

South Hill

Community Plan Background

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW OF THE PLAN AREA

South Hill is centrally located in Pierce County and encompasses approximately 19 square miles. The community is known as South Hill or ‘the Hill’ due to its location south of the valley containing the City of Puyallup and west of the valley containing the City of Orting. While the eastern boundary is defined by the Orting Valley and the northern boundary by Puyallup’s urban growth area, the western boundary generally follows 70th Avenue and the southern boundary 176th Street East. The community is bisected by SR-161, which is also known as Meridian Avenue East.

South Hill has experienced a tremendous amount of growth in the past 30 years. The growth in population, homes, businesses, and activities has simultaneously resulted in the loss of trees, wildlife, open spaces, and the general peace and quiet of a rural setting. It is an area that has been transformed from a rural setting into a suburban community that, in 1998, initiated a movement for incorporation. The incorporation proposal was defeated 2 to 1. However, the issues that drove the incorporation movement remain in the community. The South Hill Community Plan attempts to define how Pierce County will manage and address impacts of a rapidly expanding population while retaining the attributes that make South Hill unique.

HISTORY OF SOUTH HILL

EARLY HISTORY THROUGH THE 1900’S

Native Americans utilized the area, evidenced by the Ancient Klickitat Trail or Cowlitz Trail that connects eastern Washington with the areas west of the mountains. This trail passed through the community somewhere along Old Military Road. Native Americans who used this trail included the Puyallup, Steilacoom, Nisqually, and Muckleshoot peoples from the west side of the mountains, as well as the Yakima from the east of the mountains. The trail was utilized for hundreds of years by Native Americans to engage in trade, pursuit of game, travel, and communication.

When Euro-Americans were exploring and establishing trading posts and forts in the 1840’s, the Naches Pass Trail was shared by Euro-Americans and Native Americans in the movement of people, as well as horses and cattle. The Naches Pass Trail was utilized by one of the first wagon train immigrants (Naches Pass immigrant group or Longmire Party of 1853) in order to take a short cut from the Oregon Trail to the Puget Sound area over the Cascades Mountains. In the 1850’s, Euro-American pioneers began to push for development of the Naches Pass Trail as an inland road connecting Fort Steilacoom and Puget Sound to Fort Walla Walla on the eastern side of the Cascade Mountains for settlement and commerce. Later, Snoqualmie Pass was favored over Naches Pass as the main movement corridor for military and commercial purposes and for future plans for a railroad route. Consequently, the Naches Pass Road remained in primitive conditions. In the meantime, the Naches Pass Road continued to be used by wagon

train immigrants who settled in the Puget Sound area and by cattlemen who brought their animal stock from the east side of the mountains to markets in Puget Sound.

From the 1860's through the 1880's, the road was repaired and maintained through cattlemen's efforts and governmental funding, including Pierce and Thurston Counties and Olympia. In the 1870's, the Naches Pass Road was called Upper Puyallup to Steilacoom County Road. Only segments of this historic road remain in the area, including Snoqualmie National Forest and South Hill. A portion of the original Naches Pass Road was incorporated into the present-day Old Military Road. The original Naches Pass Road was one of the earliest roads in the State of Washington. Recently, seven plaques have been placed in South Hill at various locations along the original Naches Pass Road and Old Military Road to commemorate the significant history of this early road.

Although there were some donation land claimants in the vicinity in the 1850's, there was none inside the South Hill Community Plan area. But by the 1860's and 1870's, a few settlements of homesteads appeared in the South Hill community. The community was still largely forested, except those areas cleared by Euro-American settlers. Most settlers in the community engaged in the logging trade and agriculture. In addition to working in the hops industry, they also engaged in subsistence farming on their own lands.

Three Euro-American settlers' properties are shown in the 1872 survey map of the South Hill area. They were William Woolderhold (Section 8, Township 19N, Range 4E), Charles Miller (Section 16, Township 19N, Range 4E), and Anton Drumblar (Section 16, Township 19N, Range 4E). It is speculated that the total population living in South Hill was under fifty in the late 1860's through the early 1870's. By contrast, more people settled in Puyallup which was platted in 1877. The population of Puyallup was 750 in 1878.

Hops became a very popular cash crop in the Puyallup Valley starting in the 1870's through the 1880's. Around this period, some in the South Hill community began to cultivate hops as well. Others engaged in diversified farming including pigs, rabbits, berries, dairy, and vegetables. Hops cultivation began to decline due to devastation from an epidemic of plant lice in 1891. A diverse berry crop replaced hops after the turn of the century and included strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries.

In the 1870's, the arrival of railroads to Tacoma and the spur lines extending to the outer communities benefited the area greatly. The discovery of coal deposits in Wilkeson drove construction of lines for the Northern Pacific Railroad; the railroad transported agricultural products, logs and other timber products, and coal products. The railroad reached Puyallup around 1880, and by the 1920's, it was served by several railroads--the Northern Pacific; Great Northern; Union Pacific; the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul; the Interurban Rail; and a short line to Tacoma. These provided the area's farmers with a vital transport link to local and world markets for their produce of hops, berries, and daffodils throughout subsequent decades. Railroad spur lines came through the South Hill community, including the areas near the present day Hidden Valley and the area of 120th Avenue and 120th Street of the then Brew Logging Company's land to transport timber resources. No track remains exist in South Hill.

By the late 1880's, the population in South Hill increased to a level where it was necessary for the local people to request development of roads. In 1888, approximately 90 property owners in South Hill petitioned the Pierce County Board of Commissioners for the development of the street which became known as Meridian Avenue. Among the petitioners was Carl Muhler who cultivated hops on his farm. Behind road development petitions was the need to transport the hops crop to the market more easily. During this period, it is speculated the total population in South Hill was between 300 and 400 people.

The first independent school district in South Hill was established in 1895 near 136th Street E. and Meridian. Firgrove School, originally Patzner School, began on 2.5 acres purchased from the Northern Pacific Railroad for \$25. Like many one-room schools of the time, it accommodated children in grades 1 through 8. The school joined the Puyallup School District in June 1950 as the seventh elementary school in the district. Presently, enrollment at Firgrove tops 550 students. Woodland and Puyallup Heights Schools were also early schools that served the community, but they are now located outside of the South Hill community. Public schools continue to serve as centers for community life.

Although its actual age has not been determined, a historic log cabin on Blyton Farm, at 152nd Street and 78th Ave. E., appears to be more than 100 years old. If it is, the cabin would be one of the oldest intact structures in South Hill.

THE EARLY 1900'S THROUGH THE EARLY 1950'S

South Hill remained rural throughout the early 1900's to the early 1950's. There were scattered residents on farms or wooded lots. Timber operations by companies such as Weyerhaeuser or individual timber land owners were carried out in South Hill. A variety of income-supplementing farms in the community included rabbits, chickens, mink, dairy, vegetables, and holly trees.

Meridian Avenue was the main access road to reach Puyallup, Graham, and Eatonville. Until the 1940's, Meridian Avenue was a "farm-to-market" road. It was paved in the northbound direction in order to minimize the damage to the farmers' produce while transporting it to the market. The southbound road was an eight-foot-wide lane of gravel and mud that went to Eatonville.

McMillan Reservoir was built in South Hill in the early 1910's. It was a municipal water storage facility for the City of Tacoma. It stores water from the White River to be transported through two underground aqueducts in South Hill to Tacoma to be utilized as part of the City's water supply.

Bonneville Electric Power transmission lines were constructed to run diagonally across South Hill in the 1940's, as was a natural gas pipeline.

The Summit-Woodland-Collins Fire Department, the first fire district (Pierce County Fire District #9) in South Hill, was formed in 1948. At the beginning, it was staffed by 18 volunteer firefighters and was located at Airport Way (present-day 112th St.) and Canyon Road.

Many old timers in South Hill and the surrounding community fondly remember Willows Corner located at Meridian Avenue and 112th Street. It was originally the Kupfer Homestead of more than 240 acres. In the 1920's, the intersection of 112th and Meridian had a gas station and grocery stores and became the community's commercial center. The Willows Dance Hall was added later near one of the grocery stores. The dance hall was a popular place in the prohibition era of the 1930's and drew couples from all over the Pierce County area. It was called a destination resort in some advertisements. The dance hall later burned to the ground. In 1973, Willows Shopping Center was built at Willows Corner, followed by the South Hill Shopping Center. Now, the old Willows Corner is a part of the City of Puyallup.

In 1944, several businessmen from Puyallup purchased approximately 250 acres of an old logging camp located northeast of the present-day Frederickson community and immediately east of Meridian (SR-161), and established an airport with a 4,700 foot runway. At that time, it was the longest non-military airstrip in the area. In 1949, John Thun purchased the airport and began to operate a flying instruction business from the airport. With the additional purchase of land, the airport expanded to nearly 500 acres in 1967. Eventually after two additional ownership changes, approximately 150 acres of area including the airport and surrounding area were sold to Pierce County in 1979 and renamed Pierce County Airport-Thun Field. The airport is still owned and operated by Pierce County.

In 1948, the community was still relatively small, considering the fact that less than one bus load of senior high school students from South Hill went to Puyallup High School.

The community grew during this period as more people moved further south, densifying the area from the Puyallup vicinity toward Graham and Orting. Farms were subdivided to make way for residential developments. More roads were developed in the area meeting local community needs.

THE LATE 1950'S THROUGH THE EARLY 1970'S

South Hill's population began to increase dramatically with the beginning of the development of SR-512 in 1956 and its completion in 1972. This east-west connection made travel relatively easy from residential locations in South Hill to major employment and commercial centers on I-5, SR-7 (Pacific Avenue), and SR-161 (Meridian Avenue). It provided the community with crucial connections to urban centers in nearly every direction. South Hill, as a suburban bedroom community, began to take shape in earnest during this period.

Approximately 7,000 people are estimated to have lived in South Hill in the early 1970's. Major real estate speculation and boom began during this period. Many individuals with properties would short plat their properties taking advantage of the rapid appreciation of land prices. Large tracts of land began to be purchased by real estate interests to be developed into residential and commercial developments.

THE MID-1970'S THROUGH THE 1990'S

Development activities in South Hill accelerated during the mid 1970's through the 1990's. The main thoroughfare of Meridian (SR-161) became intensely developed as a continuous strip of commercial developments. South Hill Mall, as a regional shopping center, opened in the 1980's, drawing customers from all over the Puget Sound region.

In the late 1970's, the growth rate of South Hill equaled or exceeded those in major urbanized areas such as University Place, Lakewood, and Gig Harbor. Some of the major impacts from fast growth were evidenced in the traffic congestion on Meridian Avenue and severe drainage problems in pockets of South Hill from runoff in the surrounding developments. It was not unusual for developers to subdivide large tracts of land into hundreds or thousands of residential lots.

Puyallup Raceway Park near Thun Field was closed down partly due to community opposition protesting the noise and other impacts from the auto race track.

Major subdivisions or planned developments such as Gem Heights and Rainier Terrace, later renamed to Sunrise, came into existence during the 1980's. The Gem Heights development included approximately 2,000 housing units; the Sunrise development included approximately 4,200 residential dwelling units in its build-out scenario, and has been proceeding in phases. At the completion of Sunrise, the residents projected to live in the development would comprise more than 30% of the population growth of 10,260 households projected for the South Hill census tract. Overall, residential developments intensified near the commercial strips and further out in South Hill, bringing the population to approximately 20,000 by the end of the 1980's.

The annexation issue came to a head in the early 1980's to address infrastructure improvements including sewers, water, roads, surface water drainage, and police protection. Ultimately, the commercial strip along Meridian and the area south of 39th Avenue SW were annexed into the City of Puyallup. At times, the residents surrounding the commercial area opposed annexation and remained in Pierce County, fearing higher taxes, requirements to hook up to sewers, higher utility costs, and duplication of government.

The community is currently attempting to address the long-standing central issue of how to manage impacts from rapid growth through planning efforts mandated by the Washington State Growth Management Act. The population in the South Hill community is now estimated at approximately 35,000 people.

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.

In 1992, some areas of South Hill were rezoned from General to the Suburban Agriculture zone (Ordinance 90-123S). The Suburban Agriculture zone was more restrictive than the General zone.

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 in a manner that 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 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, Pierce County adopted the 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan which replaced the 1962 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan in its entirety. The Plan established population projections, urban growth areas, and rural areas. The implementing Development Regulations-Zoning became effective in July 1995.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

The Community Plans Element of the 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan envisions a local voice in how the Comprehensive Plan and its Development Regulations will be carried out in communities. It indicates specific land use designations, appropriate densities, and the 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.

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

SCOPE OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY TO DEVELOP THE PLAN

In the Community Plans Element of the 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, South Hill was identified as a community that would receive a community plan. In August 1999, the Pierce County Council directed the Department of Planning and Land Services to initiate a community plan for the South Hill community through Resolution R99-66S. The process for developing the South Hill Community Plan began with the formation of a Community Planning Board. The

Board was comprised of business owners, residents, and organizations consisting of a broad range of interests. The County Council modified the boundaries of the South Hill Community Plan with Ordinance 2001-21s. The modification excluded Canyon Road and the area known as Summit View and ensured all of the Sunrise development was included in the plan.

PURPOSE AND USE OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

The South Hill Community Plan gives residents, businesses, property owners, and Pierce County a clearer, more detailed sense of how the community wants future growth and development to occur. It details what standards should be utilized in order to create and maintain the character and amenities identified through the policies and goals of the plan. The South Hill Community Plan accomplishes the following:

- Sets distinct goals and visions for the South Hill community;
- Provides design standards for architecture, site layout, signs, and landscaping to all development;
- Provides tree retention or replacement standards to ensure significant vegetation is provided for each site;
- Establishes recreation standards to ensure a recreation is provided for every new residential development and that the recreation area is not just a small tot lot;
- Requires pedestrian connections through commercial and residential areas so that citizens may travel on foot or bicycle to any destination within the community; and,
- Identifies implementation actions necessary to carry the plan to full completion over the course of the next 20 years.

COMPONENTS OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

The vision statements and all of the policies (goals, objectives, principles, and standards) were developed through citizen input. When applying the policy statements, each should be afforded equal weight and consideration.

VISIONING PROCESS AND VISION STATEMENTS

Visioning is typically completed through a series of public meetings or workshops structured to allow the community to articulate hopes for the future. Statements, thoughts, and ideas brought forth in the visioning process became the basis for the visions, goals, objectives, and principles of the community plan.

A vision is a statement of hope within the best of circumstances. It is placed on the horizon of the future, provides direction, and is a reflection of who and what the community is and what it wants to become. Visions stay on the horizon and are larger than life, providing a beacon in the future toward which the community can steer. As soon as progress is made toward this vision, it is again moved out to the horizon. Visions are meant to be compelling and exciting, and embody a degree of risktaking and venture into the unknown.

Vision statements can be either: 1) broad - painting a picture of what the community should strive to be like, physically and socially; or 2) focused - to express how the concerns, values, and hopes of the community should be reflected in various topics.

GOALS

Goals describe a desirable future for the community: identifying who, what, why, and how the broad values and hopes set forth in the vision statement will be accomplished. Goals provide the framework from which objectives, policies (principles and standards), implementation actions, and recommendations will be developed.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives are statements which specifically define goal actions.

PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

Principles set a particular course of action to accomplish objectives. Standards, quantitative or qualitative, are specific benchmarks or targets to be accomplished in the ongoing development of the community.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Implementation actions and recommendations are refinements and changes to policy documents, regulations, capital facility plans, and statements directing agencies and community groups to revise or develop plans, regulations, programs, and other non-regulatory measures.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE 1994 PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The goals, objectives, policies, and standards in the South Hill Community Plan are consistent with the provisions in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. The plan proposes one new zone classification to implement the Community Center designation.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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.

COMMUNITY PLANNING BOARD

The development of the South Hill Community Plan could not have been accomplished without the South Hill Community Planning Board (CPB). The CPB, appointed in the spring of 2000, consisted of a 13-member group representing a variety of interests and geographic locations in

the community. In early 2001, the Board was increased to 16 members in order to fill vacancies and provide more community representation.

The CPB was charged with the following responsibilities: 1) serving as a sounding board for the community; 2) developing a vision and goals for the community plan area; 3) guiding the development of policies and map changes that address community concerns while remaining consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; and 4) forwarding a South Hill Community Plan to the Pierce County Planning Commission and Pierce County Council.

OPEN HOUSES AND WORKSHOPS

VISIONING OPEN HOUSES

Two open houses were held in February 2001 to present the efforts of the planning board and the draft vision statements to the public. The planning board gathered comments on the overall vision for the community and visions for each element of the plan. The planning board presented the South Hill Community Plan Visioning Map encompassing many of the goals and vision statements. Those in attendance were supportive of the draft vision statements. The visioning map is located in this document following page 12.

