

LAND USE



WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER

- ▶ A description of Covington's current land uses.
- ▶ A discussion of development trends.
- ▶ A plan for future land use and areas where new development is being directed.
- ▶ Goals and policies 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



Wooded lands, Lakepointe Urban Village Property.
Source: The Watershed Company 2013



Covington Farm.
Source: Studio Cascade 2014



Example of Covington Home.
Source: Coldwell Banker 2015

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

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.

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.

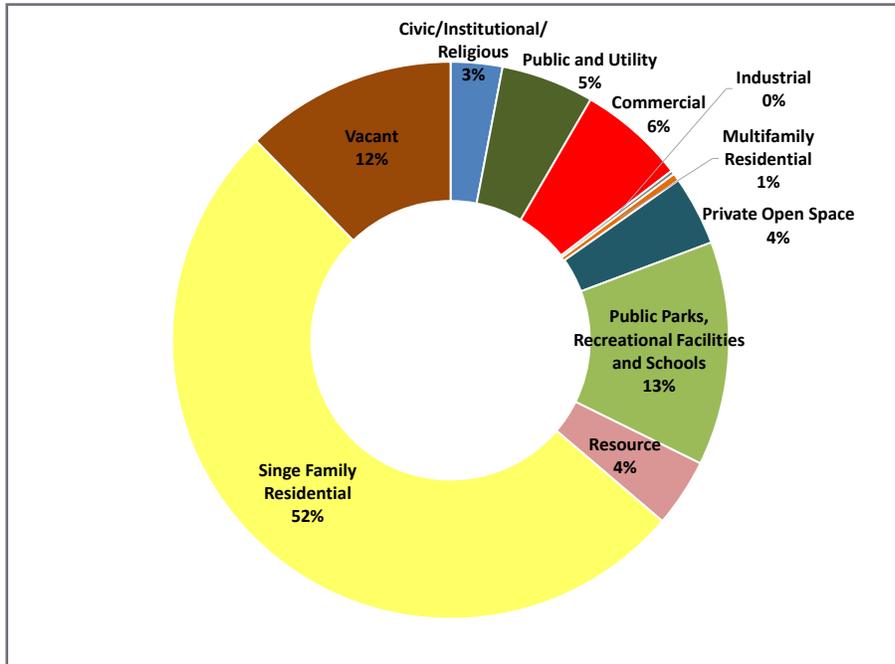
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

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.

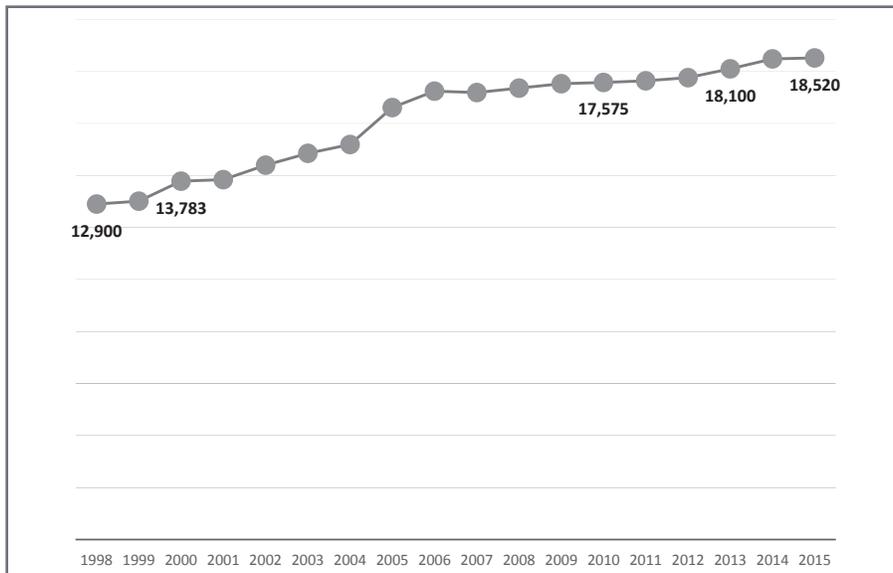
To maintain the quality of single family neighborhoods and to help protect environmentally sensitive areas, Covington has identified areas of focused growth in its Town Center with its Downtown Plan. There the City intends to facilitate compact mid-rise mixed-use residential and commercial developments with gathering spaces and gridded streets. Secondly, the Lakepointe Urban Village 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.

