

# IV. Land Use

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**PRIMARY GOAL 1:** To support, maintain, and improve a community comprised largely of residential neighborhoods, industrial business parks, a downtown core and small commercial areas in an open and natural setting that serves the local community.

**PRIMARY GOAL 2:** To maintain the “small town” atmosphere and feel by preserving, protecting, and strengthening the vitality and stability of existing neighborhoods, while ensuring the compatibility of new developments.

**PRIMARY GOAL 3:** To offer a harmonious blend of opportunities for living, working, recreation, education, and cultural activities by protecting natural amenities, and balancing development of services with growth.

**PRIMARY GOAL 4:** To expand the existing permanent open space network and trails system throughout the City while preserving and protecting natural features, wildlife habitat, and critical areas from incompatible land uses.

## Overview

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The City of Camas has grown from a relatively small, single industry, mill town to a dynamic, vibrant city with diversified employment opportunities and services that cater to a variety of its residents’ needs. The Land Use Element further supports this ideal by creating opportunities for current and future residents to live, work, recreate, educate, and enjoy cultural activities through the appropriate mix of land uses designated throughout the city.

The Land Use Element is an important part of the Comprehensive Plan; in fact, the Growth Management Act specifically identifies it as the foundation of the Plan. In that respect, the Land Use Element of the Plan is an explicit statement of the ultimate vision for the city. It outlines the framework by which the plan will be implemented and determines transportation needs, as well as other infrastructure necessary to serve the land uses.

Development of land, according to the adopted policies and land use designations, will result in an appropriate balance of public facilities, housing, employment, services, and recreational uses.

The physical setting, topography, and natural features of the city are the major organizing elements of the Plan. A series of maps identifies rivers, lakes, wetlands, steep and unstable slopes, wooded and natural habitat areas. Identifying these natural features and critical areas are essential elements of the

Plan. Other maps also mark a network of built and planned pedestrian trails that loop throughout the city.

The City of Camas is home to several large, national and international firms in the Cascade Business Park. Major office development with associated retail uses is also underway in the master planned subarea of North Dwyer Creek. Completion of the SE 192<sup>nd</sup> Avenue transportation corridor will encourage and allow for further development in the northwestern areas of the city.

In terms of developable areas, land use designations are used to assign a variety of development uses and building densities throughout the city. The Plan also identifies special nodes that are designed to act as major areas that have a significant amount of concentrated activity, such as employment and mixed-use centers.

## EXISTING DEVELOPMENT, FUTURE CAPACITY and ACCOMMODATING the GROWTH PROJECTION

In order to assess how the City of Camas will accommodate the future population and employment growth, it is first important to know how the community has developed over the years and to what degree there is capacity for this future growth. To answer the first two issues, the City of Camas relies on Clark County's Buildable Lands Report and Capacity Summary.

According to the Clark County Buildable Lands Report (1995-2000), residential development averaged 3.8 dwelling units per acre with a 90% single-family and 10% multi-family split. Also based on data provided in the Buildable Lands Report, 2000 Census data, and existing city policy of one job per every 1.9 persons eligible to work, Camas has an industrial job surplus of 1,179 and a commercial jobs deficit of 669. This information, coupled with the capacity analysis, factored into the overall approach to accommodating twenty years of population and employment growth.

As for future capacity of the land supply, the Buildable Lands Report Capacity Summary indicates that the City of Camas and current Urban Growth Area could accommodate approximately 6,500 people and just over 3,100 jobs (not including tertiary industrial land). The City of Camas and its Citizen Advisory Committee used these figures, and the assumptions connected with them, to craft a revised land use plan.

