



city of  
**covington**  
growing toward greatness

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*The City of Covington is a destination community where citizens, businesses and civic leaders collaborate to preserve and foster a strong sense of unity.*

## **PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA**

**August 20, 2015**

**6:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Chair Bill Judd, Vice Chair Paul Max, Jennifer Gilbert-Smith, Alex White, Jim Langehough, & Krista Bates.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

### 1. Planning Commission Minutes for August 6, 2015 (Attachment A)

**CITIZEN COMMENTS** - *Note: The Citizen Comment period is to provide the opportunity for members of the audience to address the Commission on items either not on the agenda or not listed as a Public Hearing. The Chair will open this portion of the meeting and ask for a show of hands of those persons wishing to address the Commission. When recognized, please approach the podium, give your name and city of residence, and state the matter of your interest. If your interest is an Agenda Item, the Chair may suggest that your comments wait until that time. Citizen comments will be limited to four minutes for Citizen Comments and four minutes for Unfinished Business. If you require more than the allotted time, your item will be placed on the next agenda. If you anticipate, in advance, your comments taking longer than the allotted time, you are encouraged to contact the Planning Department ten days in advance of the meeting so that your item may be placed on the next available agenda.*

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

PUBLIC HEARING – None

NEW BUSINESS – No Action Required

### 2. Discussion of 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update-3 Draft Elements for Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development (Attachments B-1, B-2, and B-3)

ATTENDANCE VOTE

PUBLIC COMMENT: (Same rules apply as stated in the 1<sup>st</sup> CITIZEN COMMENTS)

COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS OF COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

ADJOURN

*Any person requiring a disability accommodation should contact the City at least 24 hours in advance. For TDD relay service please use the state's toll-free relay service (800) 833-6384 and ask the operator to dial (253) 480-2400*

*Web Page: [www.covingtonwa.gov](http://www.covingtonwa.gov)*



**CITY OF COVINGTON  
Planning Commission Minutes**

**August 6, 2015**

**City Hall Council Chambers**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Judd called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:33 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jennifer Gilbert-Smith, Bill Judd, Jim Langehough and Paul Max and Alex White

**MEMBERS ABSENT** – Krista Bates

The record is noted that Commissioner Holmes has resigned from the Planning Commission.

**STAFF PRESENT**

Brian Bykonen, Associate Planner and Code Enforcement Officer  
Richard Hart, Community Development Director  
Kelly Thompson, Planning Commission Secretary

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

- Ø **1. Vice Chair Max moved and Commissioner White seconded to approve the July 16, 2015 minutes and consent agenda. Motion carried 5-0.**

**CITIZEN COMMENTS** – None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - None

**PUBLIC HEARING** - None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**2. Discussion of Code Amendments to Parking and Use of Recreational Vehicles**

Mr. Hart began by sharing responses to Planning Commission questions from the July 16, 2015 meeting. With regard to screening requirements in the driveway, staff suggests the Planning Commission consider deleting that provision.

Commissioner Max asked why the language was redacted from 8.10.050. Associate Planner and Code Enforcement Officer, Brian Bykonen responded that

the City Attorney deleted this, since it's redundant or possibly incorrect as it pertains to the legal process.

Chair Judd asked about the screening requirements and specific definition of a driveway. Mr. Bykonen explained that there cannot be a driveway within 5' of the property line. Only one driveway cut is allowed per property, and the city requires that all vehicles be parked on an impervious surface.

Commissioner White asked if these regulations would apply to both existing and new developments and whether a homeowner would be required to build a fence to meet screening requirements. Mr. Bykonen explained that staff does not proactively tour neighborhoods to enforce the new regulations unless directed by the city council. Mr. Hart shared that staff could write in an amortization provision that would allow time for homeowners to bring any violations into compliance. That is a policy decision for the planning commission to decide later.

The Planning Commission will continue to discuss these issues at the Public Hearing.

### **3. Discussion of Code Amendments to Setbacks for Sheds and Other Accessory Structures on Single-Family Residential Properties.**

Mr. Hart explained the City Attorney has reviewed the proposed amendment and will be making some formatting changes to be presented at a future meeting.

Mr. Bykonen has provided the Planning Commission a comparison of other cities setback requirements. Commissioner Langehough asked if staff had considered the city of Kent's 2' setback. Mr. Bykonen responded that staff did consider it, but suggested the 3' setback after the approval of the Fire Marshall and Building Official because it would maintain a minimum distance between structures of 6'. Mr. Bykonen explained that we cannot write code that is less restrictive than another code provision such as fire or building codes.

#### **ATTENDANCE VOTE –**

- Ø **Commissioner Gilbert Smith moved and Commissioner Max seconded to excuse the absence of Commissioner Bates. Motion carried 5-0.**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT – None**

#### **COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF**

Mr. Hart shared that the Public Hearing for both of these proposed Code Amendments will be held on September 17, 2015.

**ADJOURN**

The August 6, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting adjourned at 7:17p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kelly Thompson, Planning Commission Secretary





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# Memo

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Richard Hart, Community Development Director  
Ann Mueller, Senior Planner  
Salina Lyons, Principal Planner  
**Date:** 08/20/2015  
**Re:** 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update Final Draft for Existing Conditions Report and Land Use, Housing, & Economic Development Elements

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## Background & Summary

The staff has been working with our new consultants- Stalzer & Associates and BERK Consulting-to develop final drafts of various Elements. We have completed the Land Use, Housing and Economic Development Elements. See Attachments, B-1 through B-3. These are for initial Planning Commission review and discussion. No action is required. We will bring other Elements to the Commission at future meetings, all in preparation for your first public forums and eventual public hearing later this fall.

## Next Steps

The staff will take any comments and suggestions you might have on these four documents and make necessary changes. At future Commission meetings we will provide additional elements such as Transportation, Capital Facilities, Parks and Open Space, and Utilities for your review. We anticipate a final public hearing on late October with your recommendation to council. Hopefully council will hold their public hearing in November and make a final decision in December.



# COVINGTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Land Use Element

### WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- Ø A description of Covington's current land uses;
- Ø A discussion of development trends;
- Ø A plan for future land use and areas where new development is being directed and
- Ø Goals and polices that guide the character and intensity of land use within Covington.

### PURPOSE

This element guides future land use on both public and private property within Covington's planning area comprised of the city limits and its assigned Potential Annexation Areas (PAAs) within the King County Urban Growth Area (UGA). The element plans for the community's rising needs for residential, employment, recreation, and other land uses. The element accommodates expected growth that is the basis for investments in transportation, capital facilities, and utilities.

The element promotes compact and well-designed neighborhoods that are served by effective public facilities, that protect environmental and cultural resources, and that provide new opportunities for residents and businesses to locate in Covington to achieve the community's vision of an unmatched quality of life. Covington's proposed land use plan and policies also helps the City grow in harmony with the goals of the Growth Management Act (GMA), Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) VISION 2040's regional growth strategy, and King County's Countywide Planning Policies.

### LAND USE ISSUES AND TRENDS

#### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Covington has traditionally been a bedroom community with modern and well-kept single family neighborhoods interspersed with parks, open space, and schools. Commercial retail and medical services have also burgeoned along suburban arterial corridors to serve Covington and surrounding areas in southeast King County.

Covington is a more mature community since its settlement with farms and rapid suburban growth between the 1960s and 2000s. Covington grew more rapidly than the County between 2000 and 2010 and now its pace has moderated between 2010 and 2015. Still based on market studies Covington is poised to grow its population by 50% and its jobs by 78% over the next twenty years.

To maintain the quality of single family neighborhoods and to help protect environmentally sensitive areas, Covington has identified areas of focused growth in its Town Center with its Downtown Plan. There the City intends to facilitate compact mid-rise mixed use residential and commercial developments with gathering spaces and gridded streets. Secondly, the Hawk Property Subarea will offer an urban village with both regional and local commercial opportunities as well as mixed use retail and multifamily, townhomes, and single family homes.



Source: The Watershed Company 2013



Source: Studio Cascade 2014



Source: Coldwell Banker 2015



Source: Studio Cascade 2014

## Conditions and Trends

### History

Prior to European settlement, the Stkamish, Smulkamis, and Skopamish people inhabited the Covington area. Eventually these tribes, together with other tribes along the White and Green Rivers, were resettled on the Muckleshoot Reservation, named for the prairie on which the reservation was established. (Kershner, 2013); (Tribe, 2015))

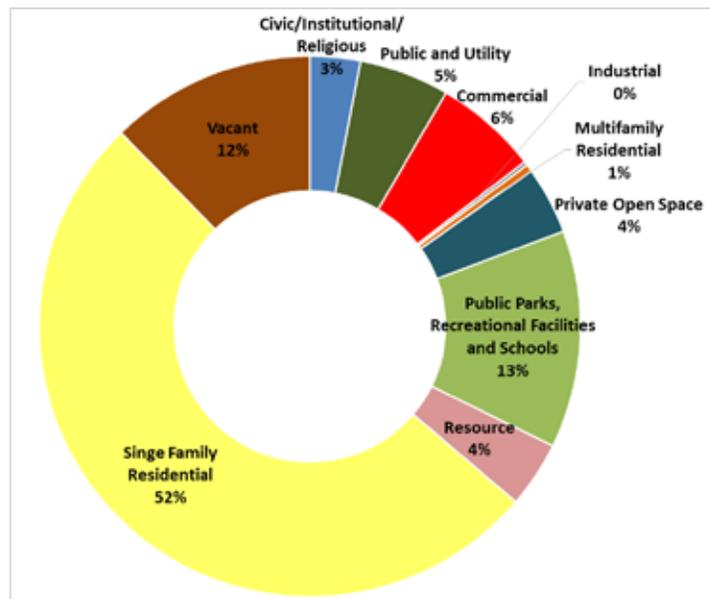
Covington was originally known for lumber mills on Jenkins and Soos Creeks, and a place where irrigated berry farms and dairies were successful. As with other places in King County, following World War II, the community grew from a rural farming community into a suburb. (Kershner, 2013)

In 1992, Covington was designated as an Urban Activity Center by King County. Eventually the community advocated for incorporation, and Covington became a full-fledged city in 1997.

### Current Land Uses

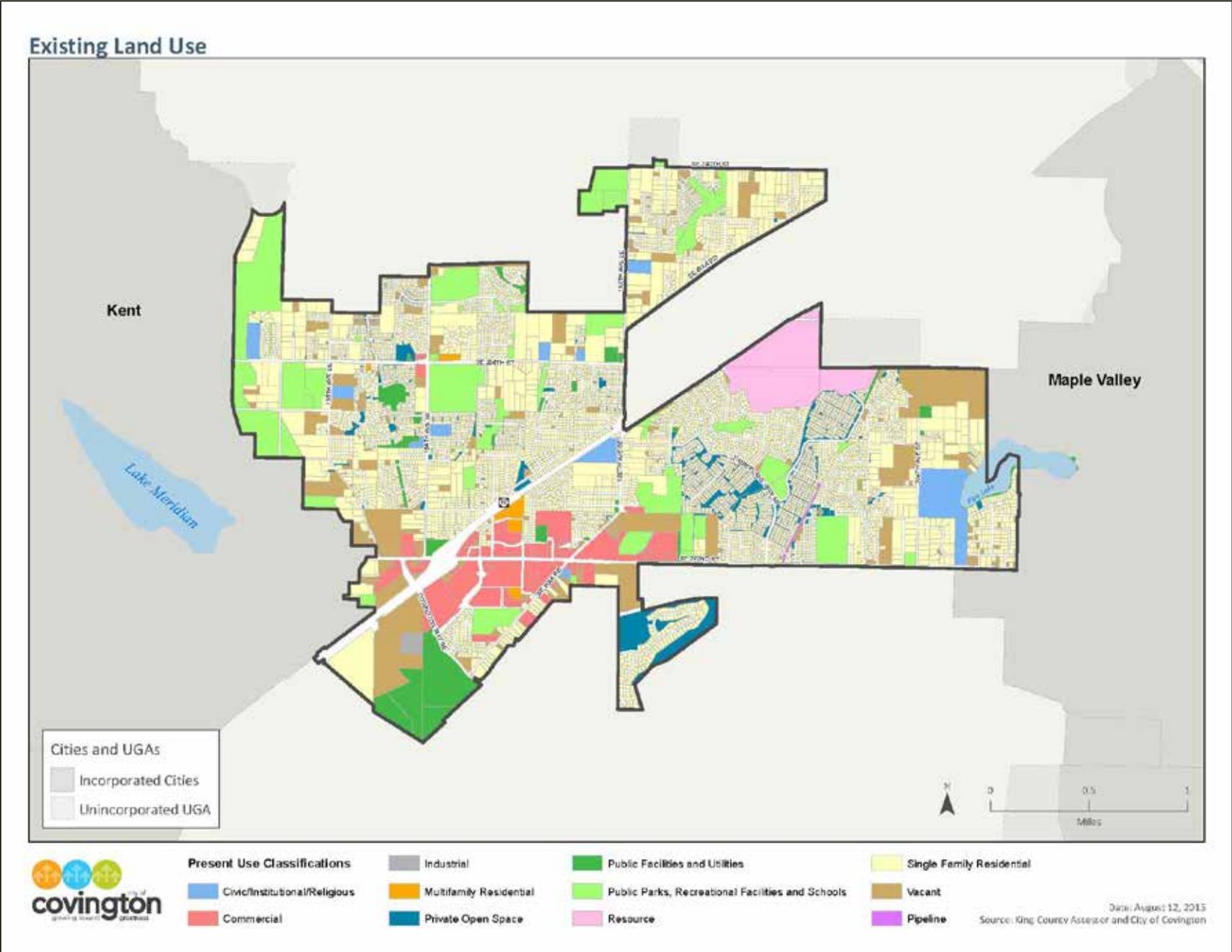
Covington's current land use pattern is dominated by single family residential, parks and schools, and commercial uses. See Exhibit 1 and Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 1. Existing Land Use Shares