Exhibit 1. Existing Land Use Shares



Source: King County Assessor, 2015; City of Covington, 2015

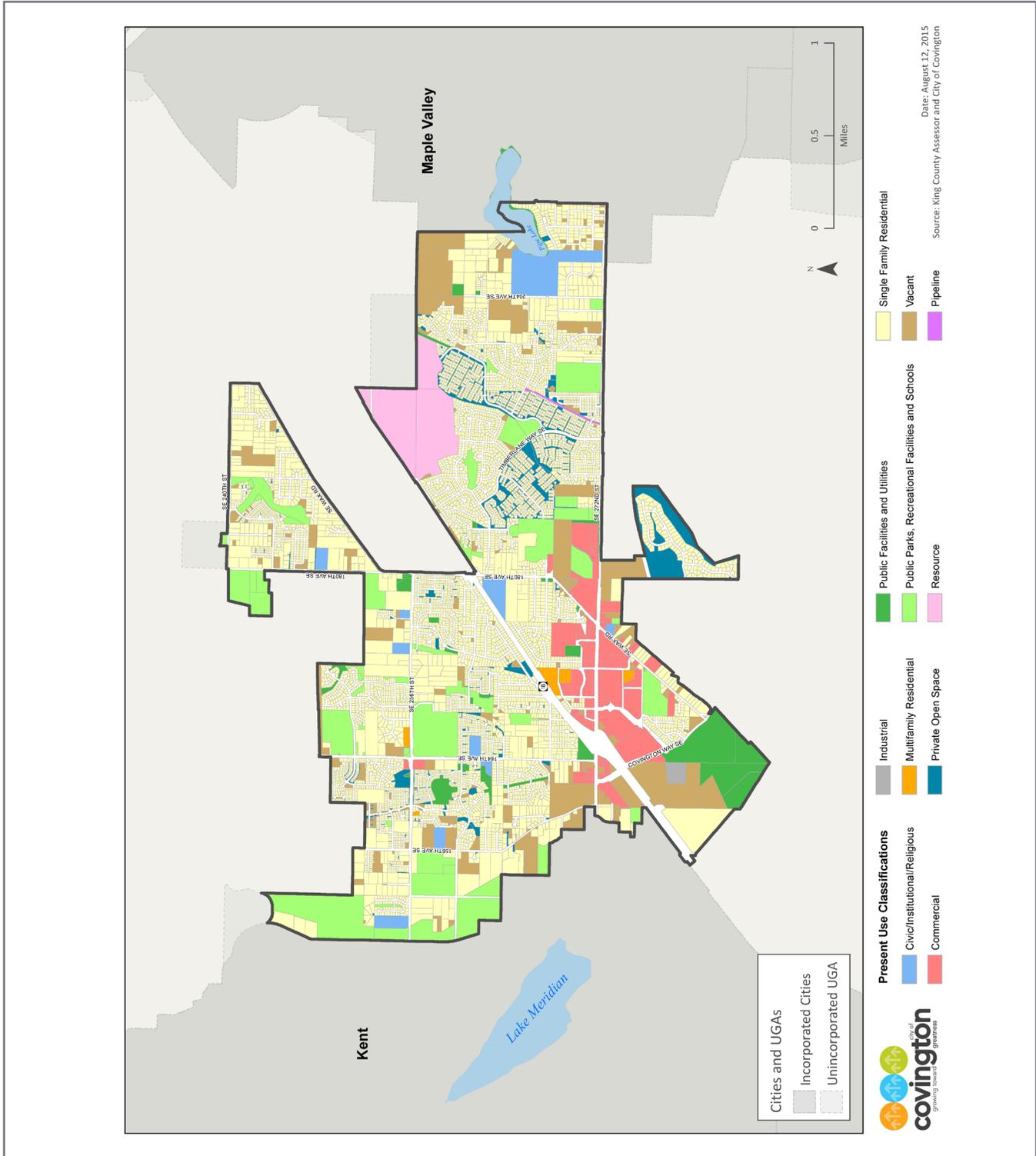
Exhibit 3. Covington Population: 1998-2015



Source: State Office of Financial Management, 2015



Exhibit 2. Existing Land Use Map



Source: King County GIS Center, 2015; City of Covington, 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.

