



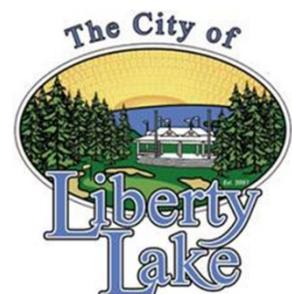
LIBERTY LAKE – 2046

DRAFT CITY OF LIBERTY LAKE

LAND USE ELEMENT

FOR THE 2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

June 2, 2025



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Appendices:

A. Introduction

The Land Use Chapter sets the stage for a vibrant, sustainable, family-friendly community through the balanced allocation of land for housing, commerce, industry, recreation, transportation, open space, cultural resources, and other uses. It accommodates growth, while preserving the character of established neighborhoods and protecting them from intrusion of incompatible uses by using innovative land development concepts and techniques.

Planning Principles

The following planning principles, developed through citizen participation efforts, were foundational to the development of the Land Use Chapter and its goals and policies.

- Compact urban forms should be encouraged that create a greater sense of “community,” with pedestrian/bicycle-friendly settlement patterns.
- Neighborhood character should be preserved and protected.
- Jobs, housing, services and other activities should be within easy walking distance and shorter commute times of each other.
- The City of Liberty Lake should have a center focus that combines commercial, civic, cultural, and recreational uses.
- Streets, pedestrian paths, and bike paths should contribute to a system of fully interconnected routes.
- The City of Liberty Lake should have a diversity of housing and job types that enable residents from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to work and reside within the City's boundaries.

B. Goals and Policies

Land Use Goal 1: Provide a healthful, safe, and sustainable urban environment.

Policy 1: Encourage developers to work with neighborhoods to develop plans that address neighborhood concerns, such as environmental protection, aesthetics, quality of life, property values, and preservation of open space.

Policy 2: Provide for a compatible mix of housing and commercial uses in all commercial districts, neighborhood centers, community centers, and the Central Business District.

Policy 3: Continue to provide incentives for mixed-use developments, which are consistent with adopted criteria. This may include, but is not limited to:

- a. Bonus densities; and,
- b. Greater flexibility in design standards (e.g., setbacks, frontage, building height, lot area, street design, landscaping, etc.).

Policy 4: Protect designated light industrial areas for ongoing use and future development.

Land Use Goal 2: Encourage development in the Central Business District that advances the City’s identity, provides transportation linkages, and supports a pedestrian friendly environment.

Policy 1: Encourage shared-use parking, pedestrian access, bicycle paths, and transit incentive programs to promote the efficient use of land.

Policy 2: Continue to work closely with property owners in the downtown area in support of their efforts to develop the remaining vacant lots and to renovate existing developments.

Land Use Goal 3: Plan for future growth of the City in a cost-effective manner while maintaining high-quality public facilities and services.

Policy 1: Maintain land use types and densities along transit corridors that support and are compatible with high performance transit.

Policy 2: Follow the process for siting of essential public facilities as set forth in the *Spokane County Regional Siting Process for Essential Public Facilities*.

NOTE: See also Housing Goals & Policies (page XX), and GHG Land Use Goals & Policies (page YY).

C. History and Background

The City of Liberty Lake contains a mix of land uses including single- and multi-family dwellings, recreational areas including parks, trails, and golf courses, light manufacturing, and mostly regional-scaled commercial, including two large grocery stores. Professional office buildings, restaurants, schools, and churches are also found with undeveloped land still available and suitable for residential, commercial, and industrial growth.

At the initial startup of the City of Liberty Lake it was recommended to and approved by the City Council to adopt by reference the Spokane County Comprehensive Plan which pre-dated the Growth Management Act (GMA) and the Spokane County Zoning Code dated November 1998 to maintain the status quo until the City adopted its own Comprehensive Plan and Implementation Regulations.

The City adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 2003 and its own Development Code in 2005.

Land Area & Use

Residential: Residential development within the city limits of Liberty Lake began back in the late 1970's with the start of the Liberty Lake Heights subdivision. Unlike developments that would soon follow, the Heights was not a Planned Unit Development (PUD), however the neighborhood did have covenants that governed the neighborhood. By 1987, full scale development had begun with the Homestead and Meadowwood subdivisions. By August 31, 2001, when the City officially incorporated, the majority of the City was within PUD residential neighborhoods. Most of these

neighborhoods were considered low- to medium-density residential units. Only a small portion of the residences within the City were higher density multi-family residential.

