

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Overview of the Comprehensive Plan

The Battle Ground Comprehensive and Transportation Plan (Plan) is based on the principle that decisions affecting Battle Ground’s development should be made in a coordinated and responsible way. The Plan articulates a vision for the future of Battle Ground that sustains the values of its citizens and establishes a flexible policy framework for making decisions over the next 20 years.

The City of Battle Ground is responsible for meeting the diverse needs of its current and future residents. Battle Ground’s citizens need livable neighborhoods, recreational opportunities, places to shop and work, and an effective, balanced, and cost- efficient transportation system. The City of Battle Ground is required to provide public services and facilities and to adopt regulations that guide growth in ways that meet the needs of city residents while complying with state and federal laws. The process used to develop this plan took a balanced approach to achieving the City’s goals, objectives, and strategies for responding to residents’ needs. Thus, the Plan is intended to serve as the guide for growth and development within the city.

1990 Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Plan mandated by the Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) of 1990 requires that cities and counties, with state oversight, plan and control where and how much growth occurs. The comprehensive plans developed by communities under this mandate will guide land use decisions in the future. Battle Ground has used the growth management process for thoughtful community development that will promote a sustainable community. At least every 10 years, the City of Battle Ground, Clark County, and other communities within Clark County are required to review their urban growth boundaries to accommodate future growth, their policies and strategies for achieving their long-term vision, and their overall progress in achieving their 20-year plans for the future.

The GMA requires counties or counties with cities that have a population growth rate of 10 percent or more over the previous 10 years to prepare and adopt 20-year plans that meet GMA requirements. The Plan responds to the GMA and its subsequent amendments. Each element of the Plan includes a more detailed description of how each of these goals is met.

GMA Goals

Plans adopted under the act must address the 13 goals of GMA, as follows (RCW 36.70A.020):

1. **Urban Growth:** Encourage new development to occur in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
2. **Reduce Sprawl:** Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.
3. **Transportation:** Encourage efficient multi- modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.

4. **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.
5. **Economic Development:** Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.
6. **Property Rights:** Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.
7. **Permits:** Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.
8. **Natural Resource Industries:** Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural and fisheries industries.
9. **Open Space and Recreation:** Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.
10. **Environment:** Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.
11. **Citizen Participation and Coordination:** Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.
12. **Public Facilities and Services:** Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.
13. **Historic Preservation:** Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.

1995 Comprehensive Plan

In 1995, Battle Ground completed and adopted its first Comprehensive Plan (1995 Plan). The 1995 Plan, which was prepared with citizen input, established a 20-year Urban Growth Area (UGA). Over the 1992 to 2012 period, growth was planned to occur only in this UGA. In preparing the 1995 Plan, the community defined its vision for the future. The community's vision for 2012 was "to be a compact, self-contained community with a diversity of housing types and sizes; an economic base including retail, commercial, industrial and business park enterprises; and community facilities to support and enhance such development." The 1995 Plan provided information and defined policies and goals for natural resources, critical areas, growth management, land use, parks and open space, transportation, housing, and utilities.

2004 and 2007 Comprehensive Plan

The City, in concert with Clark County, and other area jurisdictions updated their Plans in 2004. A growth rate of 1.69 percent was assumed and urban growth areas were expanded by 6,124 acres, or 9.57 square miles. This Plan was appealed by multiple parties to the Growth Management Hearings Board. The City of Battle Ground was among the list of appellants. The City's concern, along with some of the other appellants, concerned the last-minute reduction in the assumed growth rate, moving it from 1.83 percent to 1.69 percent.

In 2005, with a new County Board, they agreed 1.69 growth rate was too low and agreed to reopen the Plan. Relying on county assurances for an increased local process, the city of Battle Ground and development petitioners withdrew their appeals. The Board of County Commissioners launched a two-year update process that culminated in adoption of a 2007 Comprehensive Plan. In this update, a new growth rate of 2.2 percent growth rate was assumed for the first six years and a 2.0 percent growth rate for the remainder of the 20-year plan. (Source: Clark County Planning, 2015 Plan Update, Issue Paper 1, GMA Overview)

50-Year Vision

Another component of the City's comprehensive planning history is its 50-year vision. In the summer of 2000, the City launched an effort to create a 50-year Vision for the community that would be the foundation for future Plan updates and future City policy decisions. To assist in the development of the Community Vision, the City Council convened a Community Visioning Committee (CVC) during the summer of 2000. The members of the CVC represented many facets of the community and included several citizens at large, senior and youth representatives, business and development interests, the faith community, the City's Planning Commission and Parks Advisory Board, and other public agencies such as the Battle Ground School District, the Washington State Department of Transportation, and C-TRAN. Over a nine-month period, the CVC held several public meetings to create a draft Vision consisting of Vision Concepts, Guiding Principles, and a 50-year Vision Map. In addition, extensive outreach activities were undertaken to solicit input from the Battle Ground community. The Planning Commission held public hearings on the draft Vision and forwarded its recommendations to the City Council, which adopted the 50-year Vision in April 2001.

