

# Auburn Community Profile

September 2015

## **1.1 The City – An Overview**

The Green, White, and Stuck Rivers once converged on the valley floor, where the Southern Coast Salish people (now collectively known as the Muckleshoot Tribe) lived on the river and vicinity's bounty. Eventually, others also settled the valley, which was made accessible by military roads in the 1850s and railroad in the 1880s.

Many of these settlers, including Americans from the East and Midwest, as well as immigrants of European and Japanese descent, took advantage of the river in a different way than the Muckleshoot; these newcomers farmed a valley rendered fertile from regular flooding. Farming thrived for many decades in Auburn and its surrounds, following incorporation in 1891. However, agriculture was not the only driver of the economic engine.

Construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad's Auburn Yard facilities in the early 1910s ushered in the City's first population boom. Businesses serving the burgeoning railroad worker population expanded and business prospects continued through the 1920s. The favorable business environment came to an abrupt halt when the Great Depression hit in 1929.

World War II and the associated war effort, with plentiful employment for non-draftees, brought the City out of its economic slump, though not for the City's and surrounds' substantial Japanese-American population. For the Japanese-American residents, war did not bring economic stability, but far away federal internment camps and lost homes, farms, and businesses instead. Many of the City's Japanese-American residents never returned.

Those who did return were veterans starting families. Along with an influx of middle class workers moving away from larger cities, Auburn's population once again ballooned and would grow at an unprecedented pace until the late 1960s. This time around, the development pattern was significantly less centralized. While some businesses set up shop or expanded in downtown Auburn, many more stores, beginning with automobile dealerships, moved into the surrounding farmland along Auburn Way and other auto-oriented corridors.

The surrounding farmland was also prime (and affordable) real estate for industrial redevelopment. With construction of the Howard Hanson Dam in 1962, catastrophic flooding was no longer a regular threat. Access to State Route 18 and State Route 167, constructed in the 1960s and 1970s, also added to the appeal. As a result, large employers such as Boeing, as well as a plethora of warehousing and distribution centers and various light industrial enterprises, began to supersede farms in the valley.

The "Boeing Bust" in 1971 slowed, but did not stop, redevelopment of the once-agricultural valley. While population growth slowed in the 1970s, an accelerated local and regional economic

recovery beginning in the 1980s set the foundation for rapid residential development on Lea Hill and West Hill in the 1980s through 1990s (then unincorporated) and in Lakeland Hills in the 1990s and 2000s.

Not just a regional destination for businesses and homes, construction of the SuperMall (now The Outlet Collection), Emerald Downs Thoroughbred Racetrack, and Muckleshoot Casino in the 1990s provided attractions for leisure in Auburn. Since 2000, the portfolio of attractions has been expanded with Green River Community College (now Green River College), which was annexed into City limits during the Lea Hill and West Hill annexations in 2008, the construction of the downtown Auburn Transit Center, and ongoing revitalization of downtown Auburn that aims to be the enduring business, government, and cultural focal point of the City. Further, with a population that has increased from less than 300 at incorporation to more than 74,860 currently, Auburn continues to be a place where diverse cross sections of people live, work, and play.

## **1.2 The City – A Timeline**

### **The First Settlers**

**Pre-1850s: Semi-nomadic** Southern Coast Salish tribal groups, such as the Skopamish, Smalhkamish, and Stkamish, lived in winter villages along the Green, White, and Stuck Rivers, which is present-day Auburn. In these winter villages, such as Ilalko, which was located where the Green and White Rivers once converged (near where 8<sup>th</sup> ST NE crosses the Green River today), the tribal groups relied upon stored foods and local resources. In the spring and summer, the Southern Coast Salish hunted, fished, clammed, and gathered berries and other plant life.

**1853:** Military roads traversed the White River Valley, the first east-west overland routes from eastern Washington Territory to Puget Sound. Shortly thereafter, Americans from the Eastern and Midwestern United States, as well as many European and Japanese immigrants, began to settle the area, lured by the “free” and fertile land.

**1854-56:** The Treaties of Medicine Creek and Point Elliott were negotiated with Puget Sound-area Native Americans and signed, establishing reservation lands and the right to off-reservation resources. The Southern Coast Salish tribal groups living along the Green, White, and Stuck Rivers were not associated or recognized as a single tribe and were to be relocated onto the Nisqually Reservation. Following the treaties, a series of clashes, commonly known as the Puget Sound Treaty Wars or Indian Wars, occurred between Native Americans territory-wide and non-Native settlers.

**1856/74:** Following the clashes, the Muckleshoot Reservation was recommended for establishment in 1856. An 1874 executive order issued by Washington Territory Governor Isaac

Stevens established the Muckleshoot Reservation for the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, which included the riverbank-dwelling Southern Coast Salish tribal groups.

**1883-84:** The Northern Pacific's Transcontinental Railroad line between Seattle and Tacoma began operation allowing people to travel to Auburn and the White River Valley from across the region and country by rail.

## **1890s**

**1891:** The Town of Slaughter, named after Lieutenant William Slaughter, who was killed in the Puget Sound Treaty Wars, was incorporated. At the time of incorporation, the town was home to a wooden boardwalk Main Street that had two restaurants, saloons, a few of specialty stores, and the Ohio House Hotel, often-called "Slaughter House" by the locals. The town's name, liked Lieutenant Slaughter, was short-lived.

**1893:** The Town of Slaughter was officially renamed the City of Auburn when it was officially incorporated. That was not the only major change that occurred in that year. The Auburn area's industries around the time of incorporation included charcoal and terra cotta kilns, lumber mills, dairies, berry and other produce farms, and above all, booming hops farms. In quick succession, there were hops-destroying aphid plague in 1891 and the Panic of 1893, which brought down prices for hops and brought about the hops industry's eventual collapse. As a result, many hops farms became dairy farms. Without access to loans, the Panic of 1893 also resulted in foreclosures and abandoned properties. However, agriculture as a whole survived the nationwide economic depression of 1893 and continued to thrive in the Auburn area.

## **1900s**

**1900-10:** The first full decade since incorporation saw modest population growth, from 740 to 960 people.

**1902:** The Puget Sound Electric Railway, more commonly known as the Interurban, inaugurated service with speeds of up to sixty miles per hour and up to thirty-six daily roundtrips between Seattle and Tacoma at its peak. The Interurban provided Auburn and the White River Valley, and its people and produce, a fast and frequent connection to Seattle and Tacoma. In addition, it fostered the growth of businesses serving railroad workers and commuters traveling through the City.

**1903:** Dairy farming's continued prominence culminated in the opening of the Borden Condensed Milk Company (formerly Borden's Pioneer Milk Company) facility near 4<sup>th</sup> and D ST NW. During this period, Borden was Auburn's second-largest employer, second only to the railroads. In addition to Borden, many other dairy-related companies were located in Auburn.

**1906:** The problems of a growing population, associated development, and heavy rains culminated in a record flood this year. During the flood, as in years past, debris choked the White River and diverted its northward course southward, into the Stuck River. The record flood resulted in a decision to permanently seal off the White River channel and divert all water into the Stuck River, in an effort to curb flooding of the White River. Over the ensuing years, though the diversion dam was built and former channel of the White River was filled and developed, seasonal flooding did not cease in the valley.

## **1910s**

**1910-20:** Downtown Auburn evolved from wooden boardwalks to concrete sidewalks and from horse-drawn carts to automobiles. Businesses grew in numbers and diversity to keep pace with the population. Since Auburn Yard's arrival in 1910, the City had expanded more than three-fold, from 960 to 3,160 people.

**1910-13:** The Northern Pacific Railroad constructed Auburn Yard, its western freight terminal, which included a 24-stall roundhouse, car repair shops, and a yard office. The construction and subsequent operation of Auburn Yard ushered in the City's first population boom.

**1917:** The railroads were nationalized as the United States joined the Allies in World War I. This translated into better wages for railroad workers and employment of women as railroad machinist and cleaner. While the higher wages continued into the 1920s, most women were laid off and those remaining transitioned into railroad clerical positions.

## **1920s**

**1920-30:** Though the majority of the 1920s were prosperous, Auburn's population of 3,906 just after the Great Depression's onset reflects an increase of only about 24%, a modest amount compared to the large increase between 1910 and 1920.

**1921:** Auburn General Hospital (now MultiCare Auburn Medical Center) opened in downtown Auburn, providing modern medical services to the City's growing population.

**1921/1923/1925:** The state legislature adopted laws prohibiting non-citizens from land ownership and use of land through sharecropping, leasing, or renting. The laws disproportionately affected the large population of Japanese farmers and other non-white ethnicities in the Auburn area. While in 1925, the State Supreme Court ruled that minority American-born citizens could hold title to land formerly belonging to his or her parents, many were forced to make changes. Some of the Auburn area's significant Japanese population returned to Japan and others changed to commercial

professions less/not dependent upon land cultivation. Many others toiled on land they had previously owned.

**1928:** As the automobile became the preferred mode of travel, the Interurban ceased service and regular passenger rail service to Seattle and Tacoma by rail would not return for 72 years.

**1929:** The Great Depression set in, downsizing or closing many Auburn businesses; a lack of financing impeded the establishment of new businesses to take their place. The crash was manifested in general unemployment and poverty, and more viscerally, in the homeless encampments of jobless laborers around the Auburn area.

### **1930s**

**1930-40:** Growing to 4,211, Auburn's population was more or less stagnant throughout the 1930s.

**1930:** Public utility districts, such as water and sewer districts beyond City limits, authorized by the State, laid the groundwork for unincorporated areas around Auburn to absorb some of the exponential population growth in the 1950 and 1960s.

### **1940s**

**1940-50:** Growing to 6,497 people, Auburn's population gain in the 1940s was almost twice that gained between the two decades from 1920 to 1940. There was marked population and business growth post-World War II.

**1941:** Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States entered into World War II. With the labor pool decreased by the drafting of young men and increased government spending for the war effort, unemployment plummeted. The employed now counted amongst its ranks older children helping with the harvest. The employed also included for the first time since World War I, women working in retail and manufacturing, both within the City and at Boeing's factories in nearby cities.

**1942:** The entirety of the sizable Japanese-American population in the Auburn area, along with other Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast, was relocated by the federal government to distant internment camps for the duration of the war. Many families lost homes, farms, and businesses. Most never returned.

**1943:** The U.S. Army Air Force depot, including multiple warehouses (and an administrative building in 1956), opened where General Services Administration (GSA) Region 10 headquarters is now located.

**1943:** The Auburn Ave Theatre, a former bus terminal, opened its doors in downtown Auburn. The theatre provided a venue for cinematic escape from wartime realities and since the 1970s, has become a venue for live music and theatre performances.

