

Comprehensive Plan

**Oak Harbor → 2036**

***A Vision for the  
Future***



## Acknowledgements

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# Oak Harbor → 2016

## *A Vision for the Future*

*Oak Harbor, Whidbey Island's premier waterfront community, takes pride in a diverse culture rooted in history, and boasts a state-of-the-art educational system, a robust economy, and recreational opportunities for the whole family.*

**Culture:** Ancient Garry Oak trees grace the skyline in a city that invests in its waterfront and beautiful views. A town rich in diverse culture, Oak Harbor fosters art and hosts world renowned races, annual concerts, exciting parades, and family-friendly festivals. The city promotes a diverse housing stock, and clean and safe neighborhoods through community watch and policing. The connection between the urban environment and natural areas is highly valued. Here, the native landscapes are preserved and wild life is protected. Adopting innovative and environmentally sensitive development practices, Oak Harbor maintains local ecosystems and promotes green energy opportunities and growth.

**Education:** Oak Harbor is a place where education will remain at the forefront of our agenda. The school system includes cutting-edge educational, art and sports programs, as well as a community college that constantly expands and tailors its programs to fit the community's needs.

**Economy:** Oak Harbor is a state-of-the-art city with a vast public transportation system, great infrastructure and fast communication networks. Small businesses thrive and expand, and large, diverse companies locate here, offering high paying, low impact jobs. Oak Harbor’s multimodal street network emphasizes interconnectivity of roads and creative levels of service delivery. Downtown is vibrant with diverse businesses, quaint bars, outdoor cafes and street performers. Ultramodern police and fire departments along with local hospitals provide safety, high-quality health care, community services and employment.

**Recreation:** Emphasizing outdoor recreation, Oak Harbor offers extensive exercise trails from its waterfront promenade to city parks, wildlife corridors, wetlands and state parks. A city-owned marina serves local needs while inviting visitors, sporting events, seaplane transport and more. Safe pedestrian access and bicycle lanes are integrated into the transportation network facilitating easy access to outdoor recreation.

*Home of Naval Air Station Whidbey Island and its proud military heritage, Oak Harbor maintains a small-town atmosphere and lifestyle by respecting history and diverse cultures and by sustaining an affordable cost of living, making this town a place where the children of yesteryear come back to raise their families today.*

**It is Whidbey Island’s premier waterfront community, it is  
Oak Harbor**

## Introduction and Vision

*Oak Harbor's Comprehensive Plan is the city's foundational policy document that will guide growth and development for the next twenty years and beyond. Today, Oak Harbor is known as a community with beautiful views, natural areas, Garry Oaks, eclectic neighborhoods, state-of-the-art education, military heritage and recreational opportunities. The Waterfront Trail, Windjammer Park, Oak Harbor Marina, Freund Marsh, and NAS Whidbey are some of Oak Harbor's many assets. This Plan seeks to preserve and improve upon the City's many assets, while striving for the change that the community desires - and steering it toward its long term Vision.*

Oak Harbor is the largest city on Whidbey Island with a population of 22,000 (Washington Office of Financial Management, 2015). State Route 20 (SR 20) runs through the town dissecting the town into an east and west area that are distinct in character. Most of the city's commercial services are located along the highway. These services cater not only to Oak Harbor, but also to north and central Whidbey. The area east of SR 20 is characterized by a mix of residential uses - mostly post-war modern ranch homes - with a gridded street pattern and a mix of commercial services along Midway Boulevard and Pioneer Way. The area west of SR 20 is characterized by mostly newer residential development, curvilinear streets, and cul-de-sacs. The commercial area on Pioneer Way between City Beach Street and Midway Boulevard is the original center of commerce for Oak Harbor and is referred to as Old Town

or Downtown. Oak Harbor is also home to NAS Whidbey, a naval aviation installation for tactical electronic attack and reconnaissance squadrons. NAS Whidbey has its Ault Field operation to the north of the city and its Seaplane Base to the east. The Seaplane Base with its commissary and housing is within Oak Harbor's city limits. A portion of the west side of Seaplane base was acquired by the City and is now the Oak Harbor Marina, one of only two city-owned marinas in Washington.

Oak Harbor cherishes its diverse character and history and embraces the future. The Comprehensive Plan sets out the community's vision for the future, lays out a groundwork of planning policies to guide city actions, and provide a framework so that city departments and community organizations work together toward common goals.

The Vision of the Comprehensive Plan establishes the community's desire for how the city should change and what it should retain. The Vision is ambitious, yet achievable. It creates a dynamic tension that will challenge the community to continue to work to improve the qualities of the city.

The Vision ties directly to the plan's elements, or chapters, that provide the city's long-range policy direction for a number of topics. These policies serve as the basis for city regulations, capital investments, programs, and other actions. Together, the Vision and the policies help ensure that the work of the city is coordinated and helping the community achieve its potential.

# Chapter 1 → The Comprehensive Plan

*A city's comprehensive plan is vital in preparing for future growth and emerging challenges, such as housing needs, transportation improvements and environmental stewardship. People need a safe and secure place to live, an economy that provides jobs, ways to get around, schools and colleges, and recreational opportunities. It is the city government's responsibility to provide public services and facilities to develop policies and to adopt regulations to guide the growth of a city that meets the needs of its people. The Comprehensive Plan captures community goals and establishes specific policies that directly influence how the city will grow and change over time.*

## Comprehensive Plan Development

The development of a comprehensive plan for a city draws from various sources: community preferences derived from various public participation channels, public discussions, adoption of plans and studies, and other decisions. These preferences indicate the community's desire and should therefore play an important role in developing the plan. Community input is vital. However, a community's profile that includes demographics and other data helps in identifying trends that community preferences may not provide. Therefore, census and other local data help to identify changes that a community as a whole can be facing and to plan accordingly. A city's comprehensive plan should also meet the state requirements and should be consistent with local regional efforts such as the County Wide Planning Policies (CWPP), regional transportation plans etc.



Figure 1- Comprehensive Plan Development

## Comprehensive Plan Structure

The Comprehensive Plan structure is designed to meet the needs of the City. The requirements of the GMA are included in this structure either as an element or an implementation plan. For Oak Harbor, the Comprehensive Plan warehouses policies for specific elements of the city. Some of these elements are mandated and others are optional or a community choice. Elements within the Comprehensive Plan can be standalone plans or generalized policy documents governing specific functional or departmental plans.

It is important to maintain a coherent structure to planning efforts within the City. A coherent structure will provide the opportunity to test future plans for consistency. The relationship between the various plans and amendments should be reviewed periodically, along with the Comprehensive Plan major updates, and amended as needed.

## Elements of the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is the City's foundational policy document. It is one of the places that various city plans and programs come together to work toward a single community vision for the future. As an "umbrella" document, the plan's policies guide other city plans, neighborhood area plans, spending on capital projects, development of regulations, and other programs and services, all of which affect the community in large and small ways.

### Land Use Element

Growth in Oak Harbor will need to be managed between greenfield and infill development to accommodate the projected population and employment growth. The distribution of land uses are planned with the Generalized Land Use map. Policies provide

the foundation for existing codes as well as manage changes within and between land-use categories. The Land Use Element also identifies unique neighborhoods within Oak Harbor that have a mix of uses, densities and street patterns. The need to preserve or redevelop the character of these different areas will require a varied approach to the creation and application of policies.

### Urban Design Element

Oak Harbor is surrounded by breathtaking views and landscapes. Greenery weaved into the urban fabric, along with aesthetically pleasing structures, are important in preserving the essence of what makes Oak Harbor a great place to live and work.

### Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Integral to the well-being of a city is its system of parks and trails. A well-connected system will include space, trails and pathways that are accessible to all for a healthy, active community.

### Housing

A diverse housing stock provides choices in living styles for the citizens of Oak Harbor. The City strives to accommodate diversity and density in housing, including affordable housing options, by providing a range of choices for all demographic groups.

### Utilities

Coordination between all the utilities provides for an efficient system that manages change and growth while maintaining resiliency and peak functionality.

### Transportation

State Route 20 runs through the City forming a commercial corridor that serves Oak Harbor and the region. Strategies to improve multimodal connection to and across the highway will increase interconnectivity and accessibility within Oak Harbor. Improving the waterfront trail and its interconnectivity to the regional system, while accommodating bicycle and pedestrian modes into the network, will

provide healthy choices and recreational opportunities.

### Urban Growth Area

Planning for and within the Urban Growth Area will require coordination with Island County to assure that urban development occurs within the city limit where urban services are available. Designating land uses in the UGA will need to be balanced with transportation and service demands.

### Environment

As growth and development occur, Oak Harbor is working to build a healthier, greener and more sustainable future for generations to come. New developments are designed to fit within, and protect or restore, the natural systems, fish and wildlife habitat and natural resources.

### Capital Facilities

Oak Harbor should program its limited resources to address the infrastructure and evolving needs created by the community's growth. Improvements must be coordinated with the City's infrastructure plans.

### Government Services Element

In order to provide the best public service possible, the City needs to coordinate its activities with the various departments, agencies, districts etc.

### Community Coordination

The City understands the importance of NAS Whidbey and its operations on Whidbey Island. The City and the Navy benefit from enhanced communication and coordination between their various activities and services.

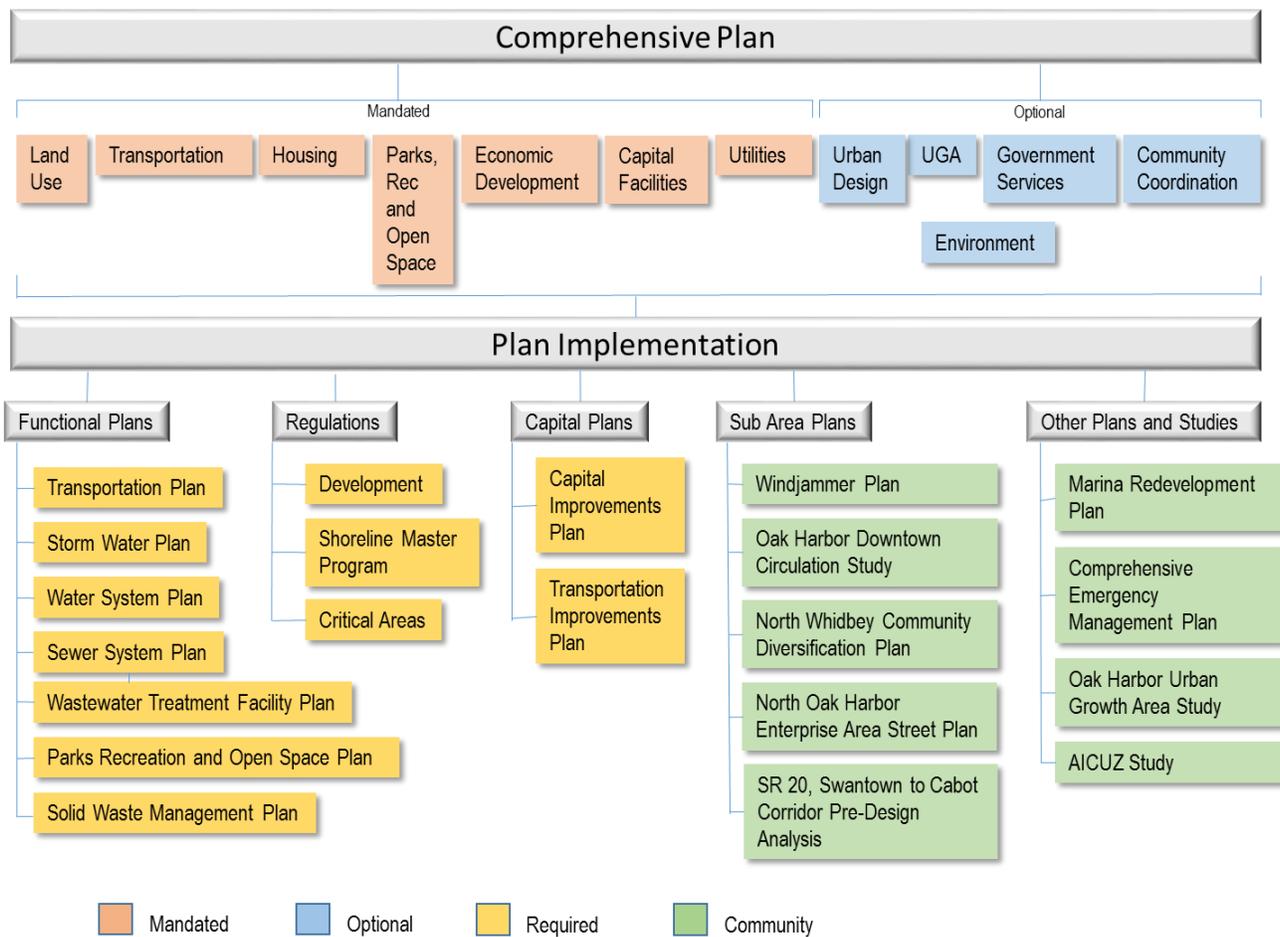


Figure 2 - Plan Implementation

## Implementing Documents

## Year Adopted

Shoreline Master Program	2013
Comprehensive Water System Plan	2014
Comprehensive Sewer System Plan	2007
Comprehensive Storm Drainage Plan	2007
Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan	1994
Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan	2009
North Oak Harbor Enterprise Area Street Plan	2001
North Whidbey Community Diversification Action Plan	1994
Windjammer Plan	2005
Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility Plan	2013
Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan	2013
Capital Improvements Plan	Annual
Transportation Improvements Program	Annual
State Route 20, Swantown Road to Cabot Drive	2005
Transportation Plan	2016

To implement the Vision for Oak Harbor, the

City adopts plans or studies that are focused on specific elements or issues that provide additional data analysis and policy directions and that identify infrastructure needs and solutions.

## Amending the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a living document that is consistently reviewed and referenced. Some elements or plans are required to be updated annually and others by a periodic cycle established by the state. All amendments must follow the public process established by code and include early and continuous public input.

## Chapter 2 → Oak Harbor Profile and Projections

Oak Harbor is the largest city in Island County with a population of 22,000<sup>1</sup>. The City benefits from the presence of NAS Whidbey, which employs 10,066<sup>2</sup> personnel that includes workers from outside the north Whidbey area. Washington State Route 20 runs through the city and serves as the primary commercial corridor with large retail stores mixed with strip centers and shopping complexes. Midway Boulevard is a secondary commercial corridor with smaller retail

establishments mixed in with some larger commercial complexes. Old Town, along Pioneer Way, is considered the downtown of Oak Harbor. It was the historical trade center for Oak Harbor before the Deception Pass Bridge was built and the Maylor Dock was destroyed by fire.

### Population

According to the 2010 Census, Oak Harbor's population is mainly White, making up approximately 72.6% of the total population, followed by Asian (10.2%) and Black (4.9%).

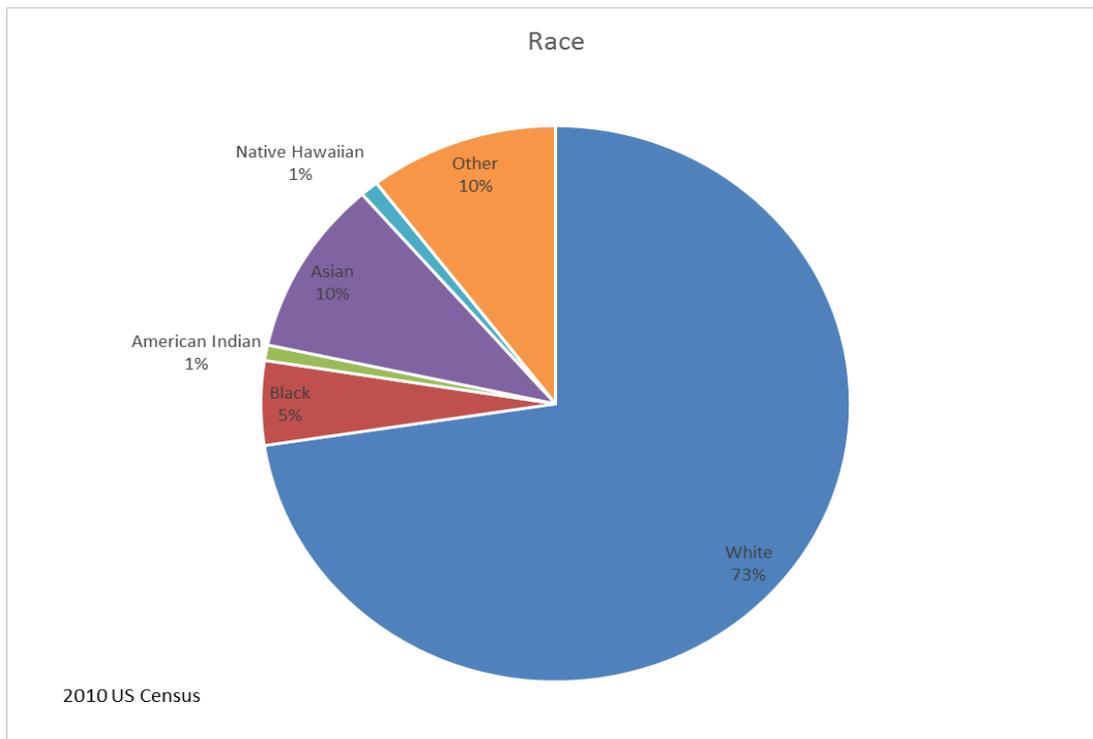


Figure 3- Race in Oak Harbor

<sup>1</sup> 2015 Office of Financial Management projections

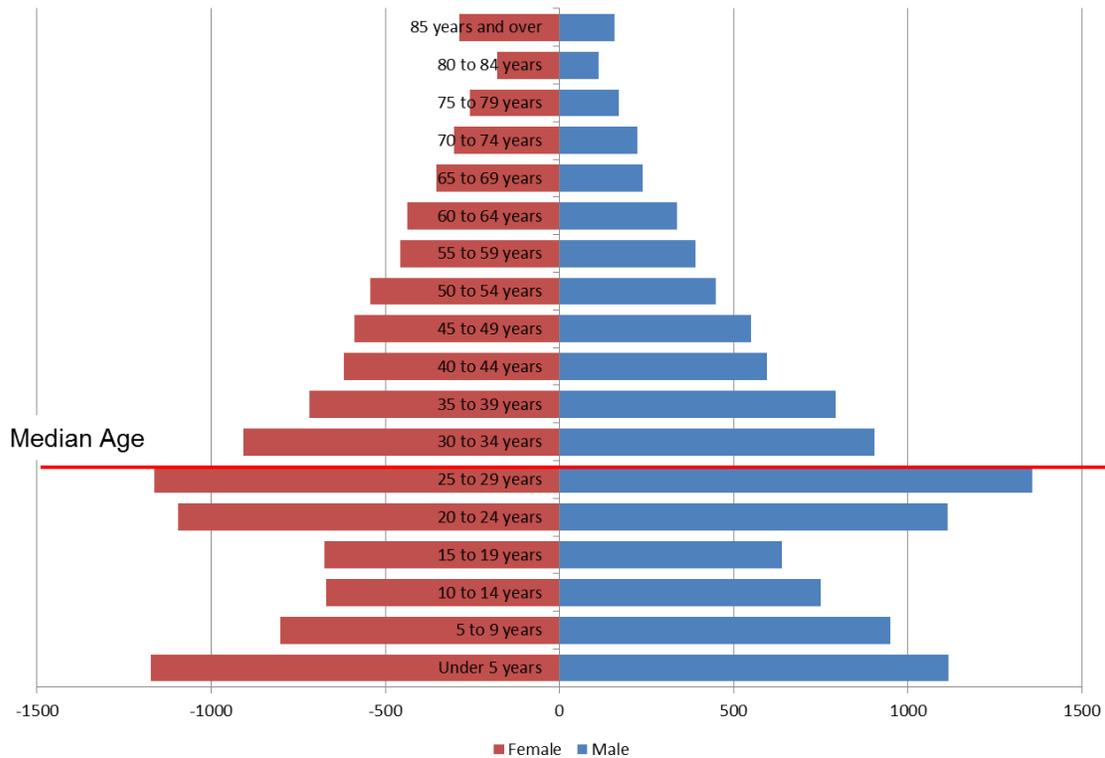
<sup>2</sup> 2012 Final Environmental Assessment – Transition of Expeditionary EA-6B Prowler Squadrons to EA-18G Growler

The population of Oak Harbor has more females (50.8%) than males. Every age group above age 40 has more females than males with females in the 85+ category almost doubling the males. As seen in the age-sex cohort population distribution below, the overall pyramid shape indicates that 50% of the people in Oak Harbor are below 29 years old (median). This indicates that Oak Harbor’s population is fairly young compared to that of Island County (43.2) and Washington (37.3). This is due to the presence of NAS Whidbey, its young sailors and their families.

## Households

There are 8677 households in Oak Harbor, of which approximately 66.7% are family households. In the nonfamily households, 26.9% of residents live alone, and of those who live alone, 8.5% are over the age of 65. Of all households, 38.6% have individuals under the age of 18 and 18.9% have individuals over 65 years old. The average household<sup>3</sup> size in Oak Harbor is 2.53 and the average family<sup>4</sup> size is 3.09.

### Age-sex population cohort



2010 US Census Bureau

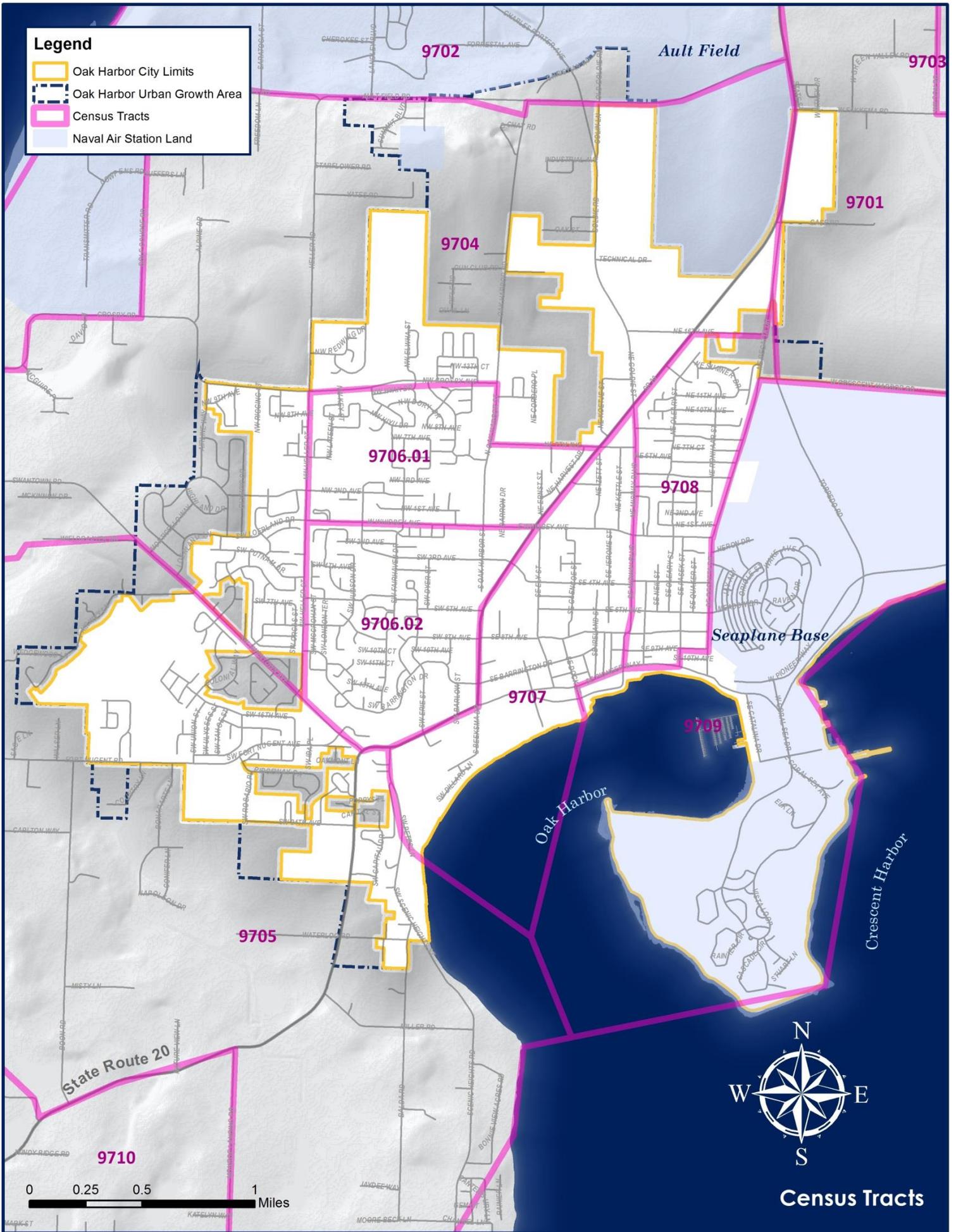
Figure 4- Age-sex population cohort

<sup>3</sup> “Household” includes all the people who occupy a housing unit

<sup>4</sup> “Family” includes householder and one or more persons related to the householder by birth, marriage or adoption

**Legend**

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Census Tracts
-  Naval Air Station Land



## Employment and Income

According to the US Census Bureau 2013 American Factfinder, 49.4% (8,028) of Oak Harbor’s labor force is employed. 83.4% (Island County: 73.9%; Washington: 72.7%; United States: 76.3%) drive alone to work and 9.9% carpool. Approximately 0.7% (IC: 3%; WA: 5.8%; US: 5%) use public transportation, 2.3% walked to work, and 2.5% worked at home. Of employed residents, 63.5% are salary workers in the private sector, 30.7% are government workers, and 5.7% are self-employed. The major industries in Oak Harbor, accounting for 22% of the workforce, are education, health care and social assistance. Public administration follows, accounting for 17% of employed individuals.

The average household income in Oak Harbor is \$56,454. This is less than Island County (\$72,743), Washington State (\$77,827) and the United States (\$73,487). Fifty percent of the households in the city earn less than \$48,955 per year. Nonfamily households earn an average income of \$40,574, while the average family earns an income of \$64,014.

Approximately 8.5% of the families have income below the poverty level<sup>5</sup> and 10.6% of all Oak Harbor residents are below the poverty level<sup>6</sup> in 2013. Residents of Oak Harbor are covered by health insurance at a 90.8% rate, with 82.4% of those covered by private health insurance and 23.8% with public coverage (American Factfinder, 2013)

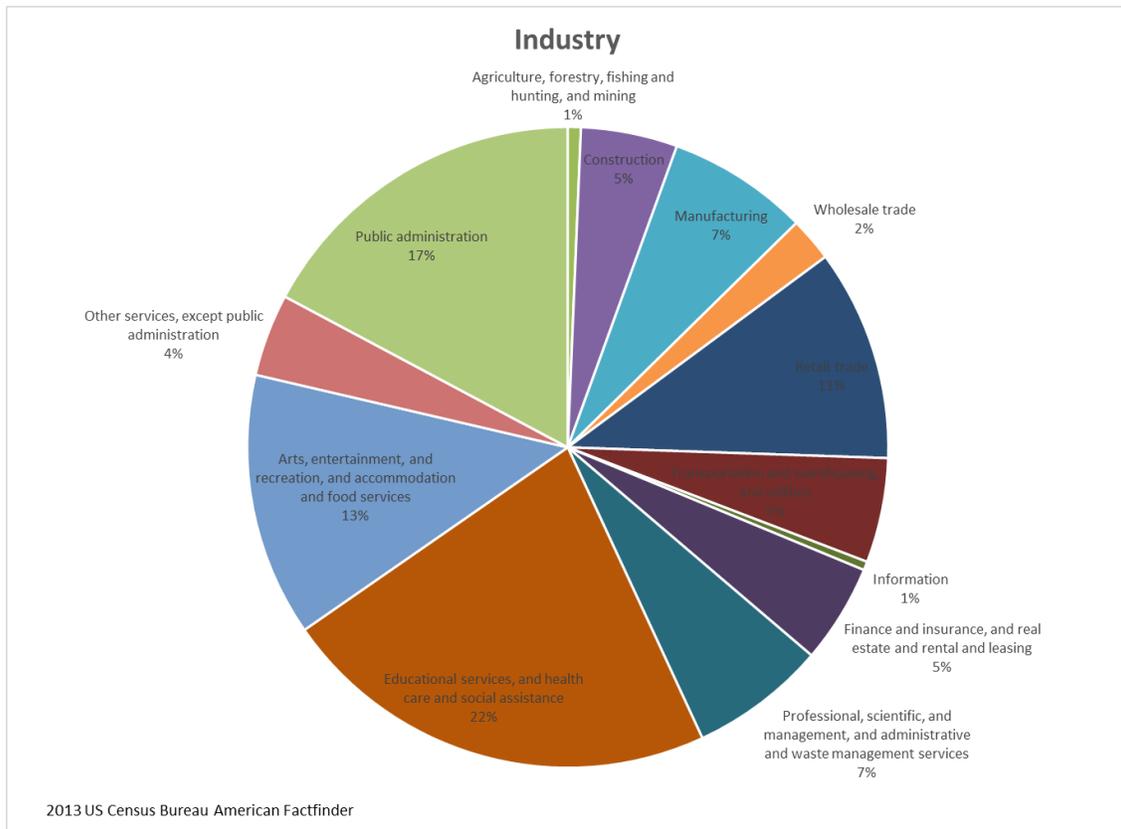


Figure 5- Employment by Industry

<sup>5</sup> Poverty threshold for family 2013 is \$15,600 and varies by family size

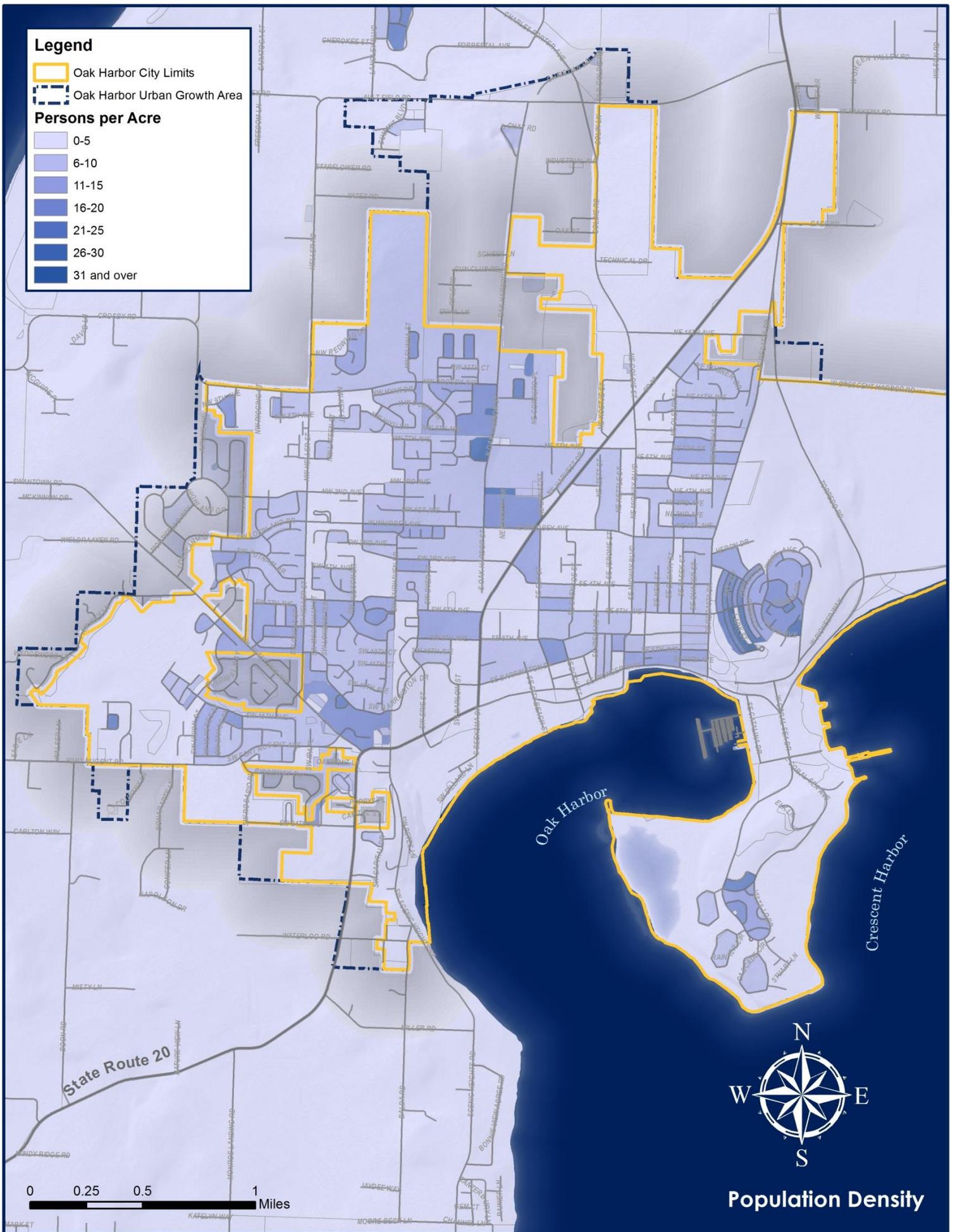
<sup>6</sup> Poverty threshold for individuals is \$12,119

**Legend**

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area

**Persons per Acre**

-  0-5
-  6-10
-  11-15
-  16-20
-  21-25
-  26-30
-  31 and over



State Route 20

Oak Harbor

Crescent Harbor



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Population Density

## Housing

The 2010 Census indicates that there are 9,553 housing units in Oak Harbor. Over 90% are occupied. Of those, 45.9% are owner-occupied and 54.1% are renter-occupied. The remaining 9.2% of housing units that are vacant include 59.7% are for rent, 18.5% are for sale, 8.2% are for seasonal, recreation or occasional use and 13.6% are vacant for other reasons.

By 2013, American Factfinder indicates that the housing units in Oak Harbor total 9,808, an increase of 255 units since the 2010 Census. Of those, 54.8% are single unit detached, 10.6% are 3-4 unit structures, and 7.2% are 5-9 unit structures. Six percent of the units are mobile homes. Multifamily structures constitute 32.6% (IC: 10.9%; WA: 25.7%) of all housing in Oak Harbor. Similar communities have comparable ratios of multifamily stock, such as Bremerton (38%) and Silverdale (37.3%).

A significant portion (43.4%) of the housing stock in Oak Harbor was built between 1970 and 1989. Between 1990 and 1999, approximately 1,460 (14.9%) units were added, and between 2000 and 2009 another 2,194 (22.4%) units were built. Three bedroom units constitute 43.1% of all housing units, while 16.2% have four bedrooms, 28.6% have two bedrooms and 9.4% have one bedroom. The 2013 American Factfinder also indicates that 40.5% of the housing units have two vehicles and 18.2% have three or more.

Forty-nine percent of the owner-occupied housing units are valued between \$200,000 and \$299,000, and 18% are valued between \$150,000 and \$199,000. More than 60% of the monthly mortgages exceed \$1500 with almost 47% of them exceeding \$2000 or more. This is higher than the national (31.5%) and state (40.1%) averages. For rentals, 44.3% (WA: 30.7%; US: 26.3%) pay rent between \$1000 and \$1,499 and 14.9% (WA: 16.6%; US: 15%) pay more than \$1500 in rent. In both, owner

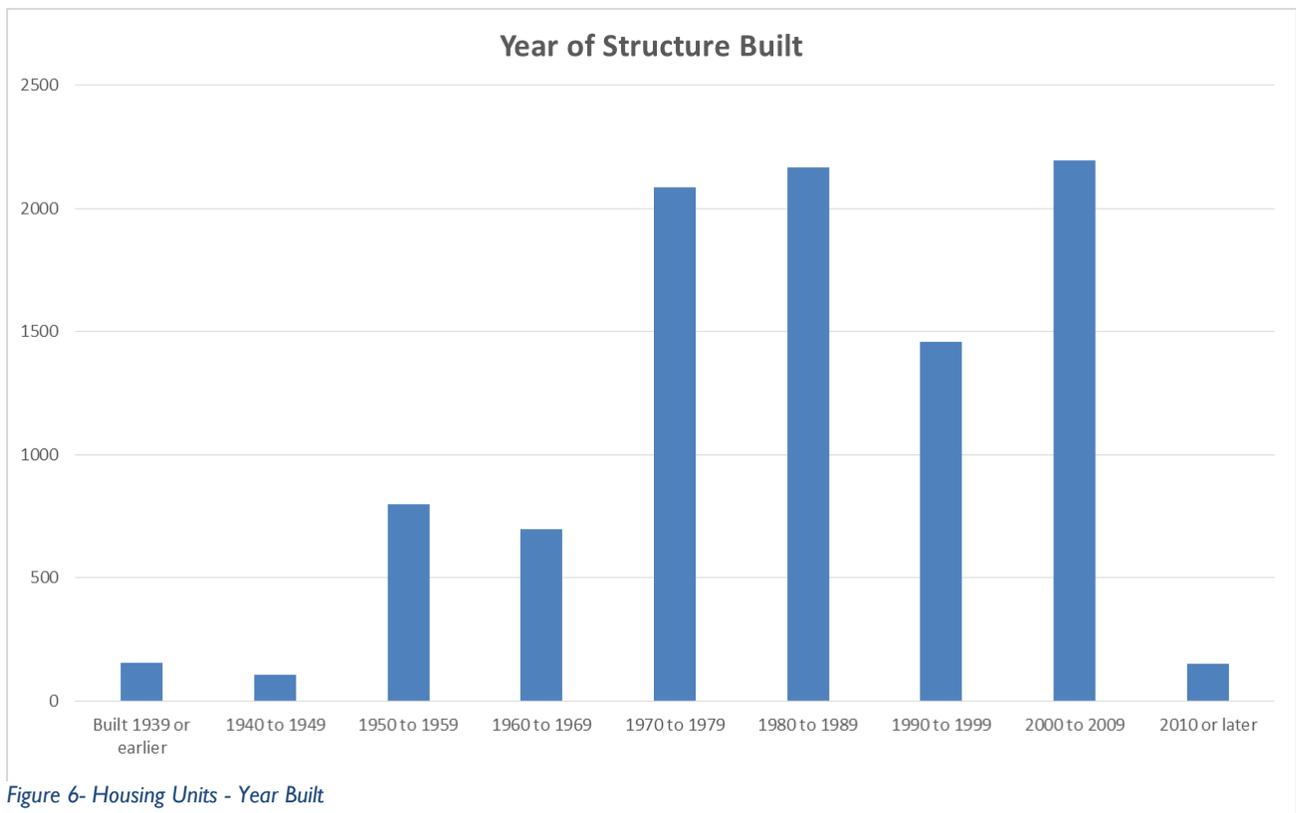


Figure 6- Housing Units - Year Built

occupied and rental units, approximately 48% spend more than 30% of their household income in mortgage or rent<sup>7</sup>.

## Economy

NAS Whidbey is the largest employer on Whidbey Island and employs 10,066 people. According to the 2012 Final Environmental Assessment – Transition of Expeditionary EA-6B Prowler Squadrons to EA-18G Growler Table 3-11 that summarizes the direct economic impacts of NAS Whidbey on Island County, the annual payroll is approximately \$399.1 million, military retiree pensions are \$91.1 million, contracts for goods and services are \$12.2 million, on-station retail spending is

\$22 million and net direct spending is \$516.5 million.

Within Oak Harbor, American Factfinder indicates that there are 1,510 companies. Retail trade tops the list for annual value of sales, shipments, receipts, revenue, or business (\$207,182,000), which accounts for 45% of Island County’s retail trade. Health care and social assistance produce \$52,997,000 in annual receipts, and accommodation and food services produce \$40,840,000. Retail trade employs 988 people in 74 establishments while health care employed 751 (68 establishments), and accommodation and food service employed 744 (63 establishments).

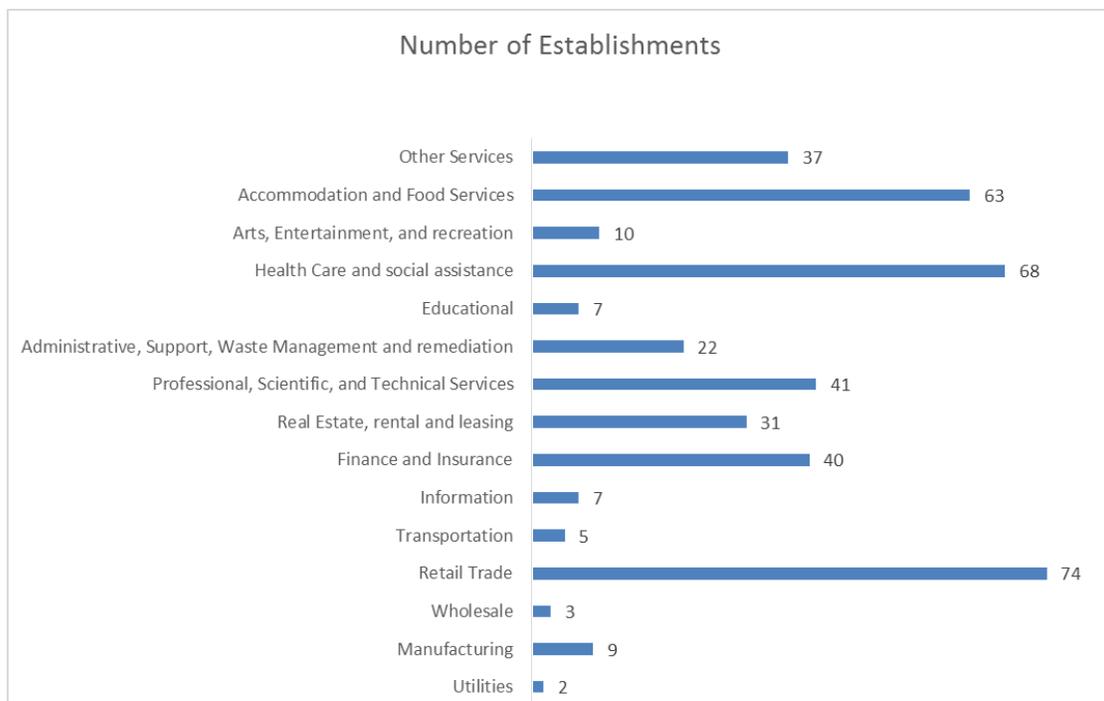


Figure 7- Number of Establishments

<sup>7</sup> According to a 2015 Housing Needs Assessment for the State of Washington, “affordable” is when a household pays no more than 30% of its income for all housing costs, “cost-burdened” when a household pays more than 30% of its income and “severely cost burdened” when a household pays more than 50% of its income on all housing expenses.

## Projections 2036

The 20 year population projection for Island County and Oak Harbor will be impacted by an increase in squadrons at NAS Whidbey that is proposed between 2016 and 2020<sup>8</sup>. The proposed squadron increase was incorporated into the 20 year population projections (87,917) for Island County, which was adopted in August 2013 in preparation for the Countywide Planning Policies. Island County also separately allocated the additional 20,136 people to the different regions within the county based on historical growth patterns. North Whidbey was allocated approximately 49% (42,989) of the total 2036 population and 66% (6232) of the 20 year growth. Based on these allocations, Island County projects Oak Harbor's population for 2036 will be 25,814, an increase of 3,739 from the 2010 Census population of 22,075.

The population projection allocation by Island County can be checked for validity by comparing the population projection for Oak Harbor based on historical trends. Figure 8 indicates the historical trend of an average of 1% growth every year, accounts for the squadron increase, and then returns to the normal growth trend of 1%. Based on this trend, the 2036 population is projected to be 25,925. This is fairly close to Island County's allocation for Oak Harbor.

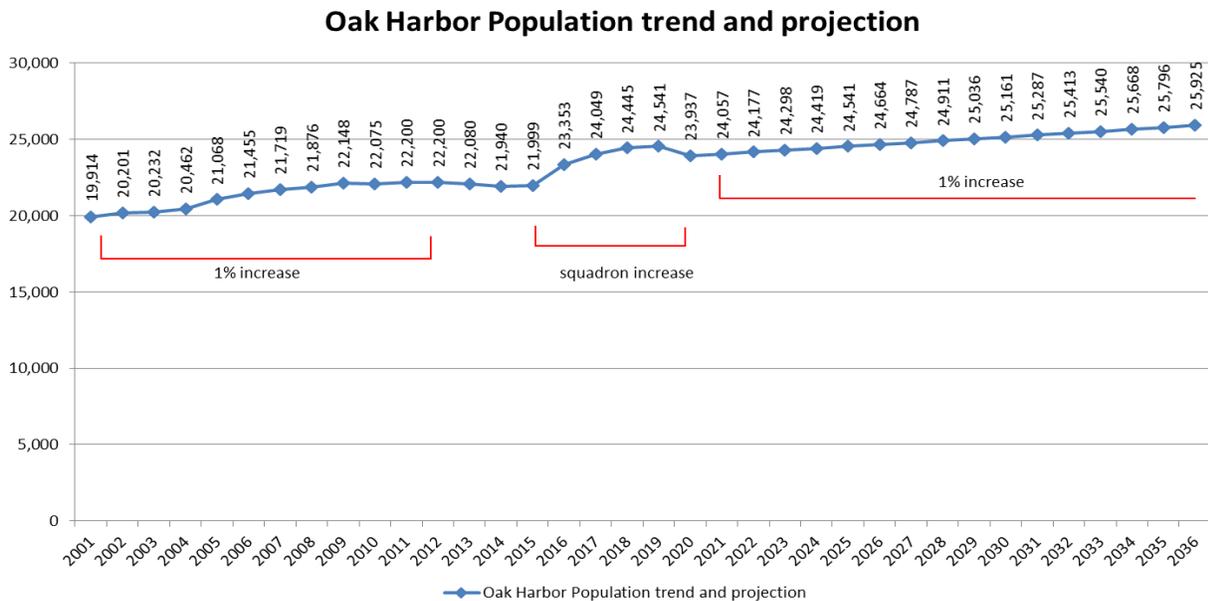


Figure 8 - Population trend

<sup>8</sup> See Resolution 13-17 and associated agenda bill for information on the 20yr Population Projection for Island County

## Findings

- The age-sex cohort information is instrumental in determining the 20 year population projection for Island County (includes low birth rates in South Whidbey due to the high median age)
- The median age of Oak Harbor is likely to remain low due to the presence of NAS Whidbey and its transitional young sailors.
- There is a low percentage of use of public transportation due to the lack of service by Island Transit to NAS Whidbey Ault Field
- The high demand for affordable housing is potentially due to property values increasing at a faster rate than increases in income and housing allowances for Navy personnel.





## Chapter 3 → Land Use Element

*A fundamental role of the Comprehensive Plan is to anticipate, guide, and plan for growth in a way that helps the City achieve its Vision. The plan is a tool to look ahead to the likely growth and ensure that the City's plans for land uses, infrastructure, and services are aligned with that growth. The Land Use Element addresses the general pattern of land use within the city and provides a framework to guide the city's overall growth and development. It ensures that an appropriate mix of land uses are available to support the City's economic goals, provide services to residents and businesses, and provide an array of housing choices. Land use planning also helps protect environmentally sensitive areas and maintain the character of established neighborhoods while allowing the city to evolve to meet the changing needs of the community.*

### Existing Conditions

Oak Harbor's land use pattern is a reflection of its history and its relationship with Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI). Prior to the existence of Deception Pass Bridge and the naval base, Oak Harbor relied on Maylor Dock for supplies, and, therefore, most of the city's commerce was established around the dock. Maylor Dock was destroyed by fire in 1966. However commercial activity continued in the area and is still active today. This area is commonly referred to as Old Town and is currently where the Central Business District is located.