Source: King County Assessor and City of Covington 2015

Exhibit 2. Existing Land Use Map

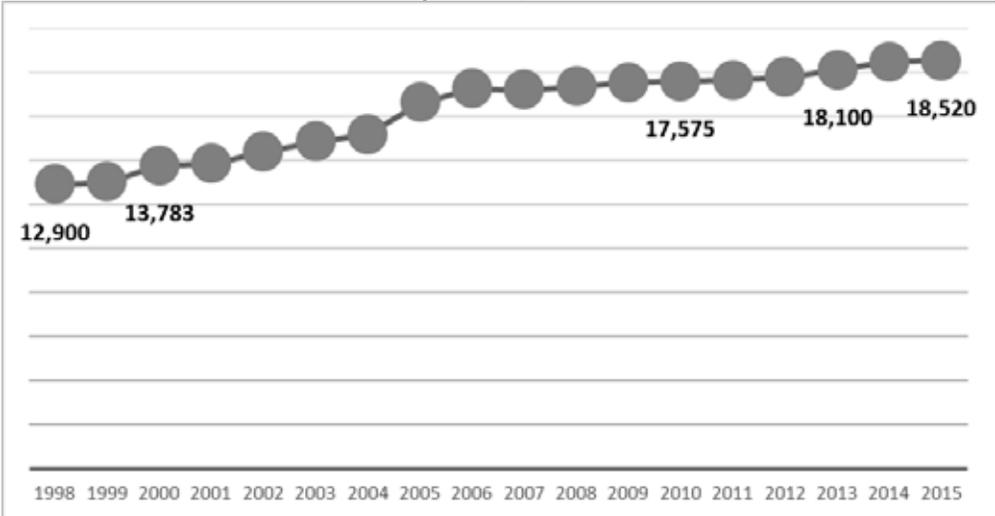


Source: King County Assessor and City of Covington 2015

### Current and Future Population, Housing, and Jobs

Covington has grown since its incorporation from a population of 12,900 in 1998 to 18,520 in 2015. See Exhibit 3. This growth reflects Covington’s attraction as a residential community with middle income homebuyer opportunities.

Exhibit 3. Covington Population: 1998-2015

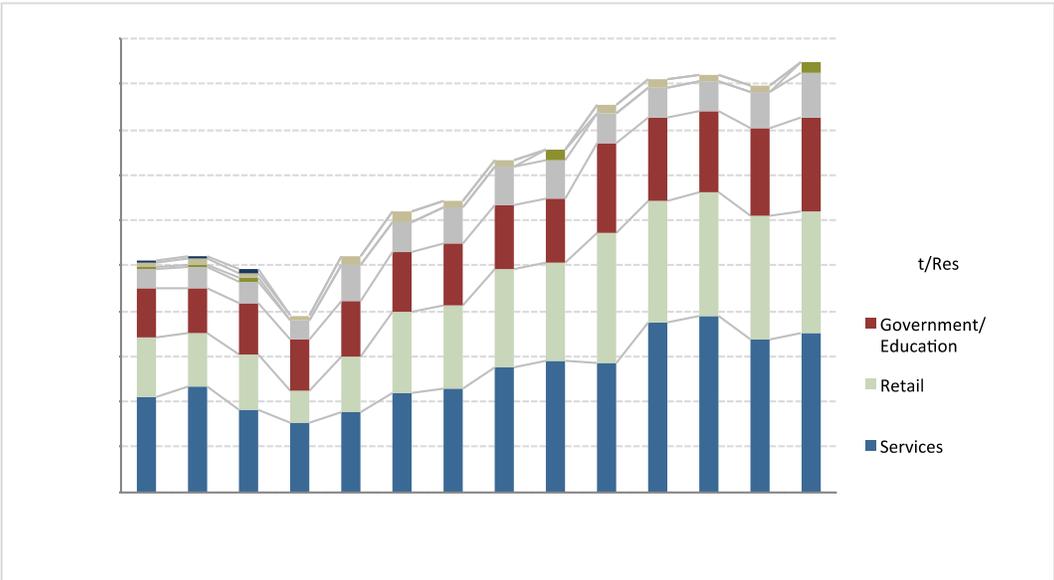


Source: State Office of Financial Management, 2015.

The City experienced a compound annual growth rate of 2.5% between 2000 and 2010, slowing to 0.5% between 2010 and 2015. Covington’s growth rate was higher than King County’s compound annual growth rate of 1.4% between 2000 and 2010, and is similar now to the County’s rate of 0.6% between 2010 and 2015.

Covington also realized strong employment growth from 2003 to 2013. See Exhibit 4. Local-serving industries such as services, retail, and government/education make up the largest shares of the city’s employment base. Retail sector employment has grown the most and the fastest from 2003 to 2013.

Exhibit 4. Total Covered Employment, 2000-2013

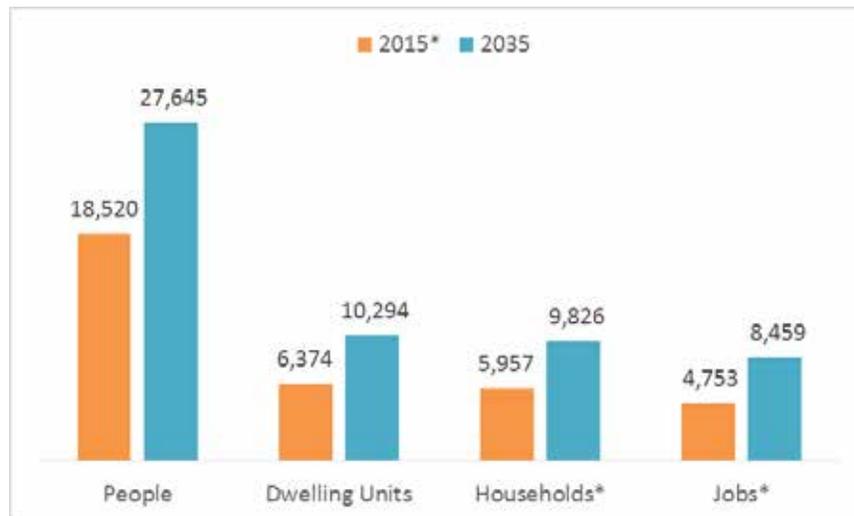


Source: Puget Sound Regional Council  
Note: FIRE (Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate), WTU (Warehousing, Transportation, and Utilities)

Covington is estimated to grow nearly 50% to approximately 27,645 persons by 2035. See Exhibit 5. Currently, there are approximately 6,374 dwellings (OFM 2015) and most are occupied with 5,957 households (ACS 2013). Based on a market demand study (BERK and Associates, 2012), it is anticipated that there will be 3,920 added dwellings. This estimated to result in a total of 9,826 households and 10,294 dwellings by 2035.

The City has a solid base of jobs, largely retail and service oriented, equaling 4,753 jobs. (ESD 2013). Based on a market analysis (BERK and Associates, 2012) the City would add over 1.6 million square feet of commercial space by 2035. This would support over 3,700 jobs. That would mean a total of 8,459 jobs by 2035. See Exhibit 5.

**Exhibit 5. Estimated Population, Housing, and Jobs: 2015 and 2035**



Note: \* Households and Jobs are 2013 estimates.  
Source: OFM 2015, ACS 2013, ESD 2013, BERK Consulting 2015

## Challenges and Opportunities

### Planning for growth that is expected to surpass growth targets

The City is required to accommodate its fair share of growth in its Comprehensive Plan. The City has grown continuously even through the Great Recession and has already made significant progress towards its growth targets, especially jobs. The City has surplus capacity to accommodate its housing and jobs targets. See Exhibit 6.

**Exhibit 6. Targets and Capacity: 2012-2035**

<b>Targets and Capacity</b>		<b>Housing</b>	<b>Jobs</b>
Housing Growth Target (2006-2031)		1,470	1,320
Permits 2006-2012 (issued/finaled)	-	163	1,148
Remaining Target 2012-2031	=	1,307	172
Extended Target 2031-2035	+	235	211
Remaining Target 2012-2035	=	1,542	383
Pending Development 2012, updated 2015	+	785	514
Hawk Property Capacity	+	1,500	1,889
Parcel Capacity 2012, updated 2015	+	2,164	2,093
<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>4,449</b>	<b>4,496</b>
<b>Capacity Surplus (Deficit) versus Target</b>		<b>2,907</b>	<b>4,113</b>

Source: City of Covington; BERK Consulting 2015

The City must, at a minimum, accommodate and plan for its King County issued growth targets. In 2012 the City commissioned a market study, which shows robust growth that exceeded its growth targets but was less than capacity. See Exhibit 7. If the City were to plan for its remaining growth target, it may “under plan” for the infrastructure and services needed to support the community’s desired levels of service. If the City were to plan for its growth capacity it may “over plan” and service providers and the city may invest scarce resources in infrastructure and services that are not yet needed.

**Growth Target:** A target is the City’s assigned share of housing and employment growth for the period 2012-2035 consistent with the King County Countywide Planning Policies. The City must demonstrate its Comprehensive Plan at least accommodates its growth target.

**Capacity:** Capacity illustrates whether the City has sufficient developable land free of constraints and zoned at urban densities to accommodate assigned growth targets. The City’s capacity is measured every five years in the King County Buildable Lands Report.

The City is basing its Comprehensive Plan Update on the market demand study that not only accounts for the City’s growth targets but also the likely level of growth in order to plan for capital facilities, utilities, and services that will help maintain Covington’s quality of life.

**Exhibit 7. Growth Targets, Market Demand, Land Capacity**



Source: BERK Consulting 2015

### Promoting Covington as a Hub for Medical Services and Family Wage Jobs

Covington now contains a hospital and an urgent care facility, and is becoming a hub for medical services in the southeast King County area.

Continuing to attract professional services, medical services, and other jobs that have the potential to support living wages is important to the City’s overall economic development goals and would promote sustainable living such as through a reduction in single occupancy vehicle driving.

## Protecting and improving Covington's existing single family neighborhoods while encouraging vibrant mixed use development

The predominant land use within Covington's city limits is single-family residential. While single-family residential use will remain Covington's predominant land use, there is limited vacant land left to develop for single family residential uses. Covington's population is growing and changing – with more senior citizens and with households that are cost-burdened – meaning they are spending more than 30% of their income on housing and utilities and earning below the County median income. Thus, Covington is in need of greater housing variety such as townhomes and mixed use residential as noted in the Housing Element.

Similarly with Covington striving to become a commercial, professional and medical services hub for southeast King County, more jobs are expected, and the City's suburban commercial areas would experience new development and redevelopment over the next 20-years.

The City is actively planning for well-designed, high quality mixed-use development focused in the Town Center zone and within portions of the Hawk Property Subarea. By focusing most growth in these two areas, the City can maintain the quality and character of existing residential neighborhoods while meeting the community's changing needs for housing variety and offering more pedestrian amenities, public gathering spaces and gridded streets. New development, whether it locates in the Downtown, the Hawk Property Subarea or within the community's established neighborhoods, must be compatible with its surroundings and enhance Covington's community identity and the character of the neighborhood in which it is located.

### Downtown and Town Center

Covington's Downtown area is presently in a low rise development pattern with commercial shopping centers predominating.