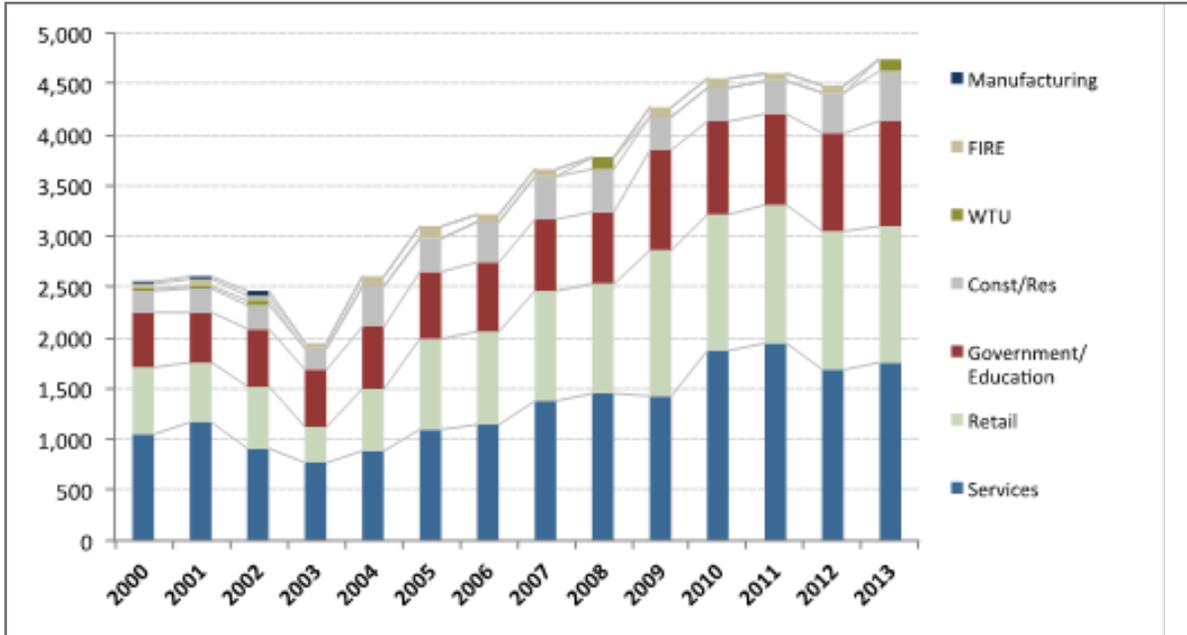
Covington also realized strong employment growth from 2003 to 2013. See Exhibit 4. Local-serving industries such as services, retail, and government/education make up the largest shares of the city's employment base. Retail sector employment has grown the most and the fastest from 2003 to 2013.

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 will 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, 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.



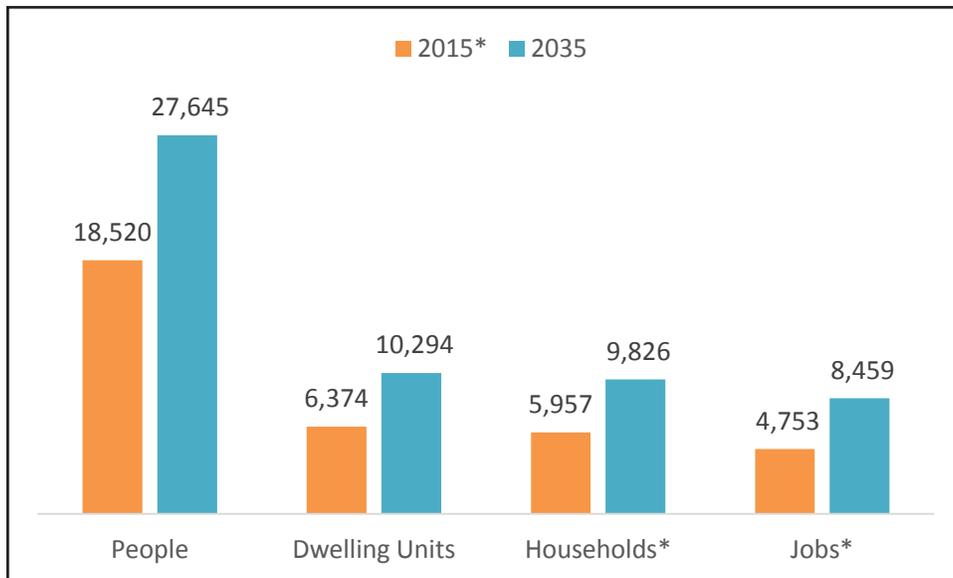
Exhibit 4. Total Covered Employment, 2000-2013 (Jobs in Thousands by Year)



Source: Puget Sound Regional Council

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

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



Source: OFM 2015, ACS 2013; ESD 2013, BERK, 2015

Note: * Households and Jobs are 2013 estimates.

KEY TERMS

- ▶ **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.

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.

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.

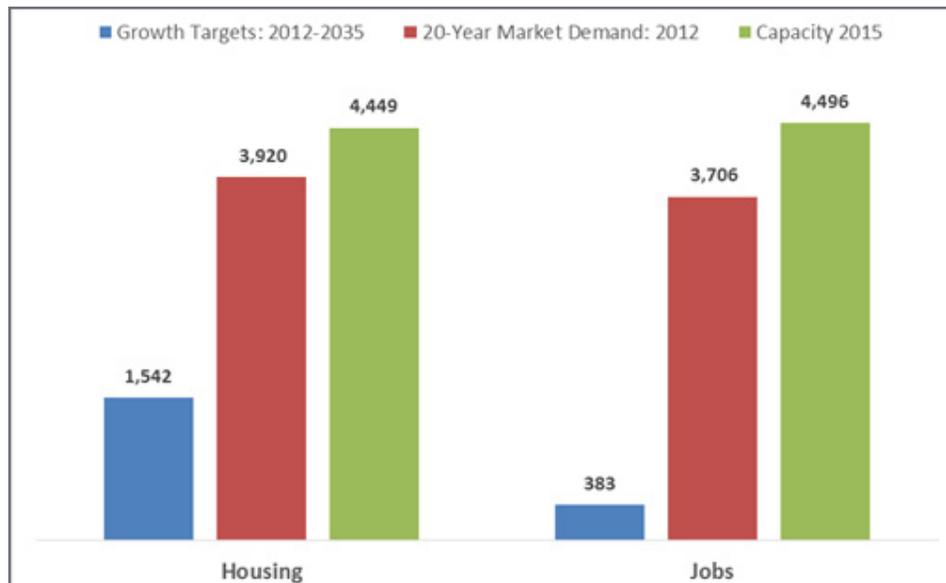
The City is basing its Comprehensive Plan Update on the market demand study that not only accounts for the City's growth targets but also the likely level of growth in order to plan for capital facilities, utilities, and services that will help maintain Covington's quality of life.