Deception Pass Bridge was built in 1935 and NASWI was established on Whidbey Island in 1942 and expanded in 1949. The first jet

squadron arrived in 1956. The Seaplane Base was built adjacent to Oak Harbor's Old Town, and Ault Field was built north of Oak Harbor. Today the Seaplane Base accommodates naval housing, the Navy Exchange and the Commissary. Ault Field is the active part of the base and features the main airfield, flight operation and supporting facilities. It also accommodates a hospital, a variety of housing units and recreational areas including an 18-hole golf course. The Seaplane Base is within city limits while Ault Field is located in the unincorporated area of Island County.

### Transportation Corridors

Today's State Route 20 was originally designated State Route 536 and came to be called SR 20 after the North Cascades Highway was completed. SR 20 through Oak Harbor is flanked by the majority of the City's commercial uses which take advantage of the traffic volumes that on the highway.

Midway Boulevard runs north-south through the city and connects Old Town and SR 20. It is flanked by mixed uses in the south close to Old Town, and commercial uses to the north where it intersects with SR 20. Midway Boulevard connects to Goldie Road north of SR 20 which is flanked by commercial uses close to SR 20 and which becomes predominately industrial as it extends north to Ault Field Road. Goldie Road terminates at one of the major entry points onto NASWI Ault Field.

### NAS Whidbey Island

Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI) is the single largest employer on Whidbey Island. Its Ault Field location and flight operations' proximity to Oak Harbor influences the city's land use patterns. Noise contours emanating from their training flight paths have been

mapped<sup>9</sup> and play a crucial role in building construction techniques to mitigate noise impacts. The orientation of runways at Ault Field also creates Accident Potential Zones (APZ) that overlap on properties within the city. These areas have overlay restrictions on uses to promote compatibility and safety<sup>10</sup>. Due to these impacts, the land use patterns to the north of the city have been designated primarily for industrial uses to limit people-intensive uses, reduce potential impacts and promote safety.

The Seaplane Base encompasses approximately 2,897 acres east of the city and is developed primarily with family housing. A large portion of the Seaplane Base is covered by grasslands, wetlands, forests and beaches. It includes approximately 10 miles of shoreline along Crescent Harbor and Oak Harbor Bay.

### **Residential Development**

In Oak Harbor, residential development east of SR 20 is comprised of a mix of single family and multifamily, with styles primarily of post-war modern ranch homes and construction dates typically in the 1950s to early 1970s. Neighborhoods in this area are mostly comprised of grid pattern streets and have limited sidewalks. West of SR 20, the typical dates of residential construction are the late 1970s and early 1980s close to the highway and 1990s to 2000s further away to the west. Neighborhoods in this area utilize curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs as their primary development pattern.

### **Commercial Development**

Commercial uses in Oak Harbor are primarily located along the major transportation corridors described above. SR 20 is flanked by big-box stores, national chain restaurants and medium-sized national chain drug stores. These

national chains along with local commercial strip centers provide a healthy mix of retail services for Oak Harbor and Whidbey Island. Old Town, located away from the highway, is characterized by smaller lots and denser development. Midway Boulevard between SR 20 and Whidbey Avenue also provides alternate commercial options.

### **Industrial Development**

Industrial land and developments are located primarily along Goldie Road and North Oak Harbor Road. Of these two corridors, Goldie Road is the most highly developed. All of the properties along the east side of Goldie Road are within the city limits, as are a few parcels on the west side. While many of the west side properties are located within unincorporated Island County, their location within the UGA indicates that they are anticipated to annex into the city over time.

### **Shoreline**

The marine shoreline within Oak Harbor is approximately 13 miles long, with a major portion of it on the Navy's Seaplane Base. The stretch within the city is covered predominantly by infrastructure (Pioneer Way, Bayshore Drive) and public lands (Oak Harbor Marina, Flintstone Park, Windjammer Park and Freund Marsh). The remaining shoreline is adjacent to residential uses that are mainly characterized by steep bluffs. The Shoreline Master Program is an overlay for uses adjacent to the shoreline and has seven environment designations<sup>11</sup> that guide development and conservation along the coast.

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<sup>9</sup> Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) for Naval Air Station Whidbey Island Ault Field and Outlying Landing Field Coupeville, Washington adopted 2005

<sup>10</sup> See Chapter 5 of the AICUZ study

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<sup>11</sup> Oak Harbor Shoreline Environment Designations – Maritime, Urban Mixed Use, Residential, Residential-Bluff Conservancy, Urban Public Facility, Conservancy and Aquatic.

## Land Use Distribution

Land use categories are applied to all properties in the city and the UGA. Oak Harbor's land uses have been divided into seven general categories. This is a major change from the original GMA comprehensive plan adopted in 1995<sup>12</sup>, which had more detailed land uses that directly matched zoning districts. The generalized land uses considered with the major update in 2016 are intended to provide a better planning tool and deal with meaningful change within a reasonable amount of time.

### Planned Residential Estate

The Planned Residential Estate category is intended to preserve the rural residential character that exists in the Urban Growth Areas that will annex into the city. These areas are intended to be preserved in their existing capacity due to their proximity to the Naval Air Station, noise impacts, surrounding land uses and environmentally sensitive areas.

### Low-Intensity Residential

The Low-Intensity Residential category is intended to accommodate most of the residential uses and to support low-intensity uses such as religious institutions, care facilities, schools etc., that create healthy livable neighborhoods. Supporting uses in this category normally provide services that are quiet, low impact and operate in a fashion that does not hinder the residential character of the neighborhood. Residential densities in this category range from a minimum of 3 units per acre to a maximum of 16 units per acre. This land use category is implemented by three zoning districts: Single Family Residential (R1), Limited Multifamily Residential (R2) and Multifamily Residential (R3).

This land use category, where most of the residents of Oak Harbor live, encompasses

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<sup>12</sup> The first comprehensive plan adopted under the Growth Management Act (GMA)

approximately 5719 parcels (about 1941 acres) and 47% of the total area in the City and the UGA. Approximately 74% of this land use category is within the city limits and 26% is in the UGA. Approximately 82% (1596 acres) of this land use category is developed<sup>13</sup>.

### High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial

This land use category accommodates high-density residential uses, fringe neighborhood-scale commercial uses and office-type uses. Densities in the residential district range from a minimum of 12 units per acre to a maximum of 22 units per acre.

Professional and administrative offices that have normal working hours are accommodated in this district and form a buffer between the Low-Intensity Residential category and other high-intensity uses. This district also accommodates neighborhood-scale commercial uses. This land use is best located on the fringes of neighborhoods and along transportation corridors and intersections and is supported by pedestrian amenities and/or is accessible by mass transit. This land use category is implemented by the following zoning districts: Multifamily Residential District (R4), Residential Office (RO) and Neighborhood Commercial District (CI).

Currently, the 275 acres that include all 366 parcels in this land use category are located within the city limits. Seventy-five percent of the area in this land use category is developed. This is one of the land use categories that should be considered for inclusion in the UGA and future UGA expansions to provide alternative commercial services away from SR 20.

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<sup>13</sup> Properties considered as "developed", are lots that have an existing structure valued greater than \$4000 (Countywide Policies Buildable Land Analysis). Properties that fall under this threshold are considered vacant but can include open space, parks, critical areas etc. and should not be assumed as all developable.

## **Maritime**

The City created this land use category in 2012 to accommodate high-intensity water related and water dependent commercial and industrial uses. This land use category and the Maritime designation in the Shoreline Master Program have similar intent. This land use would accommodate uses such as boat building, sail making, water dependent transportation warehousing and other clean industrial uses. This land use also accommodates commercial uses similar to the uses that are allowed in the Central Business District. The commercial uses are intended to draw residents and visitors to the area and enjoy the recreational facilities provided by the marina, Catalina Park and the Maylor Point trail.

## **High-Intensity Commercial**

The High-Intensity Commercial category is the workhorse commercial district for Oak Harbor and includes all types and scale of retail establishments, wholesale, transportation, and regional centers. This district is located primarily along major transportation corridors and capitalizes on traffic volumes. Large-scale offices and commercial complexes are encouraged to locate in this district. This district is intended to encourage mixed uses that support residential uses, where there are minimal noise impacts from NAS Whidbey and its operations. The zoning districts that implement this land use category are: Community Commercial (C3), Highway Service Commercial (C4) and Highway Corridor Commercial (C5).

There are 310 parcels (approximately 399 acres) in this land use category, of which 326 acres are within the city limits and 73 acres are in the UGA. Approximately 72% of the land in this area has been developed.

## **Central Business District**

The Central Business District is commonly referred to as Downtown or Old Town and is located along SE Pioneer Way between City Beach Street and Midway Boulevard. This

district encompasses small- to medium-sized lots with dense building stock and pedestrian environments. Mixed uses and high-density residential complexes are encouraged in the district to create a vibrant mixed and cohesive pedestrian-scale environment. Setbacks and parking are limited mainly to residential uses thus encouraging commercial uses to maximize the development potential of lots. Due to the high density allowed in this district, heights, views and mixing of residential uses will need to be planned for compatibility. The intent of this district is implemented through the Central Business District (CBD) zoning classification. The CBD zoning district is further divided into CBD-1 and CBD-2 sub-districts to regulate building heights and residential uses.

There are 141 parcels (approximately 41 acres) in this land use category. Of the 141 parcels, 95 (approximately 28.5 acres) are developed.

## **Industrial/Business Park**

The Industrial/Business Park land use category is intended to accommodate industrial uses, industrial parks and business parks. The industrial and business parks provide an opportunity for the City to work with developers to promote large-scaled master planned developments that accommodate office complexes while preserving natural amenities. The zoning districts in this land use category are: Industrial (I), Planned Industrial Park (PIP) and Planned Business Park (PBP).

There are currently 146 parcels totaling 671 acres in this land use category. Fifty-one of these parcels (277 acres) are within city limits and 95 parcels (393 acres) are in the UGA. Approximately 96 acres are within the city, and 185 acres are outside city limits but within the UGA are considered developed.

## **Public Facilities**

This land use category accommodates public facilities and institutional uses such as schools, colleges, churches, governmental offices, public works yards, utility structures and public parks.

This land use category is implemented by the Public Facilities (PF) zoning district.

There are approximately 505 acres in this land use category. Approximately 96% are within the city limits.

### **Open Space**

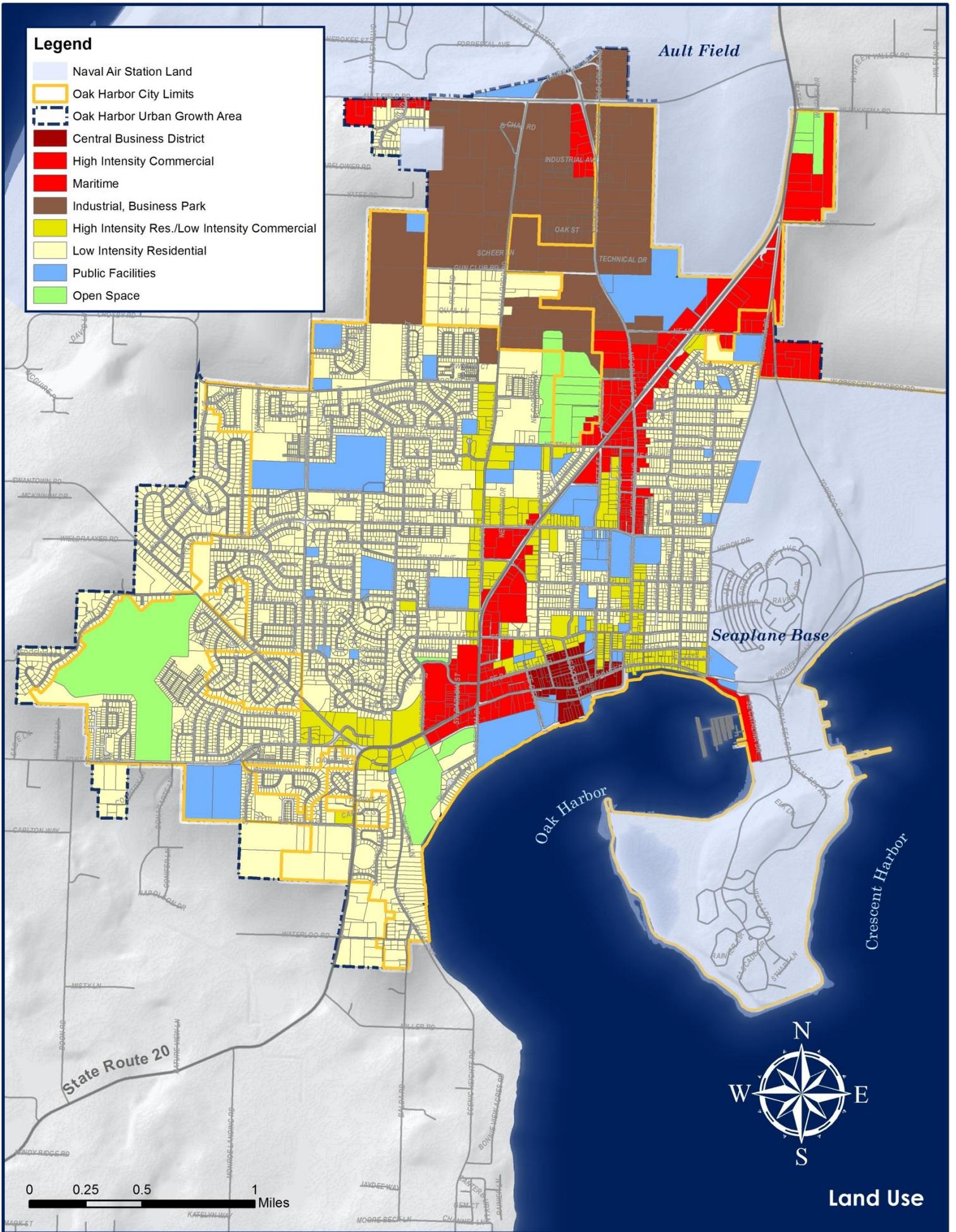
The intent of the Open Space category is to retain and preserve natural ecosystems and recreation areas for community benefit and welfare. Wetlands, forest lands, agricultural uses and golf courses are within this category. It is implemented by the Open Space (OS) zoning district.

There are approximately 325 acres of open space in the city and UGA. Approximately 259 acres are within city limits.



**Legend**

- Naval Air Station Land
- Oak Harbor City Limits
- Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
- Central Business District
- High Intensity Commercial
- Maritime
- Industrial, Business Park
- High Intensity Res./Low Intensity Commercial
- Low Intensity Residential
- Public Facilities
- Open Space



**Land Use**

## Land Use Inventory

A land use inventory indicates the amount of land in each land use category. Since every city is different and has unique land use categories there is no universal formula to determine if a city's land use distribution is ideal.

Figure 10 shows an inventory of the land use categories and the number of acres and lots in each category. As expected, the Low-Intensity Residential constitutes the major portion of the city and is likely the most dynamic of all categories as the city grows. Keeping a pulse on this land use category may provide an opportunity to determine future land use needs in other categories.

## Twenty-Year Land Use Needs

Island County has estimated the population projections for Oak Harbor to reach 25,814 people by 2036, an increase of 3,739 persons from the 2010 population. The population projection methodology includes the proposed increase in squadrons at NAS Whidbey and the new families additional squadrons will bring. Based on the population projections, the County estimates that approximately 1,626<sup>14</sup> housing units will be needed to meet the demand. The County's analysis<sup>15</sup> also indicates that Oak Harbor has the capacity for 1,803 units and will therefore be able to accommodate the projected needs.

Land Use Categories	Acres	Percentage	Parcels	Percentage
Low-Intensity Residential	1941	46.7%	5719	84.4%
High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial	275	6.6%	366	5.4%
High-Intensity Commercial	399	9.6%	310	4.6%
Central Business District	41	1.0%	141	2.1%
Industrial/Business Park	671	16.1%	146	2.2%
Public Facilities	505	12.1%	67	1.0%
Open Space	325	7.8%	27	0.4%
Totals	4157		6776	

Figure 9 - Percentage of developed acres by Land Use Category

<sup>14</sup> Housing unit demand estimated using housing occupancy of 2.3 person per household -2010 Census

<sup>15</sup> 2015 Buildable Lands Analysis

The County’s analysis also indicates that there is land available in Oak Harbor that once developed, could potentially accommodate an additional 6,781 jobs. The large capacity is probably a result of the amount of industrial land that is in the city’s UGA. The current projections estimate an increase of 1,611 jobs by 2036.

Figure 11 provides information on the total acreage in each land use category and the acreage and percentages considered as developed.

<b>Land Use Categories</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Developed Acres</b>	<b>Percentage Developed</b>
Low-Intensity Residential	1941	1596	82%
High-Intensity Residential/Low Intensity Commercial	275	207	75%
High-Intensity Commercial	399	288	72%
Central Business District	41	28	68%
Industrial/Business Park	671	281	42%
Public Facilities	505	308	61%
Open Space	325	--	--
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4157</b>	<b>2708</b>	

*Figure 10- Land Use Distribution (includes all land within City Limits and the UGA except the Seaplane Base)*

## Land Use Goals and Policies

The goals and policies of the Land Use Element help further Oak Harbor’s Vision. The policies are primarily intended to accomplish the following:

- Direct change – At a time of change, the community can rely on policies and seize the opportunity to move closer to its Vision.
- Bridge gaps – In some instances codes that implement the plan and its Vision may not be sufficient to address the intent of community plans, so policies can help determine mitigation measures to address potential impacts.
- Support code – Implementing codes have their foundation in the goals and policies of the plan.

## Goal 1 – Promote a healthy mix of uses Policies:

- I.a. Encourage land use densities/intensities where services exist or are readily available.
- I.b. Consider land use changes that are compatible with the character of its neighborhood.
- I.c. Promote neighborhood-scale satellite commercial centers to locate in areas away from SR 20.
- I.d. Promote areas for open space and recreational opportunities within residential development.
- I.e. Encourage location of new schools within or adjacent to residential developments and in close proximity to parks.
- I.f. Progress toward a form-based code to regulate the built environment and to foster predictable physical form rather than the separation of uses.
- I.g. Promote a mix of uses and densities in new developments through the Planned Residential Development process.
- I.h. Encourage private and public preservation of undeveloped open space.
- I.i. Designate areas newly incorporated into the UGA as special planning areas to:
  1. Explore the best mix of land uses to serve the area and the city’s needs;
  2. Work with property owners in the area to determine land use patterns and development scenarios;
  3. Involve public participation.

## **Goal 2 – Encourage land use patterns that promote health and safety**

### **Policies:**

- 2.a. Promote land use changes that provide services closer to where people live.
- 2.b. Incorporate alternate modes of transportation with development.
- 2.c. Encourage higher land use intensities and densities along major transit corridors.
- 2.d. Discourage long stretches of intersection-less roadway within the city.
- 2.e. Locate neighborhood parks that are easily accessible to residents and community parks within the level of service distance established in the Parks Recreation and Open Space Plan.
- 2.f. Seek opportunities to establish parks and recreation opportunities in underserved residential areas.
- 2.g. Promote interconnectedness between streets, parks, schools, trails, open spaces, and natural preserves.
- 2.h. Promote interconnectedness from residential areas to commercial areas, parks, and open spaces.
- 2.i. Promote crime prevention through environmental and defensible space design.
- 2.j. Prohibit people-intensive and residential uses from locating in high-noise and aircraft crash zones.
- 2.k. Require noise abatement construction standards based on noise level zones.
- 2.l. Consider flexible standards to encourage redevelopment of underutilized lots.
- 2.m. Limit the development around existing public water supplies to low-intensity uses.
- 2.n. Require developments to protect the aquifer recharge areas from contamination.
- 2.o. Promote a pedestrian scale environment by requiring buildings to locate close to street frontages in commercial, office and residential areas.
- 2.p. Promote pedestrian amenities, where feasible, with development and redevelopment of land.

### Goal 3 – Support a vibrant economy

#### Policies:

- 3.a. Facilitate mixed-use developments in all districts that allow commercial uses.
- 3.b. Support efforts to encourage quality development and redevelopment in the Old Town area.
- 3.c. Support NAS Whidbey and its continued operation by discouraging:
  - 1. Encroachment of incompatible uses;
  - 2. Residential uses from locating north of NE 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue alignment;
  - 3. Structures that are a hazard to flight navigation;
  - 4. People-intensive uses in high noise areas and potential crash zones.
- 3.d. Require the disclosure of potential noise and accident-potential impacts to prospective buyers, renters, or lessees of property and structures in the city and UGA.
- 3.e. Enhance and protect the waterfront as an asset and implement the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program.
- 3.f. Promote upland developments adjacent to the marina.
- 3.g. Consider flexible standards to encourage development and redevelopment along Midway Boulevard.
- 3.h. Support the retention and expansion of industrial uses by utility services extensions and public infrastructure improvements.
- 3.i. Support the development of business parks using, where appropriate, master planning processes to achieve campus type developments.
- 3.j. Facilitate the growth of Skagit Valley College and its facilities.
- 3.k. Accommodate mobile commercial enterprises such as food vendors, coffee trucks, etc. in the Old Town area, near schools and colleges, and along the waterfront and marina.
- 3.l. Promote context-sensitive and proportionately scaled signage.
- 3.m. Consider landscape flexibility along commercial frontages for signs and storefront visibility.
- 3.n. Support home occupations that:
  - 1. Can operate inconspicuously and do not infringe on neighboring residents;
  - 2. Do not infringe on or change the intent of the residential zone;
  - 3. Have limited visitors and do not require additional parking.
- 3.o. Collaborate with the county to promote development practices that:
  - 1. Encourage new development to occur within city limits;
  - 2. Promote urban Oak Harbor development standards in the UGA.

## Goal 4 – Promote a diverse and affordable housing stock

### Policies:

- 4.a. Maintain a healthy amount of developable and redevelopable land in all residential land use categories.
- 4.b. Support land use changes that accommodate higher density residential uses where services and utilities are available.
- 4.c. Support the development of new, and the conversion of existing, residential structures for accessory dwelling units.
- 4.d. Consider a mix of land uses when expanding urban growth areas.
- 4.e. Support flexible standards for developments that provide affordable housing.
- 4.f. Consider development incentives to include affordable housing within new developments.
- 4.g. Coordinate housing growth strategies with changes in school enrollment projections and NAS Whidbey expansions.
- 4.h. Support efforts to increase affordable housing in the City.

## Goal 5 – Respect the character of its natural and built environment

### Policies:

- 5.a. Consider flexible standards to protect Garry Oak trees and their habitat.
- 5.b. Protect public view corridors :
  - 1. When considering new developments;
  - 2. From natural encroachments on public property.
- 5.c. Consider flexible standards for building locations, heights, and landscaping plans to preserve views.
- 5.d. Require, where appropriate, buffers and screening between new intensive uses and existing uses.
- 5.e. Promote the use of native vegetation, including Garry Oaks, for landscaping and buffers.
- 5.f. Promote parkways, street trees and landscaped boulevards with development proposals.
- 5.g. Require design and construction standards for development to consider:
  - 1. Protection of fish and wildlife habitat;
  - 2. Geologically sensitive areas for construction;
  - 3. Protecting critical aquifer recharge areas;
  - 4. Protecting and enhancing the shoreline;
  - 5. Frequently flooded areas.
- 5.h. Require development to adhere to design guidelines and regulations that promotes a pedestrian friendly environment by:

1. Locating buildings closer to street frontages;
  2. Encouraging visually interesting facades and people spaces.
- 5.i. Respect and acknowledge the role of historically and architecturally significant buildings in the community.
  - 5.j. Discourage premature land clearing ahead of development proposals.
  - 5.k. Promote revegetation when retaining existing trees is not practical.
  - 5.l. Promote landscaping to achieve visual and noise buffers.
  - 5.m. Require buffers where land use intensities vary.
  - 5.n. Require landscaping standards to efficiently screen for outdoor uses and storage areas.
  - 5.o. Encourage industrial uses to incorporate landscaping, decorative fencing and native vegetation so that they are attractive and complementary to the community.
  - 5.p. Explore creative ways to blend in/camouflage utility towers and devices.
  - 5.q. Place utilities underground whenever feasible.
  - 5.r. Require common/public open spaces within developments to be accessible and visible.

## Challenges and Opportunities

Oak Harbor seeks to meet the challenge of achieving the community's land use vision, accommodating future growth and preserving what community-members love about Oak Harbor. Challenges and opportunities include:

- Meeting growth needs – Oak Harbor is constantly faced with the dynamic nature of NAS Whidbey and its changes. Increase in squadrons over the next few years will increase the demand for housing, schools and other services. Although, the Buildable Lands Analysis indicates sufficient land capacity within Oak Harbor, it is hard to predict whether the availability will be able to match the trend of incoming squadrons. The City will continue to support private development proposals and expansion of public facilities such as schools, colleges and other services as they come forward.
- Improvements on SR 20 – There are long standing plans to improve several intersections along Oak Harbor to relieve congestion. Funding is the primary challenge, for both the City and the State, to realize these projects. These proposals also have impacts on potential developments along the corridor. The City and Washington State Department of Transportation will continue to work in moving this project forward.
- Low Impact Development – Stormwater management has become a game changer in communities around Puget Sound. New regulations required through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permitting will impact how development occurs. An increase in development regulations, maintenance requirements, and enforcement are challenges presented by this stormwater management methodology. The City will work with the community in finding practical solutions to meet this requirement.
- Old Town/Downtown Development – Directing more development to the Central Business District will continue to be a challenge due to its physical separation from SR 20 and the perceived drawback of the one-way street configuration. There are also challenges with an aging building stock and high cost of renovations and redevelopments. The City will continue working with the downtown merchants and property owners in supporting the Main Street program.
- Industrial and Business Park – There is a large inventory of land designated for industrial and business parks along NE Goldie Road and NE Oak Harbor Road. However, a major portion is outside the city limits and in the UGA. Infrastructure development, non-conforming uses and annexations are challenges in this area. The city will continue to work with property owners, Island County and potential developers to encourage developments and employment opportunities in this area.
- Home-based Businesses and Accessory Dwelling Units – There is an untapped potential in Oak Harbor to increase home occupations and accessory dwelling units. As demographics change and population grows, the City will continue to support and accommodate home occupations and the building of accessory dwelling units.
- Garry Oaks – The tree that gives the city its name is protected by city ordinance. However, propagating the species for future generations will require proactive measures to promote planting new trees where soils and

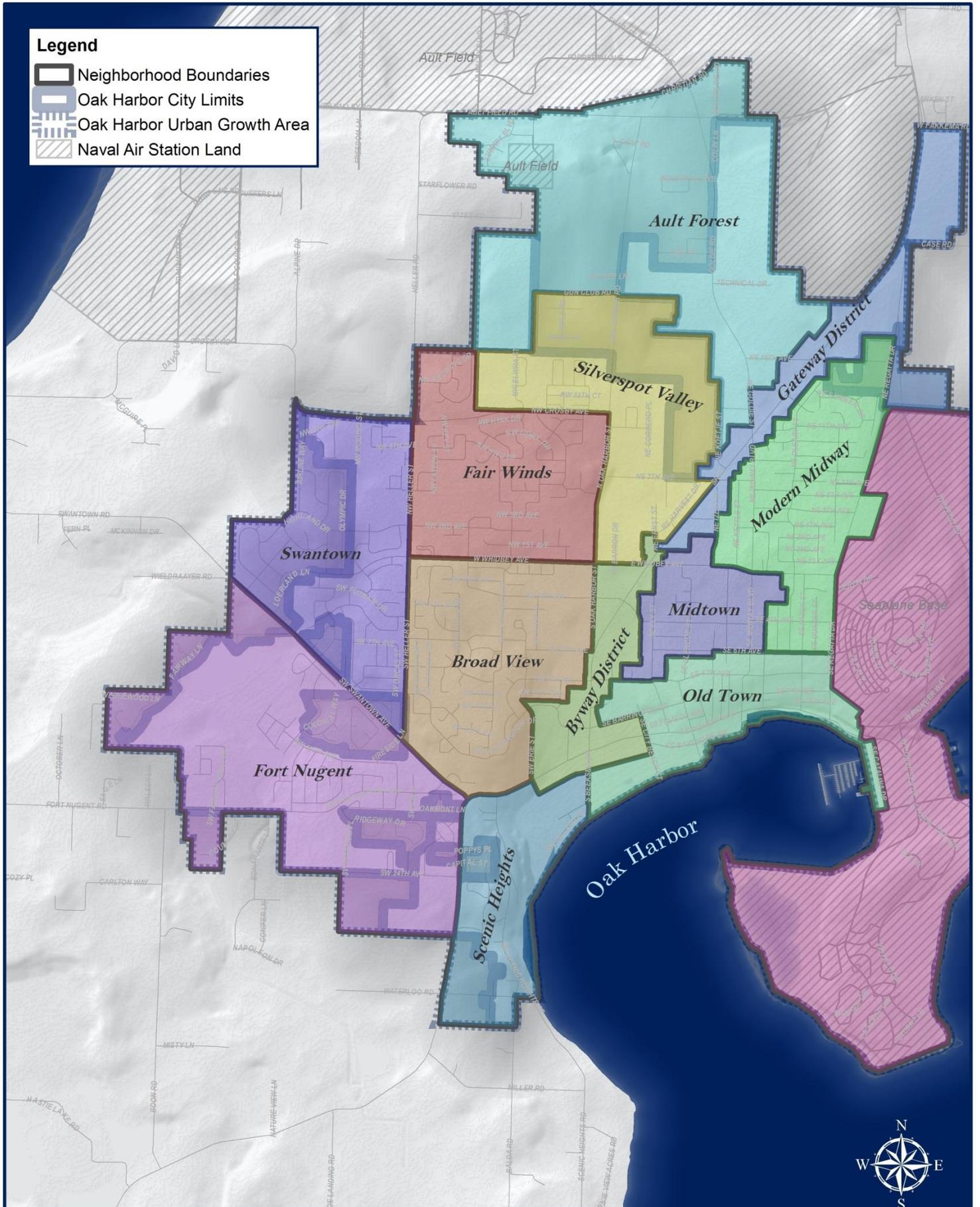
conditions are suitable. The City will continue its efforts in planting Garry Oaks on suitable public lands and encourage propagating them within private developments through incentives.

- Neighborhoods – Oak Harbor has diverse neighborhoods ranging in age from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to current times. As neighborhoods age they naturally decline and can reach a state of disrepair. The City will have to manage change in these aging neighborhoods through a combination of zoning incentives, improved public services and facilities, public financial assistance and uniform housing code enforcement.
- Midway Boulevard – This corridor was identified in 2006 as a district that could accommodate higher-intensity commercial uses. This traditional commercial corridor will benefit from new and infill commercial and mixed use developments that enhance the sense of place. Flexible development standards, such as raising the height limit, allowing development to extend to the street, parking requirement reduction, public/private partnerships and other strategies can be used to support revitalization.
- Supporting growth of school facilities – Oak Harbor Public Schools anticipates an increase in student enrollment will mirror the planned increase in personnel and squadrons at NASWI. The District anticipates enrollment to increase by 750 students and then drop to 500 with the disestablishment of VQ-I squadrons. The District will face challenges in accommodating the increase in enrollment. A partnership between the District and the City is already well-established. The City leases school district property for parks and

athletic fields, the City shares technology infrastructure with Oak Harbor Public Schools and the City contracts with the school district for technology support services. Through the joint pursuit of grant opportunities and shared advocacy at the state and federal level for resources to address facility needs, the City can be an active partner in advancing the success of the District yielding broad benefits to the Oak Harbor community. The City will also communicate and work with the School District on a regular basis, help expedite the City review processes and support the District in meeting code requirements.

**Legend**

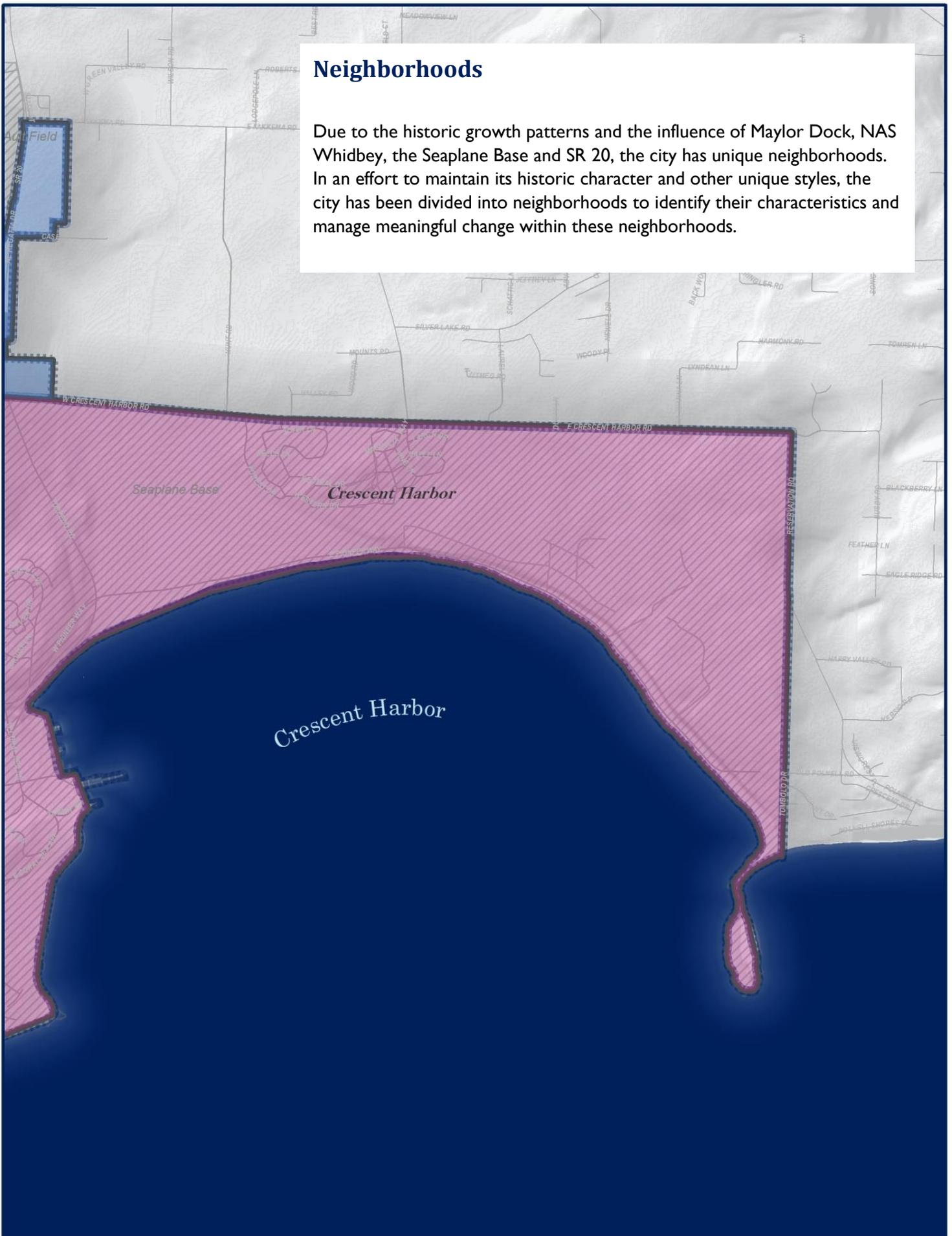
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Oak Harbor City Limits
- Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
- Naval Air Station Land



**Neighborhoods**

## Neighborhoods

Due to the historic growth patterns and the influence of Maylor Dock, NAS Whidbey, the Seaplane Base and SR 20, the city has unique neighborhoods. In an effort to maintain its historic character and other unique styles, the city has been divided into neighborhoods to identify their characteristics and manage meaningful change within these neighborhoods.



## **Modern Midway**

*This neighborhood consists of a distinct commercial core along NE Midway Boulevard and stable residential areas generally developed in the years following World War II. Sometimes viewed as Oak Harbor's first suburban-type development, the commercial district is strongly oriented toward visitors arriving by car with spacious parking lots located in front of buildings. Single family residences dominate the gridded streets, with mid-century modern architecture mixing with more traditional styles. With the exception of a very small area at the north end of the neighborhood, Modern Midway is almost entirely within the City limits.*

### *Data*

- Modern Midway includes about 353 total acres within its boundaries; it is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest neighborhood in the City.
- There are approximately 935 total properties within the neighborhood – of which about 89% are in the Low-Intensity Residential category.
- 858 (91.8%) parcels within the neighborhood are currently developed.

### *Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies*

- The neighborhood has a strong grid system allowing for easy and efficient vehicular movement, but in many areas, it lacks infrastructure for pedestrians and alternative modes of transportation.
- Modern Midway is highly developed, and has very few large lots available for infill or redevelopment. A buildable lands inventory shows only a few scattered parcels that could be divided or redeveloped for residential uses.
- Higher-intensity land uses in appropriate locations.
- Pedestrian circulation in the neighborhood should be improved, with particular focus on the NE Regatta Drive, NE O'Leary and NE Kettle Street areas.



## Fair Winds

*This neighborhood consists mostly of typical late 20<sup>th</sup>-century suburban development. A mix of single-family homes - generally built from 1970 to 1990, with some more recent developments – coexist with denser multi-family complexes grouped along the Oak Harbor Street corridor on the eastern edge of the neighborhood. Home of Oak Harbor High School and several churches and small neighborhood parks, the neighborhood is characterized by curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs and generally lacks a typical street grid.*

### Data

- The neighborhood is approximately 369 total acres, ranking 6<sup>th</sup> largest in the City.
- It includes approximately 761 developed Low Density Residential lots, or approximately 17% of the total in the City.
- 59.7 acres (16.1%) of the neighborhood's total area is dedicated to Public Facilities land uses.
- Approximately 91.7% of parcels in the neighborhood are developed.



### Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies

- Fair Winds has little opportunity for infill due to its high level of development and significant areas used by public facilities such as schools and churches.
- Lots are generally larger than minimums required in respective zone districts, but not so large as to allow redevelopment or lot splitting on a large scale. A developable lands survey found potential redevelopment opportunities in an area generally clustered around the intersection of NE Heller Road and NE Crosby Avenue.
- This neighborhood has no commercial uses within its boundaries or within close walking distance.
- Fair Winds is bounded by four major thoroughfares within Oak Harbor. Increasing traffic with additional population in neighboring and outlying neighborhoods will be a concern in the future.
- Where appropriate, higher densities with flexible standards should be considered to promote development without compromising public safety standards.
- Accessory dwelling units should be promoted where viable.



## **Ault Forest**

*The Ault Forest neighborhood generally consists of industrial and undeveloped lands at the north end of the city. Close proximity to the NASWI air field limits residential development. Commercial and industrial corridors are mostly situated on one of three roads: Goldie Road, Oak Harbor Street or Ault Field Road. Not including the Crescent Harbor Neighborhood, which includes exclusively US Navy lands, Ault Forest is the largest of the neighborhoods in the City, with over 800 acres in its boundaries.*

### *Data*

- Nearly half of the acreage in the neighborhood is located outside Oak Harbor city limits, but within the Urban Growth Area.
- More than 72% of parcels in the neighborhood are located outside City Limits.
- Only about 42% of the acreage within the neighborhood is considered developed by the standards used.

### *Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies*

- While the neighborhood is comprised of large areas of undeveloped business and industrial park designated lands, the transportation network is underdeveloped and might be a hurdle to development in the area.
- As noted in the data above, most of the land in the neighborhood is under Island County jurisdiction.
- Development will need to account for wetland areas, which are currently unmapped.
- There is no comprehensive sewer system in the area.
- No new residential projects will be permitted in this neighborhood as the majority of it lies north of the 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue alignment.



## Gateway District

*The Gateway District neighborhood serves as the northern entry into Oak Harbor via Highway 20. As such, it is a heavily-traveled corridor and the visual first impression for visitors. The neighborhood is mostly commercial in nature, with businesses serving both local residents and visitors alike. Several hotels and restaurants are located along the Highway 20 corridor within the neighborhood. The more developed sections of the highway corridor are planted with mature trees through the Heritage Way program.*

### Data

- 84% of the neighborhood is designated as High-Intensity Commercial land use category
- The neighborhood includes approximately 43% of the City's High-Intensity Commercial land.
- Approximately 27 acres within the High-Intensity Commercial land use category are vacant according to the buildable lands survey.

### Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies

- The City should endeavor to complete the Heritage Way landscaping along the entire Highway 20 corridor.
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are lacking in certain areas.
- The northern portion of neighborhood is heavily impacted by Accident Potential Zones for Ault Field. These zones limit development in those areas.





## Silverspot Valley

*The Silverspot Valley neighborhood includes some of Oak Harbor's denser residential areas, but also a significant area of permanent open space and wetland. The residential areas are a mix of single-family and multi-family residences and manufactured home parks, with higher densities occurring along the Oak Harbor Street and Crosby Avenue corridors.*

### Data

- Approximately 49% of Silverspot Valley is in the Low-Intensity Residential land use category. However, none of that land is in the R-I zone district – meaning there is a higher proportion of multiple-family properties in the neighborhood than would be expected. This contributes to the higher densities as shown in the 2010 Census numbers.
- 44% of the neighborhood is located outside City limits, but within the Urban Growth Area.
- Over 100 acres of land in the neighborhood is in the Open Space land use category.

### Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies

- As noted above, a significant amount of land in the Silverspot Valley neighborhood is designated as Open Space. The wetland area that this designation protects is also buffered in many locations and may preclude development based on the distance required for buffering. Therefore, there may be a significant amount of vacant land that may not be available for development.
- Nearly half of the neighborhood is located outside Oak Harbor city limits. These areas may not be fully served by the City and may require sewer, water or other utilities to be extended before development can occur.
- Some of the northern portion of the neighborhood is located north of the 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor, making it ineligible for residential development.



## Swantown

*Located on the far western side of the City, the Swantown neighborhood is comprised almost entirely of single-family residences, generally developed since the 1970s. Much of the neighborhood is located outside of the City limits while still in the Urban Growth Area.*

### Data

- Of the approximately 342 acres located in the neighborhood, 94.3% is in the Low-Intensity Residential land use category. The remaining land is in the Public Facilities category.
- Almost 42% of the land is located outside the City limits. All of that land is in the Low-Intensity Residential category.
- There are about 45 acres of vacant land in the neighborhood.
- Hillcrest Elementary School is located on land in the Public Facilities land use category. It is the only parcel in the neighborhood that is not in the Low-Intensity Residential category.

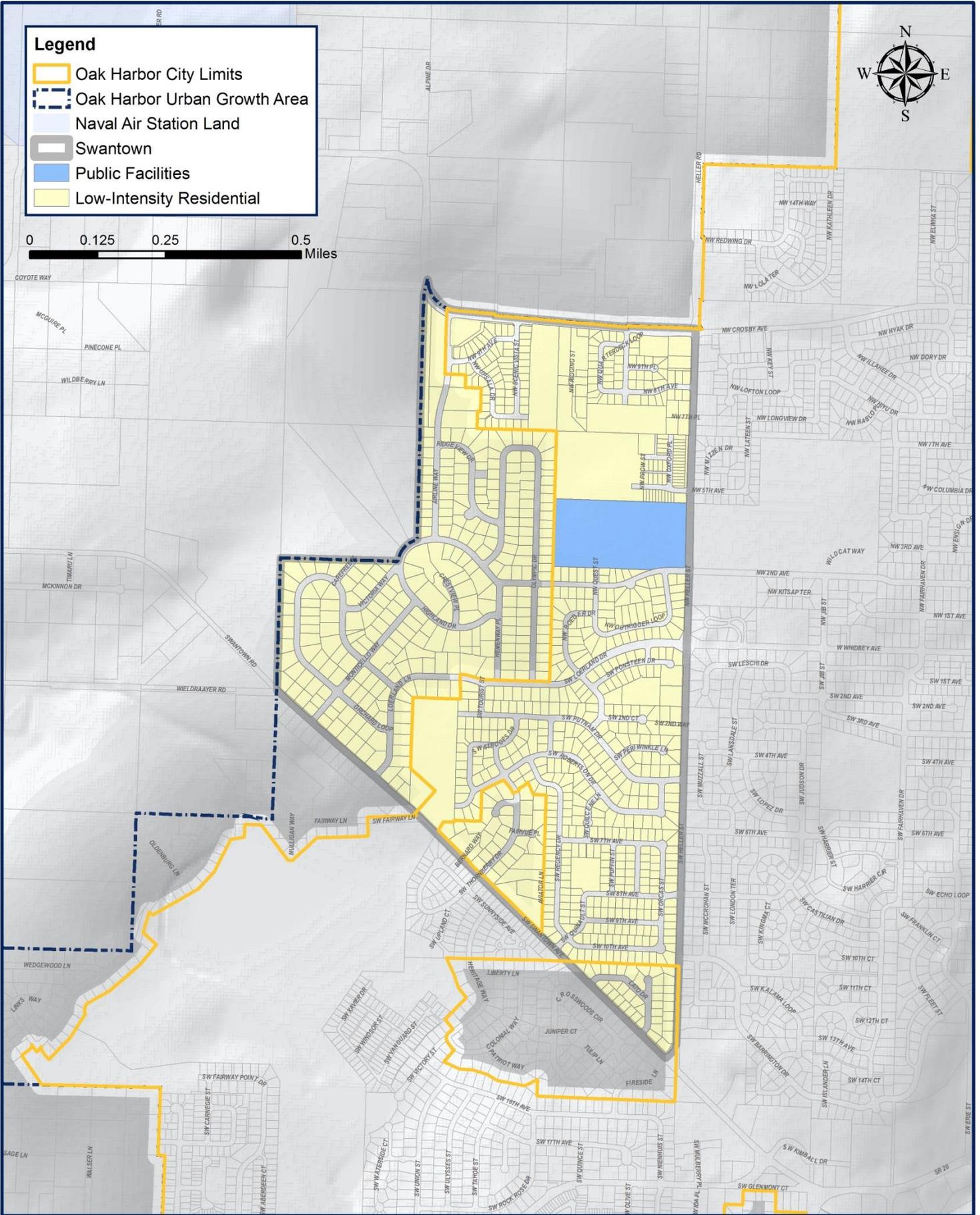
### *Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies*

- Many residential properties located outside the City limits are not connected to the City sewer system. Generally, they utilize community or individual septic systems.
- The eastern border of the neighborhood is Heller Road – a key north-south corridor in the City.
- Access to public parks is lacking in the neighborhood.

### Legend

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Naval Air Station Land
-  Swantown
-  Public Facilities
-  Low-Intensity Residential

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



# Swantown

## **Broad View**

*The Broad View neighborhood, named after the elementary school located within its boundaries, is home to established single-family residential areas and a concentration of churches near its eastern boundary. This area generally developed later than neighborhoods on the east side of Highway 20 and has homes dating from the 1960s to the present. Several small parks dot the area, both City-owned and privately held.*

### *Data*

- All of the Broad View neighborhood is located within City limits
- Approximately 74% of land in the neighborhood is in the Low-Intensity Residential land use classification. 15% fits in the High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial category.
- According to the buildable lands survey, there are less than 45 acres of vacant land in the neighborhood.

