



Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes October 21, 2022

The October 21, 2022, Economic Development Board Meeting held in person and via Zoom, was called to order at 7:35 a.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Les Anderson, Kristine Birkenkopf, Dave Pelletier, Randy Heagle, Ashley Palmer (online), Blake Arnold (online)

Absent: John Russell

Staff Members in Attendance:

Sarah Cho, Audrey Rotrock, Tansy Schroeder

Also known to be present: N/A

Approval of Minutes:

The Board unanimously approved the Minutes of the last meeting on September 16, 2022.

Comprehensive Plan Update: Economic Development and Land Use Policy Gap Analysis

One of the Stanwood's consultant firms on the Comprehensive Plan Update project team, has been tasked with performing the gap analysis on the current Comprehensive Plan and are recommending areas of revision and change to the City's goals and policies.

There are three components to the policy analysis:

- 1) Gaps in current policies caused by changes and updates to the Multi-County Planning Policies (MPPs) and Snohomish County's Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs),
- 2) Gaps in goals and policies related to requirements of the housing element in the Growth Management Act, which received a major update in 2021 as a result of the passage of House Bill (HB) 1220; and
- 3) Internal inconsistencies, overlaps, and outdated references or language within the current comprehensive plan.

This policy analysis update presents the Economic Development Board with the policy gaps associated with the land use and economic development elements under component #1 above.

The first level of analysis is identifying which existing City of Stanwood comprehensive plan policies, if any, implement each Countywide Planning Policy (and which CPPs, in turn, implement each Multi-County Planning Policy).

The next level of analysis involves determining whether there is a full or partial gap relative to a Countywide Planning Policy. Partial gaps typically arise as a result of language being added to existing policies, whereas full gaps typically come from new or wholly rewritten MPPs in VISION 2050 that translate to one or more new policies addressing new subjects or requirements within the CPPs. This distinction is important because in many cases, existing policies can be modified, expanded, or rewritten in some way to address a partial gap, while new policies or more substantial rewriting are more likely to be needed if a total gap is identified.

Substantively, there are several different categories of MPP/CPP updates that suggest changes the city could make to its economic development and land use comprehensive plan policies.



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- 1) Updates to regional policies related to changes in the Regional Growth Framework and Centers Framework.
- 2) Access to opportunity, including living wage jobs and jobs-housing balance, for historically underserved populations.
- 3) Access to open space and parks for historically underserved populations.
- 4) Reduction of health disparities.
- 5) Coordination of planning with Tribal Nations.
- 6) Preventing and mitigating displacement.
- 7) Mitigating displacement risk.
- 8) Climate change and resilience.

Board member questions and comments:

- Is there low income/subsidized housing in Stanwood? The low income/subsidized housing in Stanwood is mostly senior housing. The City is working with Affordable Housing Alliance for guidance on how to best address this issue. The City is also using how King county proceeds as an example on how they are handling low income and subsidized housing.
- Since 15% of residents drive 50 miles or more to work, how can Stanwood create more living wage jobs and reduce the number of people having to leave town for work?
 - The City is proposing an emergency ordinance for the Comprehensive Plan and the Municipal code projects for a moratorium on new mini-storage business. The reasoning is, the City wants to protect the remaining Light Industrial zoned parcels for business that create more jobs. Mini-storage businesses typically use a lot of land/space and generally only employ 1 to 3 people. This emergency ordinance will go before Council on October 27, 2022.
 - In order to meet job targets, the City is also considering a new zone titled the "Planned Industrial" (PI) zone. This zone would allow an estimate of 80% industrial uses and 20% commercial uses. This type of zone would allow more business to come in and provide more living wage jobs to the community. An example of a PI zone would be a business park. Details of the proposed PI zone will be worked out through the Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code update projects.
- How does the floodplain effect affordable housing and jobs? The floodplain is not an item that is addressed in the Comprehensive Plan update. Since we cannot move downtown out of the floodplain, the City is working with FEMA to analyze what sort of plan works best for Stanwood to keep the downtown area vital and safe from flooding.
- What is the status of the potential SR 532 roundabout that would route traffic north? WA DOT is concluding their outreach survey by the end of October and will provide a summary and a proposed solution by the end of 2022.
- Has there been a dip in residential permit applications? The City had not received any residential building permit applications for the first eight months of the year. This was partially due to LGI finishing construction in 2021, when their original projection was to finish in early 2022. The City is starting to see residential building applications for the new Chandler's Reserve development and there are many subdivision projects in the pipeline.
- An assessment is being conducted for the City Hall building to see what the substantial improvement threshold would be for a possible renovation.



2023 Special Event/Tourism Grant – Glass Quest

The Stanwood City Council has adopted and funded a Special Events / Tourism Grant program, established under Resolution No. 2018-13, to promote community events that draw visitors from outside the area. Grants are considered by the Economic Development Board and awarded by the Mayor.