Exhibit 6. Targets and Capacity: 2012-2035

Targets and Capacity		Housing	Jobs
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	+	785	514
Lakepointe Capacity	+	1,500	1,889
Parcel Capacity 2012, updated 2015	+	2,164	2,093
Total Capacity	=	4,449	4,496
Capacity Surplus (Deficit) versus Target		2,907	4,113

Exhibit 7. Growth Targets, Market Demand, Land Capacity



Source: BERK, 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.

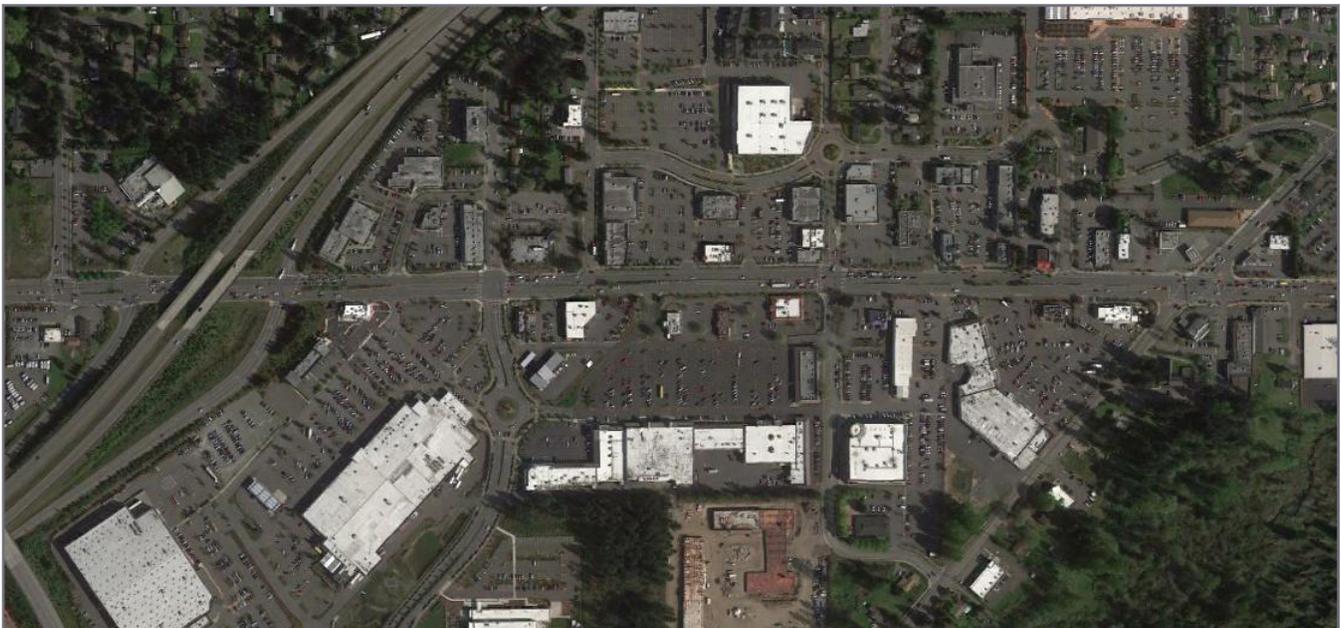


The City is actively planning for well-designed, high quality mixed-use development focused in the Town Center zone and within portions of the Lakepointe Subarea. By focusing most growth in these two areas, the City can maintain the quality and character of existing residential neighborhoods while meeting 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 Lakepointe 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. See Exhibit 8.

Exhibit 8. Covington Downtown Aerial and Photos



Source: Google Earth, 2015

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:



Covington Commercial Center.
Source: commercial-development.com 2015

- Identify a new town center site
- Make strategic town center investments
- Improve vehicular linkages
- Develop a parking study
- Provide greater pedestrian connections
- Establish new street and building design standards
- Consider and support Covington as a regional transportation focal point