**1945:** The end of World War II brought veterans and a baby boom to Auburn. Transportation improvements also brought middle-class workers who wanted to relocate from larger cities to a slice of suburbia. Existing businesses expanded and brand new businesses opened in Auburn, catering to the growing population – and the automobiles they used to get around. Though much of Auburn and the area around it remained primarily agricultural, change was apace.

**1948:** Scarff Motors relocated to 501 Auburn Way N, then the outskirts of town. The move prompted other car dealerships to follow suit, mirroring Scarff Motors' lead northward into the farmlands around Auburn. The resultant cluster of car dealerships along Auburn Way N, as they continue to exist today, earned Auburn the moniker “Little Detroit of the West”, and strong car sales contributed sales tax revenue to fund City services.

**1949:** A 7.1-magnitude earthquake felt from Seattle to Chehalis also changed the commercial landscape, damaging brick and masonry facades in downtown. Many of these facades were rebuilt in more modern styles reflecting preferences of the era.

## **1950s**

**1950-60:** Growing to 11,933, Auburn's population had almost doubled in the 1950s. Growth in population and businesses continued and spurred annexations that pushed City limits just north of 40<sup>th</sup> ST NE and south to the foot of the Muckleshoot Reservation plateau and almost to the White River.

**1956:** Lakehaven Utility District was established, providing water and sewer service to the West Hill area of the City, then located in unincorporated King County. The presence of these services spurred westward growth.

## **1960s**

**1960-70:** At 21,653, Auburn's population had once again almost doubled since 1960. Expansion of City limits continued in the 1960s, incorporating the slopes of West Hill, portions of the Muckleshoot Reservation plateau, and areas past the White River to the King-Pierce County line.

**Early 1960s:** Water District 111 was established, providing water service to the Lea Hill area of the City, then located in unincorporated King County.

**1961:** The General Services Administration (GSA) Region 10 headquarters moved to Auburn, taking over facilities constructed as a depot for the U.S. Army Air Force in the 1940s and 1950s. GSA continues to be a large employer in the City.

**1962:** The Howard Hanson Dam was completed, significantly decreasing the size and frequency of seasonal flooding in the valley. With significant seasonal flooding no longer a threat, the one-time agricultural valley attracted, in addition to the already-present GSA, large employers such as the Federal Aviation Administration (1962) and Boeing (1966), as well as a plethora of warehousing and distribution centers and various light industrial enterprises.

**1964:** The Auburn portion of State Route 18 opened, eventually connecting downtown Auburn and the Lea Hill area to Interstate 5 to the west and Interstate 90 to the northeast. Access to the interstate highway system continued the momentum of redeveloping the one-time agricultural valley into an industrial breadbasket.

**1965:** Green River Community College (now Green River College) opened on Lea Hill. Located in unincorporated King County, the school provided adult education courses for both the growing City and burgeoning Lea Hill area.

**1965:** Downtown Auburn hosted its first Veterans Day Parade, now one of the largest in the nation. The parade honored veterans and active military personnel, both of which continue to comprise a sizeable portion of the City's population.

**1966:** Les Gove Park opened. Over the ensuing years, the park evolved into a recreational and educational campus encompassing a library (1964), the White River Valley Museum (1970), senior center (1977), the Parks, Arts, and Recreation Administration Building (1977), and a gymnasium (2011).

**1969:** Auburn Municipal Airport opened, capitalizing on the Boeing boom and serving general aviation purposes.

## **1970s**

**1970-80:** Auburn grew to a population of 26,417, which paled in comparison to preceding years. The factors affecting the growth rate were the "Boeing Bust" and the slow recovery that followed and less-than-rosy local and national economic climate through much of the 1970s. However, continued redevelopment of the valley into warehousing and light industry and the Auburn General Hospital (now MultiCare Medical Center) expansion provided some relief in a dismal economic

period. Nevertheless, the City expanded northward to S 277<sup>th</sup> ST and for the first time, across the Green River by annexing the Auburn Golf Course at the base of Lea Hill.

**1971:** Citing noise and environmental concerns, federal funding for developing supersonic transport was suspended. The subsequent “Boeing Bust” led to layoffs for over 2/3s of Boeing’s 100,000-plus workforce in the Puget Sound region, which included workers at Boeing’s Auburn manufacturing facility. Boeing and the region slowly rebounded through the late 1970s.

**1972:** The Auburn portion of State Route 167 (a.k.a. the Valley Freeway) opened, providing a north-south route paralleling Interstate 5 through the valley. Capitalizing on the east-west connection provided with the earlier-completed State Route 18, the valley continued to be redeveloped with warehousing and distribution centers and light industrial enterprises taking advantage of the Auburn’s convenient access to the region and beyond.

**1975:** The half-century old building that had housed Auburn General Hospital (now MultiCare Auburn Medical Center) since the 1920s was replaced with a larger and more efficient building.

**1979:** Microsoft moved from Albuquerque, New Mexico to Bellevue, Washington. The move reinvigorated the region by attracting other technology companies to the region, which diversified an economy that was rebounding from a surplus of skilled and educated workers laid off by Boeing.

## **1980s**

**1980-90:** Growing to 33,102 by 1990, the City’s population grew in the 1980s at a rate similar to its growth in the 1970s, which is significantly slower than between the end of World War II and 1970. During the 1980s, while the City became an employment hub, it also became more suburban, with many of its residents commuting to employment beyond its borders.

**1981:** The City adopted its first floodplain regulations. While construction of the Howard Hanson Dam in 1962 eliminated significant seasonal flooding of the valley, areas along river banks were still subject to flooding during significant storm events.

**1983/87:** Burlington Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) relocated most of its operations from Auburn Yard, at one time one of the City’s largest employers, to its Seattle and Tacoma facilities. Several years later, BNSF demolished most of the buildings related to operations at Auburn Yard.

**1988:** City Council adopted the Lakeland Hills Plan for the King County portion of the Lakeland Hills area in the City. The plan set the stage for a planned residential community as demand for housing grew with the local and regional economy.

## **1990s**

**1990-2000:** Growing to 40,314 by 2000, the City grew steadily in the 1990s, at a pace similar to the 1970s and 1980s.

**1990:** The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) was adopted in response to rapid growth in the Puget Sound Region's population and employment. The GMA mandated that local jurisdictions conduct comprehensive planning in accordance with statewide goals and the City subsequently updated its Comprehensive Plan for consistency. See Chapter 3 of this Comprehensive Plan for more information regarding the GMA.

**1990:** The Downtown Auburn Design Master Plan was adopted and subsequently updated in 2001. See Chapter 6 of this Comprehensive Plan for more information.

**1991:** The Auburn Adventist Academy Plan was adopted. See Chapter 6 of this Comprehensive Plan for more information.

**1992:** The Auburn North Business Area Plan was adopted. See Chapter 6 of this Comprehensive Plan for more information.

**1995:** The previous Comprehensive Plan was adopted, which included substantial amendments to the 1986 plan for consistency with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) and King County Countywide Planning Policies. The Comprehensive Plan has been updated in annual increments since 1995.

**1995/1996:** The Muckleshoot Casino, Supermall (now The Outlet Collection), and Emerald Downs opened, adding regional entertainment and shopping destinations to the City.

**1996:** Burlington Northern-Santa Fe reopened the Stampede Pass to freight traffic. BNSF trains once again rumbled through the valley, creating challenges for travel east-west across a valley transformed from farms to a home for regional attractions, warehousing and light industry, and more than 10 times the number of people when Auburn Yard was constructed. Several grade-separation projects between City streets (S 277<sup>th</sup> Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street SW, and M Street SE) and railroad right-of-way are constructed as a result in the ensuing decades.

**1998:** Keeping pace with the local and regional economic boom, City Council adopted the Lakeland Hills South Plan and annexed the Pierce County portion of the Lakeland Hills area, which had been established as the Lakeland Hills South Planned Unit Development (PUD). Subsequently, this area expanded and was mostly built out in the 2000s. Unlike the King County portion of Lakeland Hills, the Lakeland Hills South PUD also established commercial areas within the planned residential community.

## **2000s**

**2000-10:** Growing to 70,180 in 2010, the City's population nearly doubled in the 2000s, though a portion of the growth stems from annexation of the Lea Hill and West Hill areas.

**2000/2001:** Completion of the Auburn Transit Center and commencement of Sounder commuter rail service to Seattle and Tacoma kicked off renewed interest in maintaining downtown Auburn. As “the physical and cultural heart of the Auburn community”, policy was aimed toward its renewal, as espoused by the updated Auburn Downtown Plan adopted in 2001.

**2002:** Auburn General Hospital (now MultiCare Medical Center) expanded again, with a four-story patient tower added to its downtown Auburn facilities.

**2005:** The City adopted its first Critical Areas Ordinance. While already regulating critical areas, such as wetlands, streams, and landslide hazard areas, the ordinance clarifies more specifically how critical areas are regulated within the City.

**2006:** In recognition of its ecological and economic development value, approximately 114 acres of wetland on the east side of State Route 167, between 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW and W Main Street, were set aside and the Auburn Environmental Park was established. Construction of a bird tower and wetland boardwalk trail followed. An associated zoning district between the park and the Interurban Trail was established with the intent of attracting medical, biotech and “green” technology businesses, including those in the fields of energy conservation, engineering, and water quality.

**2008:** The City annexed the Lea Hill and West Hill areas from King County, bringing in a substantial residential population along with Green River Community College (now Green River College).

**2008:** The Northeast Auburn/Robertson Properties Special Area Plan was adopted. See Chapter 6 of this Comprehensive Plan for more information.

## **2010s**

**2012:** The S Division Street promenade opened, serving as the catalyst for redeveloping the four Auburn Junction blocks south of Main Street between the two A Streets. The Auburn Junction blocks are currently redeveloping with a four-story commercial-residential mixed use building and a five-story senior housing community.

**2013:** The M Street underpass project was completed.

**2014:** The City's first significant mixed used transit oriented development (Trek) breaks ground. Imagine Auburn visioning process.

### **1.3 Community Profile**

Understanding how Auburn has grown and changed over time not only tells a story, but also helps clarify the direction of development. The data included in this chapter, taken from the 2010 United States Census, provide insight into trends and tendencies with respect to population, ethnicities, households, age, and jobs. These statistics provide a numerical description of the City of Auburn and help define the size and location of the people who live within The trends inform the needs and demands for growth, but community values and principles should shape the ways in which those issues are addressed. Using these data holistically and combining them with previous plans, existing circumstances, and community values allows the comprehensive plan to properly assess and determine a course of action to meet Auburn's future goals.