CITY VISION STATEMENT

50 Year Vision Guiding Principles

The following Guiding Principles provide the framework for the Vision Concepts and map, the Comprehensive and Transportation Plan Rewrite policies, and implementation strategies.

Vision Concepts

The following Vision Concepts provide specific guidance concerning the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan policies and future city policy decisions.

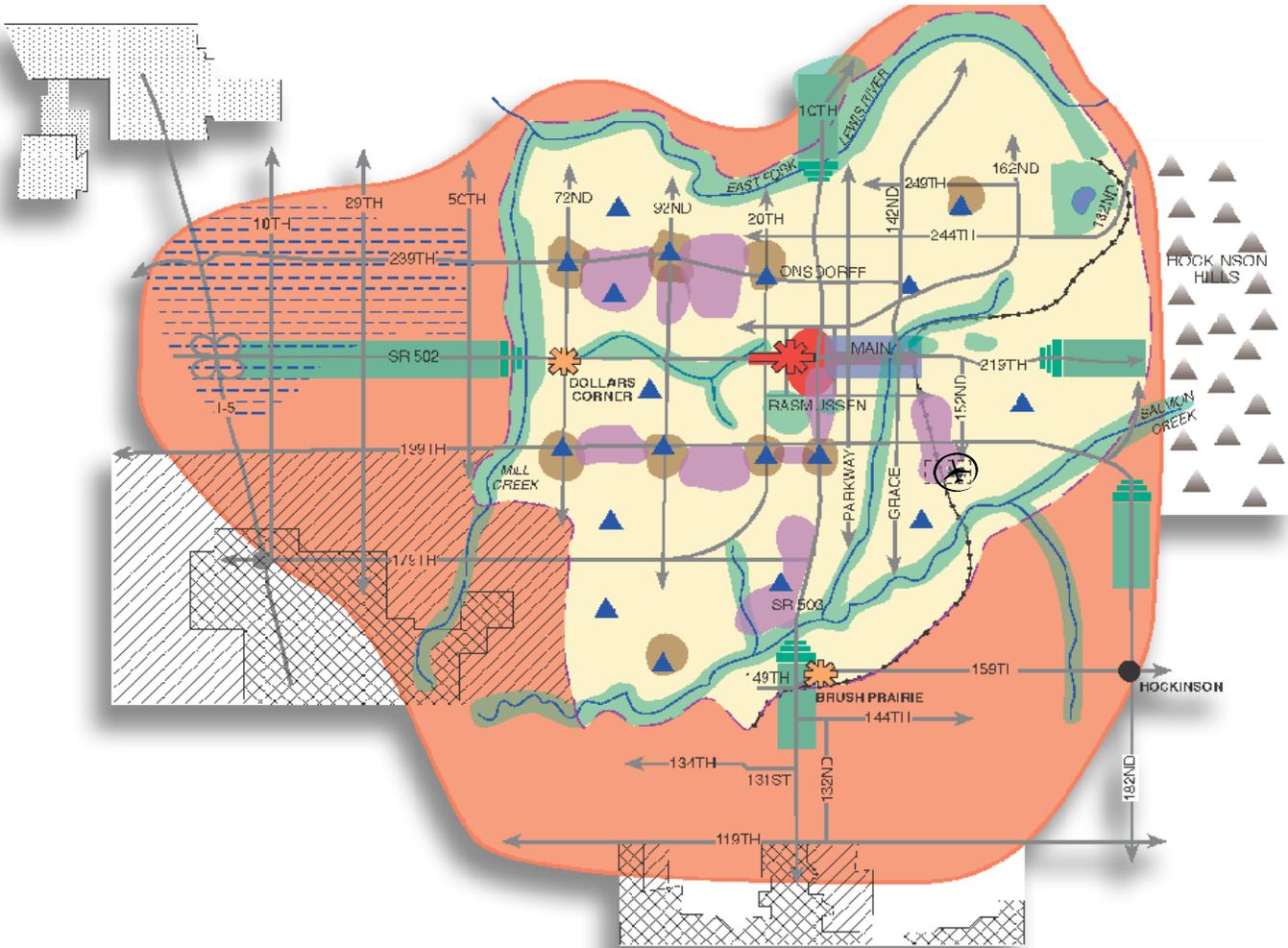
- Battle Ground is a city with a small town feel where both local and regional services are within easy reach.
- Battle ground is the social, cultural, commercial, service, education, and civic center for Central Clark County.
- The heart of Battle Ground is the downtown district, which is centered at Main Street and Parkway, and includes the school district property, old town, the railroad, and a town square. This area will be planned as a cohesive district to take advantage of new opportunities and to build on the current strengths of the area.
- There is a viable commercial district located on Main Street between 102nd Avenue and Grace Avenue. This district has different characteristics along its length, from large regional stores on one end to smaller, locally-owned stores on the other end.
- Battle Ground has one regional service center focused on Main Street between 20th Avenue and SR503, community centers at Dollars Corner and Brush Prairie, and neighborhood activity centers located throughout the city.
- Public spaces and investments in schools, library, a youth center, senior centers, and parks help to develop a sense of place while providing the services that make a complete community.