After the approval of the River District Specific Area Plan (SAP), Liberty Lake saw much greater mixed residential development, with single family homes interspersed with duplexes, townhomes and small apartment complexes within that SAP. Similarly, Liberty Village SAP, which was approved in 2006, also saw significant development of townhomes, condominiums, and apartment along with single family homes. In recent years, the City has seen an increase in larger multi-family apartment complexes being developed in the mixed-use zones.

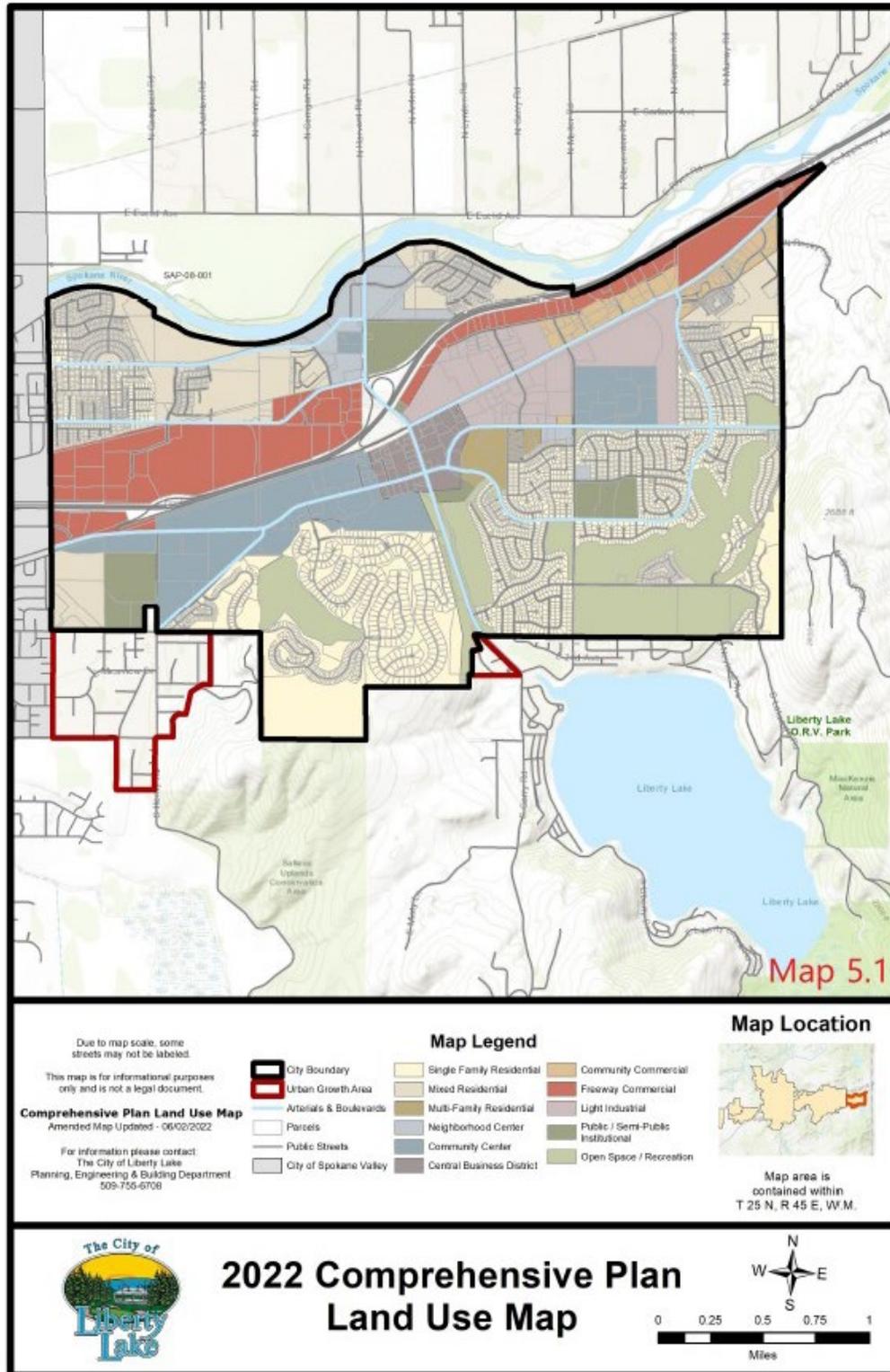
Commercial: The City has numerous professional offices and retail businesses with more commercial developments planned and/or under construction. Commercial land is found along Liberty Lake Road, Country Vista, Mission Avenue (on the south side of I-90), Harvard Road, Knox Avenue, Appleway, and the south side of Mission Avenue (north of I-90). The highly intensive commercial use designations occur along Appleway, Liberty Lake Road, and Country Vista. The retail commercial development is mostly on a regional scale and consists of two anchored retail strip centers on Liberty Lake Road and several unanchored retail strip centers along Country Vista and Mission Avenue. There are various freestanding retail, food service, automotive and recreational vehicle dealerships, and hospitality operations in the vicinity of the retail strip centers.

