital Facilities Element and prepare capital facility project worksheets for the 6 year and 20 year Capital Improvement Project lists. Elements of the worksheets should include project descriptions, high level cost estimates – including design and permitting costs, and maps showing location of the projects.
- Using information obtained from the City, draft a transportation element that integrates seamlessly with the comprehensive plan update.
- Integrate the Housing Action Plan, Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, Shorelines Master Plan, Parks and Open Space Plan, Downtown Master Plan, City Beautification Action Program and Water, Sewer and Drainage Master Plan into their associated Comprehensive Plan Elements.
- Undertake the primary responsibility for writing and editing a cohesive comprehensive plan document that addresses all GMA planning elements.
- Prepare all GIS maps and graphics in a reader friendly format that applies a consistent theme, style, and color scheme.
- Update the Parks Plan.

3. Public Participation

Implement an early and progressive public engagement process that is broadly disseminated throughout the community via a variety of methods that residents can use to obtain and share information. The public participation plan should foster an environment for idea-sharing.

4. Environmental Review

Identify and process the appropriate environment documentation. Options include preparation of a SEPA Checklist, a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) or a new EIS.

Interviews for the **Stanwood Municipal Code** update project will be held on March 3rd. Two firms will be interviewed: LDC Inc., and BHC Consultants. A recommended firm will be announced at the Committee meeting. The following principals will guide the update process.

- Focus on improving the code to eliminate deficient, outdated, overly complex or unnecessary codes that inhibit development.
- Make the code internally consistent between Titles and Chapters.
- Create a user-friendly code that is easy to administer by staff and easily understood by developers and the community.
- Use plain, easily understood language in describing requirements and procedures.
- Identify existing development regulations that need to be revised or updated to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Standards and regulations should reflect current needs and desires of the community.
- Ensure compatibility with current state and federal law.
- Evaluate the code for regulatory gaps.
- Eliminate “repealed” or “deleted” titles, chapters, or sections.
- Apply form-based concepts and development flexibility where appropriate.
- Insert tables, graphics and/or illustrations wherever necessary to convey concepts.

The update process will generally follow the following steps:

1. *Review Existing Conditions*: Prepare an approach to updating existing code and outreach to the community. the community, neighborhoods, and general development patterns.
2. *Public Outreach*: Implement an early and continuous public engagement process.
3. *Preliminary Assessment and Recommendations*: Using information gained from the existing conditions review and public outreach efforts a code assessment and recommendations on how best to update the Municipal Code will be prepared.
4. *Draft Municipal Code Language*: Building upon the preliminary assessment and recommendations report, a draft of the updated Municipal Code will be prepared. Updates may occur in phases.
5. *Conduct Environmental Review on the Draft Municipal Code Language*: In accordance with state law appropriate environmental review documents will be prepared for the project.
6. *Public Review and Hearing Process*: Adopt Municipal Code Amendments after conducting formal public hearings with the Planning Commission and City Council.

Farmers Market Lease Agreement

Staff is working with the Stanwood Farmers Market to update their lease agreement with the City. The intent is draft a 5-year lease agreement which would allow the market to continue using in the city's parking lot behind the police station. On a parallel track, market representative and the City will start discussing alternative locations for the market that would / could have better visibility from SR 532.

Exhibit A
Resolution 2022-XX

Remember Yesterday. Imagine Tomorrow.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN



Comprehensive Plan Update: Project Overview

The Comprehensive Plan is a long range (20 year) planning document that establishes city policy direction guiding growth, development, community character and quality of life. The Comprehensive Plan addresses required population and employment targets. It consists of 13 goals and five required “elements”, or chapters: land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities, and utilities. It also includes several optional elements including economic development, parks and recreation, conservation, solar energy, and climate change. Stanwood’s Comprehensive Plan also includes the policy element for the Shoreline Master Program mandated by the State.