#### **AUBURN TODAY**

##### ***Population Characteristics***

As of 2014, Auburn ranks as the 14th most populated city within the State of Washington. It is located within the two most populous counties in the state (King and Pierce counties) and is nearly equidistant from its two largest cities, Seattle and Tacoma. Proximity to both these cities and being in a central location within Puget Sound Region has helped Auburn grow at a steady rate. Since the 1950's, Auburn's population has increased substantively. Between 1950 to 1970, Auburn's population increased from about 6,500 to about 21,500. From 1970 to 1990, Auburn's population rate of growth slowed, increasing to about 33,000. In 1998, the City of Auburn began annexing several large tracts of land that precipitated the start of several large housing developments. The annexation of southwest Lea Hill in Year 2000 and West Hill and the balance of Lea Hill in 2008 increased Auburn's population significantly. As of 2010, the population of Auburn has increased to 70,180. The 2013 US Census Bureau population estimates place the overall Auburn population at

almost 75,000 people (74,860 precisely). Population estimates for 2011 and 2012 were 71,567 and 73,428, respectively.

### ***Racial and Ethnic Characteristics***

Auburn has seen significant demographic changes over the last decade. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, approximately 70.5% of Auburn's population is White/Non-Hispanic; data from the 2000 Census reported the white population in Auburn at 79%. In 1990, the white population was roughly 90%. What this means is that Auburn has grown significantly more diverse in a 25-year period. As of 2013 estimates, the overall white population is just under 50,000 at 49,238. This means that approximately 68.5% of Auburn's population is white. If this trend continues, Auburn will become increasingly racially diverse.

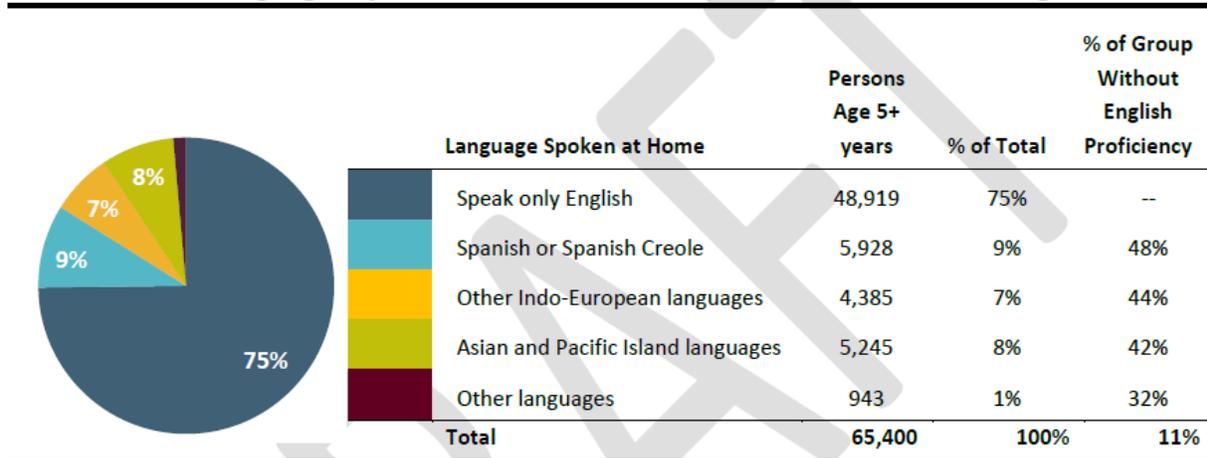
As of 2013, 7,400 residents were Asian, which is just over 10% of the total population. Blacks or African Americans account for about 5.5% of the population (3,932 residents) and American Indians account for another 2.0% (just under 1500 people). The most substantial group, Hispanics or Latinos, are 13% of the population, though they are an ethnic, not a racial group. There are approximately 9,300 Hispanic or Latino residents in Auburn. These demographic shifts point toward a more diverse Auburn. As a result of these changes in racial and ethnic makeup, the amount of people speaking a diverse number of languages have expanded dramatically.

### **TABLE 1**

#### **Languages Spoken at Home in Auburn**

## Languages Spoken at Home

**Exhibit 9**  
**Languages Spoken at Home in Auburn, 2008-2012 5-Year Average**



Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Approximately 25% of Auburn residents speak a language other than English at home. This percentage is comparable to King County (25%) and is significantly higher than Pierce County (14%). Spanish (9%), Asian and Pacific Island languages (8%), and other Indo-European languages (7%) are the most common languages spoken other than English.

**TABLE 2**

Languages Spoken at Home in Auburn, King County, and Pierce County

**Exhibit 10**  
**Languages Spoken at Home in Auburn, King County, and Pierce County**  
**2008-2012 5-Year Average**

Language Spoken at Home	Auburn		King County		Pierce County	
	% of Total	% of Group Without English Proficiency	% of Total	% of Group Without English Proficiency	% of Total	% of Group Without English Proficiency
Speak only English	75%	--	75%	--	86%	--
Speak a language other than English	25%	44%	25%	43%	14%	40%
Spanish or Spanish Creole	9%	48%	7%	46%	6%	37%
Other Indo-European languages	7%	44%	6%	31%	3%	34%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	8%	42%	11%	47%	5%	45%
Other languages	1%	32%	2%	44%	1%	38%

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Of the group who speak a language other than English, approximately 44% did not speak English proficiently. This is slightly higher than in King County (43%) and notably higher than Pierce County (40%). Among Auburn's Spanish-speaking population, nearly half do not speak English well. Among Auburn's population that speaks other Indo-European languages, 44% are not proficient in English. Among Auburn's population that speaks Asian and Pacific Island languages, 42% are not proficient in English. These data are instructive to help the City understand the types of support and programs that need to be provided to the ever-changing makeup of Auburn.

***Household and Income Characteristics***

The year 2000 Census indicated that Auburn had 16,108 households; this number has catapulted. The current household number estimates (based on 2013 figures) have increased to 27,427. This significant increase is due to substantial development activity over the past 15 or so years. This massive net growth includes the slowdown in development that coincided with the economic downturn from 2008-2011, but a reasonably steady local economy in Auburn. A predominant number of households in Auburn are either one or two person households. One person households reflect 25.6% of total households and 2-person households are 31.5%. 3-person and 4-person households are 16.4 and 14.3 percent, respectively. Households of 5 or more account for another 12.2%. Approximately two-thirds of all households are comprised of related persons; the other third are non-family households, which are primarily people living alone.

Homeownership in Auburn is just under 60 percent, which is 3.5 points lower than the State of Washington average. The lower percentage of homeownership corresponds to Auburn's other below-Washington averages in per capita income, median household income, graduation rate, as well as a higher-than-average percentage of persons under the poverty level. Auburn's median household income is \$55,483 compared to the Washington average of \$59,478, which is a nearly \$4,000 difference, this reducing earning power.

### *Housing Characteristics*

The number of housing units has steadily increased, reflecting Auburn's growth. Currently, there are 27,834 housing units, as of 2013. That number was 19,420 in 2004, which is a 43% increase in ten years. The health of the housing market is clear from the large increase in housing units. Another sign of a stable market is the vacancy rate; in 2013, Auburn had a housing unit vacancy rate of 6.4%, which is consistent for the Western region of the United States and well below the national average. Interestingly, 34% of the housing units are in multi-unit structures and while a higher percentage than the State of Washington average of 25%, is lower than the King County average of 38%. The average home cost is \$25,000 less than the state average (\$238,500 compared to \$262,100), which is consistent with the expected market based on household and income findings.

### *Housing Condition and Quality*

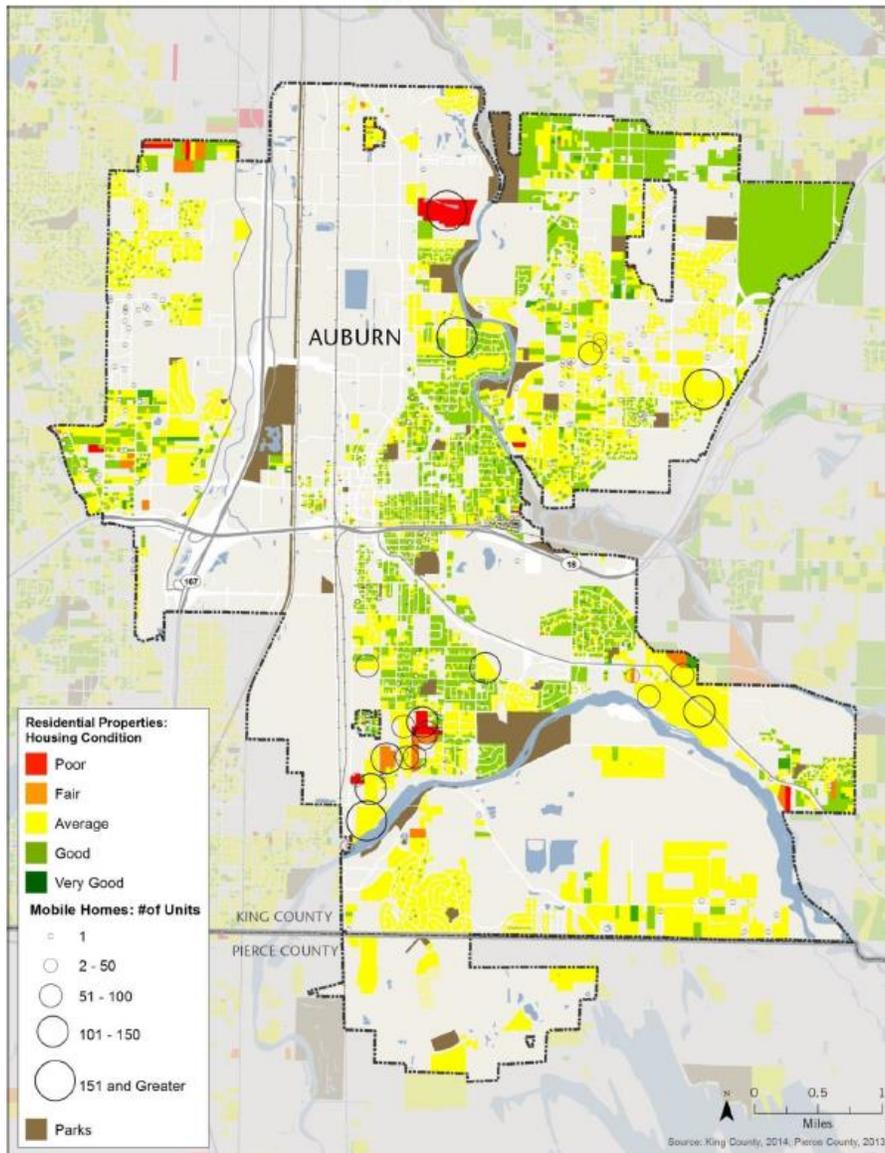
King County and Pierce County Assessors' ratings of Auburn's residential structure paint a picture of housing stock that is largely average. This means most maintenance has been deferred. A majority of the housing stock in Auburn is older than 40 years; many structures are facing comprehensive refurbishment and updates to keep them usable and habitable.