Light Industrial: Industrial uses within the City fall within the category of light industrial uses such as electronics, high tech, and assembly manufacturing. Several pieces of industrial land are being used for commercial uses. The light industrial area is located north of Mission Avenue and south of Interstate 90. There are five major corridors located in the industrial area consisting of Madson, Appleway, Molter, Mission and Knox.

Open Space and Recreation: Since the majority of the area within the city limits began as a master planned satellite community, a large portion of the land has open space and recreational uses. Within the City, there are three golf courses and three large city-owned parks. Meadowwood Golf Course runs through the residential area and is north of Valleyway and east of Molter Road. Liberty Lake Golf Course is the oldest course and it is located south of Valleyway, east of Molter Road, and north of Sprague Avenue with residences on eastern side. The City's Trailhead Golf Course, formerly known as Valley View, is located at the eastern edge of Liberty Lake Rd, south of Country Vista, and on the western edge of residences. Pavilion Park is located on the southwest corner of Country Vista and Molter Road within the residential area. Rocky Hill Park is located in the Rocky Hill neighborhood, on the north side of Mission Avenue abutting the City's eastern boundary. Orchard Park, the City's newest park, is located on the southwest corner of Harvest Parkway and Indiana Avenue in the River District and was built in 2019. The City contains an extensive trail system and smaller neighborhood parks throughout as well as access to the Centennial Trail along the northern boundary.

D. Land Use

Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map



Map 5.1 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map

Comprehensive Land Use Categories

1. Residential Categories:

- a. **Single-Family** - The Single-Family designation provides for single-family homes, townhomes, duplexes and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in support of established residential neighborhoods. This designation is the primary residential designation in the city.
- b. **Mixed Residential** - The Mixed Residential designation provides for a moderate increase in density using a variety of urban housing types and designs. This design-oriented designation promotes residential renewal to small-lot single-family homes, cottage housing, townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and small apartment buildings, as well as ADUs. The mix of housing may take a variety of forms, either mixed within a single site or mixed within a general area, with varied dwelling types. Developments within this designation should have a net density of no less than 6 units per acre, up to a maximum of 16 units per acre to promote the development of middle-housing options.
- c. **Multi-Family** - The Multi-Family designation provides for a variety of medium to high density housing types and designs. The designation incorporates a combination of urban design elements to enhance the living environment while integrating the housing into a neighborhood or neighborhood business district. Urban design elements such as private and public open space, pedestrian orientation and connections, and security are integrated into the housing to create a high standard of community cohesion and character. Developments within this designation should have a net density of no less than 12 units per acre.

2. Mixed-use Areas:

Mixed-use areas are intended to enhance service options, encourage development of locally serving commercial uses, offices, light manufacturing, civic, recreational, and residential uses along transportation corridors identified on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map 5.1. Mixed-use areas discourage low-intensity, auto-dependent uses and focus on a pedestrian orientation with an emphasis on aesthetics and design.

