

II. VISION – MARYSVILLE: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide vision to guide the comprehensive plan. Marysville’s past, present and future are inescapably linked. We rely on history to teach us; our current events and circumstances help guide our goals and expectations for the future.

A. HISTORY- MARYSVILLE YESTERDAY

The history presented within this Comprehensive Plan gives a context to future planning from familiarity with the past. The history covers the physical evolution of Marysville through economic, cultural, and social events. The Study Area for the Comprehensive Plan encompasses an area much larger than the City of Marysville: Steamboat Slough and Soper Hill Road to Smokey Point and 172nd Street NE, Highway 9 to Interstate 5, and west of Interstate 5 to include Lakewood. Marysville is the primary city within this Study Area, but there are many other small communities that have a historic or contemporary role: Sunnyside, Getchell, Shoultes, Kellogg Marsh, Kruse, Sisco, Edgecomb, Smokey Point and Lakewood’s English Station. This history does not attempt to chronicle the development of all these communities, but includes events from them as their histories have interwoven with or reflect on that of Marysville.

The first settlement in what would be Washington State occurred in 1845 in Tumwater. Only eight years later the first permanent white settlement in Snohomish County happened at Tulalip. The primary purpose of the settlement was to establish a sawmill, indicative of the significant role timber would play in the history of the area. The Treaty of Elliott Point was signed in 1855, establishing the Tulalip Reservation for the relocation of the Snohomish, Stillaguamish, Snoqualmie, and Skykomish Indians from Everett. The Tulalip Reservation area would be the focal point of activity in the area for another 20 years. During this period two missionaries arrived at Tulalip to found a mission, church, and school for Native Americans. Located at several points along the coast, including the mouth of Quil Ceda Creek, Priest’s Point and Mission Bay, the mission grew to be quite a complex. In 1869 the mission at the Tulalip Reservation became the first Indian Contract School ever established.

Father Chirouse, one of the Tulalip missionaries, persuaded Maria and James Comeford to move from Whatcom County, where they had arrived in 1872, to Tulalip to operate the government trading post. During the years they ran the trading post at Tulalip, James Comeford traveled the rivers and sloughs selling goods. He determined the area along Ebey Slough was a desirable location for a settlement with its river and marine access and significant logging potential. In 1887 he purchased 120 acres of land from two men who in the early to mid-1870s had purchased significant acreage stretching from the marshes up to the highlands in what would become Marysville. At that time, the area was otherwise uninhabited from the Snohomish to the Stillaguamish Rivers. In 1878, James and Maria Comeford built a trading post and home/hotel on a site that today is approximately the intersection of Ebey Slough and Interstate 5. Enough settlers began to arrive in the general area that in 1878 a school district was established covering the area from Sunnyside to Florence. Also in 1879 the Comefords managed to set up a post office which was named Marysville. The name is either taken from Mrs. Comeford’s name, “Maria”, or was used as an incentive to encourage two men from Marysville, California to remain in the newly formed town.

During the late 1870s through the early 1890s many settlements were begun in the greater Marysville area: Kellogg Marsh, Getchell Hill, Sunnyside, Shoultes, Sisco and Edgecomb. Probably the best indication of the determination of each of these communities was their desire to establish schools for their children. Sunnyside had one of the earliest districts that broke off from the Snohomish district around 1880. To serve the district, Sunnyside built their school house in 1881-85. Though Marysville students were a part of this district, a log cabin one or two miles east of town served as a private school house for seven students. Marysville formed their school district in 1887 and the first school, the Lyceum, was built on Front [First] Street between Beach and Cedar in 1888. That same year Shoultes created a separate school district from Marysville but did not construct a school building until the early 1890s. Kellogg Marsh followed Shoultes by creating another school district in 1892 and built their school in the mid to late 1890s.

Aside from the school activities, the 1880s were a relatively quiet time in Marysville. In the early 1880s, the city was only three blocks long with skid roads running to the slough. In 1885, James Comeford sold the store and began to plat the town. He began with nine blocks running east from the reservation to Liberty Street. This was followed by other adjacent areas being platted: Quinn's Plat in 1888, Meyer's Plat in 1890 and Marysville Plat in 1891. The first Marysville saw mill opened in the late 1880s. The platting and mills began to shift the center of town east from the original trading post's location, though still near the waterfront. But after all these efforts, in 1889 the town still only had a few residents, two general stores, an empty hotel, and 20 houses not all of which were occupied.