The Great Northwest Glass Quest is a 10-day treasure hunt for hand blown glass balls that attracts thousands of people to Stanwood and Camano Island each February. The GNWGQ is applying for a Tourism Grant through the City of Stanwood. The requested amount listed on the application is \$2,000. Grants may be considered in an amount up to \$1,000 for events with less than 4,000 participants, and \$2,000 for events over 4,000 participants.

2022 data taken from on-line check-ins showed the total number of individual questers to be close to 10,000 individuals. Of those people who checked in online, 1,987 individuals indicated that they were here for a day trip, 1,202 individuals lived in the area, 463 individuals stayed overnight in paid accommodations, and 68 individuals stayed overnight with family or friends.

For 2023, they are anticipating a budget of \$54,800, which meets the requirements of the 50% grant award match. History shows the Great Northwest Glass Quest event routinely brings in over 4,000 participants and continues to grow. The event qualifies for the full grant award of \$2,000.

The Board unanimously supports awarding the grant.

Business License Analytics

In the month of September, the City received a total of 32 new business applications – 24 Non-Resident Business, 4 Home Occupation Business Licenses, and 6 City Business Licenses. Below is the breakdown of NAICS codes for the businesses:

- 50% were classified as Construction,
- 10% were classified as Administrative Support and Waste Management & Remediation Services,
- 6% were classified as Wholesale Trade,
- 3% were classified as Finance and Insurance,
- 3% were classified as Healthcare and Social Assistance,
- 3% were classified as Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation,
- 3% were classified as Accommodation and Food Services,
- 22% were classified as Other Services.

Discover Stanwood Camano Analytics

Analytics for the month of September are as follows: Users: 2,229, Page views: 3,829. Of those views, 89.3% were New Visitors and 10.7% were Returning Visitors.

The Acquisition Overview is 46.3% was from an Organic search, 26.9% was from a Direct search, 20.4% through Social Media, and the remaining 6.4% was through a Referral.

The audience locations from the United States were: Washington: 1,495, Wyoming: 134, Virginia: 94, California: 90, and Texas: 44.

Within Washington, the audience locations were: Seattle: 433, Not Set: 286, Camano: 82, Everett: 67, Stanwood: 46, Marysville: 44, and Mount Vernon: 35.



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Facebook Page Reach: 24,984, Page Visits: 628.

Instagram Page Reach: 2,776, Profile Visits: 190.

Board member questions and comments:

- Sarah Cho is working with the website developer to track the search words people are using to find the DSC site. There will be updates on this next month after the new tracker has time to gather and process more data. Preliminary results indicate that search words include “Camano”, “Stanwood”, and “things to do”.
- The City considering using TikTok as additional outreach platform for DSC.
- The Board would like to see a new post about “Halloween on the Brick Road” to include Halloween events in the eastern portion of downtown.
- There will be a Christmas tree placed at the triangle and at City Hall. The western portion of downtown would like to do pictures with Santa and tree lighting event on the brick road.
- The DSC website has been updated to remove businesses that are no longer operating and now include the newest business in Stanwood.

Economic Development Board Rules of Procedure

The Stanwood City Council established an Economic Development Board with the intent to promote a favorable business environment to retain businesses in the City and encourage tourism in the City. At the last City Council meeting, City Council has requested staff to reevaluate term limits and schedules so that a majority of board positions do not expire at the same time, and that board position terms are staggered. The following board members and their terms have been renewed to December 31, 2024: Les Anderson, Randy Heagle, Blake Arnold, John Russell, and Ashley Palmer.

After discussing, the Board members had the following comments:

- Consider staggering terms, so all don’t expire at the same time.
- If a Board member resigns, the replacement member should start a new term, instead of finishing out their predecessor’s term.
- Add two more members to equal nine members total. Split the nine members into thirds and stagger their term expirations.
- If adding new members, consider representatives from different business areas than ones already represented on the Board such as a non-profit group, someone from the art community, an insurance representative, a developer, or someone from the school district, to name a few.
- Ashley Palmer and Randy Heagle volunteered to adjust their terms to allow for staggered expirations.

Chamber of Commerce Update – Les Anderson

The Stanwood Chamber of Commerce has their paperwork submitted for dissolution. Stanwood Commerce Alliance has their paperwork submitted to create the new group. This new Alliance may partner with the Economic Alliance of Snohomish County (EASC) at a later date, but currently it is not economically feasible.

The Alliance is creating plans for inviting people to become members. Members who paid dues in 2022 will get a new membership at no cost. The new Alliance is considering ways to attract people and bring them together with business assistance, seminars, fundraisers and more.



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Other Updates

Randy Heagle's fall festival was a big success. He is planning to make it an annual event.

Adjourn: 8:39 am

Next meeting: November 18, 2022, at City Hall at 7:30 am

Audrey Rotrock, Associate Planner