



King County

2012 King County Comprehensive Plan Update Fall City Subarea Plan Update

Public Review Draft

Department of Development and Environmental Services

Background

On January 31, 2011, King County conducted a community meeting to determine whether there was interest and need to update the 1999 Fall City Subarea Plan. This meeting was attended by about 100 people, who expressed many concerns about land use and zoning and the need for an alternative method of waste disposal for the downtown business district, and the strong concern that the existing residential areas within Fall City should not be forced to hook up to a future sewer system. County staff encouraged the community to continue to meet and develop recommendations for King County consideration during the 2012 update of the King County Comprehensive plan. There was also a considerable amount of feedback from the Fall City community during the scoping process for the 2012 update of the King County Comprehensive Plan (KCCP).

The Fall City Community Association (FCCA) held two public meetings in April and May, 2011. Each of these meetings was attended by about 50 people. The following highlights summarize the results of the two FCCA-sponsored public meetings:

Community Vision

“We seek to shape a future for our rural town that preserves and enhances its natural features and rich heritage, while providing the services and amenities that characterize a healthy, dynamic community”.

Quality of Life and Livability

In Fall City we want to work toward maintain a rural, family friendly town that strives to cultivate the health and vitality of our river, farms and forests. We want to integrate our historic richness

into our present, cultivate a healthy blend of recreational activities, and attract people here who add to his richness. Seven other statements were agreed to.

Goods and Services

King County should work with the businesses, Property Owners and Residents of Fall City to explore and implement improvements to Fall City that reinforce its rural character and improve its downtown experience for all. Two other statements were agreed to.

Business District Boundaries

King County should review and consider the three areas reviewed and recommend for commercial consideration. The south side of SR-202 from the Fall City Elementary School to Chief Kanim Middle School should not be considered for commercial expansion. See full report for specific areas.

Residential Rural Town Boundaries

King County shall expand the Fall City Town Boundary to include the adjacent 14+ acre Wells nursery Site and zone it to conform to the developed densities of the adjoining residential areas within the Town Boundary.

Wastewater Disposal

Because the current conditions are perceived to hamper the economic development of the Fall City Business District, King County shall give the analysis and implementation of any solutions a high priority in each of the responsible King County Departments while taking into account: preserving water quality, maintaining rural character, maintaining the type and scale of rural businesses, and the economic realities of the community of fall City.

Parks, Trails and Recreation Work Group

King County shall complete the previously indentified “missing links” in its regional trail system in the Fall City area including trail projects; PS-1, Preston-Snoqualmie Trail Extension; SNO-2, Snoqualmie Valley Trail (Snoqualmie Gap); and PS-2, Snoqualmie River Bridge. Seven other statements were agreed to. Additionally, King County shall provide public restrooms in Fall City to support visitor use of the business district and parks, was added at the meeting.

The full Fall City Community Association Planning Meetings Report is located on our web page.

Another group, known as **Fall City Residents for Rural Preservation**, conducted a community survey in June, 2011. The survey asked citizens to sign if they agreed the existing Fall City subarea plan has served the community well, and requested the following emphasis in preserving the plan:

- No sewer/wastewater in residential zone and no sewer tight line to Carnation, Snoqualmie or King County Metro.
- Although a few small adjustments may be needed to the business district, there are several vacant business buildings in Fall City and therefore expansion/encroachment of the business district into existing residential areas will not improve business viability.
- Apartments, condos and townhouses are not consistent with rural town character and no new permits should be issued.
- The existing town boundary should remain unchanged. No special rezoning should be granted using the King County Comprehensive plan/Fall city Subarea Plan update as a means to sidestep the permit/hearing process.

The Fall City Citizens for Rural Preservation survey was signed by 328 people and can be viewed on our web page.

Several docket requests have been submitted in recent years to activate potential commercial zoning that has been in place for several years or to request new commercial zoning in the downtown commercial area of Fall City. These requests have all been denied because the 1999 Fall City Subarea Plan and the King County Comprehensive Plan both include a policy that requires an alternative wastewater disposal method or sewer service as a prerequisite for activation of potential commercial zoning or any new commercial zoning. Sewer service is not available for Fall City and will likely not be available for the foreseeable future. It is unknown when or if an alternative wastewater method will be available.

To address the concerns raised by Fall City residents and property owners, this study will analyze and consider proposing changes to applicable KCCP and 1999 Fall City Subarea Plan policies, modifying existing land use and zoning designations, and documenting other community concerns such as parks and trails, alternative wastewater options, and improvements to downtown Fall City for consideration and possible future action by King County.