Due to the construction of the railroads, a boom hit the area in 1889. The Seattle-Lakeshore and Eastern (later the northern Pacific) railroad was built near Getchell Hill, and the Great Northern railroad, going through Marysville, was anticipated. The combination of railroad and timber increased the area's vigor. Getchell Hill is one example; in the 1890s, it had two shingle mills, hotel, post office, railroad depot, schools, and of course saloons. For Marysville, only one year after the barren description of town above, it had now acquired two hotels, 14 businesses, 47 houses, 200 people, and Sunset Telephone and Telegraph opened its Snohomish exchange.

As a result of the boom, four indicators of growth and success could be found in Marysville in 1891: the town was incorporated as a fourth class city with 350 inhabitants, a mayor, city council, treasurer, and clerk; the new city built its first City Hall on First Street; the second bank in Snohomish County opened at First and Beach in Marysville; and the Marysville Globe newspaper began its operation. Still Marysville had a next door rival for dominance in Snohomish County-Everett. For many years, Everett was called Port Gardner. But with its sizable port and the injection of monies from John D. Rockefeller in 1891, Everett began to overtake its rival.

Although the stock market Panic of 1893 slowed growth of many communities, it did not seem to have much impact on Marysville. The city's second school building opened in 1894 and the school had 159 students. Tug boats and stern-wheelers plied the river and sound, stopping at Ed Steele's wharf at the base of Ash Street, the center of the business community. Mills were being constructed along Allen Creek. When the Great Northern Railroad tracks opened in 1895, the tracks became the only direct connection to Everett. Throughout the 1890s steamers connected Everett and Marysville, but the only land route was via Sunnyside Road and Cavelero's Corner. Many people walked the tracks rather than take this longer route.

With the new century, Marysville experienced more changes and growth, and abandonment of its pioneer past. In 1904 and 1909 respectively, Maria and James Comeford died. By 1904, the town had expanded to 8th Street on the north and Allen

Creek on the east. Eight students began high school in 1903, and the first high school building was constructed in 1907 on 10th between Beach and Cedar. The population had increased in 1905 to 1250, 3.5 times the population at incorporation 14 years earlier. The town had 450 students, four churches, a public electric light system, six miles of graded streets, two logging camps, six shingle mills, three saw mills, and mail was delivered on a RFD route by horse and buggy. The entire Northwest experienced a phenomenal boom following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake when the mills of the Northwest furnished the timber to rebuild that city.

During the 1910s and 1920s Marysville began to connect or reconnect to surrounding communities. In 1912 and 1913 respectively, the Shoultes and Kellogg Marsh School Districts rejoined the Marysville district. The Marysville School District then in 1914 built its first brick building, a new high school; the second brick school building was constructed in 1916. First Street was paved in 1914; in 1916, the first Highway 99 was created from the existing Sunnyside Blvd. route by paving it from Everett to Marysville via Cavelero Corner.

Following the 1923 earthquake in Japan, the Northwest experienced another boom sparked again by the demand for building materials. Then in 1926 the second Highway 99 was constructed across the flats to Everett, requiring four bridges. The new roadway reoriented town toward it, with many businesses and public structures relocating along State Avenue. This shifted the center of town to Third Street and State Avenue, and zoning encouraged commercial and residential development to string out north of the city.

The stock market Crash and Great Depression did not affect Marysville significantly. As a farming community, the area was fairly self-sufficient; Marysville's agricultural products consisted primarily of berry crops, dairy, poultry, and oats. For some of the outlying communities such as Getchell Hill, the Depression coincided with hard times. The town was dependent on timber and as the availability of trees diminished, so did the town. By 1935, there was only one sawmill, a church and a school. Marysville, experienced the opposite action. During the 1930s the town filled in as bigger businesses and a large migration of residents took place. In 1932 Marysville held its first Strawberry Festival. This has been an annual affair except for three years during World War II. A new high school and elementary school were constructed. The Tulalip Reservation's school closed and joined with Marysville. A few Native American children had been attending the Marysville schools since 1888, but the separation of schools formally ended.