**Exhibit 8. Covington Downtown Aerial and Photos**



Source: Google Earth 2015



Source: commercial-development.com 2015



Studio Cascade 2014



Studio Cascade 2014

In 2009, Covington completed a Downtown Plan and zoning study to set a new course and vision for the community. The plan addresses core economic development and land use goals:

*Identify a new town center site*

*Provide greater pedestrian connections*

*Make strategic town center investments*

*Establish new street and building design standards*

*Improve vehicular linkages*

*Consider and support Covington as a regional transportation focal point*

*Develop a parking study*

The proposed land use pattern is based on a core surrounded by several areas of focus:

*The future downtown area should consist of a central Town Center Focus Area developed around a central civic plaza and open space, a new City Hall and/or other community facilities, and a public parking facility/transit center. Surrounding this Town Center core should be other Mixed Commercial and/or General Commercial focus areas permitting a wide variety of retail, residential, office, service, and public uses. Surrounding the retail, residential, office, service and public uses should be a less intensive Mixed Housing and Office focus area with a variety of housing and office uses at various levels of density and height. These four inter-related but discreet land use focus areas are described below. They are (a) Town Center; (b) Mixed Commercial; (c) Mixed Housing and Office; and (d) General Commercial.*

*Downtown Element, 2014*

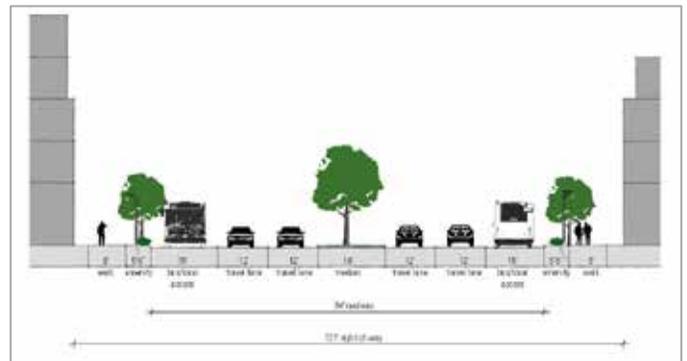
The vision is to create a dynamic Town Center that includes retail, office, residential and communal gathering spaces, and provides for development-friendly zoning and transportation requirements as well as improved surrounding areas.

Exhibit 9. Town Center Plan



Covington imagines full-scale transformation of its town center into an identity-rich, mixed-use civic district.

Source: City of Covington Downtown Plan, 2009



City of Covington Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards, 2014

Hawk Property



Source: The Watershed Company 2013

The Hawk Property Subarea lies in the northern gateway area of the city, and encompasses approximately 212 acres southeast of SR 18. The Hawk Property Subarea primarily consists of the former Lakeside gravel mine, an asphalt batch plant, vacant land, and a highway interchange. Resource extraction operations at the mine site have ceased, and reclamation is in progress. Approximately 132 acres of this area lies within the City's corporate limits; the remainder (80 acres) lies within one of the City's assigned PAAs.

The community vision for the subarea is as a mixed use urban village secondary to the Town Center:

*The vision for the Hawk Property Subarea is the creation of an Urban Village at Covington's northern gateway that provides a mix of commercial development focused on regional uses and a variety of housing types. This village would provide regional shopping and employment opportunities for residents of both Covington and neighboring communities, as well as new housing opportunities for the Covington community. In addition to commercial and residential development, the village would offer public recreational amenities, such as parks, natural open space, a pond, and*

*bicycle and pedestrian trails that link to the regional trail system. The Hawk Property Subarea, while providing both economic and lifestyle benefits would be a secondary center within Covington, providing an experience that is distinct from Covington's town center, not competing with it.*

The City adopted a range of concepts for the subarea allowing 1,000-1,500 dwellings and 680,000 to 850,000 square feet of commercial development. See Exhibit 10.

**Exhibit 10. Hawk Property Minimum and Maximum Concept Plans**



Source: City of Covington 2014

### Maintaining Covington's small town feel and the natural environment

Covington recognizes the value and need to preserve and protect the natural environment in a manner that balances growth, economic needs and quality of life. Potential development can be designed to protect environmental functions and values.

“Potentially constrained lands” typically include critical areas containing frequently flooded areas, wetlands, streams and associated buffers, wildlife habitat, critical aquifer recharge areas, as well as landslide, seismic, and erosion hazard areas. Other constrained areas include power line easements, and gas line easements.

Some potentially constrained lands areas are managed for health and safety (e.g. geologic hazards and flood hazards) and the amount of development within or abutting the area may be restricted. Some areas are protected for their water quality and habitat functions and values (wetlands, streams and lakes, critical aquifer recharging areas, wildlife habitat, and floodplains), and may be protected from development by buffers and setbacks. Permanent structures are limited in utility corridors.

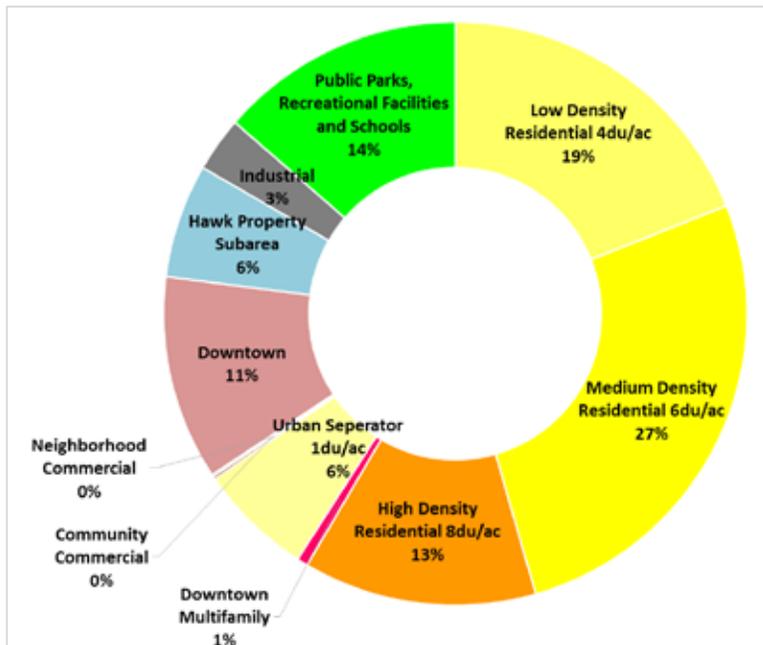


Source: City of Covington Stormwater Management Plan 2015

Low impact development methods that mimic natural stormwater systems are now required where feasible by the City’s stormwater manual. These standards not only have value to manage water quality and quantity but can be designed to contribute to open space systems and to soften streetscapes.

More detailed discussion and policies specifically related to the city’s natural environment can be found in the Natural Environment and Shoreline Master Program Elements.

**Exhibit 11. Future Land Use Distribution**



Source: City of Covington, BERK Consulting 2015

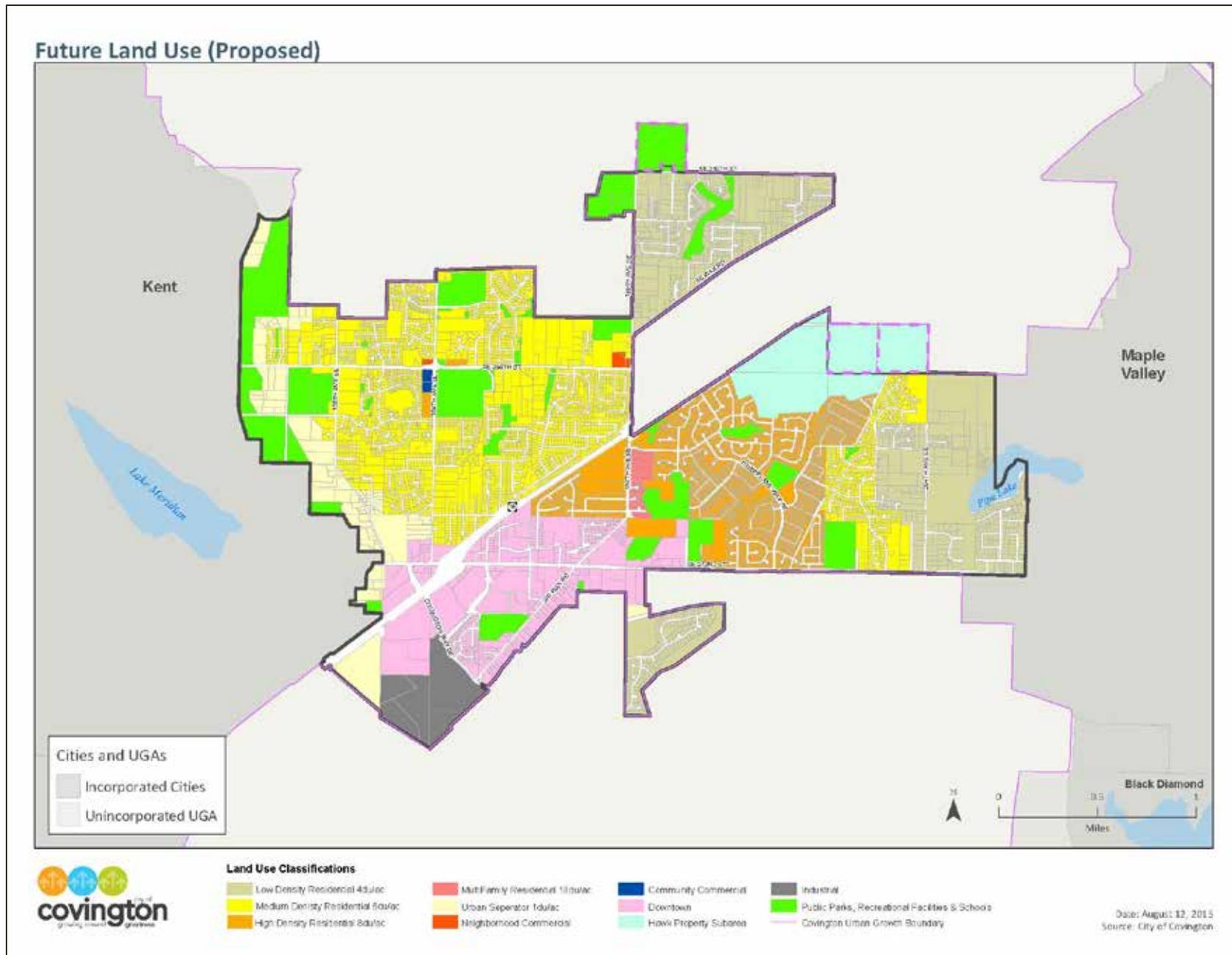
Single family residential uses continue to predominate at 65% of parcel acres, followed by public parks, recreation, and schools at 14%. The Downtown would make up 11% of parcel acres, and the Hawk Property 6% of parcel acres.

## OUR LAND USE PLAN

### Future Land Use Map and Designations

Covington’s Future Land Use Plan is oriented around two centers: the Downtown and Hawk Property. Around these two destination centers with mixed uses are single-family neighborhoods at low, medium, and high densities, interspersed by a green network of parks, trails, open space, and schools. See Exhibit 11 and Exhibit 12.

Exhibit 12. Future Land Use Map



Source: City of Covington 2015

Matching Exhibit 12, the table below in Exhibit 13 provides definitions of Covington’s Future Land Use categories, describing each in terms of intended use and overall character. These future land use designations allow for growth to occur in a sustainable development pattern, maintaining Covington’s quality of life and enhancing Covington’s identity.

**Exhibit 13. Future Land Use Map Descriptions**

**Urban Separator**

The Urban Separator category exists to foster identifiable boundaries between Covington and Kent, helping each develop as a distinct community with individual identities and a sense of place. Much of Covington’s Urban Separator includes Soos Creek Park along the western portion of the UGA. Low-density residential development of up to one dwelling unit per acre is also appropriate for Urban Separator lands.

Single-Family Residential:	Low	Medium	High
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Covington’s existing neighborhoods are primarily characterized by single-family residential development often platted at four to eight units per acre. Accordingly, the Future Land Use map divides the Single Family Residential category into “Low” “Medium” and “High” sub-categories, assigning minimum densities at four, six and eight units per acre respectively. Undeveloped or underdeveloped areas within this designation will develop at the densities associated with each category, maintaining compatibility with existing neighborhoods and open space corridors.

**Neighborhood Commercial**

The Neighborhood Commercial category includes small-scale commercial uses that provide convenience goods and services to serve the everyday needs of the surrounding neighborhoods while protecting neighborhood character. Neighborhood Commercial development can help reduce automobile trip lengths and frequency by providing dispersed commercial uses closer to resident homes. Second-floor residential uses are encouraged in Neighborhood Commercial buildings, and it’s critical that regulations ensure that the design and scale of Neighborhood Commercial development maintain compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

**Community Commercial**

The Community Commercial category is intended to provide for a broader range of commercial activities and services than those envisioned for Neighborhood Commercial areas. Community Commercial development should be designed and scaled to serve a range of day-to-day needs for residents of nearby neighborhoods, but not intentionally addressing needs of those living outside those areas. Uses should be sized and permitted accordingly to maintain compatibility with the surrounding residential neighborhoods, and the design and scale of Community Commercial development should be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.

