

COMMUNITY PLANNING ELEMENT

GOAL

Engage in community planning to improve the livability of Renton's neighborhoods, to preserve unique identity and create community character, and to provide the public with the opportunity to participate in shaping the future of their community.

General Objectives and Policies

Purpose

The Community Planning element envisions a local voice in how the Comprehensive Plan and its development regulations will be carried out in different geographic areas of the City. Community Plans will exemplify how the objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan play out when applied to detailed and specific conditions. They will indicate specific land use designations, appropriate densities, and the design standards that should apply in individual Community Planning Sub-areas. Preserving and building community character while ensuring an efficient and predictable development approval process is a central theme.

Community Planning results from a partnership between the City and the businesses, residents, and other stakeholders of a Community Planning Sub-area. They address local issues that are not in a general Comprehensive Plan. Patterns of land use, design, traffic circulation, and services are expressed within the Community Plan for the benefit of the social, economic, physical health, safety, and welfare of the people in the community. Community Plans are a unifying force that identify local characteristics in the community by surveying population, employment, transportation, building, and social attributes. Through the Community Planning process, communities will decide what they want to nurture and what they want to change at the local level.

The purpose of Community Planning is to enhance community values as well as to identify and assure sensible growth and development. One situation that must be avoided is that community plans may be pushed to freeze existing conditions, possibly to frustrate or evade provisions of the Comprehensive Plan that some members of the community may not like. That would have the effect of shifting development pressures and responsibilities outside community boundaries. Community Plans must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Washington State Growth Management Act. Plans should carry preambles with clearly articulated statements of purpose and should contain goals, policies and principles that benefit both the local community and the City of Renton as a whole.

Objective CP-A. Foster the abilities of communities to implement the Comprehensive Plan within the Community Planning sub-areas of the City of Renton.

Policy CP-1. Community Plans will apply Comprehensive Plan policies to specific parcels and groups of parcels within the Community Planning sub-areas.

Policy CP-2. Community Plans will implement the Comprehensive Plan by identifying community design characteristics which are used in project review (special district review, site plan review, conditional use permits, etc.)

Policy CP-3. Community Planning will occur in coordination with existing recognized neighborhood associations, business associations, and other community groups to make recommendations on land use designations, design standards, capital improvements, and

development proposals within the Community Planning sub-areas using the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and Title IV development regulations.

Policy CP-4. The City will utilize an effective communication system that keeps people in Community Planning Sub-areas informed at the beginning, as well as during, the process of creating a Community Plan. After plans are adopted, the City will continue to communicate with the people of Community Planning areas regarding proposed developments and policy decisions that may affect their Community Plan or Community Planning sub-area.

Objective CP-B. Foster community character and preserve the unique identities of neighborhoods and Community Planning sub-areas.

Policy CP-5. Community Plan shall involve the people of the community in plan development and amendment.

Policy CP-6. Community Plans shall articulate a vision for the community.

Policy CP-7. Community Plans shall identify features and characteristics of communities to be retained, developed, preserved, enhanced, or corrected.

Policy CP-8. Community Plans shall consider areas for commercial, industrial, residential, capital facilities, recreation, and other land uses, using the density ranges and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy CP-9. Community Plans shall contain policies that supplement and refine the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy CP-10. Community Plans may identify design features to be encouraged in capital facilities, multi-family residential development, commercial and industrial areas, and in landscaping. Design features may include site planning, building design, and other features which affect the character of the community.

Policy CP-11. Community Plans shall use the Comprehensive Plan policies written to achieve environmental protection, create open space, provide affordable housing, and accomplish other Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives.

Objective CP-C. Support communities in the development of new community plans and in the update of existing community plans.

Policy CP-12. Community Planning sub-areas are defined by the *Community Planning Sub-Area Map* within the Community Planning element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy CP-13. Community Plans will be initiated by the Mayor, City Council, or Planning Commission in order to implement objectives, principles, and standards of the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy CP-14. Communities can request the initiation of Community Plan by submitting a petition to the Mayor and City Council that identifies the reasons why a Community Plan is needed, such as: the need to preserve historical areas, the identification of new community problems, or a change in local conditions.

Policy CP-15. The Community Planning process will be initiated based on the following priorities: public health, safety, or welfare; previous commitments by the City to prepare a Community or Sub-Area plan; and evidence of community support.

Policy CP-16. Community Plans shall focus on policy choices and regulatory options that can be effectively implemented and shown to be beneficial and desirable for the community.

Policy CP-17. During the Community Planning process innovative and updated information should be shared with the Planning Commission and the Planning and Development Committee of the City Council to determine if there is a need or desire for changes City-wide.

Policy CP-18. Communities will be offered the opportunity to update their Community Plans at least every six years.

Objective CP-D. Ensure consistency between Community Plans, development regulations, and the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy CP-19. Establish a process for resolving land use conflicts within communities, and with the Comprehensive Plan, that includes the participation of all stakeholders in coming up with a solution.

Policy CP-20. Community Plan policies and development regulations should be applied City-wide when beneficial and desirable for all Community Planning Sub-areas and when implementation would allow greater consistency between Community Planning Sub-areas.

Policy CP-21. Community Plans should use existing Comprehensive Plan Land Use designations rather than creating new designations. New designations should only be created when existing designations cannot be implemented through a zone classification or variety of zone classifications to meet the same intent.

Policy CP-22. Implement Community Plans through land use regulations and administrative decisions where possible, and through capital facilities provisions and other public programs, as applicable.

Policy CP-23. One set of development regulations shall apply City-wide.