Mixed-use Categories

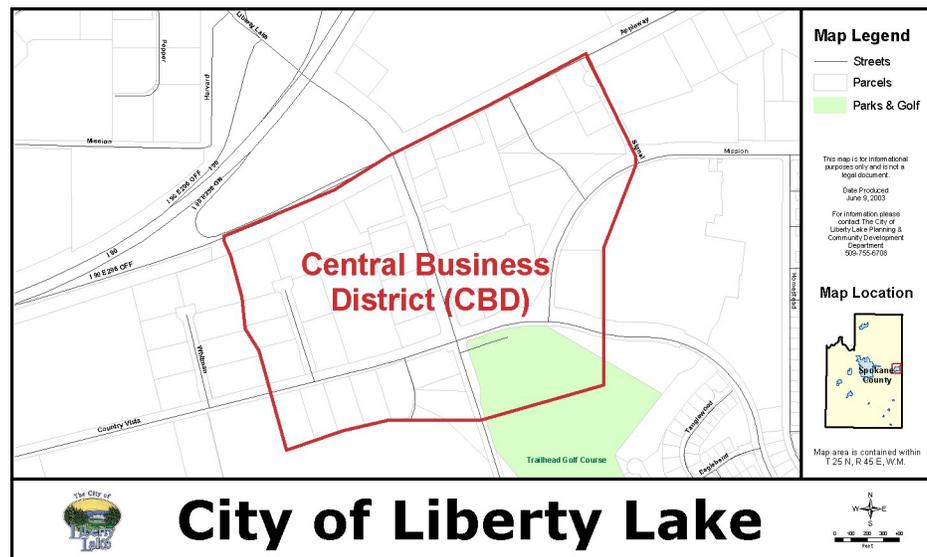
The Central Business District provides for the widest range of uses. Mixed-use categories include the following:

- a. **Neighborhood Centers** - Mixed-use centers for neighborhoods will ideally have identified neighborhood centers containing a civic green or park, a transit stop, neighborhood businesses and services, a day

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care center, and perhaps a church or school, and residential when associated with other permitted uses.

- b. Community Centers** - Community centers are higher-intensity mixed-use areas designed to serve two or more neighborhoods. Community centers may have a mix of uses, including commercial, civic, light manufacturing or industrial, office, recreational uses, and residential when associated with the other permitted uses.
- c. Central Business District** - The CBD is the primary retail, office, social, urban residential, and government center of the city (Map 5.2). The complementary and interactive mixture of uses and urban design provides for a regional intensity and viability with a local character. The regional focus and vitality of the district are evident in the urban intensity and composition of the uses in the district. Local character is reflected in the district's design, people-orientation, and connectivity, which foster a sense of community. The CBD is intended to attract significant numbers of additional office and retail jobs, civic spaces, as well as opportunities for new higher density housing.



Map 5.2 Central Business District

3. Commercial Categories

- a. Freeway Commercial** – The Freeway Commercial classification designates intensive commercial areas intended to draw customers from outlying areas. Interstate 90 is an aesthetic corridor and specific guidelines have been established to enhance the aesthetics of the Interstate 90 frontages. Shopping centers and major commercial areas of regional significance will be designated with this classification. Residential uses would typically not

be allowed within the freeway commercial category. Light industrial areas may be allowed in this category.

- b. Community Commercial** - The Community Commercial classification designates areas for retail, service, and office establishments intended to serve several neighborhoods. Community business areas should be located as business clusters rather than arterial strip commercial development. Community business centers may be designated through the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan or Comprehensive Plan amendments. Residences in conjunction with business and/or multifamily developments may be allowed, with specific guidelines that ensure compatibility.
- c. Neighborhood Commercial** - The Neighborhood Commercial classification designates areas for small-scale, neighborhood-serving retail and office uses. Neighborhood business areas should be located as business clusters rather than arterial strip commercial development. Neighborhood business centers may be designated through the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan or Comprehensive Plan amendments.

4. Industrial Category

- a. Light Industrial** – The Light Industry category is intended for industrial areas that have a special emphasis and attention given to aesthetics, landscaping, and internal and community compatibility. Light Industrial areas are comprised of predominantly industrial uses such as manufacturing but may incorporate office and commercial uses that support and complement the industrial area.

5. Public and Semi-Public Institutional Uses

The Public and Semi-Public Institutional land use designation provides for large and moderate scale governmental uses, special districts, and semi-public institutional uses. The designation allows for the specialized needs of providing public services to the City of Liberty Lake.