**Downtown**

The Downtown category is intended to provide the majority of the retail commercial and office opportunities within the City, as well as various civic, social, residential, and recreational uses. The Downtown designation is intended to accommodate economic growth in a compact form with a mix of uses that lessens automobile trip lengths and promotes travel modes other than single-occupancy vehicles. Residential uses integrated with commercial uses in mixed-use buildings are encouraged.

The Downtown area is envisioned to grow as the “heart” of Covington, characterized by:

- § Places for community events
- § Vibrant, active streetscapes with sidewalk vendors and street trees
- § Higher-intensity development (over time) with reuse of parking lots for new buildings
- § High-quality development
- § A scale and form that’s walkable and comfortable for pedestrians
- § Connections to nearby parks and natural spaces

§ Distinctive landmarks to ensure people can easily find their way

The Downtown Land Use category includes four interrelated land use subcategories as follows:

- § **Town Center:** Encompassing 81 acres is an area envisioned as the heart and core of downtown, characterized by an intensive mix of uses, a vibrant and active streetscape, the most pedestrian-scaled land use and circulation system downtown, and includes an important public gathering space.
- § **Mixed Commercial:** These “gateways” to downtown Covington on the west and east encompass 231 acres. They accommodate a diverse mix of uses, emphasizing retail and employment, with increased walkability and access for all modes of travel. Large format retail, auto-oriented uses and public uses may be part of the mix, provided they’re compatible with the area’s pedestrian-oriented scale and character.
- § **Mixed Housing & Office:** Totaling 67 acres, this category includes infill housing and office development designed to be compatible with surrounding residential uses. Cottage housing types or single-family detached housing may also be part of this category.
- § **General Commercial:** This 95-acre area is envisioned to include the broadest range of uses of any in the Downtown, including commercial, light manufacturing, office, transportation and utility uses, as well as residential uses buffered from more intensive uses to ensure compatibility.

#### Multifamily (Residential 18du/ac)

The 35-acre Multifamily area located on the north side of the Downtown land use designation allows higher density residential development typified by structures designed to accommodate several unrelated households, including duplexes, apartments, townhomes, and condominiums.

#### Hawk Property Subarea

The Hawk Property Subarea category is intended to provide commercial and residential opportunities in an “urban village” setting, with associated recreational and open space amenities. The adopted Hawk Property Subarea Plan (Ord. 01-14, as amended), clearly envisions this area will incorporate mixed-use development. Future development of the Hawk Property is intended to provide regional and local commercial opportunities, as well as housing options not widely available in Covington - including multifamily, townhome, and small-lot residential development.

#### Industrial

This category is intended to provide for industrial enterprises and activities involving manufacturing, assembly, fabrication, processing, bulk handling and storage, research facilities, warehousing, and heavy trucking. The purpose of this zone is also to protect the industrial land base for industrial, economic development and employment opportunities. It is applied largely to the Bonneville Power Administration Substation.

#### Public Parks, Recreational Facilities and Schools

This category is only placed on properties currently developed with a public park, and recreational facilities, and land owned by the Kent or Tahoma School District.

Future Parks, Recreational Facilities and Schools may occur throughout the city, consistent with comprehensive plan goals and policies as well as development regulation provisions - which reduce impacts on surrounding land uses. Although mapped as a specific land-use designation, lands within this designation may occur in any zone, as this land-use designation does not affect underlying zoning.

The Future Land Use Map is implemented by more detailed Zoning and other development regulations. The Future Land Use Designation and corresponding zoning is presented in Exhibit 14.

**Exhibit 14. Future Land-Use Designations & Corresponding Zoning Districts**

Land Use Designation	Zoning District
Urban Separator	US(R-1) Urban Separator
Single-Family Residential (Low, Medium, High)	
Low Density Residential	R-4 Residential 4 Units Per Acre
Medium Density Residential	R-6 Residential 6 Units Per Acre
High Density Residential	R-8 Residential 8 Units Per Acre
Neighborhood Commercial	NC Neighborhood Commercial
Multifamily	R-18 Residential 18 Units Per Acre
Community Commercial	CC Community Commercial
Downtown	TC Town Center MC Mixed Commercial MHO Mixed Housing/Office GC General Commercial
Hawk Property Subarea	Pending a rezone consistent with Hawk Property Subarea Plan, the Mineral zone applies on an interim basis. Future zoning consistent with approved Hawk Property Subarea Plan Ord 1-14 includes the following: § R-6 Residential 6 Units Per Acre § R-12 Residential 12 units per acre § MR Mixed Residential § RCMU Regional Commercial Mixed Use
Industrial	I Industrial
Public Parks, Recreation, and Schools	All underlying zones

**Consistency with State Goals and Regional Plans**

The City plans in conformance with the Growth Management Act (GMA) and the Puget Sound Regional Council VISION 2040 that sets a regional growth strategy.

State GMA goals are implemented in this Land Use Element by promoting a compact urban development pattern served by adequate transportation, parks, and other capital facilities and services. The Land Use Element also encourages a variety of housing choices and economic development opportunities. The Element promotes the protection of environmental, natural, and cultural resources. Each property in Covington is allowed a reasonable use consistent with the land use plan and development regulations. The City’s land use permit procedures allow permits to be addressed in a fair and predictable manner. (RCW 36.70A.020)

VISION 2040 contains multicounty planning policies and a regional growth strategy applicable to King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish Counties. The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) conducts consistency review of comprehensive plans and certifies transportation elements for consistency with VISION 2040. VISION 2040 requires a statement of consistency with VISION 2040’s multicounty planning policies and conformity to relevant planning requirements in the GMA.

*Statement of Consistency*

*Covington plans commit to a sustainable and vibrant future through implementation of a Downtown focused on a Town Center with mixed use commercial and residential mid-*

*rise development pattern, gathering spaces, and connected multimodal streets. A mixed use urban village is planned in Covington's northern gateway in the Hawk Property Subarea where a variety of housing types and densities are planned together with large format and community-based retail around natural and recreation amenities. Compact growth in the Town Center and Hawk Property urban village allows the City to reduce vehicle miles traveled, retrofit stormwater systems in a low impact manner to improve water quality, avoid impacts to ecological functions and values, and reduce air quality emissions over standard development patterns. The City will leverage special district and private investment in these places and make wise efficient public investments in infrastructure and services in already developed or altered environments.*

*This compact mixed use strategy also allows the City to protect the character and vitality of its residential neighborhoods where a variety of homeownership opportunities are available on a range of lot sizes, served by a network of parks, open space and schools.*

*As a community with a mission of unity, Covington plans together with neighboring jurisdictions and special districts serving the city on infrastructure, transportation, human services, hazard reduction, and shoreline and critical area protection.*

*Covington plans promote a quality development pattern able to accommodate the community's fair share of housing and employment growth targets and compatible with regional growth policies in conformance with the King County Countywide Planning Policies and VISION 2040.*

## VISION CONNECTION

The land use element most directly supports Covington's vision for an unmatched quality of life and framework goals around fostering well-designed and diverse neighborhoods, promoting economic development, establishing a vibrant Downtown, encouraging active and healthy living by design, promoting sustainable development patterns, and integrating nature into neighborhoods.

## GOALS & POLICIES

**Red text** – changes to staff proposed goals and policies per audit.

### Land Use Goals

- Goal LU-I. Covington contains a diverse mix of uses and densities that are sustainable and support the community's desire to provide a high-quality environment for residents, businesses, employees and visitors.
- Goal LU-II. Covington's zoning, design guidelines and other strategies promote development that provides a variety of land use types, density and building forms, while discouraging sprawl, protecting critical areas, and minimizing exposure to natural hazards to support a healthy economy and promote living wage job growth.
- Goal LU-III. Covington's vibrant mixed-use and commercial areas are places current and future residents and businesses want to live, work, learn, play, and shop and locate their businesses. These centers incorporate a range of housing types, commercial spaces, public spaces, parks and recreational facilities that accommodate a variety of families and individuals, income groups and types of businesses.

- Goal LU-IV. Covington’s Downtown is the economic and entertainment heart of the community, flourishing from the investment in infrastructure, mixed-use development and high quality urban design.
- Goal LU-V. The Hawk Property urban village is thriving and accessible by multiple modes transportation at the northern gateway to the city, providing regional shopping and employment, new housing opportunities for the community and a mix of recreational amenities.
- Goal LU-VI. Covington is a walkable community with access to healthy local foods and active living facilitates, with well-designed and accessible multi-modal connections between and within neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- Goal LU-VII. Covington residents and business owners are informed and involved in the on-going land use decision making process and have opportunities to participate in the implementation, review and amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, zoning code and development permits.

## Land Use Policies

### Citywide Sustainable Growth Management Strategy

- Policy LU-1. Plan and manage community growth and redevelopment to ensure an orderly pattern of land use that is interconnected and accessible to the community while maintaining and improving the city’s existing character.
- Policy LU-2. Maintain sufficient land designated to accommodate appropriate commercial, office and healthcare and educational uses proximate to adequate transportation and utility infrastructure. (LNP 18.1, EDP 5.5)
- Policy LU-3. Maintain land use designations that ensure an adequate supply of housing units **and employment space** to meet required growth targets. **(Added per VISION 2040/CPP Audit)**
- Policy LU-4. Encourage maximum permitted density of land development while requiring high-quality design, **avoiding natural and manmade hazards**, and protecting critical areas and environmental quality to avoid unnecessary public and private costs. **(Added per VISION 2040/CPP Audit)**
- Policy LU-5. Encourage new development to be sited and designed to have:
  - A. Limited impact on the natural environment,
  - B. Be compact and contiguous to existing development,
  - C. Protect critical areas,
  - D. Protect cultural resources, (Added per CPP Audit)**
  - E. Promote water quality, incorporation of renewable energy, green infrastructure, urban forests, green roofs, and natural drainage systems. (Added per CPP Audit)**
  - F. Incorporate energy and water conservation practices, and reduce heat absorption, and (Added per VISION 2040/CPP Audit)**
  - G. Encourage walking, bicycling and transit use.
- Policy LU-6. Direct growth, including redevelopment and infill to locations that take advantage of existing service capacity and infrastructure.

- A. Coordinate with all public service providers to ensure services can support Covington’s planned growth and shifts in demand while maintaining acceptable levels of service.
  - B. Implement City transportation level of service standards, concurrency, and impact fee requirements to support future land development. Coordinate with the Washington State Department of Transportation and adjacent jurisdictions to manage transportation demand and facilitate improvements. (Address Planning Commission comments January 2015 meeting)
- Policy LU-7. Ensure new development complements community character and neighborhood quality, encouraging attractive site and building design that is compatible in scale and in character with existing or planned development.
- Policy LU-8. Support development patterns that promote the community’s health by:
- A. Providing opportunities for safe and convenient physical activity and social connectivity.
  - B. Promoting safe routes to and from public schools. (Added per CPP Audit)
- Policy LU-9. Promote residential and other forms of mixed-use development in commercial areas to allow people to live, shop and work while reducing vehicular traffic and providing for shared parking in a pedestrian friendly setting.
- Policy LU-10. Require the incorporation of features in new development projects that support transportation choices.
- Policy LU-11. Promote the use of landscaping that can thrive in urban settings, conserve water, retain desirable trees, and is comprised of native plant materials.
- Policy LU-12. Promote farmers markets and urban agriculture as a way to access healthy, affordable, local foods.
- Policy LU-13. Encourage the development and strategic placement of public art features throughout the city (DTP 9.4)
- Policy LU-14. Encourage public open spaces or community plazas, where appropriate in commercial areas, for the congregation of people.
- Policy LU-15. Allow through appropriate zoning and siting a variety of public and quasi-public uses serving the community, including parks, schools, libraries, churches, community centers, fire and police stations, and other municipal facilities in a well-designed manner that is compatible with surrounding land uses.
- Policy LU-16. Manage and design public utility land uses and structures in a manner that is compatible with nearby uses, using techniques such as buffers, increased setbacks, easements, landscaping and other innovative forms of screening. (LNG 12.0)
- Policy LU-17. Site essential public facilities countywide in coordination with King County, the State and/or other cities and tribes considering environmental and social equity, fair-share burden, and environmental, technical and service area factors to reduce incompatibility with adjacent uses. (LNP 17.4)
- Policy LU-18. Coordinate planning efforts with State agencies, King County and neighboring cities to address shared areas of interest and concern such as transportation systems and concurrency, regional trails, health and human services, shorelines of the state, surface and groundwater systems, watersheds, and other topics. (Added per VISION 2040/ CPP Audit)

## Urban Growth and Annexations

- Policy LU-19. Continue to support the expansion of the city's urban growth area in the northern gateway to the city to include land east of 180<sup>th</sup> Ave SE between SE Wax Road and SR 18. (LNP 1.8)
- Policy LU-20. Annex potential annexation areas assigned to the City within the King County urban growth area into Covington's city limits only after carefully studying the fiscal impacts and planning for the future development of the area. (LNG 2.0, LNP 2.4) (Update per Land Use Element gap analysis)

## Public Services and Responsiveness

- Policy LU-21. Ensure timely, thorough, consistent, fair, and predictable project review by allocating adequate resources to the permit review process, minimizing review time.
- Policy LU-22. Promote public involvement in the planning process.
- Policy LU-23. Establish and maintain positive and proactive inter-jurisdictional relationships with outside service providers, such as water, sewer, gas, electric, fire, schools, phone and cable entities throughout the permitting process.