- A system of neighborhood, community and regional parks, greenways, and open spaces are identified and protected for a range of passive and active uses. Where possible, these sites are located adjacent to future school sites.
- Battle Ground is served by a number of transportation options within and around the city, including an I-5 interchange at 219th, public transit, the Cheletchie railroad and its corridor, and the opportunity to use an airport.
- Transportation access in Battle Ground is provided through a system of trails and local, collector and arterial streets that provide improved connectivity for a range of transportation choices, including automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, transit and commuter rail.
- Neighborhoods are the building blocks for future development and improvements and help maintain a small town feel. Neighborhoods are identified by parks, schools, physical features, commercial services, or other community resources. They include multiple uses such as convenience institutions such as a branch post office or a community center.
- New housing developments offer a range of options and locations and help create new neighborhoods, while in-fill housing is sensitive to existing housing types and neighborhood character.
- New employment and economic development areas are identified, preserved and promoted throughout the city and provide family-wage jobs for residents of Battle Ground, help create a self-reliant community, and provide a solid revenue base to support needed services.
- Battle Ground is influenced by the other jurisdictions surrounding it and will work with these jurisdictions to plan for the “area of influence” in a manner that implements the Battle Ground 50-Year Community Vision.
- Gateways to Battle Ground are defined by physical features such as state and regional parks, the East Fork of the Lewis River, Salmon Creek, farmland, rural development, open space, large stands of trees, stream corridors, and environmentally sensitive lands. The City will work with the surrounding jurisdictions to protect these natural boundaries.
- The corridors leading up to the gateways are protected from development that would compromise the feeling of openness and increase traffic congestion. In particular, the city will work with Clark County and other jurisdictions to protect the areas of influence that surround the city, especially the area between I-5 and the western gateway to the city.
- Stream corridors, environmentally sensitive areas, and regional parks help to build identity and are protected, enhanced, and integrated into the fabric of the community and provide needed open spaces, trail connections, and the opportunity to live with a natural environment.
- All areas of the city will be planned in a comprehensive way that integrates the elements of a complete neighborhood, including employment opportunities, housing, parks and open spaces, transportation, environmental resources, and other civic services. Each area will be planned in the context of the entire city, with particular attention given to how the area relates to the regional community centers and the downtown district.

City of Battle Ground 50-Year Vision Map

The following Vision map depicts the community’s preferred future development and transportation scenario in broad brush strokes (see Map below). The preferred development scenario is further refined and implemented through the policies contained with this Comprehensive and Transportation Plan. The City’s Planning Commission and City Council have worked together closely throughout the planning process to ensure widespread support for this Plan.

50 Year Vision Map



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|--|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| | Gateway to the City | | Downtown District | | Joint Economic Area | | Stream |
| | Neighborhood Activity Center/Park | | Higher Density Residential | | Yancouver Urban Reserve | | 50 Year Threshold |
| | Neighborhood Activity Center | | Employment/Economic Center | | Yancouver Urban Growth Area | | Major Transportation Corridor |
| | Regional Activity Center | | Stream Corridor/Open Space | | Ridgefield Urban Reserve | | Commercial Corridor |
| | Area of Influence | | Residential | | Ridgefield Urban Growth Area | | Airstrip |
| | Entry Corridor | | | | | | |



Public Involvement

The participation of the citizens of Battle Ground was fundamental to the success of this entire planning process. This included open houses in conjunction with the County Plan update held at the Battle Ground Community Center. Newspaper notifications, website updates, and public participation opportunities with the Planning Commission and City Council.