Downtown-adjacent areas are dominated by 'good' rating; these neighborhoods reflect continuous investment based on the variety in the ages of building stock and the dominance of well-constructed, older homes. Areas dominated by both low ratings (average and poor) and homogeneity of building age are likely to have significant deficiencies. Building conditions rated 'poor' represent housing that has the greatest quality deficiencies and may be posing a health or safety risk to inhabitants. Areas with higher concentrations of mobile homes tend to show average to poor conditions. Due to the nature of mobile home construction, full replacement is necessary for mobile units with deferred maintenance or outdated systems.

## **MAP 1**

### **Residential Building Condition**

**Exhibit 32 Residential Building Condition and Mobile Homes in Auburn**



Source: King County and Pierce County Assessors Offices, 2014; BERK Consulting 2014

1 = Poor- Worn out. Repair and overhaul needed on painted surfaces, roofing, plumbing, heating, and numerous functional inadequacies. Excessive deferred maintenance and abuse, limited value-in use, approaching abandonment or major reconstruction; reuse or change in occupancy is imminent. Effective age is near the end of the scale regardless of the actual chronological age.

2 = Fair- Badly worn. Much repair needed. Many items need refinishing or overhauling, deferred maintenance obvious, inadequate building utility and systems all shortening the life expectancy and increasing the effective age.

3 = Average- Some evidence of deferred maintenance and normal obsolescence with age in that a few minor repairs are needed, along with some refinishing. All major components still functional and contributing toward an extended life expectancy. Effective age and utility is standard for like properties of its class and usage.

4 = Good- No obvious maintenance required but neither is everything new. Appearance and utility are above the standard and the overall effective age will be lower than the typical property.

5= Very Good- All items well maintained, many having been overhauled and repaired as they have shown signs of wear, increasing the life expectancy and lowering the effective age with little deterioration or obsolescence evident with a high degree of utility.

### ***Age Characteristics***

Auburn is a statistically younger community than the state of Washington. The median age in Washington is 37 years; the median age in Auburn is 35.5. This is up from 34.1 years of age in 2000. While the median age has increased, the youth population remains significant. 7.4% of Auburn residents are under 5 years of age and 25.9% are under the age of 18. There are all significantly higher than the state average. The percentage of people over the age of 65 is 10.2%, which compares similarly to the state of Washington figure of 12.3%. Over the last 15 or so years, Auburn has grown significantly younger; the median age is higher, but the statistics suggest growth in the working-age adult demographic, many of whom have children. These changing data suggests a need for services and programming that address the needs of children and families, while continuing to focus on the needs of more mature adults and single people of all ages.

### ***Resident Labor Force and Employment Characteristics***

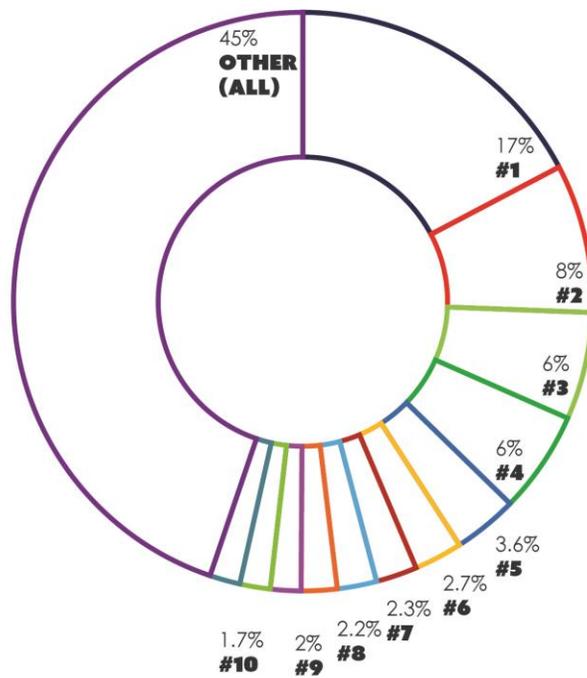
Since its population boom during the construction of the railroad freight terminals at the start of the 20th Century, Auburn has in many respects remained a "blue collar" community. This trend, however, is declining as local economies in Washington diversify. In 1990, one out of four of Auburn's residents worked in the manufacturing industry. Between 1990 and 2000, Auburn's resident labor force lost 1,000, or approximately one-fourth, of these manufacturing jobs. This trend of manufacturing job loss has been a nationwide trend, as companies relocate to other cities and states based on tax savings, and many other companies are increasingly outsourcing jobs overseas. In this ever-changing landscape, jobs continue to migrate into different sectors. This slow shift is evidenced by the lessened impact of major employers in Auburn. They no longer dominate the job market as intensely; small and medium-sized companies create many more jobs. As recently as 2002, the top ten employers accounted for nearly 85% of the total city employment. In

2011, these same employers, which remained in the top ten, accounted for 55% of the total employment base. This illustrates that the number of total jobs has significantly increased and that the number of job providers or employers has also increased.

**GRAPH 1**

**Top Auburn Employers 2011**

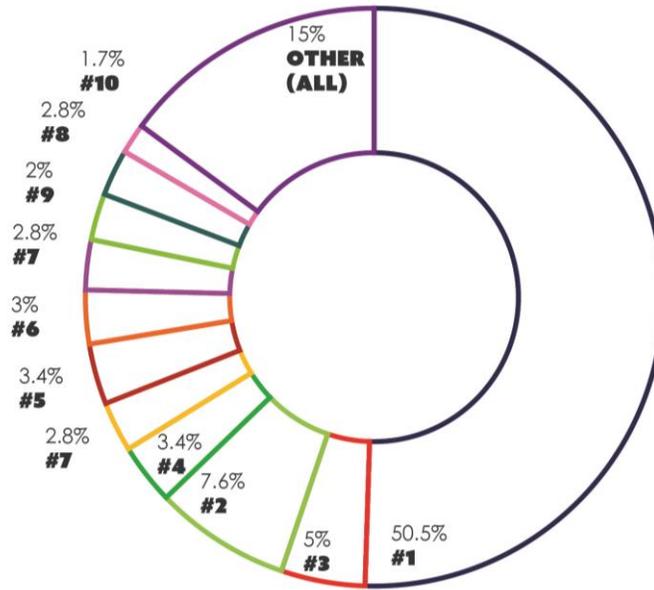
- The Boeing Company
- Auburn School District
- Green River College
- Emerald Downs Racetrack
- Social Security Administration
- General Services Administration
- City of Auburn
- Other
- Muckleshoot Tribal Enterprises
- Super Mall
- Auburn Regional Medical Center
- Safeway
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Zones, Inc.
- Fred Meyer



**GRAPH 2**

**Top Auburn Employers 2002**

- The Boeing Company
- Auburn School District
- Green River College
- Emerald Downs Racetrack
- Social Security Administration
- General Services Administration
- City of Auburn
- Other
- Muckleshoot Tribal Enterprises
- Super Mall
- Auburn Regional Medical Center
- Safeway
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Zones, Inc.
- Fred Meyer



Generally, workers are tasked with finding jobs where compensation is most lucrative. Education and specialized skills typically play a large role in finding high-paying, available jobs. An educated population encourages companies to relocate to Auburn based on the available local workforce. While Auburn's high school graduation rate of 87.5% is fairly close to the state average of 90%, the college graduation rate is more than 9 points lower than the state average. As mentioned previously, the median and per capita income is significantly lower than the state average. These data suggest that there may be a skills undermatch between regional employer expectations and available workers in Auburn.

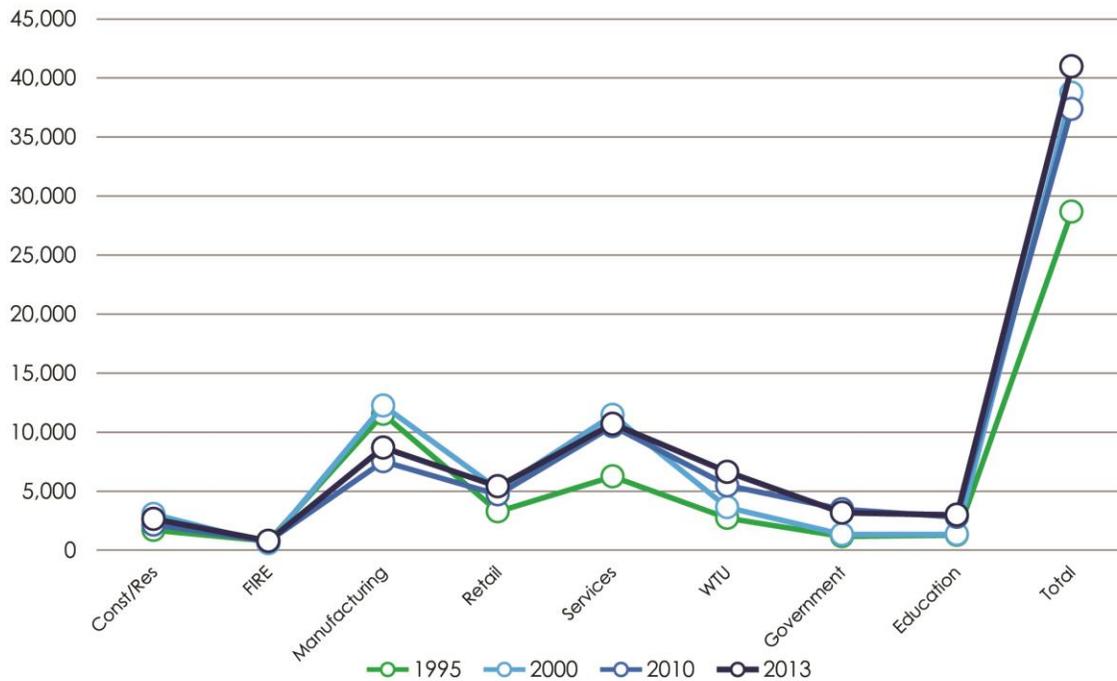
According to the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and the US Department of Labor, approximately 41,000 jobs are located in Auburn. This number has grown steadily since 2010; it is important to note that the number of jobs must be considered with an understanding of the massive loss of manufacturing jobs and the very slow national economic recovery since the economic downturn in 2008. Comparing the market sector distribution and number of jobs

between 1995, 2000, 2010, and 2013 illustrates some of changes that have taken place in Auburn's job market over the last 20 years. It also reflects nationwide trends based on the overall health of the economy, decline of manufacturing, and an increasing reliance on service. Important categories to note are:

- a. government and education, which have grown based on the increasing population of Auburn and the need to provide increased and better service to residents, as well as the success of Green River College
- b. trade, transportation, and utilities jobs (WTU) have more than doubled since 1995, also due to the relative growth of Auburn
- c. construction has nearly doubled since 1995; this is due in large part of the significant developments that have been constructed in Auburn, such as Lakeland Hills; the dip in 2010 is due to the economic downturn that began in 2008
- d. retail and services are significantly more important to Auburn's current job outlook than in 1995; service is largely increased due to the overall nationwide trend of less manufacturing and more service-based jobs
- e. finance, insurance, and real estate have held steady over the last 20 years

**Table 3**  
**Job Distribution by Market Area – 1995 - 2013**

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2013</u>
<b>Const/Res</b>	1,693	3,051	2,148	2,636
<b>FIRE</b>	760	567	757	784
<b>Manufacturing</b>	11,530	12,241	7,521	8,680
<b>Retail</b>	3,275	5,152	4,705	5,392
<b>Services</b>	6,241	11,437	10,496	10,700
<b>WTU</b>	2,716	3,619	5,475	6,626
<b>Government</b>	1,166	1,332	3,457	3,166
<b>Education</b>	1,282	1,344	2,810	2,981
<b>Total</b>	28,663	38,742	37,370	40,964



### Daily Inflow and Outflow: The Auburn Commute

The average daily commute from Auburn is 29 minutes, as of 2013; the length of the commute has increased since 2000. A more interesting issue than the length of people's commute is the number of people commuting out of and into Auburn. Both of these numbers far outstrip the number of people who live and work within Auburn. This number has been virtually unchanged over the last decade. The number of residents of Auburn, who also work in Auburn, has stayed at just over 4,000. The most promising data from the inflow and outflow is that there is a significant increase in the number of people commuting to Auburn for work. The influx of non-residents provides another pool of people that engage with the services, features, and resources in the City.



## AUBURN IN THE FUTURE- PROJECTIONS OF GROWTH

The PSRC<sup>1</sup>, King County<sup>2</sup>, and Pierce County, based on the Growth Management Act and the need for regional cooperation, need to understand growth over a 20-30 year period, as well as its

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<sup>1</sup> Puget Sound Regional Council

The Puget Sound Regional Council conducts analyses that are used to forecast population and by extrapolation and modeling, employment and housing data. One model is focused on land use targets that represent local growth targets and the other is focused on a parcel-based land use model.

### Land Use Target Analysis

The Land Use Targets is a long-range land use dataset designed explicitly to represent local growth targets. It is developed using a set of allocation "decision rules" that distribute jurisdictional growth targets to sub-jurisdictional zones based on (a) available net development

implications. Based on various models and analysis, available developable land and population based on anticipated policy and expected economic growth help jurisdictions understand industrial, commercial, and residential land supply and capacity. This understanding can also be used to extrapolate future available housing units, and employment growth.

## 2014 King County Buildable Lands Analysis

Table 4

### Gross and Adjusted Net Acres of Vacant and Redevelopable Land and Capacity by Aggregated Residential Zoning Type

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capacities (similar to what is used for the Land Use Baseline), as well as (b) a series of policy-based preferential weights for certain zones, such as designated regional growth centers and other locally-defined activity centers.

#### Land Use Baseline Analysis

The data shows results for the years 2020, 2030 and 2040, alongside actual or estimated totals for 2000 and 2010. Future year data are produced by PSRC staff using the agency's parcel-based land use model, UrbanSim, controlling to a regional forecast developed independently by an in-house demographic and economic model of the Central Puget Sound economy. The actual / estimated totals for 2000 & 2010 were derived using Census data and an employment database maintained by PSRC from the Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) records obtained by agreement from the Washington State Employment Security Department.

#### <sup>2</sup> BUILDABLE LANDS - LAND SUPPLY AND DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

In 1997, the Washington State legislature adopted a Buildable Lands amendment to the Growth Management Act (GMA) (RCW 36.70A.215). The amendment requires certain Washington State counties and their cities to determine the amount of land suitable for urban development and to evaluate their capacity for growth through the year 2031 based on past development history. Land suitability takes into consideration estimates of how critical areas, land that might be needed for public purposes (e.g. parks, storm drainage), and land needed for future streets will effect development of these vacant and redevelopable parcels.

Both Pierce and King Counties are subject to the State Buildable Lands requirement. In addition, both counties use the Buildable Lands effort to assist in the allocation of population/housing unit/employment targets to individual jurisdictions based on anticipated market conditions.

	<b>Gross Acres</b>	<b>Adjusted Net Acres (1)</b>	<b>Net Capacity (Housing units)</b>
Single Family - Vacant	2,018.0	1,050.1	3,477
Single Family - Redevelopable	1,507.0	871.1	3,108
Multi-Family - Vacant	120	85.4	1,156
Multi-Family - Redevelopable	50.0	36.3	460
Multi-Family/ Mixed Use - Vacant	16	12.9	1,822
Multi-Family/ Mixed Use - Redevelopable	117.2	94.7	4,574
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,828.2</b>	<b>2,150.5</b>	<b>14,597</b>

(1) "Adjusted Net Acres" represents land available for development after critical areas, anticipated right-of-way and public purposes needs and a market factor have been taken into account.

After deducting for constraints, future right-of-way and public purpose needs, and after applying a market factor, the Buildable Lands analysis shows that Auburn has approximately 2,150.5 adjusted net acres of vacant and redevelopable residentially zoned land during the planning period through 2031. As seen in Table 4, the majority of available land for development is zoned for single-family residential purposes.

Based on the residential land supply analysis and historical densities, an estimate of housing unit capacity was developed. Figure 5.3 identifies the estimated capacity (in housing units) in King County by the aggregated zoning type. This estimate shows a capacity of approximately 14,597 housing units in the King County portion of the City exists to the year 2031.

Estimates of how much commercial and industrial square footage could be developed on property were calculated. Employment capacity was developed applying a floor area per employee ratio.

The last column in Figure 5.4 identifies the gross and adjusted net vacant and redevelopable land by commercial and industrial land use from the King County Buildable Lands analysis. Again, adjusted net acres represents the amount of gross acres available for development after

assumptions about critical areas constraints, future right of way needs, land for public uses and the market factor have been considered.

**Table 5**

**Gross and Adjusted Net Acres and Capacity of Commercial and Industrial Land Supply (King County - 2012)**

	Gross Acres	Adjusted Net Acres (1)	Net Capacity (Employment)
Commercial Vacant/Redevelopable	501.5	412.4	7,094
Mixed Use Vacant/Redevelopable	133.2	107.6	2,525
Industrial Vacant/Redevelopable	533.0	354.9	9,417
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,167.7</b>	<b>874.9</b>	<b>19,036</b>

(1) "Adjusted Net Acres" represents land after critical areas, future anticipated streets, land for public purposes and market factor have been considered.

**Pierce County Buildable Lands Analysis**

**Table 6**

**Gross and Adjusted Net Acres of Vacant and Redevelopable Land by Residential Zoning Type (Pierce County - 2012)**

	Gross Acres	Adjusted Net Acres (1)	Net Capacity (Housing units)
R5, Residential	39.24	30.38	323
TV, Terrace View	3.17	1.34	86
Lakeland Hills South PUD	52.94	N/A	513
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>95.35</b>	<b>31.72</b>	<b>922</b>

(1) "Adjusted Net Acres" represents land available for development after critical areas, anticipated right-of-way, lands public purpose needs, and a market factor have been taken into account.

Table 6 identifies the estimated capacity (in housing units) in Pierce County by the zoning type. This estimate shows a capacity of approximately 922 housing units in the Pierce County portion of the City exists to the year 2030.

**Table 7**

**Gross and Adjusted Net Acres and Capacity of Commercial and Industrial Land Supply (Pierce County - 2012)**

	<b>Gross Acres</b>	<b>Adjusted Net Acres (1)</b>	<b>Net Capacity (Employment)</b>
Commercial Vacant/Redevelopable	501.5	412.4	7,094
Mixed Use Vacant/Redevelopable	133.2	107.6	2,525
Industrial Vacant/Redevelopable	533.0	354.9	9,417
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,167.7</b>	<b>874.9</b>	<b>19,036</b>

(1) "Adjusted Net Acres" represents land after critical areas, future anticipated streets, land for public purposes and market factor have been considered.

The Pierce County Buildable Lands analysis includes a 2030 employment target of 843 and an employment capacity of 595. This estimate was based on the likely employment generated by the commercial parcels located within Lakeland Hills South PUD and other vacant commercial lands along A St. SE.

**Table 8**

**City of Auburn 2006-2030/31 Housing Unit and Employment Allocations (King and Pierce Counties)**

	<b>Housing Units</b>	<b>Employment</b>
<b>King County</b>	9,004	19,200
<b>Pierce County</b>	3,634	843
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,638 Units</b>	<b>20,043 Jobs</b>

These revised housing and employment target numbers were updated to assist jurisdictions in their comprehensive plan updates as well as coincide with the updates to the Countywide Planning Policies.

While the calculations and categories used previously to identify market sectors and job counts differ, this table illustrates the tremendous job growth expected over the next 25 years. The total number of jobs in Auburn is projected to increase 55% by 2040. The largest total gain will be in the

FIRE/Services category. The most significant percentage gain is in the Construction/Residential, FIRE/Services, and K-12 Education.

**Table 9**  
**Job Distribution by Market Area – 2010 - 2040**

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>2040</u>
<b>Const/Res</b>	2488	4747	4704	5822
<b>FIRE-Services</b>	12398	15935	18734	22213
<b>Manufacturing-WTU</b>	13366	13661	14512	15731
<b>Retail-Food Services</b>	7218	9084	10396	12323
<b>Government</b>	2243	1812	1841	1883
<b>Education</b>	2137	3143	3466	3815
<b>Total</b>	39883	48023	53847	62003

Based on PSRC’s model, Auburn is expected to grow by 10,000 people in the next 10 years. By 2030-31, the population will be just shy of 90,000 people. As a result, many more housing units are expected to come online. Around 37,000 units will be available by 2030-31. This is nearly 10,000 more units than in 2010; the addition of 20,000 more people would require this level of increase based on the buildable lands property quota, current zoning, and typical densities. Auburn is more than prepared to accommodate this large influx of housing. Auburn is also prepared to consider pathways to meet the housing demand on less land, through higher density and by reconsidering zoning implementation and rules.