**Table 4. – Comprehensive Plan Designations**

Plan Designation	Acres
<b>Single Family Residential</b>	3,102.4
Low Density	494.8
Medium Density	2,599.5
High Density	8.1
<b>Multi-Family</b>	288.6
Low Density	115.3
High Density	173.3
<b>Commercial</b>	269.8
<b>Industrial</b>	974.7
Light Industrial	20.4
Heavy Industrial	954.3
<b>Light Industrial/Business Park</b>	1,717.9
<b>Park (not to total)</b>	626.3
<b>Green Space (not to total)</b>	379.2
<b>Public Facility (not to total)</b>	36.2
<b>Total</b>	6,401

The proposed Comprehensive Plan designations and zoning districts (shown above) are created to accommodate the projected population and employment forecast for twenty years. The end result of the proposal will yield just under 2,500 dwelling units at approximately 6.4 dwelling units per acre. On the employment side, approximately 4,000 additional jobs would result from the proposal, which includes industrial, commercial, retail and mixed-use opportunities.

Figure 7 (Appendix F) identifies the general land use designations and Figure 8 (Appendix F) identifies specific zoning districts that help in implementing the Plan. Table 4 details the amount of property with various land use designations and Table 5 the specific zoning designations.

A detailed summary of the structure of the land use plan (via a staff report), titled *Comprehensive Plan Update, Proposal to Serve Growth through 2023, Presentation to City Council, May 27, 2003*, is found in Appendix C.

**Table 5. – Zoning Districts**

Zoning District	Acres
R-5	8.1
R-7.5	1,004.2
R-10	835.4
R-12	759.9
R-15	432.4
R-20	62.4
<b>Sum</b>	3,102.4
MF-10	115.3
MF-18	41.0
MF-24	132.3
<b>Sum</b>	288.6
Neighborhood Commercial (NC)	99.7
Community Commercial (CC)	55.9
Regional Commercial (RC)	114.2
<b>Sum</b>	269.8
Light Industrial (LI)	20.4
Heavy Industrial (HI)	954.3
<b>Sum</b>	974.7
Light Industrial/Business Park (LI/BP)	1,717.9
Mixed Use Overlay (not to total)	128
<b>Total</b>	6,401

## OBJECTIVES

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Camas' Land Use Element will accomplish the following:

- Accommodate the projected growth through well-planned utilization of existing land and, as warranted, a judicious process of expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB);
- Create a balance between housing and employment that produces a more self-sustaining community;
- Preserve and enhance residential neighborhoods;
- Focus on continued growth of the Business Parks (Cascade Business Park and North Dwyer Creek Subarea) as employment centers;
- Facilitate revitalization of the downtown commercial core as the "heart of the city."
- Preserve and enhance properties of historical significance to the community.

## Citywide Focus

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Camas is a community in a setting of abundant natural beauty: mountainous terrain defined by the Columbia River at its southern border, interspersed with lakes and smaller rivers, forested hillsides, open space, parks, and a connected, looped trail system. A park-like setting, with detailed attention given to the built environment while protecting

sensitive, natural features make Camas a special place to live and work. The goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan provide direction to maintain the quality of life and working environment and ensure that the interests, economy, and welfare of the community are of primary concern as the city matures.

## POLICIES

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**Policy LU-1.** Support the continuation of a strong residential community rooted amid a blend of opportunities for commerce, industry, education, and recreation.

**Policy LU-2.** Support a diverse community in an open and natural setting comprised of stable neighborhoods with a variety of housing types and densities; a vibrant, robust downtown, which serves as a focal point for the community; the Business Parks; and other employment and commercial centers.

**Policy LU-3.** Ensure enough properly zoned land to provide for Camas' share of the regionally adopted forecasts for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses for the next 20 years.

**Policy LU-3-A:** Coordinate with Clark County, the state and special districts to identify future

needs for essential public facilities, such as airports, state education facilities, state or regional transportation facilities, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and regional parks.

**Policy LU-4.** Maintain compatible use and design with the surrounding built and natural environment when considering new development or redevelopment.