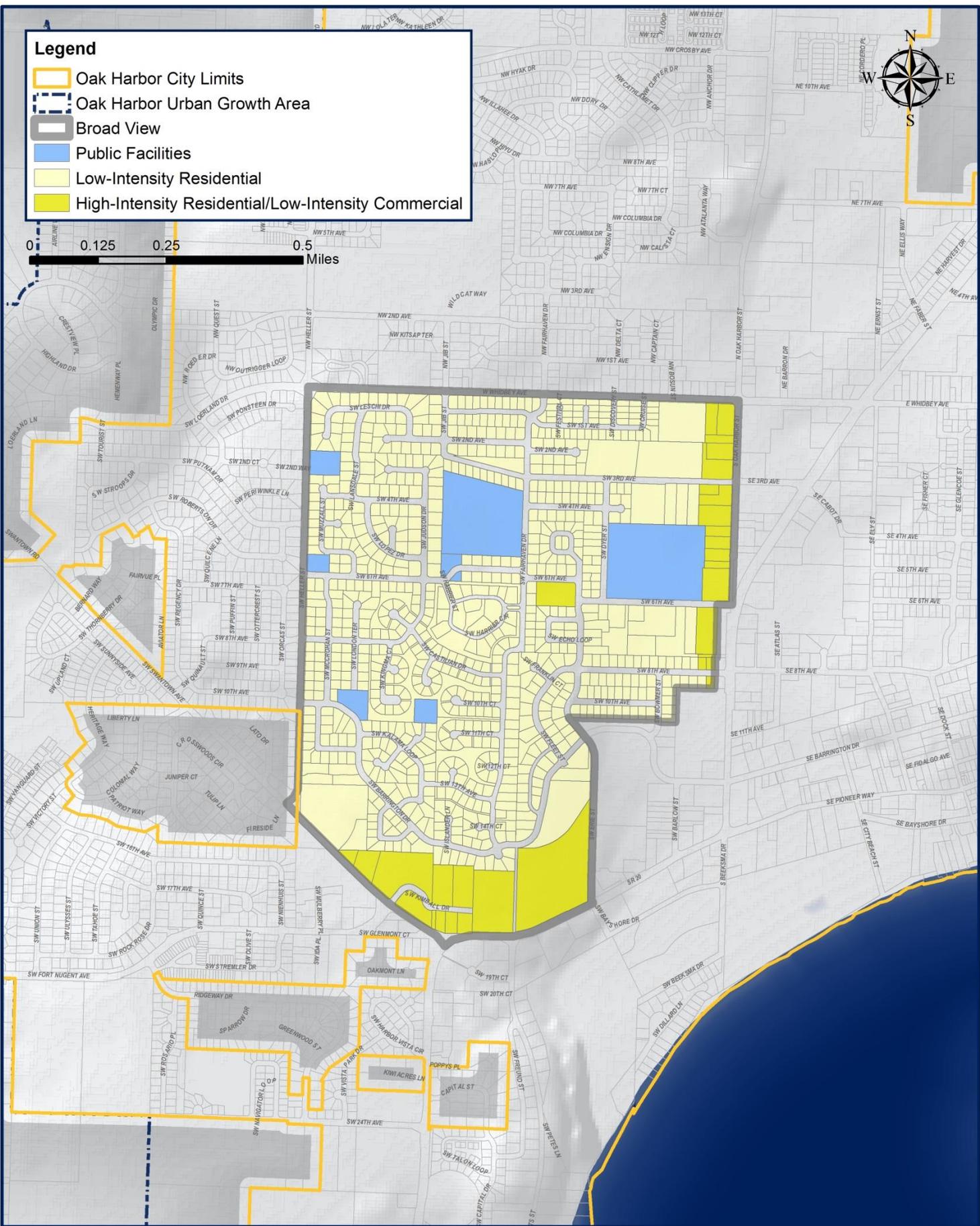
### *Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies*

- Heller Street, a key north-south corridor in the City, forms the western border of the neighborhood.
- Older areas near Highway 20 may be impacted by encroaching commercial development.

### Legend

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Broad View
-  Public Facilities
-  Low-Intensity Residential
-  High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



**Broad View**

## **Fort Nugent**

*Fort Nugent is Oak Harbor's southwestern frontier and the site of much recent single-family home construction. The neighborhood is also home to a private golf club and Fort Nugent Park, a large regional park with multiple sports fields, a large playground and open spaces.*

### *Data*

- Approximately 33% of the land in Fort Nugent is located outside the City limits, but within the Urban Growth Area. Unlike Swantown and other neighborhoods with land outside the City limits, there are several county "islands" that are surrounded by the City limits.
- Just over 68% of the land is in the Low-Intensity Residential land use category, but much of that is golf course.
- Fort Nugent contains over 146 acres of land in the Open Space land use category.

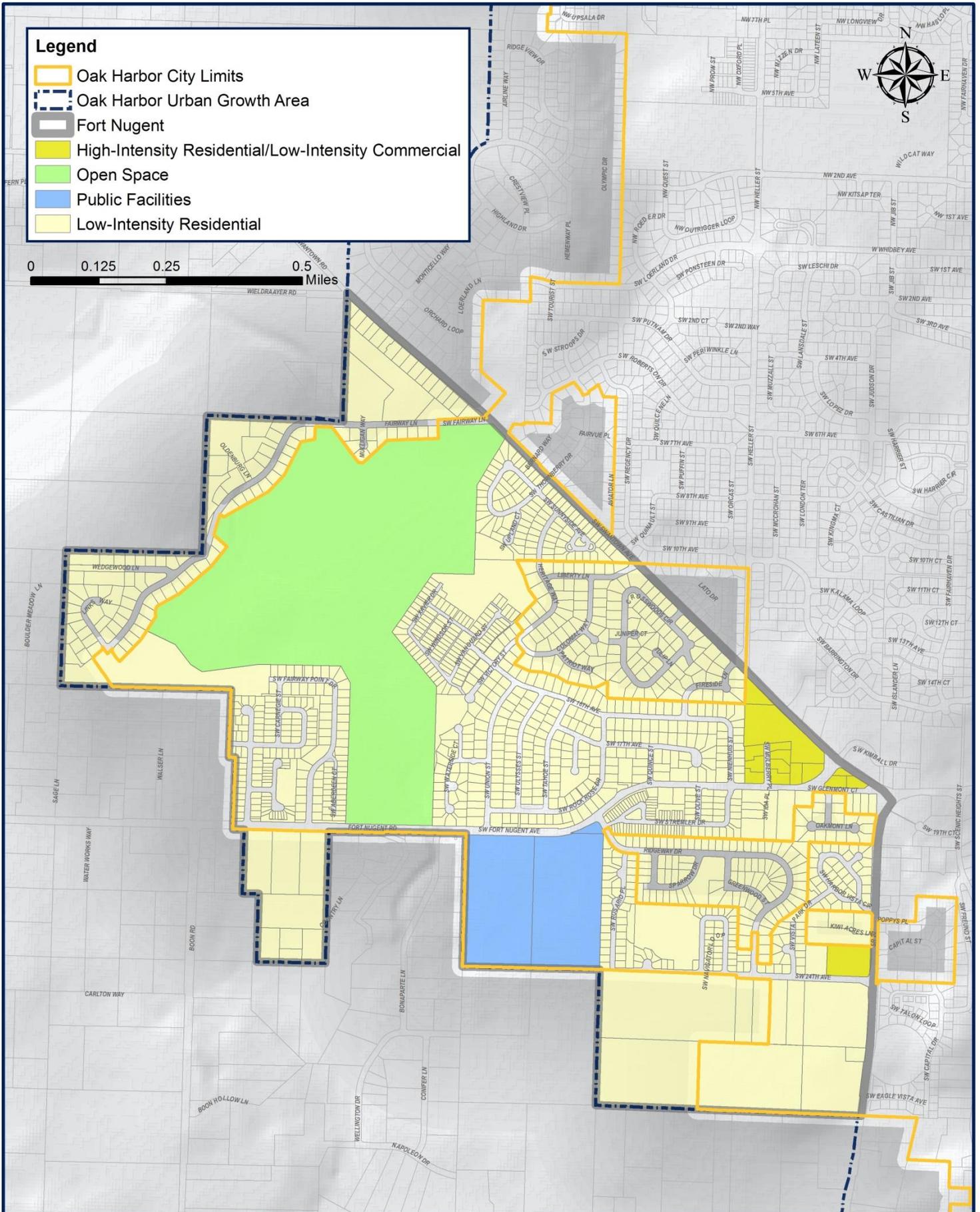
### *Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies*

- The neighborhood includes large areas of vacant land that may be open to development.
- Increasing traffic could present problems in the neighborhood, particularly at the intersections of Fort Nugent Road and Swantown Road and at Swantown Road and Highway 20.
- The trail system through the City could be augmented with a connection from Fort Nugent Park to Scenic Heights and on to the waterfront trail.
- The most logical expansion of the Urban Growth Area would include the Fort Nugent neighborhood.

### Legend

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Fort Nugent
-  High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial
-  Open Space
-  Public Facilities
-  Low-Intensity Residential

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



# Fort Nugent

## Midtown

*This neighborhood includes the mostly-residential area just to the north of Oak Harbor's original settlement and the Old Town neighborhood. This small-scale "first ring suburb" is comprised generally of single-family homes, with a few multi-family parcels mixed in and some small-scale commercial businesses along Midway Boulevard.*

### Data

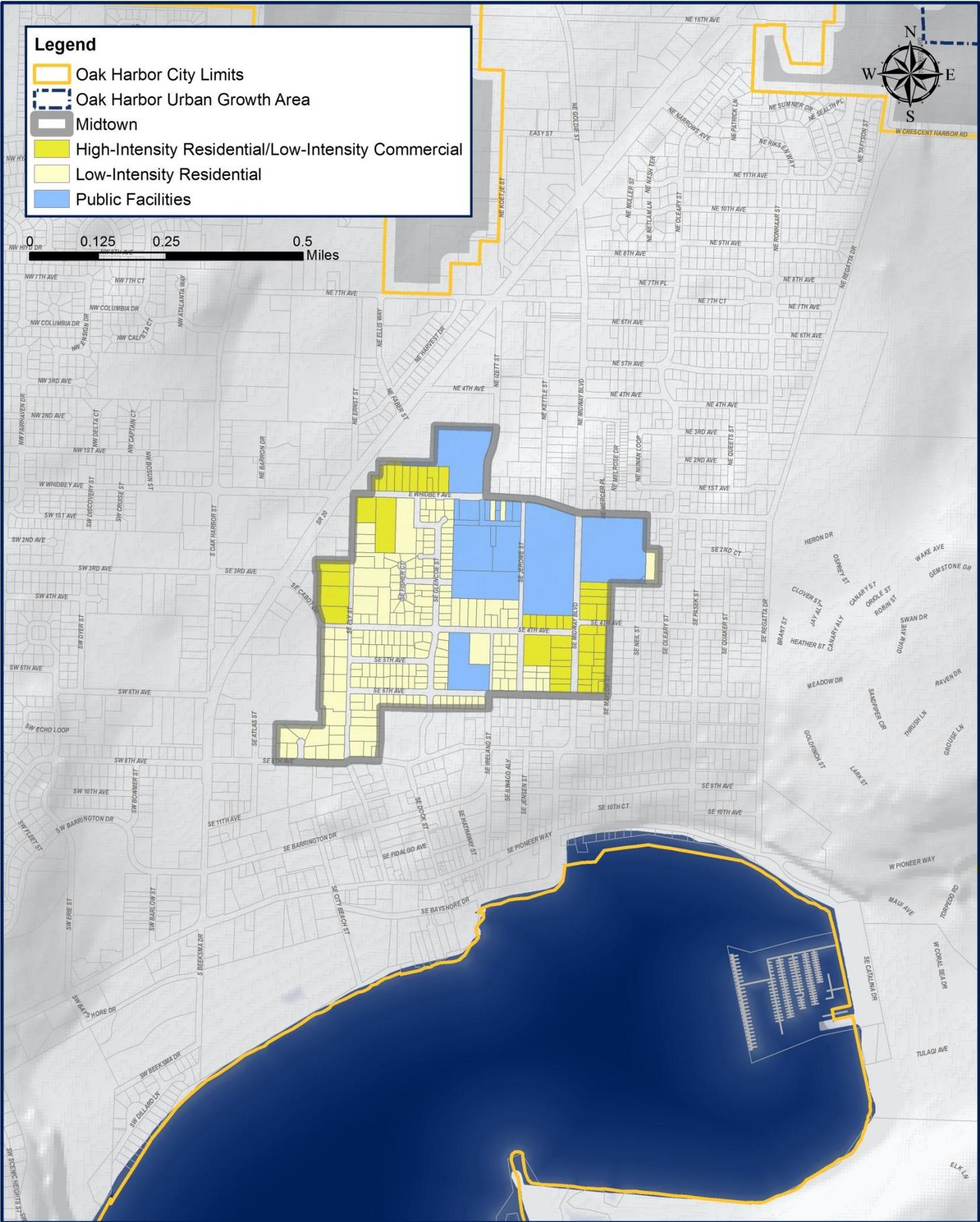
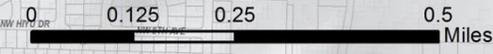
- This neighborhood has limited diversity in its land uses – nearly half (46.9%) of the land is in the Low-Intensity Residential category. The remainder is either High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial (20.2%) or Public Facilities (32.8%).
- The ratio of Public Facilities land use in this neighborhood is the highest in the City. Much of the land in this category is owned by the Oak Harbor School District and is utilized for Oak Harbor Elementary School and the district offices and support facilities.

### *Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies*

- There is a lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the neighborhood – many subdivision streets were built without sidewalks. Bike lanes are absent from major traffic routes.
- The high proportion of land in the Public Facilities land use category may act as an impediment to redevelopment.
- Increasing density may be possible in some areas. Mixed use developments could be encouraged along the Midway Boulevard corridor and along Ely Street.

### Legend

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Midtown
-  High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial
-  Low-Intensity Residential
-  Public Facilities



# Midtown

## Old Town

*Old Town encompasses the original Oak Harbor town site dating back to its first settlement. This neighborhood includes a wide variety of land uses, from the downtown commercial core to high and low density residential areas. Old Town is also home to the Oak Harbor Marina and all the waterfront property that is not located either in the Scenic Heights neighborhood or in the Navy-owned Crescent Harbor neighborhood.*

### Data

- Old Town includes five of the seven land use categories
- The City's entire Central Business District land use category is within this neighborhood. Of the approximately 41 acres of CBD-zoned land, about 12.8 acres are vacant.

### Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies

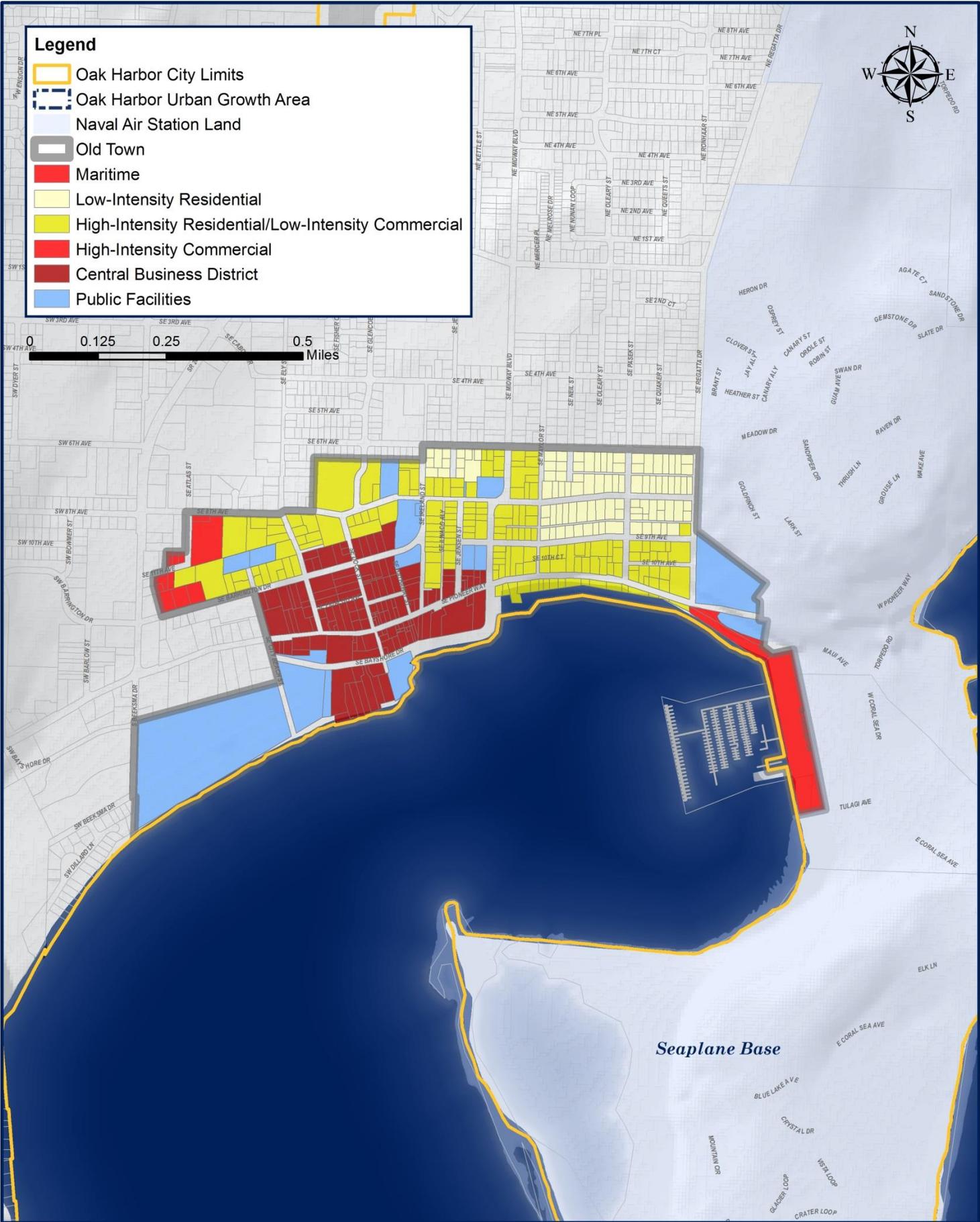
- This neighborhood includes a large concentration of Garry Oak trees. Protection of existing trees should be a priority and the inclusion of new trees may be considered for future projects.
- The marina area may support redevelopment and inclusion of support services and other commercial enterprises.
- Higher densities, where appropriate, should be considered to support downtown businesses and development and reduce pressure on the urban growth area boundary. Services already exist in all areas of the neighborhood, making it a good location for infill and increased density.
- There is limited parking in the area by design. Uses that do not require significant parking facilities, complementary uses that can share parking, and pedestrian oriented design should be encouraged.



**Legend**

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Naval Air Station Land
-  Old Town
-  Maritime
-  Low-Intensity Residential
-  High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial
-  High-Intensity Commercial
-  Central Business District
-  Public Facilities

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



**Old Town**

## **Byway District**

*The Byway District is Oak Harbor's auto-oriented commercial district, which is anchored by large retail stores that serve not only the City, but much of Whidbey Island. This neighborhood is characterized by more recent, large scale developments that include grocery, building supply and general merchandise retailers located behind landscaped strips and large parking lots. Most of the development in this area occurred after the 1960s.*

### *Data*

- At 164 acres, this is the second smallest neighborhood.
- The buildable lands survey shows only 15.8 vacant acres in the neighborhood.
- 119 acres are in the High-Intensity Commercial Land Use category.

### *Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies*

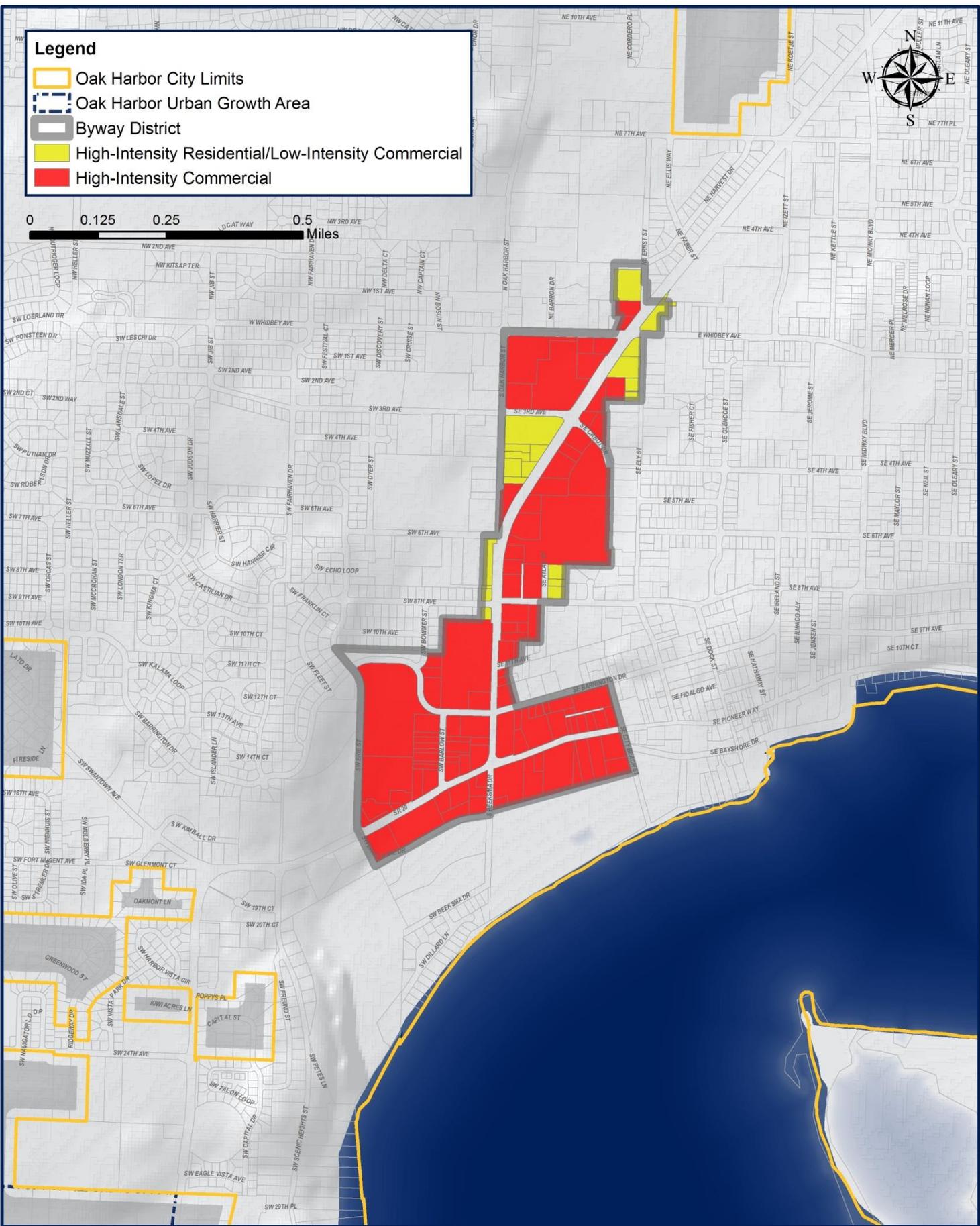
- Heritage Way landscaping theme should be implemented as many areas lack landscaping or could be upgraded.
- Proposed roundabouts at several locations will change traffic flow through the area.
- There are opportunities for redevelopment of under-utilized lands.
- Several high-profile vacant parcels are located in the neighborhood.

### Legend

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Byway District
-  High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial
-  High-Intensity Commercial



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



# Byway District

## Scenic Heights

*The southern gateway into Oak Harbor, Scenic Heights consists mostly of residential properties and open space along the waterfront. Freund Marsh occupies a large area in the middle of the neighborhood, providing recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat and picturesque views. A walking and biking path that begins in Scenic Heights near the marsh continues into the Old Town neighborhood. Scenic Heights is home to the only waterfront bluff property in the City.*

### Data

- Approximately 18% of the Scenic Heights neighborhood is designated Open Space.
- More than 45% of the neighborhood is designated Low-Intensity Residential, with nearly half (51.5 acres) being located outside the City limits.
- There are approximately 57 acres of developable land within the neighborhood boundaries.

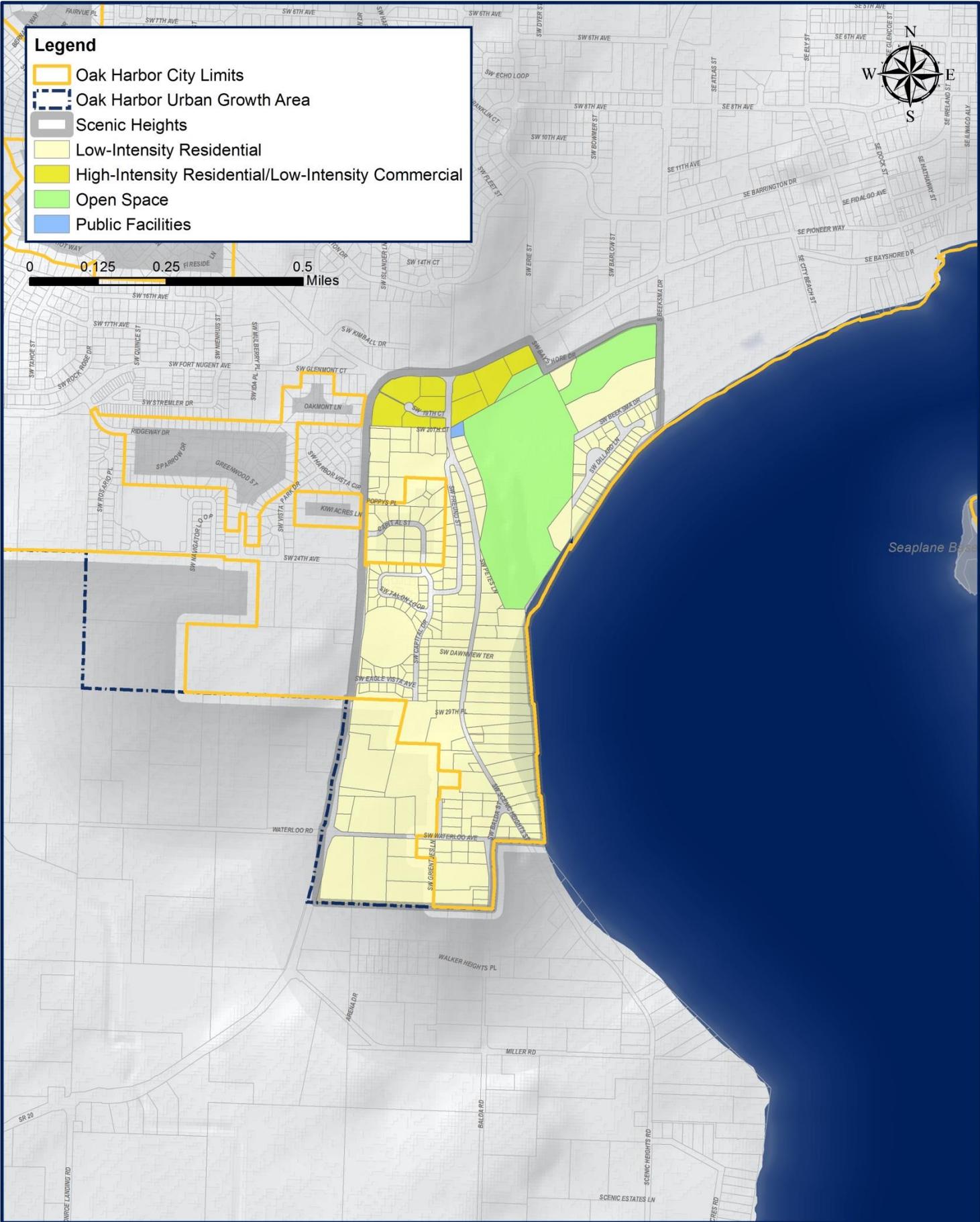
### Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies

- As the gateway to the City, special consideration should be made to the landscaping, design and overall appearance of the highway corridor.
- While there is a large parcel of open space in the Freund Marsh, there are no neighborhood parks available for the residents of the area.
- The two main roads through the neighborhood, Highway 20 and Scenic Heights Street, lack pedestrian amenities in many places.
- Infill development may be accomplished on larger lots through short plats or accessory dwelling units.

### Legend

- Oak Harbor City Limits
- Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
- Scenic Heights
- Low-Intensity Residential
- High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial
- Open Space
- Public Facilities

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



# Scenic Heights

## **Crescent Harbor**

*The largest of Oak Harbor's neighborhoods, Crescent Harbor is entirely composed of US Navy-owned property. This area includes much of the housing provided for Naval Air Station Whidbey Island in several different locations. Crescent Harbor Elementary School serves many children in the neighborhood, as well as those residing outside City limits to the east of Oak Harbor. All of Crescent Harbor lies within City limits, but the City has no zoning jurisdiction in the neighborhood.*

## *Data*

- With nearly 2800 acres of total land area, this neighborhood is nearly 3 ½ times larger than the Ault Forest neighborhood.

## *Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies*

- The neighborhood includes most of the coastline located in City limits.
- The neighborhood benefits from the recently adopted Shoreline Master Program.
- The Navy works with the City on planning and land lease issues.

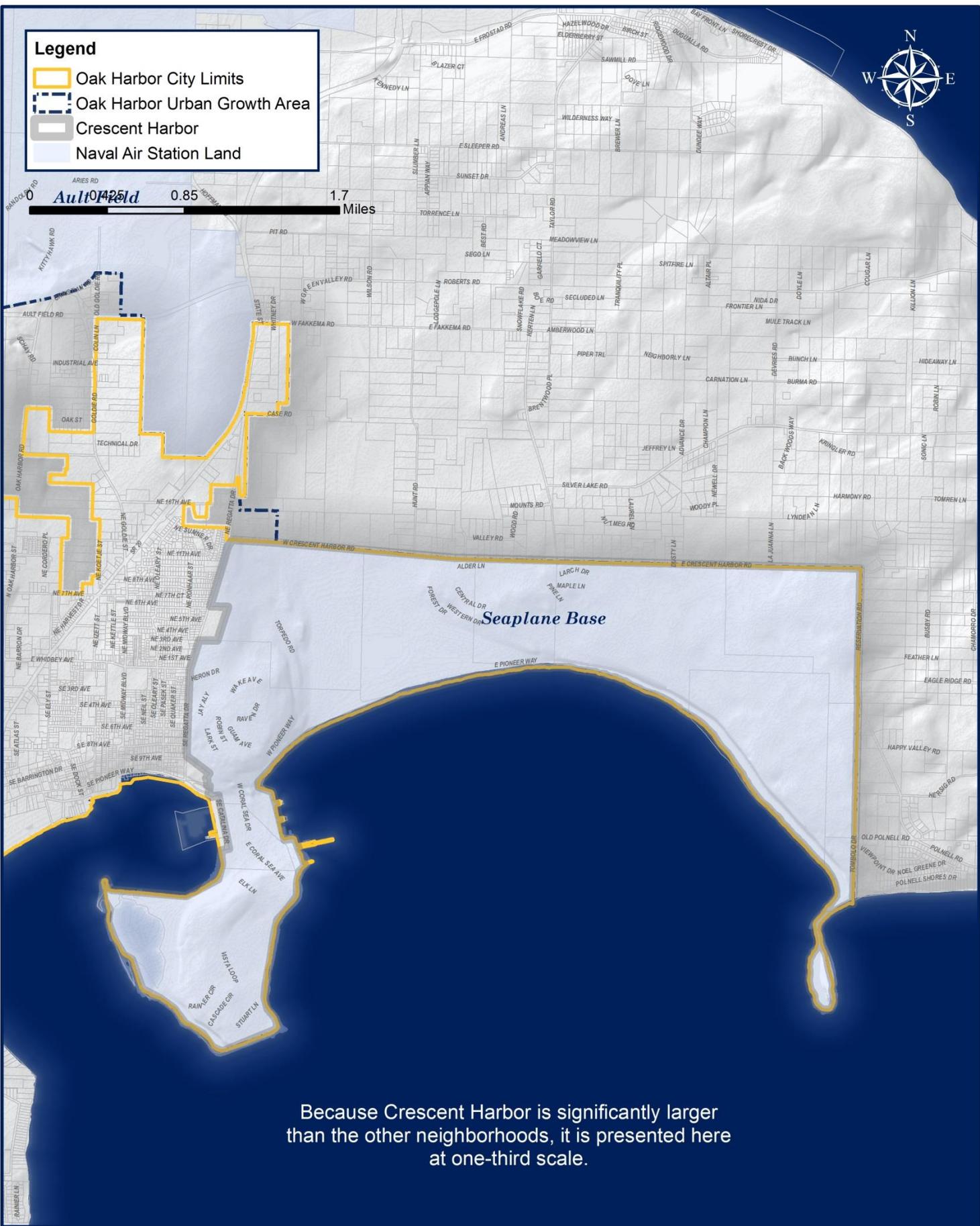


**Legend**

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Crescent Harbor
-  Naval Air Station Land



0 0.425 0.85 1.7 Miles



Because Crescent Harbor is significantly larger than the other neighborhoods, it is presented here at one-third scale.

# Crescent Harbor

## Essential Public Facilities

GMA requires that each local jurisdiction planning under the Act provide a process within its Comprehensive Plan for identifying and siting “essential public facilities.” Facilities which fall into this category are those that are typically difficult to site, and are not anticipated by existing plans and zoning, such as airports, state education facilities, state or regional transportation facilities, correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities and in-patient facilities including substance abuse, mental health and group homes (RCW 36.70A.200). The GMA prohibits communities from imposing outright bans on such land uses. The following policies address Oak Harbor’s process and criteria for siting essential public facilities.

1. Agencies proposing essential public facilities should demonstrate a justifiable need for the public facility and its location in Oak Harbor based upon forecast needs and a logical service area.
2. The City, in cooperation with proponents of essential public facilities, should establish a public process by which Oak Harbor residents have an opportunity to participate in a meaningful way in site selection and development review.
3. The City in coordination with other facility beneficiaries should establish a mitigation agreement to adjust the financial cost of receiving a public facility in exchange for inter-jurisdictional services.
4. The City should establish design criteria for public facilities to promote neighborhood and jurisdiction compatibility.
5. The City should establish a public use category to site facilities that may not otherwise be permitted.
6. Essential public facilities that are county-wide or state-wide in nature, must meet existing State law and regulations requiring specific siting and permitting requirements.
7. At a minimum, essential public facilities shall be subject to all of the requirements of obtaining a Conditional Use Permit. Depending on the type of facility, the city may require additional reports or studies as part of its environmental review process to ensure that the impacts of the proposed development may be reasonably addressed.

## Property Rights

The protection of private property rights is one of the goals identified in the Growth Management Act. The purpose of providing local goals and policies on this subject is to maintain consistency between state and local requirements, and to provide a mechanism to ensure that the cumulative effect of local, regional, state and national regulations governing the development of land do not act to deprive a property owner of all economically beneficial use of property. In the relatively rare instance where such a situation should occur, there should be sufficient flexibility in local land use regulations to avoid a claim of “takings.” Such flexibility should provide a reasonable use of property in a manner that balances the legitimate but competing interests of environmental stewardship and private property rights.

To protect the property rights of land owners

1. Allow for variances from the city’s zoning and land use regulations to mitigate undue hardship when the literal application of those regulations would prohibit all reasonable development on a parcel of land.
2. Consider the use of reasonable use exemptions or transfers of development rights when a regulation would deprive an owner of all economically viable use of their property, or have a severe impact on the landowner’s economic interest, or deny a fundamental attribute of ownership.



## Chapter 4 → Urban Design Element

*"The general tenor of the responses indicates a strong preference to not allow low-intensity development into natural areas, resource lands or highly visible open space. On the other hand, there was sentiment against dense urban-style development in town. Resolving these apparently conflicting viewpoints will be a major challenge in the planning process" ("The Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area Report: Draft Three," Appendix: Results of Public Workshops and Community Participation, 83.)*

Time and again the desire to protect the "rural feel," the small-town atmosphere, of Oak Harbor is expressed. This has already proven difficult in the face of trying to provide affordable housing, diversify the economy, and meet growth projections, while striving to avoid more intense urban-style development. It seems urban design standards could be used as an effective tool in bridging the gap between these Goals, since the nature of urban design is to address and direct the "feel" of a development project. It may be possible through urban design requirements, to retain a "rural feel" in even the densest developments. It is at this point the community should ask itself, "What do we want our community to look like; what atmosphere would we like it to project?"

In 2000 an Oak Harbor citizens' group known as Harbor Pride initiated a process focused on improving the design and function of the waterfront and "Old Town" area of the Central Business District (CBD). With assistance from the American Institute of Architects, Harbor

Pride conducted a design charrette and published the goals, findings, study area proposals and recommendations as *Harbor Pride: A Blueprint for Change*. The recommendations

from this community planning initiative are similar to those detailed in Harbor Watch a decade earlier. Because policy planning is intended to be continuous and responsive to the community and citizen initiatives, specific direction from Harbor Pride's report has been incorporated into the Goals and Policies of this element.

This section sets Goals and Policies to implement the vision of Oak Harbor. Development regulations should be consistent with the Goals and Policies.



**Goal 1 - The City shall retain the appearance and character established by existing forests within and around the community.**

**Policies:**

- I.a. Plans for new developments should include tree retention where practical, especially regarding healthy, mature trees, and replacement of those unable to be saved.

*Discussion - Methods could include: an ordinance requiring a minimum percentage of vegetation be retained in new developments, encouraging developments to seek alternative siting strategies that include existing vegetation, thus providing reduced landscaping requirements for projects that preserve existing trees.*

- I.b. Consideration shall be given to designating and protecting a "greenbelt" of wooded area or open land surrounding the urban growth boundary.

*Discussion - The area regarded as "greenbelt" is generally within the joint city-county planning area, beyond the urban growth boundary. Greenbelt may contain forested areas, as well as large tracts of farm land which characterize rural Whidbey Island.*

- I.c. A new landscaping ordinance shall be prepared which includes replacement of trees lost through land development.
- I.d. Plans for development on sites which contain significant forest areas or a portion there of shall include a forestry report to evaluate trees for retention.

*Discussion - Significant forest areas generally include stands of healthy Douglas Fir/Western Hemlock forest of 3 or more acres. Maps and aerial photographs showing forest areas and viewsheds are on file at the Oak Harbor Planning Department. (Also see the Environment Element, policy 6.g)*

- I.e. Priorities for tree retention and replanting should be given to buffers

along arterial streets, riparian areas and ridge lines as well as between different land uses and groupings of trees within developments and on rear lot lines.

**Goal 2 - Develop design guidelines which maintain and enhance the unique character of Oak Harbor’s natural setting and existing neighborhoods and districts while ensuring new areas develop with contextual sensitivity.**

**Policies:**

- 2.a. Architectural and landscape design standards for multi-family residential units should be established to promote developments which are compatible with existing residential patterns.
- 2.b. Existing rural features, such as farm buildings which are structures of historic or architectural significance, should be retained where possible.
- 2.c. Pedestrian facilities should be maintained and enhanced, as consistent with the Transportation Element, to promote a pedestrian-friendly character.
- 2.d. Consideration should be given to recognizing and visually expressing separate commercial and residential districts in an effort to promote a sense of community.
- 2.e. The City should identify internal “gateways” between districts and neighborhoods and draft polices to help develop these areas with appropriate way-finding and landmarking initiatives.

*Discussion - By marking transition points between different areas with specific architecture, built form and public realm designs a more easily understood built environment and comfortable sense of place can be achieved. For example, specific districts such as the CBD or the waterfront could benefit from clearly defined boundaries that reinforce their unique sense of place.*

*The elements used to define gateways may include: landscaping, streetscape design, signage, building*

*scale and detailing, small parks, land use designation and public art. Areas for developing internal gateways include major street intersections, areas of change between residential and commercial districts, locations of significant topographic change, development sites at prominent street corners, and public buildings.*

- 2.f. Consideration should be given to revising the sign ordinance in order to encourage signage more in keeping with the unique character of Oak Harbor.
- 2.g. Starting with the downtown waterfront area from Midway to State Route 20 and north to Barrington Avenue, the City should develop separate overlay districts for the application of unique design guidelines.

*Discussion - The current commercial and industrial design guidelines are applied based upon the applicable zoning district of the project. One set of design guidelines may not be appropriate for every circumstance within that zoning district as areas with similar zoning may have different design needs. Developing design guidelines specifically for the CBD and waterfront areas would be beneficial for ensuring that new development is contextually sensitive to the city’s natural environment, neighborhoods and precincts.*

- 2.h. Consideration should be given to establishing corridor specific guidelines for industrial corridors within the Enterprise Area (i.e. Oak Harbor, Goldie Roads, Gun Club Road and NE 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue). The nature of the design guidelines may vary depending upon the distance the project is located from the corridor. The guidelines should address the retention of a significant tree buffer along the identified streets.

**Goal 3 - The City should adopt measures to improve urban design considerations which define the city's character.**

*Discussion - These measures should be created to promote high quality development and redevelopment in existing commercial areas and corridors such as CBD, the waterfront, and the Midway Boulevard corridor. These measures may include land use and design guidelines which allow for greater flexibility in uses, promote animated streets and develop pedestrian oriented districts and neighborhoods. For example: density transfers; performance based zoning; and, public realm design guidelines.*

**Policies:**

- 3.a. The City should establish design guidelines, which strongly discourage large parking lots located at corners of arterial intersections.
- 3.b. The City should establish design standards, which promote a trend for buildings, rather than parking lots, to dominate street fronts for commercial uses coupled with effective way-finding tools such as signage and parking program requirements.

*Discussion - The focus of this policy is toward pedestrian use in commercial areas and reducing the physical and visual dominance of vehicles.*

- 3.c. The City should establish design guidelines with stricter landscaping requirements for parking areas located between the street and the building, such as vegetation buffers.
- 3.d. The City should establish design guidelines incorporating wooded, open, and other natural areas into development designs to promote the area's natural setting.

- 3.e. The City should adopt maintenance standards for new landscaping in developments along major corridors.
- 3.f. The City should apply strict requirements for vegetative buffers screening property lines of commercial uses adjacent to single and multiple-family residentially zoned properties.
- 3.g. The City should establish design guidelines developing mandatory architectural and site design guidelines and performance standards with which all new retail development must comply. The City shall explore a plan provisional overlay process as the implementing vehicle to this policy for new retail development that exceeds 50,000 square feet in floor area.

**Goal 4 - Develop a public realm that is safe, aesthetically pleasing and interesting while promoting street life, opportunities for community interactions, and commercial and social activities.**

*Discussion - This goal is interrelated with the creation of guidelines for architectural design, public realm, and streetscape design.*

**Policies:**

- 4.a. The City should develop policies to strengthen the sense of place and unique qualities of its various districts and neighborhoods.

*Discussion - Policies should focus on characteristics that define a particular sense of place and support activities and uses that further strengthen those qualities. Waterfront and CBD policies should focus on improving the function of these areas as highly livable districts primarily for the community and secondarily as an attraction for visitors. It is important that these policies build upon the context of the city and not develop as artificial thematic programming. These policies may include public art plans and street furniture design guidelines that add visual and tactile interest throughout the city.*

## **Goal 5 - Protect viewsheds and view corridors.**

*Discussion - The City of Oak Harbor defines viewsheds as a panoramic view from a single location. Significant viewsheds include views of Mt. Baker, Mt. Rainier, Cascade mountain range, Olympic mountain range, Oak Harbor Bay, Maylor Point (especially wooded and tidal flat areas) and Saratoga Passage. View corridors are defined as views of landmarks or landscapes that are visible along a traveled path such as a public street or trail such as SR 20, SE Pioneer Way and the waterfront trail. The view corridors and viewsheds within the City should be identified and accurately mapped at a useable scale so they can appropriately guide development.*

*The City conducted a scenic view study in 2014 and determined that the following view corridors are important to protect.*

- *Northbound on SR 20 between SW Scenic Heights Street and SW Erie Street*
- *Southbound on SR 20 between NE 16th Avenue and Midway Boulevard*
- *SE Regatta Drive between SE 8th Street and SE 10th Street*
- *Waterfront Trail from Windjammer Park to the Oak Harbor Marina*

*The protection of the scenic views identified above should be done in coordination with adjacent property owners at the time of development using the policies listed below in conjunction with the application of existing design guidelines and administrative design flexibility.*

### **Policies:**

- 5.a. Consideration of building impacts on viewsheds and view corridors shall be exercised in all developments, and mitigation measures shall be applied to protect existing views.

*Discussion - The City may incorporate policies and guidelines to protect these resources, such as developing: a unified bulk program for building envelopes; performance based zoning; and, density bonuses as development incentives.*

- 5.b. Landscape buffers shall be required along major arterials, retaining existing vegetation where possible.
- 5.c. Free standing business signs should be consistent with the speed limit of roadways, and the character of land use districts.
- 5.d. Developments along Oak Harbor's waterfront should enhance the area's natural and physical aesthetics.
- 5.e. Scenic transportation routes should be identified. Adjacent property owners will be encouraged to protect scenic values.
- 5.f. The City and the Navy should cooperate on the protection of viewsheds and view corridors.

**Goal 6 - The redevelopment of downtown Oak Harbor shall receive continued support, consistent with the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program.**

*Discussion - Enhancing the pedestrian experience and improving connections and access to the waterfront from neighboring areas of the city should have the highest priority. The City may consider guidelines for: a comprehensive signage program to enhance way-finding; pedestrian oriented design elements within the public right-of-way; and, human scaled architectural detailing and building design.*

**Policies:**

- 6.a. The historic character of downtown and Harborside Shops area should be encouraged through the establishment of design guidelines and a design review process.**

*Discussion - For example design policies for the CBD should support the development of an interrelated and connected system of pedestrian walkways while maintaining other access options. Additionally they should provide a variety of pedestrian oriented commercial and cultural opportunities along the street.*

- 6.b. Building heights should be coordinated in the downtown and Harborside Shops vicinity to enhance the area's view of the harbor.**

*Industrial Development Design*

*As with commercial development, industrial activities can suffer from blight and unsightliness. However, with landscaping and architectural sensitivity to exterior design, color and materials, such activities can be attractive and complementary to the community. The use of dense, native, forest vegetation or the replanting of a variety of coniferous trees to buffer industrial facilities from neighboring land uses and right of ways can contribute significantly to improve their appearance.*

**Goal 7 - Establish design guidelines for industrial and business park development.**

**Policies:**

- 7.a. Mitigate the visual and traffic impacts of industrial uses on adjacent properties and street corridors.
- 7.b. Require design standards for all development. These development standards could include:
  - 1. Retaining wooded buffers to screen adjacent non-industrial uses.
  - 2. Protecting sensitive natural areas.
  - 3. Buffering service areas, loading docks and storage yards.
  - 4. Providing generous landscaping of parking areas and buildings.

**Goal 8 - Preserve, enhance, and promote significant historic and distinctive architectural features of the City.**

**Policies:**

- 8.a. Prepare an inventory of historic structures within the UGA.
- 8.b. Establish design guidelines which protect and enhance historic features within the community. Guidelines should apply to both new construction and renovation projects in order to promote design cohesiveness. Separate street furniture and pedestrian amenity guidelines should be implemented to create a unifying element along identified street frontages.
- 8.c. Adopt historic preservation building codes and incentives to promote renovation and preservation of buildings with historic value.

*Discussion - One method may be to establish a property tax structure which favors preservation of historic properties.*

- 8.d. Encourage registration of inventoried historic structures as State and National Historic Sites.