## Downtown

- Policy LU-24. Encourage a variety of development in the Downtown with an emphasis on multistory mixed-use, while allowing existing, major retail components to exist until market conditions support redevelopment; allow limited, regulated and high quality designed large format retail; while minimizing impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods. (LNP 10.2, DTP 1.2)
- Policy LU-25. Encourage the integration of new office, service, health care, educational and residential uses into the downtown area to support high quality business/retail activities and to increase the vitality of the Downtown.
- Policy LU-26. In the Downtown Mixed-Housing and Office designation, encourage infill development and redevelopment that provides a variety of housing types and professional office uses that may include innovative ideas and designs.
- Policy LU-27. Promote a mix of uses, building forms and public realm improvements within the Town Center consistent with the current version of the Town Center Design Standards and Guidelines.
- Policy LU-28. In the Mixed Commercial area of the Downtown, encourage diverse employment opportunities, increased walkability and connectivity to portions of the downtown outside of the Town Center, while encouraging a mix of commercial and multi-story residential uses, with mixed-use buildings, public uses and spaces, compatible food related uses; and still allowing for large format and auto-oriented retail, provided they are designed consistent with the current version of the Town Center Design Standards and Guidelines.
- Policy LU-29. In the General Commercial designation, encourage a complete variety and mix of commercial and office uses, some appropriate low-impact manufacturing and storage, transportation-related and utility facilities and limited residential use that can be buffered to ensure compatibility.
- Policy LU-30. Encourage a development pattern that places buildings near the street and makes surface parking a non-dominant use.
- Policy LU-31. Provide for a sense of approach and entry to the downtown area through the development of key distinctive focal points, such as special architectural, water and/or landscaping features.

Policy LU-32. Encourage interconnected walkway systems to accommodate areas for landscaping and wide sidewalks that provide the opportunity for appropriate outdoor commercial and civic activities, including seating for food and beverage establishments.

### Hawk Property Subarea

Policy LU-33. Encourage a variety of commercial, residential, and recreational development types on the Hawk Property.

Policy LU-34. Encourage a variety of housing types at various densities on the Hawk Property to provide housing choices not currently available in one location within Covington.

Policy LU-35. Ensure that the public realm in the Hawk Property provides places for a variety of ages, interests, and experiences and is easily accessible.

Policy LU-36. Implement design standards for the urban village that facilitate development in the Hawk Property Subarea as the northern entrance to Covington. (In subarea plan; omitted here – replaced word “adopt” with “implement”)

Policy LU-37. Ensure that the pond on the Hawk Property serves as a major public amenity with extensive public access and a surrounding area with a mix of residential and commercial uses that offer a place for the community to gather, stroll, dine, shop, and live.

Policy LU-38. Encourage the preservation of a green space buffer, which may include public trails, along the southern border of the Hawk Property Subarea, adjacent to existing residential development.

Policy LU-39. Encourage development of larger public park and greenspace amenities in the Hawk Property Subarea that are accessible to all residents and visitors, as opposed to small, fragmented, private park facilities.

## ACTION PLAN

The Land Use Element is implemented by related elements, plans, regulations and programs, including:

- Covington’s Zoning Code that provides permitted uses, density and dimensional standards, and design guidelines for new development.
- Covington’s Comprehensive Plan Housing Element that provides strategies for integrating a diversity of housing types and more affordable housing.
- Covington’s Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Element that provides policies and strategies for growing businesses in the community.
- Covington’s Parks and Recreation Plan that guides parks, trails, and recreation acquisition and improvements.
- Covington’s Transportation Plan that provides motorized and non-motorized plans and promotes coordination of transit with regional providers to serve local residents, workers, and visitors.
- Covington’s Natural Environment Element that protects sensitive areas and provides open space that frames and links neighborhoods.

This Element also includes policies promoting new initiatives during the regular eight-year Growth Management Action Comprehensive Plan review cycle. See Exhibit 15.

**Exhibit 15. Land Use Action Plan**

Implementation Action	Responsibility
Prioritize strategic public and investments in parks, trails, sidewalks, streetscape, gathering spaces, streets and other infrastructure to facilitate the Downtown vision.	Community Development, Parks, and Public Works Departments
Complete a development agreement and associated development and infrastructure standards for the Hawk Property.	Community Development Department
Coordinate the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan, Transportation Plan, and Stormwater Plan to provide for a system of green infrastructure, gathering spaces, and non-motorized connections between neighborhoods and schools, parks, and shopping areas.	Community Development, Parks, and Public Works Departments



# COVINGTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Housing Element



Single Family Home, Covington, John L Scott



Covington Place Senior Apartments

### WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- Ø Characteristics of Covington's households, housing stock, and affordability;
- Ø Conditions and trends in housing variety and jobs-housing balance; and
- Ø Policy directions to meet Covington's housing needs now and in the future.

### PURPOSE

Quality housing is basic to every person's need for shelter and necessary for cohesive communities. Covington residents place a high value on having a safe place to live, a home that is affordable, and located within a neighborhood that is attractive, accessible and connected. This Element describes the community's housing needs and characteristics, key issues and trends, and housing goals and policies that support Covington's values and the Growth Management Act goal for housing:

*Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock. (RCW 36.70A.020 (4))*

### HOUSING ISSUES AND TRENDS

#### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Covington is a family-oriented community with a predominance of single family homes, a larger household size, and higher percentage of children than countywide figures. Covington's share of senior citizens is expected to quadruple over the life of the Comprehensive Plan, and opportunities for seniors to age in place, quality apartments and condominiums, assisted living and day health, and other services will be needed. Covington is and will need to be a place for the young and the elderly.

Covington offers a high quality place to live with homes typically affordable for households at moderate and middle incomes. While most households are living in homes affordable to them, about one third of

households are cost-burdened. Offering a variety of housing choices affordable to all economic segments would allow Covington’s current and next generation to have a place in the community.

Today, Covington’s housing pattern is largely single family. Over time, the mixed use nature of the Town Center and the new urban village in the Hawk Property Subarea will mean a greater share of housing styles and variety for families and households today and tomorrow.

Covington will continue its transformation from a bedroom community to a community containing a commercial and employment core, trail and park network, and quality housing choices. Covington’s projected increase in jobs will not only provide more opportunities for working and shopping in the community it may also improve the community’s jobs-housing balance and potentially reduce transportation costs allowing more home and recreation time in Covington. Changes in travel patterns will depend on attracting jobs that match the community’s education and offer living wages.

### Conditions and Trends



Shiloh Condominiums

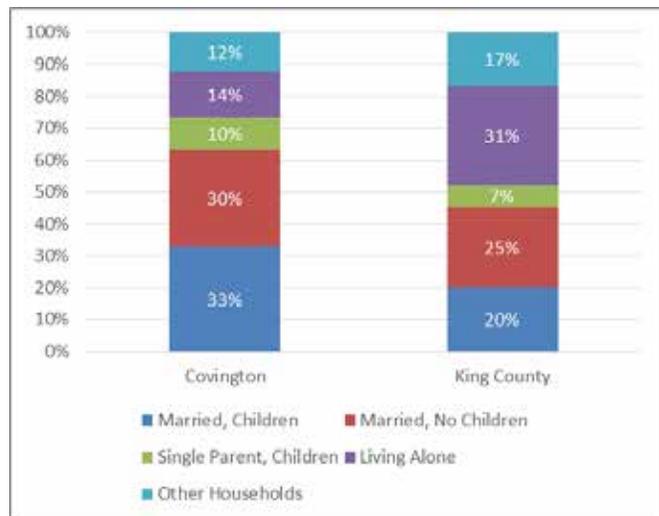
Covington’s housing conditions and needs are summarized in this element with more detailed information available in the *Existing Conditions Report*. Key conditions and trends include:

- A population with a high proportion of children today that will have a much higher proportion of senior citizens over the next 20 years.
- A community offering homeownership opportunities, but with a third of the community cost-burdened and in need of affordable housing choices.
- A predominant single-family pattern that will offer greater housing variety in the future.
- A commuter oriented bedroom community that is attracting more jobs and promise of a greater jobs-housing balance.

### Household Composition: 2010



Kids Fest, Covington



Source: US Census 2010

**COVINGTON IS A COMMUNITY OF FAMILIES.** Covington has higher proportion of children and a larger household size than King County. According to American Community Survey (ACS) 2009-2013 estimates:

- Covington has a larger percentage of population under 20 years old (31%) than King County (23.6%).

- Covington has an average household size of 3.02 persons compared to King County at 2.42.

**SENIOR CITIZENS WILL INCREASE IN NUMBER OVER THE 20-YEAR LIFE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.**

- Those in the 45-59 age range make up about 23% of Covington’s total population and would become senior citizens during the planning period. This is almost four times the current senior population of around 6%. (2009-2013 ACS 5-Year Estimates)
- Seniors tend to have a greater likelihood of disability. Currently, about 34.5% of adults 65 years and older have a disability, with many having hearing, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care and independent living difficulty. (2009-2013 ACS data)
- Senior citizens may need alternative forms of housing, such as smaller units with less maintenance responsibilities, universal design features, assisted living units, and supportive services.



Senior Mentor at Kent School District

**COVINGTON HOUSEHOLDS HAVE HIGHER INCOMES THAN THE COUNTY HAS A WHOLE BUT THERE ARE SOME AFFORDABILITY GAPS.**

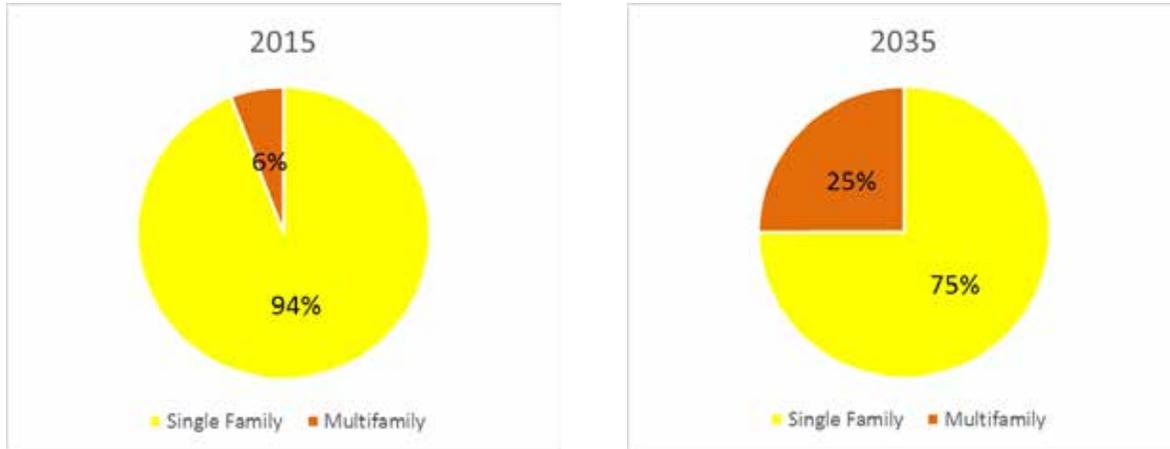
Covington’s median household income in 2013 is higher (+26%) than King County’s area median household income (AMI). Nevertheless, there are some challenges:

- Based on 2012 ACS data, about 35% of Covington’s households were cost-burdened or severely cost burdened – spending more than 30% or 50% of their incomes on housing and associated utilities respectively and earning less than 80% of the AMI. Nearly half of renter households had a cost burden: 47%. One-third of homeowners have a cost burden: 33%.
- Considering 2013 household incomes and unit rents, there is a gap in the availability of rental units affordable to households in Covington earning 0-80% of the countywide AMI. The gap in 2013 is about 560 dwellings. As of 2015, a mixed use housing proposal the Town Center is under construction that will offer 200 affordable family housing units and 156 senior units, helping to fill the current gap.