The planning board also presented three distinct concepts, or alternatives, for future land use patterns. Alternative 1 continued the existing land use pattern where commercial uses are located along Meridian and the remainder of South Hill is residential (see Land Use Working Map, Alternative #1 following page 12). The residential housing choices would be similar to the housing choices of today. Alternative 2 is similar to Alternative 1, but adds higher density housing adjacent to the Meridian corridor (see Land Use Working Map, Alternative #2 following page 12).

Alternative 3 attempts to restructure Meridian Avenue by encouraging commercial uses to locate into distinct centers (see Land Use Working Map, Alternative #3 following page 12). Each center would serve a distinct purpose or market and contain design standards consistent with the goals of that center. One of the goals of this alternative was to redesign Meridian Avenue away from a continuous strip of commercial uses. Alternative 3 also places some small scale, limited commercial uses into residential neighborhoods – with very strict design standards and limits on uses as well as hours of operation. Neighborhood commercial is intended to offer residents choices for accessing daily goods and services, such as a cup of espresso or an ice cream cone, without having to travel Meridian.

Alternative 3 also offers a variety of housing types and densities. This alternative recognizes that some residents choose to live on large lots while others choose to live on smaller lots with higher density housing. The location of the various types of housing is dependent upon environmental constraints as well as the availability of necessary infrastructure.

Alternative 3 is representative of the final decisions of the Community Planning Board. However, the final board recommendation allows the continuance of commercial uses along Meridian Avenue.

POLICY OPEN HOUSES

Four open houses were held in June 2002 to present draft policies to the public for comment. The CPB distributed surveys on parks, neighborhood commercial uses, and a central place for the South Hill community. Over 250 residents attended the four open houses. The comments and survey results guided the CPB in making policy changes to the plan.

TRANSPORTATION WORKSHOP

Approximately 200 residents met in July 2002 to discuss traffic congestion and north/south roadway extensions in the South Hill area. Recommendations from this workshop guided the development of transportation policies in the plan.

SURVEY

In November of 2000, Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS) and the South Hill Community Planning Board developed a questionnaire to survey the community. The results identified the needs and desires of the local residents to more clearly define plan goals and strengthen the effectiveness of the plan. It was randomly distributed to 3,172 households within the community plan boundaries. Questions were related to the environment, economy, design standards, public facilities and services, land use, interim regulations, and household characteristics. A sufficient number of questionnaires were returned to obtain a statistically accurate representation of household opinion.

The respondents supported strengthening regulations to mitigate impacts of growth on the environment. A majority of respondents supported Meridian as the focal point for new business and desired smaller scale, locally-owned retail and services. Respondents also desired design standards for commercial signs, residential developments, landscaping, lighting, and architecture. Respondents gave top priority to building sidewalks, improving roads, and developing parks. The respondents clearly indicated that residential density in existing neighborhoods should not increase, but higher density development could occur where environmental conditions and infrastructure could support it.

SUMMARY OF THE SOUTH HILL COMMUNITY PLAN

The South Hill Community Plan contains policies and implementing actions for five subject areas or elements: Land Use Element, Community Character Element, Natural Environment Element, Economic Element, and the Facilities and Services Element.

LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element addresses land uses allowed in plan designations and the intensity of uses in the community. Policies promote preserving the natural environment, creating livable neighborhoods and distinct commercial centers, and identifying a central place.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER ELEMENT

The Community Character Element addresses urban design, community character, heritage, and social interaction. The policies promote urban design, natural environment retention, and transportation connections.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

The Natural Environment Element includes consideration of the natural resources found in the area. The citizens in South Hill value the function and aesthetics of the natural environment. The policies promote preserving ecological functions and incorporating the natural environment into site design.

ECONOMIC ELEMENT

The Economic Element focuses on the economy of South Hill. The CPB envisions a variety of commercial opportunities to meet the needs of the community and the surrounding region. Policies focus on restructuring Meridian Avenue to concentrate commercial, office and high density residential uses within designated centers. Employment and training opportunities related to aviation and light manufacturing will be provided in the Thun Field employment area.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

The Facilities and Services Element addresses the infrastructure needed to maintain a desirable quality of life in South Hill. Infrastructure includes capital facilities such as roads, parks, trails, stormwater, schools, utilities, and the Thun Field Airport. The policies identify the capital improvements necessary to support the plan (roads, parks, sewers, water, etc.) and discuss potential partnerships within the community.

PLAN MONITORING

The Plan Monitoring section addresses how to measure the effectiveness and impacts of the plan over time.

IMPLEMENTATION

The plan also contains proposed amendments to the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations which serve to implement various plan policies.

VISION STATEMENT

The citizens of South Hill envision a dynamic residential community with a variety of neighborhoods and housing choices. A locale where residential and business developments are integrated into the natural environment. A safe place, where schools and parks provide focal points and opportunities for citizen involvement in the social fabric of South Hill. A location where neighborhoods are connected to businesses, schools, and services through a functional

transportation network that includes roads, sidewalks, bike lanes, and, where needed, transit services. A community where small neighborhood businesses provide the daily needs of local residents. A part of Pierce County where public services meet the needs of the South Hill population.

Chapter 2: LAND USE ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element of the South Hill Community Plan provides direction regarding the location and intensity of land uses. This element is intended to supplement and further refine the Land Use element of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. Where the community plan provides specific guidance regarding land uses, the policy language of this plan will govern. Where the community plan does not provide specific guidance, the reader is directed to utilize the land use objectives, principles, and standards of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan.

The Land Use Element addresses the location and intensity of commercial, industrial, residential, and civic land uses. The element contains two main components: visions, objectives, principles, and standards that provide policy direction and guidance; and, recommend regulatory and non-regulatory implementation actions to carry forth the policy direction.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

The citizens and business owners of South Hill are proud of the schools, neighborhoods, churches, choices and opportunities, and the people that define their community. However, the character of South Hill has drastically changed in the past 30 years and these changes have not always been for the better. In the late 1960's, South Hill was a rural community containing farms and large tracts of land. In 1972, the construction of State Road 512 was completed, opening the door for development.

Numerous housing developments were permitted and constructed based on Pierce County's substandard land use regulations throughout the 1970's, 1980's, and early 1990's. Several major housing developments known as master planned communities were also permitted during this time and significantly changed the face of the community. Three of the largest developments are still in construction. Gem Heights is nearing completion of 1,738 homes located in the southern part of the community immediately west of Meridian. The Sunrise development located in the southeastern corner of the community is approximately 25 percent complete with a buildout expectancy of 3,446 housing units. Finally, the Silver Creek master planned community located south of 176th Street East and west of Meridian Avenue is just beginning construction of 2,889 homes. These three developments alone will house a minimum of 16,000 people and are more likely to house upwards of 20,000 people. A considerable number of smaller residential developments, ranging from 4 homes to 100 homes, were also permitted and developed throughout the 70's, 80's, and 90's adding development and population throughout South Hill.

In 1995 Pierce County adopted a Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the Washington State Growth Management Act. The Plan directs growth into urban areas including South Hill. The Comprehensive Plan assigned commercial growth to Meridian Avenue, while the rest of the community was designated for single-family residential uses. The Comprehensive Plan did not

address whether certain neighborhoods should or should not have higher densities, where environmental constraints limit development, or unique places of the community. The implementing regulations for the Comprehensive Plan provided for consistency throughout unincorporated Pierce County. The regulations included new requirements for landscaping and stipulated the allowable range of densities for each zone classification. Revisions were made to the regulations in the late 1990's to include standards for sidewalks, lot size, curb, and gutter. The Comprehensive Plan did not address signs, architecture, site layout, pedestrian facilities, or lighting. These items were left for communities to decide through a more interactive community plan process.

The following information provides background on the existing land development patterns, population, and housing within the South Hill community.

EXISTING LAND USES

The Pierce County Assessor's Office classifies how parcels are used for purposes of calculating assessed value for taxation. Pierce County Planning and Land Services routinely uses this information to determine distribution of land uses within specific areas. The Assessor's information is known to periodically contain errors, but is considered accurate for planning purposes. The Assessor's information reflects only how land is currently being used and does not reflect zoning. The following table summarizes the current uses of land within South Hill in order of most to least acreage based upon Assessor information:

TABLE 1 – EXISTING LAND USES			
Land Use	Acreage	% of Plan Area	Total Parcels
Residential			
Single-Family	4,278.14	38.27%	10,501
Duplex	200.11	1.79%	396
Triplex	4.47	0.04%	8
Fourplex	37.57	0.34%	76
Multi-Family	94.42	0.84%	71
Group Homes	0.00	0.00%	0
Mobile Homes	298.53	2.67%	403
Mobile Home Parks	179.15	1.60%	17
Nursing/Retirement Homes	4.80	0.04%	1
College Dormitories	0.00	0.00%	0
RESIDENTIAL-TOTAL	5,097.19	45.59%	11,473
Civic			
Public Facilities	18.16	0.16%	7
Quasi-Public	34.58	0.31%	2

TABLE 1 – EXISTING LAND USES			
Land Use	Acreage	% of Plan Area	Total Parcels
Religious Assembly	65.75	0.59%	13
Health Services	9.30	0.08%	7
Education k-12	123.81	1.10%	13
Education Higher	39.80	0.36%	2
Transportation	129.43	1.16%	70
Communication	0.00	0.00%	0
Utilities	363.24	3.25%	151
Recreation, Non-Profit	171.76	1.54%	72
CIVIC-TOTAL	955.83	8.55%	337
Commercial			
Offices	23.13	0.21%	29
Commercial Service:	75.69	0.68%	51
Eating/Drinking	21.82	0.20%	18
Entertainment	5.91	0.05%	2
Lodging	0.00	0.00%	0
Automotive	12.91	0.12%	16
Other	35.05	0.31%	15
Commercial Retail:	136.72	1.22%	62
Food	2.90	0.03%	4
Automotive	78.70	0.70%	22
Bldg. Material, Hardware	0.30	0.00%	1
Furniture, Home Furnishings	1.26	0.01%	2
Apparel and Accessories	0.55	0.00%	1
Other	40.15	0.36%	28
Wholesale Trade	0.00	0.00%	0
Shopping Centers	12.86	0.12%	4
COMMERCIAL-TOTAL	235.54	1.81%	142
Industrial			
Construction Services	11.26	0.10%	5
Industrial Services and Repair	0.00	0.00%	0
Warehousing	34.00	0.30%	15

TABLE 1 – EXISTING LAND USES

Land Use	Acreage	% of Plan Area	Total Parcels
Manufacturing/Assembly	54.28	0.49%	8
INDUSTRIAL-TOTAL	99.54	0.89%	28
Resource			
Mineral Extraction	24.39	0.22%	5
Forestry	87.42	0.78%	4
Agriculture	265.76	2.38%	21
RESOURCE-TOTAL	377.57	3.38%	30
Other			
Open Space-all	78.63	0.70%	22
Vacant	3,610.36	32.30%	1,408
Other Out Bldgs.	143.93	1.29%	42
Unidentified Land Use	427.21	3.82%	142
New/Amended Lots	0	0.00%	0
TOTAL	11,025.81	98.64%	13,624

Note: The remaining 1.36% of parcels, 152.52 acres, straddle the South Hill Community Plan boundary along its border with the City of Puyallup urban growth area.

As shown in the table, the two prevailing categories of land use in the plan area are residential (46%) and vacant (32%). Together these two use categories account for 78% of total acreage in the community. The dominant land use type is single-family residential (38.3%, 40.9% when adding mobile homes on individual lots). The next most extensive land use types are: utilities (3.6%), agriculture (2.4%), and duplexes (1.8%).

The physical distribution of land uses is shown on the Existing Land Use Map following page 28. As previously noted, the prevailing land use within South Hill is residential. Residential uses are distributed throughout the community. Residential lot sizes vary throughout the community from small, densely suburban lots to larger estate-type lots. Smaller lot sizes are dominant in the southern portion of the plan area inclusive of the Gem Heights, Sunrise, and Silver Creek developments. Small lot sizes are common along the Woodland/70th Avenue corridor between 128th Street East and 152nd Street East. Finally, smaller lots are also located in the northern portion of the community near the City of Puyallup.

Larger lot sizes are commonly located on environmentally constrained lands such as steep slopes or wetlands. Large lots are found immediately west of Meridian, generally between 128th Street East to 160th Street East and extending west from Meridian to approximately 78th Avenue East. Large lots are also located immediately east of Thun Field south of 152nd Street East. Multi-family housing, which includes duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and apartment buildings, is scattered throughout the community. The greatest concentration of multi-family housing units is located in the northern portion of the community along 122nd Street East.

Table 1 shows that multi-family housing comprises only 3.01% of the total land uses within South Hill. The prevailing multi-family housing type in South Hill is duplexes, which make up 1.79% of the total 3.01%. Triplexes, fourplexes, and multi-family buildings comprise only 1.22% of the community.

Civic uses are the second most common land use and comprise 8.55% of the community. Civic land uses include such items as utilities, educational facilities, transportation, and education. Utilities are dominant in the civic category (3.25%). K-12 education (1.10%) and non-profit recreation (1.54%) comprise the other main uses considered.

Commercial and industrial land uses comprise approximately 3% of the South Hill community. Commercial land uses are divided in offices, services, or retail uses. Retail uses are the foremost type of commercial use in South Hill (1.22%). Services such as restaurants and theaters comprise less than 1% of the uses commercial uses while office uses are fairly uncommon. The existing land uses along Meridian Avenue are auto-oriented commercial uses, a limited amount of light industrial uses, and scattered vacant land.

Although vacant lands are scattered throughout the community, there is a concentration in the southeast part of the community in and around the Sunrise development and Thun Field. Other large vacant parcels are located in the western portion of South Hill and in the Silver Creek development south of Gem Heights. Smaller vacant areas also exist in the northeast part of the plan area.

CURRENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATIONS AND ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS

The 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, as amended, establishes six different land use designations within South Hill. These land use designations are Moderate Density Single-Family (MSF), High Density Residential District (HRD), Master Planned Community (MPC), Employment Center (EC), Community Center (CC), and Mixed Use District (MUD). These land use designations indicate the type, intensity, and density of land uses authorized by the Comprehensive Plan.

The MSF, HRD, and MPC designations are residential in nature, the EC designation is industrial and office, the Community Center is a combination of commercial and residential, while the MUD designation is auto-oriented commercial that also allows residential uses. These land use designations are implemented on a parcel specific basis through zoning. The land use designations do not necessarily reflect the current use of land. For example, property used for auto-oriented commercial purposes could be designated EC, an industrial use designation. The following table summarizes the land use designations in terms of acreage:

Table 2 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations - 2002		
Land Use Designation	Acreage	Percent of Plan Area
Moderate Density Single-Family	7,680.7	63.4%
Master Planned Community	2,694.9	22.3%
Employment Center	963.0	8.0%

Table 2 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations - 2002

Land Use Designation	Acreage	Percent of Plan Area
Mixed Use District	647.9	5.4%
Community Center	90.0	0.7%
High Density Residential District	29.6	0.2%
Total	12,106.1	100.0%

Land use designations are shown on the Existing Zoning and Land Use Designations Map following page 28.

The MSF designation is the prevailing land use designation and is found throughout South Hill. The southern end of the community is dominated by three large residential developments with MPC designations, i.e., Sunrise, Gem Heights, and Silver Creek. A moderately sized planned community, known as Rainier Terrace, is located in the northeastern portion of South Hill. A small area of HRD designation is located on the west side of Meridian Avenue in the neighborhood of 94th Avenue East and 136th Street East.

Meridian Avenue is currently dominated by the auto-oriented MUD designation. This designation generally extends one-quarter mile along both sides of the Avenue. While the dominant land use designation along Meridian is MUD with 584 acres and 430 parcels, only 25% of the Avenue is currently comprised of existing commercial uses (137 acres, 112 parcels).

The south end of Meridian Avenue is designated EC. This area, including Thun Field-Pierce County Airport, is identified as a location for a variety of manufacturing, assembly, warehousing, and office uses.

MODERATE DENSITY SINGLE-FAMILY

The Moderate Density Single-Family (MSF) land use designation/zone classification is intended to provide areas for urban single-family and two-family residential development at densities of 2-6 dwelling units per acre. The MSF designation is the predominant designation in South Hill. Approximately 63% of South Hill (7,680 acres) is designated as MSF.

HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

The High Density Residential District (HRD) designation is intended to provide areas of multi-family and high density single-family housing along with limited neighborhood commercial retail and service uses. Allowed residential densities in the HRD range from 6 to 25 dwelling units per acre. There is one area designated HRD located in the vicinity of 136th Street East and 94th Avenue. This designation accounts for less than .2% of the community and contains fewer than 30 acres.

MASTER PLANNED COMMUNITY

The Master Planned Community (MPC) designation is intended to achieve well designed, compact, urban development, with a balance of uses, more efficient use of public facilities and

a greater amount of open space than would be required under standard development. MPCs integrate a mix of housing, services and recreation and are approved through a planned unit development or planned development district process. MPCs must encompass a minimum of 320 acres. Four MPCs exist in South Hill: Gem Heights, Silver Creek, Sunrise, and Rainier Terrace. These communities comprise nearly 2,700 acres and account for approximately 22% of the land mass of South Hill.

COMMUNITY CENTER

The Community Center (CC) designation has as its focus a significant traffic generator around which develops a concentration of other commercial office, services, and some high-density residential development. The commercial activity is drawn from customer base of more than one neighborhood. CCs are places for the community to gather and converse, places where people live, and places with civic elements. The CC designation includes 90 acres of land located along Meridian Avenue just south of the 160th Street intersection. The CC designation accounts for .7% of the community.

MIXED USE DISTRICT

The Mixed Use District (MUD) designation provides for auto-oriented commercial and land intensive commercial uses along major arterials, state highways, and major transit routes. Commercial activity in MUDs serves a customer base beyond the surrounding neighborhoods or community. The MUD designation is typically located along a roadway used by residents of more than one community or serving a region. The MUD designation also allows for multi-family residential uses. The MUD designation accounts for approximately 648 acres of land, totaling 5.4% of the community.

EMPLOYMENT CENTER

The Employment Center (EC) designation provides land for industrial, manufacturing, and office jobs. Uses in the EC range from land intensive heavy industrial, (e.g., manufacturing, product assembly, fabrication, and processing, and heavy trucking uses) to light manufacturing, assembly, and wholesale activities, to corporate office and office park development. Commercial uses subordinate to and supportive of employment uses are also permitted. The EC designation is currently located at and surrounding the Pierce County Airport at Thun Field. The EC designation currently totals 963 acres of land in South Hill.

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED CONDITIONS

The South Hill Community Plan builds upon the strengths of the community and restates the objectives of the County Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the desires of South Hill citizens, as well as the actual land uses in existence in the community. The community plan does not contradict the Comprehensive Plan, but refines the designations and zones and the allowed uses and implementing regulations in accordance with what is appropriate for the South Hill community.

South Hill will continue to be a residential community in the future, but the infrastructure, amenities, and housing choices will be different than today. Commercial uses will also continue to be located along Meridian Avenue. Rather, the community plan prioritizes reshaping or restructuring Meridian Avenue into several centers that are more inclusive of pedestrians, green space, and a mix of residential uses with commercial components.

The community plan will change the future landscape of South Hill based on the priorities of the local residents. These priorities are detailed below.

The community plan attempts to ensure development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure such as sidewalks, roads, and bicycle paths. A top priority is connections within neighborhoods, between neighborhoods, and throughout the community. Plan policies and action steps prioritize:

- sidewalk connections from schools to surrounding neighborhoods;
- sidewalk connections extending from one subdivision to another in a continuous fashion;
- sidewalk and bicycle connections from residential areas to commercial areas; and,
- pedestrian and bicycle facilities within commercial centers so the auto is not the only mode of travel.

Parks are also of great importance in the community plan. Residents of South Hill are disgusted at the lack of community and regional parks, and further dismayed at the standard gratuitous tot lot provided in current residential subdivisions. This situation is unacceptable to South Hill citizens. The South Hill plan calls for revisions to the Pierce County Parks and Recreation Plan to include the list of priority parks identified in the Facilities and Services element of the community plan. The implementing regulations revise County regulations in terms of placement and quantity of recreation area within residential subdivisions.

Tree and vegetation retention are also emphasized ensuring the community will provide integration with the natural environment in coming years. Tree retention or replacement would be required for all new developments. Landscaping requirements are also included in the implementing regulations for the plan.

Another major difference between the Comprehensive Plan and the community plan are requirements for design. Since adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, Pierce County has worked with individual communities toward the formulation of community plans. Through this process, it has become apparent that a major concern of all communities is that of design, particularly building design and sign design. Building architecture and the predominance of signs are major concerns within Pierce County communities and thus, have been regulatory features included in every community plan proposed since 1995.

The community plan introduces regulations for South Hill that address architectural design for commercial buildings, sign design, and lighting design. The plan also includes standards for site design for commercial and residential to ensure new development is integrated into the natural environment to the greatest extent possible.

The design standards are intended to improve not only the visual character of the community, but the function of land uses as well. For example, a parking lot that includes marked or striped pedestrian walkways, shade trees, and sidewalk connections to surrounding neighborhoods is more likely to have pedestrian usage than the parking lot that does not include these amenities. These simple measures can change not only the way a land use looks, but the function as well.

Finally, the South Hill Community Plan recognizes that not all housing needs or desires are alike and thus, provides a variety of housing choices. For example, many seniors and single parents like to live on smaller lots with homes fairly close together. This housing meets their needs as it provides a sense of security and doesn't require a lot of yard maintenance. Other families like to live on the homestead, a larger estate-type lot where the sense is of a rural nature, although located within an urban area. The community plan allows for estate, mid-size, small lot, and multi-family residential development while maintaining the dominant pattern of 2-6 dwelling units per acre.

Small neighborhood centers are introduced into several residential neighborhoods. These centers are intended to allow opportunities for local citizens to obtain a few daily goods without having to get into a car and travel to Meridian Avenue. Neighborhood Centers will allow opportunities for children to walk or bike to a store to pick up an ice cream sandwich or candy bar. Alcohol and tobacco sales are prohibited and hours of operation are strictly limited in Neighborhood Centers.

The citizens of South Hill accept the location of their community within the urban growth boundary, but want to ensure livability features are in place as growth occurs. Too often, infrastructure and services have lagged far behind population growth. The South Hill Community Plan strives to provide the features that lend to a more livable community for South Hill.

PROPOSED DESIGNATIONS AND ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS

MODERATE DENSITY SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGNATION

The community plan retains the Moderate Density Single-Family (MSF) designation as the dominant land use type for South Hill. This designation is the same as the Pierce County designation and allows for single-family or two-family dwellings. Multi-family housing (three units and above), commercial, and industrial uses are prohibited. Specific densities are based on existing densities, physical constraints, and the availability of urban services such as sewers. The designation allows 2-6 dwelling units per acre.

PROPOSED ZONING

The Moderate Density Single-Family plan designation will be implemented by two zoning classifications: Moderate Density Single-Family (MSF) and Residential Resource (RR). These zone classifications are provided intended to provide a greater variety of housing choices for South Hill citizens.

The MSF zone that is proposed by the community plan is the same as Pierce County's current MSF zone classification. The primary land use allowed is low to moderate one- and two-family housing and compatible civic uses such as churches or schools. The minimum density for the zone (two dwelling units per acre) and the maximum density for the zone (six units per acre) remains unchanged.

The Residential Resource (RR) zone classification is a new classification for South Hill. It is intended to provide for low-density single-family residential uses compatible or integrated with areas of unique open space character and/or environmental sensitivity. The zone classification would be the least intensive of Pierce County's urban zones, permitting a density of one-to-three dwelling units per acre. This zone is located in environmentally constrained areas, open space corridors, and areas containing priority habitat for wildlife.

HIGH DENSITY SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGNATION

The High Density Single-Family (HSF) land use designation incorporates higher density, detached single-family development in the South Hill Community Plan area. The minimum and maximum densities reflect an attempt to encourage higher density residential developments off of the Meridian corridor. The implementation of site and architectural design standards is necessary to address the typically unfavorable perception of high density single-family development.

PROPOSED ZONING

The High Density Single-Family zone classification is a new zone for South Hill. It differs from the HRD and MHR because it does not allow for any multi-family uses, including duplexes. The zone is intended for single-family homes that are constructed on small lots. The HSF zone does not allow for attached dwelling units and all entryways must be located at ground level. The HSF zone allows 6 to 12 homes per acre.

HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT DESIGNATION

The High Density Residential District (HRD) designation will continue to apply within the community; however it will be increased beyond the 30 acres designated today. The HRD is intended to be multi-family and high-density single-family with very limited commercial uses. All developments within the HRD designation are required to meet the design standards for South Hill.

PROPOSED ZONING

The High Density Residential District plan designation will be implemented by three zone classifications: High Density Residential District (HRD), Moderate-High Density Residential (MHR) and High Density Single-Family (HSF).

The High Density Residential District (HRD) zone classification provides for multi-family and high-density single-family housing along with very limited commercial uses. Allowed densities in the HRD range from 6 to 25 dwelling units per acre accompanied by strict design regulations. The High-Density Residential zones are generally located along Meridian Avenue. The zone is located north of 128th Street East along 98th Avenue, at the intersection of 156th Street East and Meridian Avenue, and east of the community of Gem Heights south of the 160th Street intersection. The High Density Residential zones are intended to provide housing opportunities

for people who would like to be located close to the commercial centers along Meridian Avenue.

The MHR zone is a new zone classification for South Hill. It differs from Pierce County's HRD zone in that it does not allow for commercial uses, and residential densities are slightly lower. The MHR zone permits moderate and high-density single-, two-, and multi-family housing and compatible civic uses. The residential density range for this zone is six to 20 dwelling units per acre. Areas zoned MHR are located primarily where multi-family uses currently exist such as along 122nd Street East and east of Meridian on 128th Street East. The Sunrise and Silver Creek developments are planning to construct multi-family uses. These areas are recognized through the community plan by the MHR zone.

COMMUNITY CENTER DESIGNATION

The Community Center land use designation will continue to apply within the community plan area. The primary role of Community Centers is to provide retail and service opportunities that residents are likely to access on a weekly or frequent basis such as grocery stores, restaurants, or banks. Community Centers serve a market greater than a neighborhood, but not greater than the South Hill community. Site design and building orientation should safely accommodate pedestrians and will incorporate interaction with surrounding residential neighborhoods. Community Centers are intended to be both pedestrian and auto accessible where the pedestrian is clearly comfortable in the center, but the automobile also has a presence.

Though the focus of a Community Center is commercial activity, these centers are designed to be places for the community to gather and converse, places where people live, and a place with civic elements. One Community Center is designated along Meridian Avenue East from 120th Street East to approximately 164th Street East. Three Community Centers are located along 176th Street East within the planned developments of Gem Heights, Silver Creek, and Sunrise. These Community Centers are reflected on the map for the South Hill community. All uses within Community Center designations are subject to the design standards for South Hill.

PROPOSED ZONING

The Community Center plan designation will continue to be implemented by the Community Center (CC) zone classification and a new zone classification entitled Urban Village.

The CC zone is nearly identical to Pierce County's current CC zone classification. Residential densities are slightly lower (8-20 units per acre) to encourage more residential growth within the Urban Village. The uses permitted in the zone are generally the same, with a few minor modifications such as no longer allowing bulk fuel dealers within the zone. The CC zone is intended to be oriented to serve the pedestrian, but able to accommodate the automobile.

The Urban Village zone is new to both South Hill and Pierce County. The purpose of the Urban Village is to provide an opportunity for South Hill to have a focal point or central place of the community. The Urban Village is intended to be a vibrant place where citizens gather, work,

live, or shop. It is to offer a well-designed mix of living, shopping, office, and leisure activities. Businesses within the Urban Village are to be pedestrian dependent. Design standards for the Urban Village require residential uses to be mixed with commercial uses and require businesses to be connected via plazas and open-air walkways. Density within the Urban Village is based on the amount of commercial area provided.

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER DESIGNATION

The primary role of the Neighborhood Center is to provide local residents daily goods or frequently needed services without having to travel to large commercial areas on Meridian Avenue. Neighborhood Centers are reminiscent of the old corner store with pedestrian orientation and just a store or two. The Neighborhood Center zone classification is a concentrated mix of small-scale retail and service commercial and offices that serve the daily needs of residents within the immediate neighborhood.

Within South Hill, Neighborhood Centers are restricted to certain uses and hours of operation. The design standards and regulations for Neighborhood Centers are some of the most stringent within the community. These restrictions are important to ensure the Neighborhood Centers are compatible with the surrounding residential homes.

Residential development at various densities may occur within the center if appropriate to the individual neighborhood. Within South Hill, there are six Neighborhood Centers: 1) intersection of 128th and 86th Avenue; 2) intersection of 144th and 86th Avenue; 3) intersection of 160th and 86th Avenue; 4) 160th Avenue East slightly east of 92nd Avenue; 5) 122nd Avenue just south of 149th Street; and, 6) intersection of 122nd Street and Shaw Road.

PROPOSED ZONING

The Neighborhood Center (NC) designation will be implemented by two zone classifications: Neighborhood Center (NC) and Residential/Office-Civic (ROC). All of the proposed Neighborhood Centers are implemented by the NC zone classification with the exception of the center at 122nd Street and Shaw Road. The ROC zone will implement the NC designation in this neighborhood.

The uses permitted in the NC zone classifications are oriented to small-scale retail sales or services. Uses such as day care centers, small grocery stores, doctor or dentist offices, and espresso sales would be allowed within the zone. Gas stations are not allowed.

The ROC zone permits only residential, office or civic uses. Retail sales are prohibited within this zone. It is intended to allow offices such as doctor, dentist, accountant, real estate, or postal services.

MIXED USE DISTRICT DESIGNATION

The primary role of the Mixed Use Districts (MUDs) is to serve auto-oriented commercial activities. Mixed Use Districts have a loosely defined sense of place, are auto-oriented, and are generally moderate to high intensity of uses. Mixed Use Districts are areas of mixed commercial retail, service, office uses where single trip, auto-oriented and auto-dependent

businesses dominate. Mixed Use Districts are characterized by individual businesses on separate lots with separate access and parking lots. Commercial activity in Mixed Use Districts caters to a customer base beyond the surrounding neighborhoods or community due to its placement on a roadway used by residents of more than one community. Auto-oriented commercial and land-intensive commercial with a low number of employees per acre is the primary use within Mixed Use Districts.

PROPOSED ZONING

The Mixed Use District plan designation will continue to be implemented by the Mixed Use District (MUD) zone classification, however, residential uses will not be allowed within the zone. The MUD has the least restrictive design requirements although it must provide for substantial landscaping. The MUD zone is located along the intersection of 176th and Meridian and is reflective of current land uses. Most of the commercial businesses within the MUD zone located at Meridian and 176th Street East are relatively new, and therefore not likely to redevelop within the next 20 years.

EMPLOYMENT CENTER DESIGNATION

The Employment Center designation is the same as within the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, although the allowed uses are restricted to recognize the need for compatibility with the Pierce County airport. The Employment Center (EC) designation provides land for appropriate Civic, Utility, Office, Resource, commercial and industrial uses. Commercial uses subordinate to and supportive of employment uses are also permitted. The EC designation is currently located at and surrounding the Pierce County Airport at Thun Field.

PROPOSED ZONING

The Employment Center designation is implemented through the Employment Center and Employment Service zones. Allowed uses within the zones are restricted to: aviation-related manufacturing, commercial, civic, utility, and industrial services and sales.

The following tables and maps illustrate the changes in land use designations and zone classifications contained within the community plan.

Table 3. Proposed Land Use Designations

Land Use Designation	Acreage	Percent of Plan Area
Moderate Density Single Family (MSF)	6,889	56.8
High Density Single Family (HSF)	662	5.5
High Density Residential District (HRD)	99	.8
Community Center (CC)	764	6.3
Mixed Use District (MUD)	94	.7
Employment Center (EC)	911	7.5
Neighborhood Center (NC)	22	.2

Master Planned Community (MPC)	2,688	22.2
TOTAL	12,129	100

*Differences in total acreage between Tables 1 and Table 3 are due to the base of information used for calculations.

Table 4. Proposed Zone Classifications	
Zone Classification	Proposed Acreage
Moderate Density Single Family	6,530
Employment Center	911
Mixed Use District	94
Community Center	667
High Density Residential District	56
Residential Resource	2,481
High Density Single Family	676
Moderate-High Density Residential	454
Neighborhood Center	10
Residential, Office, Civic	12
Urban Village	238

ACTIVITY CENTER DESIGNATION

The Activity Center is intended to function as a primary civic center within the community and will generally have a unique recreational, cultural, or community amenity as its focal point. The Activity Center also serves as the transitional area between this amenity and adjacent commercial and residential areas. Within the Activity Center, a broad range of commercial, civic, and residential uses will be allowed and incentives will be offered to projects that provide a mix of these uses within individual buildings. Encouraging this mix of uses will help to promote and support the level of civic and recreational activity desired in the Activity Center. Within the South Hill Community Plan area, there is currently one geographic area that has been identified as an ideal location for an Activity Center. This 71-acre area is located at the crossroads of 144th Street East and Meridian Avenue East and includes the Amphitheater at South Hill and adjacent commercial areas.

