

Responses to Comments on Comprehensive Plan Update Public Hearing, November 19, 2015

Response to comment about the need for a right-turn lane from 272nd to Covington Sawyer:
The City's 6-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) includes a project to improve this intersection within the next six years. While the water district has deeded the land necessary to allow for a right-turn lane to the city, construction funds are not yet available. The Transportation Element of the draft Comprehensive Plan acknowledges the traffic deficiencies on 272nd, the need to improve traffic operations, and the funding challenges (Draft Comprehensive Plan, pages T-17 and T-26). Policy TR-4 specifically identifies adopting a 6-year TIP that addresses concurrency needs as a city policy.

Response to comment about expansion of the regional light rail network to Covington:
Planning and implementation of the light rail network is the responsibility of the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (RTA also known as Sound Transit). On June 16, 1998, the City Council passed a resolution requesting that Sound Transit exclude the City of Covington from the RTA boundaries. Sound Transit's Board subsequently approved a Resolution excluding the city from the RTA boundaries, based on the city's request. Consequently, Sound Transit does not include the City of Covington in its planning for light rail service. However, the city continues to work with King County Metro to improve bus service for Covington and in particular, access to Sounder service in Kent and future light rail stations in locations outside the city limits. The City also was part of a Tri-City feasibility study about two years ago to provide Diesel Motorized Units (DMU's) between Maple Valley, Black Diamond and Covington and the Sounder Station in Auburn. That study found the density of development, potential ridership, and cost of such service did not warrant further study and implementation. The draft Comprehensive Plan contains the commitment to coordinate with Metro for additional transit routes and facilities (draft Comprehensive Plan, page T-25) as well as Goal TR-V and Policy TR-26.

Response to comment on the need for improved storm water drainage in the Burwood Subdivision:

Small stormwater drainage upgrades along existing open-ditch drainage systems within street ROW's are handled through the annual public works budget for street improvements, based upon availability of funds. This area of the Burwood Subdivision has not been identified as a high priority in relation to other street ROW improvements, and limited funds are available for such improvements city-wide at the present time. The draft Comprehensive Plan does contain a commitment to improve stormwater drainage in residential neighborhoods depending upon resource availability (NE Policies 16, 17, 18, and 20, pages NE-11 & 12).

Response to comment on Agenda 21, lack of public notice, and lack of concern for the built environment, and sustainability:

Agenda 21 is an international 700-page global plan of action aimed at improving the environment & economies for all peoples of the planet through sustainability, which resulted from a UN Conference on the Environment & Development called the Earth Summit in 1992 in Brazil. The issue of sustainability does relate to Covington's Comprehensive Plan, and our draft 2016 Comprehensive Plan does have many elements relating to support of "sustainability" (See Land Use Goal LU-1 and Land Use Policy LU-5) and other action programs for implementation. However, the major components of Agenda 21 more appropriately relate to actions at the federal and international level. The public notice and outreach efforts undertaken during our entire Comprehensive Plan process have always met and exceeded the legal requirements. Every time there has been a public meeting or forum on the Comprehensive Plan, the City has gone beyond minimal legal public notice requirements and used other public involvement and notice methods to encourage broad participation from all types of stakeholders and interest groups. Regarding comments on the State Environmental Policy Act Addendum, such as the built environment, the City's approach is to recognize that the City has conducted much review of its draft Comprehensive Plan and associated subarea plans over time, evidenced by the number of EIS documents the City is adopting (See Addendum Section 4). The City is retaining its fundamental Town Center and Lakepointe Urban Village (Hawk Property) mixed-use land use plans, and the balance of the city is primarily devoted to low to medium density residential uses in the Comprehensive Plan update. The Addendum provides non-project analysis that updates past analysis and puts in context the City's proposed Comprehensive Plan Update. The Addendum addresses the built environment primarily in Addendum Section 6.e and 6.f.