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



Covington, Medical Uses
Source: Studio Cascade 2014

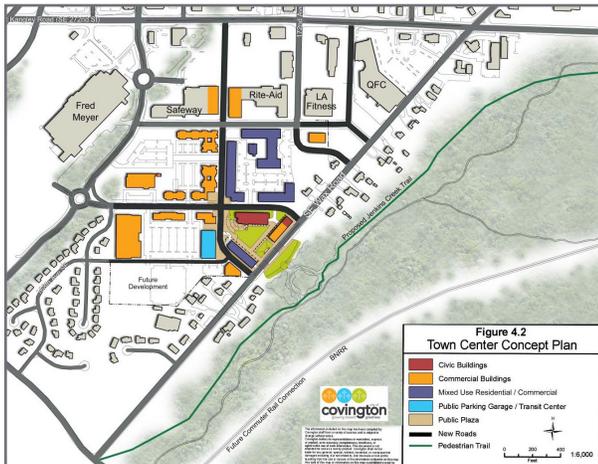
The future downtown area should consist of a central Town Center Focus Area developed around a central civic plaza and open space, a new City Hall and/or other community facilities, and a public parking facility/transit center. Surrounding this Town Center core should be other Mixed Commercial and/or 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. See Exhibit 9.

Exhibit 9. Town Center Plan



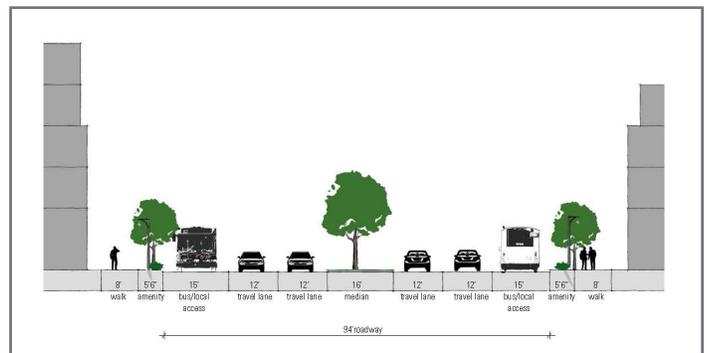
Source: City of Covington Downtown Plan, 2009



Source: City of Covington Downtown Plan, 2009



Source City of Covington Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards, 2014



Source City of Covington Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards, 2014

Lakepointe Urban Village

The Lakepointe Urban Village Subarea (formerly known as the Hawk Property) lies in the northern gateway area of the city, and encompasses approximately 212 acres southeast of SR 18. The Lakepointe Urban Village 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 Potential Annexation Areas (PAAs), currently under an annexation petition.



Lakepointe Site 2013, Pre-reclamation
Source: The Watershed Company 2013

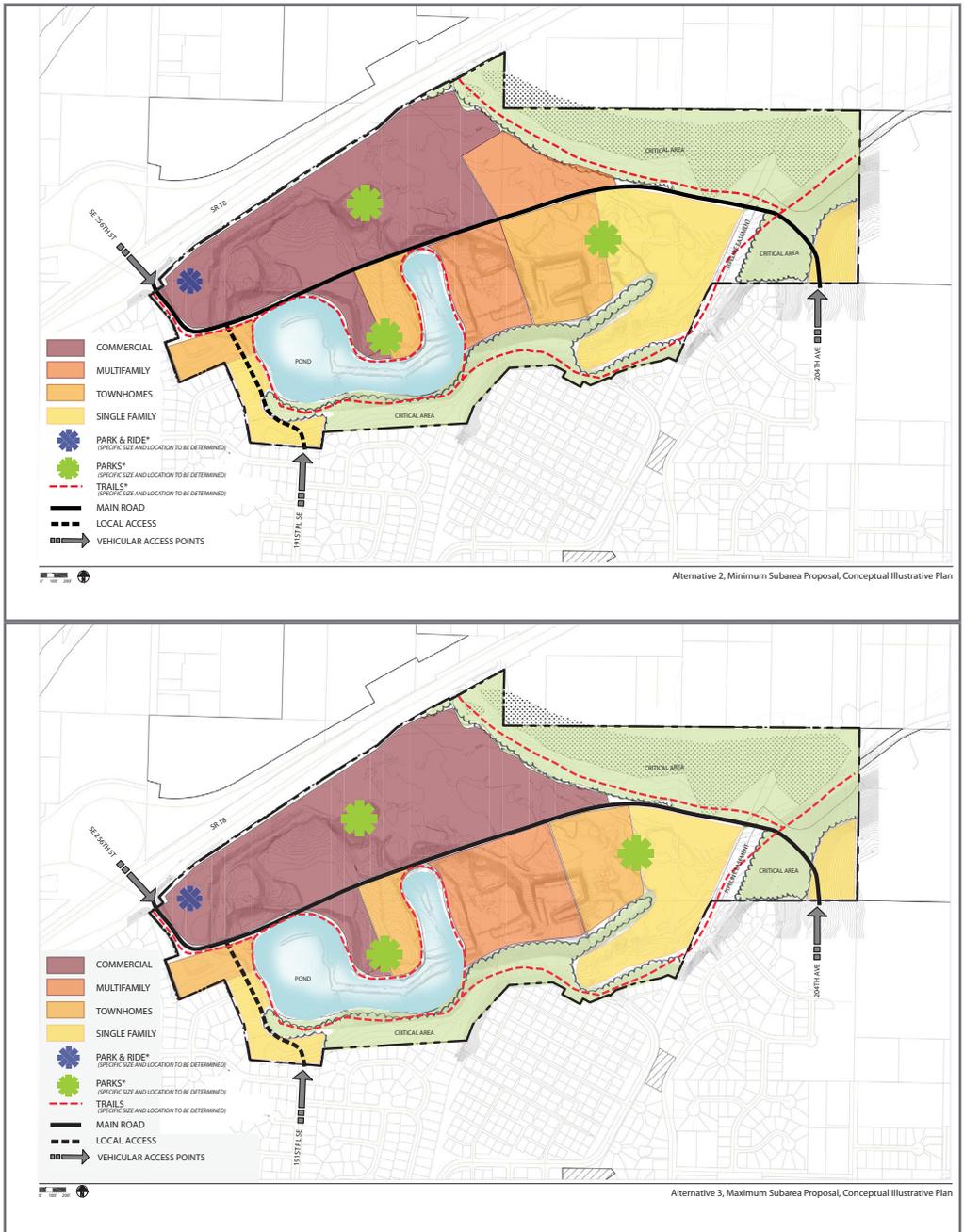
The community vision for the subarea is a mixed-use urban village secondary to the Town Center:

The vision for the Lakepointe Urban Village 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 Lakepointe Urban Village 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. Lakepointe Urban Village 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 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.

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 also 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.



OUR LAND USE PLAN

FUTURE LAND USE MAP AND DESIGNATIONS

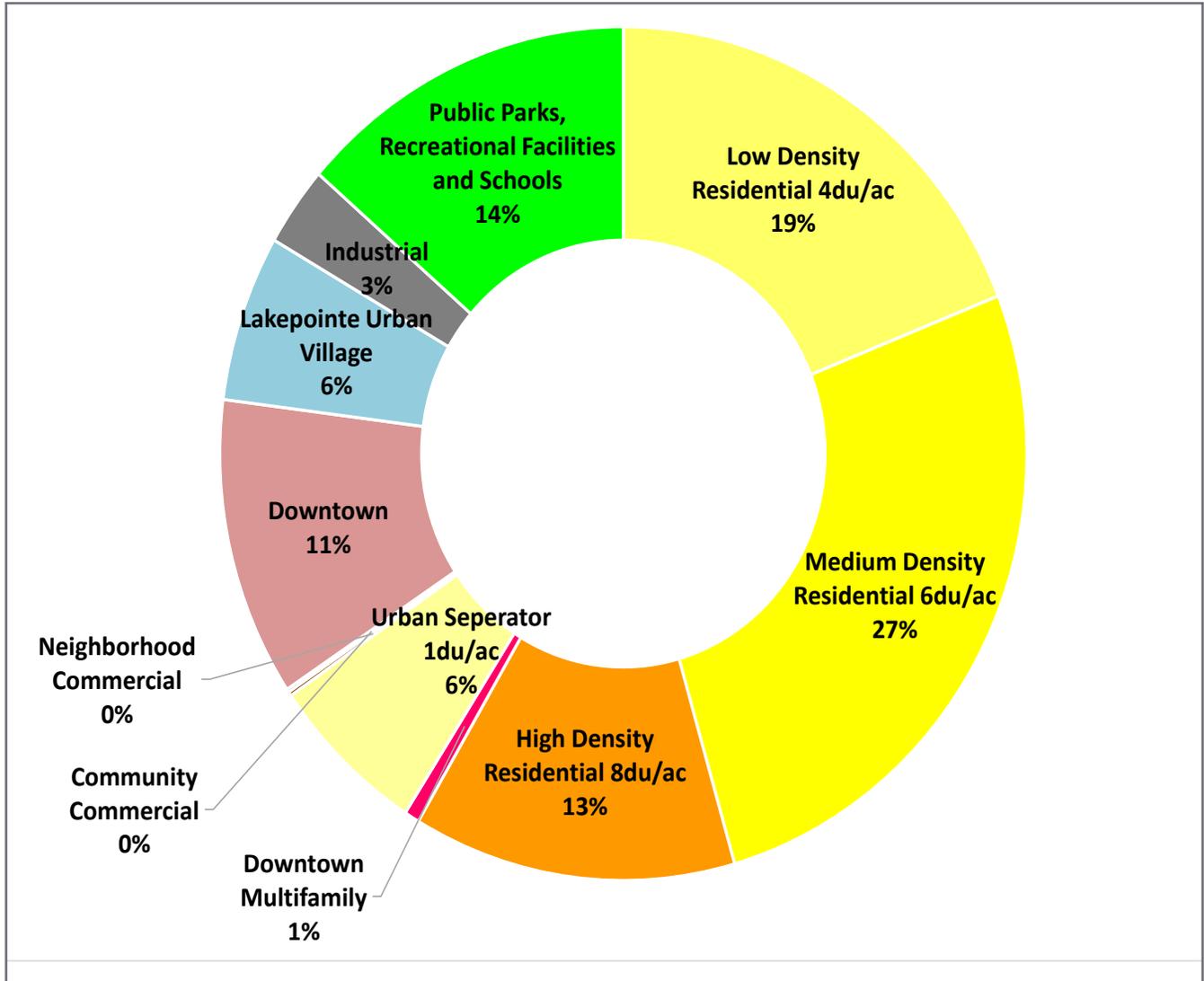
Covington's Future Land Use Plan is oriented around two centers: downtown and Lakepointe Urban Village. Around these two destination centers with mixed uses are single-family neighborhoods at low, medium, and high densities, interspersed by a green network of parks, trails, open space, and schools. See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