**Goal 9 - The City should adopt measures to enhance the entryways into Oak Harbor with early and continuous community input.**

**Policies:**

- 9.a. The entryways into Oak Harbor should be identified in the Comprehensive Plan. The following three primary, regional entryways are identified:
1. North: Along SR-20, from Fakkema Road to approximately 1500 feet north of the SR-20/NE 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue intersection.
  2. South: Along SR-20 from Waterloo Road to the SR-20/Swantown Road intersection.
  3. East: Along Pioneer Way, from Regatta Drive to Midway Boulevard.

The following secondary, local entryways are identified: Oak Harbor Road, Goldie Road, Auvil Road, Regatta Drive, NE 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Swantown Road, Ft. Nugent Road, Heller Road, Crosby Road, Crescent Harbor Road, and Scenic Heights Road.

Note: The three, primary regional entryways were identified and mapped during the 1999-2000 Comprehensive Plan update process.

- 9.b. Design guidelines should be adopted that promote an aesthetically pleasing first impression of Oak Harbor and which will promote tourism. The guidelines should recognize the unique design characteristics and needs of the identified entryways. The guidelines should address various buffering techniques (vegetative or constructed) along the identified streets.
- 9.c. The design guidelines for the identified corridors should be applied outside of the UGA boundary so as to promote a cohesive corridor appearance. Applying

the guidelines in such a manner will require coordination between the City of Oak Harbor, Island County and the Navy.

*Discussion - The guidelines should focus on, but not be limited to: 1) providing special setbacks, 2) providing unique landscape features, 3) the inclusion of community signage, 4) a coordination of private signage for developments occurring at or near the identified entry ways, and 5) the preservation of existing trees.*

- 9.d. Form partnerships with the Navy, the Washington State Department of Transportation, Island County and other property owners to implement the entryway design guidelines.

**Goal 10 - The City should engage in a community visual analysis process with early and continuous community input.**

*Discussion - A community visual analysis process could be used to identify the desired visual character for the community. In this process the community, through a series of public meetings, reviews examples of existing developments (usually through a series of photographic slides). These examples are reviewed in order to determine which design features may be desirable and which may be undesirable. This process is intended to help the community arrive at a common vision of which design features or characteristics are desired.*

**Policies:**

- 10.a. Once a community visual analysis process has been undertaken, the City should revise existing design guidelines and/or adopt additional design guidelines (including supporting graphics) which implement that vision.

**Goal 11- Design guidelines should be established that encourage wireless and satellite communication facilities to be located and designed in such a manner as to minimize their visual impact to the community.**

**Policies:**

- 11.a. Consideration should be given to establishing design guidelines that address the appearance and siting of ground and building mounted satellite facilities.
- 11.b. Design guidelines should be established that require telecommunication facilities (especially monopoles) to blend into the surrounding environment.

# Chapter 5 → Parks, Recreation and Open Space

## Element

*The City of Oak Harbor is a beautiful place where the natural environment is woven into the urban environment with such care and precision that the sense of where the built form stops and nature begins is not known.*

*It's a place where human nature has the opportunity to find its balance with its surroundings by merging of the urban and natural environment in seamless ways, inviting nature into the community and creating a wide range of spaces and experience where community can gather as one or the energy of one can rest in solitude and peace.*

*It is a town where the residents of all age groups are active and healthy, and have a wide range of choices for recreation, engaging themselves in mental and physical activity all year round.*

*It's a City where the environment is clean with beautiful landscapes that line the streets and pathways, opening up to breath taking views of the water and mountains. It invites boaters and kayakers into the community compelling them to spend time at this premier waterfront community.*

### Guiding Principles

Guiding principles set the basic foundation for the users of this plan. These principles are a memorandum of understanding. The principles help to provide the user/reader with the right perspective, role and understanding necessary to speak or act on behalf of this community accepted Plan.

1. *The City of Oak Harbor recognizes, respects, preserves and protects areas where nature will and must take its own course in shaping itself. However, the City also recognizes that it is the ambassador for change that is required to create space for the healthy existence of nature within the built environment.*
2. *The City recognizes, designates and differentiates between the spaces that need to be protected and preserved from the spaces that need to be restored and re-vegetated.*
3. *The management, acquisition and development of open space, parks and recreation must be done in a fashion concurrent with development so that a resident's mind should seldom contemplate the question of sufficiency or quality.*
4. *The recreational choices provided by the community, for the community, are of a community nature and will therefore reasonably provide opportunities for all within the community.*
5. *Man-made structures are designed with aesthetic quality and built with natural and environmentally-friendly materials to last a very long time.*

6. *City owned lands that are regional attractions must be welcoming so that a visitor to that space will savor the experience long after departing.*
7. *Creating the experiences of these spaces includes meaningful public input, balancing the needs of the community, and determining the impacts to the vision.*
8. *The community of Oak Harbor acknowledges preservation of the natural environment and in the necessity to protect nature and wildlife may restrict or preclude public access from some open space.*
9. *All open spaces, parks and recreational facilities will be maintained to their designated level of service recognizing that “no-maintenance” is also a chosen form of maintenance.*
10. *Elements of nature can and should be introduced to all public owned lands that will help connect the various spaces and form a complex network of paths between the community’s open spaces, parks and recreational facilities.*
11. *The Parks and Recreation Plan must always remain in compliance with the GMA, State and County agencies.*
12. *A two-way communication system between residents and City administration, to share, inform and receive input, is essential for the success of the Vision.*
13. *Reasonable safety measures will be incorporated into all aspects of the design of new facilities and equipment, acknowledging that people by choice indulge in sport and recreation activity that do have the potential for risks, accidents and danger.*
14. *Recreational choices shall be provided to meet the needs of youth, adult, elderly and disabled population.*
15. *The acquisition of land and easement to meet required levels of service shall be mandated concurrent with development of property. Donation of land for parks, recreation, open space and trails, above and beyond the requirements, is encouraged.*
16. *Recreation facilities are planned for use all year and in most weather conditions.*
17. *Partnerships and relationships with other agencies, such as, but not limited to North Whidbey Parks and Recreation District, Island County, NAS Whidbey Island, Washington State, not-for-profits and other public and private entities, must be continuous, proactive and enhanced through communication, coordination and participation.*
18. *Funding options and opportunities must be explored to provide a consistent revenue stream that will finance the success of the Vision.*
19. *Existing facilities shall be upgraded to meet health and safety standards and to assure the longevity of its service.*
20. *All projects initiated or partnered by the City, from conception to completion, will follow established planning processes, effective notification, public input/discussion, fair treatment and equal opportunity for all.*

## Comprehensive Planning Goals

The goals listed below are an end result envisioned for the community. The goal statements in this section are a compilation of goals from the previous plan as well as new ones that have been added based on the most recent public input process. Since the previous plan was an update of the Plan originally drafted in 1989, it is acknowledged that 20 years' worth of public input has gone into forming those statements. The spirit and essence of the goals have been included in this plan with the intent that it carries forward a community vision that may take several decades to achieve.

The Comprehensive Planning Goals include two types of goals. Some goals are “continuing” and others are “conclusive”. An example of a continuing goal is “Work with North Whidbey Parks and Recreation District to establish recreational programs in the community”. An example of a conclusive goal is “Provide additional RV spaces in or around Windjammer Park” or “Establish a trail connection between Windjammer Park and Flintstone Park”. A conclusive goal can be removed from this chapter after it has been completed.

The end result of an accomplished goal can also take various forms. Some may result in the construction or acquisition of a physical structure, building or space and some may result in the approval of codes, regulations, policies, agreements etc.

Goals included here can be accomplished or furthered in several ways. Some goals can be accomplished by a proactive approach such as including them in the six-year strategic plan. Others can be furthered by using them in decision making for specific projects. They may also be used to support a private venture that may attempt to accomplish similar goals.

Every six years, when the Plan is updated, goals are selected from this comprehensive list to be

included in the Action Plan (Tier II) for implementation. The selected goals are indicated with a seal and the year they were selected. The 2008 update cycle has “Selected 2008”. When the Plan is updated in the year 2014, a new seal can be created to indicate the chosen goals at that time. Over time, this will not only provide an indication of accomplishments but will also reveal areas that need attention.

The goals have been broadly categorized into open space, parks and recreation. A general category has been created for goals that apply to all the elements. The goals listed within each section are not arranged in any particular order nor are they prioritized.



## Open Space

1. Identify, designate and protect open space lands that provide forage, migration, and habitat for wildlife.
2. Partner with NAS Whidbey Island to formulate a Plan acceptable to both parties for the continuation of the Waterfront Trail to Maylor Point.
3. Construct a waterfront trail system linking providing public access to the waterfront from Scenic Heights Road to Maylor Point.
  - a. Connection between Windjammer and Flintstone Park
  - b. City and Navy to determine extension on Navy Property to Maylor Point
  - c. Extend the Freund Marsh Trail to the waterfront
4. Design and build trails around the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Wetlands Tract.
5. Provide safe and convenient trails for walking and bicycling between parks, neighborhood and major activity centers throughout the City, and to other recreation sites on North Whidbey.
6. Prepare a bicycle and pedestrian trails plan that establishes design standards and provides connections between city parks, residential areas and major activity centers.
7. Integrate Island County's proposed Bicentennial Trail, Pacific Northwest Trail and other County-wide trails plans into the City Trail Plans.
8. Identify and preserve open space lands that permit public access to the waterfront, and also to other areas where the public can interact with natural features.
9. Promote the conservation of open spaces that are in both public and private ownership.
10. Utilize open space conservation as a method to establish a "green belt" around the urban core of the city.
11. Identify and protect important "view corridors" that provide visual access to scenic vistas.
12. Protect open spaces that provide important ecological functions and values.
13. Work with Island County staff to identify opportunities for cooperation in preserving open space areas within the city's UGA, as well as within the city/county Joint Planning Area.
14. Promote a coordinated regional effort toward the preservation of open space.
15. Identify properties that may be suitable to create an open space link between Waterloo Marsh and Swantown Lake.
16. Recognize hydrologic and other features that create physical or visual linkages between properties and natural features.
17. Establish an "open space trust fund" for the protection, preservation, and potential acquisition of open spaces through which individuals, organizations, governments, trusts, foundations, businesses, and other entities may contribute.
18. Review and revise as necessary the city's development regulations to ensure that adequate provisions are made to preserve open space as land is developed.
19. Explore options to convert the property located on the southeast corner of SR 20 and Fakkema Road into an Oak Grove.

## Parks

1. Develop an informative brochure that includes an easy-to-read map of all the recreation sites on North Whidbey Island and publish it on all popular media.

2. Post a City Parks directory map at Windjammer Park that graphically incorporates key City landmarks.
3. Construct a concert/performance arts pavilion at Windjammer Park.
4. Provide additional public RV spaces in or around Windjammer Park.
5. Provide shoreline access, campgrounds and trail linkages for kayakers and others using human powered watercrafts.
6. Provide more facilities for large group gatherings in parks.
7. Provide upland facilities at Flintstone Park that will support the Municipal Pier Project.
8. Prepare a concessionaire policy and related ordinance for the City's shoreline and community parks.
9. Provide more attractions at Oak Harbor's shoreline parks, including opportunities for community events and vendors of appropriate refreshments and rental sports equipment.
10. Develop guidelines to promote private properties and existing developments to provide pocket parks along the City's arterial streets.
11. Upgrade existing structures and facilities to make them safe and extend their life and usefulness.
4. Work with the School District to establish long term use of existing facilities where feasible to meet established level of service standards for recreational facilities identified as needed in the level of service analysis.
5. Work with North Whidbey Parks and Recreation District to establish recreational programs for youth in the community.
6. Coordinate with Island County to establish funding for recreational programs.
7. Build a community center that serves as an indoor multiple purpose facility for active and passive recreational needs that serve the residents all year round.
8. Prepare a Marina Master Plan that analyses the community's perceptions and demand for marina services, determines market demand for tourism and commercial fishing, determines methods to establish long term funding, upland development alternatives and timing and enhance its connections to downtown.
9. Improve the appearance of the Marina so as to make it welcoming to the boaters and other users that visit Oak Harbor.
10. Investigate long term funding options for the Marina that are consistent and can serve the facility well into the future.
11. Upgrade all existing facilities and utilities in the Marina to meet or exceed current safety standards.

### **Recreation**

1. Develop the former landfill site, were appropriate, with supplemental recreational facilities.
2. Develop a regional ball park complex to serve local needs and attract tournament-level sports competition.
3. Assist in developing programs to utilize existing facilities within the City to provide recreational opportunities for all ages.

### **General**

1. Explore option to increase the revenues for parks, recreation, trails and open space projects.
2. Develop new volunteer programs to improve city parks, recreation and trails system and other areas in need of beautification.

3. Prepare a lighting policy and associated ordinance for the City's community and neighborhood parks.

### **Recommended Plan**

The Recommended Plan is a conceptual approach to planning for parks, recreation and open space in and around the community. This conceptual approach provides a desired scenario to work towards. Recommendations included in this section are targeted towards achieving a specific scenario.

This chapter provides general scenarios to work towards for the following elements of the Plan.

- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Open Space
- Trails

The Recommended Plan draws from analyses and standards contained in other chapters of this document. References are provided where feasible.

#### *Neighborhood Parks*

Neighborhood Parks serve a smaller area than community parks and have facilities that are usually scaled down to serve the immediate neighborhood. Neighborhood Parks should be designed and located so that they are accessible by foot or bicycle. They should be safe and easy to access through local streets, pathways and trails and located away from barriers such as major streets.

Neighborhood Parks should provide playgrounds and recreational facilities for children and young adults in the neighborhood. However, opportunities to provide passive recreation with natural areas should also be considered.

As the City grows, neighborhood parks should continue to be provided in residential areas as they develop. Opportunities should also be explored to provide neighborhood parks in areas within the City where service is not currently available.

Listed below are recommendations of areas to consider for neighborhood parks. These are general areas and exact park location will vary based on patterns of development, street layout, trail connections, natural features and availability of land. Recommended areas are:

- South of Whidbey Avenue and east of Midway Boulevard
- Between SR 20 and Scenic Heights
- West of SR 20 and south of SW 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- South of Swantown Road and west of Fairway Lane
- North of Swantown Road and west of Loerland Drive
- North of Crosby Avenue and west of Oak Harbor Road

### *Community Parks*

Community Parks serve a larger area than neighborhood parks and include facilities that serve the entire community. Community Parks are larger in area and includes the larger recreational facilities such as playfields for team sports and structures for large community gatherings.

Community Parks are more efficient when various recreational facilities are concentrated in one location. This allows these facilities to share common infrastructure such as water, parking, restrooms, drainage etc. Community Park should also be located along arterial streets since users may access the park by automobiles and mass transit.

The City of Oak Harbor is deficient in many recreation facilities. Most of the needed facilities best serve the City in a Community Park setting. More than one Community Park may be needed to provide the recreation facilities prescribed by the LOS standards. Analysis indicates that the west/northwest portions of the city have the least coverage.

Therefore it would be ideal to locate a future community park to provide coverage in that area.

### *Open Space*

Open space is a signature element that helps to define the quality of life in Oak Harbor. Open spaces are area of land or water in its natural or existing state that is essentially unimproved and designated, dedicated, reserved or preserved for scenic quality, or for sustaining sensitive ecosystems, or for public or private use.

The protection of open space is an issue of importance to city residents, and also to visitors to the city. Open space provides important and sometimes irreplaceable habitat for wildlife. It also provides places where people can enjoy the area's scenic beauty and cultural heritage, which may be passed to succeeding generations of residents and visitors alike.

Open space can serve many functions within a community. Those functions may include agriculture and forestry, wildlife habitat, wetlands protection, groundwater protection, flood management, shoreline access, preservation of view corridors, or similar functions. Individual open space tracts may provide more than one function. While each community may place different priorities on these functions, each can provide an important component of an area's quality of life.

Open space helps to create livable neighborhoods, to soften the edges of the built environment, to enhance property values, and to buffer incompatible land uses. Because the city is already built out to a significant extent, identifying opportunities to acquire or otherwise protect open space can be critical. The extent of the built environment also suggests that the discussion of open space should occur within a regional context.

The City should work with the County and other organizations to help identify and designate natural areas, wetlands, wildlife habitats etc. around the City as open space.

Some of these areas have been identified the Recommended Plan –Long Term Trail Layout Map (Figure 13) as nodes.

### *Trails*

Trails can broadly include dedicated (separate from right-of-way) multi-use paths, marked lanes on roadways and sidewalks. Trails also serve multiple purposes. They can be designed, built and located primarily for recreation or they could be integrated into street projects for transportation. An ideal trail system would be designed to serve both purposes.

The Recommended Plan provides two different scenarios for trail development. One scenario provides concepts for connections within the city limits and the other scenario provides concepts for trail development outside the City in the UGA and beyond.

### **Recommended Plan for Trails within the City**

Providing dedicated trails within the city can be challenging because of the existing built environment. Therefore trails within the city should be designed or designated along existing transportation corridors. Since they are adjacent to existing transportation systems, care must be taken to make them safe.



Figure 11 - Recommended Plan - City Core Trails - CBD

Ideally it is preferred that the entire city be provided with trails and sidewalks to connect the various parks, public facilities, employment centers, commercial centers etc. However, the Recommended Plan identifies two areas specifically for the development of trails within the City. These two areas are the Central Business District (CBD) and the Whidbey Avenue Corridor.

### CBD

The CBD is a high density district with a mix of commercial and residential uses. This district's commercial uses are geared towards capitalizing on pedestrian traffic. The CBD district is in an ideal location to create a hub for interconnectedness between some of the City's prime assets - Windjammer Park, Smith Park, Flintstone Park, Skagit Community College and the Marina. The waterfront trail that connects Scenic Heights Road to the Marina is adjacent to this area. The waterfront trail, a community asset, can benefit from a supporting bicycle/pedestrian trail network in the CBD district. The following recommendations are proposed to improve trails in this area:

- Design guidelines and regulations in this district should be written to guide the physical environment toward a pedestrian oriented environment.
- Enhance the existing trail connection between Flintstone Park and the Marina to a multiuse trail and extend the existing trail from the Marina to Maylor Point.
- Provide marked bicycle path along the primary east-west streets (Pioneer Way, Bayshore Drive, and SE Barrington Drive) and the primary north-south streets (City Beach Street, Dock Street, Midway Blvd and Regatta Drive).

### Whidbey Avenue Corridor

This corridor has been identified in the Recommended Plan since almost all the public

schools in Oak Harbor are primarily located in the heart of the City along Whidbey Avenue. Several other public facilities such as the Vanderzicht Memorial Pool, the Senior Center, and the skate park are also located along this major east-west arterial.

This corridor should be enhanced for all modes of transportation. The following recommendations are proposed to improve trails in this area:

- Include pedestrian and bicycle trails into the design of the reconstruction of Whidbey Avenue.
- Augment the Whidbey Avenue Corridor trail with similar trails along the other major roadways that intersect it such as SR 20, Heller Road, Midway Blvd and Regatta Drive.
- Support the Whidbey Avenue Corridor trail system with sidewalks or a trail system along local streets so that it can provide for a dispersed funneling system to the major public facilities located in this area from organized/scheduled remote drop-off and pick-up locations, preferably, at nearby parks.

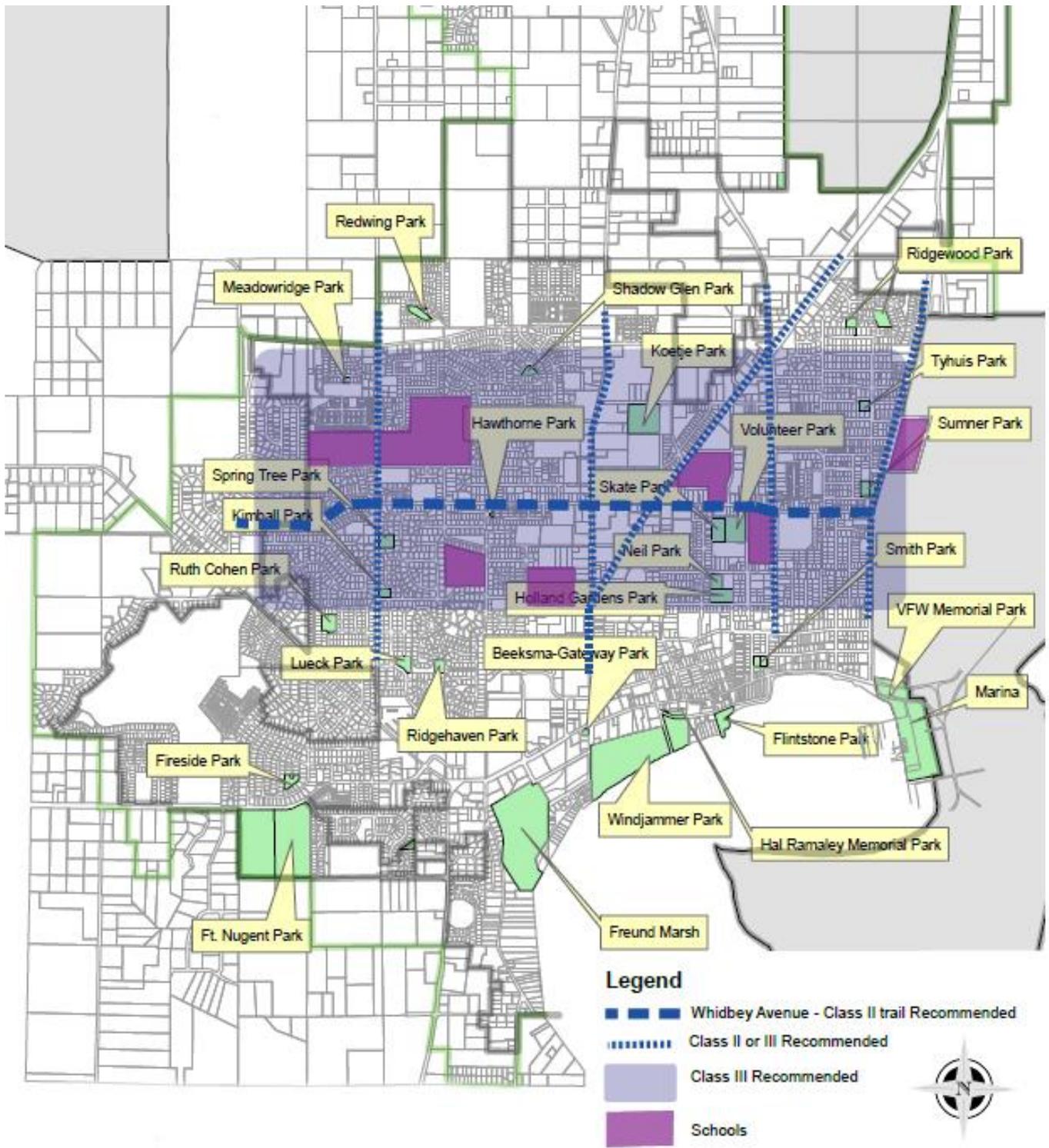


Figure 12 - Recommended Plan - City Core - Whidbey Avenue Corridor

The above recommendations are further supported by the 2007 Transportation Plan. Since these options consider the existing transportation system as a foundation, it is recommended that the City undertake a pedestrian and bicycle study to establish standards and create a detailed plan to achieve this goal.

Trails along existing roadways do not have to wait for road improvements to be implemented. Normally there is adequate right-of-way to accommodate a trail adjacent to existing pavement or storm drain. Trails can be installed temporarily until funding becomes available for street improvements.

#### UGA and Beyond

This section of the Plan lays out a vision for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan outside the city limits so that the community can plan ahead of possible growth and development. Recommendations within this section are ideas and general directions to follow. Since the City does not have jurisdictional authority beyond the city limits, it is important to coordinate with Island County to pursue the scenario recommended below.

The challenges in these areas are many such as land ownership patterns, varying lot sizes and shapes, critical areas, right-of-way and easement acquisition etc. Therefore the recommended plan for areas outside the City will rely on a few basic principles to help guide decision making.

The scenario establishes two basic elements – nodes and connectors. A combination of these will result in a network of trails, parks and open space that will provide interconnectedness, preserve critical areas, and provide open space and parks to meet the needs of growth and increase in population.

Nodes – Nodes serve as a hub for connectors (trails). They can be community parks, wetlands, natural areas such as forests, lakes, state and county parks etc. They serve to protect the natural environment, natural

features, views etc. The attached map identifies some potential major nodes around the City. Additional nodes can be added during updates or on closer studies of certain areas. Wetlands and other critical areas can have trails along the periphery or incorporated into an enhanced buffer that protects these natural features.

Connectors – These are primarily trails that connect the various nodes to form a network for pedestrians and bicycles. The proposed connectors are conceptual and additional studies need to be done to determine actual locations and alignments. A good location for connectors is to follow drainage patterns. Following such natural features can provide a quality experience to the recreational activity. Connectors in these new areas should preferably be, were possible, a trail network that provides dedicated right-of-way or easement for pedestrians and bicyclists. Trails in areas outside the City will also rely on existing roads for connection. Care must be taken to design them for safety.

The above recommendations are consistent with the Island County Trails Plan.

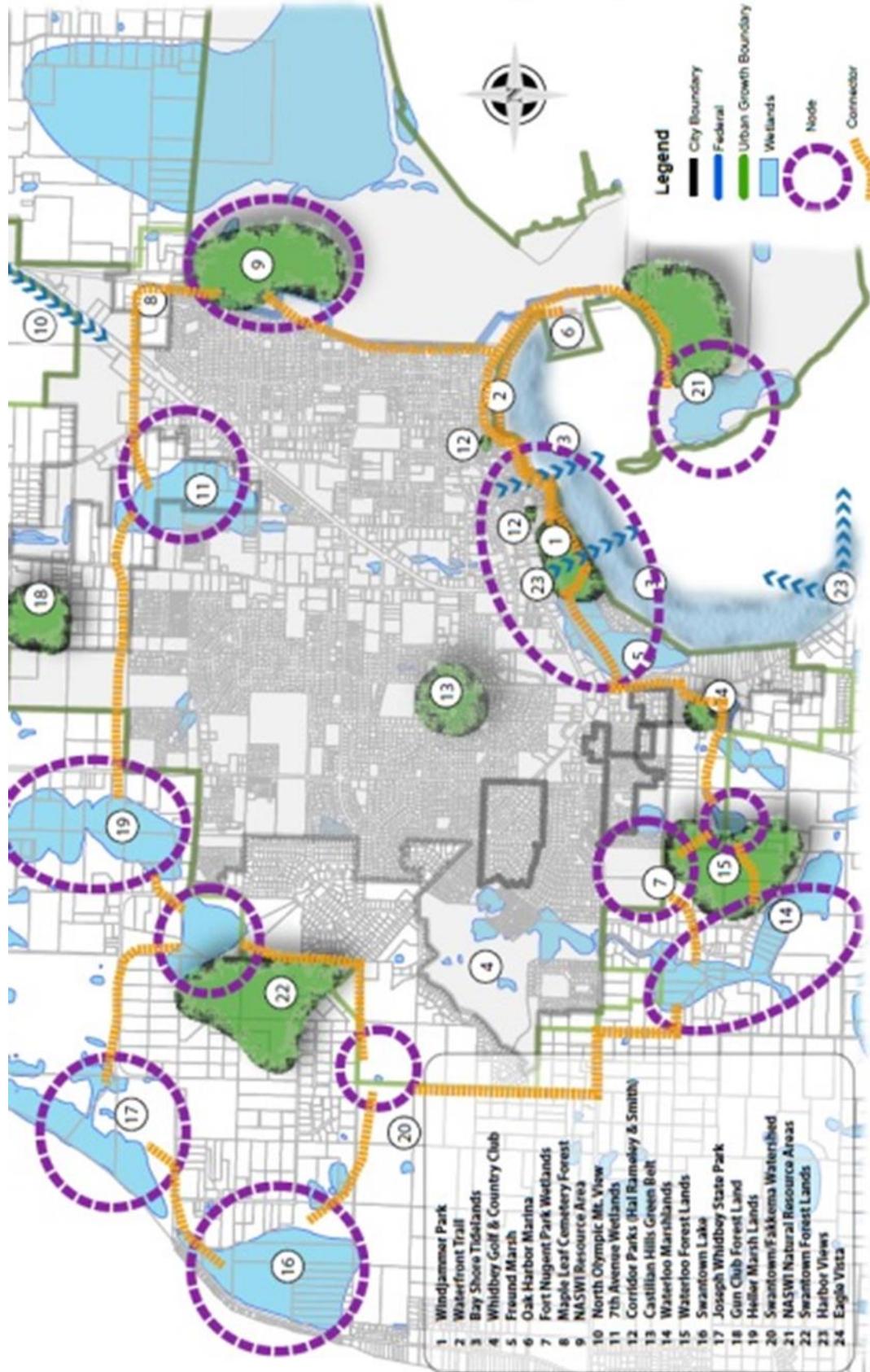


Figure 13 - Recommended Plan - Long Term Trail Layout

## Summary of recommendations

1. Continue to develop neighborhood parks as the city grows
2. Find opportunities to provide neighborhood parks in underserved areas of the city.
3. Explore options to develop a community park that can accommodate a concentration of recreational facilities.
4. Work with Island County and other organizations to identify and designate natural areas, critical areas, wetlands, wildlife habitat as open space.
5. Include bicycle paths and sidewalks in the design and reconstruction of Whidbey Avenue.
6. Develop a trail system for bicycles and pedestrians along existing streets in the Whidbey Avenue corridor with links to parks in the area.
7. Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian paths into the design and construction of streets in the CBD.
8. Enhance the trail connection between Flintstone Park and the Marina as a multiuse trail and extend the trail from the Marina to Maylor Point.
9. Develop a trail system that connects SR 20 to Regatta Drive along Barrington and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue with connections to the waterfront trail.
10. Work with developers to provide trails in new development that provides connectivity to parks and open spaces.
11. Develop design guidelines for new developments that encourage connectivity and use of the trail system.

*REFER TO THE 2009 PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN FOR MORE INFORMATION ON INVENTORY, EXISTING CONDITIONS, LEVEL OF SERVICE, COMMUNITY NEED AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES.*

## Chapter 6 → Housing Element

*The Housing element provides a framework to develop adequate and diverse housing for existing and future residents within the city. This element provides policy guidance on the types and densities of housing that are appropriate to accommodate the city's needs. It addresses issues of affordability, density and how to accommodate the needs of those households that are burdened with housing costs.*

### Housing Development History

Oak Harbor's housing is relatively young. Less than two percent of the city's housing pre-dates 1939. The city's oldest homes are located in and around the Central Business District, and are mainly in the American Craftsman style (circa 1920).

As one would expect to see in a town that "grew up" with the military build-up of the mid to late 1900s, much of the city's housing

(particularly in the city's older east-side neighborhoods) was developed in the "tract" style of the 1950s, 60s and 70s. These tract homes are characteristically small, simple in form, and inexpensively constructed. Consequently, they are relatively affordable. Even though Oak Harbor's population is primarily transitory, the local supply of tract housing has been well maintained, and it is expected that these homes will have a relatively long lifespan.

In recent years local home builders have responded to demand for greater affordability by expanding the local supply of condominium style housing units, by developing single family homes on smaller lots, and by building more multi-family housing to accommodate the needs of more transient military households. Manufactured housing continues to fill a niche in the local housing market, supplying less than 10% of the city's housing stock.



## Demographic and Housing Data

### Population

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Oak Harbor’s population is 22,075. After growing at a rate of 40% during the 1980s, the city’s population increased at a lower rate of 15% in the ‘90s and 12% between 2000 and 2010. Projected population figures suggest that the rate of growth will decrease to 9% and drop to 5% between 2020 and 2030. Figure 14 illustrates the city’s growth from 1980 to 2000, with projected growth to 2036.

Year	Population	Percent Increase
1980	12,271	--
1990	17,176	40.0%
2000	19,795	15%
2010	22,075	12%
2020	23,937	8%
2030	25,161	5%
2036	25,925	3%

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau and projections by Island County and City of Oak Harbor

Figure 14- Population growth, 1980-2036

The state’s Office of Financial Management (OFM) projects population growth on an annual basis. Their data indicates that the city’s population has been slightly decreasing since 2010. This is mainly due to decreases in personnel at NAS Whidbey Island as they transition to acquire new squadrons in the later part of the decade. The new squadrons will cause a minor spike in Oak Harbor’s population, after which the rate of population increase will fall back to historical levels. Failing any more large increases in squadrons in the next decade, the population is expected to have slight increases at an average of approximately 1% a year.

### Housing Units

The 2000 Census indicated that there were a total of 7,772 housing units in Oak Harbor. In 2010 the number of housing units increased by 1,781 units to 9,553. The population during that time frame increased by 2,280 people. In that same time period, vacancy rates increased from 5.6% (439 units) to 9.2% (876 units). Owner-occupied housing units rose by 2.6% from 3,172 to 3,979.

The percentage of owner-occupied housing in Oak Harbor is significantly lower than in Island County, and in the State of Washington. The low occupancy rate likely results from the high incidence of military personnel located at NAS Whidbey Island. The mobile nature of military employment acts to discourage home ownership investment among enlisted personnel. A comparison of home ownership rates is shown below in Figure 15.

Area	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied
Oak Harbor	45.9	54.1
Island County	70.9	29.1
Washington	63.9	36.1

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure 15- Ratio of owner-occupied versus renter-occupied housing

### Household Size

As the city’s population has increased over time, its average household size has decreased. From nearly 3 persons per household in 1980, the average household size has continued to decline to today’s 2.53 persons per household. The decrease in household size seems to follow the national trend that saw a decline from 2.76 in 1980 to 2.59 in 2010.

Year	Population	# of Households	Avg. Household Size
1980	12,271	4,107	2.99
1990	17,176	5,971	2.88
2000	19,795	7,333	2.70
2010	22,075	8,677	2.53

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure 16 - Household size

Failing extenuating circumstances, the household size is not expected to continue to decrease at the current rate and will likely stabilize at the current level. This is an important assumption since population projections for 2036 are based on the household size remaining at the current level.

## Housing Density

The city has approximately 1,941 acres of land devoted to Low-Intensity Residential and 275 acres for High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial land uses. In the Low-Intensity Residential land use areas, housing densities are permitted at between 3- and 16-dwelling units per acre. In the High-Intensity Residential areas, densities are permitted at up to 22 units per acre of land.

Historically over the past fifteen years, the overall housing density in the city has averaged approximately 7.47 dwelling units per acre which is up from the 5.7 units per acre noted in the last update in 2005. This may be due to a trend toward smaller households and the popularity of smaller homes. Housing densities from development during the last fifteen years are provided below. It should be noted that in 2016 the land uses were generalized.

Therefore Low-Intensity Residential has densities ranging from 3 to 16 units per acre and High-Intensity Residential/Low-Intensity Commercial can have densities ranging from 12 to 22+ units per acre.

Land Use Category	Units	Acres	Avg. Density
Low-Intensity Residential	1280	292.3	4.38
High-Res/Low-Com	134	8.56	15.65

Figure 17 - Density by Land Use Category

Developments	Land Use	Units	Total Acreage	Density
Cherry Hills	Low-Intensity Residential	151	29.5	5.12
Spring Hollow	Low-Intensity Residential	32	4.03	7.94
Whidbey Links	Low-Intensity Residential	28	7.93	3.53
Woodbury Park	Low-Intensity Residential	37	6.06	6.11
Island Place	Low-Intensity Residential	105	19.45	5.40
Crosby Commons	Low-Intensity Residential	74	19.4	3.81
Whidbey Greens	Low-Intensity Residential	90	16.04	5.61
Harbor Place	Low-Intensity Residential	56	6.3	8.89
Rose Hill	Low-Intensity Residential	38	4.01	9.48
Fairway Point	Low-Intensity Residential	140	36	3.89
Highland Park	Low-Intensity Residential	25	4.75	5.26
Summer Wind	High-Res/Low-Com	48	2.42	19.83
Scenic View	High-Res/Low-Com	24	1.24	19.35
Foxwood Condos	High-Res/Low-Com	48	4.1	11.71
Kettle Cove	High-Res/Low-Com	14	0.8	17.50
East Park	Low-Intensity Residential	38	9.13	4.16
Redwing	Low-Intensity Residential	111	28.86	3.85
Barrington Heights	Low-Intensity Residential	23	7.6	3.03
Frostad Pond	Low-Intensity Residential	45	8.74	5.15
West Meadows	Low-Intensity Residential	61	15.4	3.96
Fireside	Low-Intensity Residential	226	69.1	3.27
			Total Average	7.47

Figure 18 - Multi-family complexes

## Housing Trends and Conditions

As the table below indicates, Oak Harbor experienced significant growth between 1981 and 1990. This growth prompted the 1993 study, *Housing Needs Assessment; Island County, Coupeville, Langle, Oak Harbor*.<sup>16</sup> This study documented housing shortages and affordability concerns primarily affecting low-income households throughout Island County. After the release of this study the county's rate of growth slowed significantly, for a variety of reasons.

In the area surrounding Oak Harbor, growth has historically been linked to the fortunes of NAS Whidbey Island. While the military base faced great uncertainty during much of the mid-1990s, existing conditions appear to be more stable. In 2012, NAS Whidbey announced the arrival of new squadrons by the end of the decade. Since the old squadrons will be transitioning out, the increase in population is expected to be small. Moderate or normal growth patterns are expected to continue.

While it is certain that housing affordability remains a significant issue for low- and moderate-income persons, the decline in the area's rate of growth suggests that housing pressures may have eased somewhat.

Year	Population Increase	Building Permits	Census Household size	# of Households	Population
1973-1980	1971	1223	2.99	4107	12,317
1981-1990	4859	1800	2.88	5971	17,176
1991-2000	2619	1154	2.70	7333	19,795
2001-2010	2280	1433	2.53	8677	22,075

*Figure 19 - Increases by decade*

<sup>16</sup> Judith Stoloff Associates.

### Housing Availability

Between 1980 and 1990, the number of housing units in Oak Harbor increased from 4,407 to 6,173, a jump of 40%. By 2000, that number increased to 7,772 units, representing a more modest increase of 21% during the '90s. By 2010, the Census indicates that the number of housing units grew to 9,553, which is an increase of approximately 22%. If the rate of growth in the last two decades is a sign of stability, it can be expected that the growth between 2010 and 2020 will also be approximately 22% which is approximately 2,054 units (approximately 205 units per year). However, the American Factfinder estimates that in 2014, housing units totaled 9,944, which indicates a slower rate of growth (less than 100 units per year). With the squadron increase at NAS Whidbey anticipated in 2017, the rate of growth in the latter part of the decade can be expected to increase.

In 2000, according to the U.S. Census, the city's vacancy rate for housing was 5.6%. The 2010 Census indicates that the vacancy rate has increased to 9.6. This may be due to a slight decrease in population that Oak Harbor has been experiencing since 2012. The decrease is primarily due to the Navy preparing for the transition in squadrons.

### Housing Affordability

In January 2015, the State released a report titled *Housing Needs Assessment for Washington*. It was commissioned by a diverse, governor-appointed membership of the Washington State Affordable Housing Advisory Board to create an unbiased accounting of housing affordability in Washington State. The assessment considered housing to be affordable when a household pays no more than 30% of its income for all housing costs. When a household pays more than 30% of its income for housing costs it is considered "cost-burdened" and when it pays more than 50% it was considered "severely cost-burdened." American Factfinder for 2014 (Figure 20) indicates that 46.8% of home owners and 48.7% of renters in Oak Harbor are considered cost-burdened.

	Owner	Renter
Less than 20 percent	19%	16.80%
20 to 24.9 percent	17.70%	16.70%
25 to 29.9 percent	16.50%	17.80%
30 to 34.9 percent	7.60%	10.10%
35 percent or more	39.20%	38.60%

Figure 20 - Housing cost as a percentage of income

## Housing Needs

The Buildable Lands Analysis (BLA) conducted in 2016 by Island County indicates that there is adequate capacity within the UGA to accommodate the 20-year population projection. The BLA estimates that Oak Harbor has an average<sup>17</sup> capacity for 1,985 units and that 1,629 units are needed to accommodate the 20-year population projections.

As part of the 2016 Update, Island County is considering policies to encourage more of the projected growth to occur within the UGA. To determine the impacts of such policy shifts, Island County calculated development capacities under 10%- and 20%-shift scenarios. The tables below indicate the capacities under these scenarios. The County eventually chose to not consider policies for an increased shift with the 2016 update, however this may be an option that will continue to be considered and discussed after the update cycle. The City will continue to work in collaboration with the County to ensure that services can be provided to support any increase in population shifts.

2010	2036		
	Baseline	10%	20%
22,075	25,822	26,447	27,071

Figure 21 - Projected Oak Harbor population, with allocations

	Baseline		10% shift		20% shift	
	Allocation	Growth	Allocation	Growth	Allocation	Growth
North Whidbey						
Oak Harbor	60%	3,747	70%	4,372	80%	4,996
Rural	40%	2,498	30%	1,874	20%	1,249
Regional Allocation	100%	6,245	100%	6,245	100%	6,245

Figure 22 - Population growth allocation and shift

<sup>17</sup> The density for the various zoning districts in Oak Harbor accommodates a range from low to high. Therefore the BLA uses the average of these densities to determine capacity.

	Housing Capacity (Housing Units)	Baseline		10%		20%	
		Additional Housing Units Need*	Excess Housing Units	Additional Housing Units Need*	Excess Housing Units	Additional Housing Units Need*	Excess Housing Units
Low	1,016	1,629	(613)	1,901	(885)	2,172	(1,156)
Average	1,985	1,629	356	1,901	84	2,172	(187)
High	2,490	1,629	861	1,901	590	2,172	318

Figure 23 - Land Capacity, 2036

## Summary

The local housing market is driven primarily by conditions at NAS Whidbey Island. While the area is undertaking efforts to diversify its economy, it is expected that changes in base population will continue to dominate local housing issues.

The census data for the last two decades and population projections suggest that area growth will continue at moderate levels in the foreseeable future. As growth continues, the city will need to remain diligent in implementing strategies that will continue to provide housing that is affordable to all economic segments within the community.

## Goals and Policies

### Goal 1 - Ensure that adequate opportunities exist for low and moderate-income families to obtain affordable housing.

#### Policies:

- I.a. Provide land use policies and development regulations that allow for a variety of housing types and residential life styles, to accommodate households in varying income ranges.
- I.b. Encourage alternative housing types from the standard single-family residences by using contemporary building and planning concepts, including apartments, condominiums, small lot, zero lot line, attached patio, townhouse, and manufactured housing.
- I.c. Promote the inclusion of affordable housing developments through incentives, density bonuses, and flexible development regulations.
- I.d. Promote the inclusion of subsidized units throughout the community to diversify neighborhoods.
- I.e. Promote the location of affordable housing in proximity to transit routes to ensure the most efficient and cost-effective use of public transportation.
- I.f. Support efforts to develop self-help housing programs.
- I.g. Allow provisions in development regulations for inclusionary affordable housing and density bonus performance standards.
- I.h. Allow for the development and preservation of manufactured home

communities, using design guidelines that ensure that such communities are compatible with existing neighborhoods.

- I.i. Support and monitor mediation services for tenant/landlord dispute issues.
- I.j. Encourage the development and implementation of affordable housing as part of the City's annexation program.
- I.k. Monitor affordable housing availability for low and moderate-income populations.
- I.l. Encourage the development of accessory units to address housing needs and increase capacity.

**Goal 2 - Promote housing opportunities for special needs population.**

Policies:

- 2.a. Accommodate land uses and housing that provides for the needs of the elderly, disabled, and infirm.
- 2.b. Support the Island County Housing Authority and Opportunity Council to address siting and development of housing for special needs populations.
- 2.c. Work cooperatively with social service providers, local churches, other organizations and individuals, to address the needs of homeless persons by establishing options for short-term homeless shelters and encampments.
- 2.d. Allow for the development of assisted housing in appropriate locations.
- 2.e. Ensure compliance with State and National Standards for group homes and family day care facilities.

**Goal 3 - Identify and provide sufficient and appropriate land for housing.**

Policies:

- 3.a. Monitor inventory of developable land, to ensure adequate land is available for projected housing needs.
- 3.b. Allow for a range of densities to ensure maximum choice in housing options.
- 3.c. Consider incentives and flexibility in development standards to promote mixed uses that include housing in commercial development .

**Goal 4 - Preserve, maintain and improve the value of existing neighborhoods.**

Policies:

- 4.a. Enforce existing housing codes and maintain code enforcement efforts in residential areas.
- 4.b. Invest in existing infrastructure as a means to encourage private reinvestments.
- 4.c. Encourage redevelopment and infill of underdeveloped residential properties.



## Chapter 7 → Transportation Element

*This element aims to provide a 20 year vision for Oak Harbor's transportation system, which respects the community's history, culture and character, supports anticipated growth in the region, and builds on Oak Harbor's momentum as an attractive community in which to live, work, and play by supporting safe and comfortable travel by all modes through 2036.*

The vision for this element is to provide a safe, balanced, and efficient multi-modal transportation system that is consistent with the City's overall vision and adequately serves anticipated growth. Guidance from City staff, stakeholders, citizens, Planning Commission, and City Council helped identify several priorities:

- Improve safety for all road users in Oak Harbor through thoughtful planning and street designs that accommodate all modes;
- Encourage the efficient movement of people and goods through an interconnected transportation network that includes streets, sidewalks, bike paths, public transit, and other transportation facilities; and,
- Ensure Oak Harbor's transportation element compliments the City's land use vision and adopted plans and Island County's transportation network.

The transportation element sets a framework for understanding, prioritizing, measuring, and creating a transportation network to help Oak Harbor achieve its vision.

### Planning Framework

The State's Growth Management Act of 1990 requires communities to prepare a transportation plan that links directly to the City's land use decisions and financial planning. This transportation element fulfills the mandate.

Additionally, given the status of State Route 20 as a major transportation corridor that travels through Oak Harbor, this plan aims to coordinate with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to ensure that this state facility can adequately serve the region's needs.

As part of this planning process, several local, regional, and state plans and documents that influence transportation planning in the City of Oak Harbor were reviewed. This section summarizes some of the key regional plans that were reviewed.

*The Skagit and Island Counties Metropolitan & Regional Transportation Plan (2010-2035)*, prepared by the Skagit Council of Governments, lays out the long term goals for growth management, economic, and transportation issues.

*Island County's Transportation Element* is intended to serve as a guide for making transportation decisions to address both short and long term needs. The overarching goals of the plan are to provide a safe and integrated transportation system that maintains and preserves the existing system, while supporting the land use development and economic vitality. The projects outlined within the county's 20-year project list focus on preserving and managing the existing transportation system and implementing safety projects, rather than adding more roadway capacity.

*State Route 20, Swantown Road to Cabot Drive (WSDOT, 2005)*. WSDOT partnered with the City of Oak Harbor to review SR 20 corridor needs and develop a detailed plan that will facilitate design and construction of future highway improvements. The goal of the analysis was to determine how best to redesign the section of the corridor, between Swantown Road to Cabot Drive, to improve levels of safety and mobility, while encouraging better access to land uses and improving the aesthetics of the corridor to match the city character.

Based on the traffic analysis of six key intersections within the project area, roundabouts were determined to be the best solution to improve safety and mobility along the corridor. In 2012, WSDOT released a briefing report and technical update to the 2005 plan, which further analyzed traffic within the study area and updated the costing estimates of the improvements recommended in the pre-design analysis. As of June, 2015, the project was funded by WSDOT as part of the Connecting Washington Projects Highway Improvements Program<sup>18</sup>. The project is scheduled for implementation between 2027 and 2029.