PROPOSED ZONING

The Activity Center (AC) plan designation will be implemented by the Activity Center zone classification. This zone has civic uses as its primary focus but also permits a wide range of commercial uses and residential uses.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

The following is a list of actions that need to be completed in order to implement the policies contained within this plan. They are arranged according to the timeframe within which each

should be completed: short, medium, or long term. Short-term actions should occur within one year of plan adoption. Mid-term actions should be completed within 2-5 years. Long-term actions should be completed within 5-10 years of plan adoption. The parties responsible for leading the effort to complete the action item are listed in parenthesis following the action. Actions are assigned to the South Hill Advisory Commission (SHAC), Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS), Pierce County Economic Development (EC), Pierce County Parks and Recreations (Parks), Pierce County Public Works (PW), Airport Advisory Committee (AAC), and Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD).

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1. Amend Title 18A to provide incentives for re-development and infill. (PALS, SHAC)
2. Develop and implement a program to provide a visual break, protect resources, and reduce flooding along Meridian. Programs to be considered include:
 - Transfer of Development Rights
 - Current Use Assessment
 - Public Purchase
 - A landscape and restoration program. (PALS, SHAC)
3. Conduct yearly reports that summarize accomplishments and outline recommendations for work items toward the upcoming year. (PALS)
4. Complete regulations and design provisions for small-lot single-family or the High-Density Single-Family residential zone. Regulations shall address:
 - appropriate infrastructure in place prior to occupancy;
 - design features that mitigate and blend high-density with established single-family.
 - possible exception from barrier curb requirements. (PALS, SHAC)
5. Develop and implement incentive based regulations by incorporating a minimum, base, and maximum density for each zone. Developments exceeding base density shall have criteria to exceed the base. A menu of choices shall be provided to allow flexibility. (PALS)
6. Amend Title 18 to require rezone applications to include an analysis of market vacancy and demonstrate a need for rezone. (PALS)
7. Establish an Airport Advisory Committee for Pierce County Airport within one year of plan adoption.

MID-TERM ACTION

1. Inventory abandoned, dilapidated, or illegal land uses and institute a program to bring each into compliance or eliminate. (PALS, SHAC)

LONG TERM ACTIONS

1. Complete a monitoring report to evaluate the effectiveness of regulations and incentives. (PALS)

Chapter 3: COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DESIGN ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Community design deals with the physical elements that compose the character of our communities: the streets, parks, buildings, open space, and neighborhoods that determine the way our communities look and feel. It is a blending of land use planning, architecture, landscape architecture, and environmental protection. Community design looks at the way in which buildings, streets, public places, natural features, and other development relate to one another and the people who use them. Through community design, individual improvements, such as street construction, park development, land use regulation and new commercial, industrial, residential and civic development can be effectively coordinated with each other to promote a unified community image.

The way in which people experience their communities and interact with one another is determined, in large measure, by a community's design. Designs that emphasize community are those that invite human presence and allow for interaction of people. Where design is not a consideration, land use planning and regulation often fail to recognize the functional and visual links between developments. Poorly designed development tends to hinder the development of desired land uses.

While the regulation of appearance and design is often a basic component of urban regulatory systems, it is also one of controversy. Many people feel that such regulation is inherently subjective and hence inappropriate for government. However, design regulation is not only capable of making a substantial difference in the character of a community and its quality of life, but it also plays an important role in how the community perceives itself and how it is perceived by outside visitors.

The Community Character and Design Element is a new addition to the set of documents comprising the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. The need for a community plan element articulating the desired appearance and character of individual communities is inferred through policies in the 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan and is stressed through public input gathered through the South Hill and other community planning efforts.

The Community Character and Design Element is an integral part of the entire growth management planning process for South Hill. Design directly affects land use patterns, transportation planning and community and neighborhood livability, and overall quality of life. The design policies are intended to establish and reinforce a visual character for South Hill.

The Community Character and Design Element is affected by the Land Use Element which develops policy direction for urban form and, in turn, affects the Land Use Element by providing guidelines for how the urban form can be achieved and critical areas can be integrated into future projects. The design direction found in the Community Character and Design Element is

also closely linked with and provides support for policy direction in the Economic, Natural Environment, and Facilities and Services Elements of the community plan.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

As South Hill population increases, the landscape rapidly changes, and many local citizens no longer experience a sense of community. This is a disturbing trend not only for long-time residents who have watched their homeland transform, but also for new residents who seek to raise children with a sense of belonging to a community. Although the true heart of the South Hill community lies in its people, churches, schools, neighborhoods, and activities, there is not a central location that is easily identifiable as the heart or center of South Hill.

Historically, the commercial portions of the plan area have developed absent a consistent design theme or set of design standards. As a result, many of the buildings have standardized franchise themes or, in the case of independent businesses, no theme at all. Without question, South Hill and other communities in Pierce County have developed with incompatible architectural styles that lack consistent character.

Meridian Avenue provides superb views of Mount Rainier, views rarely seen due to the overwhelming signs advertising businesses that are also obstructed by the signs. This proliferation of signs adds to the visual clutter along the Avenue and deteriorates pride in the community.

With the exception of older, established neighborhoods, the existing residential character is void of significant vegetative buffers within and surrounding developments. Significant stands of trees have not been retained and complete removal of understory vegetation has been a common development practice. Until 1998, there were no design standards required for residential development within South Hill. The residential complexion is largely single-family with some duplexes and mobile home parks. There are a few multi-family residential complexes located in the northern portion of the community situated near Meridian Avenue.

Traffic is frequently identified as the number one problem on South Hill. It is difficult to move around the community for numerous reasons. There are very few sidewalks or bicycle pathways that allow movement through the community. Thus the only way to get from one place to another is by car. Everyone is forced to drive.

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED CONDITIONS

South Hill citizens want a livable community. The South Hill Community Plan enacts measures to ensure future development will contribute to visual and functional amenities. The goals of the community plan are accomplished through policies, regulations, and design standards. However, adoption of the community plan will not result in immediate change. Significant and lasting change will occur over time through the realization of the implementing actions and citizen support.

Nearly all of the policies of the Community Character and Design Element call for long term educational action on the part of citizens. These educational measures may be accomplished through homeowner association discussions, public forums, or school programs.

CENTRAL PLACE

To counteract the lack of a central place or heart of the community, two strategies are proposed. First, the allowance and creation of two Urban Villages along Meridian Avenue would provide a mix of residential and small commercial business interconnected with plazas and pedestrian walkways. These areas are intended to be local community centers where citizens would be likely to meet for coffee, a community gathering, a farmer's market, or shopping. Plantings, plazas, public art, and other features will be used to create an aesthetically pleasing atmosphere and provide a sense of the community. Secondly, the community plan recognizes the need and importance of a community center in a park-like setting. The property located at 144th and Meridian is recognized as a very desirable setting should it become available.

DESIGN

The South Hill Community Plan integrates the natural and built environments to create neighborhoods and business centers that are functional, visually attractive, and compatible with the natural surroundings. Design standards require new development to demonstrate that filling and grading are minimized, trees are retained or replaced, and pedestrian connections are in place. Landscape standards are increased for parking lots and commercial buildings. Architectural standards are required for small lot residential development. High-density housing will be characterized by houses that accentuate the living area of houses, and de-emphasize carports and garages. Residential areas will feature a variety of architectural features that mute the scale of larger buildings so as to blend with the desired sense of scale for the neighborhood. Covered bus shelters will be required for new residential developments and commercial complexes served by transit.

Building and site design will emphasize safety through effective use of lighting, site design, and landscaping. Within the Urban Village zones, amenities such as courtyards or plazas, benches, artwork, and lighting will be integrated into site design to attract pedestrian uses. Within Community Centers along Meridian Avenue, pedestrian walkways will be distinctly marked through parking and automobile areas

The apparent scale of multi-family and commercial buildings will be reduced through the design and placement of structures and through the effective use of landscaping. Parking areas will be situated and designed to minimize visibility from streets and the front of buildings.

SIGNS

The South Hill Community Plan sets new standards for signs as a means of enhancing the streetscape of Meridian Avenue and opening potential views. Policies and regulations strive to reduce the number and size of signs. In commercial complexes with multiple businesses, signs will be consolidated to diminish the visual clutter. New pole signs, video signs, flashing or rotating signs will be prohibited.

TREES

Trees and vegetation retention are addressed through two methods in the community plan. First, the plan introduces standards for tree retention or replacement. These standards require trees on a site to be retained or replaced with trees similar to the surrounding neighborhood. Trees are also addressed through landscape standards.

PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES

To promote mobility within neighborhoods and throughout the community, a strong emphasis is placed on ensuring pedestrian sidewalks are constructed. Commercial business and residential developments will construct sidewalks within their developments as well as along the perimeter. Roadways will be separated from pedestrian and bicycle pathways so as to encourage a variety of modes of transportation.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

South Hill residents recognize the importance of preserving historic resources. Recently, interested citizens formed the South Hill Historical Society. Efforts are underway to gather data and record the past. Community plan policies and actions promote the efforts of the Historical Society toward preserving historic structures and documents.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

The following is a list of actions that need to be completed in order to implement the policies contained within this plan. They are arranged according to the timeframe within which each should be completed: short, medium, or long term. Short-term actions should occur within one year of plan adoption. Mid-term actions should be completed within 2-5 years. Long-term actions should be completed within 5-10 years of plan adoption. The parties responsible for leading the effort to complete the action item are listed in parenthesis following the action. Actions are assigned to the South Hill Advisory Commission (SHAC), Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS), Pierce County Economic Development (EC), Pierce County Parks and Recreations (Parks), Pierce County Public Works (PW), Airport Advisory Committee (AAC), and Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD).

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1. Develop and adopt flexible, incentive-based regulations that provide bonus densities when natural site characteristics are preserved beyond standard requirements or low impact development techniques are utilized. (PALS, SHAC)
2. Develop and adopt incentive-based regulations for residential developments that cluster housing and preserve a significant area of open space. (PALS, SHAC)

3. Develop and adopt flexible regulations requiring adequate recreational areas for residential developments to ensure recreational areas are landscaped with native vegetation. (PALS, SHAC)
4. Develop and adopt incentives for small lot development. Amenities must be provided to mitigate for impacts. (PALS, SHAC)
5. Develop and adopt regulations that integrate single-family homes into areas that allow for high-density apartments. (PALS, SHAC)
6. Develop flexible regulations that allow options for vegetation plantings instead of fences. (PALS)
7. Develop and implement a landscape plan for Meridian Avenue. (PALS, WSDOT)
8. Work with the South Hill Land Use Advisory Commission to implement the community plan. (PALS)
9. Amend parking standards to:
 - allow on-street parking for minor arterials and residential streets; and
 - ensure senior housing does not require the same amount of parking as other residential uses. (PALS)
10. Develop and adopt criteria that would permit pole signs in hardship circumstances. (PALS, SHAC)
11. Within one year of plan adoption, complete an inventory of the location and condition of all billboards within South Hill. (PALS)
12. Within one year of plan adoption, review and recommend revisions to the design standards for the Mixed Use District (MUD) and Employment Center (EC) zones if necessary. (PALS, SHAC, AAC, PW)
13. Inventory existing business signs for location and condition. (PALS)
14. Investigate the possibility of increasing the bond amount for landscaping to ensure landscaping is planted. (PALS, PW, SHAC)
15. Investigate the possibility of allowing rear yard alley access development in Pierce County. Alleys should be constructed for one-way traffic to reduce impervious surfaces. (PALS, PW, SHAC)

MID-TERM ACTIONS

1. Develop and adopt an incentive-based regulatory program that promotes alternative energy sources and design. (PALS, SHAC)
2. Amend Title 18 to require design standards for cell towers. (PALS, SHAC)
3. Develop and adopt a preferred conceptual streetscape layout for the Central Place:
 - provide incentives for the implementation of the site layout; and
 - permit deviation to the conceptual layout if specific design criteria are met. (PALS, SHAC)

4. Research and pursue a possible site for the Blyton Farm cabin (Historical Society, SHAC)
5. Work toward the creation of community entrances at identified locations. (PALS, SHAC)
6. Facilitate landscaping and maintenance improvements along Meridian Avenue through coordination and cooperation with community service organizations and the business community. (PALS, SHAC, Community Development)
7. Explore the possibility of creating a local park or recreation district whereby a fee may be contributed to the district in lieu of constructing an on-site facility. (PALS, Parks, SHAC)

LONG TERM ACTIONS

1. Work with appropriate agencies to establish a scenic vista area at the landfill site. (PALS, Pierce County Recycling, Composting and Disposal, SHAC)
2. Establish a scenic viewpoint near 156th and Meridian. (PALS, SHAC)
3. Develop and adopt an incentive program to include art into developments. (PALS, SHAC)
4. Expand community awareness and identity through:
 - working with community groups to develop spring or summer festival
 - establishing a farmer's market
 - distributing community information through local schools. (SHAC)
5. Pursue the opportunity to link the South Hill Heritage Corridor with the Naches Trail. (Historical Society, SHAC)
6. Work with the local school districts to integrate South Hill history into the curriculum. (Historical Society, SHAC)

Chapter 4: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Natural Environment Element addresses the protection and conservation of the natural resources in the South Hill community such as water, air, vegetation, fish, and wildlife. The residents of the South Hill community are concerned about the loss and continual degradation of natural resources that have occurred over the past couple of decades.

Of particular concern is the loss of trees. The trees and vegetation of the Pacific Northwest offer valuable habitat to wildlife while providing the human environment with visual relief, shade, noise barriers, and an opportunity for integration of the earth's natural resources. In surveys, open houses, and public meetings, the citizens of South Hill have repeatedly expressed concern about the tendency of new development to clear all vegetation, bring in fill, grade the site, construct homes or buildings, and then decorate with small deciduous trees.

Tree retention and replacement is a key component of the South Hill Community Plan. A number of environmental strategies are identified within the element to ensure preservation of not only trees, but groundwater and air quality as well.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

EARTH RESOURCES

EROSION HAZARDS, SLOPES, AND TOPOGRAPHY

The plan area is located on a plateau above the Puyallup River Valley. A rolling upland area with slopes of 8 percent or less characterizes most of the community. However, there are three areas that contain slopes in excess of 30% grade. The eastern edge of South Hill is defined by a steep hillside that drops 300 feet into the Orting Valley. South of 176th Street East, there is an east-west creek that leads to the Orting Valley and also has slopes exceeding 30%. Finally, south of 144th Street East along the 78th Avenue corridor is a drainage that contains slopes in excess of 30%. Isolated pockets of moderately steep slopes exist in a few other areas of the community. In the western end of the plan area, moderately steep slopes define a north-south drainage.

Slopes of 15% or greater are considered potential landslide and erosion hazards. Development in these areas is controlled by Pierce County's Critical Area Regulations. The regulations generally require that these slopes remain in an undisturbed condition and that development is set back a certain distance from the slopes.

SEISMIC HAZARD AREAS

Seismic hazard areas are subject to severe risk of damage as a result of earthquake induced ground shaking, slope failure, settlement, or soil liquefaction. Seismic hazard areas are noted by the presence of alluvial surficial geology or recessional outwash geology overlain by Barneston, Everett, Neilton, Pilchuck, or Spanaway soils.

Seismic hazards within the South Hill community are located along the Orting Valley hillside. New land use activities within seismic hazard areas are subject to more stringent engineering requirements, including the submittal of geo-technical reports with recommendations for mitigation measures to be taken to reduce the risk of structural damage from a seismic event. Single-family homes less than 5,000 square feet in size and subdivision of property are exempt from the geo-technical reporting requirements.

VOLCANIC HAZARD AREAS

Because the South Hill community is located above the Orting and Puyallup Valleys, there are no volcanic hazard areas located within the community. In fact, the community of South Hill is widely known as a safe haven for Valley residents in a volcanic event.

The maps illustrating slopes and hazard areas are found in this document following page 90.

WATER RESOURCES

STREAMS

Hydrology mapping by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources indicates that there is only one stream within the community plan area, Horsehaven Creek. Horsehaven Creek is located south of 176th Street East and east of Meridian Avenue. According to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), one species of native Coho has a known presence within the creek. Horsehaven Creek drains east to the Orting Valley into the Puyallup River. There is a known presence of pink, coho, Chinook, sockeye, steelhead, and chum salmon in the Puyallup River. WDFW classifies all of the species as having depressed status.