**Housing cost burden** is defined according to the HUD CHAS data definition: Cost burden is when monthly housing costs (including utilities) exceed 30% of monthly income. Please see [http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/cp/CHAS/bq\\_chas.html](http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/cp/CHAS/bq_chas.html).

**HOUSING VARIETY IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE.** Covington’s attractive and affordable housing inventory is an important component of the city’s healthy and thriving environment. Still, Covington has recognized that it needs – and there is an unmet demand for – more diversity in housing types. Covington’s share of single family homes is about 94% but is expected to transform to be 75% single family through a greater share of attached housing in mixed use developments in the Town Center and Hawk Property.

### Current and Future Share of Single Family and Multifamily Housing



Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2015; BERK Consulting 2012 and 2015.

#### JOBS-HOUSING BALANCE IS EXPECTED TO IMPROVE OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS.

While the traditional measure of housing cost burden looks at the cost of housing alone, transportation costs can also be factored in to housing affordability. Transportation costs are usually a household's second largest expense, making location an important part of the affordability equation.

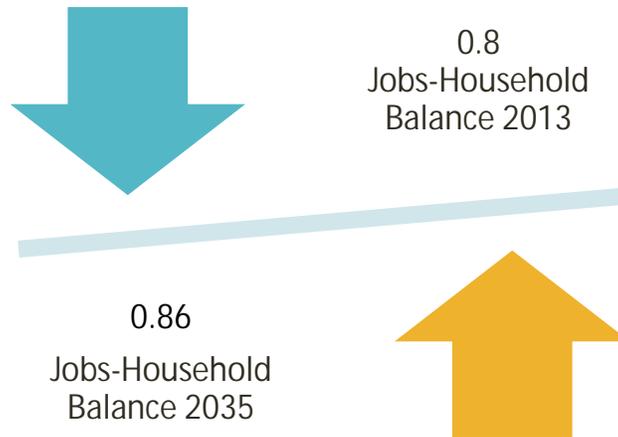
- A. As of 2013, Covington has a higher percentage (78%) of workers over 16 years old who travel to work via car, truck or van alone compared to King County overall (65%).
- B. According to the Center for Neighborhood Technology's H+T index, Covington households on average spend about 56% of their income on housing and transportation costs combined. This is slightly more than King County households overall, which on average spend 51%.

#### Housing + Transportation Costs as Percent of Income

	Covington	King County
Housing	35%	33%
Transportation	21%	18%
<b>Housing + Transportation</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>51%</b>

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology, H+T Affordability Index, 2015.

Currently, Covington has fewer jobs than households at a ratio of 0.80, but with the projected market demand for commercial and residential uses the ratio is projected to be closer to a balance at 1.06; the true balance would be determined by the type of jobs and wages the marketplace offers. Continued service and retail job growth would be beneficial for the community's tax base but generally offer lower-wage jobs. The Economic Development Element identifies some areas of focus such as regional businesses and professional services, including healthcare and educational institutions could offer family wage jobs. This may allow for less vehicle miles travelled with jobs and services more available to Covington residents. A greater jobs-housing balance could also help reduce the share of household expenses for transportation.



## Challenges and Opportunities

Covington has traditionally offered neighborhoods with stand-alone single-family residences, and a challenge and opportunity is to encourage development of a wider variety of housing types for different economic levels. With City investments in planning and local service providers investing in necessary infrastructure and requiring mixed-use development in the Town Center the City of Covington is already seeing market interest through permit applications. Future development of a mix of housing types is expected to be developed within the Hawk Property Subarea within the next 15 years.

The City has also built in flexibility in housing choice in existing single family neighborhoods by allowing accessory dwelling units, though little permit activity has occurred.

The City will continue to attract more family wage jobs as it becomes a medical services hub for southeast King County, but many of Covington's existing jobs are retail and service oriented with lower wages. For an improved jobs-housing balance the projected new jobs will need to include family wage jobs better suited Covington's well-educated households.

Covington has a higher percentage (78%) of workers over 16 years old who travel to work via car, truck or van alone compared to King County overall (65%). Covington has a lower percentage of workers who use public transportation (4%) compared to King County overall (11%). Because Covington does not have a lot of transit options, the City could create mixed use activity centers in the Town Center and an urban village on the Hawk Property is anticipated to reduce the length of car trips and support alternative mode use such as walking/biking to these activity centers.

While King County has a large percentage of households living alone at 31%, Covington has only 14%. It may be that young Covington residents move away from the City and potentially return as married householders seeking homes in proximity to quality schools and recreation areas. By attracting more family wage jobs the City could retain more young households to stay in Covington.

## OUR HOUSING PLAN

Covington's plan for housing is to create opportunities for new residences that meet the needs of Covington's people, preserve and enhance existing neighborhoods, facilitate a healthy and thriving environment that promotes individual well-being with design that encourages active living.

**INVEST IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.** Covington seeks to protect the character of its vibrant residential neighborhoods through an investment in amenities such as parks and multimodal transportation facilities, and quality maintenance of infrastructure such as stormwater and streets.

**PROMOTE HOUSING VARIETY IN TOWN CENTER AND HAWK PROPERTY.** Covington will continue to implement its vision for the Town Center and Hawk Property that promote compact, affordable, and well-designed mixed use development with public spaces and that create vibrant centers and neighborhoods.



Covington adopted design standards to ensure new, higher-intensity housing looks good and is compatible with its surroundings.

**NECESSITATE EXCELLENCE IN DESIGN AND COMPATIBILITY WITH EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS IN NEW HIGHER DENSITY HOUSING AND MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT.** Covington has implemented design standards and guidelines for townhouses, condominiums, apartments and mixed-use development, reflecting the community's wish for higher intensity development to be constructed of high quality material and design. Covington's existing neighborhoods and households have invested time and money into their homes, and they want to see their property values maintained. There is community support for housing all of the community's economic segments; this is coupled with community support for high quality design to assure that new developed at higher densities maintains or enhances the value and connection with nearby residential areas.

**PROMOTE EXPANDED TRANSPORTATION ACCESS AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY.** Implementation of the City's Housing Element should be accomplished in tandem with the Economic Development and Transportation Elements to improve the City's jobs-housing balance, offer mobility options, and reduce combined housing and transportation costs.

**OFFER EFFECTIVE HUMAN SERVICES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS.** Covington's Human Services department is active in implementing a series of grant and assistance programs to improve living conditions in the community's lower-income housing units. The Human Services Master Plan outlines the department's priorities and programs. The City of Covington currently provides grant funding to sixteen agencies for twenty-one different programs. Services provided include emergency assistance for food, shelter, utility bills, health care, victim assistance, counseling and transportation, and a sampling of programs is listed below:

- Access to basic needs such as food, clothing, and housing. An example program includes the joint home repair program with Covington, Des Moines, SeaTac and Tukwila, providing free grant money for the cost of minor home repairs. Another program includes the Auburn Youth Resources (AYR) Street Outreach Team providing mobile street outreach services to Covington and Maple Valley.
- Safety for children and adults through domestic violence services and safe housing options as well as crime prevention programs. For example, when emergency and transitional shelters for victims of domestic violence are full the Covington Domestic Violence Task Force has been able to bridge this gap by providing critical motel vouchers to the victims. They have also partnered with Project U(th) to provide teen dating violence prevention in the Covington and Kent junior and senior high schools.
- Access to affordable health and dental care, substance abuse treatment, and suicide prevention. The City of Covington human services funding has supported a number of agencies to provide health and dental care for low to moderate-income residents.

- Youth and recreation activities available to all income levels. The City has provided funding to agencies (for mentoring, education, recreation programs and more). The City has expanded its recreation offerings and is planning for a connected trail and park system.

Covington's Human Services program is unique for a community of Covington's size, demonstrating the community's commitment to providing safe, affordable, and suitable housing for its residents. Covington's continued effort to partner with and support local and regional housing organizations is necessary to provide safe and affordable housing for all of the City's economic segments, and this plan underscores and supports the City's work to build and maintain these effective housing partnerships.

**CREATE SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS THAT PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING.** Ensuring that dwellings have onsite open space or are in proximity to public parks and trails, and promoting an interconnected street system would promote use of walking and biking, less vehicle miles travelled, more green space and pervious area, and other features beneficial for personal health, and water and air quality.

## VISION CONNECTION

Fostering housing variety and affordability will help meet citywide goals to maintain and create City neighborhoods that offer a variety of housing options that are diverse, safe, accessible, and well-designed and develop the Town Center as a vibrant human scale mixed use residential and commercial activity center with public gathering spaces. Housing with supportive human services respects the dignity of our people as they seek to live, work, learn, shop and play in Covington.

## GOALS & POLICIES

**Red text** – changes to proposed goals and policies proposed in January 2015 per audit.

### Goals

- Goal HO-I. Covington fosters livable neighborhoods with green space and recreation opportunities, multi-modal connections between and within neighborhoods and commercial areas,, and access to healthy, local food and services.
- Goal HO-II. Covington encourages the preservation, maintenance, and improvement of the city's existing neighborhoods.
- Goal HO-III. Covington assures that the full range of incomes and special needs populations are provided with sufficient, appropriate, accessible and affordable housing and services.
- Goal HO-IV. Covington participates in a coordinated and regional response to providing affordable housing, based on local understanding of Covington's housing needs, issues and strategies (HGG 7.0, HGG 8.0)

### Healthy Community

- Policy HO-1. Maintain future land use designations that accommodate Covington's regionally determined housing growth target and support regional objectives for walkability, housing diversity, affordability, job-housing balance and flexibility.
  - A. **Work in partnership with King County and other cities to meet the countywide need for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households. (CPP Consistency)**

- B. Promote individual and collective action by Covington, King County, other cities, and the state and federal government to provide housing affordable to very low-income households (30% AMI), where the greatest need exists. (CPP Consistency)
- C. Provide for higher density housing in proximity to multimodal transportation options and job centers. (CPP Consistency)
- D. Promote social connections and access between neighborhoods and to parks, recreation, and educational opportunities, as well as healthy food choices through the design of residential environments (e.g. adding trails, sidewalks, allowing community gardens, , and the incorporation of landscaping and other features).(Framework Policies)

Policy HO-2. Allow for a variety of housing types, densities and lot sizes, including mixed use development, small and large lot single family development, manufactured housing, accessory dwelling units, townhomes, duplexes, apartment and condominiums.

- A. Encourage mixed use developments with apartments and condominiums in the Town Center and Hawk Property subareas. Promote market rate, affordable, and special needs housing with quality gathering space, transit, pedestrian, bicycle, and other amenities to meet community needs. (CPP Consistency)
- B. Promote a range of lot sizes in residential land use designations implemented by associated zones. (Provides context for policy above.)
- C. Allow accessory dwelling units in single family areas to support compatible affordable housing that benefits homeowners and tenants. (Provides context for policy above.)
- D. Allow for designated manufactured homes on single family lots. (2004 Law)
- E. Conditionally allow new mobile home / manufactured home parks. (Match code)
- F. Allow housing that provides quality homeownership and rental options such as cottages and townhomes. (Provides context for policy above.)

Policy HO-3. Ensure that community and public services, including, but not limited to, fire, emergency medical services, police, library facilities, healthcare, educational facilities, shopping, childcare, healthy food sources, and recycling services, are easily accessible to Covington’s residents. (HGP 1.1)

Policy HO-4. Support the development of senior housing and long-term care/assisted living facilities in the Downtown and other areas in combination with or in close proximity to commercial uses. (HGP 1.5)

Policy HO-5. Ensure development regulations allow for and have suitable provisions to accommodate housing opportunities for **all economic segments and** special needs populations in Covington. When developing new regulations or amendments, **consider the cost of city regulations and rates together with non-city utility provider costs and rates on the affordability of housing in the community.** (Related to PC Comments in January 2014 regarding utility costs)

Policy HO-6. Promote energy-efficient housing and the use of renewable energy.

- Policy HO-7. Encourage innovative and environmentally sustainable development and **universal** design techniques.
- Policy HO-8. Promote infill and redevelopment designed to be compatible with existing neighborhoods while creating new housing opportunities.
- Policy HO-9. Maintain a strong code enforcement program.