Applicable Fall City Subarea Plan Policy:

- L-4** Fall City’s existing commercial and industrial land base should be retained. Future expansion of the business district is provided for in this Plan through potential Community Business zoning, which may be realized through an area-wide rezone initiated by the King County Council once alternative wastewater treatment systems or public sewers are available.

Applicable King County Comprehensive Plan Policies

- R-504** King County hereby designates the Rural Towns of Fall City, Snoqualmie Pass, and the Town of Vashon as unincorporated Rural Towns. These historical settlements in unincorporated King County should provide services and a range of housing choices for Rural Area residents. The boundaries of the designated Rural Towns are shown on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. Adjustments to these boundaries shall only occur through a subarea planning process, and shall not allow significant increases in development potential or environmental impacts. No new Rural Towns are needed to serve the Rural Area.
- R-505** Commercial and industrial development that provides employment, shopping, and community and human services that strengthen the fiscal and economic health of rural communities should locate in Rural Towns if utilities and other services permit.
- R-506** Rural Towns may contain higher-density housing than permitted in the surrounding Rural Area, and should provide affordable and resource-worker housing if utilities and other services permit. Development density in Rural Towns may approach that achieved in rural cities.
- R-507** Rural Towns serve as activity centers for the Rural Area and may be served by range of utilities and services, and may include several or all of the following land

uses, if supported by necessary utilities and other services and if scaled and designed to protect rural character:

- a. Retail, commercial and industrial uses to serve the surrounding Rural Area population and to provide support for resource industries and tourism;**
- b. Residential development, including single-family housing on small lots as well as multifamily housing and mixed-use developments;**
- c. Other commercial and industrial uses, including commercial recreation and light industry; and**
- d. Public facilities and services such as community services, churches, schools, and fire stations.**

R-508 Sewers may be allowed in Rural Towns if necessary to solve existing water quality and public health problems which cannot be addressed by other methods, provided that any extension of sewer mains from urban areas to serve a Rural Town shall be tightlined systems designed to not serve any intervening lands. All alternatives shall be exhausted before sewers may be allowed. Rural Towns shall not be enlarged to facilitate provision of sewers.

R-509 Rural Towns should be compact, promoting pedestrian and nonmotorized travel while permitting automobile access to most commercial and industrial uses. New development should be designed to strengthen the desirable characteristics and the historic character of the town, be supported by necessary public facilities and services, and be compatible with historic resources and nearby rural or resource uses. New industrial uses should locate where they do not disrupt pedestrian or bicycle traffic in established retail areas of town or conflict with residential uses.

CP-937 Fall City is an unincorporated rural town which should have overall residential densities of one to four dwelling units per acre. Potential commercial zoning adopted in the 1999 Fall City Subarea Plan may be actualized through an area-wide rezone initiated by the King County Council once alternative wastewater treatment systems or public sewers are available.

- CP-938** The zoning for Fall City adopted in the 1999 Fall City Subarea Plan reflects the community's strong commitment to its rural character, recognizes existing uses, provides for limited future commercial development, and respects natural features. Additionally, it recognizes the current and long-term foreseeable rural level of utilities and other public services for the area. The land use implications of a major change in the water supply or a public health requirement for community-wide wastewater collection and treatment may be evaluated in a new community-based planning process; however this does not mean that zoning will change to allow more intense development beyond that adopted in the 1999 Fall City Subarea Plan. The rural character of Fall City should be preserved.
- CP-939** Within the residential area of Fall City, compatible home occupations and small-scale agricultural pursuits or similar rural land uses can continue.
- CP-940** King County should work with the State of Washington and the Fall City community to make transportation improvements in Fall City that will favor safe and pleasant pedestrian and other nonmotorized links between downtown businesses, the residential areas, and nearby King County Parks, and safe walkways to schools, rather than rapid through traffic.
- CP-941** King County should expand the soft surface pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle trail opportunities serving the Fall City area. Trail route options serving the community shall be reviewed to include a route along the left bank levee easement directly adjacent to the Raging River, historically used by the public as a pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle trail. This historically used trail generally follows the "wildlife corridor" along the bank of the Raging River from 328th Way SE approximately NE to the Preston Fall City Road. The selected trail system for the Fall City area shall be identified in the King County Parks and Recreation trail system plan.

CP-942 Zoning for the existing industrial and office areas adopted in the 1999 Fall City Subarea Plan should be maintained but not expanded.