The headwaters of Clover Creek lie just outside the South Hill community south of 176th Street East and west of 86th Avenue. The area contains steep slopes and intermittent creeks and wetlands.

Maps illustrating the water resources of the South Hill community are found after page 90.

FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

Pierce County defines flood hazard areas as those lands "in a floodplain within Pierce County subject to a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year." These areas have been mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Flood Insurance Program. Flood hazard areas may be referred to as the 100-year floodplain.

The FEMA maps for Pierce County indicate there are several flood hazard areas (100-year floodplains) within the community. These flood hazard areas range in size and are typically

associated with either wetlands or low areas. In addition, there are 100-year floodplains associated with Horsehaven Creek and Clover Creek.

There are a number of areas mapped by FEMA as being prone to flooding on a less frequent basis. These wetlands are also associated with other wetlands or low areas. These less frequently flood areas are referred to as 500-year floodplains. Pierce County regulates 500-year floodplains in the same manner as 100-year floodplains.

WETLANDS

Wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support vegetation adapted to life in saturated soil conditions. Examples of wetlands include swamps, marshes, bogs, and potholes. Wetlands are of significant biological and physical value and are protected under federal, state, and local laws.

Pierce County uses the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), Pierce County Wetlands Inventory (CWI), and site specific investigations to determine the presence of wetlands. The CWI indicates that there are numerous wetlands of various sizes found throughout the plan area. The wetlands are concentrated in several areas: between 78th Avenue and Meridian Avenue, along 122nd Avenue, and south of 176th Street/east of Thun Field. There are small wetland areas throughout the County which have not been mapped. Accordingly, there may be small wetland areas within the community not found in the County database.

Wetlands in Pierce County are classified and protected according to category. Category I wetlands are the most valuable wetland systems and are typically large, diverse wetlands which provide habitat for threatened or endangered species. Category I wetlands are protected with a 150-foot buffer. Category II wetlands are typically large, diverse systems that provide significant habitat; 100-foot buffers protect these wetlands. Category IV wetlands are the least valuable, and are hydrologically isolated, less than one acre in size, and have only one dominant plant species. A 25-foot buffer protects these wetlands. Category III wetlands are wetlands that do not meet the criteria of Category I, II, or IV and are protected with a 50-foot buffer. Most wetlands in Pierce County fall into either Category II or III.

GROUNDWATER

The South Hill plan area is located partially in the regional recharge area for the Clover/Chambers Creek aquifer system. Depth to groundwater is 30 or more feet. The geology of most of the plan area is such that infiltration is rapid. This high degree of permeability makes the groundwater in the area very susceptible and vulnerable to contamination. The Clover/Chamber Creek aquifer encompasses the southern and southwestern portions of the community. Pierce County designates the recharge area for the Clover/Chambers Creek aquifer system as an Aquifer Recharge Area. Pierce County has established regulations to prevent or minimize potential impacts to groundwater resulting from land use activities.

In addition to the Clover/Chambers Creek aquifer, a significant portion of the community is within aquifer recharge areas associated with wells of individual water companies.

FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

The Open Space Corridors Map and the Priority Wildlife Habitats Map are located after page 88.

OPEN SPACE CORRIDORS

The Pierce County Comprehensive Plan identifies the largest open space corridor coinciding with the Orting Valley/Puyallup River corridor. The Orting Valley hillside is part of this open space system, as is the Horsehaven Creek drainage, the Puyallup River, and the southeastern portion of the community, i.e., Sunrise. Open space corridors are chosen in part due to their relatively undisturbed natural characteristics that foster wildlife habitat and movement. Open space corridors are identified through known wildlife species and vegetative cover or forest canopy.

Open space corridors in South Hill frequently contain notable wetland systems. Thus neighborhoods west of Meridian Avenue between 152nd Street East and 136th Street East are identified on open space maps as well as several pockets along 122nd Avenue East.

Clover Creek, outside the plan area to the southwest, is also identified as a major open space corridor.

PRIORITY WILDLIFE HABITATS

Priority fish and wildlife habitat and species locations have been mapped by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and are identified in the Priority Habitat and Species Database. This database indicates that there are several such areas within South Hill. Habitat for bald eagles exists in the northwest part of the plan area and is associated with wetlands. Three significant areas of urban natural open space, i.e., relatively undisturbed areas of natural vegetation, are located in the Sunrise area and in the wetland concentrations located in the western end of the plan area. Isolated wetlands are also identified as having habitat importance.

Pierce County protection of these areas is limited to wetlands, streams, and those areas that provide habitat for a state or federally listed threatened or endangered species.

AIR QUALITY

The Washington State Department of Ecology and the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency monitor air quality in the Puget Sound Area. In Pierce County, air quality monitoring stations are located at Milton, Tacoma tide flats, in South Hill on 128th Street East, Eatonville, and Mount Rainier. These stations track numerous air pollutants including particulate matter, carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and lead. The sources of these pollutants include motor vehicles, industrial emissions, residential woodstoves and fireplaces, outdoor burning, and

other sources. Of these sources, motor vehicles are the largest source of pollutants, generating an estimated 57% of all airborne pollutants in Washington State.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Washington State establish air quality standards. Failure to meet the established standards results in an area being designated as a non-attainment area by the EPA. When an area is designated as non-attainment, a plan is required to be developed to bring the area back into compliance with the established standards. The most recently published annual air quality report for the Puget Sound Region is for the year 1998 and was released by the Department of Ecology in April 1999. This report indicates that the air quality of Puget Sound region, including Pierce County, is in compliance with established standards. The trend in air quality over the past ten years in the Puget Sound region has been one of continued improvement.

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED CONDITIONS

The South Hill Community Plan strives to blend the built or human environment with the natural environment. In the past 30 years, South Hill has transformed from a rural community to a burgeoning suburban community. Significant changes to the natural environment or landscape occur with the growth in population. Residents and business owners recognize that South Hill is within the designated urban growth area and that the population will continue to grow. However, growth is not to occur at the expense of the natural resources. Preservation or restoration of resources lends to maintaining a rural atmosphere and a quality community with a sense of pride.

South Hill residents recognize and want to emphasize the importance of integrating the built environment with the natural environment. Preserving native vegetation and trees is a top priority. It is recognized that trees and vegetative cover not only provide habitat for wildlife, but also alleviate the impacts of high density or intensive developments. Trees can act as buffers from noise, light, and glare while providing shade and areas for children to play. Harmonizing new growth with the natural environment is a high priority in the South Hill Community Plan.

The South Hill Community Plan Natural Element map was utilized during the visioning process. It represents many elements of the natural environment that are preserved through plan goals and regulations. The map is located in this document following page 90.

EARTH RESOURCES

EROSION HAZARDS AND TOPOGRAPHY

While the South Hill community does not contain a large amount of landslide and erosion hazards, it is important to ensure slopes are protected. Of particular concern are slopes above the Puyallup River and those leading to wetlands or streams. The community plan strives to protect vegetation within hazard areas and ensure homes are set back from the top of slopes.

VEGETATION

Citizens of South Hill place a high value on remaining forests and areas of significant vegetation. New development will not occur without retaining the trees on the property or, at a minimum, replacing them with like kind. To demonstrate the high priority placed on tree and vegetation retention, the community plan contains a number of policies on the subject and regulations are included with the plan implementation package. Tree retention is addressed in Site Design Standards and in the Landscape Standards.

WATER RESOURCES

Because South Hill does not contain many streams, concerns about water resources relate to wetlands, flood hazard areas, and groundwater protection. Past experiences with flooding have made it among top priorities. Recent capital projects, largely funded through Pierce County Public Works Water Programs Division, have alleviated some flooding incidents and concerns. The community plan sets forth goals and objectives to ensure flooding is minimized. One of the strategies for minimizing flooding is to recognize environmental limitations of properties. This is accomplished through zoning and revising submittal requirements for development applications. These measures also serve to protect wetlands.

A map of South Hill environmental constraints illustrates that many wetlands and flood hazard sites overlap. The community plan sets forth policy and regulatory direction to ensure development is minimized within these areas. Currently, low densities and large lot sizes are found where many wetlands and flood hazards exist. This is in part due to the environmental limitations resulting in development difficulties. The community plan recognizes this trend and recognizes these constraints through new zone classifications that will limit the density or intensity of development to coincide with the carrying capacity or capability of the land.

Design standards, introduced through plan implementation, require each development to demonstrate how it is working within the natural constraints of the land. The new standards will limit grading, filling, and vegetation removal. Development projects will demonstrate how the built environment is integrated with the existing resources of the site.

FISH AND WILDLIFE

An important step toward integrating the built and natural environments is recognizing the role of open space corridors. The open space corridors in South Hill coincide with wetlands, flood hazards, slopes, and streams. The community plan strives to preserve these resources through policies, regulations, and long-term educational outreach. Open space corridors in South Hill are also inclusive of Priority Habitat and Species as listed on Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife maps. The preservation of open space corridors is accomplished through the same zoning actions described in the above section. South Hill is fortunate that so many resources can be conserved by properly zoning a few concentrated areas. Difficulties arise in communities where environmental constraints are distributed evenly across the landscape thus making preservation of all resource more difficult.

The community plan prioritizes the acquisition of open space in environmentally constrained areas. The County's Conservation Future Program is recognized as a tool to help preserve these areas into perpetuity. Stewardship and management plans that address long-term protection and maintenance should also be developed. In addition to public acquisition efforts, a variety of other open space acquisition and conservation strategies are suggested to ensure long term preservation.

AIR RESOURCES

The greatest concern for air resources within the South Hill community lies along Meridian Avenue where discharge of carbon monoxide from automobiles can be problematic. The community plan strives to recognize air as a resource and implement measures to decrease the problem along Meridian Avenue.

The community plan recognizes the significance of long-term educational outreach to maintain quality air resources. The plan also implements several land use strategies to help improve air quality along Meridian Avenue. Land use strategies include concentrating commercial uses within centers and constructing pedestrian access to cultivate on-foot patronage. Centers are to be connected to surrounding neighborhoods and other commercial uses through sidewalks, bike paths, and marked pedestrian pathways through parking lots. Secondly, concentrating uses within defined centers allows customers to accomplish several tasks through one car trip rather than constantly having to drive to the next stop along the commercial corridor. Third, the community plan recognizes two Urban Villages that will be a strong mix of commercial and residential, thus ensuring that a certain portion of the population will not rely as much on the automobile. Finally, the plan strives to increase the number of trees along Meridian Avenue to assist with cleansing of air resources.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

The following is a list of actions that need to be completed in order to implement the policies contained within this plan. They are arranged according to the timeframe within which each should be completed: short, medium, or long term. Short-term actions should occur within one year of plan adoption. Mid-term actions should be completed within 2-5 years. Long-term actions should be completed within 5-10 years of plan adoption. The parties responsible for leading the effort to complete the action item are listed in parenthesis following the action. Actions are assigned to the South Hill Advisory Commission (SHAC), Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS), Pierce County Economic Development (EC), Pierce County Parks and Recreations (Parks), Pierce County Public Works (PW), Airport Advisory Committee (AAC), and Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD).

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1. Improve wetland conservation measures and alleviate flooding by:

- pursuing grants to conduct a detailed, updated wetland inventory;
 - developing an acquisition / incentive program;
 - establishing a program that involves citizen participation in wetland violations;
 - establishing a public outreach program that increases understanding regulations, penalties, and open space taxation possibilities. (PALS, SHAC)
2. Prohibit activities that store, generate, or utilize hazardous materials at levels that could potentially contaminate the groundwater within all Wellhead Protection Areas and the areas greater than 180 in the DRASTIC ratings. (TPCHD, PALS)
 3. Develop and adopt regulations to ensure sidewalks are constructed on all developments within walking distance of schools. (SHAC, PALS, PW, school districts)
 4. Develop and adopt low impact development standards as an option for developments to control stormwater, provide aquifer recharge, and limit impervious surfaces. Provide incentives for developments to use low impact development standards. (PALS)

MID-TERM ACTIONS

1. Establish an education outreach program with WSU Extension and homeowner associations regarding the importance of vegetation retention. (SHAC, PALS)
2. Update the South Hill Community Plan with recommendations from the Basin Plans. (PALS, PW, SHAC, AAC)
3. Work with local water purveyors to increase public awareness of water quality and quantity issues. Develop strategies, brochures, or other forms of public outreach to improve water quality and maintain quantity. (SHAC, TPCHD, PALS)
4. Inventory and analyze sites adjacent to open space corridors for habitat viability and amend open space map where revisions should be completed. (PALS, SHAC)
5. Investigate the possibility of retrofitting existing publicly owned stormwater facilities to encourage wildlife movement and habitat. (PALS, PW, SHAC)

LONG TERM ACTIONS

1. Obtain funding to acquire the following identified wetlands:
 - 144th Street East and 86th Avenue (adjacent to park);
 - 86th Avenue East and 152nd Street East;
 - 144th Avenue East and 119/120th Avenue East;
 - 122nd Avenue East and 136th Street East;
 - 142nd Street East and 86th Avenue East;
 - West of Firgrove Elementary School and Ballou Junior High School. (PALS, SHAC)
2. Improve air quality along Meridian Avenue by amending Title 18J to require developments along Meridian Avenue to place trees along the arterial to assist in air quality along the street. (PW, PALS, SHAC)
3. Coordinate a public education outreach program for South Hill with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency. (SHAC, PALS, TPCHD, AAC)

Chapter 5: ECONOMIC ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Element of the South Hill Community Plan builds upon the current economic strength of the community. The economic strength of South Hill is in its ability to provide commercial services not only to local residents, but also to those who reside in the rural communities located to the south and east of the Hill. Many citizens who live in Graham, Eatonville, Nisqually, and Orting purchase goods from commercial businesses located along Meridian Avenue. The regional services provided along Meridian Avenue encompass not only commercial uses, but health and civic services as well. The community plan continues to strengthen the role of South Hill as a provider of regional commercial, health, and civic services.

The community plan emphasizes quality of commercial uses over quantity. Design standards emphasize landscaping, marked pedestrian pathways to and from businesses as well as through parking lots, building variation, sign design, and lighting. Improving the appearance of the buildings which provide the pedestrian the ability to safely move about within the center will change and strengthen Meridian Avenue over time.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

Many residents of South Hill commute out of the immediate community for employment. Thus, South Hill is largely known as a bedroom community, i.e., a community where many people live but not necessarily work. While this situation is one of the contributing factors to traffic problems, it is very difficult to change. The Community Planning Board recognized the difficulty in trying to shift the local economy to one of manufacturing particularly when situated next to Frederickson and the locational amenities that area offers to traditional industry. The Board also discussed the possibility of focusing investments and energy toward high-tech industries. However, attracting high-tech industries is a very competitive market. The plan allows for high-tech industries and employment but does not rely on them.

INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

Reflective of a bedroom community, employment located in the South Hill area is heavily concentrated in the retail trade and services sectors, with nearly 78% of all employment in those two sectors. Using location quotients, which compare an area's concentration of a given factor to that of a larger area (such as the nation, a state, or a region), Table 5 shows employment concentrations in South Hill in comparison to Washington State and Pierce County. A location quotient greater than 1 indicates a high-concentration sector, a location quotient less than 1 indicates low concentration. Put another way, areas with a high location quotient in a sector may have a locational advantage for that sector. Relative to the State, South Hill has a higher concentration of employment in the construction, finance, insurance and real estate (FIRE), and retail sectors. Relative to Pierce County, South Hill has higher concentrations of employment in construction, FIRE and retail trade. The area has substantially

lower concentrations than the State and Pierce County in agriculture, forestry and fishing, manufacturing and wholesale trade.

Table 5. Employment Concentrations Compared to the State and County							
Industry	1999 Total Firms	1999 Avg Monthly Employed	% of Employed	Location Quotient (State)	Location Quotient (County)	1999 Avg Annual Wage	1999 Total Wages Paid
Agriculture- Forestry- Fishing	11	56	0.6	0.17	0.40	\$16,438	\$920,527
Construction	153	925	9.4	1.73	1.54	32,649	\$30,200,088
Finance- Insurance-Real Estate	119	763	7.8	1.53	1.44	22,537	\$17,195,563
Manufacturing	25	245	2.5	0.18	0.24	46,317	\$11,347,683
Retail Trade	279	5,257	53.4	2.99	2.70	9,331	\$49,050,768
Services	462	2,402	24.4	0.91	0.88	2,995	\$7,193,548
Trans-Comm- Public Utilities	*	*	*	*	*	*	\$3,545,204
Wholesale Trade	51	196	2.0	0.35	0.40	12,606	\$2,470,687
Total	1,100	9,844					

An * indicates data has been suppressed to protect firm(s) identity)

Source: Washington State Employment Security Department; Pierce County Department of Community Services

In terms of numbers of firms, retail trade, the sector with the highest employment, is fairly diversified with eating places and grocery and food stores representing 28% of all firms in the sector. Table 6 shows the rank by number of firms for the top ten retail trade clusters.