**Policy LU-5.** Ensure that park and recreation opportunities are equitably distributed throughout the city.

**Policy LU-6.** Encourage redevelopment when and where appropriate.

## STRATEGIES

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**Strategy LU-1.** Balance consideration for community values, the neighborhoods, the natural environment, and the economic environment. (Policy LU-1 and Policy LU-6)

**Strategy LU-2.** Separate incompatible land uses with the use of zoning and development regulations, and ensure that commercial and industrial land uses are contained within carefully delineated areas with appropriate setbacks, landscaping buffers, and lighting. (Policy LU-2 and Policy LU-3)

**Strategy LU-3.** Support and encourage Planned Developments which can provide “cluster housing” (to protect sensitive lands), higher density, and mixed-use residential/commercial (where appropriately zoned), and where compatibility can be demonstrated. (Policy LU-3 and Policy LU-4)

**Strategy LU-4.** Locate high-traffic generating land uses along arterial streets whenever possible. (All Policies)

**Strategy LU-4-A:** Establish a local process for siting essential public facilities, based on land use and public service impacts as well as future needs and community vision. Facilities that generate substantial travel demand should be sited along or near major transportation and/or public transit corridors.

**Strategy LU-5.** Support the purchase, dedication, and preservation of open space and encourage careful consideration and integration of the natural environment in any planning activity to perpetuate the park-like setting of Camas. (All Policies)

## Residential Focus

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An essential goal of the Land Use Element is the protection and enhancement of Camas’ residential neighborhoods and maintaining the “small town” atmosphere and feel. The quality and integrity of Camas’ neighborhoods, and the people, who live, work, interact, and recreate within them make the city special. Ensuring that these neighborhoods

remain connected, stable, and vibrant is of primary concern.

The Land Use Plan provides opportunity for a variety of housing choices, reflective of the desire to offer housing for those who work here.

## POLICIES

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**Policy LU-7.** Maintain stability and improve the vitality of residential neighborhoods.

**Policy LU-8.** Provide the opportunity for a broad range of housing choices to meet the changing needs of the community.

## STRATEGIES

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**Strategy LU-5.** Protect residential areas from the impacts of non-residential uses of a scale not appropriate to the neighborhood. (All Policies)

**Strategy LU-6.** Encourage and support adequate pedestrian connections with nearby neighborhoods and access to transit facilities citywide. (All Policies)

## Industrial/Business Park Focus

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The Business Park designation is characterized by strict development standards, which include well-designed buildings, generous landscaping, and limited outdoor operations. These standards assure

development in a campus park-like setting, which will be a compatible, visual asset to the community, a regional employment center, and an economic base within the city.

### POLICIES

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**Policy LU-9.** Support the continued growth of industrial firms and development within the Cascade Business Park and North Dwyer Creek subarea to provide regional and local employment.

**Policy LU-11.** Ensure compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods by using development, design review, and landscaping regulations.

**Policy LU-10.** Support limited, appropriate and associated retail uses within the Business Parks.

### STRATEGIES

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**Strategy LU-7.** Maintain a commitment to work with existing and new businesses to process and facilitate their permit requests in a timely manner. (Policy LU-9)

**Strategy LU-9.** Participate in local and regional organizations (e.g., Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Council) which focus on attracting new business to the area. (Policy LU-9 and Policy LU-10)

**Strategy LU-8.** Foster and encourage an attitude of trust with new and existing businesses using clear, open communication and timely answers to their issues. (Policy LU-9)

**Strategy LU-10.** Support the enhancement of the Business Parks with emphasis on aesthetics and community compatibility. (Policy LU-11)

## Downtown Core Commercial

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As noted earlier, the *Downtown Camas Vision and Implementation Plan* was developed over a nine-month period by a citizen-based Downtown Vision Committee (DVC). The 15 members of the DVC, appointed by Camas City Council, represented a variety of downtown and community interests.

The Downtown Camas Vision project was proposed in response to concerns that businesses would continue to depart the city's core if conditions did not improve. During the first phase of the project, citizens and downtown stakeholders were asked to provide both a structure and guiding principles for the visioning process during a series of interviews and at a public workshop held at the

Liberty Theatre. These individuals also identified a set of goals to drive the overall visioning process:

- Lower business vacancy rates
- Increase patronage, flow of people downtown
- Create reasons for people to stay downtown longer
- Increase access to capital and other resources for businesses and property development
- Establish a successful business recruitment/retention program
- Attract anchor tenant(s)

- Expand the variety of business-types located downtown
- Market downtown to greater Camas and neighboring communities
- Enhance aesthetics throughout the core and corridors
- Establish new, improved public amenities
- Develop a theme or message to market downtown as the first choice for doing business
- Promote mixed-use, including an element of housing
- Create accessible and adequate parking opportunities

- Improve traffic flow and access
- Preserve the small town feel of downtown
- Maintain a balance between functionality and aesthetics
- Instill a sense of value and relevance for those visiting, locating their business downtown
- Establishing downtown Camas as a unique, special place to visit, shop and/or live

Each of these elements are captured and addressed in the *Vision and Implementation Plan*.

