

A Comprehensive Plan to guide future growth and development for the City of Camas

# Camas 2035

*The Camas Vision*  
*Introduction*

*Developing Camas 2035*  
*Introduction*

*Land Use Goals  
and Policies*

*Pg. 1-4*

*Gateways and Entries*  
*Pg. 6-6*



# Camas Vision Statement

In order to create a vision for the future, it was important to understand the today. Camas 2035 has been guided by the community vision established over a 6-month process that involved hundreds of community members. In this process, we examined where we've been, how we've grown, what we do, and who we are today – to better understand how we will grow.

The vision is written in the present tense, as if describing the city as it exists in 2035. Some aspects of the vision can be found in Camas today, while others represent aspirations. It was adopted by City Council Resolution #15-002 on February 17, 2015, the vision provides a framework for the goals and policies of every element of Camas 2035.

## Introduction to Vision

In the year 2035, residents of Camas continue to appreciate their safe, diverse and welcoming community. Those that were raised in Camas will return for family wage jobs, and to ultimately retire here. Camas maintains its small town character while accommodating future residents. Camas is well known for its excellent schools, thriving businesses and ready access to metropolitan amenities and natural features. A vibrant downtown and community events bring neighbors together and are enjoyed by all.

## Vital, Stable and Livable Neighborhoods

Camas is a well-planned and connected city where residents enjoy pedestrian and bicycle paths between neighborhoods and to downtown. Historic structures are maintained and rehabilitated to accommodate new homes and businesses. **There is a wide variety and range of housing for all ages and income levels.** Quality public facilities, services and utilities contribute to a high quality of life.

## Diversified Economy

The economy has grown to attract a variety of businesses that offer stable employment opportunities and family wage jobs in the medical and high-tech fields. Camas is a gateway to nature and recreational opportunities, leading to a robust tourism industry. Professional office, medical and industrial uses will typify western Camas, with retail businesses supporting the large campus firms. The north shore area will fulfill the employment and retail needs of the growing population on the northeast side, and reduce trips outside of the city.

Downtown Camas retains its historic atmosphere as a walkable, attractive place to shop, dine and gather. Housing within the city's core contributes to a town center that supports local businesses.

*How we've grown...*

Camas has added nearly 7,500 residents since 2004!

*But we've added more than 1,300 acres of land to our city over the past 10 years.*

*Residential density is among the least dense urban areas in Clark County.*



**LU-2.7:** Protect employment land from conversion to residential uses in order to ensure an adequate supply of commercial and industrial land to meet 20-year employment projections.

**LU-2.8:** Ensure appropriately zoned land for the development of food retailers (grocery stores and farmers' markets) within a half-mile of residential areas.

### 1.4.3 Neighborhoods

In 2035, Camas is a well-planned and connected City where residents enjoy pedestrian and bicycle paths between neighborhoods and to downtown. Historic structures are maintained and rehabilitated to accommodate new homes and businesses. There is a wide variety and range of housing for all ages and income levels.

#### Neighborhood Goal

**LU-3:** Create vibrant, stable, and livable neighborhoods with a variety of housing choices that meet all stages in the life cycle and the range of affordability.

#### Neighborhood Policies

**LU-3.1:** Encourage a variety of housing typologies to support the overall density goal of six dwelling units per acre.

**LU-3.2:** Develop areas appropriate for senior housing, considering proximity to services and transportation options.

**LU-3.3:** Encourage connectivity between neighborhoods (vehicular and pedestrian) to support citywide connectivity and pedestrian access.

**LU-3.4:** Camas residents are protective of the small-town ambiance and family-friendliness of the community. Discourage exclusive neighborhoods, privacy walls, and gated communities.

**LU-3.5:** Where neighborhoods adjoin natural areas or trails, ensure connections through neighborhoods to enhance access to recreation amenities.

**LU-3.6:** Improve food access in residential areas that are farther than a half-mile from healthy food stores (grocery store or farmers' markets).

