

## 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

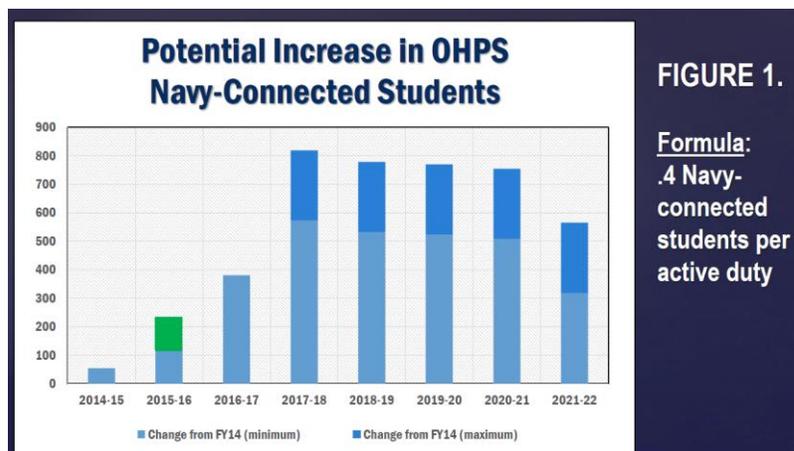


FIGURE 1.

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.