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 Lakepointe 6% of parcel acres. Matching Exhibit 11, the table in Exhibit 13 provides definitions of Covington's Future Land Use categories and allowable densities in dwelling units per acre (du/acre), 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.



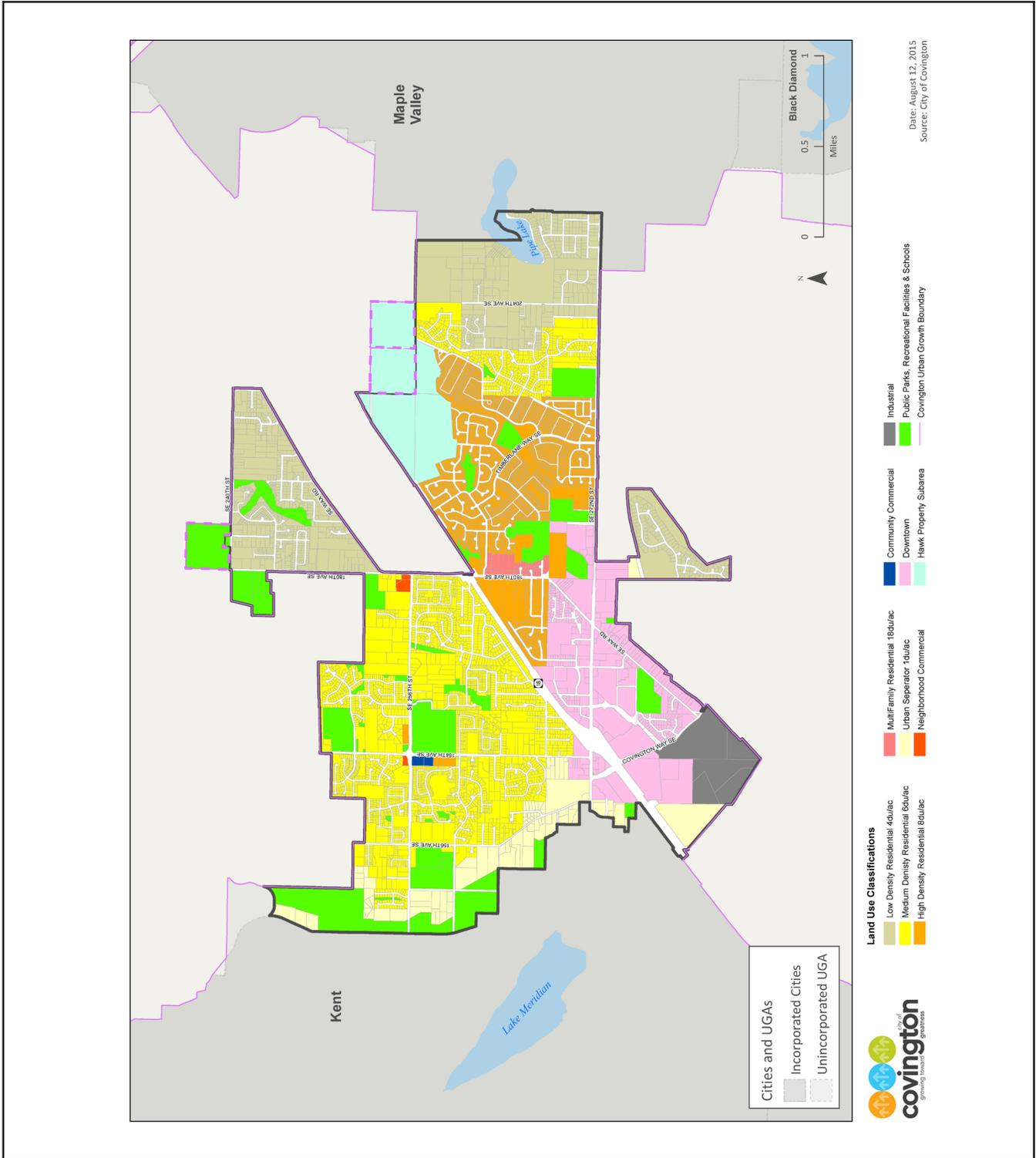
Stormwater Facility in Covington.
Source: City of Covington Stormwater Management Plan 2015

Exhibit 11. Future Land Use Distribution



Source: City of Covington, 2015; BERK, 2015

Exhibit 12. Future Land Use Map



Source: City of Covington, BERK Consulting 2015

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.