*The Whidbey Scenic Isle Way Corridor Management Plan (CMP)* was created for the state scenic byway that consists of SR 525 and SR 20 on Whidbey Island. The corridor, which spans from Deception Pass to the Clinton Ferry Terminal, is characterized as a “ribbon of commerce and connectivity for island communities”. The vision of the Whidbey Scenic Isle Way is to enhance visitors’ experience and preserve the quality of life enjoyed by island residents.

The CMP serves as a tool that provides recommendations for specific strategies and actions that improve, enhance, and sustain the corridor’s unique intrinsic qualities and the many enjoyable experiences it offers. In regards

to transportation, the plan outline several goals such as promoting the non-driving experience, improving the aesthetics of the transit system and park-and-ride lots, expanding the multiuse trail system, and providing safe and convenient crossing opportunities for pedestrians.

*The Oak Harbor Transportation Plan, (April 2016)*, prepared by Fehr & Peers, serves as the principal functional plan for this element and includes level of service reports, land use and travel demand, and travel demand modeling documentation supporting this element.

## Existing Conditions and Trends

The way people travel is greatly influenced by the built environment, which includes land use and travel corridors, as well as the key destinations where people live, work, play, shop, and recreate. This section also describes trends in how people are traveling based on anticipated development patterns and travel mode data.

### Land Use

The main commercial areas in Oak Harbor, where people tend to shop, are located downtown and along State Route (SR) 20; these areas are zoned Central Business District (CBD) and high-intensity commercial as shown on the Land Use Map in the Land Use Element of this document.

Oak Harbor’s Old Town District (downtown) features older buildings that are home to a variety of commercial uses including a mix of office and retail uses, as well as restaurants. The area along SR 20 is characterized by auto-oriented commercial development that features larger scale buildings and parking lots. Other areas of commercial and industrial land uses are located in the northern portions of Oak Harbor, and military land uses are adjacent to the eastern and northern city limits. Much of

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<sup>18</sup> Leap Transportation Document 2015 NL-1

the remaining City area is zoned for single-family residential.

It is important to consider that areas of commercial, industrial, and dense residential land use tend to have more concentrated trips and can be supportive of alternative modes of travel such as transit, whereas areas of low density residential tend to have dispersed trip patterns more conducive to trips made by personal vehicle.

Oak Harbor's Old Town District functions as the historical city center. It is a major trip generator for all modes. It features a mix of commercial, residential, and civic destinations such as City Hall and the public library.

### **Island Transit's Harbor Station**

Island Transit's Harbor Station serves a major transit hub and transfer center in Island County. Located on Bayshore Drive, the Harbor Station is served by nine transit routes, and connects to destinations as far as the Anacortes and Clinton Ferry Terminals. The Harbor Station is well connected to the Old Town District, and provides access to a nearby surface lot for passengers who access transit by car. There are

also bicycle and pedestrian amenities at the station area, including shelters, bathrooms, benches, and bike parking.

### **Oak Harbor Waterfront**

Located on the south side of Oak Harbor's Old Town District, the Oak Harbor Waterfront provides access to parks, trails, and the Marina. Many residents and visitors alike enjoy the waterfront area and travel and recreate on Oak Harbor's Waterfront Trail, which spans the entire City waterfront. The Waterfront Trail serves as a major non-motorized route for residents and visitors. It connects trail users to destinations in Old Town such as shops, restaurants, and the Skagit Valley College. The trail also provides important connections for residents who live on their boats in the Oak Harbor Marina.

### **Naval Air Station Whidbey Island**

The Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI) is located on two pieces of land near Oak Harbor. The primary section of the base, Ault Field, is located about three miles north of Oak Harbor. Ault Field, totaling approximately 4,250 acres in size, features the main airfield, administrative and industrial buildings, a



hospital, a variety of housing units, and several recreational areas including an 18-hole golf course.

The secondary section of the base, the Seaplane Base, is located just east of Oak Harbor's Old Town District. The Seaplane Base encompasses approximately 2,820 acres. About twenty percent of this land area is developed, primarily with single family housing.

NASWI's personnel contribute to a significant amount of traffic on roadways leading to Ault Field and the Seaplane Base. Traffic near the bases becomes backed up during shift changes, as personnel enter/exit the base at Goldie Road and West Ault Field Road; Langley Boulevard and West Ault Field Road; and West Crescent Harbor Road and Torpedo Road.

Although the majority of personnel commute by private vehicle, many young personnel do not own a vehicle, and rely heavily on Island Transit, walking, and/or biking for their travel. The anticipated growth in population (see below) is expected to increase the number of young personnel, who typically lack access to a personal vehicle and are dependent on other modes.

Today, approximately 7,000 personnel are stationed at NASWI. By 2020, the active duty population is projected to reach 8,000. Anticipated growth and development near NASWI bases may necessitate roadway and operation improvements.

### **Oak Harbor Public Schools**

The Oak Harbor Public School system operates neighborhood schools that serve the City and surrounding areas. In addition to School District facilities, there are several private schools located within Oak Harbor. The City of Oak Harbor, the Oak Harbor School District, and neighborhood groups have made a commitment to provide safe access to the City's schools through the State Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. The Oak Harbor SRTS program has been successful in securing grant funding for a

variety of programs that support a safer transportation network near schools.

Growth within the City of Oak Harbor will necessitate the need for new schools. NASWI alone is expected to add another 750 elementary students by 2019. Given this growth, the Oak Harbor School Board has approved a plan to create two "hybrid schools". Instead of two middle schools for grades 6-8, there will be one school for grades 5-6 and one school for grades 7-8.

This could create challenges for school children who may need to cross SR 20 more often, given that their home school will not necessarily be the one closest to them.

### **Skagit Valley College**

A branch of Skagit Valley College is located in Oak Harbor at the east end of Pioneer Way. Approximately 1,400 students enroll on the campus annually. The college is served by three Island Transit routes (3, 10, and 12), however the majority of students access the campus by car.

## Transportation Network Overview

Oak Harbor's transportation network accommodates many modes of travel, including walking, bicycling, public transit, and driving. Vehicular travel still is the primary choice for most travelers in and around Oak Harbor.

City streets form the foundation of the transportation framework with roadways shaping how residents and visitors experience Oak Harbor. The main travel corridors in Oak Harbor are mostly roadways with sidewalks but also include non-motorized trails. The Old Town District has a relatively well-connected street grid, while the remaining areas of the city are characterized by larger blocks and curvilinear streets, which can make direct connections difficult.

The network classifies Oak Harbor's roadways into principal arterials, collectors, and local streets, as shown in the Roadway Classification Map. While Oak Harbor utilizes a traditional classification system, future projects may incorporate alternatives to the classification to accommodate road diet options. Road diets serve to utilize existing right-of-way and

pavement to provide greater multi-modal opportunities.

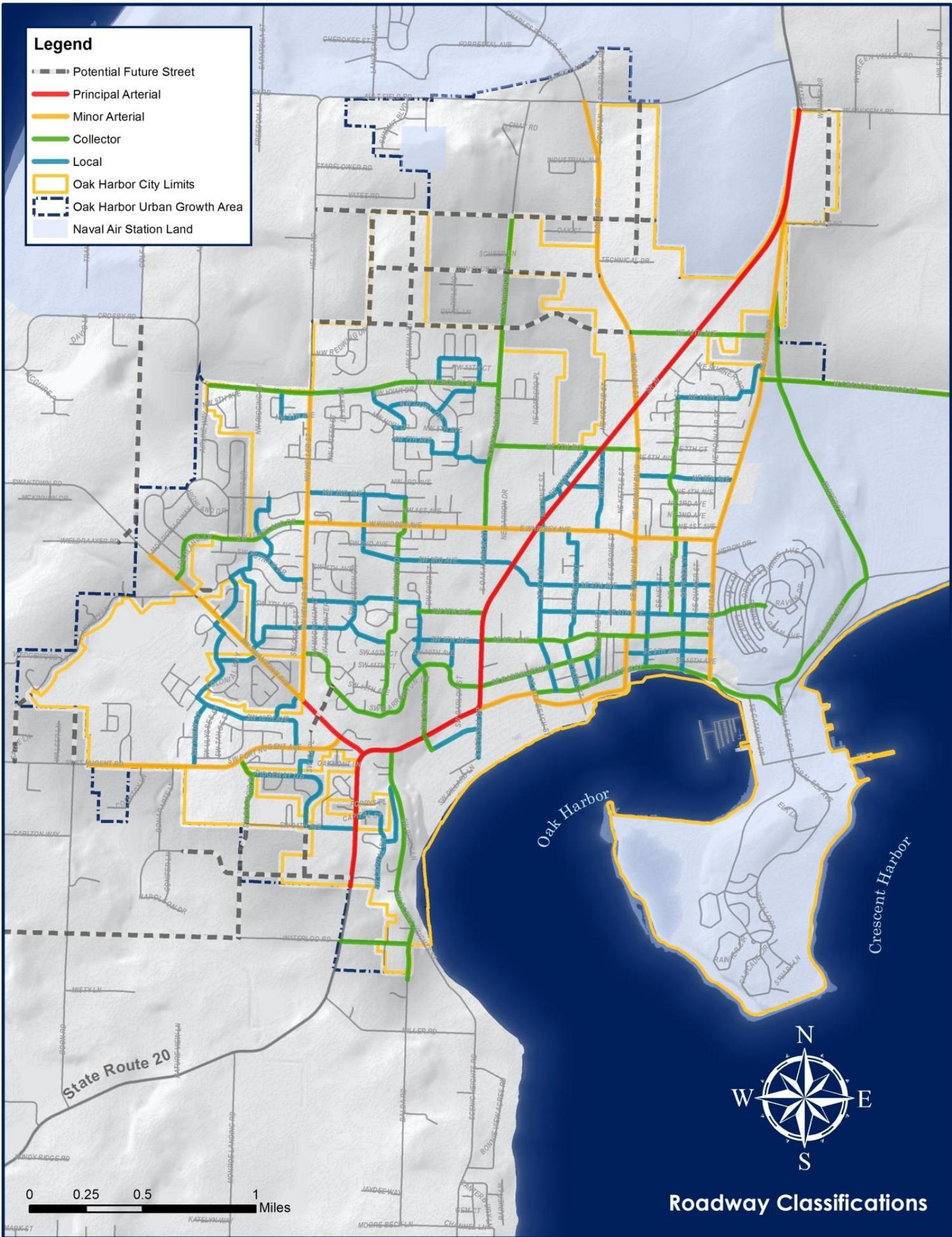
Residents and visitors in Oak Harbor walk and bike as a part of their daily travel for many reasons. Children attending school, commuters taking the bus or connecting with a carpool to get to work and senior citizens making midday trips, all require safe amenities. Over the past five years, Oak Harbor has made great strides in creating a more bicycle friendly and walkable community.

In 2012, Oak Harbor completed the Pioneer Way improvements as part of a downtown revitalization project. The reconstruction project converted Pioneer Way from a two-way to a one-way street and added pedestrian-friendly streetscape enhancements including wider sidewalks, landscape planters, and angled on-street parking.

South of Pioneer Way is Oak Harbor's waterfront trail. Oak Harbor's waterfront trail has grown into a popular pedestrian and recreational facility that spans the entire City waterfront. It connects to some of Oak Harbor's busiest parks and key destinations such as downtown, Skagit Valley College, the public library, and Oak Harbor's Marina.

# Legend

- Potential Future Street
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Collector
- Local
- Oak Harbor City Limits
- Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
- Naval Air Station Land



Roadway Classifications

Oak Harbor's bicycle circulation is supported by a network of low speed and low volume residential streets, which offer the basic components of a safe bicycling environment. The City is working to make Oak Harbor more bicycle-friendly by investing in bike facilities such as bike lanes and multiuse trails that support local and regional connections.

Locally, Oak Harbor has improved the bike network through projects such as the Freund's Marsh Trail from Scenic Heights Road to Windjammer Park. Regionally, Oak Harbor has worked with Island County, through planning efforts such as the Island County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, to further develop Oak Harbor's bicycle network; identify short-term, mid-term, and long-term priority projects; and support a regional trail system that connects Oak Harbor with Deception Pass, Joseph Whidbey State Park, Dugualla State Park, and a number of additional parks and beach access areas. The Bicycle Priority Map shows the existing bicycle network.

Island Transit provides local bus, express bus, and para-transit service with connections in Oak Harbor. The majority of transit riders access this transit service by walking or driving to a parking lot or on-street parking and then walking to connect to transit. Six Island Transit routes serve Oak Harbor with frequencies ranging from 20 – 60 minutes. Service is offered throughout all of Whidbey Island's eight park-and-ride lots, which are located along the state scenic byway that consists of the SR 525 and SR 20.

Island Transit connects to each of the ferry terminals on Whidbey Island, and many communities along the scenic byway. In addition, several transit agencies connect to Oak Harbor's transit network including Sound Transit, Skagit Transit, Community Transit, Everett Transit, Jefferson Transit and Whatcom Transit. Island Transit also offers a very successful vanpool and rideshare program. The Island Transit Routes Map shows existing routes.

# Legend

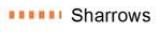
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 Bike Lane

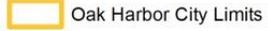
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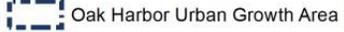
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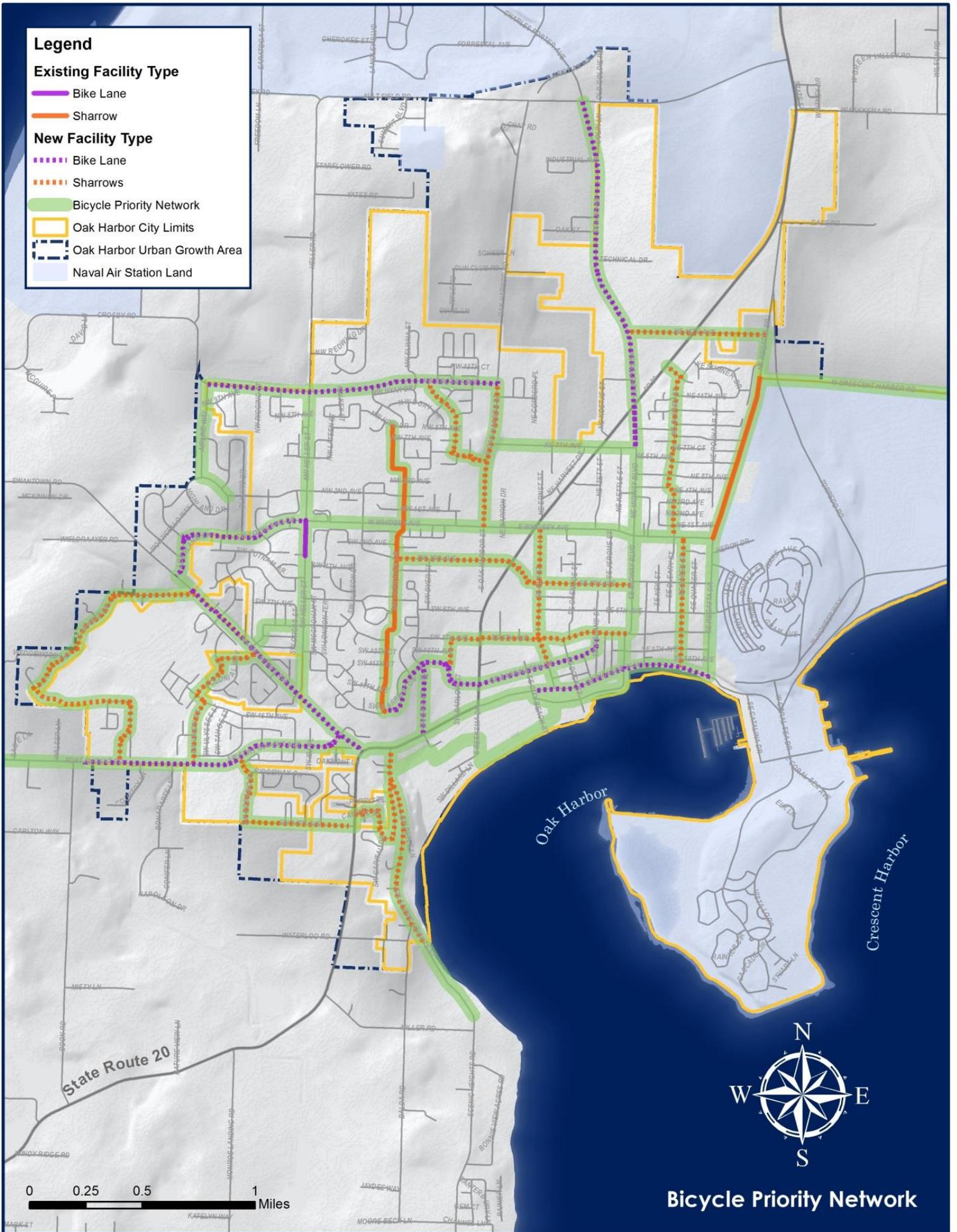
 Sharrows

 Bicycle Priority Network

 Oak Harbor City Limits

 Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area

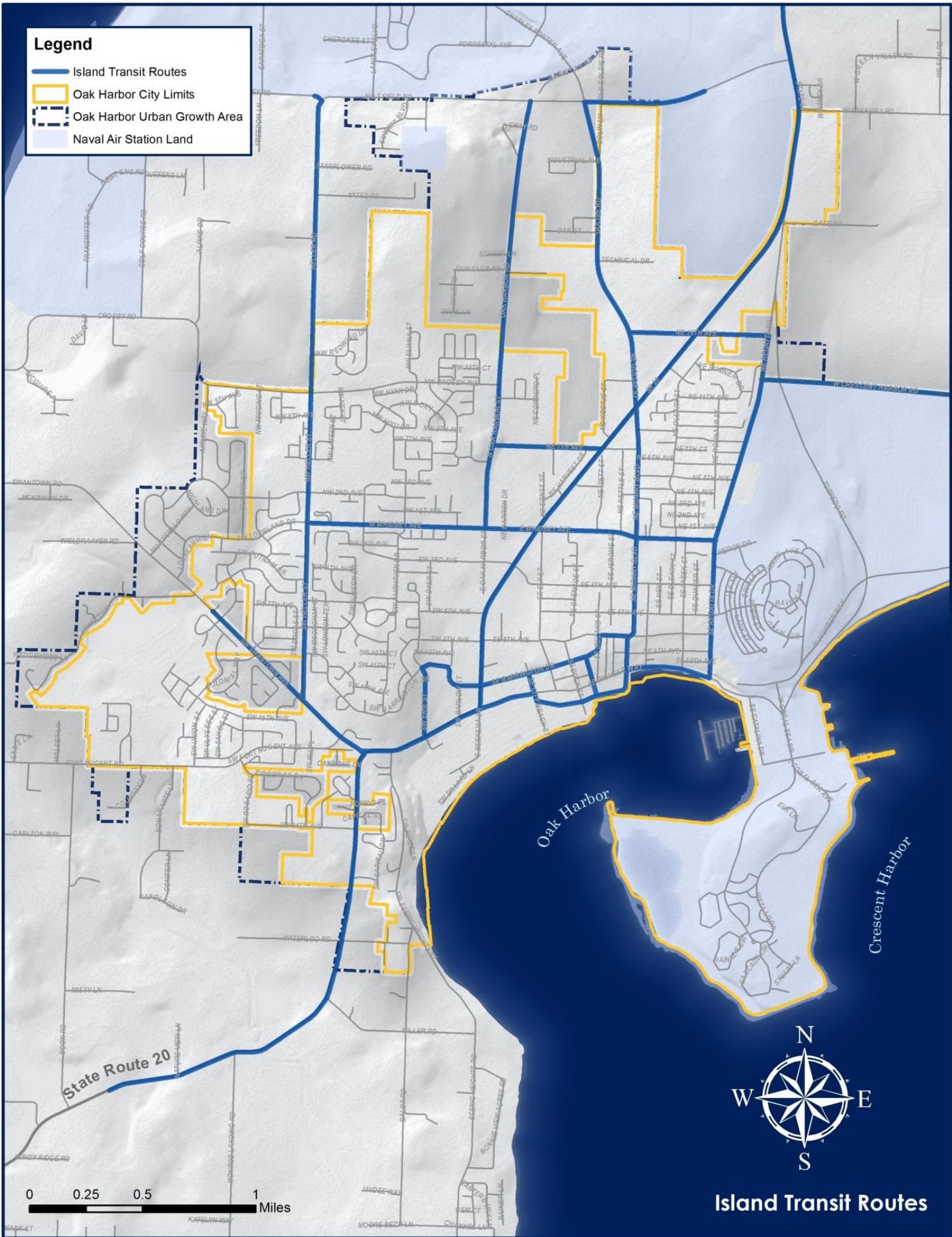
 Naval Air Station Land



**Bicycle Priority Network**

# Legend

- Island Transit Routes
- Oak Harbor City Limits
- Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
- Naval Air Station Land



Island Transit Routes

Freight and goods movement is a vital and often underappreciated element of the transportation network. Everyone is directly impacted by how goods are delivered to ports, distribution centers, stores and their homes. The City of Oak Harbor is a key regional player in the movement of goods with major highway and arterial connections to distribution facilities. Further, NAS Whidbey's Ault Field and Seaplane Base rely heavily on the efficient movement of goods.

SR 20, from Deception Pass Bridge through the City of Oak Harbor, is the most heavily-traveled roadway facility in Island County, with approximately 3.6 million tons of freight carried annually along the corridor. In addition, local city arterials such as Regatta Drive, Midway Boulevard, Oak Harbor Street, Whidbey Avenue, Swantown Avenue, and Heller Street serve as key freight arterials that provide connections to regional facilities.

## Level of Service Standards

With many Oak Harbor residents, employees, and residents relying on vehicles as their primary mode of transportation, the City's street network is critical to the transportation system. Growth within the region has increased traffic congestion along some of Oak Harbor's roadways.

To understand roadway operations in the City today, 31 intersections in the City of Oak Harbor were evaluated to identify the need for future roadway improvements. The study intersections were within the area bounded by NE 16th Avenue (north), Regatta Drive (east), Swantown Avenue (west), and Pioneer Way (south). Intersection operations were evaluated and assigned a level of service (LOS) grade based on their operations in terms of vehicle delay.



The City’s existing level of service policy sets the following standards for its roadways:

- LOS D or better for intersections on City streets within the City UGA
- LOS E for intersections along SR 20 within the City UGA

Table 21 describes the Level of Service definitions established in Chapter 16 of the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) (Transportation Research Board, 2010), which is a standard methodology for measuring the performance of intersections and corridors.

Level of Service	Description
A	Free-flowing conditions.
B	Stable operating conditions.
C	Stable operating conditions, but individual motorists are affected by the interaction with other motorists.
D	High density of motorists, but stable flow.
E	Near-capacity operations, with significant delay and low speeds.
F	Over capacity, with delays.

Figure 24 - Level of service definitions

Of the 31 intersections analyzed, all intersections operate at LOS D or better today. These intersections are generally located along key north-south arterials. Given the land use growth anticipated in Island County between now and 2036, some of the intersections that are currently meeting the City’s LOS D standard would degrade to LOS E or F by 2036 without the infrastructure improvements identified in this plan. The locations of these intersections are shown on the Future Level of Service Map. Detailed reports of LOS are available in the Transportation Plan.

## Travel Demand Forecasting

An important component of this element was forecasting how the future land uses envisioned in the City, as well as regional growth, would influence demand on Oak Harbor’s transportation network. A description of the travel demand modeling process is provided below with more detail about land use assumptions in Appendix C of the Transportation Plan (May, 2016).

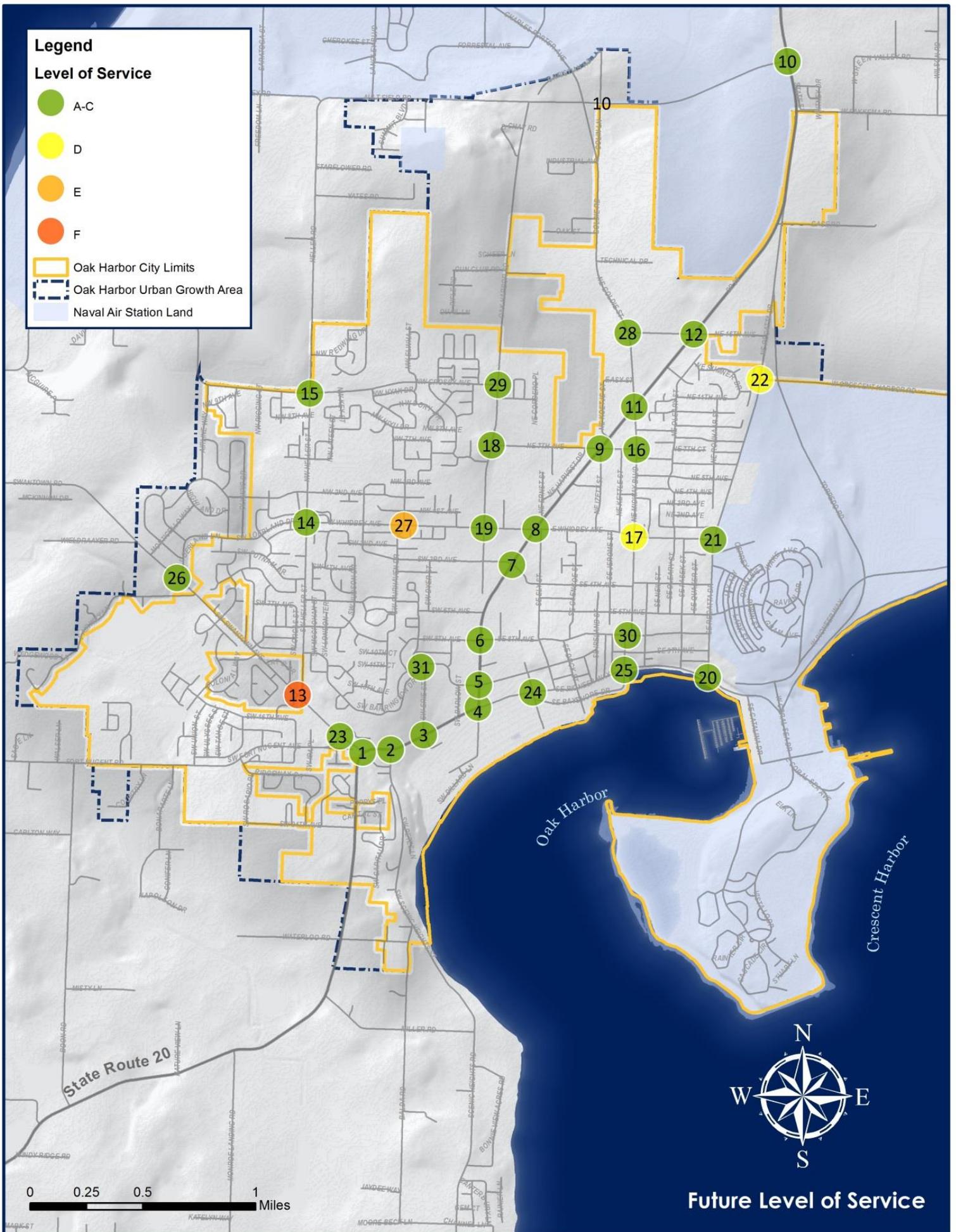
As a part of previous planning efforts, the Skagit Council of Governments created a travel model with the Visum software package. This model forecasted traffic volumes during the evening commute hour (4-6pm) along Oak Harbor’s key streets and intersections. This tool provides a reasonable foundation for developing year 2036 forecasts, as the underlying land use assumptions have been updated to match the land use forecasts for the current Comprehensive Plan.

### Legend

#### Level of Service

- A-C
- D
- E
- F

- Oak Harbor City Limits
- Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
- Naval Air Station Land



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Future Level of Service

These land use assumptions include:

- *Estimated Land Use Growth in the City.* As a part of the Comprehensive Plan update, the City is planning for expected growth in housing units and employment over the next 20 years through 2036. Based on growth estimates from Island County and reviewed by City staff, Oak Harbor is preparing for 1,600 new housing units and 2,000-3,000 new workers by 2036. The City then allocates the growth throughout Oak Harbor based on adopted zoning, observed development patterns, and other city policies.
- *Capture Regional Growth Patterns.* Other communities throughout the region are going through this very same process. Since travel does not stop at a jurisdiction's borders, it is important to capture how regional growth could influence travel patterns on Oak Harbor's streets.
- *Translating Land Uses into Trips.* The next step is evaluating how the City and regional growth assumptions described above translate into walking, biking, transit, and auto trips. The travel model represents the number of housing units and employees in spatial units called traffic analysis zones (TAZs). TAZs can be as small as a few street blocks to as large as an entire neighborhood. They provide a simplified means to represent trip making rather than modeling individual parcels. The travel model estimates trips generated from each TAZ (both inside and outside of the City) using established relationships between different land use types with trip making. These trips are then assigned onto the roadway network to estimate how much traffic would be on each street during the evening commute hour.

## Opportunities and Challenges

The City of Oak Harbor has several important challenges to face as it prepares for future growth and development. Motor vehicle travel currently dominates the City's transportation network. Oak Harbor is working to create a more balanced network and addressing the transportation challenges below will be a key to the City's success.

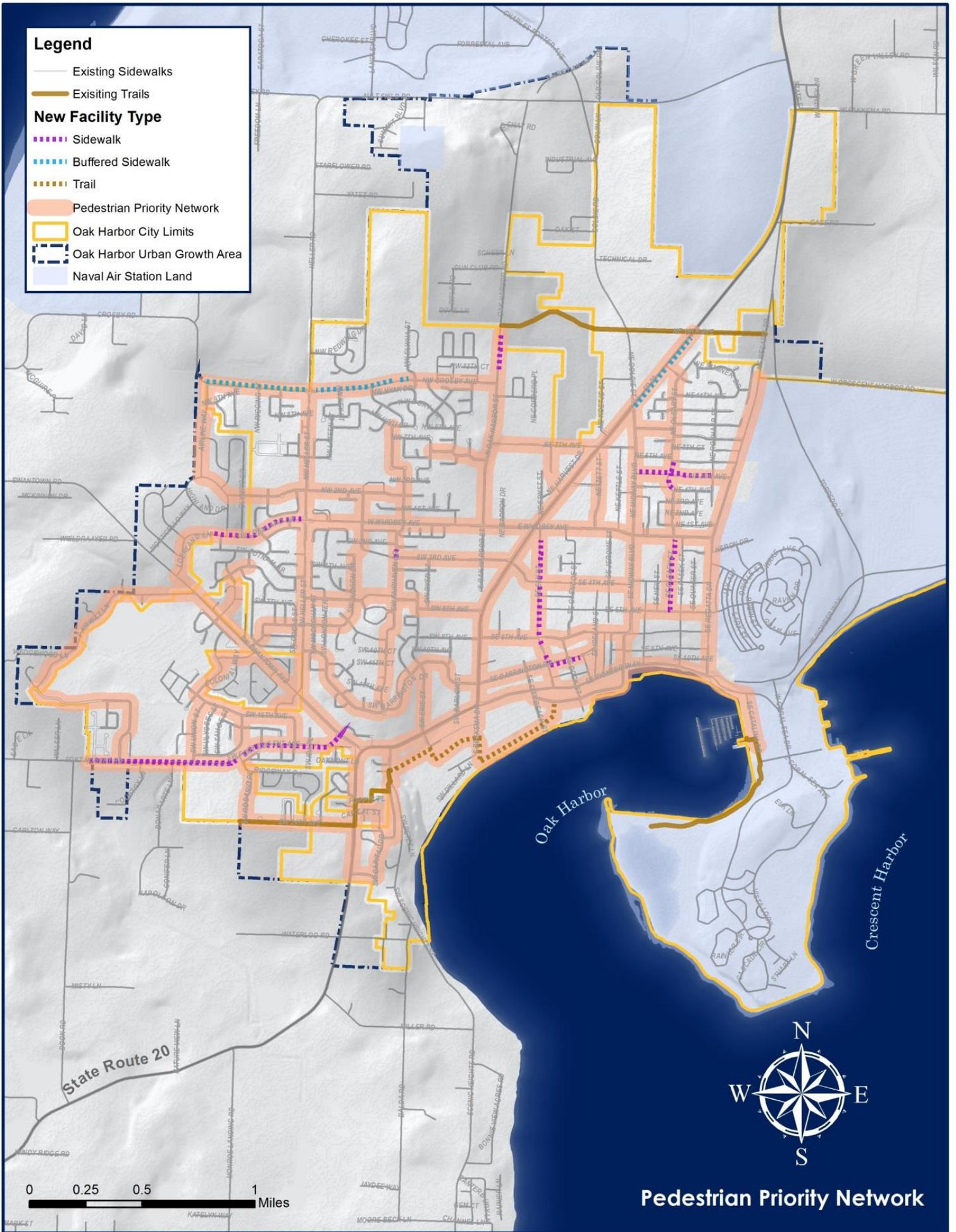
### Network Connectivity

*Barriers to Mobility:* The City's roadway network creates several challenges for local traffic. Few east-west and north-south arterials serve the entire City. Further, poor connections between local streets (e.g. dead ends, cul-de-sacs, misaligned roads, etc.) encourage the use of SR 20 for local trips. This contributes to congestion on SR 20, especially during peak periods. In addition, SR 20 bisects the center of Oak Harbor creating barriers for walking and biking. Proposed enhancements to the City's roadway network to partially address these issues are identified on the Bicycle Priority Map.

*Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure:* Sidewalks are generally available along all arterials, most streets within the Old Town District, and in newer subdivisions. However, many older residential areas, have incomplete or poorly maintained sidewalks. This limits the mobility of pedestrians between major destinations. The Pedestrian Priority Network Map identifies where pedestrian infrastructure should be provided.

### Legend

- Existing Sidewalks
- Existing Trails
- New Facility Type**
  - Sidewalk
  - Buffered Sidewalk
  - Trail
- Pedestrian Priority Network
- Oak Harbor City Limits
- Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
- Naval Air Station Land



**Pedestrian Priority Network**

The City's existing bicycle network is limited to a small number of trails and on-street facilities. These gaps in infrastructure, along with a topography that includes many hills, create challenges for bicycle travel within the City. The Bicycle Projects Map identifies potential bicycle network segments.

*Transit Access and Availability:* With no high capacity local transit system, bus service in Oak Harbor must be reliable and provide significant mobility. The bus routes that currently serve Oak Harbor operate on infrequent service schedules. This creates challenges for transit-dependent riders for accessing their needs, and it forces many potential transit users to drive instead. The City should look for ways to encourage enhanced transit service from Island Transit through investment in transit-supportive amenities to help residents, employees, and visitors access and use transit.

### **Downtown Mobility**

The City is working to develop safer connections to the Old Town District as part of this Transportation Element update. By improving bicycle and pedestrian amenities, by adding flashing beacons at crosswalks and bike lanes along Pioneer Way, the City will create a more accessible and attractive downtown. This will enhance the appeal of spending time in the downtown area.

### **Safe Routes for All, Especially Pedestrians and Bicycles**

Since 2010, Oak Harbor has seen 150 to 200 traffic collisions per year. The Collisions (2010-2014) Map displays traffic crashes around the City over a five-year period spanning 2010-2014. Of the 965 total collisions during this 5-year period, 39 collisions, or about 4 percent, involved pedestrians or bicycles. In an effort to increase pedestrian safety, Oak Harbor has improved pedestrian facilities in the downtown. Sidewalk and crosswalk improvements have created a more welcoming environment for pedestrians moving around downtown, but busy corridors, such as Pioneer Way, SR 20, and Regatta Drive, have still seen a significant number of collisions involving pedestrians and bicyclists.

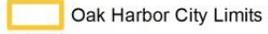
**Legend**

**Project**

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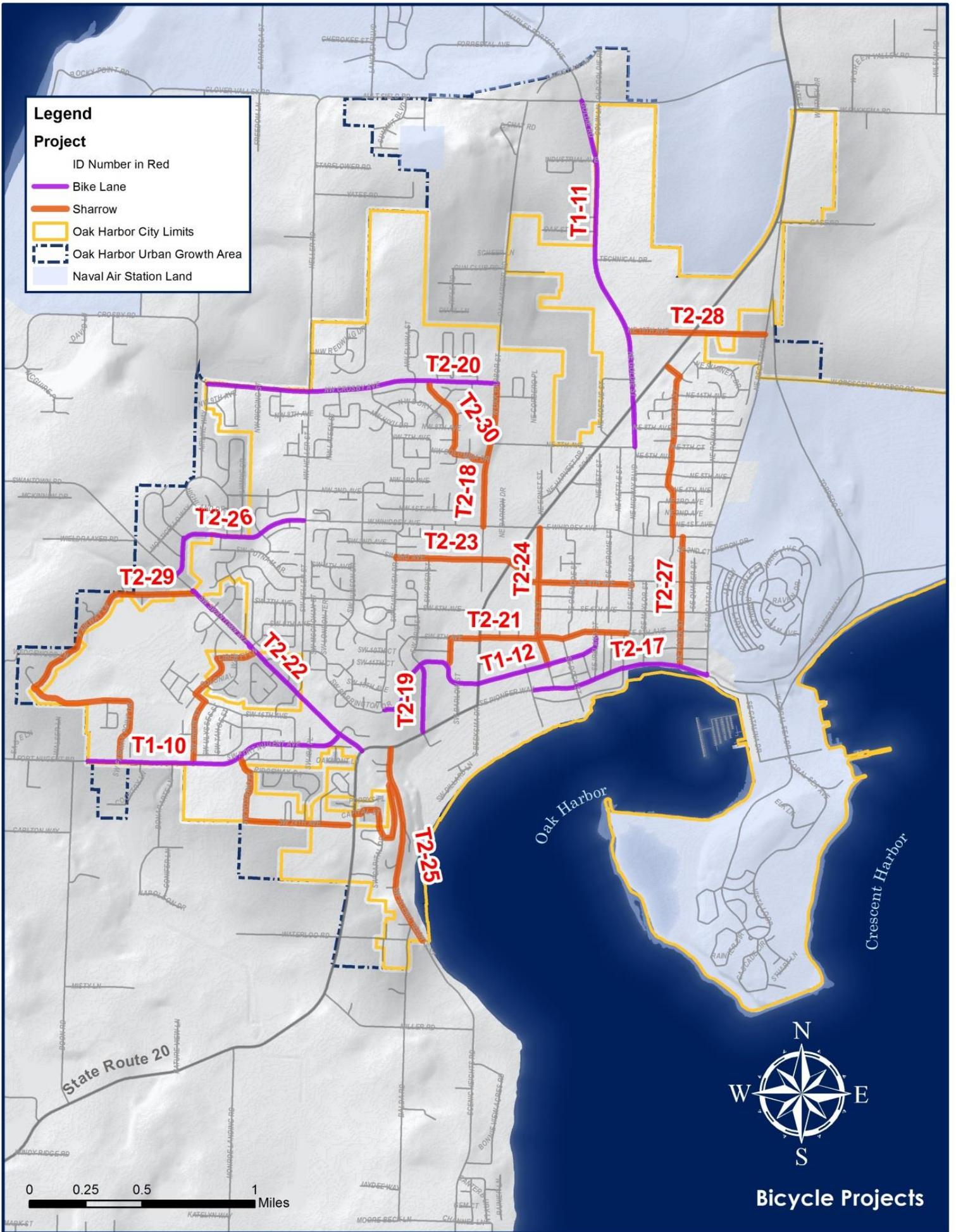
 Bike Lane

 Sharrow

 Oak Harbor City Limits

 Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area

 Naval Air Station Land



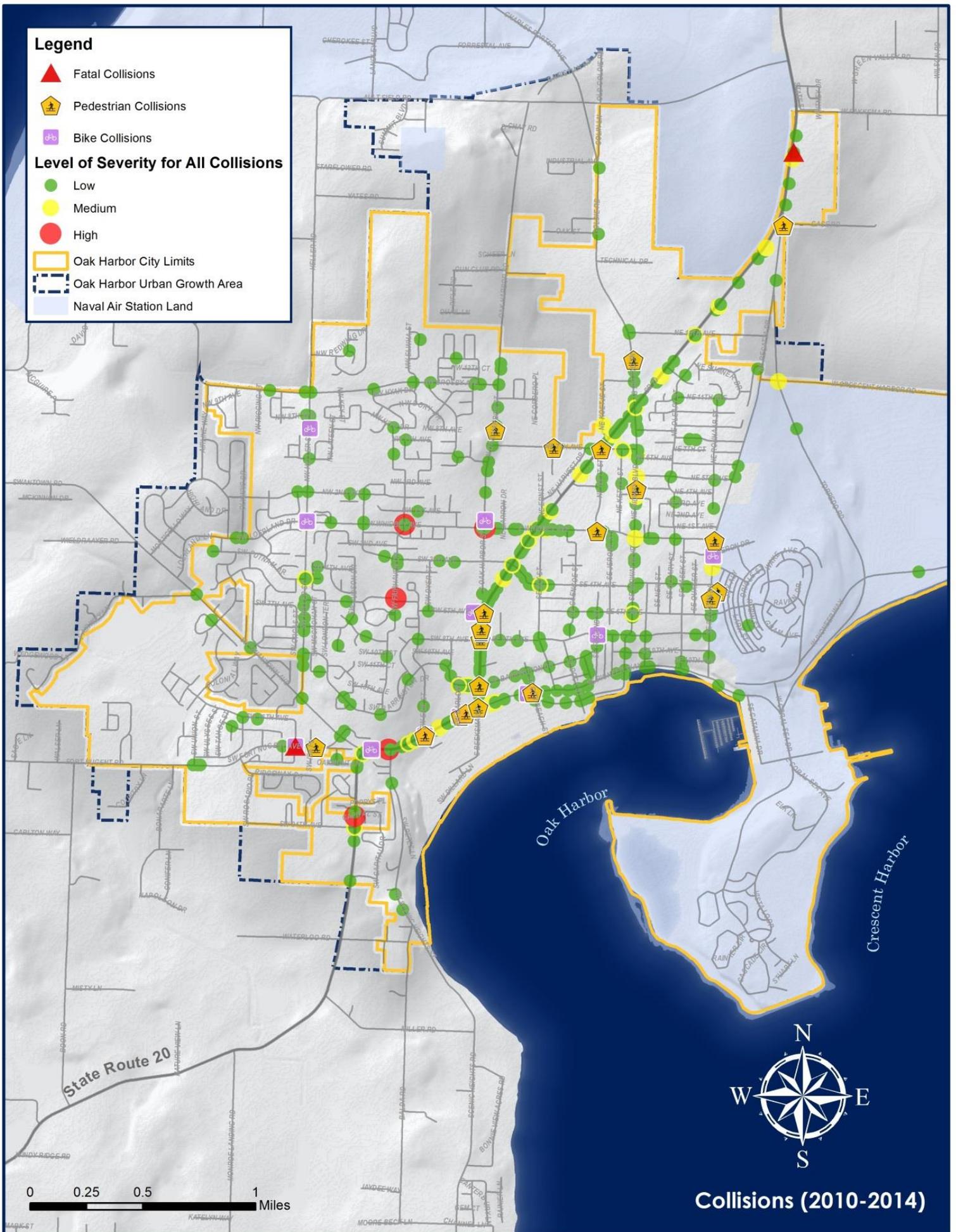
**Bicycle Projects**

### Legend

-  Fatal Collisions
-  Pedestrian Collisions
-  Bike Collisions

### Level of Severity for All Collisions

-  Low
-  Medium
-  High
-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Naval Air Station Land



Collisions (2010-2014)

## Goals and Policies

Oak Harbor has established six goals to accomplish its overall vision for transportation. The goals establish overarching priorities that serve the vision of this Transportation Element while policies lay out specific actions. Together, the goals and policies lay the foundation for the remainder of this Plan, including the proposed project list and ongoing implementation of the Plan.

### Goal 1 - Safe for all Users

#### Policies:

- I.a. Strive to reduce traffic deaths and serious injuries in Oak Harbor to zero by 2030 as part of the State of Washington's traffic safety efforts using education, enforcement, engineering, emergency medical services, and leadership / policy.
- I.b. Prioritize locations with a history of collisions or other identified safety issues when selecting transportation projects to implement.
- I.c. Keep roadways operating in safe condition by taking steps to secure roadway funding from a variety of sources to maintain, rehabilitate, or replace roadways.
- I.d. Design street improvements to enhance the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians and bicycle traffic. Incorporate traffic calming measures where appropriate.
- I.e. Design new streets and, when the opportunity arises, redesign streets in order to reduce lane widths to accommodate vehicles that use the street most frequently; rather than large vehicles that may use the street only occasionally.
- I.f. Coordinate with emergency response services to ensure adequate and timely access as the city builds out the transportation network.

## Goal 2 - Connected and Efficient

### Policies:

- 2.a. Encourage the efficient movement of people and goods through an effective and inter-connected transportation network that includes: collector and arterial streets, trails, bike paths, public transit and other transportation facilities and is in balance with the land use and transportation requirements in the City of Oak Harbor.
- 2.b. Provide for the efficient movement of people and goods on arterial streets through a balanced approach that only increases the automobile capacity of roadways when necessary.
- 2.c. Work toward development of a multi-modal transportation system that achieves the following level of service metrics:
  - 1. Vehicular LOS: Maintain standards that promote growth where appropriate while preserving and maintaining the existing transportation system. Set LOS D as the standard for PM peak hour for allowable PM peak hour delay at intersections, with the exception of intersections along SR 20 within the City UGA, where LOS E operations will be considered acceptable during the PM peak period.
  - 2. Pedestrian LOS: Provide sidewalks, trails, and/or separated paths, as defined in Pedestrian Priority Network.
  - 3. Bicycle LOS: Provide bike lanes, separated paths, protected facilities, and bicycle boulevards, as defined in Bicycle Priority Network.
  - 4. Transit LOS: Partner with Island Transit and other transit operators to provide transit stop amenities and safe access to transit at major transit stops and park and ride facilities.
- 2.d. Maintain concurrency between land development and installation of required transportation facilities, consistent with the Capital Improvement Plan.
- 2.e. Facilitate efficient connections by encouraging street system design in a rectangular grid pattern with smaller block sizes, frequent interconnections, and clear wayfinding; strongly discourage cul-de-sacs or dead end streets.
- 2.f. Coordinate all modes of transportation to enhance effectiveness and efficiency. Promote a transportation network, including non-motorized modes, that allows for convenient access to major destinations within the City of Oak Harbor.

### **Goal 3 - Multimodal, Offering User Friendly Transportation Options**

#### **Policies:**

- 3.a. Coordinate with private transportation providers to boost the effectiveness of public transportation providers.
- 3.b. Coordinate with Island Transit to identify locations for future transit infrastructure and improvements that will more effectively serve the developing areas of Oak Harbor, such as bus stops, bus pullouts, bus stop shelters, and park-and-ride facilities.
- 3.c. Provide incentives for the use of car and van pools through City development standards that support providing park-and-ride lots, designated car pool parking spaces, van pool pick-up areas, and other supportive amenities.
- 3.d. Participate and support in the planning for long-term sustainability of air and water transportation and facilities.
- 3.e. Develop a bicycle priority network for the City of Oak Harbor and the UGA that promotes bicycling as an efficient choice for transportation and recreation. The priority network shall include but not be limited to the following: future on-street bicycle facilities, multi-use paths, and bike rack locations, using context-sensitive designs for bicycle facilities on the different roadway classifications and intersections.
- 3.f. Enhance and beautify the Waterfront Trail, from Scenic Heights to Maylor Point, with widening, scenic viewpoints, historical signage and art.
- 3.g. Develop and construct a pedestrian priority network for all streets and highways that interconnects with other

modes of transportation and prioritizes streets used frequently by school children, senior citizens, people with disabilities, and streets in heavily congested areas. Use the Safe Routes to School program as a model for identifying locations for these facilities.