During World War II, the main activity in the immediate Marysville area was the ammunitions storage depot on the Tulalip Reservation. After the war this site would become a Boeing test site. Beginning then, a new kind of manufacturing, aerospace parts, would join the traditional ones as part of the Marysville economy.

Most of the post-war changes that occurred gave the city the form we know today. After the war, Marysville decided it was time for a new city hall. The city hall was the original wooden structure built in 1891 that had been relocated to three different sites during its 60 year life span. The new brick City Hall and library opened in December 1951 in City Park. Another major post-war event was the construction of the third Highway 99, now named Interstate 5. The Marysville portion was completed in the mid-1960s, and the entire Interstate was finished a decade later. This limited access highway introduced a new orientation to the city. Previously, State Avenue, the second Highway 99, had been the primary north-south route through the city. Following the construction of the new Interstate 5 on the western edge of town, State Avenue's role changed as highway oriented businesses moved to Fourth Street. New businesses along State Avenue were such things as mobile home courts and strip shopping

centers, like B & M. The new businesses on Fourth Street supplanted its residential uses, and the expressway instigated the decline of the once fine residential neighborhood alongside it. Also, by 1954 the population of Marysville was approximately 2500. Marysville had taken 50 years to double in size. Additionally, in 1954 the Sunnyside School District consolidated with the Marysville district.

Comprehensive land use planning began in the greater Marysville area in 1956 when the Snohomish County Council adopted the first plan for the county. The 1956 plan consisted of a land use map showing a range of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The 1956 plan lacked any explanatory text that could provide guidance in implementing it. In 1964, Snohomish County was separated into twelve planning sub-areas and a plan prepared for each of them. The Marysville Sub-Area surrounded the City on the north, south, and east with the Tulalip Sub-Area situated to the west. The City of Marysville's own first plan was adopted in 1968; it was revised and updated for adoption in November 1978. The City's plan contained explanatory text to provide direction in implementing it. In March 1982 the revised County Sub-Area Plan for Marysville was adopted by the County Council. This revised plan was based on the desire for growth management population and employment increases were incorporated by expansion of developed land, and utilities were limited to minimize the fiscal and environmental impacts of growth. Another aspect of this plan was that it was intended to complement the City's 1978 plan. Lastly, the County plan also supported strengthening the vitality of the business areas of Marysville by not allowing retail or service businesses to locate outside of the urban core, that is, along the State Avenue corridor.

The 1980s were not just a time of planning, but actions as well. In the late 1980s many significant projects were built: a new shopping mall was constructed in downtown Marysville, between First and Fourth Streets, State and Cedar Avenues. While the mall replaced many rundown and underutilized structures, it also turned its back on the waterfront. Another significant shopping center with K-Mart and Fred Meyer as anchors was built at State Avenue and 100th Street. This development reinforced the residential developments that had been occurring north of the city limits since the 1950s. Also the major connection and widening of Fourth Street/64th Street NE took place. This improvement not only improved connections between downtown Marysville and Highway 9, but also access to Interstate 5. With concomitant growth pressures, the areas east of Marysville, especially those on the slopes overlooking the City and valley, have been developed.

During the 1990's, the population of Marysville experienced quite a change. As was mentioned above, in 1954 there were twice as many residents in Marysville as there were in 1905. By 1980 the population had again doubled, but in half the time it had previously taken. Since 1980, the population has almost doubled with each decade through 2000. Marysville's location with proximity to major employment centers and transportation corridors, the beauty of the natural setting, the moderate size of the community, and the relatively reasonable housing costs make it an attractive city. However, these same attractions have put significant growth pressures on the city.

Much of the growth within the past three decades has been residential growth. The resulting imbalance between residential and commercial growth has brought new vigor to the City's efforts to kindle economic development and business growth. Many of the housing developments designed in the 1980's and '90's lacked individuality and quality design elements. The commercial strip along State Avenue/Smokey Point Boulevard (Old Hwy 99) aged and became a little more run-down as new commercial malls and developments were built in adjoining communities.

Over the 1980's and '90's the community began to lose its small-town feel and charm, while the area has yet to develop the urban amenities and presence of a larger city. Throughout the 1980's, 1990's and early 2000's, the Marysville community was also undergoing the polarization of pro- and anti-growth pressures reacting to political decisions that affected each interest group. Growth brought with it rapid change to small farms, rural lands, open space, roads and infrastructure affecting the community. Growth also brought many new residents with expectations for their new home based on the community they came from.