Table 6. Top Ten Retail Trade Clusters in Pierce County	
1	Eating places
2	Grocery and food stores
3	Home furnishing & electronics stores
4	Clothing stores
5	Hardware and building materials
6	Miscellaneous retail stores
7	Auto supply stores
8	Car dealers

- 9 Gift, novelty, and souvenir shops
- 10 Sporting goods stores and bicycle shops

Source: U.S. West Phone Disk, 1998

WORK FORCE

Work force participation and employment in the South Hill area is similar to the rest of Pierce County; however, there is a smaller proportion of persons in the armed forces, and a larger proportion of people overall in the work force.

Table 7. Work Force Participation and Employment – South Hill and Pierce County

	South Hill Count	South Hill %	Pierce County Count	Pierce County %
Armed Forces	507	1.18%	16,847	3.17%
Civilian Employed	28,957	67.44%	314,158	59.14%
Not Employed	1,432	3.34%	21,672	4.08%
Not in Workforce	12,042	28.05%	178,538	33.61%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

The South Hill work force has a moderately higher level of educational attainment than the Pierce County workforce as a whole. As shown in Table 8, the area has similar concentrations of people with high school education through bachelor’s degree, but smaller proportions of people with less than a high school diploma and those with graduate degrees.

Table 8. Education Attainment – South Hill and Pierce County

	South Hill Count	South Hill %	Pierce County Count	Pierce County %	Relative Education
8th or less	616	1.7	14,874	3.36	0.51
9-12, No diploma	2,793	7.72	43,251	9.77	0.79
High School	11,113	30.71	131,810	29.78	1.03
Some College	10,781	29.79	125,820	28.42	1.05
Associate’s Degree	3,219	8.89	35,749	8.08	1.10
Bachelor’s Degree	5,200	14.37	60,536	13.68	1.05
Master’s Degree	1,808	5.00	20,620	4.66	1.07
Professional	472	1.30	7,228	1.63	0.80
Ph.D.	190	0.52	2,777	0.63	0.84

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 9 shows that the South Hill work force is roughly similar to Pierce County as a whole in terms of occupations, with the exception that there is a considerably lower concentration of people in farming, forestry and fishing occupations.

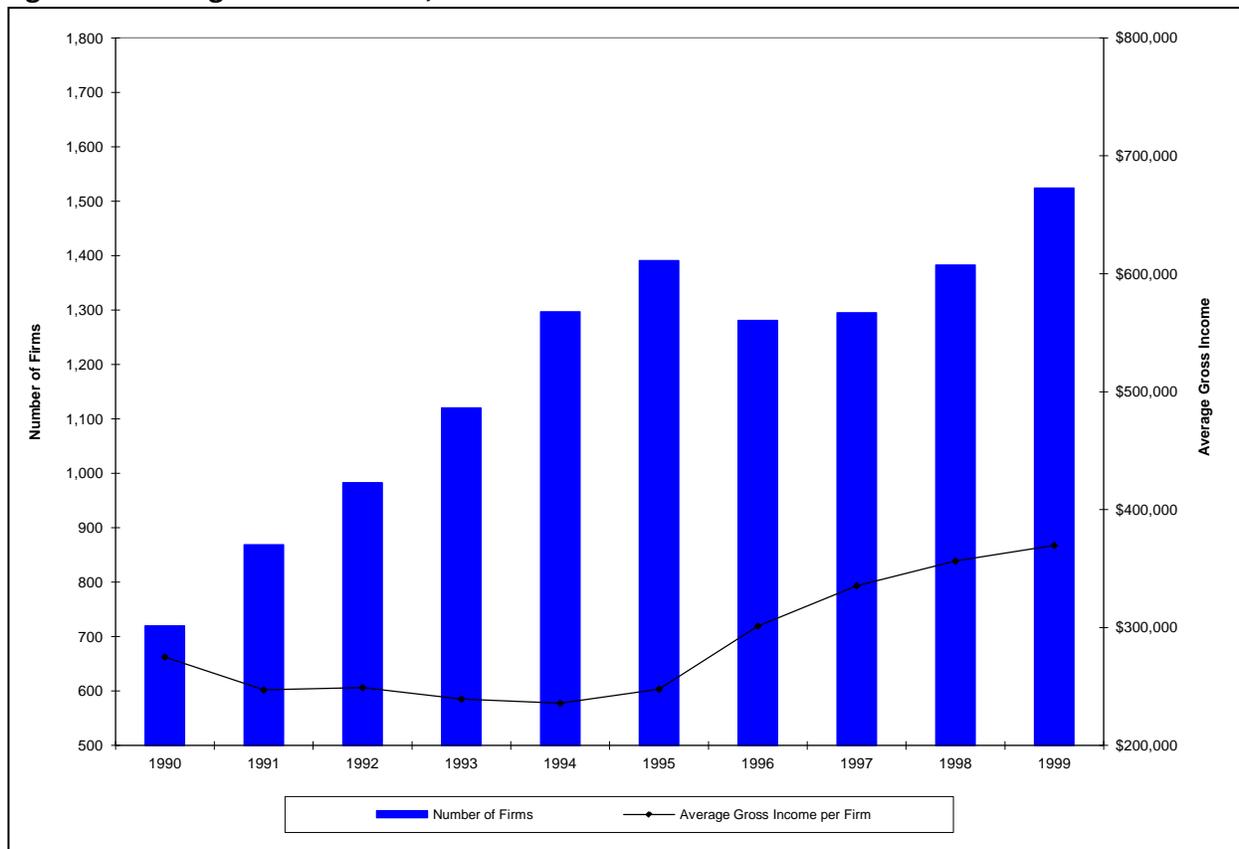
Table 9 Occupations – South Hill and Pierce County					
	South Hill Count	South Hill %	Pierce County Count	Pierce County %	Relative Occupations
Management, Professional and Related	9,029	31.18	94,546	30.10	1.04
Service	3,715	12.83	51,126	16.27	0.79
Sales & Office	11,132	38.44	84,105	26.77	1.44
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	50	0.17	1,683	0.54	0.32
Construction, Extraction and Maintenance	3,331	11.50	35,334	11.25	1.02
Production, Transportation and Material Moving	4,376	15.11	47,364	15.08	1.00

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

FIRMS

The number of businesses reporting tax information from the South Hill area increased steadily through the 90's. While the number of businesses increased, there was some lag time before gross business income showed a corresponding increase. Average gross income per firm declined somewhat in the period from 1990-1995, then showed strong growth from 1995 through 1999, but has begun to level off at the higher rate (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Average Gross Income, 1990 to 1999 – South Hill



Source: Washington State Department of Revenue

The size of firm data shows that 43% of firms in the South Hill area have 1-4 employees, and another 19% report no employees (Table 10). Those 62% of firms represent approximately 10% of the area’s employment and provide about 8% of the area’s wages. Two firms employ 250 people or more and account for 18% of the employment and 23% of the wages paid in the area. Firms that employ between 5 and 249 people make up 38% of all firms and provide 72% of the area’s employment and 69% of the wages.

Table 10. Size of Firm Data – South Hill Area						
Size of Firm	Firms		Employees		Wages	
0 Employees	245	18.9%	245	1.8%	349,415	0.5%
1-4 Employees	561	43.2%	1,113	8.1%	5,780,642	7.5%
5-9 Employees	229	17.6%	1,527	11.1%	8,126,468	10.6%
10-19 Employees	141	10.9%	1,899	13.8%	10,057,762	13.1%
20-49 Employees	81	6.2%	2,438	17.7%	13,112,184	17.1%
50-99 Employees	21	1.6%	1,470	10.7%	6,908,719	9.0%
100-249 Employees	18	1.4%	2,642	19.2%	14,535,674	19.0%
250+ Employees	2	0.2%	2,451	17.8%	17,822,839	23.2%

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED CONDITIONS

For the most part, the local residents are satisfied with the current South Hill economy. However, there are some changes they would like to see occur, particularly along Meridian Avenue. The South Hill Community Plan Economic Element map was developed during the visioning process. The map is located in this document following page 108.

Over time, the citizens would like to see Meridian Avenue restructured into distinct, identifiable centers. Each center is intended to serve a particular market and follow design standards that support the uses within that center. The community plan recognizes a need for four types of centers: regional, community, neighborhood, and central place. Regional centers are intended to serve communities surrounding South Hill and are designed for auto-oriented uses such as very large grocery stores, carpet sales, or building materials and garden supplies. Regional centers within the community plan are designated Mixed Use Districts (MUD). Community centers are intended to serve the citizens of the South Hill community for goods and services that are typically sought on less than a daily or perhaps weekly basis. Clothing stores, mid-size groceries, and restaurants are found in the designated Community Centers. These centers are designed for both pedestrian and auto uses by ensuring sidewalks are constructed from surrounding neighborhoods to the buildings, marked pedestrian pathways are provided through parking lots, and sufficient landscaping is provided to allow pedestrians a greater comfort level.

Neighborhood centers are a new concept to South Hill, but are intended to allow for very small-scale commercial businesses to meet daily needs. Neighborhood centers are located in residential neighborhoods and allow uses such as espresso businesses, dry cleaning, accounting, or tax offices. Because of the location within residential neighborhoods, these centers have restricted hours of operation and strict prohibitions on the sales of tobacco, alcohol, and gasoline. Finally, the community identified a need for a central place, a place that provides a center of the community and is alive with activity. These areas are designated Community Center, but are zoned Urban Village. Uses within this area are intended to be pedestrian dependent and designed with plazas, artwork, and pathways.

Are the goals and objectives of the community plan realistic for Meridian? The commercial real estate market changes as the population increases in the community. This change brings commercial real estate investors speculating on future needs. The scarcity of vacant commercial properties entices investment in older commercial buildings with low improvement values. When the local economy warrants, it is feasible for investors to demolish existing building and construct more profitable commercial complexes. This redevelopment offers an opportunity to the community to influence a change in the commercial landscape. Economic development is more likely to occur when a specific area or areas are targeted for financing, capital improvements, civic projects, or redevelopment. These districts (along Meridian) are expected to form the basis for moving South Hill from a suburban community without a sense of place to a community with a sense of place. The community, business owners, and County should recognize that transformation of the areas will take time and commitment.

The policies guide the type and location for new commercial establishments. Strong emphasis is placed on the survival of small independent businesses. The past growth of South Hill has brought with it large-scale retail businesses that are considered as one-stop shopping. These types of businesses draw their customer base from smaller-scale independent stores. The result is financially struggling businesses. Businesses can overcome these struggles through providing a shopping experience not available at typical larger-scale establishments. The shopping experience encompasses customer service, product selection, and ambiance. Smaller businesses may need assistance through this transformation that is necessary for survival. And it is important for these businesses to survive – through time they have become part of the community’s identity.

The community plan is a documentation of community goals and desires. With the business community working closely with citizens and interest groups to implement the community plan, improvements can be identified and implemented.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

The following is a list of actions that need to be completed in order to implement the policies contained within this plan. They are arranged according to the timeframe within which each should be completed: short, medium, or long term. Short-term actions should occur within one year of plan adoption. Mid-term actions should be completed within 2-5 years. Long-term actions should be completed within 5-10 years of plan adoption. The parties responsible for leading the effort to complete the action item are listed in parenthesis following the action. Actions are assigned to the South Hill Advisory Commission (SHAC), Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS), Pierce County Economic Development (EC), Pierce County Parks and Recreations (Parks), Pierce County Public Works (PW), Airport Advisory Committee (AAC), and Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD).

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1. Develop an informative outreach program to work with businesses to integrate design standards into business sites. (SHAC, PALS)
2. Develop a process to facilitate renovation projects that are brought into greater conformance with the design standards by developing a fast-track permit process strictly for non-structural renovations that do not impact the natural environment. (PALS)

MID-TERM ACTIONS

1. Work with the Pierce County Economic Development Board, Eastern Pierce County Chamber of Commerce, and local businesses to facilitate the formation of a local South Hill business group in order to strengthen and improve business development. (ED PALS, AAC)
2. Organize a business forum to discuss the formation of a Business Improvement District(s) for the Urban Village and Community Center zones. (PALS, ED)

3. Investigate and pursue grant funding for physical improvements within the Urban Village and Community Center zones for projects such as lighting, landscaping, signage, awnings, façade restoration, building painting, and other items as found in the design standards. (SHAC, PALS, ED)
4. Actively pursue opportunities for high-tech businesses and professional office space within the Urban Village. (ED)

LONG TERM ACTIONS

1. Assist businesses in marketing by:
 - Organizing a “business” fair to spotlight the unique goods and services available on South Hill.
 - Developing/maintaining a business web site that profiles South Hill businesses,
 - Coordinating “business” workshops,
 - Creating a referral network among businesses in South Hill,
 - Working with the local media to highlight small, unique businesses in the South Hill community,
 - Facilitating common promotion campaigns. (SHAC, ED)
2. Assist with marketing efforts for the Employment Center for small-scale aviation industries, light manufacturing, and related businesses. (ED, PW, AAC)
3. Encourage and endorse transportation projects that contribute to the economy of South Hill such as:
 - improvements to 176th Street East and construction of the Cross-Base Corridor to successfully attract light manufacturing and aviation industries to Thun Field
 - development of a regional transportation network to serve light industrial facilities while allowing customers greater ease in reaching all commercial venues. (SHAC)

Chapter 6: FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Prior to the substantial growth experienced in the late 80's and throughout the 90's the low-density residential land use pattern sustained an acceptable quality of life with limited government facilities and services. The two-lane road networks facilitated traffic without congestion, schools provided necessary recreation areas, and the natural environment accommodated stormwater runoff.

The residential growth experienced in the past 20 years has transformed the community into an urban residential community for the Tacoma and Seattle metropolitan area. While this growth has been accompanied by additional facilities and services, such as a sheriff substation, a library, schools, road improvements, and sewer and stormwater utilities, deficiencies still continue for some types of facilities.

The Facilities and Services Element articulates future policy guidance to decisions makers for the adoption of regulations, financial investments and coordination associated with parks and trails, stormwater utilities, sewer utilities, potable water systems, public schools, Pierce County Airport (Thun Field), County satellite offices, and transportation.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

PUBLIC PARKS

The South Hill community currently does not have any developed Pierce County parks. The only public recreation facilities are associated with the ten public schools. The County has begun to develop one of its two undeveloped sites, the South Hill Regional Park. In addition, the County has entered into a partnership with the Puyallup School District to develop a regulation designed sports complex, the South Hill Community Athletic Complex. Pierce County recently received funding to complete preliminary planning for a trail to link the two facilities called the Chapman Trail.

South Hill Regional Park, located at the corner of 144th Street East and 86th Avenue East, is the result of a grassroots community effort. The forty-acre site is being developed with two full size soccer fields and a paved parking lot. The fields will also be able to accommodate youth baseball and softball. The scheduled completion date is fall 2003. This land is owned by Washington State Parks Commission, which gave Pierce County a license to build a park facility on the site.

The South Hill Community Athletic Complex, located between Rogers High School and Zeiger Elementary School on 128th Street East, is a joint partnership between the Puyallup School District and Pierce County Department of Parks and Recreation. Construction on the approximately 40-acre site will begin in 2003 and be completed by the end of 2004. The facility

will include five softball/baseball fields, four soccer fields, and related amenities such as parking and restrooms.

The remaining three-acre, undeveloped County park property, Half Dollar Park, is located at 120th Street East and 94th Avenue East. There are not any current plans for its development.

TRANSPORTATION

The existing roadway network within the South Hill Community Plan area contains approximately 145 miles of County roads. Not included within this figure are approximately 3.5 miles of state jurisdictional highway (Meridian Avenue E).

Pierce County employs a roadway functional classification system that assigns the County roads to various categories. The functional classification system represents a hierarchy of roadways ranging from those serving trips between and within the larger activity and population centers (Major Arterials) to those providing circulation and access to the residential neighborhoods (Local Roads). This classification system plays a number of important roles. The County's roadway design guidelines uses the functional classification system to specify design features. Of the 145 miles of County roadway in South Hill, there are approximately 7 miles of major arterials, 18 miles of secondary arterials, 39 miles of collector arterials, and 81 miles of local roadways.