## Housing Affordability, Choice & Preservation

- Policy HO-10. Support both rental and ownership forms of affordable housing, in a variety of locations, types, and sizes.
- Policy HO-11. Support affordable housing throughout the city for all economic segments and special needs populations, especially in areas with good access to transit, employment, healthcare, education and shopping.
- Policy HO-12. **In partnership with service providers, implement the City's Human Services Master Plan to promote stable housing outcomes, including, but not limited to:**
  - A. **Homeless individuals and families will have access to transitional housing and emergency shelter.**
  - B. **Provider agencies are financially supported as resources for emergency assistance to pay rent, mortgage, or utility bills.**
  - C. **Families or individuals have access to affordable housing including low-and moderate income.**
  - D. **Life skills guidance and education are provided for long-term sustainability.**
  - E. **Provider agencies are financially supported as resources to the elderly and the disabled to sustain independent living.**
  - F. **Families have access to domestic violence services and safe housing options.**
  - G. **Veterans have access to housing assistance services.**
- Policy HO-13. Promote educational and outreach efforts regarding preservation, improvements, maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential structures. (HGP 3.2) Support non-profit organizations involved in housing repair and rehabilitation through the Human Services Program. (HGP 3.3)
- Policy HO-14. Support housing options, programs and services that allow seniors and people with disabilities to stay in their homes or neighborhood as their housing needs change, such as encouraging universal design or retrofitting homes for lifetime use.
- Policy HO-15. Provide incentives and work in partnership with non-profit and private developers to build affordable housing.
- Policy HO-16. Coordinate with public and private lending institutions to find solutions that reduce housing financing costs for both builders and consumers.
- Policy HO-17. **Promote equal and fair access to housing through application of federal and state fair housing laws. (CPP Consistency)**

## Regional Partnerships & Education

- Policy HO-18. Promote education and guidance of low and moderate-income households on financing assistance, home purchasing techniques, and assistance in locating affordable rentals. (HGP 7.1)

- Policy HO-19. Participate in local and regional resource, education, and lobbying programs regarding housing data, housing programs, design alternatives, and funding sources. (HGP 7.2)
- Policy HO-20. Participate in educational campaigns in the community that support low-income and special needs housing. (HGP 7.3)
- Policy HO-21. Participate in the development of countywide resources, funding, and programs to assist low and moderate-income households in obtaining affordable and appropriate housing. (HGP 8.2)
- Policy HO-22. Work cooperatively with regional and federal programs and with private and nonprofit developers and social and health service agencies to address local housing needs. (HGP 8.4)
- Policy HO-23. Use housing and community development block grant funds in order to provide housing opportunities for low and moderate-income households. (HGP 8.5)
- Policy HO-24. **Work with affordable housing providers on the acquisition and rehabilitation of housing for long-term affordability. (CPP Consistency)**
- Policy HO-25. **Monitor housing supply, affordability, and diversity as part of Comprehensive Plan Updates and at the time of the Buildable Lands Report. Consider adaptive management measures and removal of identified barriers to meet the jurisdiction's share of the countywide need. (CPP Consistency)**

## ACTION PLAN

The Housing Element is implemented by related elements in this Comprehensive Plan as well as regulations in the Covington Municipal Code and programs, including:

- § Covington's Comprehensive Land Use Element and Zoning Code and the adopted Town Center Design Standards and Guidelines and the Hawk Property Subarea Plan that provide for capacity and variety in housing,
- § The Human Services Master Plan that provides direction on how the City's resources should be targeted to help Covington's family secure housing, food, and other basic needs.
- § Covington's Parks and Recreation Element and Transportation Element that provides non-motorized pedestrian, bicycle, trail, parks and recreation improvements to promote a healthy and active community.

### Housing Action Plan

Implementation Action	Responsibility
Monitor housing supply, affordability, and diversity as part of Comprehensive Plan Updates and at the time of the annual OFM building permits report, Multifamily Tax Exemption annual reporting to the State Department of Commerce, and the King County Buildable Lands Report. Adapt plans and codes as needed to meet the local housing need and share of the countywide need.	Community Development Department.
Consider updates to zoning and design standards to implement principles of universal design, environmental sustainability and site design to encourage active living.	Community Development Department.

# COVINGTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Economic Development Element

### WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER

- Ø A summary of the major components of and trends in Covington's economy, including an overview of the challenges and opportunities for the local economy;
- Ø An economic plan for the future;
- Ø Goals and policies to provide direction for economic development efforts; and
- Ø An economic development action plan.

### Purpose

The economic development element comprises a larger economic development strategy for Covington. It is closely related to the plan's other elements, such as land use and capital facilities, but it serves the specific purpose of helping the community position itself to be a strategic actor in a dynamic economic context. This broad strategic direction is important to ensure the City's planning efforts and public investment remain on target and serve the community well in the long run. This element, much like the land use and transportation elements, will guide local decision-making on an almost daily basis.

### Economic Development Issues and Trends

#### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Covington is a growing bedroom community with convenient access to services and large-format retail stores but limited local employment opportunities for living wage jobs for residents. Twenty-five percent of the residents are college educated, which is about half of the norm for King County and another forty percent have some college or higher education. Forty-three percent of households are families with children and the median household income is over 25% higher than for all King County households. The local economy is dominated by the retail and service sectors and over 75% of the local jobs in Covington pay less than \$40,000 a year. The disparity between high household income and low local employment earnings explains why virtually all residents commute to work outside the city and local employees commute to their jobs in Covington.

Retail sales have grown steadily since 2000 in response to the local population and housing growth in Covington and the surrounding communities, and the taxes generated by retail sales are a critical source of revenue to the city for providing public services. Continued city support of the existing retail base and new retailers is crucial to the city's financial health.

Implementation of the vision for the downtown and the Hawk Property Subarea Plan ensures that the retail and service sectors will continue to dominate the local economy for years to come and offers the opportunity to capture some of the lost retail sales dollars (in 2014 over \$28 million of local spending power was lost to businesses outside the city limits). Development of mixed-use, multifamily housing in the downtown and the Hawk Property Subarea provide an opportunity to improve the jobs-housing balance for the expanding retail and service sectors. Continuing support and vision of city leaders for the growing presence of healthcare facilities and medical providers in the downtown will assist with

diversification of the local economy and efforts to generate business interest and development that create higher paying jobs for Covington residents and reduce the commuting time for local employees.

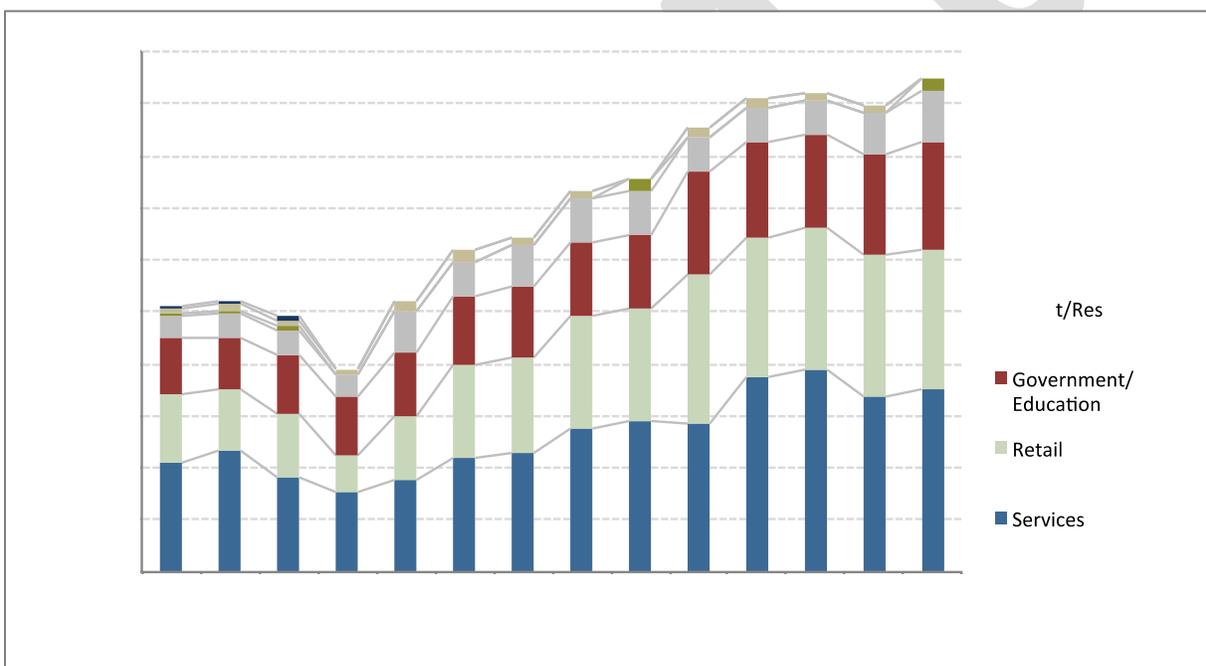
## Conditions and Trends

The history of the local economy since the incorporation of Covington has been a positive one and the outlook for the future continues to be promising. The city's economic development conditions and trends are summarized in this Element. More detailed information is available in the *Existing Conditions Report prepared for the 2015 update to the Comprehensive Plan*.

### As indicated in Exhibit 1, Covington's is a retail and service-centered economy

- The city has increasingly become a retail and service center for the local population and broader area due to the accessibility provided by SR 18 and SR 516.
- Local employment has realized significant increases primarily in local-oriented service sectors such as retail, personal services, and government/education to support the increasing population.

**Exhibit 1. Total Covered Employment, 2000-2013**



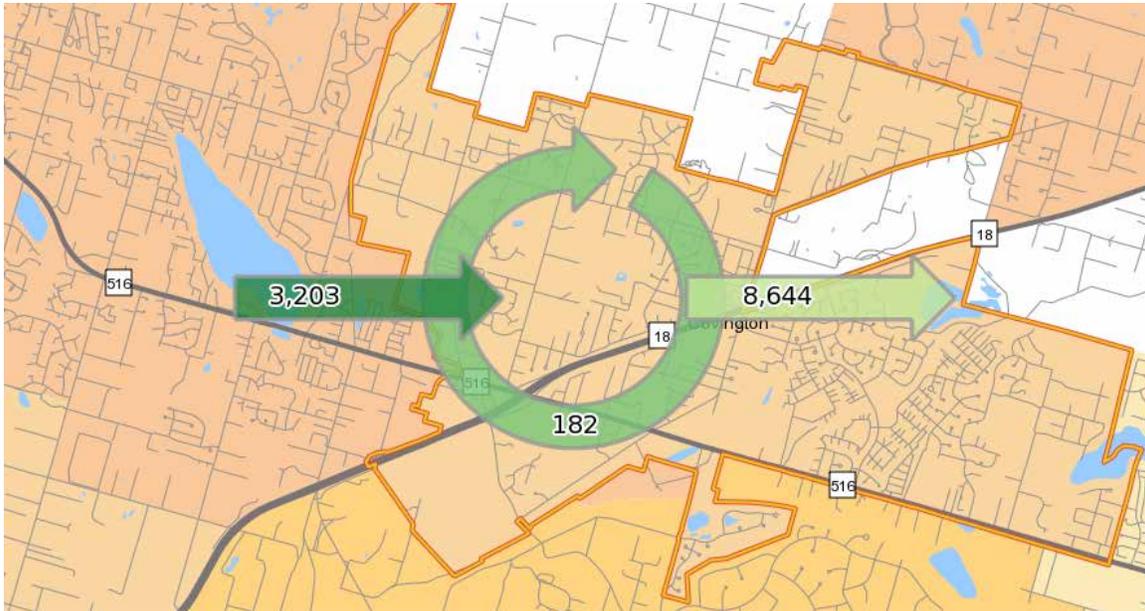
Source: Puget Sound Regional Council 2000-2013

Note: FIRE (Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate); WTU (Warehousing, Transportation, and Utilities)

### Household Incomes are relatively high, but most residents' jobs are not local

- Household incomes of residents are relatively high despite educational levels below that of the county overall.
- The overwhelming majority of Covington residents commute an average of over 30 minutes to jobs that are located outside the city and are often better paying than are local jobs.
- As indicated in Exhibit 2, more than 3,200 people come to work in Covington, but more than 8,600 Covington residents leave for jobs located outside the city. Only 182 people both live and work in the city.

