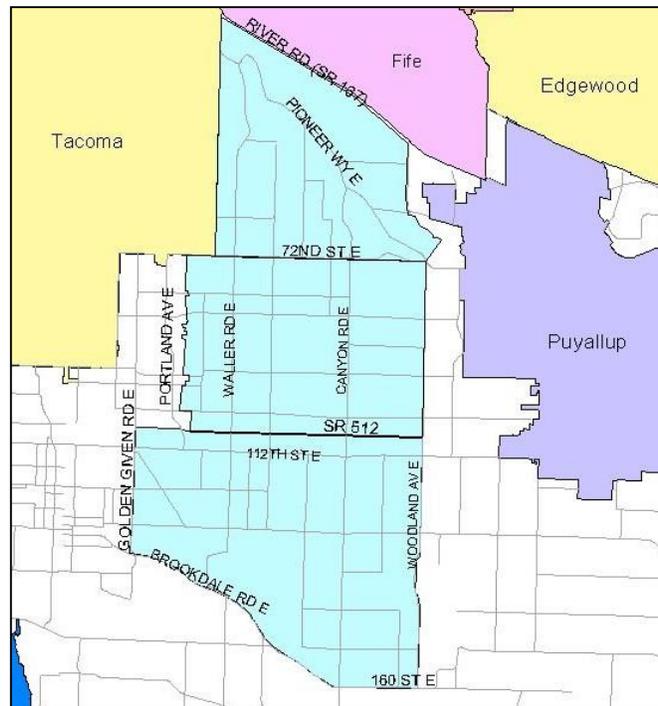


Chapter 1: Introduction

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN AREA

Central Pierce County has experienced a significant amount of growth during the past several decades. Some of this growth has been at the expense of the Mid-County area’s rural atmosphere.

The Mid-County Community Plan area is located in central Pierce County at the fringe of the County’s urban growth area limits. The plan area is bordered by the City of Tacoma and the communities of Midland and Parkland to the west, the City of Puyallup and South Hill to the east, the City of Fife to the north and Frederickson to the south. The northern boundary of the plan area is State Route 167 (River Road) and Brookdale Road East/160th Street East represents the southern boundary. The western boundary shifts between the City of Tacoma boundaries, 20th Avenue East, and Golden Given. Woodland Avenue and 66th Avenue East represent the eastern boundary. The intersection of 96th Street East and Canyon Road East is roughly the geographic center of the plan area.



The plan area is approximately 23 square miles in size and encompasses almost 14,652 acres of urban, rural, and natural resource lands. Many small, distinct communities are located within the plan area including Summit-Waller, North Clover Creek Collins, and Summit View. Some plan area residents associate themselves with other neighboring communities such as Midland and South Hill. Major north/south transportation routes within and adjacent to the plan area include Mountain Highway, State Route 161 (Meridian), and Canyon Road East which bisects the center of the plan area. The main east/west access routes through the plan area are SR 167, 72nd Street East, SR 512, and 112th Street East.

While a small portion of the eastern plan area is located within the County’s Urban Growth Area boundaries, the majority of the plan area is rural in character with agricultural activities, hobby farms, and low density rural residential housing. There are many unique environmental features within the plan area including a system of rivers and creeks, all of which support a variety of wildlife species.

GROWTH TRENDS, POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

GROWTH TRENDS

During the years between 1990 and 2000, the Mid-County plan area had a similar percentage of population growth compared to Pierce County as a whole, but less growth compared to surrounding communities. The following is an example of the comparative growth (expressed in percent) from 1990 to 2000 between the plan area and other areas:

Mid County - 18%

Pierce County (incorporated and unincorporated) - 20%

South Hill - 44%

Frederickson - 52%

Graham - 58%

CURRENT POPULATION

The year 2000 population within the plan area was estimated at 23,117 people. Of the total plan area population, it is estimated that 4,269 of those people reside inside the Comprehensive Urban Growth Area (CUGA) boundary while the remaining 18,848 residents live in either designated rural or natural resource areas. The year 2022 population estimates indicate that the population is expected to increase to 25,639 people. From this total estimate, 5,840 of those people will reside inside the CUGA boundary while the remaining 19,799 residents will live in either designated rural or resource areas.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics for the plan area were compiled from information contained within the year 2000 U.S Census survey. The following census block groups contain the plan area and were used to derive the demographic information; 710.001, 710.002, 710.003, 710.004, 710.005, 710.006, 711.001, 711.002, 712.051, 712.052, 712.062, 712.063, 713.051, 713.052, 713.061, 713.062, 713.063, 713.073, 713.081, and 713.082.

