

Parkland-Spanaway-Midland Communities Plan Plan History

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.

The development of a new comprehensive plan for Parkland-Spanaway began in 1974. Parkland residents who were concerned about a Port of Tacoma proposal for an air freight terminal recognized that this issue and several other important land use questions needed to be resolved. Through the efforts of these citizens, the Board of Commissioners appropriated a budget for the development of a comprehensive plan.

In 1976, a citizens' group called the Parkland-Spanaway Citizens' Advisory Committee was formed. This group was charged to assist the staff in developing the plan and fostering community awareness and support for the plan. Over a three-year period, the CAC met on a regular basis to develop the basic goals, objectives, and recommendations, as well as the overall philosophy, contained within this 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. In 1982, the Parkland-Spanaway Zoning Regulations were adopted by Pierce County. In 1983, the Midland area was removed from the control of the 1980 plan and 1982 regulations and reverted to the control of the 1962 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code.

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, including community plans such as Parkland's, Spanaway's, and Midland's. 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 more complex plan developed 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 1994 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 1980 Parkland-Spanaway Comprehensive [Community] Plan remained in effect as a component of the new Comprehensive Plan but many aspects of the 1980 plan did not coincide with the new County Comprehensive Plan and consequently were superseded by the new County-wide plan and implementing Development Regulations-Zoning, effective in July 1995.

In the community plans element of the 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, the Parkland-Spanaway-Midland area was identified as a community with an existing community plan that needed to be updated. In 1997, the Pierce County Council directed the Department of Planning and Land Services to update the 1980 plan.

At the request of residents, the County Council modified the boundaries of the 1980 plan area to include the Midland area and remove the North Clover Creek/Collins and west Frederickson areas. The process for updating the Parkland-Spanaway-Midland Communities Plan began in 1998 through the efforts of the Community Planning Boards and five community plan committees, (Commercial and Industrial Character and Economic Development (CICED), Natural Environment, Water Resources, Parks and Open Space (NEWPOS), Residential Areas (RAC), and Transportation).

Purpose and Use of the Community Plan

The Parkland-Spanaway-Midland Communities Plan gives the residents, businesses, property owners, and the County a clearer, more detailed sense of how the communities want to develop in the future and what standards could be utilized to create and maintain the look and feel identified in the communities plan. The Parkland-Spanaway-Midland Communities Plan has accomplished the following:

- Developed an area-wide vision for the entire Parkland-Spanaway-Midland region of Pierce County;
- Developed a vision unique to each community - Parkland, Spanaway, and Midland;
- Retained policies and actions from the 1980 communities plan that remain relevant today;
- Developed additional policies and actions that reflect the needs, concerns, and desires of the region and communities today;
- Made sure that the actions developed by each of the communities mesh with the vision and policies for the entire area and the other two communities;
- Refined the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan to more closely reflect the desires of the communities while making sure that what the communities desired would still fit well with the big picture for all of Pierce County in terms of County-wide policies; and
- Identified actions necessary to implement the communities plan, including: adopting or revising land use regulations; identifying priorities for use of public funds to develop physical improvements, such as sidewalks, street landscaping, street lights, water-related improvements, and park development; social programs; economic programs, etc.

Development of the recommended plan incorporated a variety of public involvement strategies including the formation of Community Planning Boards and committees, public workshops and open houses, and various surveys. These public involvement techniques ensure that the plan is developed as a representation of the general will and values of the community.

Open Houses, Workshops, and Surveys

Garfield Street Revitalization Workshops

In 1997, two workshops were held to gather public input for the development of a revitalization plan for the Garfield Street neighborhood. While this planning effort never resulted in the development of a formal plan, the information and ideas gathered from these two workshops were considered and, in some cases, incorporated in the commercial policies of this plan.

Visioning Workshops

Three visioning workshops were held in March 1998, one in each of the communities in the plan area. These workshops were designed to check whether the visions from the 1980 community plan were still valid and, if not, how the plan should be changed.

Business Roundtable

In August 1998, a small focus group composed of long-term business people and property owners along the Pacific Avenue corridor was convened. The intent of the meeting was to gather insight from business people with a history of successfully making a living along Pacific Avenue. The group was asked a variety of questions designed to elicit responses on issues such as obstacles and opportunities for business success within the area, desired infrastructure improvements and potential funding sources for these improvements, and building design and sign standards.

1998 Community Survey

In 1998, a survey was distributed throughout the community to solicit input on a variety of issues such as perceived quality of life, adequacy of facilities and services within the plan area, quality of the natural environment, and location and intensity of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The 1998 community survey was not mailed out to a representative sample of the population, therefore, its results are not statistically viable as a reflection of the views of the majority of Midland, Parkland, or Spanaway residents. However, this survey does serve as a snapshot of community values and preferences within the communities plan area, as well as within the individual communities. In addition, the 1998 results were compared against the statistically viable 1976 attitude survey conducted for the 1980 community plan to indicate how opinions have changed in the past 22 years.

Business Survey

In the summer of 1998, a survey targeted towards business owners in the communities plan area was mailed out. The business survey questions were designed to elicit information about:

1. business longevity and stability;
2. factors that influence business location patterns;
3. business needs for access, parking, and signage;
4. elements that pose obstacles to the success and growth of businesses; and
5. support for creation of a business improvement district.

Telephone Interviews with Commercial/Industrial Real Estate Agents

In August 1998, staff conducted telephone interviews with the local real estate community to seek input on factors that influence the marketability of commercial and industrial properties located within the Parkland-Spanaway-Midland Communities Plan area. Ten agents were interviewed with expertise in selling commercial/industrial real estate ranging from 10 to 28 years with an average of 19 years of experience