6. Open Space and Recreation

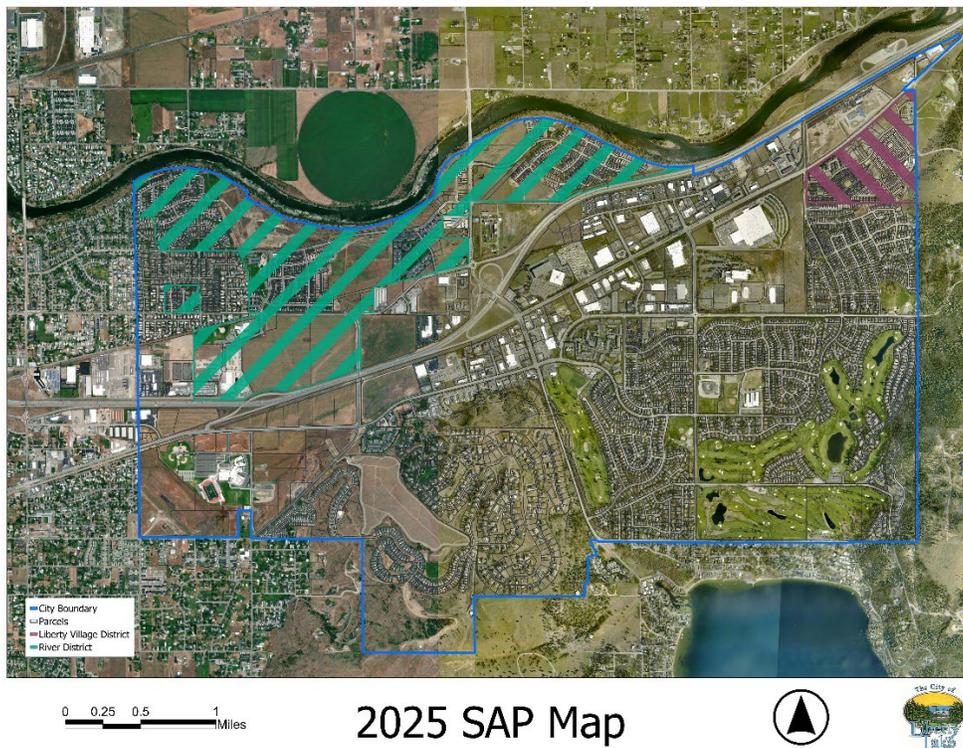
The Open Space and Recreation designation provides for open area spaces and recreational uses such as public/ private parks, preserves, and trails, as well as public and privately owned facilities such as golf courses. Local and regional recreation opportunities are included within this designation. The designation promotes the conservation of public and private sensitive or critical natural resource areas and areas of local interest as open space.

7. Aesthetic Corridors and Boulevards

Aesthetic corridors and boulevards are intended to protect the visual appeal of the area along major transportation routes entering, exiting, and circulating through the City of Liberty Lake. Aesthetic corridors include Liberty Lake Road; Appleway Avenue; Country Vista from E Mission Ave to the western City boundary; Harvard Road; Indiana Avenue; and Harvest Parkway.

Approved Specific Area Plans

Specific area plan overlay districts (“specific area plans” or “SAPs”) are master development plans that describe the types of development planned for a specific area in more detail than would typically be found in a Comprehensive Plan. They can contain specific design standards and development styles that are specific to the geographic features or mix of uses that are proposed for that development area. The City has adopted two specific area plans. Liberty Village (also known as Lakemore, Hawkstone and Stonehill) was approved in 2006. The River District SAP was adopted in 2008. Both SAPs are still actively being developed at the time of this writing.