The population within the plan area is generally older than Pierce County's average. The median age for this plan area is approximately 38, while that for the County as a whole is approximately 35. The median household size for the plan area closely reflects that of the County, being 2.5 members in Mid-County and 2.62 in the County as a whole.

HISTORY OF MID-COUNTY

EARLY HISTORY

Native Americans lived in the Mid-County area for thousands of years before Europeans started to arrive in the 1830s. The local tribe which inhabited and utilized the Puyallup River area was the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, who hold reservation lands in this area today. Tribal villages were

established throughout the Puyallup River watershed and beyond. Hunting, fishing and gathering were their traditional food provision methods.

The Puyallup River valley area was one of the first areas in Pierce County settled by Euro-American emigrants who came west through an overland route such as the Oregon Trail in the 1850s. In 1853, the Mid-County area became part of the Washington Territory, and in 1889, part of the newly-formed State of Washington.

In 1850, the U.S. Congress passed the Donation Land Act that granted 320 acres to single adult male citizens or 640 acres to married couples settling the area. Portions of E. Meeker and C. Downey Donation Land Claims granted under this Act are located in the Mid-County community planning area.

Some of the segments in the present day arterials in the Mid-County community were dedicated to the local government for use as roads by local property owners and were named after the persons dedicating them or well-known families in the area. Some of these road names go back to the latter part of the nineteenth century. The following past road names are examples:

- S. Wilkens Road (a segment of 72nd Street East)
- Moeller-Mahon Road (a segment of 96th Street East)
- Knapp Moore Road (a segment of 104th Street East)
- Geo. A. Cooper Road (a segment of 128th Street East)
- Widerhold-Headley Road (a segment of Brookdale Road)
- Jordan-Chesney Road (a segment of Waller Road)
- Malcom McLarty Road (a segment of Canyon Road)
- Tacoma-Puyallup Road (Pioneer Way)
- Collins Road (a segment of 128th Street East)
- Moeller-Mahon Road (a segment of Vickery Avenue)
- Byrd's Mill-Puyallup Road Revision (a segment of 84th Street East)
- Wilt-Hegele Road Extension (a segment of 112th Street East)
- Central Road (Bingham Avenue)

DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY

Early settlers from the latter part of the nineteenth century were engaged in logging and agriculture, and fished in local waters. Crops cultivated in area farms included hops (in early period), and later, berries, bulbs, vegetables, hay, and grain, such as barley and oats. Later, raising cattle, dairy cows, goats, sheep and chickens became more common on local farms. Railroad lines that passed through the Summit area in the last decades of nineteenth century helped transport logs and farm produce from the area and bring supplies to the area.

SCHOOLS

Schools were a source of pride for the early Mid-County community. The Midland School District was formed in 1880. Its first two-story school was built in the 1890s. In 1904, the

Harvard School District consolidated with Midland School to become Midland School District No. 304.

Summit School, serving grades 1 through 4, was built in 1908 as a one-room school. In 1911, a second room was added to the Summit School and it was renamed the Central Avenue School. In 1927, after a fire destroyed the building in 1925, a much larger brick building was built to house only the elementary school children at 4505 104th Street East. Additions to the Central Avenue School were built in the 1940s and 1955. The Central Avenue School building still exists today at the same location.

Collins School, originally built in 1908 as a one-room school, added a second room in 1910 and a third room in 1919.

The Franklin Pierce School District No. 402 was created by voter approval in 1947, consolidating the Midland, Collins, and Central Avenue schools, in addition to the Parkland school.

In the early 1910s the local community organized another new School District No.123. The one-room Woodrow School, named after President Woodrow Wilson, was constructed mostly through local community donation of labor and materials. It was expanded to a two-room school in 1918. A special school levy was passed to fund the construction of a modern building in the middle of the 1930s. A new three-classroom brick building was completed around 1936. At this time, Woodrow School was renamed Waller Road School. In 1953, three more classrooms were added. Further additions were made, including three classrooms and a play court on the north end of the building, seven classrooms, an office area and a multi-purpose room on the south end of the building added in 1960. In 1985, additional remodeling was accomplished to modernize the facility.

A large shed on property owned by Ed Eichorn served as a temporary school building while the first one-room Woodrow School building was being constructed in 1913. Later, when the Eichorn property was sold, the shed which served as a temporary school building was moved to the Waller Road Grange. The Waller Road Grange decided to renovate it as a special Pierce County bicentennial project. A group of volunteers furnished the building with authentic historic furnishings from the 1910s. During the local grange-related festivities, the first school building serves as a museum and community historic resource and is open to the public.

