

# 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.