**Table 10**  
**Population and Housing Forecasts – 2010 - 2035**

	Estimate	Forecasts			
	2010	2025	2030	2031	2035
<b>Housing Units</b>	27,827	34,582	36,827	37,276	39,072
<b>Total Households</b>	26,051	33,031	35,351	35,815	37,671
<b>Household Population</b>	69,491	84,126	88,996	89,970	93,866
<b>Total Population</b>	70159	84948	89868	90852	94788

### **3.1 – Philosophy and Ideals – City's Approach to Planning**

The City of Auburn's approach to comprehensive planning prepares the City for future development activity and for accomplishing goals. There are three distinct philosophies that shape how the City can manage future planning issues:

1. **Reactive** - prioritizes flexibility in responding to changing conditions and individual situations; addresses problems and issues at the time they arise; advance planning is de-emphasized
2. **Predictive** - anticipate future needs and plan to meet them; involves research and analysis
3. **Proactive** - seek to influence future events to achieve community objectives; involves significant research, analysis, and relationship building

Over time, the City's approach and strategy has shifted from being largely reactive to being more predictive and proactive. The proactive approach blended with the predictive approach ensures that basic community values are reflected in the City's planning of existing and future development.

#### **Growth**

The City of Auburn faces the potential for significant growth in the upcoming decades with many new households and new jobs. Much of this growth is due to basic factors beyond the City's control; however, other aspects of growth can be appropriately managed. Therefore, it will be through the implementation of strong policies, and adherence to the policies that the City will be able to influence patterns of desired future growth.

### **2015 Comprehensive Plan Update**

#### **Step 1: Issue Identification**

Since its original adoption in 1986, and adoption in compliance with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1995, City staff has worked under the existing Comprehensive Plan's principles and parameters. Having such a close understanding of and working relationship with the Comprehensive Plan, its successes, failures, and unintended consequences, has made the Planning Department well-situated to identify necessary changes to both the content and structure of the Plan. In addition, elected officials and other City staff members have brought forward ideas and presented issues that should be reflected in the Comprehensive Plan. In consultation with the City of Auburn Planning Commission, the City Council, and the Mayor, important principles, values, and issues have been tracked and categorized for inclusion in this plan.

#### **Step 2: Public Input**

"Imagine Auburn", a visioning process used to capture a comprehensive community vision, began in early 2014. This public outreach and input initiative was designed to garner public input about

Auburn's future from a broad range of stakeholders. Public involvement helps the City create a more representative process, a more complete plan, and comply with the Growth Management Act (GMA). Outreach events and activities involved social media, stakeholder interviews, online questionnaires, intercept interviews, committee meetings, and seven community workshops held in neighborhoods throughout the City and culminating in an open house to share initial results.

Throughout the City's outreach events and activities, community members have shared their ideas about how to manage growth and change in Auburn; and more importantly, have shared their ideas and vision about the Auburn they want to see in the future. Participants weighed in on topics such as neighborhood character, the Downtown environment, economic opportunities, transportation issues, such as opportunities to walk and bike, as well as, community facilities, open space and trails.

### **Step 3: Policy Development**

Imagine Auburn created the foundation upon which the City of Auburn has crafted its vision statement and value statements for future growth and development. The Community's information and perspectives has become the basis for the Plan's values and direction. After concluding the Imagine Auburn visioning process, the City Council held a retreat where they developed a statement embodying the vision the community had for Auburn.

From Imagine Auburn, elected official oversight, and coordination with GMA goals, *Vision 2020*, *Vision 2040*, *King County Countywide Planning Policies*, and *Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies*, City staff developed a set of seven value statements that will shape the contents of the Comprehensive Plan. The value statements or "values" will also be the guiding principles for how the City functions and how officials and staff make decisions. During the process of categorizing and shaping the values, comments were collected from every City department, as well as City Council and Planning Commission.

The result is a working document that frames these seven values around ideas of how the particular value will manifest itself in the future (What It Will Look Like), what the value means (What It Means), in practice, for Auburn, and how the value will be implemented (How It Will Happen) by staff, elected officials, and citizens.

From these values, City staff developed the Comprehensive Plan's objectives and policies. These objectives and policies more specifically guide the future growth and development of different land uses and geographic areas in the City. They also guide the development of the supporting capital facilities, transportation, utilities, shoreline and parks and open space plans and the code regulations that implement all of the above.

Development of these objectives and policies included oversight of elected officials, review of GMA compliance requirements, Vision 2020 and 2040, King County and Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies, and incorporation of identified needs, recommendations, and policies of Imagine

Auburn. During this process, additional research, such as the *Health Impact Assessment* (not currently addressed or included by Comprehensive Plan objectives and policies) and a separately prepared Housing Element was also reviewed.

#### **Step 4: Adoption**

An ongoing process of outlining, drafting, and editing of the City of Auburn Comprehensive Plan began during the summer/fall of 2014. An annotated staff draft was submitted to the Planning Commission in April and May of 2015. From March to May 2015, the Planning Commission reviewed and refined the preliminary chapters of the Draft Plan during several regular and special meetings. The Planning Commission also held two public hearings, which allowed for public testimony, during that period. From October through December of 2015, the Planning Commission held a series of public meetings and hearings in an effort to formulate its recommendations to the City Council to adopt the "Staff Draft".

#### **Annual Amendment Process**

Since the time of the GMA compliant Comprehensive Plan's adoption in 1995, the City of Auburn has amended the comprehensive plan on an annual basis as provided for by State law. Amendments outside of the annual amendment process have also occurred during this time frame using the special exceptions and emergency provisions allowed by the Growth Management Act.

The amendment process affords the public an opportunity to request changes to the plan annually to address changing circumstances and also has allowed the City to address amendments to State law and the changing needs of the community.

The process of initial adoption, periodic major updates, and continual amendments requires commitment, effort, and collaboration between elected officials, appointed bodies, staff, and of course, the residents of Auburn.

### 3.2 – Policy Coordination – Between the City and the State, Region, and Counties

#### **The State: Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA)**

During the 1980's, Auburn, King County and the entire Puget Sound region experienced an extremely rapid rate of growth in both population and employment. This rapid growth brought with it increased traffic congestion, air and water pollution, increased housing costs, and the loss of natural areas and resource lands. In response to these problems, the State Legislature passed HB 2929, the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1990 and amendments in each of the following years.

The GMA requires that Auburn, King County, Pierce County, and all jurisdictions within the counties develop and coordinate their comprehensive plans to meet statewide goals. The GMA contains 14 planning goals which must be considered as local jurisdictions develop, adopt, and update comprehensive plans. The goals of GMA offer guidance to all jurisdictions planning under the Act as they develop their vision in accordance with statewide goals. As such, the City's vision statement and seven value statements, embody these statewide goals, as well as the community's vision for future growth and development.

<b>GMA GOALS</b>	<b>CITY OF AUBURN VALUES</b>
<b>URBAN GROWTH. GOAL 1: Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.</b>	The City's values of character, wellness, and environment provide a framework for the design and maintenance of high-quality places, spaces, and neighborhoods, the concurrent infrastructure to serve them, and the preservation of and appropriate access to open spaces and critical areas.
<b>URBAN SPRAWL. GOAL 2: Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.</b>	The City's values of character, sustainability, and environment provide principles to encourage infill and compact development that successfully use available buildable lands.
<b>TRANSPORTATION. GOAL 3: Encourage efficient multi-modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.</b>	The City's values of character, wellness, service, and economy provide a framework for designing and financing multi-modal transportation systems that physically connect neighborhoods, safely and efficiently move people and goods throughout the City and beyond, and are coordinated with transit and other governmental agencies.
<b>HOUSING. GOAL 4: Encourage the availability</b>	The City's values of character, wellness, and

of affordable housing to all segments of the population, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. GOAL 5:**  
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 in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.

**PROPERTY RIGHTS. GOAL 6:** Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.

**PERMITS. GOAL 7:** Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.

**NATURAL RESOURCE INDUSTRIES. GOAL 8:**  
Maintain and enhance natural resource based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.

**OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION. GOAL 9:**  
Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase

economy provide a framework for building high-quality housing, maintaining existing housing, and enabling a diverse and robust marketplace so that people want and can live here

The City's values of wellness, economy, celebration, and sustainability provide a framework for addressing the economic development needs of all places and people, through strategic expansion of and investment in capital facilities, targeted economic development strategies, inclusiveness for a socially, ethnically, economically, and culturally diverse community, balance of natural resource protections and economic and cultural prosperity, and delivery of public services that result in an educated, equitable, and prosperous community.

The City's values of service and celebration provides a framework for a government whose processes are transparent to all and is inclusive, proud, and reflective of Auburn's diverse and evolving culture and heritage.

The City's value of service provides a framework for an efficient, approachable, responsive, and transparent government that provides frequent communication and whose processes and services are convenient to all.

The City's values of wellness, environment, economy, and sustainability help support an environment where businesses focused on sustainable natural resources can thrive in Auburn.

The City's values of wellness, environment, and sustainability set a foundation for healthier, active, and fun lifestyles by way of making active and passive parks for all of Auburn to enjoy.

access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.

ENVIRONMENT. **GOAL 10: Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.**

The City's values of wellness, environment, and sustainability provide a framework for natural resource protection and enhancement, appropriate access to natural resources and open spaces, maintenance and strategic expansion of public infrastructure, natural resource protection that results in a thriving and long-lasting community, and appropriate updating of the adopted Shoreline Master Program.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND COORDINATION. **GOAL 11: Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.**

The City's value of service provides a framework for an efficient, approachable, responsive, and transparent government that provides frequent communication and whose processes and services are convenient to all.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES. **GOAL 12: 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.**

The City's values of character, wellness, service, and environment provide a framework for the provision of services including stormwater , water, sewer manafement, in addition to roadway maintenance and other public infrastructure service.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION. **GOAL 13: Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.**

The City's values of character, celebration, and sustainability underscore the City's historic preservation policies and regulations.

SHORELINE MANAGEMENT. **GOAL 14: The goals and policies of the shoreline management act as set forth in RCW 98.58.020.**

The City's values of wellness, environment, and sustainability provide for natural resource protection that results in a thriving and long-lasting community, and appropriate updating of the adopted Shoreline Master Program.

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In addition to planning goals, the GMA prescribes general components for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan. As the components are a guide to all jurisdictions planning under GMA, few are specifically related to comprehensive planning objectives and policies for cities. These GMA-specified objectives and policies related to cities include:

- Suggestions to consider innovative land use planning techniques, such as density bonuses, cluster housing, planned unit developments, and transfer of developments, and multi-modal transportation improvements and strategies.
- Provisions for enacting or expanding affordable housing incentive programs.
- Superseding of local regulations by the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) for certain land uses, such as accessory dwelling units, family day-care provider's home facility, general aviation airports, and forestry uses.

Since, the GMA only prescribes general goals and components required for the Comprehensive Plan, the development of specific objectives and policies was guided by the City's value statements and consistency with the applicable needs, recommendations, and policies identified in the documents below.