Stanwood’s first Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1975. In 1990-1991, the State adopted the Growth Management Act (GMA) which established specific requirements for Comprehensive Plans. As a result, Stanwood overhauled its Comprehensive Plan in 1995 to comply with the GMA. The City annually updates its Plan to keep it current and in 2002 undertook a major review as required by the GMA with adoption of an updated GMA compliant Comprehensive Plan in 2004. Amendments have been made over the years to address changing circumstances and state laws. The Comprehensive Plan is now due for the State mandated update which must be completed by June 30, 2024.

The City, through its Comprehensive Plan, decides issues such as:

- Where future growth in housing and employment should go,
- How to address community character and the form of development,
- Quality of life measures,
- Economic development initiatives,
- Open space and recreational opportunities,
- How future public utilities such as sewer, drainage and water need to be provided,
- What transportation policies are needed to effectively manage traffic,
- How new improvements will be funded.

The Comprehensive Plan must address a period of at least 20 years into the future. This Plan Update will cover 2024 through 2044 and is expected to build on the current City Vision which states:

- The City of Stanwood is the commercial and cultural center of the greater Stanwood/Camano region.
- The City is self-sufficient - providing employment, access to locally grown food, community activities, and a full range of goods and services for its residents and surrounding rural communities.
- Residents and members of the business community both support preservation of existing structures and seek new development that enhances the existing small-town character which gives the community its distinctive identity.
- Downtown Stanwood as the heart and core of the community.

There are two primary objectives of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update: 1) examine the challenges faced by the community and provide strategies for overcoming those challenges and 2) identify

opportunities for community growth as outlined in the Puget Sound Regional Vision 2050 Plan while preserving the City's small-town vision and quality of life. The City wants to ensure that growth occurs in a way that considers quality of life, placemaking, and other community character goals. This update is not about adopting a new vision for the community, but instead builds upon decades of planning activities to update and refine the vision for the community.

Purpose of Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Plan

The goal of the *Public Participation Plan* is to educate the public, communicate with them, and encourage community participation in the update. Essentially the public participation plan is about reaching out to all segments of the community in new and innovative ways. Ultimately the feedback received from the community will be tied into each of the required comprehensive plan elements as well as the overall vision for the City.

Stanwood Comprehensive Plan: Remember Yesterday. Imagine Tomorrow.

Public Participation Plan Guiding Principles

One: Education

- Explain the requirements of the Growth Management Act and Comprehensive Plan
- Provide objective information to assist stakeholders in understanding issues and solutions
- Encourage public involvement in the Comprehensive Plan Update process
- Inform interested stakeholders of the progress, status, and key policy discussions throughout the update

Two: Communication

- Use multiple forms of communication: print, social media, city website, public surveys
- Integrate key messages in city communications
- Provide two-way communication as much as possible
- Use non-technical language and graphics to explain the technical or complex subject matter
- Provide timely and accurate information
- Acknowledge comments and concerns received from stakeholders and participants

Three: Participation

- Encourage robust public participation in the update process
- Build trust by providing timely and accurate information
- Provide information to those traditionally unreachable in city communications

With Whom Will We Communicate? Key Stakeholders

The city will strive to use multiple means of communications to educate, communicate, and encourage participation in the Comprehensive Plan Update and will seek out the following key stakeholders:

Stakeholder Category	Stakeholder Groups
<i>City of Stanwood Residents:</i>	Stanwood Historical Society Stanwood Rotary Club Kiwanis Club of Stanwood Lions Club of Stanwood Homeowner Associations (HOA)
<i>Stanwood Business Community:</i>	Stanwood Chamber of Commerce Stanwood Business Representatives
<i>Elected and Appointed Officials:</i>	City Council Planning Commission Parks and Trails Advisory Committee Economic Development Board
<i>Non-City Service Providers:</i>	North County Regional Fire Authority Snohomish County Sheriff's Office PUD Snohomish Health District
<i>State Agencies:</i>	Washington State Department of Commerce Washington State Department of Ecology Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife Washington State Department of Commerce
<i>Regional Agencies:</i>	Puget Sound Regional Council Association of Washington Cities
<i>Local Governments:</i>	Snohomish and Island Counties City of Arlington
<i>Transit Agencies:</i>	Community Transit Island County Transit Skagit Transit Snow Goose Transit
<i>Tribal Governments:</i>	Stillaguamish Tribe Swinomish Tribe Tulalip Tribe
<i>Other Agencies:</i>	Stanwood - Camano School District Diking District 7 WRIA 5 / Stillaguamish Watershed Stillaguamish Flood Control District Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties

Who Will Make the Decisions on The Final Plan?