Integration with Other City Plans

The City must ensure that urban services match the requirements of the citizenry in a cost-effective way, which has required the development of long-range master plans for all major municipal functions. Capital facilities master plans were adopted concurrently with this Plan. These adopted facilities master plans reduce the risk of both private and public investment. This Plan incorporates adopted sewer, stormwater, drinking water, transportation, and parks master plans. The Plan serves as an integrating mechanism to ensure that these plans are compatible and advance the goals described in the City's overall vision. The following documents are considered an integral part of this Plan:

- City of Battle Ground Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan
- City of Battle Ground Transportation System Plan
- City of Battle Ground Water System Plan
- City of Battle Ground General Sewer Plan
- City of Battle Ground Stormwater Management Plan
- City of Battle Ground Shoreline Master Program

Integration with Clark County Plans

A cornerstone of the GMA is coordinated planning between different jurisdictions within a region. To that end, Clark County adopted a Community Framework Plan in 1993. The Community Framework Plan includes county-wide planning policies under which all cities agreed to plan. The City of Battle Ground's goals and objectives are coordinated and comply with the County's policy framework. The County's Comprehensive Plan provides direction to the City of Battle Ground and other local Clark County jurisdictions on countywide development policies, including population allocations, transportation systems, vacant land inventories, and land allocations. The County and City have coordinated and confirmed that their land use inventory and forecasts and transportation models are compatible.

How to Use the Plan

The Plan is designed to articulate a vision for Battle Ground's development and to describe a strategy for accomplishing this vision over a 20-year period. The Plan will be implemented through the Land Development Code and other regulations. The Plan also articulates community priorities for City expenditures on capital facilities and transportation improvements and how such improvements could be financed in the future. A 2004-2024 Growth Strategy Action Plan is a companion piece to the Plan, providing a road map for implementing the Plan and tracking implementation progress.

The Plan is a legally binding document that guides the creation of regulations and ordinances for the City. Its goals and objectives express the ideal vision for Battle Ground. However, these multiple goals and objectives may occasionally conflict with one another. Additionally, circumstances may arise that are not addressed in the Plan. Therefore, the Plan provides guidance in the decision-making process, but

does not constitute a regulation. It is intended that the Plan be adjusted over time as conditions change or as new information is discovered about how successful the Plan is in achieving its goals.

Although integrated and coordinated, each element of the Plan establishes policies on a specific aspect of life in Battle Ground. A brief description of the 10 elements follows.

Livability: This element addresses the preservation and enhancement of qualities that make Battle Ground an interesting and dynamic place for people to live. Much of this element relates to urban design within Battle Ground. Livability is not a required element under the GMA, but a “design” element that is optional under the GMA.

Land Use: The Land Use element provides guidelines for property development during the next 20 years. It strives to achieve a balance between the land that is available for the creation of new jobs and that is used for housing. It emphasizes the stability of existing neighborhoods, while enhancing regional, community, and neighborhood centers. The GMA requirements include identification of urban growth areas, consistency with county-wide planning policies, and a description of population densities.

Housing: This element encourages a range of housing types and prices to meet the needs of all citizens of Battle Ground. GMA requires that this element be consistent with county-wide planning policies, include an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs, identify sufficient land for housing, and a number of other requirements.

Growth Management: This goal of the Growth Management element is to promote a logical sequence of growth through annexation. This is not a required element under GMA, but is included to help manage future growth within the city.

Environment: This element includes the inclusion of best available science for protecting critical areas and review of designations for critical areas. Critical areas include wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas. The GMA actually includes the provisions for critical areas within the land use element, but Battle Ground has elected to include a separate element to address these issues, as provided in RCW 3670A.080.

Economic Development: This element encourages a strong, independent, and broad-based economy in the city. This is an optional element under GMA.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space: This element provides direction on creating open spaces, trails, and parks within the community for present and future generations. It represents an update of the Park and Recreation Plan, and is an optional element under GMA.

Transportation: This element establishes a Transportation Plan for the city, which ensures that the transportation system is safe, efficient, balanced, environmentally sustainable, and improves livability. The GMA requires that the transportation element be consistent with county-wide policies, be based on the land use plan, include an estimate of traffic impacts on state-owned facilities, provide an inventory of existing transportation services, and provide a financing plan for new improvements, among other requirements.

Capital Facilities: The Capital Facilities element creates a plan for stormwater, wastewater, and drinking water infrastructure, and will foster environmental sustainability and cost-efficient development of new infrastructure. The GMA requires that this element be consistent with county-wide policies, include the proposed location and capacities for new facilities, provide a six-year financing plan, and include an assessment of the land use assumptions if funding is not available to serve new growth.

Private Utilities: This element helps to ensure that the provision of electrical, cable, telephone, and other private utilities are well managed and timely. The GMA requires that this element be consistent with county-wide policies, include the general location and proposed location of utilities, and provide coordination between all service providers.