AGRICULTURE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMERCE

Collins and Waller Granges were two early granges organized in the community in the 1920s. They were organized to promote the area farmers' interest as a political entity and to provide educational and social opportunities for the local community. The granges still operate and remain two of the oldest granges in Pierce County.

Businesses established in the early decades of the twentieth century included Kimberg's feed and grain store (which later added a gas pump), Sundell's barbershop, confectionary store and pool hall, and Billy Bent's Woodland Grocery. Kimberg's store became Summit Trading Company in 1919 when purchased by Elmer and Oscar Carlson and moved to its present location at 10409 Canyon Road East in 1930. The store is still in family ownership.

Large dairy farms, poultry processing plants, and natural resource-based operations have located in the Mid-County area at different times. Faith Dairy operated a dairy farm in the 1960s and 1970s. Pederson Farm processed poultry starting in the 1940s and continued into the 1990s. Fors (Chicken) Hatchery also operated for a few decades. Gravel mining and construction-related industries such as Tucci's and Sawyer's gravel pit operated for many years. Some of these establishments have evolved to adjust to the changing markets and economic circumstances over time.

In 1925, a private water utility company was organized and shares were sold to individuals and businesses. The company brought domestic potable water to individual properties through wooden pipes. Starting in the late 1910s, telephone service became available to the area. By the mid-1920s, approximately 15 families around Waller Road had telephone service. Puget Sound Interurban Electric Railway which ran between Tacoma and Seattle reached the Puyallup area in December 1908 through the new "Short Line" that connected Tacoma with Puyallup. The line went south past the Puyallup fairgrounds, then west up the hill, through Summit, Midland, and Woodland (along present-day 104th Street East). Then it connected with the Spanaway line at Parkland. The electric railway stopped operating in 1928 because of decreased demand as more roads were paved for travel by automobile.

In 1926, Waller Road was paved in concrete making it more convenient for automobile travel. In 1928, Puget Power brought electricity to the Mid-County area. In 1930, the first Waller Road bus line was started by Charles Reed. The bus service took people from the community to Tacoma. The line later expanded to include service to Summit and Vickery. The demand for bus service declined as more people drove their own automobiles, and caused the local bus service to stop operating for a while. In 1947, the private bus service resumed.

Pierce County Fire District No. 9 (Woodland-Collins) was formed in April 1948, by the Summit-Woodland-Collins area residents. Through a special levy passed by area voters, the Fire District purchased a fire truck and equipment and housed them in a temporary structure. The first fire station was built at 11325 Canyon Road in 1950. Soon thereafter, Fire District No. 9 expanded from one station to three, from ten volunteers to forty volunteers, from one fire truck to twelve, adding ten paid personnel, and extending the fire protection coverage to thirty eight square mile area by late 1970s. In the early 1990s District 9 merged with District 4 (Midland), District 6 (Parkland), and District 7 (Spanaway) to form Central Pierce Fire and Rescue (CPFR). CPFR is now the County's largest fire district.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The farms, orchards, and ranches of earlier decades gradually declined and became less active as family-owned and -operated industries and businesses. By the 1960s and continuing in the 1970s, the Mid-County area was becoming increasingly divided into smaller residential parcels of land.

Many existing Mid-County property owners enjoy the area's agricultural heritage and rural lifestyle. A number of property owners operate ranches and other agricultural enterprises on a

hobby basis and support the protection of the rural heritage, rural lifestyle, and land use pattern.

The 40-acre land surrounding the Swan Creek was established as a regional-level Pierce County park land in 1967. In 1994, 160 acres of open space was established as Orangegate Park, a regional-level Pierce County park. Protection and conservation of major water and land resources such as Swan, Squally, and Clear Creeks and the Orangegate Park has become an important community-wide issue in recent decades.

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PLANNING HISTORY

COUNTY PLANNING

1962 PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ZONING

The first Pierce County Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the Pierce County Zoning Code were adopted in 1962. Zoning districts were established that dictated the appropriate location for commercial business and residential homes. However, the Plan did not offer much protection from incompatible uses and did not recognize the unique individuality of communities.