### 1.4.4 Natural Environment

In 2035, Camas appreciates and remains good stewards of its natural environment. A vegetated corridor provides habitat and safe passage for wildlife from Green Mountain to the Columbia River. Lacamas Lake is treasured as a unique and pristine resource.

#### Natural Environment Goal

**LU-4:** Develop an interconnected network of parks, trails, and open space to support wildlife corridors and natural resources and enhance the quality of life for Camas residents and visitors.

#### Natural Environment Policies

**LU-4.1:** Maintain development regulations that encourage the preservation of trees and natural areas, including the use of density bonuses to protect sensitive areas and encourage tree replacement.

**LU-4.2:** Support the purchase by the City, or the dedication and preservation by private owners, of open space and encourage careful consideration and integration of the natural environment in any planning activity to perpetuate the park-like setting of Camas.

**LU-4.3:** Encourage regional trail connectivity and increased access throughout the City to support multi-modal transportation and physical activity.

**LU-4.4:** Development on the edges of the City adjacent to unincorporated land in agricultural use or in a forested or natural state should consider those adjacent uses and, where appropriate, provide buffers.

## 2 HOUSING

### 2.1 Vision

In the year 2035, residents of Camas continue to appreciate their safe, diverse, and welcoming community. Those raised in Camas will return for family-wage jobs and to ultimately retire here. Camas is a well-planned and connected city where residents enjoy pedestrian and bicycle paths between neighborhoods and to downtown. There is a wide variety and range of housing for all ages and income levels.

### 2.2 Organization of Housing Element

- Housing Overview
  - Housing Needs
  - Housing Diversity and Supply
- Goals and Policies by Housing Category
  - Citywide Housing
  - Affordable Housing
  - Senior and Special Needs Housing

### 2.3 Housing Overview

Camas provides a full range of housing opportunities to meet the needs of the people who call the City home. Neighborhoods are strong, and residents participate in community events and care about the livability and quality of life of their community. Housing in Camas ranges from residential estates on acreage to higher density apartments and a variety of single and multi-family housing types. While new development in Green Mountain and North Shore will add nearly 2,500 lots to the City and include a mix of housing types, additional housing is needed to support the growing population of seniors and those whose household incomes fall below the median.

According to the GMA, the housing goal is to “[e]ncourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of the state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.” To accomplish this goal at the local level, Camas should pursue opportunities to increase the supply and diversity of housing by converting existing houses, increasing the number of accessory dwelling units (ADU) (a.k.a., in-law apartments), and providing incentives for the development of a wider range of housing sizes and types (e.g., single-story, multi-story, and cottage).

Regional cooperation is essential to assure adequate housing opportunities. Camas participates with the Vancouver Housing Authority, a local intergovernmental non-profit housing agency, to promote low- and moderate-income housing throughout the City.

*“Neighborhoods are strong, and residents participate in community events and care about the livability and quality of life of their community.”*

#### 2.3.1 Housing Needs

As stated in the Land Use Element, GMA requires jurisdictions to accommodate their shares of the region’s projected growth. In 2035, the City is expected to have a population of 34,098 people, an 11,255-person increase from the 2015 population of 22,843. In order to accommodate this projected increase, the City will need approximately 3,868 new housing units. Furthermore, in order to maintain the overall City density of six dwelling units per acre, approximately 645 acres are needed to support a variety of housing typologies and styles. The goals and policies in section 2.4, as well as the goals and policies included in the Land Use Element, are established to ensure the City can accommodate the population increase and provide housing for all economic segments of the community.

## Senior and Special Needs Housing

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, “[b]y 2030, one in every five people living in the US will be over the age of 65. This aging of America is fueled by 72 million baby boomers aging through the life cycle in combination with a profound increase in longevity. Average life expectancy doubled from the mid-thirties in the 19th century to age 78 today [2015].”

In general, special needs populations include people who might require some assistance in their day-to-day living, such as people who are physically or mentally disabled, victims of domestic violence, and at-risk youth. The City encourages efforts to provide for those needs and to require a percentage of new housing developments to include universal design accommodations. Special needs housing should be integrated into Camas neighborhoods and have easy access to public transportation, shopping, medical facilities, and other essentials.