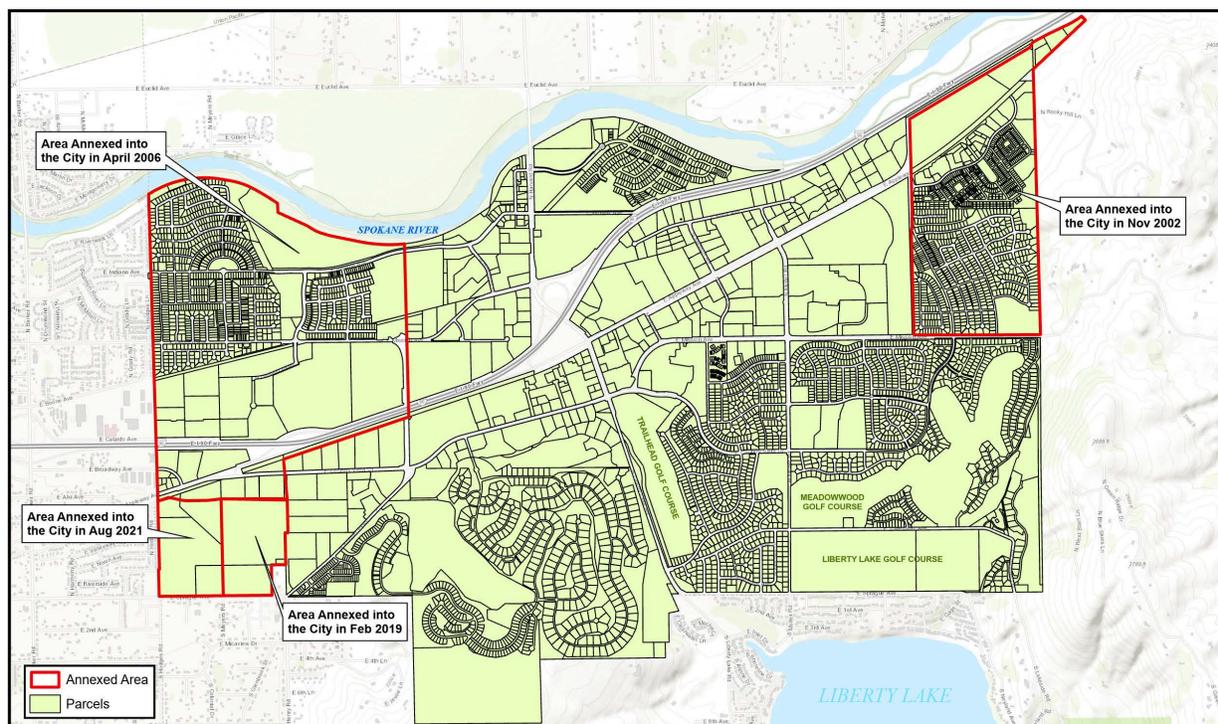
Map 5.3. Specific Area Plan Map

Urban Growth Area

The Growth Management Act mandates the establishment of urban growth areas (UGAs). The urban growth area (UGA) boundary identifies areas where future urban growth should occur and establishes a clear separation between urban and rural development. The UGA generally has existing public services and facilities that have sufficient capacity to serve development or is

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located in areas where urban services can be economically extended. With adjustments for environmentally sensitive land which is unsuitable for development and reasonable market factors to avoid constraining the land supply, the UGA is sized to accommodate the projected 20-year population. A primary basis for the UGA requirement is the economical and efficient provision of public services. The urban land supply should be closely monitored and adjustments to the UGA made when necessary to ensure that land prices are not artificially inflated. Conservation or open space areas may be included within a UGA for preservation of the areas. Under the GMA, jurisdictions may not annex additional area into their corporate limits unless the area is included within the UGA and can be provided with or already has urban levels of service for such public services and facilities as police, water, and sewer. Map 5.1 includes the UGA boundary surrounding the City of Liberty Lake.



Map 5.4 City Annexed Areas

Since official incorporation (August 31, 2001), the City of Liberty Lake has annexed four additional areas into its municipal boundary. The first area was located northeast of the City and contained only one resident. This land was previously identified as part of the future service area of the Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District and was officially annexed in November of 2002. The second area was located northwest of the City and contained several residents. This area was officially annexed in April 2006. The City annexed a portion of the former Gun Club property, located in the southwest corner of the City in 2019, at the request of Central Valley School District (CVSD) for the development of a new high school. The balance of the Gun Club property was annexed in 2021, again at the request of CVSD. There were no residences located on either of

those properties. Map 5.4 above shows the areas annexed into the City following incorporation. The City of Liberty Lake has no plans to annex additional areas at this time. The City will accept proposals from property owners in designated Urban Growth Areas provided that they are not in another jurisdiction’s potential annexation area. It is assumed that the Spokane River is the logical outer boundary of the city to the north, and with the City of Spokane Valley to the west, the Idaho state line to the east, and Liberty Lake to the south that the City’s boundaries are substantially set and are not likely to significantly change over time.

Population Projections

As a part of the process of updating this Comprehensive Plan the City conducted an updated Land Capacity Analysis (see appendix XX). This analysis included all anticipated housing units, based upon approved subdivision and binding site plans. These developments included authorization to build a specific number of dwelling units over time. The analysis also included the identification of vacant parcels in the City and assumptions about the intensity of development that will occur on those parcels in the future. Based upon this analysis, it was determined that there is sufficient capacity to provide the range of housing types necessary to meet the needs of a projected population of nearly 22,000 by 2046 (please also see the Housing and Community Services Chapter).