- 3.h. Maintain a pedestrian-oriented atmosphere in the Old Town District (Downtown).

## Goal 4 - Financially and Environmentally Sustainable

### Policies:

- 4.a. Reduce the demand on roadways as a method of deferring or negating the need for capacity improvements.
- 4.b. Integrate Transportation Demand Management goals with the development review process such that they become a part of any traffic impact assessment and mitigation program.
- 4.c. Prioritize roadway preservation projects, review potential roadway preservation funding programs and consider the long term maintenance costs of new transportation capacity projects.
- 4.d. Prioritize projects on the City of Oak Harbor Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) by evaluating and ranking them, taking into account their costs and benefits, to ensure effective investment of city funds.
- 4.e. Maintain an Impact Fee Program that determines the proportionate share of infrastructure improvement costs to be assessed to new and redevelopment projects. Require proportionate funding of required transportation improvements by property owners and by developers whose developments impact the streets.
- 4.f. Evaluate potential federal, state, and other funding (grants and loans) programs that may be compatible with prioritized transportation projects.
- 4.g. Coordinate with state and regional agencies to obtain funding for identified improvements for SR-20 within the UGA.
- 4.h. Promote property owners to finance neighborhood street improvements, for example through local improvement districts (LIDs).
- 4.i. Protect air quality by improving the operating efficiency of the overall transportation system and boosting the non-single occupant vehicle mode share in Oak Harbor.
- 4.j. Consider the potential of using roundabouts in lieu of installing new signalized intersections or reconstructing existing signalized intersections.
- 4.k. Protect and/or mitigate the preservation of natural vegetation in transportation rights-of-way, particularly regarding the City's trademark Garry Oak trees, in the construction and repair of streets.
- 4.l. Protect and/or mitigate environmentally sensitive areas and resource lands when maintaining existing streets and planning for future ones (See Environmental Element.)

## **Goal 5 - Complementary of the City's Land Use Vision and Other Adopted Plans**

### **Policies:**

- 5.a. Locate and design transportation facilities to meet the demands of existing and projected land uses as provided for in the Comprehensive Plan, including the growth anticipated within the Oak Harbor UGA.
- 5.b. Implement transportation improvements that respect the community's residential character, natural features, and quality of life.
- 5.c. Manage the supply of parking to ensure it serves the community's needs and maintains a positive aesthetic.
- 5.d. Support the use of public transit, walking, and bicycling through development regulations and design guidelines that create infrastructure, land use patterns, and developments that are conducive to these modes. Require public transit opportunities for new and re-developed projects. Maintain an emphasis on a bicycle and pedestrian oriented atmosphere during development review.

## **Goal 6 - Integrated with the Regional Transportation Network to Address a Diverse Range of Transportation**

### **Interests**

### **Policies:**

- 6.a. Ensure efficient management of all transportation resources through cooperation in planning and project development with Federal, State, regional, and local jurisdictions. Work with Island County to continue consistency and interconnectedness in Oak Harbor's Unincorporated UGA.
- 6.b. Coordinate planning for transportation improvements and projects with other agencies in order to reduce costs, minimize environmental impacts, reduce duplication of services, and minimize disruption to the general public.
- 6.c. Work with adjacent jurisdictions and transportation agencies to identify necessary improvements to the regional roadway system to ensure adequate regional access to and from the City of Oak Harbor.
- 6.d. Coordinate with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on capacity improvements, access management and safety issues for SR 20.
- 6.e. Continue to encourage the implementation of transportation demand management (TDM) strategies through coordination with WSDOT, Island County, and Island Transit.

## Project List Development

Extensive community outreach during the development of the Transportation Plan, including, staff workshops, stakeholder meetings, surveys, and public forums provided the basis to develop an initial list of city projects.

A 20 year project list was developed to create a transportation system that realizes Oak Harbor's ultimate transportation vision: to provide a safe, balanced, and efficient multi-modal transportation system that is consistent with the City's overall vision and goals and adequately serves anticipated growth.

The draft project list included over 50 potential projects. Each project was evaluated and scored relative to the transportation goals using a scoring matrix. The scoring matrix included 14 metric covering the 6 goals (City of Oak Harbor Transportation Plan, 2016, Appendix E). The scoring matrix, combined with other sources of community outreach, were utilized to prepare a 20 year project list which identified projects as Tier 1 projects representing roadway and intersection, pedestrian and bicycle network improvements (City of Oak Harbor Transportation Plan, 2016, Table 8). Tier 1 projects are those that meet multiple criteria in terms of effectiveness, benefit to the community, and ability to be implemented. Tier 2 projects, while ranked lower than Tier 1 projects, are considered contingency projects based on available funding (City of Oak Harbor Transportation Plan, 2016, Table 9).

Oak Harbor will maintain its current LOS D standard for allowable PM peak hour delay at intersections in most locations, with the exception of intersections along SR 20 within the City and UGA, where LOS E operations will be considered acceptable during the PM peak period in recognition of the need to balance driver experience with other considerations, such as regional travel, cost, right of way, and

other modes. This plan also provides an exception for the LOS E operations measured at the intersection of Whidbey Avenue and Fairhaven Drive, since the higher delays would only be experienced by a relatively small number of left-turning vehicles during a short period of the day.

Maintaining intergovernmental coordination, Oak Harbor will work with Island County in their improvement and signalization at the intersection of SW Heller Street and Fireside Lane and intersection improvements at Regatta Drive and Crescent Harbor Road.

### Capital Plan

Since the scope of the 20 year project list exceeds revenues from exclusively city sources over the next few decades. As shown in Table 2, the project list has been sized to represent projects which provide a balance of safety, maintenance, and operational improvements for all modes. These projects provide a starting point for the City in developing its financially constrained Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan, which is updated annually and is developed based on knowledge related to project feasibility and funding availability.

The components of the transportation program include \$2.3 million in maintenance, operations and roadway rehabilitation. Maintaining Oak Harbor's transportation system is important for sustaining the quality and safety of roadways. The program also includes full reconstruction of NE 7th Avenue between N Oak Harbor Street and SR 20.

Funding to support this program will come from a number of sources including Oak Harbor's general funds, gas taxes, property taxes, impact fees, as well as federal and state grants.

Investment	Project Description	Planning Level Cost
Pavement Maintenance	Annual pavement maintenance and overlay program	\$2.3 M
NE 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Roadway and Pedestrian Improvements	Full reconstruction of the Roadway; Construct missing sidewalks on the north side, multiuse path on south side of the road.	\$4.7 M
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$7 M</b>

Figure 25 - Six-year Transportation Program

### Implementation

A key GMA planning requirement is the concept of fiscal restraint in transportation planning. A fiscally constrained Transportation Element must first allow for operation and maintenance of existing facilities, and then capital improvements. To introduce fiscal constraint into the plan, an inventory of revenues and costs was undertaken to identify funds that are likely to be available for capital construction and operations.

The proposed Transportation Plan for the City of Oak Harbor contains approximately \$7 million worth in transportation investments over the next 20 years. The Transportation Plan focuses on capital projects that will complete the layered network plan, as well as ongoing pavement maintenance to ensure that the roadway network is kept in good condition.

### Funding Approach

Not all of the transportation needs are affordable with existing revenue sources during the 20 year period. Should supplementary funding become available, projects that would further support the development of the transportation network have been identified and prioritized.

Other funding options available to the City include:

- Increase the amount of revenue from existing sources, including impact fees or increased general fund revenues;
- Adopt new sources of revenue, such as creating a Transportation Benefit District;
- Develop a grant strategy to secure additional funding for capital projects.

## Chapter 8 → Utilities Element

*The Utilities Element sets forth City policies for water, sanitary sewer and storm drainage services, and relates the Comprehensive Plan to development plans of independent utility providers in a coordinated and consistent manner. It incorporates by reference the Oak Harbor Comprehensive Water System Plan, 2014, and Oak Harbor Comprehensive Sewer System Plan, 2007, and any updates thereto.*

The Utilities Element was prepared in accordance with Section 36.70A.070 of the Growth Management Act (GMA). The Utilities Element contains a statement of Goals and policies, and a general inventory of existing and planned utilities.

### Scope and Organization of the Utilities Element

GMA requires that the, "utilities element [consist] of the general location, proposed location, and capacity of all existing and proposed utilities, including, but not limited to, electrical lines, telecommunication lines, and natural gas lines" (RCW 36.70A.070). The City is also required to plan for water, sanitary sewers, storm drainage and solid waste facilities, and has elected to address these services in the Utilities Element (WAC 365-195-210).

The format of this chapter is consistent with WAC 365-195-320, Growth Management Act -- Procedural Criteria for Adopting Comprehensive Plans and Development Regulations. Section II provides an inventory of the utilities serving the City of Oak Harbor and its Urban Growth Area (UGA), analyzing existing capacity, future needs and planned improvements. This is followed by a statement of City Goals and policies for utility siting and

service in Section IV. Technical and financial information about city utilities is found in the Capital Facilities Element, Comprehensive Water System Plan (2014), Comprehensive Sewer System Plan (2007), and Comprehensive Storm Drainage Plan (2007).

### Inventory and Planned Improvements

#### City Owned Utilities

The City manages the water system, sanitary sewers system, storm drainage system and solid waste. Non-city owned utilities are natural gas, electricity, telecommunications, television, and internet services.

#### *Water System*

Oak Harbor obtains water from Anacortes via 10- and 24-inch transmission lines, and from an aquifer below the city via three wells. The Anacortes supply is the primary source. The City updated its Comprehensive Water System Plan in 2014.

Oak Harbor has entered into a 20-year Water Supply Agreement with Anacortes, and renegotiates water charges and committed water volume with an annual amendment. The most recent water service amendment (2006) allows Oak Harbor to withdraw 970 million gallons/year, or adequate water through the year 2025. The Navy and the City have an equal allocation of water capacity through the existing transmission lines.

The supply and transmission system has sufficient capacity to meet the projected 2025 peak-day demand for the UGA service area. The Water System Plan analyzed the City's need for reservoir capacity and proposes

additions to the system to meet projected demand, including required fire flows.

### *Sanitary Sewer System*

The City of Oak Harbor Comprehensive Sewerage Plan, adopted by City Council in 2007, contains all pertinent information concerning the sanitary sewer system. The plan contains a description of the existing system, population projections, design criteria for future systems, and proposed improvements. In 2015, the City began the construction of a new wastewater treatment facility located immediately north of the existing RBC plant in Windjammer Park. The new facility is designed to handle 2.7 million gallons per day and with minor upgrades can handle the projected growth until 2060.

### *Storm Drainage*

A Comprehensive Storm Drainage Plan was adopted by the Mayor and City Council in 2007. The Plan contains background information, water quality assessment, alternative solutions for improving Oak Harbor's run off quality, and funding alternatives for implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

### *Solid Waste*

In July of 1980, the City of Oak Harbor terminated its sanitary landfill operations and began, through an interlocal agreement, to use the County's landfill site for disposal of its municipal solid waste. All operating revenues are obtained through collection and container fees and storage rentals. User charges are adjusted according to present needs.

### **Natural Gas**

Washington State law requires gas providers to demonstrate that existing customers will not subsidize new customers. Thus, gas transmission line extensions are not planned in advance but are initiated only when there is sufficient customer demand.

Natural gas is piped to North Whidbey Island through a six inch high-pressure submarine line

connecting Brown's Point on Camano Island to Strawberry Point east of the NAS-Whidbey Seaplane Base. Within the City of Oak Harbor, gas pipelines are typically located in street rights-of-way, however, some developments may receive service through utility easements on adjoining properties. Service is limited to the incorporated city limits, NAS Whidbey Island, and surrounding unincorporated areas within a short distance of the transmission main.

## Future Demand and Proposed Facilities

### Natural Gas

The location, capacity and timing of improvements to the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) distribution system are driven purely by demand. This means that, unlike electrical or telephone service, improvements are initiated solely by customer requests. This applies to both new service connections and conversion from other energy sources to natural gas. Requests for natural gas service may legally be refused if the extension is not cost-effective to the company.

No major new facilities, upgrades, or extension of services beyond the existing service areas are planned or anticipated within the next 20 years, but the utility may serve new development outside present service areas if it is relatively close to existing mains.

### Electric Utility and Provider

*Company Overview:* Puget Sound Energy (PSE) is a private utility providing electric and natural gas service to homes and businesses in Puget Sound region and portions of Eastern Washington, covering 10 counties and approximately 6,000 square miles. PSE's regional and local electric and natural gas planning efforts are integrated and centered on providing safe, dependable, and efficient energy service. PSE provides electrical power to more than 1.2 million electric customers throughout eight counties.

*Regulatory Environment:* PSE's operations and rates are governed by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). PSE electric utility operations and standards are further governed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the National Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), and the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC). These respective agencies monitor, assess and enforce compliance and reliability

standards for PSE. The residents of The City of Oak Harbor and the region rely on the coordinated effort between PSE and the County for the adoption and enforcement of ordinances and/or codes to protect transmission and distribution line capacity and support federal and state compliance of safe, reliable, and environmentally sound operation of PSE's electric facilities. Routine utility maintenance work, including vegetation management is required to maintain compliance with FERC, NERC, and WECC regulations.

*Integrated Resource Plan:* In order for PSE to meet regulatory requirements, it updates and files an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) with the WUTC every two years. The IRP presents a long-term forecast of the lowest reasonable cost combination of resources necessary to meet the needs of PSE's customers to provide dependable and cost effective service over the next 20 years. The current plan, which was filed in May of 2013, details both the energy supply and transmission resources needed to reliably meet customers' wintertime, peak-hour electric demand over the next 20 years. The plan, which will be updated in the fall of 2015, forecasted that PSE would have to acquire approximately 4,900 megawatts of new power-supply capacity by 2033. This resource need is driven mainly by expiring purchased-power contracts and expected population and economic growth in the Puget Sound region. The IRP suggests that roughly more than half of the utility's long-term electric resource need can be met by energy efficiency and the renewal of transmission contracts. This reduces the need down to 2,200 MW by 2033. The rest of PSE's gap in long-term power resources, the IRP stated is likely to be met most economically with added natural gas-fired resources.

PSE generates approximately 46 percent of the electricity for its customers' from its own generation specifically generation plants; hydro, thermal, solar and wind. PSE currently has about 3,000 megawatts of power-generating

capacity, and purchases the rest of its power supply from a variety of other utilities, independent power producers and energy marketers across the western United States and Canada.

*System Overview:* To provide the City of Oak Harbor (the City) with electricity, PSE builds, operates, and maintains an extensive integrated electric system consisting of generating plants, transmission lines, substations, switching stations, sub-systems, overhead and underground distribution systems, attachments, appurtenances, and metering systems.

Electricity provided by PSE to the City is produced nearby in Skagit County (Baker River Dams) and elsewhere as PSE is interconnected to the Northwest's regional transmission grid through an extensive network of transmission facilities providing bulk transmission service to meet the demands of electricity customers within the region's eight states. PSE electric transmission facilities within and near the City are important components of the electric energy delivery grid serving the Puget Sound region. As electricity reaches the homes and businesses in the city, the voltage is reduced and redistributed through lower-voltage transmission lines, distribution substations, overhead and underground distribution lines, smaller transformers, and to individual meters.

PSE is prudently and systematically deploying smart grid technology at each level of infrastructure to enhance and automate monitoring, analysis, control and communications capabilities along its entire grid. Smart grid technologies can impact the electricity delivery chain from a power generating facility all the way to the end-use application of electrical energy inside a residence or place of business. The ultimate goals of smart grid are to enable PSE to offer more reliable and efficient energy service, and to provide customers with more control over their energy usage.

PSE serves commercial and residential locations within the City and operates and maintains approximately 43 miles of overhead facilities and 70 miles of underground cables, see map.

*Future Projects:* To meet local electric demand, new transmission lines and substations may need to be constructed. In addition, existing facilities are always being maintained and at times rebuilt to serve current and future demand. The system responds differently year to year and PSE is continually adding or modifying infrastructure to meet electrical demands.

PSE continues to evaluate the growth and development on Whidbey to determine when a third transmission line may be added to serve the needs of the Island. That transmission line would utilize a submarine cable from some point near SW Snohomish County to the south end of the Island.

## **Telecommunication Facilities**

### *Telephone*

Like investor-owned gas and electric companies, telecommunications companies are regulated by the WUTC, which establishes service levels and rates. Standard telephone facilities include a central plant, which houses switching gear (usually in the same building as central offices), utility poles, and overhead or underground lines. Underground installation of telephone lines and use of efficient fiber optic systems is becoming more common as technology advances and regulators respond to aesthetic concerns.

### *Cellular Telephone Service*

A cellular system consists of cells (geographic areas served by a transmitting and receiving tower), cell sites (the tower site, base station radio and interconnecting equipment), a switching station (which receives and distributes signals from the cell sites via conventional lines and microwave signals), and the cellular phones themselves. Cellular phones can operate only

within the range of a given cell site. Therefore, in order to cover broad service areas, cell sites must be located close enough to one another to provide uninterrupted service as the user moves from one location to another. With advances in digital technology, the capacity of cell sites will increase. Therefore, capacity is not anticipated to be a problem in the future. There are several providers of cellular telephone service within the Oak Harbor UGA. These providers operate a network of cell sites within the City of Oak Harbor, Island County and surrounding counties in order to provide adequate coverage. Additional cell sites will be constructed in response to consumer demand as regulated by the Federal Communications Commission.

*Siting Issues:* Cellular towers can pose siting problems due to aesthetic concerns and conflicts with competing radio signals. The towers can be free-standing, but are often placed on top of existing structures. As service demands change, cell sites may need to be reconfigured. For example, as additional cell sites are added to the system, tower heights may need to be changed to prevent overlapping radio coverage. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulates the public airwaves, assigning frequencies and licensing cellular telephone utilities. The FCC requires that transmitting towers be located such that signals are unobstructed. Local governments may regulate tower siting to the extent that a utility's federally-licensed right to use the airwaves is not impeded. A local jurisdiction can deny approval of an individual tower site based on established policy, but cannot impose an outright ban on towers, or effectively prohibit towers within its jurisdiction through repeated denials or excessive conditions.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) also reviews proposed towers when they exceed 200 feet in height or when the proposed location is within 20,000 feet of a major airport (i.e., serving military or commercial aircraft), or

within 10,000 feet of a smaller airport. While the FAA does not have the authority to deny siting proposals, it coordinates its review process with the FCC, who may deny a particular site if the FAA objects.

### *Cable*

Cable utilities transmit television programming via coaxial cable from trunk lines, which originate at "head-end" or data processing sites. Though the term "cable" implies wiring throughout the system, many cable systems also rely on satellite dishes and microwave antennas. Overhead utility poles are often used to run cable distribution lines, however, underground installation is becoming more common.

## Goals and Policies

The following Goals and Policies serve as a framework for the expansion of public and private utilities serving Oak Harbor. They are intended to provide a long-range plan for utilities to protect the public health, welfare and safety. Utility construction projects must be consistent with Goals and Policies. The Utilities Element meets the requirements of GMA, and is consistent with the County Wide Planning Policies and Urban Growth Area Agreement between the City of Oak Harbor and Island County.

### **Goal 1 - Facilitate the orderly and cost-effective development of all utilities at adequate levels of service to accommodate the projected growth..**

Policies:

- I.a. Ensure that all public utility services within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) are at a level that is consistent with an urban community.
- I.b. Sound growth management principles should be used to guide extension of utilities within the UGA.
- I.c. Consider allowing phased upgrading of utilities for existing uses, for example, meeting fire flow and city sewer requirements, when immediate upgrading of existing properties would create an undue hardship.
- I.d. No new water and sewer extensions should be allowed beyond the UGA and the boundaries of existing service districts.
- I.e. Consider actual usage fee rates on an income needs-based scale that will assist low-income adults to remain in their own homes (for example: actual water and solid waste, sewer and direct-cost service hook-up fees).
- I.f. Coordinate land use and utility planning to promote cost-effective utility services. Specifically, the Land Use Element and level-of-service standards shall be used to determine future service requirements, and utilities shall be designed accordingly.
- I.g. Encourage innovative solutions for reducing utility costs, managing growth and protecting the public health, safety and welfare.
- I.h. Encourage co-location of utilities should be encouraged when co-location reduces impacts and does not

- substantially increase costs. Utility lines should be co-located in trenches whenever possible.
- I.i. Flexible and innovative construction techniques which reduce cost and impacts of utilities should be encouraged.
  - I.j. Seek to recover costs for extending utilities, including overhead costs, and the costs to maintain and operate these systems. Debt financing shall be minimized whenever possible.
  - I.k. Consider exceptions to extend utilities into the enterprise areas in the UGA ahead of annexation to promote economic development.
    - 1. As a condition of the City granting sewer service prior to annexation within an enterprise area, property owners shall be required to commence annexation proceedings within a timeframe established by agreement with inclusion of an intended completion date.
    - 2. Sewer service may be provided prior to annexation within enterprise areas only for non-residential uses.
    - 3. Any new construction on properties within enterprise areas provided sewer service prior to annexation shall comply with current standards of the Aviation Environs Overlay Zone and with current Noise Attenuation Standards.
    - 4. Financing of utility extensions into enterprise areas should be mainly borne by the properties receiving the extended service unless grants or other outside financial sources are found or made available. The City may wish to participate in financing utility extensions in order to encourage economic development.
  - I.l. Review annually the capacity of the shared sewer treatment facility with the Navy
  - I.m. Minimize service interruptions for utility siting and related construction..
  - I.n. Conditions which facilitate a utility' s ability to meet its public service obligations under state law should be included in contract and franchise agreements between City and private utilities.

**Goal 2 - Process permit requests for utilities in a fair and timely manner to ensure predictability.**

**Policies:**

- 2.a. Provide timely, effective notice to private utilities and customers regarding the review and approval of major projects.
- 2.b. Work with private utilities and other jurisdictions to coordinate long-range plans for service expansion.
- 2.c. Facilitate public participation in utility siting decisions early on in the design and site development process.
- 2.d. Review and amend existing regulations as necessary to provide clear and objective standards for maintenance, repair, installation and replacement of utilities. Such changes shall be consistent with other Goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan for construction practices, restoration of City property/rights-of-way, environmental protection and oak tree preservation.

**Goal 3 - In conformance with the Comprehensive Plan use the Utilities Element and consult with utility providers, to guide decision-making and achieve community Goals.**

**Policies:**

- 3.a. Review proposed utility projects based on Comprehensive Plan policies and other regulations. Land use, transportation, urban design and environmental elements should guide the decision-making process. Appropriate conditions for compliance shall be established as needed.
- 3.b. Encourage public involvement in finalizing location of utility corridors and other planned facilities..
- 3.c. Coordinate with Island County and utility providers to encourage orderly extension of services.
- 3.d. Encourage the joint use of land for utilities, when feasible.

*Discussion - When practicable, new utility distribution lines should be installed in shared rights-of-way. Development of surface water detention and infiltration areas jointly with parks and open spaces should be encouraged when mutually compatible. The City should initiate agreements with private utilities and property owners to allow joint use of utility corridors for trails, open space and storm water management, to the extent that the uses are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and corridors are determined to be suitable for the proposed use (See Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan; Comprehensive Storm Drainage Plan).*

- 3.e. Require easements to be provided by property owners during development applications as necessary to install and maintain utilities.
- 3.f. Observe the Island County wellhead protection program for development in vicinity of operating wells in the unincorporated areas.

**Goal 4 - Minimize aesthetic and environmental degradation from utility operation, installation, replacement, repair and maintenance.**

Policies:

- 4.a. Strive to reduce the environmental and aesthetic impacts of the construction, operation and maintenance of utilities when practical.
- 4.b. Avoid, or minimize and mitigate impacts on environmentally sensitive areas, based on best available science.
- 4.c. Regulate utility construction to mitigate construction-related disruptions to neighborhoods and disturbances to the environment.
- 4.d. Require undergrounding of utility distribution lines in all new developments.
- 4.e. Require above ground utilities to be screened within a building, sight obscuring fence or landscape, or locate the utilities out of public view.
- 4.f. Continue to implement Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan standards for storm water.
- 4.g. Meet National Pollution Discharge Permit requirements for storm and sanitary sewer discharge.
- 4.h. Coordinate utility projects to avoid or mitigate impacts to Garry Oak Trees.

*Discussion - Permits must be obtained prior to any tree-trimming projects involving Garry Oak trees.*

**Goal 5 - Encourage sustainable design and alternatives that are efficient and encourages resource conservation.**

**Policies:**

- 5.a. The City should adopt site design standards, which provide for solar access, and installation of solar energy systems where feasible.
- 5.b. Continue to support energy efficiency by encouraging low impact sustainable development through building practices, landscaping and site designs, which promote natural resource conservation.
- 5.c. Continue to develop the City's solid waste recycling program as a means of resource conservation. Encourage site designs, which allow for co-collection of trash and recyclables.
- 5.d. Encourage use of storm drainage solutions, which use natural processes to make existing infrastructure more efficient while protecting wetlands and drainage functions.
- 5.e. Protect groundwater recharge capacity through sustainable development practices to the greatest extent practicable.
- 5.f. Require preservation and/or replanting of landscaping in developments to support energy conservation Goals.
- 5.g. Implement the Water Conservation Program, as outlined in the Comprehensive Water System Plan, including adoption of a conservation rate structure.
- 5.h. Explore using gray water as a method of water conservation.
- 5.i. Promote water conservation, facilitate recycling and manage sanitary sewer treatment capacity.

**Goal 6 - Coordinate with the City of Anacortes to ensure Oak Harbor's water needs are addressed.**

**Policies:**

- 6.a. Coordinate with the City of Anacortes to maintain water supply needs with consistency in projecting growth for Oak Harbor and NAS Whidbey.
- 6.b. Maintain a long-term contract to address forecasted water demands and long-term viability of water resources.
- 6.c. Support the City of Anacortes in maintaining water rights.

**Goal 7 - The City should develop a program, in cooperation with the affected utilities, to encourage the under-grounding of overhead utility lines.**

Policies:

7.a. Be opportunistic on retrofitting and burying of overhead distribution lines adjacent to City arterial streets and other areas.

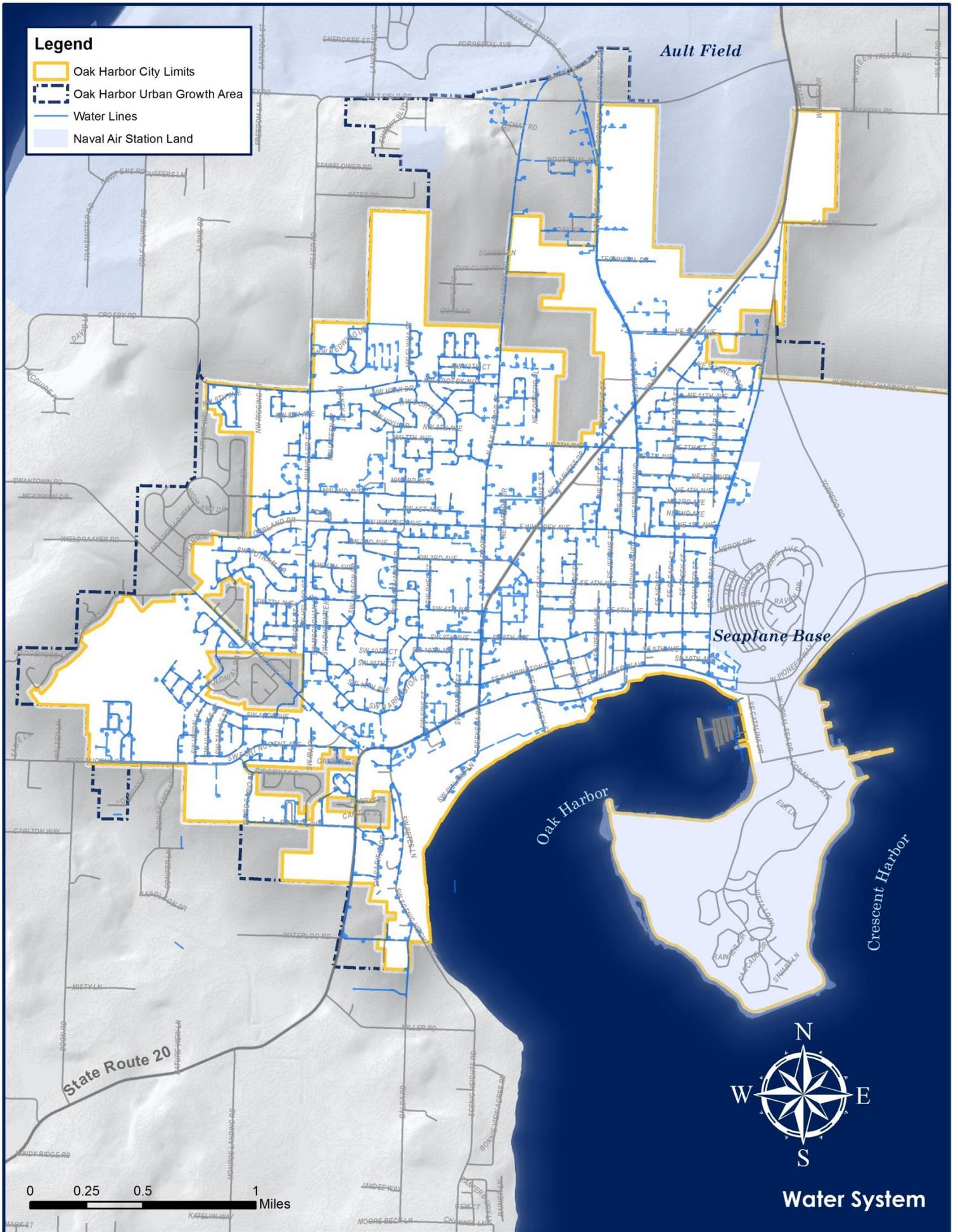
7.b. Budget for and coordinate burying of overhead utilities with other street upgrade projects and include this activity in the capital facilities budget.

7.c. Work with the local utility providers to develop a plan that will provide for underground power lines in the downtown business core.



**Legend**

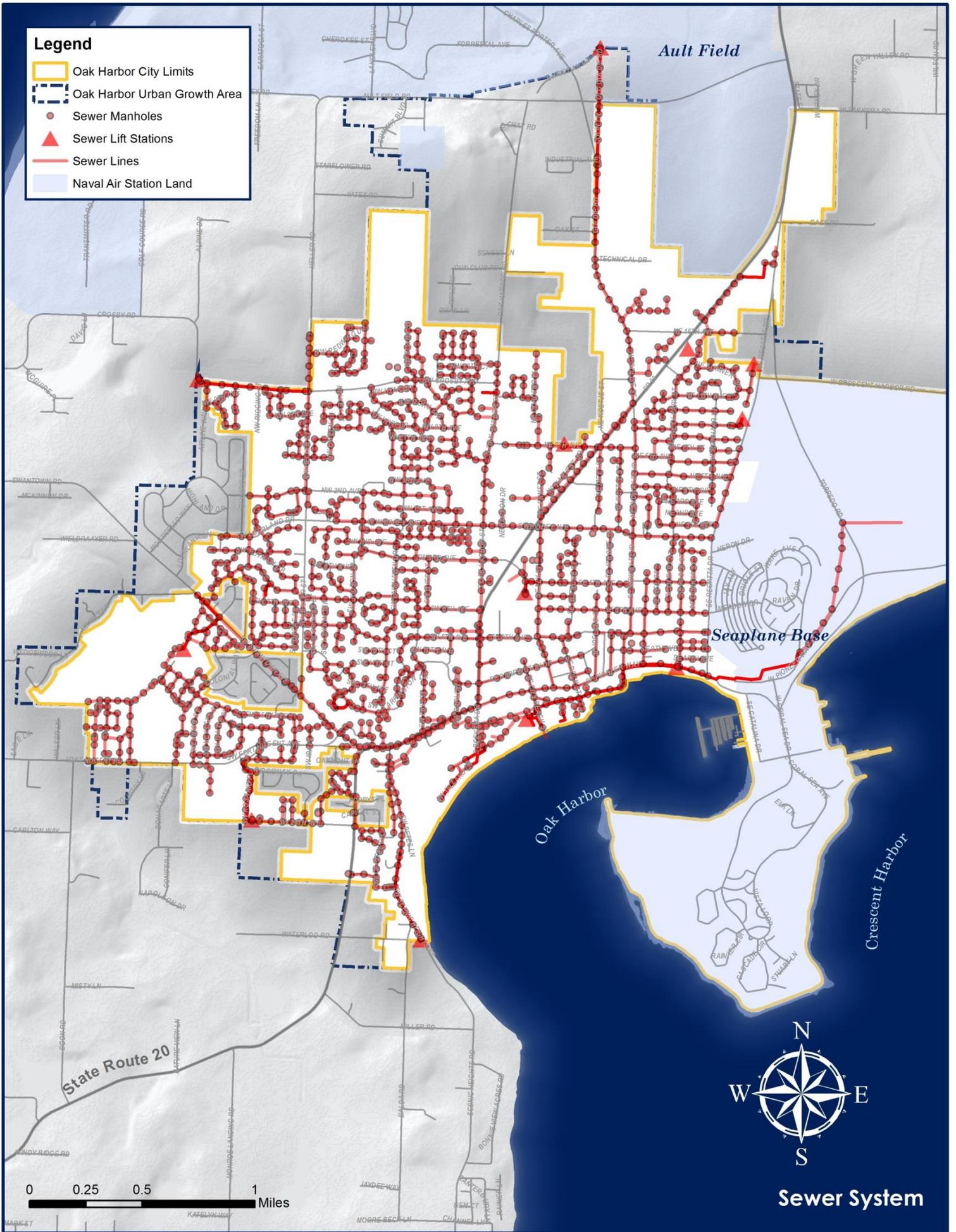
-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Water Lines
-  Naval Air Station Land



**Water System**

**Legend**

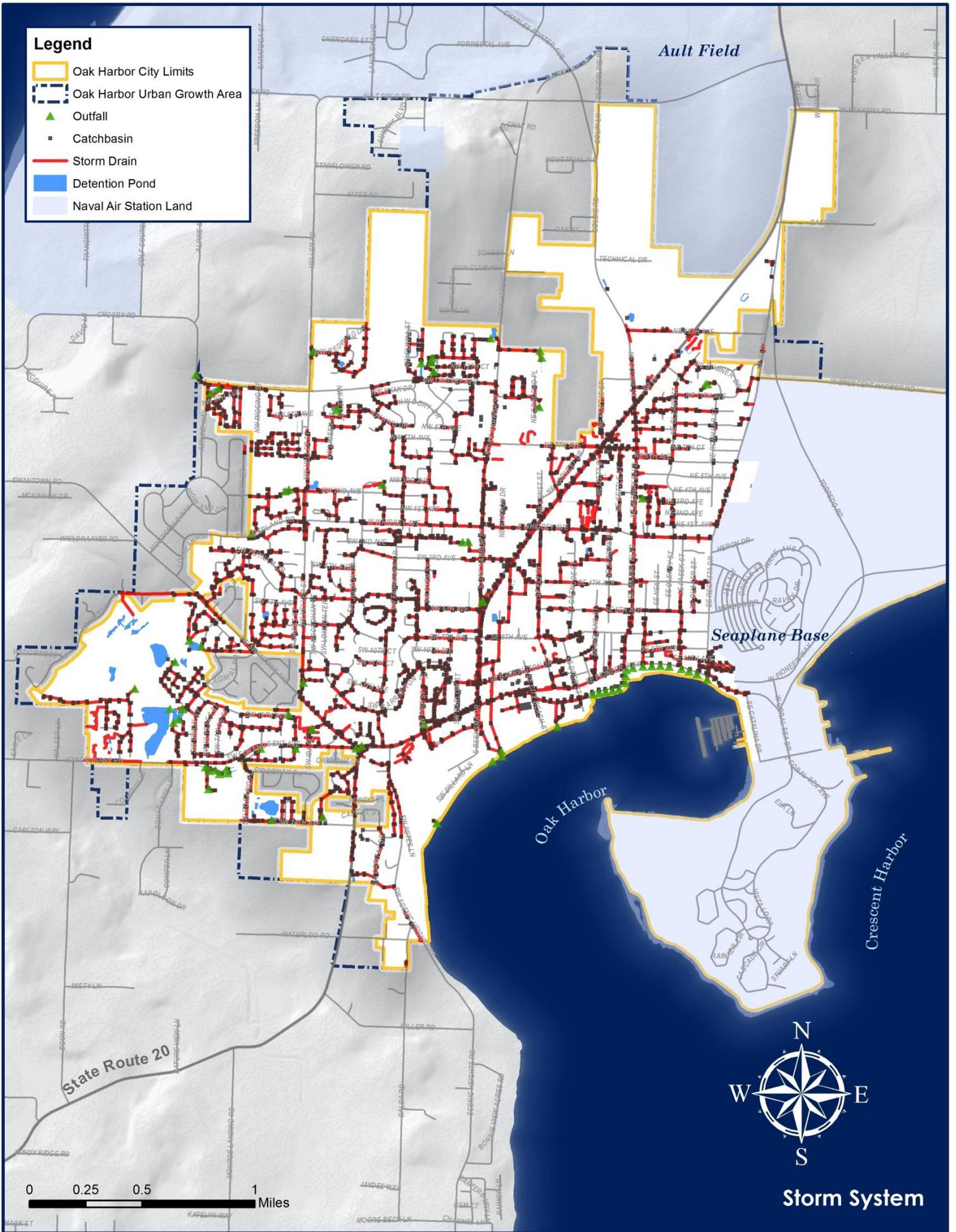
-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Sewer Manholes
-  Sewer Lift Stations
-  Sewer Lines
-  Naval Air Station Land



**Sewer System**

**Legend**

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Outfall
-  Catchbasin
-  Storm Drain
-  Detention Pond
-  Naval Air Station Land



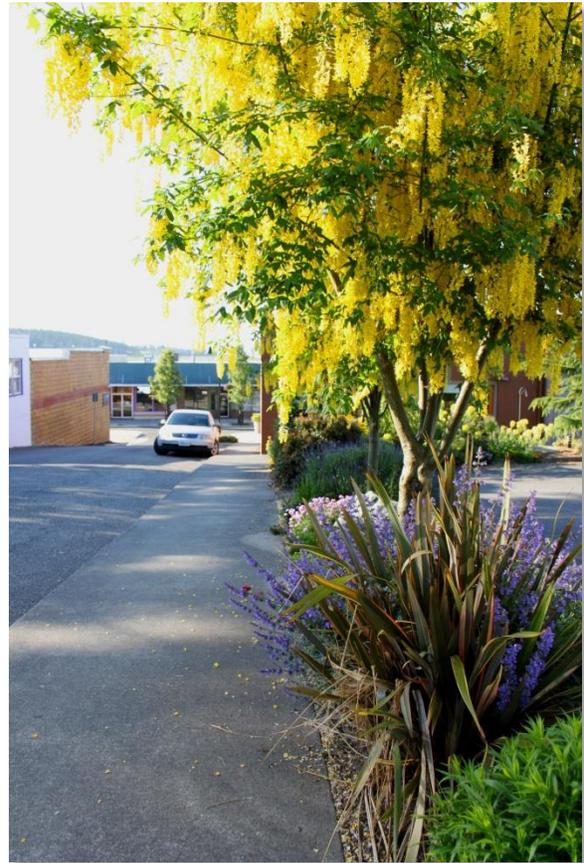
**Storm System**

## Chapter 9 → Economic Development

*In March of 1991, the Department of Defense recommended the closure of NAS Whidbey Island. Although the base was later removed from the closure list, the original action created economic instability in Oak Harbor and the greater north Whidbey Island area. As a result, the "North Whidbey Economic Diversification Action Plan" was prepared to assist the community in diversifying its economy.*

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is in part based upon the "North Whidbey Economic Diversification Action Plan," which contains the following mission statement:

*"North Whidbey is committed to creating a planned and diversified local economy that creates opportunities for fairly paid employment and a strong local tax base, while respecting the unique quality of life we treasure. To accomplish this mission, we will create proactive community and customer service support programs which will maintain NAS Whidbey, support the vitality of existing businesses and encourage compatible new economic activities."*



## Goals and Policies

### **Goal 1 - Encourage coordination between Oak Harbor and Island County governments with local, state, and federal entities as well as the public to promote economically diverse opportunities for Oak Harbor.**

#### **Policies:**

- I.a. To ensure community consensus, representation should be sought from all Oak Harbor Stake-Holders in planning for economic diversification. "Stake-holders" include, but are not limited to, the School District, Skagit Valley Community College, NAS Whidbey, Greater Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce, Island County Economic Development Council, Downtown Development Council, Partnership Oak Harbor, and the public at large.
- I.b. The City and County should monitor the implementation of the North Whidbey Economic Diversification Action Plan and regularly meet to refine economic development programs.
- I.c. To achieve economic development Goals, the City and County should coordinate, where applicable, zoning, development standards, permit review processes, and land use within the urban growth area.

*Discussion - These Goals include, but are not limited to, those listed within the North Whidbey Economic Diversification Action Plan.*

- I.d. Ensure that economic development addresses all levels of the demography, including, the youth and retired.
- I.e. The City, working with other governmental agencies and the public sector, shall seek to provide employment opportunities for older adults, particularly those with low-to-moderate incomes.

**Goal 2 - Implement the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program to increase visitor spending and enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of Oak Harbor.**

*Discussion - The Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program focuses on capital and non-capital projects intended to improve the community's economic and recreational opportunities along the waterfront. The mix of existing assets ripe for redevelopment, combined with future development opportunities, will contribute significantly to the community's livability and economic vitality. The existing commercial core area, referred to as the Harborside Shops area, receives special prominence in the program.*

**Policies:**

- 2.a. The City shall pursue a variety of funding strategies as outlined in the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program in order to bring about its implementation.
- 2.b. The City will assist the Harborside Shops businesses in forming a Business Improvement District, or other similar funding mechanism, to help implement the capital and non-capital projects identified in the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program.
- 2.c. The City should seek, support and assist in grant applications to help fund construction of planned circulation improvements in the downtown area.

- 2.d. The City should support and assist private property owners in the Harborside Shops area with planning projects in conformance with the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program.
- 2.e. Improve Harborside Shops area identity from State Highway 20 through signage and other projects identified in the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program.

**Goal 3 - Increase Oak Harbor's market share of retail sales to reduce the economic leakage off-island.**

**Policies:**

- 3.a. Adequate land should be zoned, where compatible with existing uses, to meet the retail needs of the local community.
- 3.b. The City should support consolidation of segmental strip development into organized groupings by assisting with planning and upgrading of site improvements.

**Goal 4 - Continue working with the Navy to enhance economic opportunities.**

**Policies:**

- 4.a. The City supports the continuing operation of NAS Whidbey as a military installation. Should the present character of operations and mission change in the future such that the Navy can support joint use, then the opportunity for joint use of Ault Field should be explored.

*Discussion - The opportunity for joint use of Ault Field was explored in the North Whidbey Community Diversification Action Plan of April, 1994. The Plan's conclusion; "The operations of NAS Whidbey and related directives regarding military, security and other logistical, environmental and surplus issues clearly make joint use not a viable option, particularly for the scope of time of this study". Laws, regulations, policies, and criteria regarding joint use of military airports can be found in the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, the Federal Airport and Airways Development Act of 1970, the Federal Airport and Airways Improvement Act of 1982, and Secretary of the Navy Instruction 3770.2. Associated airspace, land use, facilities, environmental, etc., regulations, policies, and/or criteria may also apply and can be found in applicable Public Law, Executive Order, the National Environmental Policy Act, Department of Defense and Department of the Navy policies and regulations, Federal Aviation Regulations, etc..*

- 4.b. Consider surplus military lands for economic diversification potential.
- 4.c. The City should work together with the Navy to encourage Naval procurement of local products and services.

**Goal 5 - Implement long-range economic diversification projects to provide job opportunities and reduce economic reliance on Naval Air Station Whidbey Island.**

*Discussion- The majority of the policies within this Goal can be referenced directly to the "North Whidbey Community Action Plan".*

**Policies:**

- 5.a. The City, in cooperation with Island County and other stake-holders, should work to increase the number of jobs in primary industries and the retention of existing employment.
- 5.b. Diversification assistance should be directed towards helping businesses and employees most likely impacted by military realignments.
- 5.c. The City should work to establish the North Whidbey Enterprise Area to facilitate the creation of primary jobs in targeted business sectors (see North Whidbey Economic Diversification Action Plan and map).
- 5.d. The City should plan to annex the Enterprise Area and coordinate the extension of utilities, in conformance with the UGA and Utilities Element.
- 5.e. For consistency with the Enterprise Area concept, review existing standards, such as requirements for fire flow and sanitary sewer.
- 5.f. The City should pursue the financing and construction needed to upgrade Goldie Road and Oak Harbor Road corridors and extension of Cemetery Road, in conformance with the Transportation Element.

- 5.g. Adopt performance zoning and design standards for the Enterprise Area to allow flexibility in site design and use, while requiring a high standard of aesthetics, circulation, and overall compatibility with the small-town character of Oak Harbor and unincorporated Island County.
- 5.h. The City should adopt a minimum target to increase the share of North Whidbey area manufacturing jobs from 4 to 8 percent as well as increase transportation and utility jobs from 1 to 3 percent of all non-agricultural workers by the year 2013.

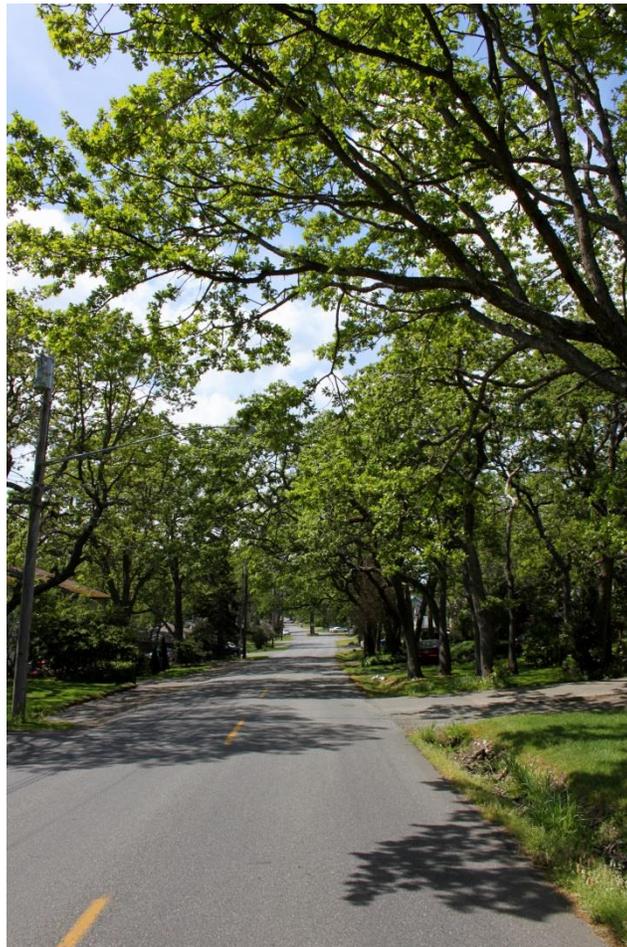
*Discussion - The wording of this policy is to suggest an increase in private sector jobs, rather than governmental jobs.*

- 5.i. Encourage non-polluting industries to locate within the city and/or urban growth area.
- 5.j. The City should pursue funding and construction of the North Whidbey Enterprise Area sewer as a means of encouraging economic growth and job creation within this area.