Policy Analysis and Conclusions

KCCP policies R-504 through R-509 provide direction for the three designated Rural Towns in King County. Reviewing these policies in light of the public input received from Fall City residents and property owners, no policy amendments to policies R-504 through R-509 are recommended.

One provision of policy R-508 states that *all alternatives shall be exhausted before sewers may be allowed*. It should be noted that two of the three Rural Towns already are served by sewer systems, so this provision is only applicable to Fall City. Current and future efforts to determine whether there could be an alternative wastewater disposal method for the downtown commercial district of Fall City are consistent with the intent of R-508.

In the future, if an alternative wastewater method has been investigated but not been put in place, a tightlined sewer that is designed to only serve the downtown commercial district would then be consistent with policy R-508. In this scenario, the only reason to provide sewer service outside of the downtown commercial district would be to serve a failed septic system for an existing structure, which is allowed by the King County Code. No residents or property owners outside of the downtown commercial district would be required to connect to a sewer system.

Policy L-4 of the 1999 Fall City Subarea Plan and the corresponding policy CP-937 from the community plan chapter of the King County Comprehensive Plan link future commercial rezones to the existence of an alternative wastewater disposal system or a sewer system. Since neither has been put in place, all commercial docket requests have been denied and all properties with existing potential commercial zoning have been unable to activate and use their potential commercial zoning. Staff recommends uncoupling the requirement for a new wastewater method from the ability to request commercial zoning within the Fall City downtown commercial district. This will allow property owners who are able to get Health Department approval for their on-site waste disposal system to develop their property consistent with zoning.

For this reason, the following amendments to policy L-4 of the Fall City Subarea Plan and policy CP-937 of the KCCP are recommended:

L-4 Fall City’s existing commercial and industrial land base should be retained. ~~((Future expansion of the business district is provided for in this Plan through potential Community Business zoning, which may be realized through an area-wide rezone initiated by the King County Council once alternative wastewater treatment systems or public sewers are available.))~~ The downtown Fall City business district is included within a Special District Overlay (SDO). All property within this SDO is designated and zoned for commercial development. New development within the SDO is subject to Seattle-King County Health Department approval of the on-site septic system. When and if an alternative waste disposal method or self-contained sewer system becomes feasible, it shall be designed to serve only the designated downtown commercial district.

CP-937 Fall City is an unincorporated rural town which should have overall residential densities of one to four dwelling units per acre. ~~((Potential commercial zoning adopted in the 1999 Fall City Subarea Plan may be actualized through an area-wide rezone initiated by the King County Council once alternative wastewater treatment systems or public sewers are available.))~~ The downtown Fall City business district is included within a Special District Overlay (SDO). All property within this SDO is designated and zoned for commercial development. New development within the SDO is subject to Seattle-King County Health Department approval of the on-site septic system. When and if an alternative waste disposal method or self-contained sewer system becomes feasible, it shall be designed to serve only the designated downtown commercial district.

New text following policies L-4 and CP-937:

It is important to note that a self-contained sewer system does not directly connect to the Metro system. A self-contained sewer system would be designed and built to only serve the Fall City downtown business district.

To implement these policy recommendations, several zoning changes are proposed:

Establish a new Special District Overlay (SDO) in the King County Code for rural business districts and apply this SDO to the Fall City downtown business district, as shown on the attached zoning map for this subarea plan. All property within the SDO is recommended to be zoned CB-SO. This Special District Overlay includes a list of permitted and conditional uses for all property within the Overlay, replacing the permitted use table in King County Code Chapter 21A.08. Design standards for new construction are also required. All other provisions of King County Code Chapter 21A continue to apply.

The permitted and conditional uses within the Special District Overlay include:

Permitted and Conditional uses

Rural Business District Special District Overlay

1	Residential	<p>The following uses are allowed by right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multifamily residential units shall only be allowed on the upper floors of buildings. If more than 10 units are provided, at least 10% of the units shall be classified as affordable (see Article 8: Definitions).• Home Occupation (per the requirements of Section 21A.30 of the Zoning Code) <p>The following uses are permitted with a conditional use permit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bed and Breakfast (five rooms maximum)• Hotel/Motel
2	Recreational/Cultural	<p>The following uses are permitted by right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Library• Museum• Arboretum <p>The following uses are permitted with a conditional use permit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sports Club/Fitness Center• Amusement/Recreation Services/Arcades (Indoor)• Bowling Center
3	General Services	<p>The following uses are allowed by right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Personal Services• Funeral Home• Appliance/Equipment Repair• Medical or Dental Office/Outpatient Clinic• Medical or Dental Lab• Day Care I• Day Care II• Veterinary Clinic• Social Services• Animal Specialty Services• Artist Studios• Nursing and Personal Care Facilities <p>The following uses are permitted with a conditional use permit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theater (Movie or Live Performance)• Religious Use