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will be made up of volunteers whose members will represent the community and will provide early policy guidance that reflect the community's core values and goals. The Steering Committee will provide policy recommendations to the Planning Commission.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission will provide policy recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan update and will assist in ensuring the public is involved through the process. Planning Commission members will be notified of all community activities and events. All public workshops, hearings and other activities with the Planning Commission will be noticed per city code. The Commission will receive regular briefings on the update and will review all drafts on a section-by-section basis, providing opportunities for public comments. At the conclusion of their work, they will hold a formal public hearing on the Plan before forwarding a recommendation to the City Council.

City Council

The City Council will provide policy guidance and is the final decision maker on the Comprehensive Plan update. Council members will be notified of all public activities and events. All public workshops, surveys, hearings and other activities with the City Council will be noticed per city code. The Council will also receive periodic briefings throughout the update process and will review the Planning Commission's recommendations. The City Council will hold a public hearing on the final draft of the update prior to taking final action on the Plan.

How Will We Ensure Effective Communications?

Techniques for public participation vary in scale, technology, structure and timing. Our community members are busy and active people and in the age of Covid-19, new innovative ways of communicating will be necessary. We will bring activities to places where people are already going and provide a series of on-line platforms for public discussion. The City recognizes the need to involve community members in a variety of outreach methods continuously throughout the update process.

The following tables provide lists of outreach methods and communication tools that will be used to foster broad and ongoing community involvement. These are not meant to an exhaustive list, and if other processes are requested, the plan is meant to be flexible to accommodate those requests.

Table 1: Community Outreach Methods

<i>Public Meetings:</i>	Planning Commission, Parks and Trails Advisory Commission, Economic Development Board and community open house meetings will be held throughout the update process. Staff reports will include a combination of educational and technical information describing proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.
<i>Community Events and Activities:</i>	As opportunities arise following Covid-19 protocols, staff will attend scheduled community events to reach out to the community. These events include the farmers market, Touch-a-Truck and/or National Night Out.
<i>Public Surveys:</i>	The city will hold an online open house / public survey to gather public feedback on the Comprehensive Plan amendments.
<i>Interviews:</i>	Online, in person and paper interviews will be used to collect community members stories, ideas, and opinions on a wide range of topics.
<i>Community Group Meetings:</i>	As opportunities arise following Covid-19 protocols, staff will attend scheduled community meetings. These events include the Stanwood Chamber of Commerce, Arts Advocacy, and / or Homeowner Association meetings.
<i>Environmental Review and Public Comments</i>	Request for comments will be solicited per City of Stanwood regulations.
<i>Public Hearings:</i>	Public hearings will be held with the Planning Commission and City Council prior to adoption. Written, electronic and oral testimony will be accepted at public hearings.