**Goal 6 - Ensure tourism with an emphasis on strengthening Oak Harbor as a tourist destination.**

**Policies:**

- 6.a. The City, Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce and other tourism agencies should participate in regional tourism planning.
- 6.b. Allocate hotel/motel tax funds and leverage additional support for tourism.
- 6.c. The City should encourage the Tourism Promotion and Visitor Information Center programs of the Chamber of Commerce.
- 6.d. Encourage the Economic Development Council to promote and assist existing and new tourist oriented businesses.
- 6.e. A hotel/special events center should be encouraged to locate in the downtown waterfront area, as determined in the Downtown Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program.
- 6.f. The City should explore and encourage the development and expansion of eco-tourism and military related tourism, such as reunions and a military museum.



## Chapter 10 → Urban Growth Area

*The Urban Growth Area (UGA) plays a significant role in planning for Oak Harbor's future. Oak Harbor's UGA also assists the City in meeting State planning Goals; such as encouraging development in urban areas where public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner, reducing the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling low density developments, and protecting the environment and enhancing the state's high quality of life.*

Consistent with the County-Wide Planning Policies, the term UGA includes both the incorporated land and the surrounding unincorporated area that is planned to accommodate future urban development. For a complete outline of urban governmental service standards, the reader is referred to the Government Services Element.

### Goals and Policies

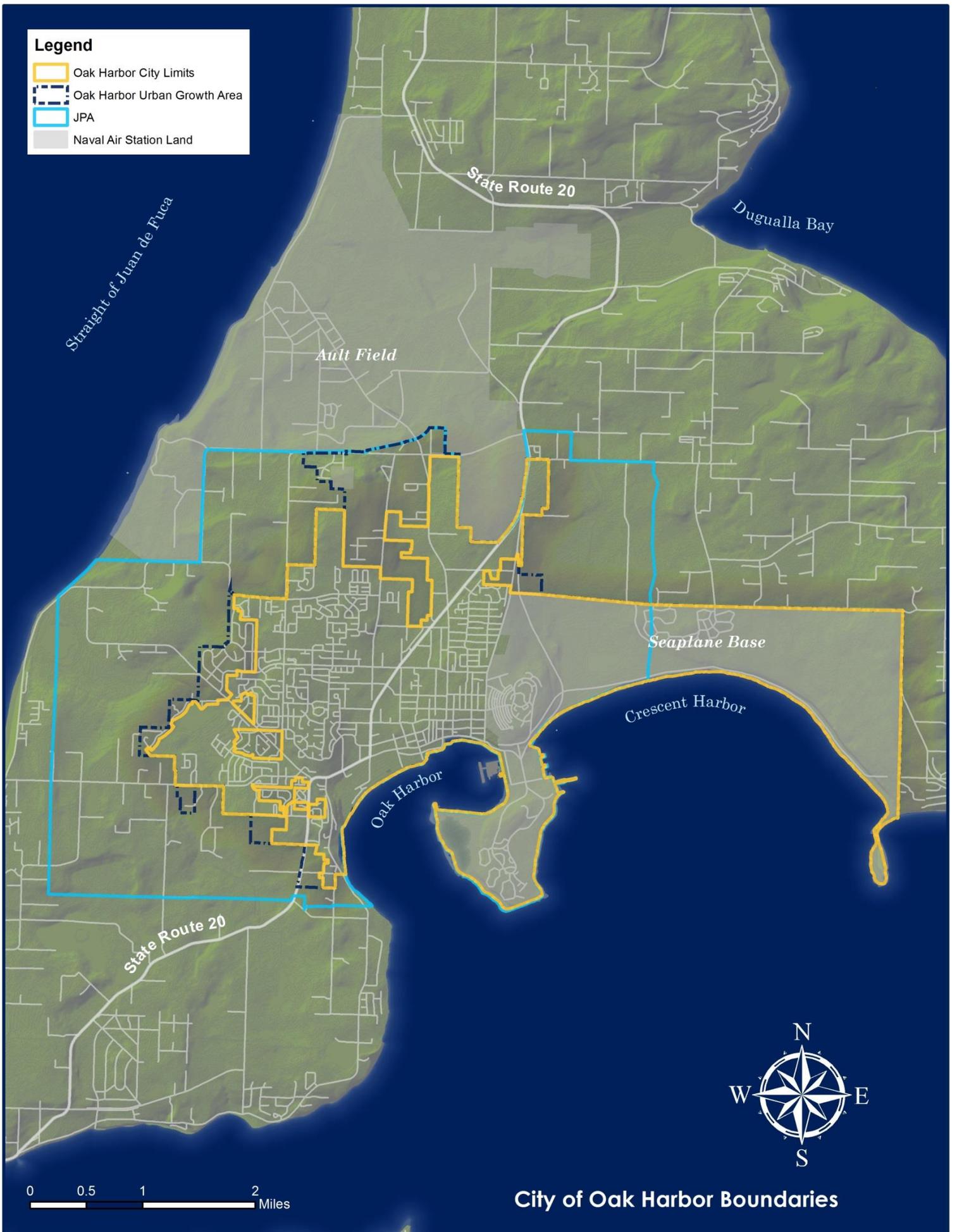
#### **Goal 1 - Support and encourage urban uses and densities to occur within the UGA boundaries.**

##### Policies:

- I.a. Include urban density growth, and municipal public facilities serving that growth, only within the UGA boundary, as mandated by the Washington State Growth Management Act.
- I.b. Ensure that sufficient land in the UGA is available to provide reasonable development opportunities to accommodate twenty years of population and employment growth.
- I.c. Progress toward eliminating unincorporated enclaves in order to provide for the most efficient provision of urban services within the UGA.

**Legend**

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  JPA
-  Naval Air Station Land



**City of Oak Harbor Boundaries**

**Goal 2 - Engage the County cooperatively in determining expansions to the UGA boundary in accordance with the County Wide Planning Policies.**

**Policies:**

- 2.a. The UGA boundary expansion may be activated by a proposal from either the City or County. Both governments must agree on the boundary as required by the Washington State Growth Management Act.
  
- 2.b. Base proposed expansion of the UGA on the percentage of developable land existing within the UGA as determined by the City Council as well as changes in the city or amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

*Discussion – The City may choose to initiate discussion with the County for a UGA boundary change when the city reaches a threshold of approximately 15% undeveloped acres of any one major land use category, i.e. residential, commercial and industrial land use categories, within the city UGA as defined in the Land Use Plan.*

**Goal 3 - The City and County shall adopt inter-jurisdictional cooperation policies regarding land within and surrounding the UGA.**

**Policies:**

- 3.a. Joint planning should identify, in advance, the priority areas of future boundary expansion.
  
- 3.b. Ensure regional growth capacity issues are a part of the consideration of the boundary expansion by the City and County.

*Discussion - The City and County base their comprehensive plans on official population forecasts developed by the State of Washington Department of Financial Management. The forecasts are allocated to the four regions of Island County, with Oak Harbor located in the North Whidbey Island region.*

- 3.c. Continue to use and amend as necessary the Interlocal Agreement between Oak Harbor and Island County as the primary means of implementing compatible land use policies, procedures, public facility planning and development standards and regulations within the UGA.
  
- 3.d. Plan development within the UGA for future annexation to the City by ensuring uses are compatible with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.
  
- 3.e. A portion of Ault Field should be included in the Oak Harbor UGA in the event the base is closed, lands are surplus, or the base's mission is changed and joint use becomes possible. The City shall coordinate with the County, the Department of Defense and other agencies involved to develop a Master Plan for reuse of the air

station should any of these events occur.

*Discussion - Portions of Ault Field which could be included in the UGA are airfield functions such as operation areas, runway, structures, and clear zones (see Land Use map). These areas are urban in character and served by water systems interconnected with the City.*

#### **Goal 4 - Annexations to the City will occur in compliance with the Washington State Growth Management Act and the following policies.**

**Policies:**

**4.a. Land to be annexed should include only areas seen as logical extensions of the City, located adjacent to existing urban development.**

*Discussion - This policy is to be used solely as a guide to prevent leap-frogging and not as a means of preventing growth.*

**4.b. The City should avoid annexations that would result in unincorporated enclaves within the UGA.**

*Discussion - An unincorporated enclave is an area completely surrounded by incorporated parts of the city. However, the City may make exceptions to this policy in cases where the potential enclave is already characterized by urban density. In such cases, the City should first encourage petitioners to work with property owners inside the potential enclave to include them in the annexation area. Failing this preferred option, only then should the City consider whether the annexation would further other Comprehensive Plan goals, such as economic development, and otherwise be consistent with annexation policies.*

**4.c. Annexations to the City should be based on evidence that public facilities and service capacities already exist or are planned for and can be efficiently, economically, and practically provided by either public or private sources.**

**4.d. Annexations should not diminish the present LOS or create an excessive financial burden to existing and prospective property owners in the City.**

- 4.e. Ensure property owners within an annexing area are aware of foreseeable obligations or requirements that may be imposed upon them by the City at the time of annexation.

*Discussion - Provide foreseeable cost estimates where possible.*

- 4.f. Require existing buildings, within annexed areas, to meet the City's fire and safety requirements.

*Discussion - Public safety shall be ensured by the following:*

- \* An inspection will be conducted of all properties within the proposed annexation area. The Fire Department will identify deficiencies of fire and life safety codes to property owners and City Council. Actions for addressing the deficiencies within specified time frames as recommended by the Fire Department and subject to approval by City Council, will be in the annexation agreement.*
- \* Upon annexation, existing buildings will be required to have minimum fire-flow within three years for mobile home parks, and two years for all other buildings, or by annexation agreement. Smaller, individually developed properties should not be burdened by excessive costs of utility improvements beyond their normal proportional share of costs. Costs should be proportionate to benefit.*
- \* Existing buildings not conforming to the City's requirement for fire sprinkler systems, will not be subject to retrofitting until the building is remodeled, modified or has an occupancy reclassification. Occupancies or portions thereof classified as hazardous and/or required to have fire suppression systems in accordance with the Uniform Building Code will be required to install an approved system within one year.*

- 4.g. Assure that the City's fire rating is not reduced because of annexation.

*Discussion - The intent is to preserve the City's current fire rating and LOS and protect public welfare by providing a water supply of sufficient quantity and pressure for fire protection. In all instances, areas to be annexed should be analyzed for their potential effect on the City's fire rating. Programs should be established to assure improvements are made in the annexed area or to correct identified deficiencies made elsewhere in the City to balance rating deficiencies in the annexed area. Property owners in the annexing area may be required to pay all or a portion of the cost to correct the deficiencies in their area.*

- 4.h. Maintain the existing level of police service when annexing new areas.

*Discussion - The intent is to protect the residents of the City from a reduced level of police services due to annexation. In all instances the areas to be annexed should be analyzed for their potential effect on the City's current level of police protection. Increases in police personnel may be necessary in order to remain at its present LOS. The City should have a method for analyzing the fiscal impacts of annexation on police services.*

- 4.i. Annexation proposals should describe the method and level of funding for capital facilities needed to serve the annexed area.

- 4.j. Proponents of annexation in developed or partially developed areas should pay their fair share of the costs of urban services and public improvements required to meet the City's LOS standards.

*Discussion - This commitment to meet the City's LOS standards should be identified by all annexation agreements, including pre-annexation agreements.*

- 4.k. The City may require the preparation of a fiscal impact study which addresses long and short-term economic impacts to the City.
- 4.l. Annex, when possible, areas of sufficient size that square off City boundaries and enhance circulation.

*Discussion - This policy makes subarea planning for local roads and utilities more efficient.*

- 4.m. Proposed annexations shall not result in the long-term reduction of the City's established LOS standards.

**Goal 5 - New neighborhoods annexed into the City should contribute in a positive manner to sustain and enhance the quality of life for all Whidbey Island citizens while promoting a strong sense of place for Oak Harbor.**

Policies:

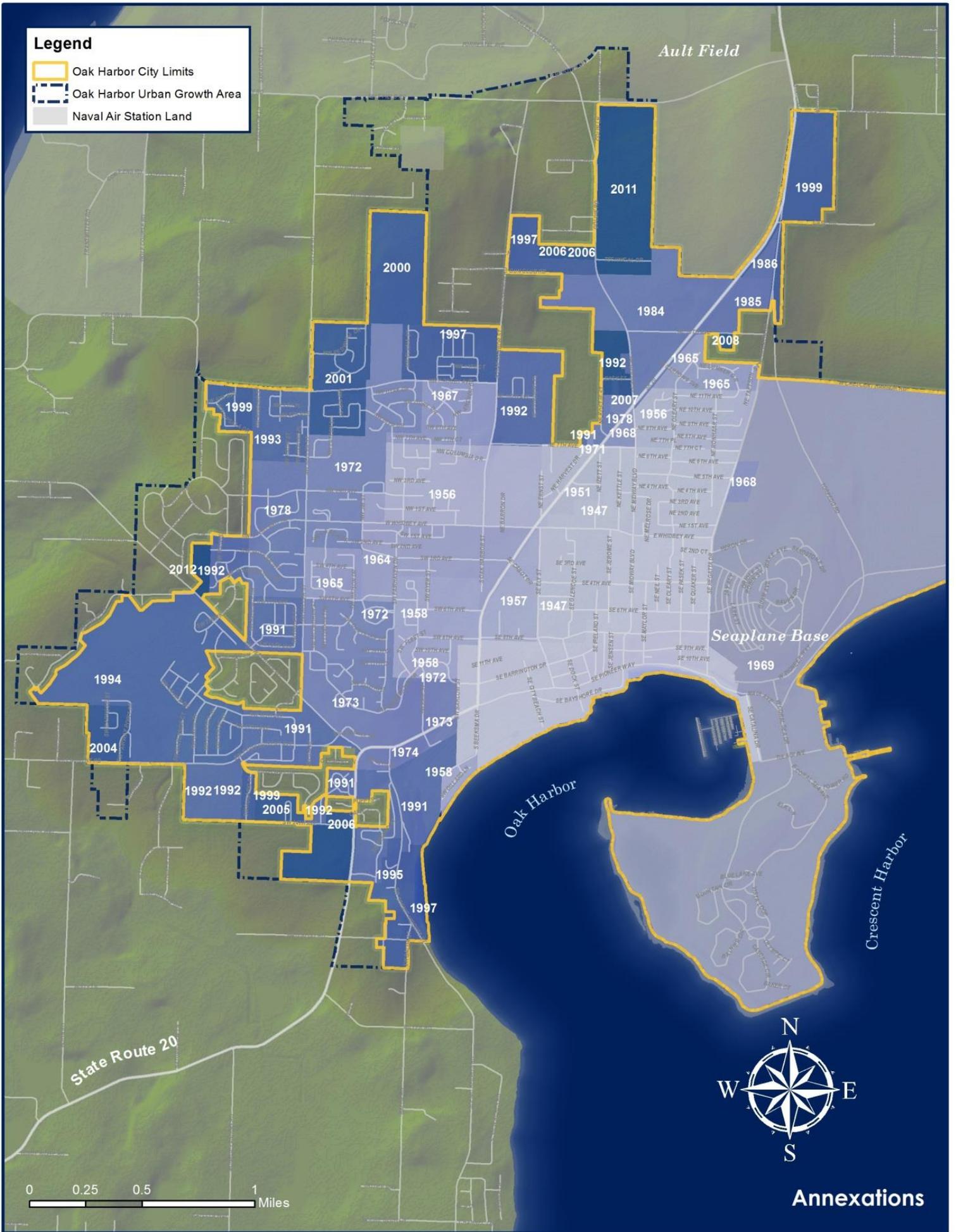
- 5.a. Annexation agreements should include a preliminary plan for a transportation network that emphasizes connections to existing neighborhoods, streets and pedestrian facilities.
- 5.b. Where topography allows, new annexation areas should develop in the traditional lot and block grid pattern that typified early Oak Harbor development and enhances the provision of public facilities and services.
- 5.c. The City should consider the desirability of acquiring potential new public facilities, such as trails, parks or open space lands, during the annexation review process with the cooperation of the petitioners.
- 5.d. In annexation requests where the surrounding land uses could be significantly affected by the potential land uses in the annexing area, the City should require a greenbelt designation of an appropriate width to ameliorate the negative impacts.

*Discussion - This policy would apply to the annexation of new industrial lands that abut properties that have historically been used for residential purposes.*

- 5.e. The City should adopt standards that support the Comprehensive Plan annexation policies.

**Legend**

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Naval Air Station Land





## Chapter 11 → Environmental Element

*The City of Oak Harbor recognizes the value of its natural environment and supports environmental protection and enhancement. The community recognizes that total preservation may not be feasible in an urban area. Rather, the City should seek to implement environmental goals within the context of planned growth. This approach acknowledges and accepts the demand for growth, and suggests that urbanization can be sensitive to those resources found to be valuable to the community.*

Along with the Land Use Element, the Environmental Element is one of the central components of the comprehensive plan. While the Land Use Element is the cornerstone for the Capital Facilities, Utilities, Housing, Economic Development and Open Space elements of this Plan, the Environmental Element is the key for planning the protection and enhancement of the City's natural environment. The Environmental Element goals and policies and the critical areas designations shown on the Critical Areas Maps are important for planning appropriate land uses and establishing meaningful open space areas and corridors. The Environmental Element is closely coordinated with the Land Use Element so the City can meet its land use, housing and economic development goals, while protecting and enhancing the natural environment. The Environmental Element is also coordinated with the City's Shorelines Master Program (SMP) to ensure that shoreline uses are consistent with protection of these valuable environmental resources.

The SMP applies to all shoreline areas under the jurisdiction of the City. Management of shorelines is mandated by the State's Shoreline Management Act (RCW 90.58). Mapped

shorelines include Oak Harbor Bay and Crescent Harbor. The SMP provides goals, policies, and regulations for shoreline areas, generally described as aquatic environments and tidelands of Oak Harbor Bay, and land areas within 200 feet of the ordinary high water mark. Crescent Harbor lies within federal jurisdiction and as such is governed by the Naval Air Station. The Naval Air Station has developed the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan to guide activities at the base. The following policies serve as general goals for shoreline use of Oak Harbor Bay, as identified by the Master Program.

### Existing Environmental Conditions

The City has a rich natural environment that shapes the land uses and development patterns in the City. The City's natural environment includes critical areas, shorelines, and cultural resources. Each of these features contributes to the health and special character of Oak Harbor. These natural resources include tidal flats, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (including species and habitats of local importance such as Garry Oak), geologically sensitive areas, frequently flooded areas, and aquifer recharge areas. Urban forest areas are also found in the City.

A key amenity of Oak Harbor's natural environment is the visual and physical association with the marine waters of Puget Sound. The marine shoreline is addressed in greater detail under the City's Shorelines Master Program. The unique marine relationship, critical areas, and other environmental values such as air and water quality, are discussed below. Inventories and mapping of these critical areas and

environmental features within the City of Oak Harbor and the Urban Growth Area (UGA) are included in this Element.

- Tidal flats are found along the shoreline of Oak Harbor Bay.
- Wetlands are found throughout the UGA, with one large wetland system associated with the shoreline.
- Frequently flooded areas associated with several of the wetland and tidal areas are also mapped.
- Geologically sensitive areas are primarily associated with the bluffs along the shoreline and other steep slopes. Potential liquefaction areas exist in the downtown area and Maylor Point.
- Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas primarily include marine resources such as eelgrass communities, shellfish, forage fish spawning areas, great blue heron, and bald eagle habitats. Of local significance, areas of Garry Oak habitat are also included.
- Critical aquifer recharge areas are mapped based on the susceptibility of current or possible future potable water supplies to pollution.

## Goals and Policies

### Growth Management Act Goals

RCW 36.70A.020 sets forth fourteen Planning Goals for use by jurisdictions in developing comprehensive plans. These goals are not stated in any order of priority. One of those goals, as shown below, directly addresses the environment:

*(10) Environment. Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.*

Implementing this goal, the City of Oak Harbor finds that it is in the public interest to protect critical areas from adverse impacts to preserve public health, safety, and welfare. The State's Growth Management Act mandates designation and protection of environmentally critical lands and their functions and values.

## **City of Oak Harbor Goals and Policies**

The goals and policies address protection and enhancement of the natural environment features found in Oak Harbor. These features include shorelines and tidal flats, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (including species and habitats of local importance such as Garry Oak), geologically hazardous areas, frequently flooded areas, and critical aquifer recharge areas, urban forests, surface water quality, air quality, stormwater management, and cultural resources.

### **Goal 1 - To protect the public health, safety and welfare by preventing adverse impacts to critical areas, their functions and values**

Policies:

- I.a. Update and implement regulations for the protection of critical areas consistent with state law.
- I.b. Update and maintain inventories of all critical areas within the City and its UGA.
- I.c. Coordinate with Island County to jointly prepare a critical areas field reconnaissance study for proposed transportation and utility corridors in the Enterprise Area.
- I.d. A monitoring and management program should be developed to prevent adverse impacts to the environment and critical areas from noxious, invasive and non-native plant and animal species.

### **Goal 2 - Encourage alternative methods of resource protection and stewardship**

Policies:

- 2.a. Encourage acquisition by public agencies and non-profit organizations that have the benefit of long-term preservation and direct control over the resource.
- 2.b. In all but the most extreme cases, acquisition should occur with the voluntary participation of the property owner.
- 2.c. Financial incentives such as reductions in property taxes have the advantage of reduced public costs for acquisition and maintenance and represent a more collaborative approach between private owners and the City.
- 2.d. Encourage regulatory options, such as zoning and subdivision controls and incentives such as density bonuses for clustered development, to reduce public costs for acquisition and maintenance of resources.
- 2.e. The method of resource preservation should be based on the public benefit derived from preservation, resource sensitivity, maintenance requirements, and related planning goals and policies.
- 2.f. Designate existing and potential open space areas on land use, park and recreation, and open space plans. Open space may include public and private parks, greenbelts, corridors, and critical areas.
- 2.g. Work with the Navy and other agencies to acquire open space lands in a coordinated regional effort to preserve open space.
- 2.h. Continue to pursue advanced acquisition of park lands within the UGA, ahead of development pressures.

- 2.i. Provide incentives to promote conservation of open space on private land, such as tax incentives, density credits, and various alternatives in the city's development regulations.
- 2.j. Promote Island County's Public Benefit Rating System to provide tax incentives.

**Goal 3 - Preserve and enhance water quality in conformance with the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda for Puget Sound and other Clean Water Act and Growth Management Act requirements**

**Policies:**

- 3.a. Use a comprehensive system of drainage facilities (and public education) to control the quality and quantity of storm water runoff.
- 3.b. Update the Comprehensive Storm Drainage Plan to incorporate appropriate guidance and information from The Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington (2012).
- 3.c. Update the Oak Harbor Municipal Code to incorporate low impact development best management practices as the required method of stormwater treatment.
- 3.d. Coordinate with Island County to protect water quality when stormwater drainage affects both jurisdictions.
- 3.e. Approve erosion and sediment control plans for construction activities that include approved best management practices, control sedimentation of waterways, tracking of sediment onto public roads, erosion of denuded soils, and runoff damage to adjacent properties.
- 3.f. Include storm water management facilities to protect water quality and limit maximum discharge to pre-development rate conditions in new developments and substantial redevelopment projects.
- 3.g. Maintain natural drainage patterns and discharge locations to the maximum

extent practicable, while protecting functions and values of wetlands.

- 3.h. Provide regulations to guide corrective actions necessary to mitigate or cleanse those discharges that pollute waters of the state.
- 3.i. Meet National Pollution Discharge Permit requirements for sanitary sewer discharge.
- 3.j. Be prepared to respond to toxic spill incidents, including monitoring cleanup and assisting permitting agencies with enforcement of related laws. Require large developments and industries to maintain Spill Prevention and Contingency Plans to effectively respond to any spill incidents.

#### **Goal 4 - Maintain and improve air quality in the Oak Harbor Area**

Policies:

- 4.a. Cooperate with the Northwest Clean Air Agency and federal agencies in efforts to implement regional air quality standards.
- 4.b. Prohibit open burning associated with land clearing and encourage chipping and use of woody material on-site wherever possible.
- 4.c. New developments should address air quality and establish mitigation measures to avoid significant impacts. Prior to approval of industrial emissions, the City shall coordinate with the Northwest Clean Air Agency and other affected agencies.
- 4.d. Prohibit land uses which create excessive amounts of point-source pollution.
- 4.e. Consider land use and transportation linkages in planning decisions to reduce air quality impacts.



**Goal 5 - To conserve the urban forest to enhance air quality, energy conservation, noise abatement, community aesthetics, wildlife habitat, and the general quality of life appropriate to a small urban community.**

*Discussion - The urban forest includes the interconnected system of trees and shrubbery on public or private property within the City and the UGA. Components of this system may include remnant forest lands, parks, street trees, forested ridge lines, private open space tracts within subdivisions, greenbelts between land use districts, arterial landscape buffers, landscaping on residential lots, landscaping within parking areas, individual Garry Oaks and hedge rows and trees of significant size or historical importance.*

**Policies:**

- 5.a. Increase community awareness about the importance of the urban forest and the positive impact trees and shrubs have upon the environment.
- 5.b. Provide adequate funding to assure safe, well-maintained, and healthy trees and shrubs on public property.
- 5.c. Promote public and private tree planting as well as replacement and preservation programs to sustain and improve the urban forest.
- 5.d. Require retention or planting of trees and shrubs with new development and substantial redevelopment projects.
- 5.e. Encourage City departments, other agencies, and the public to work together to identify opportunities for cooperative projects to enhance the urban forest.

- 5.f. Continue to work together with Island County to implement a program for greenbelt protection around the UGA.
- 5.g. Require developers to submit and receive City approval of erosion control and limits-of-clearing plans, as applicable, prior to release of land clearing permits.
- 5.h. Prevent indiscriminate removal or destruction of trees and ground cover on undeveloped and partially developed property.

**Goal 6 - Protect, preserve and restore significant historical and cultural resources in the City to the maximum extent practicable**

**Policies:**

- 6.a. Protect areas of known historic and cultural value from incompatible development and ensure that newly discovered areas are documented by the appropriate experts and authorities.
- 6.b. Develop an inventory of potential historical and cultural resource sites for City reference.
- 6.c. Use the following preferences to address identified historical and cultural resources:
  - 1. Avoid adverse impacts to the historical or cultural resource.
  - 2. Protect the historical or cultural resource to the maximum extent possible.
  - 3. Inventory the historical or cultural resource prior to development activity through archaeological surveys and subsurface testing.
  - 4. Monitor the resource during development activity.
- 6.d. Coordinate with the appropriate Native American Tribe(s) or Nation for identified Native American cultural resources prior to development activity.
- 6.e. Encourage voluntary protection of significant historical and cultural resources, using acquisition, incentives, conservation easements, transfer of development rights, and alternative re-use of structures.
- 6.f. Develop educational materials as appropriate to educate the public and increase awareness and appreciation for historical and cultural resources.

- 6.g. Incorporate the preservation of historical and cultural resources into development permit and land division reviews.

**Goal 7 - Include “Best Available Science” in the process of designating critical areas and developing environmental regulations**

Policies:

- 7.a. Include the best available science in developing policies and regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas and shorelines.
- 7.b. Identify the best available science (science obtained through valid and reliable scientific process) used in developing the regulations.
- 7.c. Identify any non-scientific information used as a basis for departing from science-based recommendations for policy and regulations. The reasoning for use of non-scientific information shall be specified.
- 7.d. Where scientific information is lacking or non-scientific information is used in developing policies and regulations, implement a precautionary or “no-risk” approach or an adaptive management and monitoring program to monitor the protection of the functions and values of the critical area or resource.

**Goal 8 - Integrate and streamline the environmental review process with the development review process**

Policies:

- 8.a. Use the Comprehensive Plan and its supportive environmental impact statement to assess the environmental impact of development proposals to the greatest extent possible.
- 8.b. Review and amend existing regulations to integrate and streamline the environmental review process.
- 8.c. Coordinate with Island County on development policies and regulations to optimize predictability for development and environmental reviews in the UGA.

## **Wetlands Goal**

### **Goal 9 - Protect wetlands from a net loss in functions, values and acreage**

#### **Policies:**

- 9.a. Designate, classify, and regulate wetlands based on functions, values and acreage.
- 9.b. Establish standards for wetland protection including use limitations and buffers based on wetland classification and habitat value.
- 9.c. Allow for variances based on potential impacts.
- 9.d. Establish a mitigation sequence reducing impacts to wetlands and their buffers which range from impact avoidance to compensation and monitoring.

## **Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Goal**

### **Goal 10 - To protect fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas from loss or adverse impacts**

#### **Policies:**

- 10.a. Designate and classify critical fish and wildlife areas based on type and/or association with priority species.
- 10.b. Identify priority species based on Federal or State status or based on local importance.
- 10.c. Maintain standards for buffers and timing or activity restrictions based on the habitat class and priority species use.
- 10.d. Establish a mitigation sequence reducing impacts to critical habitat functions and values which range from impact avoidance to compensation and monitoring.
- 10.e. Develop conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fish habitat.

## Geologically Sensitive Areas Goal

### Goal 11 - Prevent hazards resulting from incompatible development being sited on geologically sensitive areas

Policies:

- 11.a. Designate and classify areas on which development should be prohibited or limited due to danger from geologic hazards, based on level of hazard or risk.
- 11.b. Regulate significant geologic impacts resulting from development by avoiding or mitigating impacts to identified critically geologically sensitive areas.

## Frequently Flooded Areas Goal

### Goal 12 - Minimize public and private losses due to flood hazards

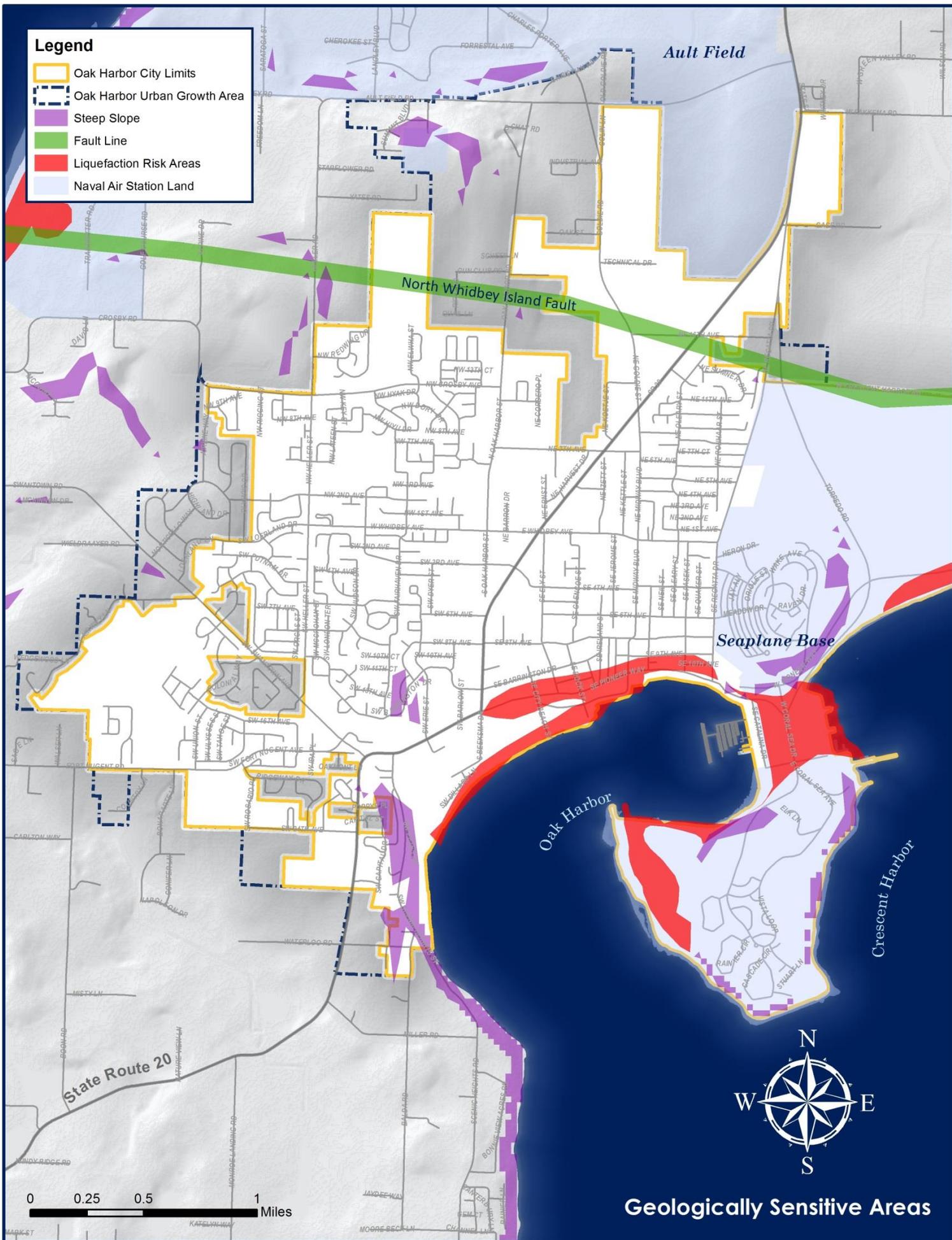
Policies:

- 12.a. Designate those areas subject to frequent flooding or inundation as flood hazard areas.
- 12.b. Protect the important hydrologic role of frequently flooded areas by preventing or mitigating disruption of frequently flooded areas, which may result in hazards to safety or property.
- 12.c. Limit/restrict development within flood hazard areas to reduce flood control and disaster relief costs.



**Legend**

-  Oak Harbor City Limits
-  Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area
-  Steep Slope
-  Fault Line
-  Liquefaction Risk Areas
-  Naval Air Station Land



**Geologically Sensitive Areas**

## Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas Goal

### **Goal 13 - Protect critical aquifer recharge areas from contamination and maintain long-term recharge potential**

#### Policies:

- 13.a. Designate and classify critical aquifer recharge areas.
- 13.b. Regulate activities that could have negative impacts on ground water quality and or recharge potential within critical aquifer recharge areas.
- 13.c. Limit impervious surfaces to reduce stormwater runoff by incorporating low impact development best management practices into new developments.

## Shoreline Goal

### **Goal 14 - Conserve, protect, and enhance shoreline resources through implementation of the Oak Harbor Shoreline Master Program**

#### Policies:

- 14.a. Assure protection of the unique character of the City of Oak Harbor and its shoreline environment while providing for compatible use of the shoreline.
- 14.b. Evaluate proposals for economic development along the shoreline or over the water with regard to the degree to which the natural environment and the social qualities of the city will be enhanced and/or affected. Evaluate such proposals with a preference for long-term benefits over short-term benefits. Evaluate development proposals with a preference for proposals that concentrate development in areas where current development already exists.
- 14.c. Ensure safe, convenient, and diversified public access to the water and shoreline, while protecting the natural environment and maintaining quality of life.
- 14.d. Designate, protect and enhance forage fish spawning areas, eelgrass, shellfish areas and shoreline areas used by bald eagles or great blue herons as fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas.
- 14.e. Ensure efficient movement of people, with minimum disruption of the shoreline environment and minimum conflict between different types of uses, through transportation systems developed along the shoreline.

- 14.f. Encourage diverse, water-oriented recreational opportunities that are compatible with and appropriate to the shoreline locations on which they are planned without degrading the shoreline environment.
- 14.g. Conserve natural resources unique to the shoreline for the benefit of existing and future generations. Utilize the following prioritized mitigation sequence in addressing potential impacts to the natural resources associated with the shoreline when evaluating development proposals:
  1. Avoid impact by not taking certain action or parts of an action.
  2. Minimize impact by limiting the degree or magnitude of action by use of technology or other means.
  3. Rectify impact by repair, rehabilitation, or restoration.
  4. Reduce or eliminate impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations.
  5. Compensate for impact by replacing, enhancing, or providing substitute resources.
  6. Monitor the impact and compensation project, taking appropriate corrective measures.
- 14.h. Protect and/or restore shoreline or water areas that have educational, scientific, archaeological, historic, or cultural value.
- 14.i. Recognize that areas lying seaward from the line of extreme low tide of Oak Harbor Bay as shorelines of statewide significance and manage the uses along these shorelines with the recognition of their regional importance.

## Opportunities and Challenges

As is the case with several other plan elements, there are specific areas that present opportunities for future action and challenges which may have to be overcome. Below are the opportunities and challenges pertinent to the Environmental Element.

The appropriate agency to acquire open space lands depends upon management objectives, available resources, and various land use considerations. For example, management of wildlife habitat may best be accomplished by a land trust, wildlife agency or conservation organization, while the City or a parks district may be the appropriate steward of recreational lands. Island County's Open Space Public Benefit Rating System may be a useful tool in helping to prioritize the specific open spaces to be acquired or protected. This system was originally developed following extensive public input, including input from residents of Oak Harbor.

Greenbelt protection may include clustered development incentives, critical areas regulation, educational support for agriculture and forestry uses through the Washington State extension service, and transfer of development rights as administered by Island County. The City should work with the County to implement the interlocal agreement that allocates a portion of Conservation Futures funds generated from Oak Harbor toward open space preservation in the Joint Planning Area or UGA. Where practical, valuable open space areas outside the UGA should be considered for acquisition or protection to benefit future generations.



## Chapter 12 → Capital Facilities

*A capital facility is a structure, improvement, piece of equipment, or other major asset, including land, that has a useful life of at least 10 years. The Capital Facilities Element links adequate physical infrastructure and facilities with development. In addition the Capital Facilities Element also proposes maintaining or improving existing level-of-service (LOS) standards.*

Oak Harbor's Capital Facilities Element complies with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW 36.70A.070(3) and WAC 365-195-315 (Capital Facilities Requirements) and the Island County, County Wide Planning Policies.

In meeting GMA requirements the Capital Facilities Element includes the following information:

1. An inventory of existing capital facilities owned by public entities, showing the locations and the capacities of public facilities.
2. A forecast of the future needs for such capital facilities.
3. The proposed locations and capacities of expanded or new capital facilities.
4. At least a six-year plan to finance such facilities within projected funding capacities that clearly identifies sources of public money for such purposes.
5. A requirement to reassess the land use element if probable funding falls short of meeting existing needs. This ensures coordination of the Land Use Element and the Capital Facilities Element.

See Technical Appendices, Elements to be Adopted with the Comprehensive Plan, Volume III, for the entire Capital Facilities Element. The following Goals and policies apply to the Capital Facilities Plan Element.

## Goals and Policies

### **Goal 1 - Provide adequate capital facilities and services necessary to serve Oak Harbor's existing and future population without causing decreased service levels below adopted LOS standards.**

#### **Policies:**

- I.a. Predict facility needs for the next 20 years based on projections of anticipated population and business growth.
- I.b. Prepare phased plans to identify needed public facilities to support existing and future growth projected in policy I.a.
- I.c. Coordinate with other jurisdictions to establish priorities of county-wide facility improvements, identify services needed to achieve adopted service levels, and protect public health, safety and the environment.
- I.d. Review growth projections and capital facilities plans annually congruent with the City budget process to ensure that the City's ability to provide and maintain adequate public facilities and services is consistent with growth.
- I.e. Phase the development of capital facilities to ensure sufficient lead-time financing, planning, and construction to provide the facilities when needed.
- I.f. Coordinate land use and public works planning activities with an ongoing program of long-range financial planning to conserve fiscal resources.
- I.g. Support and encourage joint development and use of cultural and community facilities among governmental and/or community organizations.

- I.h. Approve development only when the LOS for a capital facility is assured to meet the standards set forth in the Comprehensive Plan. Limited short term reduction in LOS is acceptable when a capital improvement or strategy to accommodate the impacts is made concurrent with development.

*Discussion - When adequate facilities do not exist to serve proposed development and funds have not been allocated to provide such facilities, the City may consider the following alternatives: change LOS standards, modify the land use element, or require the developer to mitigate.*

- I.i. The City will cooperate with private developers to address Capital Improvements financing programs when necessary.

**Goal 2 - Implement capital facilities projects in accordance with the funding policy priorities of Oak Harbor.**

**Policies:**

- 2.a. Program and prioritize City capital improvements for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The City's capital improvement funding priorities should be:
  - 1. Urgent projects which cannot reasonably be postponed including, but not limited to, those reconstruction, upgrading or new construction projects which are needed to protect public health, safety and welfare.
  - 2. Reconstruction, major maintenance or expansion of the City's existing infrastructure in order to provide for service to the existing community.
  - 3. New projects where the need or demand for service already exists.
  - 4. Expansion projects in partially developed or developing areas where demand is anticipated as a result of, or in preparation for, future growth.
- 2.b. Evaluate capital projects that are included in the Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
- 2.c. Coordinate with the Navy, Island County, and other applicable agencies during planning stage for timely siting and development of facilities of regional significance to ensure the consistency of each jurisdiction's plans.
- 2.d. Locate only compatible public facilities in designated resource lands or critical areas.

- 2.e. Promote high quality design and site planning in the construction of capital facilities.
- 2.f. Encourage citizen involvement in the planning and siting of capital facilities.
- 2.g. Ensure that all City departments review changes to the Capital Facilities Plan and participate in an annual review.

*Discussion - The City should avoid deferring necessary maintenance in favor of new capital projects except for reasons of public safety and other urgent Community needs. Funding programs for specific revenue sources should be linked to priority categories.*

**Goal 3 - Finance Oak Harbor's needed capital facilities in the most economic, efficient, and equitable manner possible.**

**Policies:**

- 3.a. Ensure that the burden of financing capital improvements is equitably borne by the primary beneficiaries of the facility.
- 3.b. Use general revenue only to fund projects that provide a general benefit to the entire community.
- 3.c. Determine which services or facilities are delivered most cost-effectively by the City and which services should be contracted to private entities.
- 3.d. Where appropriate, use special assessment, revenue and other self-supporting bonds instead of tax-supported general obligation bonds.
- 3.e. Consider adopting impact fees when appropriate to mitigate the short-term fiscal impacts of increased development.

*Discussion - A mitigation fee has been proposed for meeting park level-of-service standards, and a fee may be necessary to address transportation concurrency. The City currently collects system development charges to allocate long-term costs for improving water and sewer systems. (See Utilities Element, Policy 1.i.)*

**Goal 4 - Provide a full range of cost-effective urban governmental services to residents within the Oak Harbor City boundaries and the Urban Growth Area as annexed.**

**Policies:**

- 4.a. Monitor annually school, fire, police, waste disposal, utilities and other capital facilities to ensure existing and future needs are met.
- 4.b. Require development proposals to be reviewed for available capacity to accommodate development and needed system improvements by the various providers of services, such as school districts, utilities, police and fire departments.
- 4.c. Encourage joint-use of corridors for major utilities, trails, and transportation rights-of-way. (See Utilities Element)



## Chapter 13 → Government Services

*Local governments are charged with the responsibility of providing certain public services and facilities. Often, the quality of such services is an important indicator of quality-of-life in a particular area, and may shape the decisions of employment and residents as to where they choose to locate. The City of Oak Harbor provides police and fire protection, senior, parks and recreation, utilities, streets, and various community development services. In addition, Oak Harbor School District, Skagit Valley College, Sno-Isle Regional Library, Island County, North Whidbey Parks and Recreation District and Island Transit, provide educational, public health, recreational and public transportation services within the City and the unincorporated UGA.*

An important planning consideration is the relationship between the ability of local government to provide public services and the increased demands that growth and development place upon local government. If this relationship is not properly addressed through advanced planning, the demand for services and facilities may exceed available supply resulting in a reduction of service levels and deterioration of infrastructure.

This element explores the public facilities and services provided by the City and other agencies within the planning area, and the potential impact of growth and development. An underlying philosophy of the Comprehensive

Plan is that growth and development should not detrimentally affect the level of public services and facilities that residents, businesses and property owners presently enjoy. For a discussion of required public improvements and

methods of funding, see the Capital Facilities Element technical plan. The reader is referred to the Utilities Element technical plan for a discussion of water, sanitary sewer, storm drainage, solid waste, electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications services. Marina services are addressed in the Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan.

### Law Enforcement

Law enforcement services within the urban growth area are provided by the Oak Harbor Police Department within City limits, Island County Sheriff's office in unincorporated areas, and the US Navy within the Seaplane Base. In 2016, the Police Department maintained approximately 1.63 non-management law enforcement officers including sergeants, for every 1,000 persons living in the City (non-military lands). This ratio is close to the national average of 1.7 officers per 1,000 population, and the State average of 1.5 officers per 1000.

The department has 38 total employees. This translates into 1.72 employees per 1000 people. It is important that the City maintain an adequate level of police staffing to ensure a safe environment for residents and businesses. The Police Department provides auxiliary response if requested to the Navy Seaplane Base for dependents.

The physical facilities for the Police Department are all located in one building across from City Hall within the Central Business District. The Police Station contains approximately 12,000 square feet of floor area, including 1,250 square feet of jail area. Equipment assets operated by the Police Department includes 23 motor

vehicles broken down as follows: 9 marked, 2 traffic motorcycles, 1 prisoner transport van, 1 drug prevention, 2 administrative, 5 investigative, 1 volunteer/reserve units, 1 animal control truck and 1 armored responsive vehicle.

In addition to law enforcement, the municipal police department is also responsible for providing animal control services throughout the city and contractually on the Navy Seaplane Base.

## Goals and Policies

### **Goal 1 - Maintain and enhance law enforcement services to protect the public health, safety and welfare of Oak Harbor residents.**

#### **Policies:**

- I.a. Ensure that existing public safety and emergency service levels are not diminished as a result of urban growth.

*Discussion - At any one time there may be shortfalls when the City would not meet level-of-service standards (LOS), however, over the long-term, the City will meet or exceed standards.*

- I.b. Continue to maintain its law enforcement response time standard of two minutes or less for emergency calls, and five to seven minutes for non-emergency calls.

*Discussion - These service standards are meant to serve as general targets. The City recognizes that circumstances beyond the control of the Police Department may prevent staff from achieving the target on individual cases. Preservation and improvement of this response time as the City grows will require expanded staff levels, equipment and facilities, as well as proper planning, construction and upkeep of City streets and individual developments.*

- I.c. Seek to maintain adequate Police Department staffing.

*Discussion - The preferred method of measuring demand for law enforcement services is the "24-hour unit" concept. This unit of measurement describes the manpower necessary to support a single patrol officer in the field over a 24-hour period. Each 24-hour unit is supported by one investigator and one clerical support position. In order to maintain existing law enforcement service levels the City needs to add one additional 24-hour unit for each 5,000 to 5,500 increase in population. For simple calculation purposes an additional method of evaluating police LOS is used, a ratio*

which compares number of non-management officers per 1,000 population.

- I.d. Require that new development and redevelopment designs incorporate crime prevention and public safety measures, as practicable, to mitigate the need for law enforcement expenditures.

*Discussion - Street designs that ensure proper grades, turning radii, surface width and sight distances contribute to public safety and reduce the occurrence of traffic accidents. Further, development projects can be designed to ensure that inhabitants enjoy relative freedom from burglaries and assaults. By simply enhancing visibility to the general public through outdoor lighting, landscape maintenance and creation of defensible spaces, much can be done to reduce potential crime situations.*

- I.e. Continue to offer neighborhood-based crime prevention programs to help educate local residents and employers about actions they can take to reduce the threat of crime.

*Discussion - Examples of successful crime prevention programs include D.A.R.E., Citizens on Patrol (Volunteers) and the Citizens Academy.*

- I.f. Work cooperatively with the Island County Sheriff's office and other law enforcement agencies to address regional crime prevention issues and cases.
- I.g. Engage in law enforcement programs which protect the City's large percentage of children for their own inexperience and the criminal conduct of others.