### **The Region: Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Vision 2040**

The GMA required the development of multi-county planning policies for King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties, resulting in Vision 2020. In April 2008, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) updated Vision 2020 with a new planning document, Vision 2040. The vision is for vibrant, livable, and healthy communities that offer economic opportunities for all, provide safe and efficient mobility, use our resources wisely and efficiently, protect the environment, integrate land use, economic, and transportation decisions in a manner that supports a healthy environment, addresses global climate change, achieves social equity, and considers the needs of future generations, and thus, advances the ideals of our people, prosperity, and planet.

Vision 2040 continues Vision 2020's commitment to both the land use patterns that can achieve a compact centers concept, and a reordering of transportation investment priorities to emphasize multi-modal choices, such as walking, biking, and taking public transportation, efficiency, demand management, and the maintenance of current facilities. To achieve this end, Vision 2040 supports the development of more compact living and working places, limiting the expansion of the urban area, and focusing a significant amount of new employment and housing into mixed-use centers served by efficient, transit-oriented, multi-modal systems.

Vision 2040 also continues to recognize Auburn as a Regional Growth Center. Regional Growth Centers are "designated areas of high-intensity residential and employment development . . . Regional growth centers serve as a primary framework for regional transportation and economic development planning." (Vision 2040, pg. 52)

Building on existing Vision 2020 policies, Vision 2040 provides a stronger environmental focus in recognition of the need to ensure long-term sustainability in the region, including addressing issues of climate change, a stronger emphasis of high-quality, compact urban communities that impart a distinctive sense of place, and new focus for planning and designing communities to advance physical, social, and mental well-being and more active lifestyles.

The six regional goals established by Vision 2040 relate to environment, development patterns, housing, economy, transportation, and public services.

For more details on Vision 2040, see *Vision 2040: People–Prosperity–Planet: The Growth Management, Environmental, Economic and Transportation Strategy for the Central Puget Sound Region*.

### **The Counties: Countywide Planning Policies**

The GMA requires King County, Pierce County, and all jurisdictions within each county to establish county-wide planning policies. These policies are intended to (1) provide processes for coordinating planning activities in the region; (2) obtain consistency between state, regional, and local jurisdictions; and (3) provide a policy framework for the development and adoption of coordinated and consistent comprehensive land use plans throughout the county. The county-wide planning policies cover the establishment of urban growth areas, the provision of urban services, the siting of essential public facilities, economic development, transportation and affordable housing.

The Countywide Planning Policies are a framework to guide the development of the comprehensive plans for counties and each city within the county. The Countywide Planning Policies do not dictate the way each jurisdiction will handle its share of growth or which city will choose to have one or more Urban Centers. Rather, the policies set up criteria and allow local decisions.

The City of Auburn is mostly located within King County, but the southern portion of the City, is located within Pierce County.

#### *King County Countywide Planning Policies (KCCPP)*

As adopted in 1992, the King County Countywide Planning Policies (KCCPP) are a vision statement of how King County should grow over the next 20 years. Amendments to these policies were adopted in 1994, and a significant amendments subsequently in 2012. The policies established an Urban Growth Area within the western one-third of the county where most future growth and development would occur in order to reduce urban sprawl, enhance open space, protect rural areas and more efficiently use social services, transportation and utilities.

**Urban Centers** were designated within existing cities which serve as areas of concentrated employment and housing and a wide variety of land uses, including retail, recreational, cultural and public facilities, parks and open spaces, with direct service by high-capacity transit. Emphasizing growth in the urban centers will contribute to achieving the GMA goal of concentrating infrastructure investments and preventing further urban sprawl. Downtown Auburn achieved urban center status in 2004. Some other Urban Centers include the downtowns of Bellevue, Seattle, Renton, Federal Way, SeaTac, Kent and Redmond.

The policies also call for designation of **Manufacturing/Industrial Centers**, recognizing that these sites are key components of a strong regional economy. These centers would be zoned to preserve and encourage industrial growth. Examples include the Duwamish River industrial area and Kent.

The 1994 amendments to the KCCPPs placed an increased emphasis on Activity Areas, which evolved into emphasis on **Local Centers** in the 2012 KCCPPs. These centers, such as neighborhood centers, transit station areas, or other activity nodes, contain a mix of housing, employment, and in a compact form, are within walking distance of surrounding residential areas, foster a healthy community through physical exercise and a sense of neighborhood, and provide local transit connections to Urban Centers and elsewhere within the Urban Growth Area.

The 2012 KCCPPs also contain policy direction on three new policy areas, climate change, healthy communities, and social equity. These policy directions include, but are not limited to:

- Considering the impact and disparity of environmental hazards, risks, and burdens on minority and low-income populations.
- Recognizing the importance of natural ecosystems and their contribution to human health and vitality now and for future generations.
- Reducing greenhouse gases from land use, transportation, and building activities, and mitigating the impacts of climate change.
- Planning for development patterns that improve public health by providing all residents with opportunities for safe and convenient daily physical activity, social connectivity, and protection from exposure to harmful substances and environments.
- Using productive agricultural lands and the associated food economy to distribute agricultural food and food products to all King County communities, especially the areas with limited access to healthy food options.

A key policy area that carried over to the 2012 KCCPP is housing affordability. One of the critical issues facing the region as it grows is the quantity and location of affordable housing. In the Puget Sound region, housing prices have skyrocketed over the past few decades. As such, KCCPPs recognize housing affordability as a regional issue and seek to encourage that all jurisdictions accept their fair share of affordable housing.

Auburn has historically had a positive response to providing a range of housing opportunities to all groups. The City has historically provided affordable housing and demonstrated a willingness to accept its "fair share" of these units on a regional basis. Auburn is willing to continue to meet regional housing goals, however, this willingness will only be the case if it can be demonstrated that there is a regional effort to spread these units and their related costs on an equitable basis throughout all of the communities in the region.

The “Urban Separators” is another key policy that carried over to the 2012 KCCPP. The “Urban Separators” are low-density areas or areas of little development within the Urban Growth Area (UGA). These areas are considered to be permanent low-density lands that cannot be redesignated within the 20-year planning cycle (which began in 2004) to other urban uses or higher densities. (*King County Countywide Planning Policies, pg. 27*)

There are significant areas of lands designated as “Urban Separator” within the eastern and Lea Hill portion of the City of Auburn (see the Comprehensive Land Use Map). Pursuant to the King County Countywide Planning Policies, these areas are zoned for residential development not to exceed densities of approximately one dwelling unit per acre. No modifications to the development regulations to increase density governing these areas can occur without King County review and concurrence.

Lastly, the KCCPPs also contain growth targets for each jurisdiction. These targets represent commitments by jurisdictions to provide sufficient land and infrastructure to accommodate these targets, but recognize that achievement of targets is dependent on many variables including the marketplace. King County's residential target range for Auburn is approximately 9,620 new households and its employment target range is approximately 19,350 new jobs by 2031.

For more detailed information, see the *King County Countywide Planning Policies*.

#### *Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies*

The development of the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies (PCCPPs) involved a significant level of coordination and cooperation between the county and the incorporated Cities and towns within it. The PCCPPs were adopted in June 1992 by the Pierce County Council and ratified by the cities and towns. The PCCPP has since been amended approximately once every 4 years and was significantly amended in 2012.

As with the King County Countywide Planning Policies (KCCPPs), the PCCPPs establish guidelines and a framework from which county and municipal comprehensive plans are to be developed and adopted. Similarly, the PCCPPs also call for the establishment of centers, including Regional Growth Centers in the Metropolitan City (ex. Tacoma Central Business District and Tacoma Mall), Regional Growth Centers in Core Cities (ex. Lakewood and Puyallup Downtown), Countywide Centers (none currently designated), and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers (ex. Port of Tacoma and Frederickson).

There are currently no PCCPP-designated centers in the City of Auburn. The Pierce County portion of the City is primarily the Lakeland Hills South Planned Unit Development (PUD), which consists of single-family and moderate density dwellings, the Lakeland Town Center commercial area, and parks facilities, and also contains the entirety of the TV Terrace View zoning district (a heavy commercial zoning district current developed with moderate and high density dwellings), several

commercially zoned properties along A ST SE, and several single-family subdivisions in the vicinity, but outside of the Lakeland Hills South PUD.

Also echoing the KCCPPs, the 2012 update of the PCCPPs included chapters on community and urban design and health and well-being, policy areas not previously addressed. For those policy areas, policy direction includes, but are not limited to:

- Developing high-quality, compact communities that have a sense of place and local character, provides for mixed use and choices in housing types, and encourages alternatives to personal vehicle use.
- Considering public health and well-being by improving walking and biking environments, construction of healthy buildings, and providing access to fresh and minimally processed food.
- Minimizing negative impacts by transportation and climate change on human health.
- Ensuring residents of all socio-economic statuses live in a healthy environment.

The 2012 amendments to the PCCPPs also provided additional emphasis in:

- Housing accessible to services and jobs.
- Encouraging sustainability in the practices of private, public, and nonprofit organizations, maintenance and use of natural resources, and planning of transportation systems.
- Maintaining air quality, such as reducing particulates emitted from wood-burning and transportation activities and addressing climate change, such as policies to consider shoreline impacts and greenhouse gas reduction.
- Considering all modes in transportation system investments and policies, including freight mobility and level of service standards for transit in addition to roadways and intersections.
- Recognizing contributions by the county's diverse population and providing services to populations facing unique obstacles or special needs.

The PCCPPs have assigned 2030 population, housing, and employment allocations to the jurisdictions. The City's 2030 allocation is 7,950 people, 3,634 households, and 206 jobs (based on 2008 City limits).

For more detailed information, see the *Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies*.

### **Additional Planning Considerations**

The following components are required by the Growth Management Act to be included in the Comprehensive Plan:

- Designation of, in conjunction with King and Pierce Counties, an urban growth area sufficient to accommodate housing and employment growth to 2035.
- Designation of, in conjunction with King and Pierce Counties and adjacent jurisdictions, a potential annexation area for the City.