**Exhibit 2. Commute Pattern: 2002-2011**



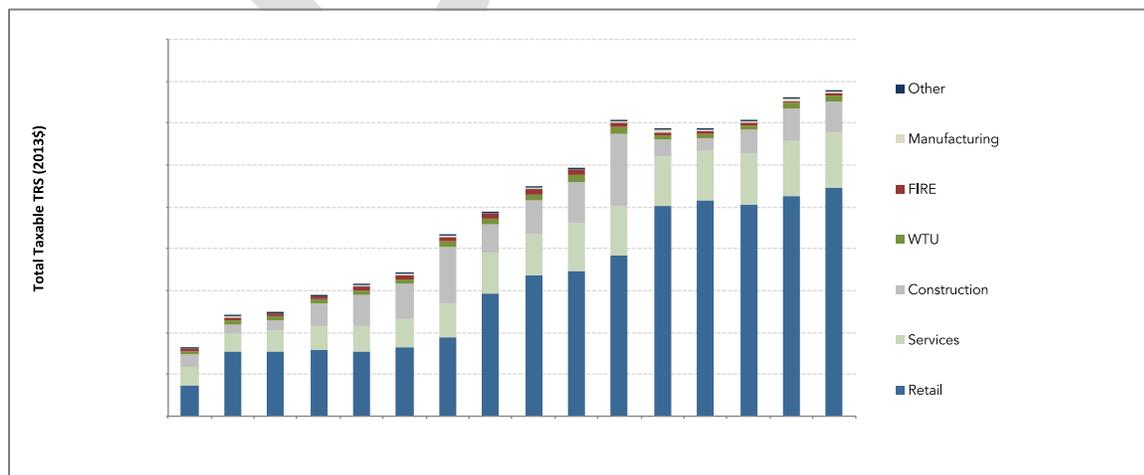
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2011). <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

**Local jobs are lower-paying and workers live elsewhere**

- Wages and earnings for those working in local retail and service sectors in Covington are lower than earnings for residents of Covington and the County overall.
- Overwhelmingly employees of local businesses commute from elsewhere in the region
- The addition of more choice in housing types in the downtown and Hawk Property Subarea combined with the addition of local retail and service jobs is intended to improve the jobs/housing balance

**Retail Sales generate significant revenue to the city (see Exhibit 3 below) AND more are COMING**

**Exhibit 3. Taxable Retail Sales In 2013 inflation Adjusted Dollars, 1998-2013**



Source: Washington Department of Revenue

- Retail sales taxes will continue to be a significant contributor to the city's financial health.
- The addition of between 680,000 and 850,000 square feet of commercial space – largely retail—in the Hawk Property Subarea will reinforce the city's retail and service center reputation, create a substantial number of new jobs, and reduce the leakage of retail sales dollars to businesses located outside the city.

## Challenges and Opportunities

The recent economic recession of 2008-2011 had less of an impact on Covington than it had on other suburban communities, largely because Covington's retail sector serves a large portion of southeastern King County. Revenues from sales taxes remained relatively consistent, and the City was able to make targeted budget cuts without sacrificing the community's quality of life. Covington remains a retail center for a much larger area, and the City's plans are to expand that niche even more, identifying opportunities for increased retail growth in the Hawk Property Subarea and downtown. Covington also will continue to foster and leverage its growth as a healthcare facility and medical services hub for south King County. While the outlook for the local economy is bright, it is not without challenges:

- Employment growth is increasingly occurring in existing employment centers, such as downtown Seattle and Bellevue.
- The rise of online shopping reduces the share of consumer spending at traditional "brick and mortar" stores, particularly large format discount and department stores.
- Surrounding communities are realizing new retail development that competes for retail spending with stores in Covington.
- The city will not always have the opportunity to capture lost local spending power in many sectors. Sectors with large market areas, such as motor vehicle sales, serve a population much larger than Covington's. As a result, a city the size of Covington cannot always support enough retail options to fully accommodate local demand.
- With the exception of the downtown and Hawk Property Subarea, many of the large, easily developable sites in the city have already been developed or are in the process of being planned and developed. As a result, the remaining commercial development opportunities will occur as infill development on smaller parcels and/or redevelopment of existing sites.
- The city is experiencing increasing service and infrastructure costs from population growth paired with limited ability for tax revenues to keep pace. This is due to a 1% limit on property tax revenue increases and increased competition for retail spending.

## Economic Development Plan

The policy direction in this plan update is to reinforce the community's resilience to changing conditions by continuing to support local businesses, enlarging the retail sector, improving the jobs/housing balance by diversifying the local economy and the choice of housing solutions, continuing to invest in infrastructure, and providing efficient city services, all in support of the neighborhoods, human services, and public spaces that make Covington a unique community in which to live.

### Continue to actively support existing retail and service businesses

Covington is not looking to provide large amounts of manufacturing or industrial land, but is looking to strengthen its position in the regional economy where it already has a solid footing. Existing retail and service providers account for over 90% of total retail sales and 65% of total employment, and much of Covington's retail sector is dedicated to serving a larger, regional market. Even so, Covington's residents

are the retail sector's staple. Increased disposable income – that share of a household's income not dedicated to housing, food, medical expenses, education, or transportation – may increase local spending, thereby increasing local commerce, generating more local sales tax, and helping the community become less dependent on attracting shoppers from elsewhere.

### Expand the local economy by building on existing strengths in the retail and service sectors

The policies call for both increased economic diversity and an increased retail presence. Calculations on retail leakage confirm that there are retail markets where Covington can conceivably still expand its retail trade, and the downtown and Hawk Property Subarea areas intend to capture some of it.

### Diversify the local economy by targeting expansion of the office market, especially the burgeoning medical sector

While Covington is a prosperous community, its economy is not necessarily diverse. Covington relies on the sales taxes generated by a large retail service area transcending the community's boundaries. The policies provide for increased professional office employment, building on the regional medical presence and expanding the scale of other, related personal services that are needed to address local demand.

### Make it easier to live and work in Covington

Overwhelmingly, residents of Covington commute to work by vehicle to employment opportunities located outside the city while employees of Covington businesses commute to work from areas outside the city. Housing in Covington is more expensive than what many of those employed in Covington can afford to either buy or rent, so expanding the housing choices is important for reducing the commuting time for those employees. Preserving the character of Covington's existing neighborhoods is essential to the character of the town, so diversifying the local economy to create higher-paying jobs is important for reducing the commuting time for residents of the city.

### Retain an efficient, fiscally-sustainable strategy of economic development

The City has a history of facilitating economic development and efficiently reviewing and processing development applications. The policies recognize the high-level functioning of City operations and encourage the business and development community to become engaged, ensuring it is sustainable. Community engagement will encourage continued City responsiveness, generate new leaders and build closer relationships between residents, the business community and local government.

Strategic investment – directed by the community's leaders – will ensure Covington can continue to prosper. While the city has the capacity to incur additional public debt, its tendency has been to support municipal investment only in those cases where direct benefit will result and where the community's money will be matched by funds from other governments or private entities. Its preference is to leverage public investment, where City funds are augmented by investment from others, thereby making for more attractive partnership-style solutions. Much of this work will need to involve partners, either in coordinating the utility services provided by others or in sharing financial obligations among other jurisdictions. Covington has already demonstrated its ability to do this, through Interlocal Agreements (ILA's).

The city also has other, more targeted, economic development tools at its disposal including development agreements and Traffic Impact Fee Funding Source Adjustment (TIFSA).

### Vision Connection

Fostering growth and diversification of the local economy will help meet the citywide goals for the downtown and Hawk Property Subarea as areas with a mix of retail and office uses and varied housing

densities as well as ensure the continuing health of the existing retail and service businesses along major corridors. Growth and diversification expand the diversity of products and services, create family wage jobs, and ensure a healthy tax base to support public services.

## Goals & Policies

**Red text** – Changes to Goals and Policies per audit. January 2015 Planning Commission draft policy numbering in parentheses at the beginning of a goal or policy.

- Goal ED-I. (Goal ED-B) Support local commercial activity and spending power in the community by increasing household disposable incomes and continued population growth within the city.
- Goal ED-II. (Goal ED-A) Grow local employment targeted to the medical and professional office sectors suited to Covington's resident population, offering higher wages, building on local institutions, expanding the availability of local services and contributing to the community's economic resiliency.
- Goal ED-III. (Goal ED-C) Build and demonstrate local capacity to support development activity, including a responsive service culture, proactive problem solving, and strategic investment in education, transportation, utilities, and telecommunications infrastructure.
- Goal ED-IV. (Goal ED-D) Build on the City's existing assets and stable growth, and focus on being a desirable place to live, work, learn and play by continuing to provide high quality services (including schools, safety, and recreation) and making strategic investments in infrastructure.
- Goal ED-V. (Goal ED-E) Grow the City's tax base, prioritize investments, and efficiently provide city services.

### Actively support business and service retention, expansion and diversification

- Policy ED-1. (Policy ED-4 revised) Strengthen Covington's position as the center of a regional retail and service area serving Covington and nearby communities readily accessed from the State Route 18 and State Route 516 highway corridors. **(Change per PSRC Economic Development Requirement)**
  - A. **(New Policy) Support efforts for retention and expansion of existing businesses. (Change per PSRC Economic Development Requirement)**
  - B. **(New Policy) Provide outreach efforts to local businesses for city government contracts. (Change per KCCPP EC-5)**
  - C. **(New Policy) Promote new business formation by economically disadvantaged populations such as minorities and women by committing resources to human services and economic development strategies in this Element. (Change per PSRC and KCCPP EC-13)**
  - D. **(New Policy) Provide for business attraction and diversification including entrepreneurship and small business development.**
- Policy ED-2. (Policy ED-5) Facilitate continuing education and skill development for residents.

### Expand the local economy by building on existing strengths

- Policy ED-3. (Policy ED-1 revised) Partner with regional and state organizations for economic development initiatives of mutual interest. **Coordinate local and countywide economic**

policies and strategies with PSRC's Regional Economic Strategy, King County initiatives and other agencies. (Change per PSRC EC-1)

- Policy ED-4. (Policy ED-3) Actively market the community by identifying areas for development and target new or expanding businesses for which there is clear opportunity to locate and invest in Covington.
- Policy ED-5. (Policy ED-6) Encourage regional commercial and employment uses along major transportation corridors to strengthen Covington's economic position within the region
- Policy ED-6. (Policy ED-7) Facilitate development of lodging, meeting, event and entertainment venues meeting both resident and visitor needs.

### Diversify the local economy by targeting expansion of professional services, especially the burgeoning medical sector

- Policy ED-7. (Policy ED-8) Foster a business climate and site options supporting large employers offering high-wage jobs together with small business and entrepreneurial start-ups
- A. (New Policy) Promote the emerging professional services sector, especially healthcare facilities and medical services (Change per PSRC Economic Development Requirement to address industry clusters)
- Policy ED-8. (Policy ED-9 revised) Encourage location of new higher wage jobs in the downtown area, the Lakepointe Urban Village, and other mixed-use development in Covington [Change per PSRC Economic Development Requirements and KCCPP EC-2]

### Make it easier to live and work in Covington

- Policy ED-9. (Policy ED-10) Facilitate commute trip reduction by providing more jobs locally for Covington residents

### Retain an efficient, fiscally-sustainable strategy of economic development

- Policy ED-10. (Policy ED-14 revised) Maintain development regulations that are predictable and that balance public costs with public benefits as well as assure competitiveness with other Puget Sound jurisdictions.
- Policy ED-11. (Policy ED-15) Support an economic development effort over time with adequate budgets and staffing to insure that it has an appropriate capacity to address economic development threats and opportunities.
- Policy ED-12. (Policy ED-17 revised) Develop downtown, neighborhood, community and regional commercial uses with coordinated provision of:
- A. Adequate transportation, pedestrian and utility infrastructure;
  - B. Development and design standards to encourage mixed use, commercial and residential developments; and
  - C. Incorporation of trails, open space and parks.
- Policy ED-13. (Policy ED-21) Assure that new development is a fiscal benefit except in instances where clear public policy supports additional public investment.
- Policy ED-14. (Policy ED-22) Draw on outside regional, state, federal and private/non-profit resources to assist in meeting community infrastructure and public service needs associated with economic development.
- Policy ED-15. (Policy ED-23 revised) Encourage public-private partnerships with proactive tools and incentives to leverage the desired mix of private and public uses with a net long-term

economic and financial benefit to the City at the lowest public outlay possible.  
(Change per KCCPP EC-7)

## Action Plan

The Economic Development Element is implemented by related elements, plans, regulations and programs, including:

- Covington’s Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element and Zoning Code that provide capacity for and variety in both commercial and high density residential uses.
- Housing and Land Use Elements that provide policy direction for capacity, variety, and design of commercial and residential uses with an emphasis on high density housing and mixed-use commercial/residential solutions.
- The Housing Element that provides policy direction for a greater range of housing choices.
- The Transportation Element that provides policy direction for motorized and non-motorized solutions between the commercial and residential areas within Covington and within the Hawk Property Subarea including pedestrian-scale streets, adequate parking for commercial uses, and an interconnected system of sidewalks, trails, and bicycle routes between neighborhoods.

### Exhibit 4. Economic Development Action Initiatives

Implementing Action	Responsibility
Annual Strategic Assessment of economic strengths and weaknesses	Community Development Department and Executive Department
Annual Economic Development Work Plan	Community Development Department and Executive Department
Annual business survey	Community Development Department and Executive Department
Ongoing liaison with Chamber of Commerce	City Manager and Community Development Department