Case Study:
City of Puyallup

Fit and Well: A Community Vision with a Focus on Health

Imagine Puyallup featured on the cover of Time magazine. A town so attractive it’s the envy of cities throughout the country. A model town making the best use of its resources...a lively downtown core, a safe country-like atmosphere, an agricultural heritage, a commitment to history and a strong sense of community. Puyallup will be a larger suburban community with ample employment opportunities and a diverse population; a community able and willing to accept financial responsibility for its needs.

This is envisioned for the year 2010 with such images as:
- A park stretching along both banks of the Puyallup River;
- A renewed downtown with connecting footpaths and bikeways;
- New downtown buildings in scale with the surrounding historic structures;
- Quality housing development with nearby services for seniors and disabled;
- Tree-lined lawns recreating "a walk through yesteryear;"
- Mixed residential densities but a predominantly single-family community; and
- Well planned new neighborhoods with schools, parks and services interconnected to the rest of the community.

The city’s centerpiece is a revitalized, lively downtown bustling with residents, visitors, and shoppers, both young and old. Commercial areas are buffered with street trees and surrounded by graceful, well-preserved historic neighborhoods. By 2010, the town will have developed an economic development strategy that will help attract visitors and new businesses, as well as assist existing businesses.

Puyallup Demographics
- Population: 37,980
- Mostly residential, but includes mix of commercial and industrial uses
- Historic downtown with typical suburban build-out on South Hill
- Major employers: Good Sam Hospital, Fair, School District, Pierce College, WSU Extension, South Hill Mall, Auto dealers

2015 Comp Plan Update
- Overall goals:
  - Reduce length, more accessible to layperson, update format
- Vision statement:
  - Less specific, yet more focused
- Direction:
  - Council and Planning Commission both supportive of the update goals
- Health:
  - Incorporate throughout plan rather than as stand-alone element

The city boasts a parks system for various purposes: athletics, strolling and quiet time. Centennial Park serves as a meeting place and home of special events. People walk along the River Walk, enjoying connecting trails throughout the greater community, and regularly see an idle all the way to Mt. Rainier.

Puyallup maintains its character and mobility as it grows into the next century. The city will be managing growth with the use of impact fees and by new development, enhanced public works and other facilities to support the growing population. A new downtown building and a performing arts center will be completed by 2010. A new performing arts center is part of a performing arts complex, focusing on the arts and entertainment. A new downtown building is part of a performing arts complex, focusing on the arts and entertainment. A new downtown building is part of a performing arts complex, focusing on the arts and entertainment. A new downtown building is part of a performing arts complex, focusing on the arts and entertainment.

In 2010 the Puyallup school district will rank among the nation’s top ten. Of note is the district’s close relationship with community and city government and offering unique educational programs relevant to the public.

The Puyallup of the future honors its long-standing agricultural heritage with the preservation of bulb fields, open space, and historic and city parks. A building history and preservation program enable the city to preserve areas of highly productive agricultural lands in the valley. A new performing arts center and better use of the Fairgrounds enhance the heritage. The emphasis on cultural education and recreation involves all ages. Puyallup resists its growth, families, elders and recreation.

Through conscientious planning and design, new and old residential neighborhoods and commercial districts relate to each other and are buffered by protected agricultural and forest lands, stream, and natural and architectural elements. Old parts of town are restored and have been adapted for new uses. Service, safety and a sense of community distinguish the city from others.

Known as the “Gateway to Mt. Rainier,” the Puyallup of 2010 has established its place in the region and is a model city. Strong community values are in evidence everywhere. Thoughtful and accountable leaders, with respect for citizens’ views, support responsible growth as more people move to the area to enjoy the city’s assets.
Political Context

- Skepticism of Planning driven ideas
- Perception that public has not been accurately represented in the past
- Tight control of public process
- Uncertainty - upcoming election could change direction

Stakeholder Group

- **Purpose:**
  - Engage the public for the duration of update
  - Avoid criticism of staff not listening to public opinion
- **Process:**
  - Identified participants – active community groups, major businesses, agencies
  - Reviewed with Council and requested input
- **Result:**
  - Lack of Council support ➔ “Key Communicators”

Visioning Process

- Kick-off open house
  - Identify and reach out to underrepresented groups
  - Take advantage of other opportunities (farmers market, library patrons)
- Survey
  - Development of questions
  - Outreach to seniors in collaboration with Health Department