*Discussion - Community police programs and cooperative youth intervention programs should be encouraged and developed as the needs of the community change. (also see Youth Services)*

## Fire Protection

The Oak Harbor Fire Department and North Whidbey Fire and Rescue provide fire protection services within the UGA planning area. The Oak Harbor Fire Department provides services in public education, inspections, and fire/medical incident responses. These services are essential to protect lives and property. The department also provides support to Whidbey General Hospital through an agreement to assist with pre-hospital medical care.

The City relies upon a combination of career and paid-on-call personnel, and preventative means, such as strict enforcement of building and fire codes, to protect lives and property. In 2015, the Fire Department employed eleven (11) career, and 30 paid-on-call personnel. Career personnel include an Administrative Assistant, four Firefighter/EMTs, four Captains, a Deputy Chief and a Fire Chief.

Headquarters Station 81 was completed in April, 1992, and is located at 855 E. Whidbey Avenue. The facility includes a 2,800 square foot training structure and is centrally located on a major arterial street. It is anticipated that the City will need a new fire sub-station in the southwest portion of the UGA to serve future growth.

**Goal 2 - Maintain and enhance fire protection services to safeguard life, property and firefighting personnel.**

- 2.a. Ensure that existing fire protection levels are not diminished as a result of urban growth (See also Urban Growth Area Element).
- 2.b. Maintain a fire protection response time standard of five minutes or less for fire-related incidents, and four minutes or less for medical-related incidents.

*Discussion - This service standard is meant to serve as a general target. The City recognizes that circumstances beyond the control of the Fire Department may prevent staff from achieving the target on individual cases. Preservation and improvement of this response time as the City grows will require expanded staff levels, apparatus, equipment and facilities, as well as proper planning, construction and upkeep of City streets and individual developments (See Capital Facilities Element for capital project requirements).*

- 2.c. Maintain minimum fire flow standards in conjunction with building and fire codes to protect life and property.

*Discussion - Developers may be required to install appropriate public and/or private improvements for fire safety based on potential risk to life and property. For annexation policies, see Urban Growth Area Element, Goal 4.*

- 2.d. Maintain adequate fire protection staffing in order to meet its LOS standards.

*Discussion - Career positions will continue to provide Fire Department administration, training, fire prevention and education, code enforcement services, planning, and fire investigations. Paid-on-call personnel will remain the primary force for fire suppression and response to medical incidents. In order to continue with this structure, it will be necessary to maintain a ratio of firefighters to population, and career personnel to firefighters,*

*which will enable the City to continue providing all of the essential functions described above. This plan recognizes that such ratios may change over time, however, the current level-of-service is a general bench-mark:*

Fire Department Officers  
0.223 per 1,000 population

Support Staff  
0.045 per 1,000 population

Firefighters (paid-on-call and career)  
1.519 per 1,000 population

Training Staff (paid-on-call)  
0.024 per paid-on-call

- 2.e. Maintain or improve the City's Survey and Rating Bureau rating.

*Discussion - The City was reviewed by the Washington Survey and Rating Bureau in 2013, and rated a Class 4 on a scale from one to ten. Some insurance companies use this rating to assist in establishing premium costs for property owners. The rating is based on a number of factors, including personnel, facilities, training, existing fire hazard conditions, City policy toward fire protection, water system for fire flow, emergency communications, and the Fire Department in general, among other things.*

- 2.f. Adopt and implement zoning, subdivision codes and other regulations that address the relationship between development design and protection of property against fire hazards.

*Discussion - Subdivision and site design regulations must consider the relationship between fire protection, street design and layout. Zoning regulations must compliment fire protection regulations.*

- 2.g. Maintain routine inspection programs to enforce building and fire codes.

*Discussion - The intent of these programs is to maintain compliance with the code requirements and thereby reducing risk from fire and other catastrophic events.*

- 2.h. Work cooperatively with adjacent fire protection agencies to coordinate fire delivery service within the Urban Growth Area.
- 2.i. Continue to educate residents and business owners on fire safety and prevention.
- 2.j. Require proposed annexations provide, when requested by the Fire Department, a Fire Response Time Analysis to ensure that the City's response time can be maintained.
- 2.k. Consider establishing a fire service impact fee in order to ensure that capital facilities can be provided to maintain the adopted level of service as the community grows, and should also consider a variety of financing mechanisms in combination with non-capital alternatives.

*Discussion - Financing mechanisms to ensure adequate capital facilities to provide fire services include, but are not limited to, impact fees and service or user charges and dedication of land for facilities in lieu of impact fees. Non-capital alternatives can include private installation of infrastructure, sprinkler systems or interlocal agreements. Other options may include intersection and roadway improvements to maintain response times.*

## Emergency Management

"Emergency management is an umbrella system of planning and preparing for emergencies that are larger than can be handled on a routine basis by law enforcement and fire service first responders... Disaster research reveals that communities which are not prepared and which do not have viable emergency management plans, generated through an interagency planning process, will experience greater difficulty managing resources, delays and misunderstandings during response actions... It is a high probability that these difficulties increase threats to life safety; cause higher, more costly property damage; and lead to more serious degradation of the environment." *(Growth Management Applications to Emergency Services, Department of Community Trade, and Economic Development, 1994).*

The Fire Department is responsible for updating the Emergency Management Plan for Oak Harbor. In particular, the following potential hazards were identified by the community during the Comprehensive Plan update: earthquakes, wind storm damage, aircraft accidents, bridge and utility failure, and hazardous materials releases and spills. The purpose of the emergency management plan is to describe the roles and responsibilities each part of the community will play in responding to the above emergencies.

### **Goal 3 - Prepare for natural disasters and other emergencies which may require extraordinary response measures.**

#### **Policies:**

- 3.a. Cooperate with other responsible agencies to update and maintain a current Emergency Management Plan.

*Discussion - The Fire Department is responsible for maintaining the Emergency Management Plan for Oak Harbor. Such a plan should include an assessment of hazards, identification of responses and facilities, equipment, training, exercises to test effectiveness, public education, and appropriate mitigation to avoid hazards.*

- 3.b. Ensure that Enhanced 911 and all other emergency communications plans are consistent with planned future growth.
- 3.c. Avoid building critical public facilities, such as hospitals, schools and electric transmission lines, in areas likely to experience severe seismic effects, flooding, hazardous material releases or intense fire.
- 3.d. Maintain current information on land use, transportation, utility and communications systems to assist in emergency planning.

## **Educational Services and Facilities**

### **Private Primary and Secondary Schools**

#### *Colleges*

Skagit Valley College operates a full-service campus in Oak Harbor on 2.5 acres of the Navy Seaplane Base at the east end of Pioneer Way. The campus serves about 1,250 students per quarter and is comprised of 4 buildings totaling 114,025 square feet which hold 19 instructional spaces including general classrooms, basic science, nursing and computer labs, and fitness facilities. Skagit Valley College degrees include a Bachelor of Applied Science in Environmental Conservation, six Associate of Arts degrees, one Associate in Science degree, 19 Associate of Technical Arts degrees, and many certificate programs including an Oak Harbor-based Practical Nursing certificate. Various undergraduate and graduate degrees are offered to the general public by a branch of Chapman University, which is located on the Navy Seaplane Base. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University at NAS Whidbey Resident Center offers both Associate and Baccalaureate degrees in aviation-related fields.

#### *Oak Harbor Public Library*

The Oak Harbor Library is a branch of Sno-Isle Libraries, a two-county library system serving Island and Snohomish counties. The City of Oak Harbor annexed to the Sno-Isle library district through voter approval in 1981, allowing residents to pay for library services directly through their property taxes. The library facility, including all major furnishing and shelving, remains the responsibility of the City, in agreement with the library district. The Oak Harbor Library is currently located in the east end of Hayes Hall on the Whidbey Island Campus of Skagit Valley College (SVC). Completed in 1993, Hayes Hall is jointly owned and maintained by SVC and the City of

Oak Harbor, although the City is responsible for all elements related to the public library. The City's share of the building is estimated at approximately 12,000 sq. ft., or 43%. The boundaries of the Oak Harbor Library service area correspond with those of the Oak Harbor School District and include the City of Oak Harbor and the unincorporated North Whidbey area. According to the U.S census, the 2010 population of the area was 37,813. Island County Planning and Community Development projections show the population North Whidbey area increasing to 42,989 by the year 2036.

The current library meets the informational and recreational needs of community members and supports early literacy and school readiness. It serves as a resource for teachers and students in public and private schools from preschool through college. Economic development and local business needs are met through information services, access to online data and entrepreneur/small business support. The library offers many services and resources to families, children and caregivers, teens, adults and seniors including reference and information, programming, access to digital and physical collections and interlibrary loan. Library services include, but are not limited to:

- Story times and events for babies, toddlers, preschoolers and caregivers to promote reading and early literacy
- Programs and outreach for school aged children to promote academic success
- Homework assistance
- Access to online electronic databases via the library website
- Books, eBooks, digital materials, DVD's, CD's, magazines and other materials for checkout
- Library Online Catalog access to 1.5 million titles plus digital resources
- Internet access (including filtered access for children)

- Free eBook, audiobook, movie and music downloads
- Free classes and one-on-one computer help for adults
- Wi-Fi access throughout library and lobby areas
- Professional, friendly, well-trained staff
- Express check out and holds pick up
- Reference and information services during all open hours
- Online reference services accessible 24/7
- Outreach services to the homebound individuals, retirement facilities and local daycares
- Open seven days per week

In 2013, the library circulated more than 400,000 items, not including digital titles. The library shares a collection of more than 1.5 million items. In 2013, out of a total of 433,182 Sno-Isle Libraries customers, 28,271 were registered at the Oak Harbor Library. The use of digital resources by library customers is significant and increasing. In 2013 Sno-Isle Libraries customers accessed the library web site nearly 47 million times to access online data and download digital materials.

Usage statistics gathered by the Sno-Isle Libraries for the Oak Harbor Library indicate that 46% of borrowers are residents of the City of Oak Harbor and the remaining 54% live outside the city limits. It is advisable to use population projection estimates for both the city of Oak Harbor and unincorporated North Whidbey when planning a library facility to serve Oak Harbor Library patrons. A potential source of funding for expanded library facilities is legislation signed into law in 1995 and codified in RCW 27.15 which allows the formation of library capital facility areas in the state of Washington. A library capital facility area is an independent taxing unit formed within the boundaries of an existing rural county library district. Funds approved by voters can be used to finance a new library or remodel an existing library or building.

#### **Goal 4 - Encourage and promote public and private institutions dedicated to the pursuit of education.**

Policies:

- 4.a. Coordinate with Oak Harbor School District, Skagit Valley College and other educational institutions in preparing long-range plans, development regulations and capital projects.
- 4.b. Coordinate with the Oak Harbor School District, Skagit Valley College and other public entities for joint use, including maintenance, of facilities for public use.
- 4.c. Continue to include the Oak Harbor School District in the City's development review process and advise the administration of all municipal activities that may affect the District.
- 4.d. Coordinate its economic diversification plans with Skagit Valley College and other educational institutions and support reasonable plans for campus expansion (See also, Economic Development and Land Use elements).
- 4.e. Work cooperatively with the Oak Harbor School District, Skagit Valley College and Oak Harbor Public Library to share information and resources.
- 4.f. The Library Board is responsible for advising City Council on all matters related to the Oak Harbor Public Library.
- 4.g. The City and Sno-Isle Regional Library should continue to implement library expansion and improvements to advance customer service, information technology and operational efficiency.

Educational services and facilities are principal contributors to a community's quality-of-life. Often the level and quality of such services

become key factors in where families and businesses choose to locate. Elementary schools are an integral part of neighborhoods in which they are located. Middle schools, high schools and other district facilities host a range of community-based events from concerts to trade shows. District and school events bring visitors and revenue into the City. School athletic fields and facilities serve and support community-based programs for children, youth and adults. Libraries and museums symbolize the community's regard for the past and interest in the future. The availability of higher education in either vocational or academic fields is an important determinate in where industries choose to locate.

Usually the agencies responsible for providing the educational services conduct their own long-range planning programs that anticipate future demands on staffing and capital facilities. However, the City has an interest in assuring that its activities recognize and support the ability of these organizations to provide their services. In fact, a partnership between educational services and the City is already well-established. The City leases school district property for parks and athletic fields, the City shares technology infrastructure with Oak Harbor Public Schools and the City contracts with the school district for technology support services. Through the joint pursuit of grant opportunities and shared advocacy at the state and federal level, the City can be an active partner in advancing the success of educational services yielding broad benefits to the Oak Harbor community.

The information presented in this section was prepared by the Oak Harbor Public Schools in 2016 to assist the City in understanding the challenges facing the School District in the years to come.

#### **Oak Harbor Public Schools**

The Oak Harbor community is served by Oak Harbor Public Schools. In 2016, the district operated one high school, two grade 6-8 middle

schools, five grade K-5 elementary schools, and an early learning center and K-12 parent-partnership school (on one site). The district serves over 5,650 students that live both within and outside the Oak Harbor Urban Growth Area Boundary. About half of the students in Oak Harbor Schools are Navy-connected and 92.5% of the dependents connected with Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI) attend Oak Harbor Schools with only 7.5% attending neighboring districts. Oak Harbor Public Schools is also the second largest employer on Whidbey Island. The strong Navy presence in the schools, due to NASWI, drives the community's and Oak Harbor Public Schools' goal to support the military and ensure its children, military and civilian, receive a high quality education.

By October 2016, a new P-8 Poseidon squadron (VP-4) will have relocated from Hawaii to Whidbey Island. The full squadron will eventually include nearly 300 personnel and is expected to bring about 100 new students to Oak Harbor Schools. Two additional P-8 squadrons will arrive subsequently between 2017 and 2018. Depending on the results of an Environmental Impact Statement, NASWI may

also be home to additional squadrons or expansion of current squadrons of E-18A Growlers. The full integration is expected to occur by 2020, and will substantially increase military personnel. Official NASWI estimates conclude that the military population in Oak Harbor will increase from about 7,000 to as many as 9,000 personnel. This could mean an approximately 30% increase in personnel over 4 years. This estimate does not account for dependents who will travel with Navy personnel.

As shown in the chart below, current models used by Oak Harbor Schools predict a conservative enrollment increase of nearly 750 Navy-connected students by 2020.<sup>19</sup> Department of Defense (DoD) studies predict .65 dependent children (K-12) per active duty personnel. However, based on historical data, the district's projections are based on a conservative .4 dependent children per active duty personnel. This formula suggests the district should prepare for an increase of up to 15% in district enrollment. However, in FY2022 VQ-1 is slated for disestablishment and a drop of about 250 students is expected. Nevertheless, after the drop, the district expects to have about 500

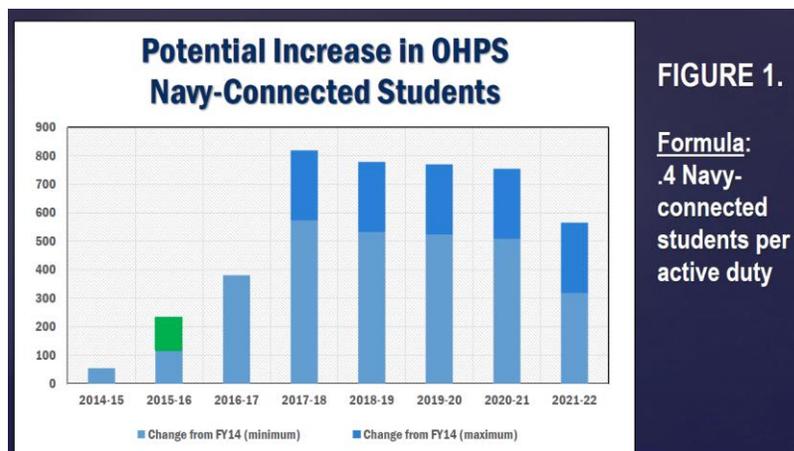


FIGURE 1.

Formula:  
.4 Navy-connected students per active duty

<sup>19</sup> Projections for the increased numbers of students, based on planned expansions at NASWI, were compiled by Oak Harbor Public Schools staff.

more Navy-connected students than today. It is important to note that the projections for military students do not account for increases in Oak Harbor's civilian student numbers, which have steadily risen for the past three years. Navy-connected students increased by over 180 students in the fall of 2015 with 160 of those students at the elementary level. Civilian growth is anticipated at about 50 students per year, which could result in up to 300 more civilian students by 2021-22. This would leave the district with a sustained enrollment of 750 more students than today, even after the drop in FY2022.

In addition to incoming students, Oak Harbor Schools faces facility challenges from state-mandated reductions in class sizes. In November 2014, Washington State voters passed Initiative 1351, the "Washington Class Size Reduction Measure." This initiative mandates a reduction in class sizes across Washington such that no classroom will have more than seventeen (17) students.<sup>20</sup> While the initiative was suspended, lowered K-3 class size caps were implemented statewide under the McCleary Decision with calculated averages dropping to near seventeen by fall 2018. Because of incoming students, it will be impossible for the district to achieve class sizes of seventeen without additional classroom spaces. All elementary schools in Oak Harbor are already operating at or above maximum capacity. In fact, at one school in the fall of 2016 music had to be taught on a cart and remedial classes were taught in the hallways. Without significantly expanded facilities, Oak Harbor Schools could break the state class size mandate, negatively impacting state funding.

Oak Harbor Public Schools has already been required to accommodate all-day kindergarten for all kindergarten students. This demanded an additional five classrooms fall 2015. It also

coincided with an unexpected surge in elementary enrollment. Elementary enrollment grew by 160 students in fall 2015, 100 more than projected. This required five more classrooms than planned. Between enrollment growth, class size reduction and full-day kindergarten, the district had to find thirteen (13) additional classrooms in fall 2015 and this was prior to any growth related to the Navy. This space was created by eliminating computer labs, adding portables and consolidating other programs all at district expense. Between 2014 and 2016, the district spent nearly \$2.5 million on portable classrooms, facility modifications and new furniture and equipment to accommodate additional students and classroom demands. This reduced the district fund balance to minimum levels leaving no dedicated funding source for any future growth.

The district had considered whether or not new attendance boundaries would mitigate the space issues. However, since all of its elementary schools were full, new boundaries would not have alleviated its space issues. In fact, elementary school enrollment is both higher and the most balanced it has been with over 500 students in each school. Despite the space issues, the district reports that it was still able to honor over 80% of parent school-to-school transfer requests. In many cases parent requests helped the district achieve this balance. Depending on the solutions used to create additional space, boundaries may be a consideration, but they are not part of the solution at this time. At both middle schools, there is still physical space for new middle school students. Therefore, there is no need for new boundaries at the middle school level at this time. Alternative uses for this space are discussed later.

The district does have an elementary school facility (Clover Valley) that was closed in 2007 due to declining enrollment. However, in 2008 it was reopened and served as the "North Campus" for the high school during

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[http://sos.wa.gov/\\_assets/elections/initiatives/FinalText\\_578.pdf](http://sos.wa.gov/_assets/elections/initiatives/FinalText_578.pdf)

construction and since 2010 has served two growing district programs. In fact, the school now serves over 400 school district students. It is home to Hand-in-Hand Early Learning Center, which includes the district's developmental (special education) preschool, Title I Preschool and Head Start programs, and HomeConnection, a K-12 public school that enrolls part-time homeschool students in public school classes. The students in both of these programs are school district students and the district receives state and federal funding to serve them. The school has a principal, secretaries, certificated teachers, para-educators, custodians, a school lunch program, library, gym and more that currently are using the facility to full capacity. The school is actually on the verge of needing additional space as well.

Washington State initiated a grant program in fall 2015 to fund capital construction to provide spaces for full-day K and to meet new K-3 class size reduction targets. The district expended significant resources to apply for funds through this grant. However, due to high statewide demand for these funds, only a handful of projects were funded. Oak Harbor's request was not among the approved projects. The district may reapply in subsequent years if this program is continued. However, even if its grant request is approved, the district will be required to secure matching funds of up to \$2 million to access up to the maximum \$4 million possible through the grant. Without help from an outside source (most likely the federal government), securing the state grant would require the district to borrow the matching funds through a limited general obligation bond (LGO). This type of financing is typically unadvisable without a dedicated funding source to service the debts. Without a dedicated funding source, the district would be required to make budget cuts in order to make annual payments on the loans. This could negatively affect services and support for students given the district's existing budget constraints. The total of \$6 million, including match and state

funds, would fall far short of the funds needed to meet the district's space demands, let alone construct a new elementary school. The current new construction cost for a typical elementary school is approximately \$25 million. It is important to note that state class-size grant funds cannot be used for portables. That means the only options the district may consider include modular construction on existing district property, expansion of existing sites through traditional or modular construction and/or the purchase and modernization of an existing facility not currently owned by the district.

Without state and federal funding, the district has been forced to come up with a viable cost-effective stop-gap solution to provide facilities and classroom space relief at the elementary school level. The district is already using twenty (20) portable classrooms to serve elementary students and this number will increase to twenty-eight (28) by fall 2016. By fall 2016, average enrollment at elementary schools is expected to be nearly 600 students, far exceeding the designed facility capacity at each school. The district has some classroom space available at the two middle schools. As a result, in winter 2015 the district conducted a facilities review process to determine how best to use this capacity to provide relief at the elementary level. After gathering parent, staff and community input and holding public hearings, the Oak Harbor School Board decided to reorganize the district's grades K-8 into five K-4 elementary schools, one 5-6 intermediate school and one 7-8 middle school beginning in fall 2017. The reorganization will result in the intermediate school and middle school sites eventually serving over 900 students in each. While this will provide temporary space relief in the elementary schools and capacity for growth, the two buildings were designed for less than 750 students. Consequently, facility modifications and the addition of portables will be necessary at both of the current middle school sites. Meeting these needs will impact

the district's operating budget since no other funding source is available. Facility modifications are expected to cost about \$300,000 and the additional portables (12 classrooms) will cost between \$700,000 and \$1.6 million, depending on whether or not the district purchases or leases the portables. While many students will be displaced through the reorganization, it should provide the additional capacity needed at the elementary level to absorb additional the students anticipated.

By the 2019-20 school year, the district is expected to have 40 portable classrooms serving students in grades K-8. Portables may be cheaper than permanent facilities initially, but continuing with this strategy will likely cost the district more money in the long run. The average acceptable life of a portable unit is approximately ten years. Across Washington, it is uncommon for portables to be replaced at this rate. Instead, they are generally replaced every twenty (20) years or more, creating high

maintenance costs. Portables are also generally viewed as less preferential learning spaces when compared with permanent construction. The current price for a two classroom portable including installation is \$250,000 plus \$50,000 for furniture, equipment and curriculum. These costs do not include water or bathrooms to the portables, which are features that can increase costs by about \$50,000 per unit. It is clear that the district will eventually need a long-term permanent facilities solution.

The required number of portable classrooms has been somewhat difficult to fit onto Oak Harbor Public Schools' existing property. With at least twenty-eight (28) portable classrooms on elementary sites by the end of the 2015-16 school year, the physical capacity for additional portables is nearing site maximums. Whenever new portable classrooms are added, playground space is compromised. Furthermore, since gym and lunchroom space are already filled to

<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>SQ. FTG.</b>	<b>CCA</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>ESTIMATE</b>
ANY K-8 NEW SQUARE FOOTAGE FOR <b>UNHOUSED</b> STUDENTS (NEGATIVE NUMBER INDICATES <b>OVERHOUSED</b> )	(67,363)	\$200.40	60.19%	\$0
ANY K-8 <b>MODERNIZATION</b> OR <b>REPLACEMENT</b> (NEW-IN-LIEU) (NEGATIVE NUMBER INDICATES NO ELIGIBILITY)	65,656	\$200.40	60.19%	\$7,919,477
ANY 9-12 NEW SQUARE FOOTAGE FOR <b>UNHOUSED</b> STUDENTS (NEGATIVE NUMBER INDICATES <b>OVERHOUSED</b> )	(36)	\$200.40	60.19%	\$0
ANY 9-12 <b>MODERNIZATION</b> OR <b>REPLACEMENT</b> (NEW-IN-LIEU) (NEGATIVE NUMBER INDICATES NO ELIGIBILITY)	38,662	\$200.40	60.19%	\$4,663,440

Notes:

- 1 ESTIMATES SHOWN HERE ARE CONSTRUCTION COSTS. OTHER COMPONENTS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR STATE ASSISTANCE.
- 2 DOES NOT INCLUDE CURRENT CLASSROOM/HANDICAPPED STUDENT COUNTS.
- 3 CCA: CONSTRUCTION COST ALLOWANCE FOR JULY 2014 RELEASE OF FUNDS.
- 4 %: FUNDING ASSISTANCE PERCENTAGE FOR 2014 FOR OAK HARBOR SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 201

capacity alternative locations and plans to serve students must be developed. Ensuring adequate restrooms access is an additional concern and would increase costs if sewer and water lines needed to be added to the portables. Finally, there is virtually no resale value on portable classrooms, so any monies directed toward them are sunk costs.

Permanent construction is the preferable solution for space issues. In 2009, an OSPI-supported “study and survey” of district facilities recommended the replacement of Oak Harbor Elementary south buildings due to their condition and high costs for modernization. However, that project has not been initiated due to a lack of available funds. Table I details estimated state aid for construction projects. The estimate comes from the Office of the Northwest Regional Coordinator for the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Oak Harbor Public Schools would prefer to build 65,656 square feet of permanent facilities (through brick and mortar or modular construction). It is important to note that these numbers were calculated prior to the recent influx of additional students and fails to take into account expected new Navy students. Permanent construction would avoid maintenance costs from installing portable classrooms for several hundred incoming students. Additionally, permanent facilities would bolster Oak Harbor Public Schools’ ability to accommodate future surges in students. This means that over the life of the expansion, permanent facilities will save money on housing students. While state funding is available for construction, the match requirements are significant and would require a federal funding source to cover the match since the district’s bond rate is already at a high level due to the 2007-09 construction of a new stadium, career & technical education facility and high school modernization and expansion. The bonds for these projects will not be paid off until 2023.

Oak Harbor Public Schools is the local education agency serving students in the greater Oak Harbor community. It is inexorably tied to NASWI. This is a point of pride to the community, the students and their families, many of whom are connected to the Navy. As personnel and operations expand at NASWI, so too does the need for facilities at Oak Harbor Public Schools. The District currently experiences space constraints that will be exacerbated by a significant influx of students, most of whom will be Navy dependents. To continue providing a high quality education to all of the students of Oak Harbor Public Schools, civilian and military, Oak Harbor School District, NASWI, the City of Oak Harbor and Island County must maintain a strong relationship and pursue policies to address the issue of growth. This must include finding a solution to current facilities constraints. The Oak Harbor community and school district have consistently demonstrated support, both financially and morally. The local community should continue to seek assistance with this challenging situation from the federal government.

Regarding a levy increase, with a projected nearly 20% increase in student enrollment since the last levy, a corresponding levy increase is already necessary just to maintain current student programs and services. This is likely to be the maximum amount feasible for Oak Harbor citizens at this time. Such an increase will only maintain current programs and not provide additional funding for permanent facilities or other expansion. Oak Harbor residents already pay a higher rate per \$1000 of assessed value for schools (as compared with neighboring districts) to make up for lost local funds due to the presence of NASWI. Non-taxable federally-owned property constitutes more than half of the assessed value in the district. Federal Impact Aid is intended to offset this impact, but it only makes up for less than half of this lost revenue and has significantly diminished over the past eight years. In fact,

Impact Aid for Oak Harbor was 50% higher in 2008 with fewer federally-connected students in the district. This has left the district far below neighboring districts in dollars per student from these funding sources.

Finally, concerns about long-term involvement are reduced because construction funding would actually directly benefit the Navy, its personnel and families. The extra space requirements are caused by a surge in both personnel and their children. Whenever new squadrons are introduced, staffing increases at NASWI. By creating additional classroom spaces, Oak Harbor Schools will be able to more easily accommodate new students regardless of future Navy contributions.

While the district has a stop-gap plan in place to address its immediate facility and space issues, it is clear that a more permanent solution will be required. Forty (40) portables housing students is not sustainable in the long-term. However, a long-term facility solution for Oak Harbor Schools will require a combination of federal, state and local support and funding. The district has adequate land available for construction of additional and/or expanded school facilities. Some of this property has already been zoned for school construction. Moving forward, it is clear that funding for additional facilities is the primary barrier for the district.

## Senior Services

Oak Harbor Senior Services serves a fast growing population of citizens of Oak Harbor and North Whidbey Island who are age 50 and over. Senior Services is dedicated to improving quality of life, fostering community partnerships, responding to diverse needs and interests, enhancing dignity, supporting independence and encouraging local older adults to be involved in the community.

The City's Senior Services operates an 8,000 square foot facility (or center) which is home to a variety of programs, activities and events geared towards meeting the needs of the community's seniors. Many of the programs are offered by other entities, who utilize the center's space to meet with clients. The center currently has approximately 950 members and is operated by three paid staff and over 50 volunteers. Funding for its operation comes from a variety of sources, including Island County, the City, grants, private donations and staff-led fund raising efforts.



**Goal 5 - Continue to provide our senior residents with recreational, social, educational, and health maintenance services specifically designed to meet their current and emerging needs.**

Policies:

- 5.a. The City should identify barriers to service access and define emerging needs of this group while updating planning strategies as needed.
- 5.b. The City should expand the senior center as use increases and unmet needs are identified.
- 5.c. Establish an interlocal Agreement with Island County to assure that the Senior Center remains capable of providing its services and adequate staffing is maintained.

**Public Involvement**

Local government is a democratic institution governed by elected representatives. As such, its policies, actions, and decisions should reflect the majority view of its constituency, tempered by the parameters of the state and national constitutions. Further, local government must ensure that its constituency is informed about the implications of its activities so that people can effectively express their opinions. This is particularly important in the establishment of policies affecting community growth and development.

The growth in technology and communication devices has increased the venues for distribution of information as well as gathering input. The City has been using the web and social media as avenues for citizen engagement. For younger generations, social media has become the default means of interacting with organizations and individuals. Also for busy professions, especially those with families, participating in civic issues through more traditional public engagement tools, such as public hearings or open houses, is impractical. By using internet and social media, the city can make participation easier, more convenient, and consistent with the expectations of our citizens.

However, there are still a large demographic in the community that is familiar with the traditional public engagement approaches that were effective before the current technology boom. The City should continue to offer these avenues of public participation as a default and enhance them with the more modern technology avenues where feasible.

**Local Boards, Commissions and Advisory Committees**

The City of Oak Harbor maintains several special purpose boards with varying powers to advise and act in matters affecting public

services and development. These include the Civil Service Commission, the Library Board, Park Board, Senior Advisory Board, Community Police Advisory Board, Marina Advisory Committee, Arts Commission, and Planning Commission. Of these, the Planning Commission has the most responsibility for addressing growth and development issues.

In addition to formally adopted boards and commissions, the City has, from time to time, established ad-hoc citizens committees to accomplish a specific task. This approach increases public exposure and involvement in municipal activities, providing greater assurances that new policies are consistent with the interests of the general citizenry.

### **Inter-governmental Relations**

From the City's perspective, it is desirable to understand the role and intentions of each level of government and to establish policies that guide its approach to inter-governmental relationships affecting the community's growth and development. Oak Harbor coordinates its development review and planning activities with other governmental agencies and service providers. In particular, the establishment of an Urban Growth Area boundary and supportive interlocal agreement with Island County is an integral part of the Comprehensive Plan (See Urban Growth Area Element).

### **Goal 6 - Encourage early and continuous public involvement in the planning process and ensure coordination between the City and other jurisdictions to advance community Goals.**

Policies:

- 6.a. Design a process that involves early citizen input and review for city plans, policies and regulations..
- 6.b. Strive to provide timely information to the citizens on public meeting and discussions using traditional methods of notification along with web and social media postings.
- 6.c. For large scale and complex projects, create and disseminate a public involvement plan designed to encourage early and continuous public involvement.
- 6.d. Seek to maintain diverse public involvement, and expeditiously appoint new advisory board and commission members as vacancies occur.  
  
*Discussion - Consideration should be given to announcing vacancies in the local newspaper as a means of encouraging community interest.*
- 6.e. Strive to create diversity in advisory groups and commissions to provide a broad spectrum of experience, knowledge and insights regarding city matters
- 6.f. Provide timely and effective public notification of land use actions.
- 6.g. Coordinate with other public agencies to promote city goals and further adopted statewide and countywide goals and policies.

## Permitting

Various City departments are responsible for issuing permits and licenses. Some permits, such as major land use approvals, require authorization by the City Council, after recommendations by the Planning Commission, while other approvals, such as short subdivision plats and building permits, are administered by City staff. The City recognizes that fair and efficient processing of permits is in the interest of property owners, private businesses, and the City Administration.

### **Goal 7 - Process land use and development permits in a fair and timely manner, with City decisions based upon clear and objective standards to ensure predictability.**

Policies:

- 7.a. Combine review and notification procedures for multiple permits, whenever possible, to eliminate unnecessary delay in review of development applications.

*Discussion - This policy is intended to improve communications between City departments and applicants in an effort to concurrently process multiple permits and prevent unnecessary delays, possibly through pre-submittal discussion. The policy is not intended to reduce public participation or limit statutory review procedures, such as notification requirements.*

- 7.b. Consider streamlining procedures under the State Environmental Policy Act and Shoreline Management Act, as such programs may be developed by the State of Washington.

- 7.c. Process development applications within the legal time frames established by state law.

*Discussion - In the event of a heavy work load, the Planning Commission may consider auxiliary meetings or workshops to address planning and development problems.*

- 7.d. Consider establishing a fee structure for development permits which is graduated to reflect demands on staff time.

*Discussion - For example, larger, more complex projects require more time for review by City staff than smaller projects which presently fall under the same classification and fee. Further, it may be in the city's best interest to obtain a special fee for projects requiring outside consultant review and technical support.*

## Property Rights

**Goal 8 - 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. (Also see the United States Constitution, 5th Amendment)**

**Policies:**

*Discussion - In addition to the following policies, the City of Oak Harbor will abide by the State of Washington Attorney General's recommended process for evaluation of proposed regulatory or administrative actions to avoid Unconstitutional Takings of Private Property, 1993.*

8.a. Preserve the rights of property owners, operating under current land use regulations, unless a public health, safety or welfare purpose is served by more restrictive regulation.

- 8.b. Proposed regulatory or administrative actions shall not result in an unconstitutional taking of private property without just compensation.
- 8.c. The City shall not exceed its valid authority as granted to it under police powers or by any other grant of power.



# Chapter 14 → City of Oak Harbor and Naval Air Station Whidbey Island Community Coordination

*Just as the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission recognized the importance of the NAS Whidbey to the Navy, the City of Oak Harbor recognizes its importance to the greater Oak Harbor community. This section of the Comprehensive Plan provides a summary of the goals and policies that support the mission of NAS Whidbey and displays the spirit of cooperation between the City of Oak Harbor and the Navy. NAS Whidbey and Oak Harbor are interconnected by planning issues. Goals and policies that either directly support NAS Whidbey Island or that support the military and civilian personnel who are employed there, can be found in every element of the Comprehensive Plan. Listed below are some key statements, goals and policies. Please note that not all policies associated with a particular goal are shown.*

## **Comprehensive Plan Elements Land Use Element**

### **NAS Whidbey**

NASWI is the single largest employer on Whidbey Island. Its Ault Field location and flight operations' proximity to Oak Harbor influences the city's land use patterns. Noise contours emanating from their training flight paths have been mapped and play a crucial role in building construction techniques to mitigate noise impacts. The orientation of runways at

Ault Field also creates Accident Potential Zones (APZ) that overlap on properties within the city. These areas have overlay restrictions on uses to promote compatibility and safety. Due to these impacts, the land use patterns to the north of the city have been designated primarily for industrial uses to limit people intensive uses, reduce potential impacts, and promote safety.

### **Goal 2 – Encourage land use patterns that promote health and safety**

- 2.j. Prohibit people intensive and residential uses from locating in high noise and aircraft crash zones.
- 2.k. Require noise abatement construction standards based on noise level zones.

### **Goal 3 – Support a vibrant economy**

- 3.c. Support NAS Whidbey and its continued operation by discouraging:
  - 1. Encroachment of incompatible uses;
  - 2. Residential uses from locating north on NE 16th Avenue alignment;

- 3. Structures that are a hazard to flight navigation;
  - 4. People-intensive uses in high noise areas and potential crash zones.
- 3.d. Require the disclosure of potential noise and accident potential impacts to prospective buyers, renters, or leases of property and structures in the city and UGA.

**Goal 4 – Promote a diverse and affordable housing stock**

- 4.g. Coordinate housing growth strategies with changes in school enrollment projections and NAS Whidbey expansions.

**Urban Growth Area Element**

The Urban Growth Area (UGA) plays a significant role in planning for Oak Harbor's future. Oak Harbor's UGA also assists the City in meeting State planning Goals; such as encouraging development in urban areas where public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner, reducing the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling low density developments, and protecting the environment and enhancing the state's high quality of life. Consistent with the County-Wide Planning Policies, the term UGA includes both the incorporated land and the surrounding unincorporated area that is planned to accommodate future urban development. Policies that relate to NAS Whidbey include:

**Goal 3 - The City and County shall adopt inter-jurisdictional cooperation policies regarding land within and surrounding the UGA.**

- 3.c. Continue to use an amend as necessary the Interlocal Agreement between Oak Harbor and Island County as the primary means of implementing compatible land use policies, procedures, public facility planning, and development standards and regulations within the UGA.
- 3.d. Plan development within the UGA for future annexation to the City by ensuring uses are compatible with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

## Housing Element

The ability to provide adequate opportunities for housing, and affordable housing, is important to the City of Oak Harbor. It is especially important to the City's relationship with NAS Whidbey as the personnel employed by the Navy are only partially housed in Navy housing. Affordability of housing is recognized as a key factor in the ability of Oak Harbor to meet the needs of all its citizens.

Two Comprehensive Plan goals directly support the City's efforts in providing for adequate housing:

**Goal 1 - Ensure that adequate opportunities exist for low and moderate-income families to obtain affordable housing.**

**Goal 3 - Identify and provide sufficient and appropriate land for housing.**

## Utilities Element

### Water

Oak Harbor obtains water from Anacortes via 10- and 24-inch transmission lines, and from an aquifer below the City via three wells. The Anacortes supply is the primary source. Oak Harbor has entered into a 20-year Water Supply Agreement with Anacortes, and renegotiates water charges and committed water volume with an annual amendment. The Navy is a wholesale water customer of the City. The Navy and the City have an equal allocation of water capacity through the existing transmission lines. The supply and transmission system has sufficient capacity to meet the projected 20 year population demand for the UGA service area, with an excess capacity of 16% if the City's wells are not producing and 21% if the wells are producing.

### Wastewater treatment

The City and the Navy share a wastewater treatment facility on the Seaplane Base. An existing contract determines the amount of treatment capacity allocated to both entities.

Existing goals and policies address wastewater discharge requirements:

**Goal 4 - Minimize aesthetic and environmental degradation from utility operation, installation, replacement, repair and maintenance.**

4.g Meet National Pollution Discharge Permit requirements for sanitary sewer discharge.

## Transportation Element

Transportation within Oak Harbor and to and from the Ault Field and the Seaplane Base is addressed in general terms by the goals and policies of the Transportation Element. The City of Oak Harbor recognizes that efficient transportation systems support NAS Whidbey operations.

### Goal 1 - Safe for all Users

#### Goal 2 - Connected and Efficient

- 2.f. Coordinate all modes of transportation to enhance effectiveness and efficiency. Promote a transportation network, including non-motorized modes, that allows for convenient access to major destinations within the City of Oak Harbor.

#### Goal 3 - Multimodal, Offering User Friendly Transportation Options

- 3.b. Coordinate with Island Transit to identify locations for future transit infrastructure and improvements that will more effectively serve the developing areas of Oak Harbor, such as bus stops, bus pullouts, bus stop shelters, and park-and-ride facilities.

#### Goal 6 - Integrated with the Regional Transportation Network to Address a Diverse Range of Transportation Interests

- 6.a. Ensure efficient management of all transportation resources through cooperation in planning and project development with Federal, State, regional, and local jurisdictions. Work with Island County to continue consistency and interconnectedness in Oak Harbor's Unincorporated UGA.
- 6.c. Work with adjacent jurisdictions and transportation agencies to identify

necessary improvements to the regional roadway system to ensure adequate regional access to and from the City of Oak Harbor.

## Capital Facilities Element

The Capital Facilities Element links adequate physical infrastructure and facilities with development. As with the other elements, coordination between the City and the Navy on capital facility projects benefits both parties.

### Goal 2 - Implement capital facilities projects in accordance with the funding policy priorities of Oak Harbor.

- 2.c. Coordinate with the Navy, Island County, and other applicable agencies during planning stage for timely siting and development of facilities of regional significance to ensure the consistency of each jurisdiction's plans.

## Economic Development Element

As was noted earlier, as the largest employer in North Whidbey, NAS Whidbey has a significant economic impact on the greater Oak Harbor area. Yet it is realized that additional economic growth is required in order for Oak Harbor to maintain economic stability. This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is in part based upon the 'North Whidbey Economic Diversification Action Plan,' which contains the following mission statement:

"North Whidbey is committed to creating a planned and diversified local economy that creates opportunities for fairly paid employment and a strong local tax base, while respecting the unique quality of life we treasure. To accomplish this mission,

we will create proactive community and customer service support programs which will maintain NAS Whidbey, support the vitality of existing businesses and encourage compatible new economic activities.”

The Economic Development Element provides the goals and policies intended to assist in meeting this goal.

#### **Goal 4 - Continue working with the Navy to enhance economic opportunities.**

- 4.a. The City of Oak Harbor supports the continuing operation of NAS Whidbey as a military installation. Should the present character of operations and mission change in the future such that the Navy can support joint use, then the opportunity for joint use of Ault Field should be explored.

*Discussion - The opportunity for joint use of Ault Field was explored in the North Whidbey Community Diversification Action Plan of April, 1994. The Plan's conclusion; "The operations of NAS Whidbey and related directives regarding military, security and other logistical, environmental and surplus issues clearly make joint use not a viable option, particularly for the scope of time of this study" (Chapter 1, page 10).*

*Laws, regulations, policies, and criteria regarding joint use of military airports can be found in the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, the Federal Airport and Airways Development Act of 1970, the Federal Airport and Airways Improvement Act of 1982, and Secretary of the Navy Instruction 3770.2. Associated airspace, land use, facilities, environmental, etc., regulations, policies, and/or criteria may also apply and can be found in applicable Public Law, Executive Order, the National Environmental Policy Act, Department of Defense and Department of the Navy policies and regulations, Federal Aviation Regulations, etc.*

- 4.c. The City should work together with the Navy to encourage Naval procurement of local products and services.

#### **Goal 5 - Implement long-range economic diversification projects to provide job opportunities and reduce economic reliance on Naval Air Station Whidbey Island.**

*Discussion - The majority of the policies within this Goal can be referenced directly to the "North Whidbey Community Action Plan".*

- 5.a. The City, in cooperation with Island County and other stake-holders, should work to increase the number of jobs in primary industries and the retention of existing employment.
- 5.c. The City should work to establish the North Whidbey Enterprise Area to facilitate the creation of primary jobs in targeted business sectors (see North Whidbey Economic Diversification Action Plan and map).
- 5.d. The City should plan to annex the Enterprise Area and coordinate the extension of utilities, in conformance with the UGA and Utilities Element.
- 5.e. For consistency with the Enterprise Area concept, review existing standards, such as requirements for fire flow and sanitary sewer.
- 5.f. The City should pursue the financing and construction needed to upgrade Goldie Road and Oak Harbor Road corridors and extension of Cemetery Road, in conformance with the Transportation Element.
- 5.g. Adopt performance zoning and design standards for the Enterprise Area to allow flexibility in site design and use, while requiring a high standard of aesthetics, circulation, and overall compatibility with the small-town

character of Oak Harbor and unincorporated Island County.

- 5.h. The City should adopt a minimum target to increase the share of North Whidbey area manufacturing jobs from 4 to 8 percent as well as increase transportation and utility jobs from 1 to 3 percent of all non-agricultural workers by the year 2013.

*Discussion - The wording of this policy is to suggest an increase in private sector jobs, rather than governmental jobs.*

- 5.i. Encourage non-polluting industries to locate within the city and/or urban growth area.
- 5.j. The City should pursue funding and construction of the North Whidbey Enterprise Area sewer as a means of encouraging economic growth and job creation in this area.

## Urban Design Element

The Urban Design Element provides the goals and policies that direct the visual appearance of the community. These goals and policies directly contribute to the quality of life for all the citizens of Oak Harbor.

### Goal 4 - Protect viewsheds and view corridors.

*Discussion - The City of Oak Harbor defines a viewshed as a panoramic view from a single location. Significant viewsheds include views of Mt. Baker, Mt. Rainer, Cascade mountain range, Olympic mountain range, Oak Harbor Bay, Maylor Point (especially wooded and tidal flat areas) and Saratoga Passage.*

- 4.f. The City and the Navy should cooperate on the protection of viewsheds and view corridors.

### Goal 8 - The City should adopt measures to enhance the entryways into Oak Harbor with early and continuous community input.

- 8.c. Form partnerships with the Navy, the Washington State Department of Transportation, Island County and other property owners to implement the entryway design guidelines.

## Chapter 15 → Related Documents

### **Comprehensive Plan Non-Project Environmental Impact Statement**

A non-project environmental impact statement (EIS) was prepared during the drafting of the first GMA comprehensive plan (1995). This EIS evaluated five alternatives for addressing growth in Oak Harbor. Each of the alternatives analyzed issues previously discussed above such as housing, employment and the environment. Throughout this analysis the presence of NAS Whidbey played a critical role in planning for the future of Oak Harbor. For instance, noise and safety issues resulting from aircraft operating from Ault Field are addressed in the Comprehensive Plan through the designation of uses compatible with the Accident Potential Zones (APZ's) and noise sensitivity areas (DNL or Ldn contours) established by the Navy. In addition, it is projected that NAS Whidbey will provide 500 additional residential units to serve military families over the next 20 years, including the necessary roads and utilities, and has joint agreements with Oak Harbor on sewer treatment and potable water.

### **Shoreline Master Program**

The City of Oak Harbor Shoreline Master Program contains an *applicability to federal agencies* section. Direct federal agency actions and projects occurring on lands subject to the Washington State Shoreline Management Act and within the City's shoreline jurisdiction shall comply with WAC 173-27-060 (as filed on 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96).

### **Oak Harbor Municipal Code Chapter 6.90, Noise Disclosure Requirement**

Requires that any person selling, leasing or offering for sale any property within the noise contours of 60Ldn or above must give notice to the prospective buyer or lessee of the fact that property is in an area impacted by noise.

### **Oak Harbor Municipal Code Chapter 17.30, Noise Attenuation Standards**

Safeguarding life, health, property and public welfare by establishing minimum requirements regulating the design and construction performance standards of buildings for human occupancy in the noise sensitive vicinity of the Whidbey Island Air Station and Ault Field, to ensure compatibility between the air station and surrounding land uses, and to protect the air station from incompatible encroachment.

## **Oak Harbor Municipal Code**

### **Chapter 19.50, Aviation Environs Overlay Zone**

This chapter serves as an overlay district that applies additional standards and requirements to properties located within an underlying zoning district. It also shares the same purpose statement of OHMC 17.30, Noise Attenuation Standards. The two subdistricts of this chapter (Noise Zone A and B) determine which of the noise attenuation standards from OHMC 17.30 apply to a given project.