The Growth Management Act resulted in more influence of planning on local land use decisions. Snohomish County designated an urban growth area for Marysville in 1995. The City GMA Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1996 establishing stronger guidance for land uses and planning areas. In 1997, Arlington and Marysville settled a long-standing dispute over urban area influence of each City, setting the north and south boundaries respectively of Marysville and Arlington in the Smokey Point area.

B. MARYSVILLE TODAY

From the beginning of the new millennium, year 2000, a new dynamic emerged in the community. The community began to see itself as an urban area with the needs, desires and goals to provide a quality urban environment for its residents and businesses. New capital projects were planned, financed and constructed for roads, parks, wastewater, water, stormwater and public buildings.

These public improvements have the City taking on a new look in the Downtown with new services for the community and infrastructure for future growth. Other key areas for development and redevelopment within the City include:

- The Lakewood area which has seen considerable commercial and multi-family development since 2006 yet still contains large tracts of remaining undeveloped commercial, mixed use, and residential zoning;
- The Smokey Point Neighborhood particularly the Smokey Point Master Plan Area and the Arlington-Marysville Manufacturing Industrial Center (MIC) which are slated for industrial and business park development, and the attendant living wage jobs;
- The East Sunnyside-Whiskey Ridge Master Plan Area which provides opportunities for commercial, multi-family, and residential development in the southeast corner of the City; and
- The 88th Street Master Plan Area which allows for true Mixed Use development with commercial and service oriented uses on the ground floor and commercial, service, and residential uses above the ground floor.

A new spirit of cooperation has also emerged with neighboring jurisdictions including Snohomish County, the Tulalip Tribes, and Arlington.

While the overall guidance of the City's 1996 plan remains relevant, citizens, business leaders and elected officials want to implement change at a faster and more aggressive pace with respect to business growth, quality residential, commercial and industrial growth, and well planned balanced growth in the Marysville area. These key priorities were spelled out in the City's economic development plan written in 2002.

C. MARYSVILLE- OUR FUTURE

This Comprehensive Plan Update establishes the framework and regulatory guidance in our land use planning to meet current community mandates.

Vision

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These priorities are:

1. Enhance Community Image and Identity
2. Improve Existing Business Opportunities and Expand & Diversify the Economic Base through Business Attraction and Retention Efforts
3. Support Recreation and Tourism Advantages
4. Improve Transportation and Infrastructure
5. Improve Government and Regulatory Environment
6. Enhance Employment and Housing Opportunities through Workforce Education and Training

The City is actively implementing its strategic plan with respect to each of these priorities. Citizens, business leaders appointed and elected officials have committed their time and efforts to taking steps to create a better Marysville. This plan will help realize that vision in terms of shaping, guiding and regulating future development in the Marysville urban growth area.

Some of the focus areas that have emerged in the plan development are revitalizing the downtown and downtown waterfront as a key to the image and identity, tourism and recreation potential of the Marysville community. To that end, the City conducted a separate Downtown Vision Plan and adopted the *Downtown Master Plan* in October 2009 to guide development and redevelopment of the Downtown. Marysville's Downtown embodies the image and identity of our community to both internal and external visitors. In order to spur redevelopment within the Downtown, the City has invested in key capital improvement projects that include the State Avenue Improvement project; the Ebey Slough Waterfront Park and Boat Launch Facility; the Marysville Spray Park at Comeford Park; and will be pursuing additional projects such as the First and Third Street Low Impact Development projects. Private investors have also begun to invest more in the Downtown with notable projects including redevelopment at the southwest and northeast corners of the intersections of Fourth Street and State Avenue with new or remodeled buildings; remodels of several other buildings along the Fourth Street corridor; and remodeling of the commercial building at the southwest corner of Third Street and State Avenue.

As we envision the future Marysville, we have chosen to use historical neighborhood areas as the basis for future land use planning. These neighborhoods, which center around historic community services (often commercial uses and schools), are the foundation of new plans for strengthening our neighborhood connections. It is our intent in pursuing this plan to effectuate stronger community participation, leadership and an active, caring and involved citizenry.