- Development of, in conjunction with King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties and the jurisdictions within them, a multi-county planning framework (see below Multi-county Planning Policies: Vision 2020 and 2040) and consistency with that framework.
- Development of, in conjunction with King and Pierce Counties and the jurisdictions within them, a county-wide planning framework (see below King County Countywide Policies and Pierce County Countywide Policies) and consistency with that framework.
- Designation of the proposed general distribution, location, and uses of the land, including population and building densities, and estimates of future population growth. **Land Use Element**
- Inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs necessary to manage projected growth, and provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing for all economic segments of the community. **Housing Element**
- Inventory of existing capital facilities owned by public entities, a forecast of future needs, and the proposed location and capacities of expanded or new capital facilities, including park and recreation facilities. **Capital Facilities/Park and Recreation Elements**
- Analysis and implementation of transportation improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts of development and multi-modal transportation. **Transportation Element**
- Establishment of provisions for economic growth, vitality, and a high quality of life. **Economic Development Element**
- Designation and protection of lands useful for public purposes (utility corridors, transportation corridors, landfills, sewage treatment facilities, stormwater management facilities, recreation, schools). **Utilities Element**
- Designation and protection of lands useful for open space corridors (recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas).
- Designation and protection of resource lands (forest, agricultural and mineral) and critical areas (wetlands, geologically hazardous areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, aquifer recharge areas, and frequently flooded areas).
- Designation and siting of essential public facilities (airports, state education facilities, and state or regional transportation facilities, regional transit authority facilities, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, inpatient facilities including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities, group homes, and secure community transition facilities).
- Adoption of a shoreline master program that is consistent with the plan.
- Adoption of development regulations which implement the plan. Compliance with all provisions of the GMA.
- Many of these components require substantial inventorying and data collection, maps and descriptive text, and analysis, and consequently, several components warrant a City long-range planning document of their own. In addition, these components must be consistent and coordinated.

## **Policy Elements of the Plan**

Due to the extensive nature of topics to be addressed for certain GMA-required elements, these elements while guided by the Comprehensive Plan, warrant their own long-range plans.

### Land Use Policy Element

The land use element is the focal element of the Plan that is then supported by all other elements of the Plan. It illustrates where the community should or should not develop, the anticipated scale and intensity of development, and how various land uses relate to each other. The Land Use Element lays the foundation for what the community will look like, how it will change and grow, and where different types of land activities will be established.

### Housing Policy Element

The housing element provides policy direction for how the city should inventory, monitor and regulate existing and future housing. Of particular importance is the city's efforts to ensure that there is a wide variety of housing type and cost so that all members of the community have access to a variety of housing choice. There is also an emphasis on how to ensure that existing housing stock is maintained and that rental housing is safe and healthy.

### Capital Facilities Element

A capital facilities component is a comprehensive plan element required by Washington State's 1990 Growth Management Act (GMA). Capital facilities generally have long usable lives, significant associated costs, and are typically not mobile.

The GMA requires that capital facilities documentation includes an inventory of existing capital facilities (showing locations and capacities), a forecast of future needs for such capital facilities, proposed locations and capacities of new or expanded capital facilities and at least a six-year plan to finance capital facilities with identified sources of funding. The GMA also requires that the land use element be reassessed if probably funding falls short of existing needs.

The Capital Facilities Plan is a companion document to the Comprehensive Plan; this document identifies the planning approach and policy framework by which decisions are made regarding capital facilities. This Capital Facilities Plan contains time frames which are the intended framework for future funding decisions and within which future actions and decisions are intended to occur. However, these time frames are estimates, and depending on factors involved in the processing of applications and project work, and availability of funding, the timing may change from the included time frames. The framework does not represent actual commitments by the City which may depend on funding resources available. The Capital Facilities Plan is amended each year.

### Comprehensive Water Plan

The Comprehensive Water plan offers a complete roadmap of proposed improvements for anticipated future growth. The City initiated this Plan recognizing the importance of planning, developing, and financing water system facilities to provide reliable and efficient service for existing customers and to serve anticipated growth. The Plan is designed to meet state, county, and local requirements. It complies with the requirements of the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) as set forth in the Washington Administrative Code 246-290-100, Water System Plan. As with the other comprehensive plans, the Comprehensive Water Plan satisfies the requirements of the Growth Management Act.

The Comprehensive Water Plan contains timeframes which are the intended framework for future funding decisions and within which future actions and decisions are intended to occur. However, these timeframes are estimates, and depending on factors involved in the processing of applications and project work, and availability of funding, the timing may change from the included timeframes. The framework does not represent actual commitments by the City of Auburn which may depend on funding resources available.

#### Comprehensive Sewer Plan

The Comprehensive Sewer Plan outlines all known future plans for sewer expansion and maintenance, in accordance with the Growth Management Act and other state regulatory bodies. The Comprehensive Sewer Plan (Sewer Plan) for the City of Auburn, Washington (City), is an update to the previous plan that was completed in November 2009. Evaluation of the sanitary sewer system for this Sewer Plan incorporated system-wide hydraulic modeling, economic life modeling of utility assets, and evaluation of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to account for completed projects, changes in system conditions, and new development, as well as to incorporate new financial information.

This Sewer Plan contains time frames which are the intended framework for future funding decisions and within which future actions and decisions are intended to occur. However, these time frames are estimates, and depending on factors involved in the processing of applications and project work, and availability of funding, the timing may change from the included time frames. The framework does not represent actual commitments by the City which may depend on funding resources available.

#### Comprehensive Stormwater Drainage Plan

The City of Auburn's Comprehensive Stormwater Drainage Plan (Drainage Plan) is an update of the previous plan, which was completed in 2009. An update to the 2009 Drainage Plan was necessary for several reasons including new regulatory requirements, continued growth and development, the need for a comprehensive system inventory and an update of the list of projects for the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

The Comprehensive Stormwater Drainage Plan contains time frames which are the intended framework for future funding decisions and within which future actions and decisions are intended to occur. However, these time frames are estimates, and depending on factors involved in the processing of applications and project work, and availability of funding, the timing may change from the included time frames. The framework does not represent actual commitments by the city of Auburn which may depend on funding resources available.

The purpose of this new Drainage Plan is to guide the City's Stormwater Drainage utility with respect to future activities and improvements for the stormwater drainage system. An asset management approach was used to develop a work plan for the stormwater utility.

#### Utilities Element

While Auburn provides water, sewer and storm utility service to the majority of Auburn homes and businesses there are a number of other utility providers that deliver power, telephone, cable, fiber, cellular, and other type of private service throughout the City. The utilities element seeks to find the best and most efficient ways to ensure that all utilities are provided throughout the entire city.

#### Comprehensive Transportation Element

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan is the blueprint for transportation planning in Auburn. Washington State's 1990 Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that transportation planning be directly tied to the City's land use decisions and fiscal planning. This is traditionally accomplished through the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan transportation element. However, Auburn fulfills this mandate by adopting the Comprehensive Transportation Plan as the City's Comprehensive Plan transportation element. It functions as the overarching guide for development of the transportation system considering spatial and fiscal priorities.

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan evaluates the existing system by identifying key assets and improvement needs. These findings are then incorporated into a needs assessment, which informs the direction the City will take in developing the future transportation system. This Plan is multi-modal, addressing multiple forms of transportation in Auburn including the street network, non-motorized travel, transit, and air transportation. Evaluating all modes uniformly enables the City to address its future network needs in a more comprehensive and balanced manner.

#### Economic Development Element

The economic development element emphasizes policies, strategies and approaches for creating and maintaining a diverse economic base within Auburn. Economic development priorities include supporting and growing a strong mix of industries, job growth, generation of revenue, and creating a climate that makes people and businesses want to live, work and visit Auburn.

#### Parks & Recreation Open Space Element

The City of Auburn Parks & Recreation Open Space Plan (PROS), an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan and an update of the 2006 Plan. The PROS Plan provides a six-year plan and 20-year vision for Auburn's park system and the steps needed for developing and improving existing park facilities, the development and acquisition for new park facilities, and expanding recreational and arts programming in the City of Auburn. It outlines goals and objectives, implementation strategies, capital improvements, and investment programs for the City's parks, recreation and open space system. The PROS Plan provides guidelines and direction for the City in terms of acquiring, developing and preserving property, accepting property donations, and identifying potential funding sources and other actions enabling the City to respond to opportunities in a timely fashion. The Plan will identify the action steps needed in our park and recreation systems to ensure that these systems are an integral part of the City's economic development strategy. Also, the plan is required in order to be eligible for state and federal grants administered by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

## **Other Initiatives**

### Shoreline Master Program

The Auburn City Council adopted the updated Auburn Shoreline Master Program in April of 2009 (Ordinance No. 6235) in accordance with Washington's Shoreline Management Act (SMA), which was passed by the State Legislature in 1971 and adopted by the public in a referendum. The SMA was created in response to a growing concern among residents of the state that serious and permanent damage was being done to shorelines by unplanned and uncoordinated development. The goal of the SMA is "to prevent the inherent harm in an uncoordinated and piecemeal development of the state's shorelines." While protecting shoreline resources by regulating development, the SMA is also intended to provide for appropriate shoreline use by encouraging land uses that enhance and conserve shoreline functions and values.

Consistent with state guidelines (WAC 173-26-201, Comprehensive Process to Prepare or Amend Shoreline Master Programs), a first step in the comprehensive Master Program update process is development of a shoreline inventory and characterization. The inventory and characterization documents current shoreline conditions and provides a basis for updating the City's Master Program goals, policies, and regulations. The characterization identifies existing conditions, evaluates existing functions and values of shoreline resources, and explores opportunities for conservation and restoration of ecological functions.

State guidelines also require that local governments develop Master Program policies that promote "restoration" of damaged shoreline ecological functions and develop a "real and meaningful" strategy to implement restoration objectives. Planning for shoreline restoration includes identifying opportunities (both programmatic and site-specific), establishing goals and policies, working cooperatively with other regional entities, and supporting restoration through other regulatory and non-regulatory programs.

## Floodplain Management

As a "two-county City", with nearly 10% of Auburn's land area located in a floodplain, the City coordinates with both the King County Flood Control District and the Pierce County Flood Control Zone District. Overarching objectives and strategies of these flood control districts include:

- Improving levee protection through major commercial, industrial and residential areas,
- Improving flood water conveyance and capacity,
- Reducing hazards by removing flood, erosion, and landslide prone residential structures,
- Providing safe access to homes and businesses by protecting key transportation routes,
- Minimizing creation of new risks to public safety from development pressure.

The City works closely with FEMA, the National Flood Insurance Program, King County and Pierce County to inform property owners, regulate development, and protect the City from potential flooding events and for the protection of the environment.

## Climate Change

In 2010 the City of Auburn initiated and completed a Greenhouse Gas Inventory. Besides providing a baseline of data and conditions, the inventory also identifies actions that can be taken to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the City is already engaged in efforts to develop a Climate Action Plan that will help direct future comprehensive plan initiatives, education and outreach efforts, capital investments, city operations, and community partnerships.

## National Pollutin Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

Auburn is a Phase II NPDES jurisdiction which requires policies, regulations, operations, and programs to be updated in 2016 with implementation beginning on January 1, 2017. The City is actively reviewing all policies, standards, regulations and capital project requirements in order to meet the compliance deadline. There will be a heavy emphasis placed on the use of low impact development techniques, sustainable practices, stormwater infiltration, and other methods to reduce stormwater discharges and rates of runoff.