4	Government/Business Services	<p>The following uses are allowed by right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Business Service • Professional Office: Bank, Credit Union, Insurance Office <p>The following uses are permitted with a conditional use permit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Agency or Utility Office • Police Substation • Fire Station • Utility Facility • Self Service Storage
5	Retail/Wholesale	<p>The following uses are allowed by right on the ground floor of buildings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Store • Drug Store/Pharmacy • Retail Store: includes florist, book store, apparel and accessories store, furniture/home furnishings store, antique/recycled goods store, sporting goods store, video store, art supply store, hobby store, jewelry store, toy store, game store, photo store, electronic/appliance store, fabric shops, pet shops, and other retail stores (excluding adult-only retail) • Eating and Drinking Places including coffee shops and bakeries <p>The following uses are permitted with a conditional use permit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liquor Store or Retail Store Selling Alcohol • Hardware/Building Supply Store • Nursery/Garden Center • Department Store • Auto Dealers (indoor sales rooms only)
6	Manufacturing	<p>Manufacturing uses (excluding Home Industry Uses permitted per the requirements of Section 21A.30 of the Zoning Code) are prohibited.</p>
7	Resource	<p>The following uses are allowed by right:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar photovoltaic/solar thermal energy systems • Private stormwater management facilities • Growing and Harvesting Crops (within rear/internal side yards or roof gardens, and with organic methods only) • Raising Livestock and Small Animals (per the requirements of Section 21A.30 of the Zoning Code) <p>The following uses are permitted with a special use permit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wind Turbines
8	Regional	<p>The following uses are permitted with a special use permit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Facility

**Design Standards for New Construction
Rural Business District Special District Overlay**

1	Number of Floors	1 to 2 floors plus an optional basement.
2	Ground Floor Elevation	The elevation of the ground floor may be elevated a maximum of 5' above the average grade of the site along the front facade of the building. If the ground floor is designed to accommodate non-residential uses, the elevation of the ground floor should be placed near the elevation of the sidewalk to minimize the need for stairs and ADA ramps.
3	Ground Floor Height	If the ground floor is designed to accommodate non-residential space, the height of the ceiling (as measured from floor plate to floor plate) shall be at least 18'.
4	Maximum Height	40' maximum as measured from the average grade of the site along the front facade of the building.

Retain the existing P-Suffix conditions of development approval for two properties within the SDO: Parcel number 1424079050 (landscaping requirements of an old rezone), and parcel number 2475900460 (limits on overnight parking and prohibition of truck storage also from an old rezone).

Delete all other P-Suffix conditions within the SDO for the downtown business district. All of the parcels within the SDO that have potential commercial zoning are proposed for outright CB zoning – the potential zoning is no longer needed and should be deleted. All of the potentially zoned properties also have a P-Suffix condition (number FC-P1), which is no longer needed and should be deleted.

No KCCP land use map amendments are recommended. There is no need for additional

residential development capacity beyond what is already allowed in Fall City. The existing Fall City residential neighborhood should not be threatened by either expansion of the Rural Town boundary for the purpose of more residential development, or by any commercial expansion beyond the boundary of the proposed SDO.

The following **special recommendations** for consideration and possible future action by King County have been developed by the FCCA as a result of their public outreach. The list below should be considered an overview or highlights of these recommendations. **Please see the full FCCA report (follow the link on page 2 of this study) for a more detailed discussion and complete list of community recommendations.**

- King County shall work with businesses, property owners, and residents of Fall City to review, enforce or update current business regulations to maintain workable standards that enhance Fall City while allowing desired business operations;
- King County should work with businesses, property owners, and residents of Fall City to explore and implement improvements to Fall City that reinforce its rural character and improve the downtown experience for all;
- King County shall resume leadership in determining a non-sewer wastewater solution for the Fall City business district;
- King County has an obligation to remain the provider and maintainer of parks and recreational facilities in the unincorporated rural areas; and
- King County shall complete the previously identified “missing links” in its regional trail system in the Fall City area, and update its missing links list to include the missing segment between Fall City Park and the marked pedestrian/equestrian crossing at SR 203.