Community Feedback

- Visioning wall
- Survey responses
- Use of toolbox to develop vision and framework goals
- Identification of “health” as community priority
  - Specific desires: ped/bike facilities, recreation opportunities, healthy/local food)

Updated Vision

*In 2035, Puyallup will be an active, friendly community that embraces its heritage. While preserving its small-town feel, it will grow responsibly to include diverse transportation, recreation, and housing options. Maintaining its quality of life, Puyallup will encourage economic development, education opportunities, and ample amenities for all ages.*

- Also established Framework Goals
- Preliminary “endorsement” from Planning Commission and City Council

Reengage Community

- Currently taking updated vision back to the public
  - “Did we correctly reflect community input?”
- Range of responses – many contradicted original input
Toolbox Resources

- **Visioning**
  - Update vision statement and goals to reflect community health priorities

- **Community Assessment/Existing Conditions**
  - Assessment questions used to develop survey
  - Work with TPCHD to identify underrepresented populations

- **Goal Formulation**
  - Include community health in framework goals
  - Statement of intent in Comp Plan introduction

- **Policy Development** – future update work

Lessons Learned

- Identify underrepresented groups early on
- Coordinate with other agencies
- Initial efforts to spread the word will pay off
- Survey questions – ask the right ones
- Never underestimate political impacts

---

Katie Baker, AICP
Associate Planner
City of Puyallup
kbaker@ci.puyallup.wa.us
253-435-3604
Creating Fit and Well Communities
Tools Included; Some Assembly Required

Washington APA Conference
October 2, 2013
Amy Pow, MCIP
Built Environment Liaison
Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

Public Health Trends—Then
• Clinical care for the underserved
• Direct services and individualized care
• Emphasis on communicable diseases caused by pathogens and vectors

Public Health Trends—Now
• Population-based
• Policy development
• Primary prevention—"upstream"
• Chronic disease prevention
• Health disparities and health equity

Planning for What?

Planning for Whom?
Creating Healthy Places for All

What are Healthy Communities?
Healthy and sustainable places built on a balanced foundation of people-prosperity-planet

What Are Planners Saying and Asking?
- Not enough resources
- Need evidence and policy language
- Health equity is hard to sell
- No political will or support
- No resource for rural communities
- Who are the underserved?
- What does it mean to wear a health lens?
- Where should we start integrating health?

A Solution
An evidence-based toolbox to address:
- **How**—Process tools that provide a health lens for your planning work.
- **What**—Policy tools that provide language and best practices to address health disparities, physical, mental health priorities.

www.tpchd.org/HealthyCommunityPlanningToolbox

What’s the Problem?
How do we create healthy communities?
“Show me the tools!”

Inside the Toolbox: Process Tools
Steps in Comprehensive Plan Update Process
- Visioning
- Community Assessment and Existing Conditions Update
- Goal Formulation
- Policy Development
- Draft Plan Review
- SEPA Review
- Final Plan Adoption
- Plan Implementation
- Plan Monitoring and Performance Management
Inside the Toolbox: Process Tools

**Wearing a Health Lens in Visioning**
- Amend vision statement to represent collective aspirations of diverse communities
- Emphasize community health priorities revealed in needs assessment process with diverse groups

Inside the Toolbox: Policy Tools

**PLACEMAKING**
- Design Guidelines for Traditional Mixed-Use Neighborhood Developments

**Policy Tool to Affect Placemaking Outcome (Land-Use Element/Mixed-Use Policy)**

**Purpose**—Provide design guidelines applicable to small and rural communities.

**Type of Tool**—Sample implementation tool: design guidelines that may be adapted for policy development.

**Summary Description**—Provides smart growth design guidelines for developing large sites in small towns or rural areas.

Your Health Department is Ready to Help....
- Partner with you
- Assist in community visioning, public engagement and environmental scan
- Provide evidence-based research and data, definition of terms
- Help craft or review policies
- Assist with HIA or integrating health in EIS
- Provide letters of support, make presentations

Thank You!

Amy Pow, MCIP
Built Environment Liaison
Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
(253) 789-6456
apow@tpchd.org

www.tpchd.org/HealthyCommunityPlanningToolbox