Table 2: Communication Tools

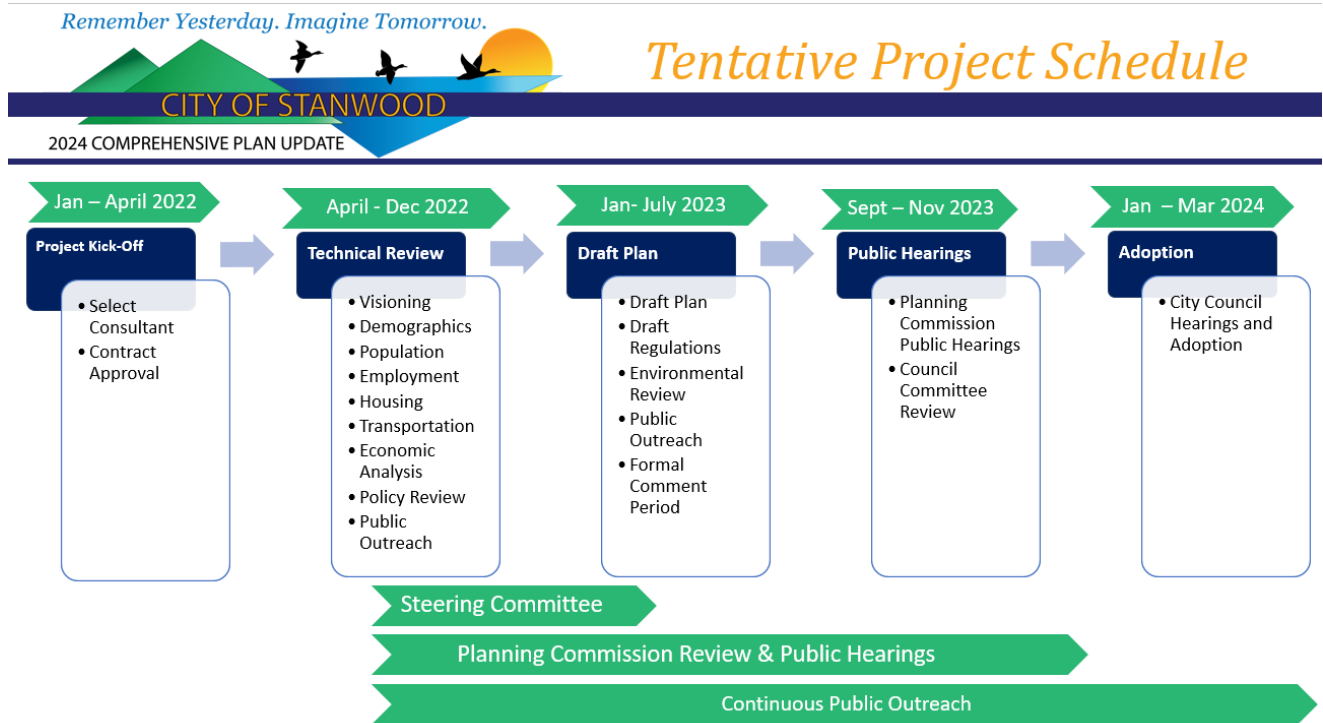
<i>Written Materials:</i>	Written materials will be accessible on the City's website and will be shared during regularly scheduled Planning Commission, Parks and Trails Advisory Commission, Economic Development Board and City Council meetings.
<i>Party of Record List:</i>	A party of record list will be prepared and maintained throughout the update process. This list will be used for notification of public meetings, surveys and public hearings.
<i>Comprehensive Plan: Webpage</i>	The City's webpage will include access to all written materials and information regarding proposed amendments, meetings, events, and resources.
<i>Social Media:</i>	The city will use existing social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter to notify the community about the Comprehensive Plan update.
<i>Press Releases and Newspaper Articles:</i>	The City will provide legal notices as required by the Stanwood Municipal code and will request that the local newspaper publish articles regarding the update at key points during the process.

Table 3: Communication Objectives

<i>Build credibility and trust among stakeholders and participants.</i>	City materials answer questions completely, accurately, and quickly.
<i>Use non-technical language and simple graphics to explain technical aspects of the project.</i>	City materials presented to the public will be reviewed to eliminate overly technical language.
<i>Use a variety of media (website, printed materials, email updates, social media, multi-media) to provide information about the project.</i>	Communication methods other than public meetings will be used when appropriate to obtain feedback from stakeholders and participants.
<i>Provide information to those traditionally unreachable in city communications.</i>	Conduct assessment at the onset to identify populations traditionally not engaged in citywide public involvement efforts.

What is the Comprehensive Plan's Tentative Schedule?

It is the goal of the city is to adopt the Comprehensive Plan by March 2024. Work shall be completed over a two-year period using the following tentative schedule as a guide.