## Other Commercial Areas

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The city recognizes the importance of a strong, vibrant, diverse economy. While the majority of commercial land use designations are located within the city's Downtown core, smaller commercial nodes of various sizes are scattered throughout the city.

For much of the city's existence, the Downtown area provided most of the amenities necessary for a small community, including a large grocery store, drugstores, dry cleaners, gift shops, *etc.* Both the cities of Vancouver to the west and Washougal to the east have experienced rapid growth in commercial development, which benefit Camas residents in the availability of choice and flexibility in their service and buying needs. With the completion of SE 192<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, new retail businesses will locate on this corridor, providing closer availability to

services and reducing travel time for those residents who live on the west side of Prune Hill.

The existing commercial development along SE 164<sup>th</sup> Avenue provides the availability of "one-stop-shopping" chain stores, a number of large grocery stores, and many "mini-mall" areas, as well as the commercial growth along SE 192<sup>nd</sup> Avenue at Camas' border.

The city's land use philosophy supports the development of a diverse economy. With the city's expansion and growth, particularly on the west side of Prune Hill, providing opportunities for some neighborhood commercial development is both desirable and necessary.

### POLICIES

**Policy LU-12.** Encourage and foster economic development in areas designated for commercial development.

**Policy LU-13.** Encourage the master planning of mixed-use developments that emphasize aesthetics and community and neighborhood compatibility.

**Policy LU-14.** Maintain a balance of commercial land uses within the city that consider the location, type, and availability of commercial service being planned in other jurisdictions.

**Policy LU-15.** Encourage neighborhood retail and personal services to locate at appropriate locations where local economic demand, local citizen acceptance, and design solutions demonstrate compatibility with the neighborhood. The following concepts should be considered

at a minimum when determining compatibility:

- a. Retail and personal services should be encouraged to group together within planned centers to allow ease of pedestrian and vehicular movement.

- b. Neighborhood business centers should consist of neighborhood scale retail and personal services.

## **STRATEGIES**

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**Strategy LU-11.** Encourage mixed residential/commercial development using Planned Unit Developments in appropriately designated areas where compatibility with nearby uses can be demonstrated. (All Policies)

**Strategy LU-12.** Maintain and support compatibility of such uses within existing and new neighborhoods by the use of development, design review, and landscaping regulations. (All Policies)

## **Subarea Focus**

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In a spirit of collaboration, Camas, Vancouver, and Clark County have begun discussions regarding development proposals that will affect the contiguous city limits of both jurisdictions. This is important to future planning since much of the SE 192<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, where much of the development is slated to occur, will potentially have an impact on future transportation issues within the Cascade Business Park. Several retail and commercial sites are also being planned, which will prove beneficial for Camas residents. With open discussions, a “joint planning” effort between the cities, everyone will benefit, and a shared, harmonious existence will be achieved.

Another issue, which will become a matter of concern as the city’s population grows, is development and requests for inclusion of land within the city’s Urban Growth Boundaries. In keeping with the directives of the Growth Management Act to curb urban sprawl, the city has been judicious in granting

requests for water and sewer service outside of its Urban Growth Boundary. However, several issues will be facing the City very shortly.

The primary issue is the request by the Camas School District for inclusion of two school sites, which lie outside the City’s Urban Growth Boundary. The 52-acre high school site that has been purchased is adjacent to Lacamas Heights Elementary School. The other site is located at the end of Leonard Road.

Current population forecasts, coupled with available land indicate that the existing Urban Growth Boundary will require expansion at some point in order to provide additional commercial and residential land. This expansion will be done with the same careful analysis and planning that supports the community’s vision and established long-range planning goals.