## 2.4 Goals and Policies

Housing goals and policies are established to ensure adequate housing is developed throughout the City to support residents of all ages and income levels. Goals and policies are presented for three housing categories:

- Citywide – establishes a broad housing goal and sets policies to be considered throughout the City
- Affordable Housing – focuses on the development of affordable housing
- Special Needs and Senior Housing – establishes goals and policies to address the particular needs of residents with special needs and seniors

### 2.4.1 Citywide Housing

#### Citywide Housing Goal

**H-1:** Maintain the strength, vitality, and stability of all neighborhoods and promote the development of a variety of housing choices that meet the needs of all members of the community.

#### Citywide Housing Policies

**H-1.1:** Provide a range of housing options to support all ages and income levels.

**H-1.2:** Support residential development that minimizes both impervious areas and minimizes site grading to retain the natural contours of the land. Low impact development (LID) strategies include conserving native vegetation in tracts and considering narrower streets, stormwater gardens, and other landscape practices that store and filter runoff.

**H-1.3:** Encourage use of the optional development codes (e.g., PRD, MXPD) in order to create a variety of housing types within new developments.

**H-1.4:** Require a percentage of newly created lots to include one or more of the following unit types (to be designated on the face of the plat):

- Single-story dwellings
- Barrier-free dwellings (consistent with Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] guidelines)
- ADUs, to be constructed concurrent with primary dwellings

**H-1.5:** Ensure that housing in mixed-use buildings (or developments) will complement the commercial and retail portion of the development and increase local family-wage jobs.

**H-1.6:** Encourage in-fill development on vacant or underutilized sites, subject to design review guidelines, that have adequate urban services, and ensure that the development is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

**H-1.7:** Require all new housing developments to provide a range of housing types and sizes that are evaluated through the land use approval process and stipulated on the final plat.

## 2.4.2 Affordable Housing

### Affordable Housing Goal

**H-2:** Create a diversified housing stock that meets the needs of all economic segments of the community through new developments, preservation, and collaborative partnerships.

### Affordable Housing Policies

**H-2.1:** Support and encourage a wide variety of housing types throughout the City to provide choice, diversity, and affordability and promote homeownership.

**H-2.2:** Provide incentives and bonuses to encourage the development of affordable housing.

**H-2.3:** Any comprehensive plan designation change that increases residential capacity should require a quarter (25 percent) of the new units to be affordable to households earning 50 to 80 percent of Camas' MHI at the time of development.

**H-2.4:** All affordable housing created in the City should remain affordable for the longest possible term, whether created with public funds, through development agreements, or by regulation.

**H-2.5:** Participate in collaborative partnerships with various local and regional public and non-profit housing groups to ensure that affordable housing is provided throughout the City.

**H-2.6:** Provide financial assistance through collaborative partnerships to qualifying low-income residents to maintain or repair the health and safety features of their homes.

**H-2.7:** Conduct an affordable housing study in order to determine the number of existing affordable units and assess the need for additional units. Develop policies to implement recommendations of the affordable housing study.

## 2.4.3 Senior and Special Needs Housing

### Senior and Special Needs Housing Goal

**H-3:** Encourage and support a variety of housing opportunities for those with special needs, particularly those with challenges relating to age, health, or disability.

### Senior and Special Needs Housing Policies

**H-3.1:** Encourage special needs and senior housing to be dispersed throughout the community and close to public transportation, shopping, medical clinics, and other essential services.

**H-3.2:** Encourage and support social and health service organizations that offer programs and facilities to help persons with special needs remain in the community.

**H-3.3:** Treat residential structures occupied by persons with disabilities the same as residential structures occupied by a family or by non-disabled unrelated individuals.

**H-3.4:** Support and encourage the development of smaller (less than 1,000-square foot), single-story houses through the Multi-Family Cottage Overlay or other tools.