CITY OF STANWOOD
Stanwood, Washington

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-XX

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF STANWOOD, WASHINGTON,
ADOPTING THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN AND WORK
PROGRAM FOR CONDUCTING THE LEGISLATURES MANDATED
2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE.**

WHEREAS, the State of Washington adopted the Growth Management Act (GMA) governed by RCW 36.70A in 1990 and 1991, and

WHEREAS, the GMA is a series of state laws that require fast-growing cities and counties to develop a comprehensive plan to manage their population growth, and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive Plans establish community vision, character, growth projections and development policies over a twenty-year planning horizon, and

WHEREAS, communities planning under the GMA are required to update their comprehensive plans every eight years, and

WHEREAS, the City of Stanwood is required by RCW 36.70A.130 to update their Comprehensive Plan by June 30, 2024, and

WHEREAS, GMA requires local governments to create and broadly disseminate a Public Participation Plan that describes how the city will conduct its Comprehensive Plan Update outreach efforts, and

WHEREAS, the City of Stanwood's Planning Commission reviewed the Public Participation Plan on March 14, 2022 and recommended approval of such plan to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, The Council, after effective public hearing notice, considered the Public Participation Plan, took public testimony and considered all comments presented on April 14, 2022, and

WHEREAS, the Stanwood City Council believes that regular, meaningful public involvement in the Comprehensive Plan update process is important to assure that the resulting plan meets the wishes and expectations of the community, and

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE STANWOOD CITY COUNCIL DOES HEREBY RESOLVE
AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. Adoption. The City of Stanwood 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update Public Participation Plan, attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A, and incorporated herein by this reference as if set forth in full, is hereby adopted. The City will follow the Public Participation Plan during the consideration of 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Section 2. Dissemination. The Community Development Department shall broadly disseminate the Public Participation Plan using some or all of the methods set forth in the Public Participation Plan.

Section 3. Effective Date. This resolution shall become effective upon passage.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Stanwood this 14th day of April 2022.

CITY OF STANWOOD

By: _____
Sid Roberts, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM

By: _____
Nikki Thompson, City Attorney

ATTEST:

By _____
Lisa Sokolik, City Clerk



2024 Draft Vision Statement:

Promote the City of Stanwood as the commercial and cultural center of the Greater Stanwood/Camano region by preserving its distinctive small-town character while strategically planning for future growth and economic development opportunities.

Mission:

The Mission of the City of Stanwood is to create and maintain a community where people can live, work and play in an environment that is safe, vibrant and aesthetically pleasing. Stanwood: is inclusive of everyone, includes the community in its decision-making process; ensures a thriving local economy, provides transparent government, and is responsive to the needs of the community.

Values:

The following core values represent the desires of the community and provides a common basis for developing and implementing the City's 2024 Comprehensive Plan:

Sense of Community: Retain the City's small-town rural character and identity at all costs.

Livability: Continue to make Stanwood a desirable place to live by investing in the historic downtown, new uptown commercial areas and residential neighborhoods to create an aesthetically pleasing community.

Mobility: Stanwood should provide for all forms of multi-modal transportation, including includes trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, transit and private vehicles.

Growth: Manage growth to avoid suburban sprawl while protecting the city's small-town community character.

Economic Development: Focus on retaining the city's role as the center of the Greater Stanwood area by pursuing new endeavors that support the downtown and leverage Stanwood's location as an urban center surrounded by world class agricultural land.

Environment: Protect the environment while promoting access and tourism to local natural features.