The County's major arterials within the South Hill area are 112th St E, 160th St E, and 176th St E/Sunrise Blvd. All of these are east-west roads. The secondary arterials are 128th St E, 122nd St E, Military Rd E, 122nd Av E, Shaw Rd, 94th Ave E, and Gem Heights Drive. Of the secondary arterials, only the 122nd Ave E/Military Rd E/Shaw Rd E form an arguably "continuous" north-south roadway within the South Hill area.

MERIDIAN AVENUE E

Meridian Avenue E is the most heavily traveled roadway in the South Hill area. This four/five lane arterial now carries more than 42,000 vehicles per day (vpd) north of 128th St E. The Washington State Department of Transportation indicates that from 1995 to 2000 that traffic volumes on Meridian Ave E from 176th St E to 128th St E increased at an average rate of 2.84% per year. WSDOT has projected that based on this growth rate, that traffic on Meridian Ave E in 2020 could be as high as 61,000 vpd. Based on either the state or the Pierce County method for determining roadway level of service or roadway deficiencies, Meridian Avenue E in the more northern section has exceeded its capacity or may be classified as having exceeded its deficiency threshold.

In January 1997 WSDOT released the findings and recommendations of the *Route Development Plan, State Route 161- 234 Street East to King County Line*. This project, which analyzed Meridian Avenue E conditions and operations, addressed a wide range of roadway circulation issues.

The Route Development Plan did not recommend additional through lanes between 176th Street E and 128th St E. While recognizing the need for additional carrying capacity in this area,

the study cited that widening the roadway would necessitate high right-of-way acquisition costs and business displacement. The study also noted that widening the roadway in this section could conceivably increase congestion north of 128th Street. While widening the mainline of Meridian was not proposed, other measures to increase mobility and move traffic were proposed as part of this study. The study's fundamental recommendations included:

- Additional lanes on SR-161 from 234th St E to 176th St E
- Provide access controls from 176th St E to 128th St E
- Consolidate driveway approaches
- Replace two-way left-turn lanes with raised medians
- Encourage alternative trans modes
- Frontage or back road access to parcels along SR-161
- Support increase capacity of road net adjacent to SR-161
- Coordinate and optimize signals
- Increase transit services
- Construct Park and Ride lots

PROGRAMMED IMPROVEMENTS ON MERIDIAN AVENUE E

WSDOT has a number of projects programmed for implementation on Meridian Ave E. Among the more notable are described below:

176TH ST E TO 128TH ST E

A \$9.2 million dollar project would provide sidewalks, street illumination, improved/interconnected traffic signals, additional turn lanes at intersections, and street trees. Engineering work for this project is funded; however, right-of-way funds have been deferred.

204TH ST E TO 176TH ST E

This project would widen Meridian Ave E within these limits to five lanes. The total project cost for this project is \$13.3 million.

234TH ST E TO 204TH ST E

This project would also widen Meridian Ave E within these limits to five lanes. Engineering and right-of-way work has been completed.

COUNTY ROADWAY DEFICIENCIES

The description and analysis of the County's roadway functional classification system strongly suggests a need for additional roadway connections. The absence of higher functionally classified roadways to move traffic north/south combined has contributed to congestion not only in the state roadway, but also has delayed operations on County roads. In applying a methodology now being developed as part of the County's traffic impact fee system, only one roadway within the community plan area, 94th Avenue E, is currently listed as being deficient in

its ability to carry traffic. If no improvements were made to the current roadway network by 2025, a number of roadways would be deficient within the South Hill area, inclusive of:

- 94th Ave East, from 144th St E to 116th St E,
- 160th St E – various sections between Canyon Road E to Meridian Ave E,
- 176th Street East- throughout the South Hill area, 122nd Ave E/Military Rd E/ Shaw Rd E, and
- Old Military Road

The “deficiency” method cited here may be perceived by many as a conservative measure for determining the adequacy of roadways. For example, this method may not identify those traffic issues associated with intersections.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Pierce Transit provides transit service in the study area. Route 402 provides daily service between South Hill and Graham via SR-161 (Meridian Ave). Routes 400, 410, and 413 also serve the South Hill Mall Transit Center, providing service between South Hill and Puyallup, Midland, and downtown Tacoma on SR-161.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Puyallup School District encompasses the majority of the South Hill Community Plan area with two small exceptions. The Franklin Pierce School District serves a small subdivision, approximately 25 homes, in the southwestern portion of the plan area, and the Orting School District entails approximately 675 vacant acres in the southeast portion. All ten schools located within the plan area are the Puyallup District's facilities.

The Puyallup School District's schools are comprised of six elementary schools (Brouillet, Firgrove, Hunt, Pope, Ridgecrest, and Zeiger), 2 middle schools/junior high schools (Ballou and Stahl), and 2 senior high schools (Rogers and Emerald Ridge) within the plan area. The recent enrollment for some of the schools has been greater than forecasted. This reflects the district's overall capacity of 17,688 students and actual 2002 enrollment of 19,355. If the capacity remains stagnant, the deficiency will escalate with the 2008 student forecast of 21,742 students. The result of this deficiency is the placement of portable units, larger class sizes, the use of non-classroom space and students being bussed to schools outside their neighborhoods.

The Puyallup School District has the responsibility to alleviate the capacity deficiencies. The district utilizes various funding sources for the construction of needed facilities. Although minimal to the overall costs of new construction, the district started to collect impact fees associated with new residential building in 1996. The current fee is \$1,475 for single-family units and \$750 for multi-family units. Although this fee amount represents approximately 1/4 of the district's costs to accommodate new growth, it is the proportionate amount deemed appropriate by Pierce County.

SANITARY SEWER

Prior to 1985, the South Hill Sewer District provided sanitary sewer service to the neighborhoods in and around Sunrise Terrace in the northeastern portion of South Hill. A small number of community septic systems were serviced by Pierce County Public Works at that time. Since then, flows from existing and developing subdivisions have been redirected to Pierce County's Chambers Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The South Hill community is serviced by approximately 48 miles of interceptor and collection lines. The majority of these lines (87.5%) are gravity with the remainder being force mains. The sewer infrastructure is comprised of approximately 27 miles of collection lines and 22 miles of interceptor lines.

Pierce County Sanitary Sewer Administrative Code and Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health Regulations for On-Site Sewer Systems require properties within 300 feet of an existing public sewer line to connect to the sewer system when proposed for development.

Current regulations require vacant properties within 300 feet of an existing sewer main to connect to the sewer system when proposed for development. Existing developed property within 300 feet does not have to connect unless there is a proposal to change the use, a septic failure, or an addition to a structure that would substantiate additional bathrooms.

In the late 1990's Pierce County adopted regulations that require new subdivisions which do not connect to the sewer system to construct dry-line sewer infrastructure in addition to an interim septic system. The premise of this regulation is that when sewer lines are extended past the project in the future, the interim septic systems will be disconnected and the dry-line infrastructure will be connected to the sewer system. The costs of constructing an interim septic system and dry-line infrastructure, maintenance, and the engineering challenges have encouraged developers to connect projects to the sewer system, with limited exceptions. Please see the Sewer Infrastructure map after page 128.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

As natural vegetative cover is replaced with homes, businesses, parking lots, and roads, surface water runoff (stormwater) tends to increase both in volume of runoff and rate at which the water drains off the land. Stormwater that has not been properly addressed can result in flooding, water quality and habitat degradation, and erosion.

The drainage system within South Hill is comprised of stormwater pipes, man-made channels, stormwater ponds, and infiltration facilities. This system has not been adequate for all areas within the plan area. In the recent past local home and business owners have experienced stormwater problems as a result of poor soil characteristics, lack of maintenance to facilities, and inadequate engineering specifications.

Portions of the South Hill community are within a closed depression drainage basin where stormwater flows to a series of potholes. No natural surface water outlet is present in these potholes and the only means of exit is evaporation and infiltration. Because this type of topography lends itself to frequent flooding, regulatory modifications and infrastructure investments had been prioritized since the mid-90's to address these situations. Developments

within the closed-depression areas are now required to retain all of their stormwater flows and volume on-site to prevent further build up of stormwater within the pothole. Pierce County has also obtained property and constructed regional stormwater ponds to alleviate stormwater-related problems in existing developed pothole areas. Developers may inquire with Pierce County Public Works and Utilities about connecting into the regional stormwater ponds. The regional ponds identified below are in addition to the approximately 55 publicly owned retention/detention ponds associated with individual substations.

Table 11. Regional Stormwater Facilities

Facility Name	Location	Purpose
Afdem Pond	128th St. E. & 86th Ave. E.	Retention Pond
Hemlock Pond and South Hill Pump Station	144th St. E. & 120th Ave. E.	Retention Pond and Discharges to Puyallup River
Ates Pond	136th St. E. & 120th Ave. E.	Retention Pond
Springfield Pond 1	150th St. E. & 118th Ave. Ct. E.	Retention Pond
Springfield Pond 2	155th St. E. & 118th Ave. Ct. E.	Retention Pond
Springfield Pond 3	159th St. E. & 118th Ave. Ct. E.	Retention Pond
Sand Pit Pond	78th Ave. E. & 156th St. E.	Retention Pond
Lower Meridian Pothole	144th St. E. & Meridian Ave. E.	Retention Pond
Candlewood/Manorwood Pond	116th St. E. & 120th Ave. E.	Retention Pond

BASIN PLANNING

To assist in future decision making associated with stormwater issues, a series of basin plans are being prepared by Pierce County to address all aspects of surface water management. Three such plans are being written that include portions of the South Hill Community Plan area - Clover Creek, Mid-Puyallup River, and the majority within Clear/Clarks Creek. Implementation of the plans' recommendations will help ensure that actions taken to improve stormwater drainage in the County are in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations, particularly the federal Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act.

POTABLE WATER SUPPLY

South Hill residents receive their potable water (or drinking water) from one of several types of public water systems operating under different ownership arrangements (i.e., a municipal system, a mutual or an investor-owned system). The majority of residents receive their drinking water from a Group A water system, or a system serving more than 15 connections, operating under different ownership arrangements. Few South Hill residents receive water service from a Group B system, or a water system with between 2 and 15 connections. Finally, a portion of South Hill residents obtains their water from an individual well. Of the eight Group

A water systems operating in the South Hill community, the majority of residents receive service from one of four systems: Fruitland Mutual Water, Southwood Water, Tacoma Water, or Firgrove Mutual Water.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) has regulatory responsibility over Group A water systems while the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD) has primary regulatory responsibility over Group B systems, in conjunction with DOH. TPCHD is responsible for permitting individual wells. Water systems meeting certain conditions (i.e., size) are required by DOH to prepare water system plans. Such plans are required to be consistent with growth and zoning conditions contained in the relevant jurisdiction's comprehensive plan.

The Central Puget Sound area faces significant challenges in meeting the water needs for people and fish habitat with available resources. At current levels of water use, additional water supplies will be needed to meet both near-term (through 2020) and long-term (through 2050 and beyond) water demand in the region. While many of these systems would prefer the ability to drill for new sources of groundwater within their service areas, the likelihood of doing so is questionable. Instead, water systems are beginning to recognize the need to seek a regional water source to supplement existing sources of supply, which is reflected in several new regional planning efforts, such as the Central Puget Sound Water Initiative and ESHB 2514 planning processes.

At the local level, several Pierce County water purveyors operating within the urban growth boundary are in need of new sources of supply to serve anticipated new growth. Currently, both Fruitland Mutual Water and the Southwood Water, each serving a portion of the South Hill community, are reaching capacity in terms of their water rights. Both systems have recognized the need for a new water source in their current individual water system plans and each is actively pursuing alternatives for additional sources. For example, Southwood Water is currently acquiring additional water rights through the purchase of existing wells with water rights and transferring the rights into the system capacity and has formalized a request to the City of Tacoma to enter a wholesale water contract. The majority of the Southwood Water system service area in the South Hill community is within the Silvercreek development. According to the Southwood/Sound Water System Plan, August 29, 2001, service to the development has already been committed. Fruitland Mutual Water is currently analyzing an intertie with the Lakewood Water District. See the Water Systems map located after page 128.

PIERCE COUNTY AIRPORT (THUN FIELD)

The Pierce County Airport is a publicly-owned facility operated by Pierce County. Airport and aircraft provisions located on the 150-acre site include support services for activities associated with accommodating small piston and turbine-engine aircraft, airport patron, tenants, and the general public. These support services include a single non-precision instrument lighted runway and a full-length taxiway, with exit and crossover taxiways to the terminal area facilities. The terminal area building and facilities are used and occupied under lease by aircraft operators and private and commercial enterprises. Airport hangars are owned and operated by a mix of county and private entities and provide for various uses, including individual aircraft

storage, transient storage, commercial maintenance/repair, leased business and office areas. Hangar storage currently totals 138 units, with an on-demand hangar waiting list of over 35 planes. In 2001, Pierce County adopted an updated master plan that details future improvements to the airport.

The Pierce County Airport was developed in 1944 by a group of local businessmen. Initially, low-density residential sites and agricultural operations surrounded the facility. As time proceeded, the airport ownership transferred to various private individuals/partnerships. Airport improvements attracted more civilian-based aircraft and an increase in aircraft operations, growing from approximately 25,000 annual operations in the 50's to roughly 49,000 annual operations in 1980. The residential community surrounding the airport began to grow also, but not to the extent as in the 80's and 90's.

In the late 70's, the FAA encouraged a local government to sponsor the facility to assure continued aircraft recreation activity. Pierce County acquired Thun Field in 1980 with participation from the FAA and Washington State DOT, Aeronautics Division. The manager of the County Park, Recreation, and Community Services Department assumed the initial administrative sponsorship of the facility. In 1994, the airport's management was transferred to the County Department of Public Works and Utilities.

Residential construction skyrocketed around the airport in the late 80's and throughout the 90's. By 2002, it is forecasted that there will be a total of 170,000 operations. With the combination of residential and aircraft operation growth, various neighborhoods have an increased sensitivity towards safety and noise issues.

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED CONDITIONS

Community residents emphasize that their quality of life is dependent on the level of service for certain facilities and infrastructure. Increased access to public services and additional oversight of the Pierce County Airport are also desired. Agency coordination, regulatory modifications, and public investment highlight strategies to successfully accomplish the community's goals. The South Hill Community Plan Capital Facilities Element map was developed during the visioning process. The map identifies numerous facilities and services desired by the citizens. The Capital Facilities Element map is located following page 128.

PUBLIC PARKS

The objectives, policies, and standards focus on the acquisition and development of property for public parks and a community trail system. Strategies identify possible funding mechanisms and public agency partnerships. Additional policies address park and trail design to ensure associated amenities provide visitors various opportunities for enjoyment.

Existing utility corridors are identified as potential community trail segments. Pierce County is directed to enter into discussions with the Bonneville Power Administration, Tacoma Water, and Williams Natural Gas to negotiate conditions associated with the development of a trail system. The trail system would fulfill a dual role, providing pedestrian connections between

residential neighborhoods and the Meridian commercial districts, and providing passive recreation opportunities.

Five new sites are identified as possible parks. The vast majority of these sites are existing publicly owned properties or dedicated undeveloped tracts within established neighborhoods. Policy also directs the County to explore the acquisition of the property located southwest of the intersection of 144th and Meridian for a public commons area if it becomes available on the real estate market. Although a site has not been specified, the need for a multi-purpose community center has also been identified. Possible uses for this type of facility may include community holiday functions, senior activities, service organizations, etc.

IDENTIFIED PUBLIC PARK SITES

- Horse Haven Creek Park and Trail
- Hopp Farm/Hemlock Pond Park and Trail
- Ates Pond Park and Trail
- Reservoir Park and Trail
- Half Dollar Park (94th Avenue and 124th)

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The objectives, policies, and standards strive to manage stormwater to ensure existing neighborhoods are not flooded by runoff from new development and to more effectively integrate stormwater facilities into the natural landscape. General strategies are recommended to address the contributing factors of flooding episodes: Purchasing properties that have experienced repeated flooding episodes; discouraging development in areas that are susceptible to flooding; and properly maintaining public and private stormwater facilities. The community plan should be updated with more specific recommendations once local basin planning is completed.

SANITARY SEWER

Limited policy direction is provided to Pierce County to consider revising sewer regulations to increase the required hook-up distance for formal plats beyond 300' of a main to decrease the development of new septic systems. The desire to fully sewer the entire community should be balanced with the need to recharge the aquifer.