Policy CP-24. City development regulations shall provide a range of alternatives that recognizes and provides for local uniqueness and character. Communities may select from the range of alternatives to achieve their desired character.

Policy CP-25. Community Plans should use existing zone classifications rather than creating new zone classifications. Densities and uses may vary among Community Planning Sub-areas only when consistent with City-wide policies for growth and land use.

Policy CP-26. Communities may recommend changes to the development regulations to achieve the desired character as articulated in an adopted Community Plan. Proposed new regulations should be applied to similar situated locations in other parts of the City when possible.

Policy CP-27. Redundant and inconsistent regulations, procedures, and overlays should be eliminated in Community Plan Sub-areas.

Policy CP-28. Use Community Plan policies as guidelines for identifying mitigation and unacceptable impacts for projects and development proposals.

Added 2008

COMMUNITY PLANNING SUB-AREAS MAP

{Insert Map}

Added 2008

CEDAR RIVER SUB-AREA

Added 2008

EAST RENTON SUB-AREA

Added 2008

FAIRWOOD SUB-AREA

Added 2008

KENNYDALE SUB-AREA

Added 2008

SUNSET SUB-AREA

Added 2008

TALBOT/BENSON HILL SUB-AREA

URBAN CENTER SUB-AREA

Objective LU-RR: Recognize the following Downtown Districts reflecting varying development standards and uses that distinguish these areas.

- 1) Downtown Pedestrian District;
- 3) South Renton's Williams-Wells Subarea (see South Renton Neighborhood Plan);
- 4) South Renton's Burnett Park Subarea (see South Renton Neighborhood Plan); and
- 5) Cedar River Subarea north of the Downtown Core.

Policy LU-229. Encourage the most intensive development in the Downtown Pedestrian District with a transition to lower-scale commercial and residential projects in areas surrounding the Downtown.

Policy LU-230. Ground-floor uses with street frontage in the Downtown Pedestrian District should be limited to businesses that primarily cater to walk-in customer traffic (i.e. retail goods and services) in order to generate and maintain continuous pedestrian activity in these areas.

Policy LU-231. Walk-in customer-oriented businesses should be encouraged to locate along street frontages in the Downtown Pedestrian District and the portion of the Urban Center - Downtown located west of it.

Policy LU-234. Specific streetscapes, development standards, and design guidelines for the South Renton Neighborhood are outlined in the South Renton Neighborhood Plan.

Policy LU-255. Buildings in the Pedestrian District should retain a pedestrian scale by employing design techniques that maintain the appearance and feel of low-rise structures to avoid creation of the "canyon effect" (e.g. preserving historic façades, stepping façades back above the second or third floor).

Policies for Surrounding Residential Area (North Renton Neighborhood, south of N 6th St)

Policy LU-291. Provide a transition in land use with respect to intensity of development where areas mapped Residential Single Family and Residential Options border Urban Center - North designations.

Policy LU-292. Create boulevard standards for arterial streets connecting or running through adjacent residential neighborhoods that address noise, pedestrian sidewalks, planting areas between vehicular lanes and pedestrian areas, traffic calming techniques, lighting standards, a landscape planting plan for street trees and other vegetation, and street furniture.

Policy LU-293. Support a mix of activities within the Urban Center - North designation that supports populations in adjacent residential areas as well as new development within the re-development area. Examples of uses that serve the needs of existing populations include neighborhood-scale retail that addresses the day-to-day needs of residents, restaurants and coffee houses, public facilities, and places of assembly such as parks and plazas.

Proposed Objective (Business Districts): The Rainier Avenue Corridor is one of the busiest arterials in the City and is located as a gateway to the City from both the south and north. The design, function, and configuration of development and re-development should reflect its status as a key gateway.

Proposed Policy (Business Districts): Business signs in the Rainier Avenue Corridor should be uniform in size, content, and location to reduce visual clutter. Monument signs are the preferred type.

I. Urban Center

Policy LU-205. Identify major natural features and support development of new focal points that define the Center and are visually distinctive.

Objective LU-XX: Maintain and expand the available amenities to make the Urban Center - Downtown more appealing to existing and potential customers, residents, and employees.

Policy LU-260. Design guidelines should assist developers in creating attractive projects that add value to the downtown community, attract new residents, employees, and visitors, and foster a unique downtown identity.

Policy LU-261. Design guidelines may vary by zone within the downtown area to recognize and foster unique identities for the different land use areas (i.e. South Renton's Burnett Park Subarea).

Policy LU-263. Urban Center - Downtown development should be designed to take advantage of existing unique downtown amenities such as the Cedar River, City parks and trails, the downtown Transit Center, IKEA Performing Arts Center, and Renton High School.

Policy LU-264. Public amenities such as art, fountains, or similar features should be incorporated into the design of public areas, major streets and gateways of the Urban Center - Downtown.

Policy LU-265. Support more urban intensity of development (e.g. building height, bulk, landscaping, parking standards) than with land uses in the suburban areas of the City outside the Urban Center.

Policy LU-278. Support creation of a significant gateway feature within gateway nodes in the Urban Center-North.

Policy LU-280. Use a hierarchy of conceptual plan, master plan and site plan review and approval to encourage the cohesive development of large land areas within the Urban Center-North. Incorporate integrated design regulations into this review process.

Policy LU-286. Support structured parking to facilitate full redevelopment of the Urban Center over the 30-year planning horizon. Where structured parking is infeasible for

early phases of development, parking should be located in the rear or the side of the primary structure.

Added 2008

VALLEY SUB-AREA

Added 2008

WEST HILL SUB-AREA