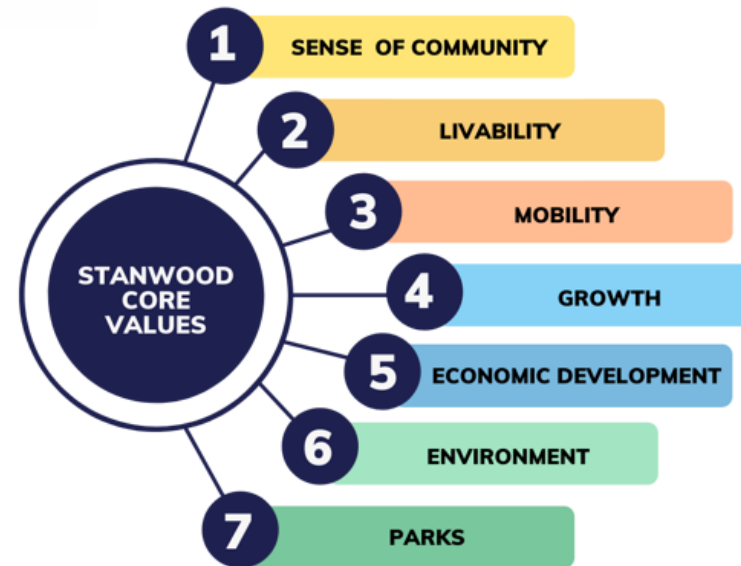
Parks: Develop a parks system that provides public spaces for all age ranges that bring people together to create a more vibrant, healthy and equitable community.



VISION STATEMENT

Vision

Promote the City of Stanwood as the commercial and cultural center of the Greater Stanwood/Camano region by preserving its distinctive small-town character while strategically planning for future growth and economic development opportunities.



Mission

The Mission of the City of Stanwood is to create and maintain a community where people can live, work and play in an environment that is safe, vibrant and aesthetically pleasing. Stanwood: is inclusive of everyone, includes the community in its decision-making process; ensures a thriving local economy, provides transparent government, and is responsive to the needs of the community.

2015 Comprehensive Plan Vision Statements

The Community Vision of Stanwood

The people of Stanwood value specific characteristics that are unique to the City. Residents are very clear in stating that they would like to maintain the special qualities of the City. It is the City's intention to encourage an ongoing, long-term public involvement program. This program will involve Stanwood and surrounding jurisdictions.

The 1995 Community Vision of Stanwood was established through a multi-faceted approach. Comments and input on the City's Vision were collected from several different sources, including:

1. General discussion from the Comprehensive Plan Committee. There were 7 committee members, 2 staff members, and 2 professional consultants working together in structuring the 1995 Stanwood Comprehensive Plan.
2. Continuous input from the general public.
3. Two general surveys taken in Stanwood--the surveys of the spring of 1986 and the spring of 1992. Although these surveys are non-scientific, a number of similarities appear on both.

In 2002, the Vision Statement was updated based on input from the following:

1. Visioning Workshops - Two workshops were conducted by City Staff and the Planning Commission, one on January 28th, 2002 and the second on September 23rd, 2002. The second visioning workshop focused on the "downtown" and economic development. Everyone in attendance at these workshops was asked to fill out a questionnaire and answer some general questions relating to Stanwood's future.
2. Citizen planning - a committee of 6 citizens, 2 members of the Economic Development Council, 2 City Council members, one staff member, and the Planning Commission (9 citizens total) who assisted the Planning Commission with the 2004 update.
3. Continuous input from the general public.

In 2003, the City engaged in a professional design charette over an intense three-day period ("Design Stanwood"). The Design Stanwood charette resulted in many new ideas for downtown Stanwood and also confirmed some of the existing vision for downtown. During the 2004 update, the Planning Commission recommended incorporation of the results of the Design Stanwood charette into the Comprehensive Plan. The concepts of Design Stanwood are incorporated accordingly into the Vision Statement.

In 2008 the Vision was again reviewed in the context of developing an Economic Development Strategic Plan. A community stakeholder group provided input to the Economic Development Element and Downtown Plan goals and strategies in the context of a future action plan. The future Vision and adopted policies of the Comprehensive Plan were renewed and affirmed through this process. Several policy refinement amendments were made in the Land Use and Economic Development Elements as well as the Downtown Plan.

In 2012 the Plan was amended by two major initiatives.