Lakepointe Urban Village Subarea

The Lakepointe Urban Village Subarea category is intended to provide commercial and residential opportunities in an “urban village” setting, with associated recreational and open space amenities. The adopted Lakepointe Urban Village Subarea Plan (Ord. 01-14, as amended), clearly envisions this area will incorporate mixed-use development. Future development of the Lakepointe Urban Village 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.



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	<p>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 01-14 includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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

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.

Consistency with State Goals and Regional Plans

The City plans in conformance with the GMA and the PSRC 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 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 Lakepointe Urban Village 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 Lakepointe 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 within 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.

GOALS AND POLICIES

LAND USE GOALS



Example of Senior Housing.
Source: Sstudio Cascade 2015

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 Lakepointe Urban Village is thriving and accessible by multi-modal



Covington Medical Uses.
Source: Sstudio Cascade 2015



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.



Soos Creek Trail.
Source: Studio Cascade 2015

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, healthcare, and educational uses proximate to adequate transportation and utility infrastructure.

Policy LU-3. Maintain land use designations that ensure an adequate supply of housing units and employment space to meet required growth

targets.

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.

Policy LU-5. Encourage new development to be sited and designed to:

- A. Limit impact on the natural environment,
- B. Be compact and contiguous to existing development,
- C. Protect critical areas,
- D. Protect cultural resources.
- E. Promote water quality, incorporation of renewable energy, green infrastructure, urban forests, green roofs, and natural drainage systems.
- F. Incorporate energy and water conservation practices, and reduce heat absorption.
- G. Encourage walking, bicycling and transit use.

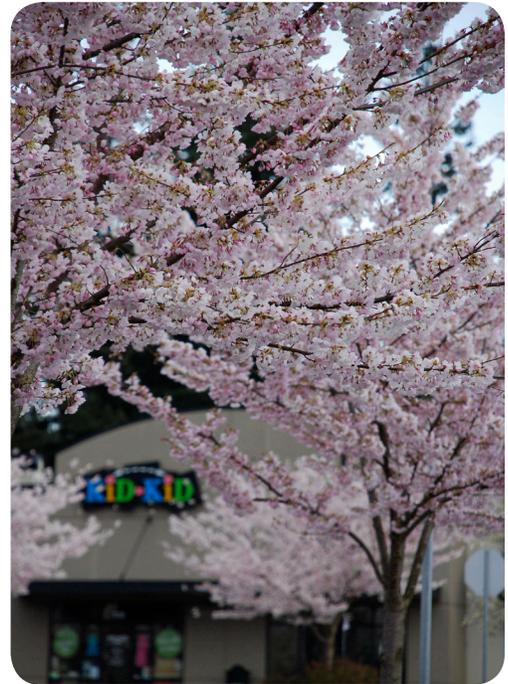
Policy LU-6. Direct growth, including redevelopment and infill to locations that take advantage of existing service capacity and infrastructure.

- 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.

- 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.
- 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 including eventual transition to structured parking at high demand locations, and maintain development capacity for active ground level commercial use.
- 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.



Landscaping in Commercial Center.
Source: Studio Cascade 2015



Agricultural Use in Covington.
Source: Studio Cascade 2015

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

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 180th Ave SE between SE Wax Road and SR 18.

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.

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 Area Commercial and Streetscape.
Source: Studio Cascade 2015

downtown with an emphasis on multi-story 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.

- 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 gateway and entry to the downtown area through the development of key distinctive focal points, such as special signs, 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.



Lakepointe Site 2014
Source: Studio Cascade 2015

Lakepointe Urban Village Subarea

- Policy LU-33. Encourage a variety of commercial, residential, and recreational development types in the Lakepointe Urban Village.
- Policy LU-34. Encourage a variety of housing types at various densities in the Lakepointe Urban Village to provide housing choices not currently available in one location within Covington.
- Policy LU-35. Ensure that the public realm in the Lakepointe Urban Village provides places for a variety of ages, interests, and experiences and is easily accessible.
- Policy LU-36. Implement design standards that facilitate development in the Lakepointe Urban Village Subarea as the northern entrance to Covington.
- Policy LU-37. Ensure that the pond in the Lakepointe Urban Village 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 Lakepointe Urban Village adjacent to existing residential development.
- Policy LU-39. Encourage development of larger public park and greenspace amenities in the Lakepointe Urban Village 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.



Town Center Concept
Source: City of Covington, 2015

Exhibit 15. Land Use Action Plan

Implementation Action	Responsibility
<p>Prioritize strategic investments in parks, trails, sidewalks, streetscape, gathering spaces, streets, and other infrastructure to facilitate the Downtown vision.</p>	<p>Community Development, Parks, and Public Works Departments</p>
<p>Complete a development agreement and associated development and infrastructure standards for the Hawk Property.</p>	<p>Community Development Department</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Community Development, Parks, and Public Works Departments</p>