1980 PARKLAND-SPANAWAY COMPREHENSIVE [COMMUNITY] PLAN

The Parkland-Spanaway Comprehensive [Community] Plan was adopted by Pierce County in 1980. In addition to the Parkland and Spanaway communities, the plan also included the Midland and North Clover Creek Collins communities and the northwestern portion of Frederickson. In 1983, the Midland area was removed from the control of the 1980 plan and reverted to the control of the 1962 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. The 1980 Parkland-Spanaway-Comprehensive [Community] Plan remained in effect as a component of the new Comprehensive Plan, but many aspects of the 1980 plan were not consistent with the new County Comprehensive Plan and consequently were superseded by the new Countywide plan and implementing Development Regulations-Zoning that became effective in July 1995.

1988 SUMMIT-WALLER COMMUNITY PLAN

The Summit-Waller Community Plan was adopted by Pierce County in 1989, under Ordinance Number 88-209. The plan area consisted of the northern portion of the Mid-County plan area, extending from Pioneer Avenue to State Route 512. This plan is a subarea plan of the larger 1962 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. Like other subarea plans implemented before the new 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, the Summit-Waller Community Plan remained in effect; however it was inconsistent with many Countywide planning policies.

1994 PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Growth Management Act (GMA) was passed by the Washington State Legislature in 1990. It required Pierce County to update its existing Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations. The GMA required Pierce County to develop and adopt a comprehensive plan which would control residential, commercial, and industrial growth.

In 1991, Interim Growth Management Policies were adopted as a transition between the 1962 Comprehensive Plan and the new plan required under the Growth Management Act. In 1992, the Pierce County County-Wide Planning Policies were adopted. The policies provided the framework and process by which Pierce County and the cities and towns within the County would establish urban growth areas, provide infrastructure and services, and preserve agricultural and natural resource lands.

In 1994, per the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act, Pierce County adopted a new Comprehensive Plan. The Pierce County Comprehensive Plan replaced the 1962 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan in its entirety. The plan established population projections, urban growth areas, and rural areas. The new County-wide plan became effective January 1995, with its implementing regulations becoming effective July 1995.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Although the Growth Management Act does not require comprehensive plans to provide for community plans, Pierce County Ordinance 90-47s directed County officials to prepare a community plans element of the Comprehensive Plan. The majority of unincorporated County residents live in community plan areas. Community plans must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the GMA.

The community plans element of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan envisions a local voice in how the Comprehensive Plan and its Development Regulations will be carried out in communities. This element provides the flexibility for communities to refine comprehensive plan land use designations and associated densities and make decisions about specific design standards that should apply in community planning areas. Preserving and building community character while ensuring an efficient and predictable development approval process is a central theme in community plans.

SCOPE OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY TO DEVELOP THE PLAN

The Pierce County Comprehensive Plan Community Plans Element provides the authority for the preparation and adoption of community plans. This element requires that new community plan areas be established based on priorities such as public health, safety, or welfare; previous commitments by the County through legislative action to prepare a plan; and evidence of community support. Community plans can be initiated by Land Use Advisory Commissions through submittal of a petition to the Pierce County Executive and County Council that identifies the proposed area and identifies reasons why a community plan is needed or instigated by the Pierce County Executive, County Council, or Planning Commission in order to implement objectives, principles, and standards of the Comprehensive Plan. In 2001 by Resolution R2001-39s, the County Council authorized the initiation of a community plan for the Mid-County area.

In 2002, the County Council adopted Resolution R2002-65s, which required the community planning boards and the Planning and Land Services Department to use the adopted Upper Nisqually Valley, Gig Harbor Peninsula, and Parkland-Spanaway-Midland community plans, and implementing regulations for these plans, as a template for developing future community plans and regulations. Specifically, this Resolution encourages communities to use the existing menu of land use designations and classifications, employ the established use types and levels of use, recommend changes to administrative processes or development regulations that apply at a countywide scale (e.g., nonconforming use provisions and critical area and stormwater regulations), and adopt community plans prior to (at least nine months) the implementing regulations.

Resolution R2002-114 amended Resolution R2001-39s by increasing CPB representation to a total of eighteen members and indicating that all properties currently designated as Rural Separator should maintain that designation through the community planning process.

A community planning board (CPB) was formed in the winter of 2002. The CPB was tasked with the responsibility of developing the community plan. The CPB consisted of 17 members with a variety of backgrounds representing a variety of interests. The first meeting of the community planning board was held in December of 2002.

Ordinance No. 2005-8s2 adjusted the Mid-County Community Plan boundary by adding parcels in the northern portion of the plan area in order to be consistent with provisions of Ordinance 2004-87s.

PURPOSE AND USE OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

The Mid-County Community Plan gives the residents, businesses, property owners, and the County a clear, more detailed sense of how the community should develop in the future and