1. A community wide Sustainable Design Assessment Team charrette resulted in refinement of the future Vision. Similar to the 2003 DAT, this visioning session refined ideas for downtown Stanwood and again confirmed the existing vision for downtown. This charrette was attended by over 200 citizens and business groups over a three day period.
2. A Parks Plan update resulting in the incorporation of parks plan policies into a new Parks Recreation and Open Space Element. The Parks Recreation and Open Space Plan changes were made after an online survey with over 70 responses, an Open House with 20 attendees and a public hearing before the Planning Commission.

In 2014 through 2015 the Plan was updated in accordance with the required Growth Management Act update and the adoption of the Shoreline Master Program.

1. A comprehensive Shoreline Management Program Update resulting in adoption of the Shoreline Management Element. The Shoreline Master Program update was the accumulation of three and a half years of study and public process consisting of over ten Planning Commission and City Council meetings, workshops and public hearings.
2. A review and update of all the elements of the City's Comprehensive Plan to ensure compliance with the Growth Management Act during the mandatory update process.

Based on this input, the major components of the Vision were re-affirmed and updated, and are reflected in the following Vision Statement for this Plan.

Vision Statement

The City of Stanwood is the commercial and cultural center of the Greater Stanwood/Camano region and is self sufficient - providing employment, access to locally grown food, community activities, and a full range of goods and services for its residents and surrounding rural communities.

Surveys indicate that residents and members of the business community both support preservation of existing structures and seek new development that enhances the existing small town character which gives the community its distinctive identity. Simply put, Stanwood is a nice place to live, work, shop and visit and citizens of Stanwood would like to see it remain that way.

Over 200 community members participated in the 2012 community Sustainable Design Assistance Team charette. The strong consensus was to continue building on the assets currently in Stanwood, engage in more economic development to diversify the City's employment base, and support the existing business community.

The assets needed to achieve the City's long-range vision include:

Sense of Community

The City's sense of community is highly valued and residents would like to retain this character at all costs.

Livability and Convenience

Stanwood is considered to be very livable. The scale and design quality of historic downtown, new commercial areas and residential neighborhoods combine to create an aesthetically pleasing community character. Many residents are within a safe and convenient walking distance or a short drive to stores, restaurants or services that they utilize. There are many goods and services that can be obtained within this City.

Transportation and Mobility

Residents like to be able to move about freely and safely. Continual improvements to City sidewalks and trails are desired. A system of walkways, trails and bike paths between schools, parks and natural open spaces would ease the conflict between pedestrians, bicyclists and the automobile. Stanwood should be a hub for all forms of transportation to and from surrounding areas. The importance of trails, both within the existing City and as connectors to the region, are emphasized.

Growth Patterns

The City envisions continued growth at low to moderate rates (2-5 percent per year). People would like to avoid suburban sprawl. This threatens Stanwood's City center and sense of community. Sprawl would also create a greater dependence on the automobile.

Economic Development

The City will focus on retaining its role as the center of the Greater Stanwood area by pursuing new endeavors that support the downtown and employment diversification and leverage Stanwood's location as an urban center surrounded by world class agricultural land. These efforts include the following initiatives:

- A successful year around farmers market and support of local food distribution.
- Special events, festivals, and sports tournaments to attract additional foot traffic into the downtown.
- Pursuing more effective means to address the flooding issues inherent in its location along the Stillaguamish River.
- Promoting businesses that fit into the downtown plan through incentives.

Value of the Environment

There is overwhelming support from the community to protect the local environment, and to promote access and tourism to local natural features. The updated policy framework for the shorelines emphasizes shoreline access and future trail development within the Stillaguamish River shoreline area. In addition, the lower reaches of Church Creek are recognized for their high quality natural habitat which will be retained.

Surrounding Land Use Valued

Residents generally value the agricultural land use surrounding Stanwood. Stanwood's identity associated with the agricultural and rural environment is very important.

Parks Recreation and Open Space

The vision for the Stanwood parks system includes developing a new park that connects the downtown to the Stillaguamish River, developing neighborhood parks in the downtown and the north portion of the residential area, and expanding trails to provide a loop route within the City while providing trail and bicycle access to the region. The parks system also continues to be envisioned as providing regional facilities at Heritage Park to serve the needs of the Greater Stanwood area.