POTABLE WATER

Acknowledging the finite resource that it is, the policy focus for potable water is placed on aquifer recharge, resource protection, and conservation. These efforts require cooperation between public agencies, water purveyors, and community groups. Due to the limited available information about the aquifers, the planning and monitoring efforts for the Chamber-Clover

Creek water resource area and other regional water resource management efforts should also be supported.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Most children and young adults spend six hours a day, nine months a year in a public school. In addition to providing core education, school programs provide students with social interactions, exposure to the arts, and sports opportunities. Although the Puyallup School District has a high reputation for providing a quality education experience, the recent residential growth is straining the district's ability to provide the desired school space for students in the South Hill community.

It is recognized that the Puyallup School District is the responsible entity to address the core issues. Policies strive for increased coordination between the County and the district to develop strategies to address student capacity deficiencies. Specifically, the district is encouraged to actively pursue an increase in impact fees that are collected through the County's building permit process. Additional coordination is also needed between the two entities to ensure students have safe walking routes from their residential neighborhoods to schools.

PIERCE COUNTY AIRPORT (THUN FIELD)

Heated debated occurs when pilots and residents living around the Pierce County Airport are convened in the same forum. Residents complain of the noise generated and acrobatic maneuvers performed by individual aircraft. Pilots respond with reference to FAA regulations, but concede that some individuals have not always complied with them. Through the planning process, both sides of the issue have recognized that a lack of productive dialogue has escalated the tension.

The primary emphasis of the policies is on the establishment of an airport advisory committee. Committee membership would represent both residential and aviation interests. In addition to updates to the master plan, the committee would explore good neighbor practices to implement at the airport. As a means to recognize the airport as a community facility, the airport master plan would be incorporated as a component of the South Hill Community Plan. This reference would require additional community review for future revisions to the master plan. Additional policies encourage Pierce County to develop a marketing plan for available airport properties.

PIERCE COUNTY OFFICES

Residents and business owners are currently required to travel to the City of Tacoma to receive certain County services. The population in the community warrants some level of local access. Policies encourage the County to survey community residents and business owners to determine the appropriate services to be located in a potential Pierce County satellite service

center. The County should identify existing public or private facilities in South Hill that could serve as a potential Pierce County satellite service center.

TRANSPORTATION

Improvements to the transportation system need to efficiently facilitate the existing and projected automobile traffic.

The policies strive to safely connect roadways, bike lanes, and trails to residential neighborhoods, schools, parks, community services and commercial areas. The community plan development is accompanied by appropriate infrastructure such as sidewalks, roads, and bicycle paths. A top priority is connections within neighborhoods, between neighborhoods, and throughout the community. Plan policies and action steps prioritize:

- sidewalk connections from schools to surrounding neighborhoods;
- sidewalk connections extending from one subdivision to another in a continuous fashion;
- sidewalk and bicycle connections from residential areas to commercial areas; and,
- pedestrian and bicycle facilities within commercial centers so the auto is not the only mode of travel.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

The following is a list of actions that need to be completed in order to implement the policies contained within this plan. They are arranged according to the timeframe within which each should be completed: short, medium, or long term. Short-term actions should occur within one year of plan adoption. Mid-term actions should be completed within 2-5 years. Long-term actions should be completed within 5-10 years of plan adoption. The parties responsible for leading the effort to complete the action item are listed in parenthesis following the action. Actions are assigned to the South Hill Advisory Commission (SHAC), Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS), Pierce County Economic Development (EC), Pierce County Parks and Recreations (Parks), Pierce County Public Works (PW), Airport Advisory Committee (AAC), and Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD).

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1. Appoint a Thun Field Advisory Committee to work with the County, airport managers, and users to ensure good neighbor practices. (Pierce County)
2. Develop an urban essential public facility PUD for the Pierce County Airport. (PALS, Public Works, Pierce County Airport Advisory Commission)
3. Identify existing public or private facilities that could serve as a potential Pierce County satellite service center. (SHAC)
4. Augment each school district's effort to identify, program, and implement improved nonmotorized connections to their local schools. Review the existing and future needs for improving existing connections between the schools and neighborhoods using such

information as the individual School Walk Route Plan. Develop strategies for implementing such connections. (PWU, PALS)

5. Appoint a committee to investigate and recommend solutions to the Thun Field Area of Influence and Employment Center. The committee should consider safety records, compatibility issues, the need for industrial lands, and the viability of Thun Field as an Employment Center. Members of the committee should include WSDOT Aviation Division, Pierce County Public Works and Utilities, Pierce County Economic Development, Puyallup School District, property owners within the EC zone, property owners within Zone 6, and representatives from the CPB and the SHAC.

Parks

6. Develop and adopt a detailed plan for the South Hill Community Trail that:
 - links to schools, parks, neighborhoods;
 - promotes or links to the Heritage Corridors where possible;
 - provides educational and fitness resources;
 - includes interpretive signs. (PALS, SHAC)
7. Pursue community trail development through discussions/negotiations with Bonneville Power Administration, Tacoma Water, and Williams Natural Gas. (PALS, SHAC)
8. Conduct a study to determine the feasibility of the acquiring and developing the parks listed in this Element with the desired amenities and water reuse systems. (Parks and Recreation, SHAC)
9. Amend the Pierce County Parks and Recreation Plan to include the active and passive park/recreational uses in accordance with plan priorities and results of the feasibility study. (Parks and Recreation)

Transportation

10. Amend parking requirements for parks where adjacent to school sites. (PALS)
11. Develop and implement measures for traffic calming and speed control facilities to be utilized to increase safety. Consider revising road design standards or functional classifications in order to implement traffic calming measures. (SHAC, PALS, PW)
12. Revise the transportation concurrency method to reflect the congestion on the roadway network and relate to the methodology of the traffic impact fee program. (PWU, PALS)
13. Augment each school district's effort to identify, program, and implement improved nonmotorized connections to their local schools. Review the existing and future needs for improving existing connections between the schools and neighborhoods using such information as the individual School Walk Route Plan. Develop strategies for implementing such connections. (PWU, PALS)
14. Amend the Pierce County Transportation Plan projects and 6-year Transportation Improvement Plan to reflect the projects and priorities of the South Hill Community Plan. (PALS, PW)

15. Develop and adopt incentive-based regulations that provide for density incentives in exchange for a public benefit, such as dedication of rights-of-way, to help achieve the goals of the community plan. (PALS, PW)

MID-TERM ACTIONS

1. Establish annual workshops with adjacent cities and communities to establish coordination and communication for establishing services and facilities. (Pierce County, SHAC, AAC)
2. Explore opportunities for funding for services and facilities that may include special taxing districts, grant funding, and community fundraisers. (PALS, SHAC)
3. Explore opportunities to co-locate community facilities and services. (PALS, SHAC, PW, AAC)
4. Establish a system by which utility providers are required to notify Central Pierce Fire and Rescue, Puyallup School District, and other utility providers regarding construction activities, schedules, and locations. (Public Works)
5. Identify properties that need to be acquired to preserve existing flood plains and construct CIP projects. (Public Works, SHAC)
6. Educate the public about the County's Floodplain Preservation and Property Acquisition Program. (Public Works, SHAC)
7. Formalize an educational program to communicate the tenets of sustainable development techniques to the South Hill community. (Public Works, SHAC)
8. Develop an inspection program for existing public and private stormwater ponds within subdivisions to enforce existing maintenance agreements on private stormwater facilities. Where the responsible homeowners' association is not responsive to the maintenance of the private stormwater facility and public resources are necessary to complete the maintenance, fees and liens on property should be applied. (Public Works)
9. Develop a contest or demonstration garden to promote water conservation measures. (SHAC, WSU, Water Purveyors)
10. Sponsor a yard maintenance workshop to instruct homeowners proper use of fertilizers and pesticides. (SHAC, Water Purveyors)
11. Pursue amendments of state law in order to allow water to be transferred among pressure systems and water purveyors. (PALS, TPCHD)
12. Review local water purveyor's ability to serve the expected densities and 20 year growth projections. Recommend service area revisions to problem areas. (Public Works)
13. Update the South Hill Community Plan with revisions from the Basin Plan. (PALS, Public Works)
14. Coordinate with local school districts to increase impact fees. (SHAC)

15. Coordinate with local school districts to identify and prioritize designated walking routes to school. (SHAC)
16. Coordinate roadway and utility related construction activities in order to minimize the delays on alternative roadways within close proximity of one another. (PWU)

Parks

17. Conduct public forums to discuss the formation of a local park taxing district or service area to fund park/trail acquisition and maintenance. (SHAC, Parks and Recreation)

Transportation

18. Assess the demand and operational feasibility for fixed route and demand responsive transit services in the South Hill area and to the outlying areas. Services for these areas should be implemented if they are operationally viable and aid in the reduction of traffic congestion in the South Hill area. The assessment should include the following roadways: (Pierce Transit, Sound Transit)
 - 70th Avenue /Woodland Avenue East
 - 86th Avenue East
 - 94th Avenue East
 - Meridian Avenue East
 - 122d Avenue/Military Road East/Shaw Road East
 - 112th Street East
 - 122nd Street East
 - 128th Street East
 - 136th Street East
 - 144th Street East
 - 152nd Street East
 - 160th Street East
 - 176th Street East
 - Sunrise Parkway East/Sunrise Boulevard East
19. Assess the need, benefits, costs, and implementation strategies for providing significant capital and operational improvements on and along Meridian Avenue East inclusive of the addition of through lanes on Meridian Avenue East from 176th Street E to 112th Street E and the implementation of access management strategies. WSDOT should develop and prioritize these strategies by:
 - establishing a committee of citizens, business owners, County staff and WSDOT staff to identify needed improvements and potential funding sources;
 - adopting a Corridor Management Plan or EIS that details the planned improvements; and
 - proposing revisions to state transportation programs and/or budgets to ensure improvements are implemented. (WSDOT, PWU)

20. Site, coordinate, and implement the selection of one or more park and ride sites that will serve the South Hill area. A site should be considered near the southern boundary of the community plan area such as 176th Street East and Meridian Avenue. (WSDOT, Pierce Transit, Pierce County)
21. Establish a system by which South Hill residents will be informed of road projects that may disrupt traffic in the area. (Public Works, SHAC, Pierce Transit)
22. Coordinate roadway and utility related construction activities in order to minimize the delays on alternative roadways within close proximity of one another. (PWU)
23. Develop a neighborhood speed control program by:
 - Approving a budget to develop and implement the program.
 - Hiring staff to produce administrative procedures to evaluate and prioritize options for interested neighborhoods.
 - Considering the use of speed control methods inclusive of bulb outs, traffic circles, and speed humps. (PWU)
24. Implement the nonmotorized plan by including priority projects in the 6-year Transportation Improvement Plan. Investigate and implement methods to fund the comprehensive system.

LONG TERM ACTIONS

1. Develop and implement a marketing plan for commercial sites at the airport. (Pierce County Economic Development, airport advisory committee)

Parks

2. Develop an internal process that facilitates private land donation opportunities. (Parks)

Chapter 7: PLAN MONITORING

PURPOSE

The 1990 State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires jurisdictions planning under GMA to report on progress made in implementing the Act, and to subject their comprehensive plans to continuing evaluation and review. As part of the County's Comprehensive Plan, the South Hill Community Plan is subject to this requirement. One mechanism for conducting this evaluation and review is to monitor the development standards, regulations, actions, and other programs called for in the plan for the purpose of determining their effectiveness in fulfilling the vision of each of the six elements of the plan.

This section provides a framework both for monitoring the various actions undertaken to implement the plan and for offering recommendations to make adjustments to the actions in order to achieve the vision of the plan. Actions may include the development and implementation of regulations and design standards, working with South Hill to coordinate the provision of facilities and services, developing educational programs and handouts, acquiring parks, preserving open space, and other actions. This framework for monitoring provides a means for measuring the effect of each action, identifies participants and their roles in monitoring the actions, lays out time frames for monitoring, and specifies how the monitoring program should be documented. Information obtained from the monitoring program will be used to offer recommendations to decision makers as to what changes to the community plan may be needed in order to attain specified goals and meet the visions in the plan.

HOW TO MEASURE THE EFFECTS OF STANDARDS

The South Hill Community Plan identifies actions that need to be implemented to meet its vision, goals, objectives, principles, and standards. Monitoring evaluates the effectiveness of the actions in fulfilling the plan policies. The monitoring program outlined here includes several steps which are intended to identify actions taken, the ease with which they can be used, and whether the actions actually meet the objectives they were intended to achieve.

To do this, the monitoring program is divided into five steps: Actions, Inputs, Process, Outputs, and Outcomes. Each of the steps and the responsible participant are discussed briefly here.

PHASE 1 – ACTIONS:

Phase 1 monitoring would consist largely of reviewing the policies and standards stated in the plan and identifying all the actions that need to be undertaken to be consistent with the plan. The actions should be grouped according to the objectives they are intended to meet. PALS staff and the South Hill Advisory Commission (SHAC) would be the primary participants in this activity.

PHASE 2 - INPUTS:

Phase 2 monitoring would determine whether actions called for in the plan have actually been undertaken and completed. PALS staff would evaluate if regulations and design standards have been adopted. Review to determine if other actions have been completed and could be done by the SHAC or other County departments.

PHASE 3 - PROCESS:

Phase 3 monitoring would evaluate whether an action is straightforward, understandable, or easy to use. In the case of regulations and design standards, those persons who have submitted permit applications requiring compliance with the regulations and design standards would need to be involved in the evaluation. The Pierce County Hearing Examiner and the SHAC, which review such applications, as well as PALS staff, would need to be included in the monitoring. PALS staff would coordinate the monitoring and could conduct interviews or distribute questionnaires to persons who have submitted or reviewed permit applications subject to the regulation being monitored.

PHASE 4 - OUTPUTS:

Phase 4 monitoring would determine whether the action has been carried out as stated in the plan. For example, monitoring would determine whether a regulation or design standard has been complied with and identify reasons for any noncompliance. In regard to non-regulatory activities, monitoring would determine whether the objectives of the activity have been met. Participants would include residents, property owners, the SHAC, and PALS staff.

PHASE 5 - OUTCOMES:

Phase 5 monitoring would evaluate the extent to which each action results in the desired effect on the community. The primary participants are the residents and property owners in the plan area. Assistance would be provided by the SHAC and PALS staff. PALS staff would assist in organizing public meetings, preparing and distributing questionnaires, and using other means to gather this information.

TIMELINE

It is anticipated that the South Hill Community Plan will take a substantial period of time to be implemented. There are a number of actions that can be accomplished within a short timeframe, some will take much longer, and others will involve ongoing actions with no specific completion date. It is important that monitoring be done on a continuing basis with specific actions monitored at different times.

In regard to monitoring the development and implementation of regulations and design standards, it would be appropriate for monitoring to be phased over time as the five phases outlined above are accomplished. Phase 1 would begin almost immediately upon the plan adoption. Phase 2 would take place within two years following the plan adoption. This would provide adequate time for the County Council to adopt implementing regulations called for in

the plan. Phases 3, 4, and 5 would occur within two to three years following completion of Phase 2. This would allow time for the regulations to be applied to a number of development projects. Phase 3 analysis of how understandable the regulations are, and the ease to which they can be applied, would then be based on the application of the regulations to those projects developed within that time period. Phases 4 and 5 monitoring would be done simultaneously with Phase 3 monitoring. The total time for initial monitoring for Phases 1 through 5 would be about five years. As changes are made to regulations and design standards, the monitoring cycle would need to be repeated to address the changes.

Other actions that do not involve the implementation of regulations or design standards would be monitored on a similar timetable. Phase 1 and Phase 2 would occur within two years of adoption of the plan, while Phase 3, 4, and 5 monitoring would occur within five years of plan adoption.

As amendments are made to the plan, monitoring would need to continue to determine how effective the changes are in carrying out the goals in the plan. In addition, it would be appropriate to continue monitoring all actions in the plan every five years to evaluate whether the actions continue over time to effectively carry out those goals.

DOCUMENTATION

A review of baseline information is necessary to effectively monitor whether the goals of the South Hill Community Plan are being met. Information regarding community attitudes, visual characteristics of the community, community services, infrastructure, business climate, land uses, permitting activity, and other community characteristics would be evaluated.

As each phase of monitoring is completed, a report should be prepared by PALS staff which identifies the action being monitored, the specific purpose of the monitoring, methods used in monitoring, data collected, analysis of the data, and recommendations for further action. The report should be submitted to the SHAC for review and comment and to the County Council for its consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER ACTION

In addition to determining the effectiveness of the plan in fulfilling the goals of the community, a key component to monitoring would be the recommendations for further action. These recommendations should clearly identify the specific goals being addressed, how the recommended action corrects a deficiency in the plan, how the recommended action will contribute to fulfilling the goal in question, and a timeline for completing the proposed action.