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GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

The City has created Goals, Objectives & Policies specific to the Land Use Element. These Goals, Objectives & Policies guide the City's decision making process related to land use issues, and are as follows.

GENERAL LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

LAND USE GOAL 1: ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOUND IN THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON AS A PLACE TO WORK, LIVE AND RECREATE.

- OBJECTIVE 1.1:** Balance residential, commercial, industrial and public land uses within the City.
- Policy 1.1.1: Maintain the use of the Design Guidelines to achieve attractive new residential developments within the City. Create new Design Guidelines to promote attractive new office, retail, commercial and industrial developments within the City.
 - Policy 1.1.2: Maintain zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure that adequate setbacks, landscaping and buffering are required where land use impacts occur between residential uses of different intensities; along with residential and non-residential uses.
 - Policy 1.1.3: Provide adequate capacity for the City's projected residential growth and provide enough commercial/industrial areas within the City to balance residential growth.
 - Policy 1.1.4: Allow planned multi-family housing throughout the City in residential and commercial zoning designations through processes such as the Planned Unit Development, other types of overlay zones, or with new subarea plans.
 - Policy 1.1.5: Integrate non-residential uses such as parks, social and religious uses, where appropriate, into residential neighborhoods to create communities that have a full range of public facilities and services. These non-residential uses shall be sited, designed, and scaled to be compatible with the existing residential character.
 - Policy 1.1.6: Encourage infill development on vacant properties with existing public services and public utilities.
 - Policy 1.1.7: Public transportation transit stops constructed as part of a development shall be safe, clean, comfortable, and attractive.
 - Policy 1.1.8: Consider adopting new zoning designations or amending the development regulations associated with existing zones to encourage the development of affordable housing in residential and commercial areas of the City.
- OBJECTIVE 1.2:** Maintain and enhance the character of existing single-family neighborhoods but not preclude redevelopment and/or new development within established neighborhoods.
- Policy 1.2.1: Provide development regulations that create a compatible pattern of development within established neighborhoods. The development standards shall address densities, building setbacks, parking and landscaping.

OBJECTIVE 1.3: Foster business creation and retention and contributes to the quality of life of the citizens of the City of Mount Vernon.

- Policy 1.3.1: Provide adequate land for commercial and industrial development that provides jobs and augments the City’s tax base.
- Policy 1.3.2: Ensure zoning regulations accommodate a range of allowable businesses, commercial and industrial uses in appropriate locations throughout the City.
- Policy 1.3.3: Review on a regular basis existing development regulations to remove unnecessary requirements that unnecessarily hinder the development process.

LAND USE GOAL 2: PROVIDE FOR ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH ADOPTED PLANS AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS.

OBJECTIVE 2.1: Implement the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.

- Policy 2.1.1: Designate land for housing, commerce, recreation, public utilities and facilities and other land uses on the official Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.
- Policy 2.1.2: Update on a yearly basis the official Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, as appropriate.
- Policy 2.1.3: Ensure that the yearly updates to the Comprehensive Plan map and text are accompanied by changes to development regulations and the zoning map, so that these items are consistent.
- Policy 2.1.4: Each year when the Comprehensive Plan is updated an inventory of new public uses such as Churches, Parks, Cemeteries, and Schools that have been allow as conditional or special uses shall be completed and these areas shall be redesigned with the appropriate Comprehensive Plan designation and rezoned as Public (P).

OBJECTIVE 2.2: Establish densities and development standards that provide for efficient infrastructure and service delivery.

- Policy 2.2.1: Have development regulations that allow the use of Planned Use Developments (PUDs). PUDs shall provide for open spaces and protection of critical areas, shall offer a diversity of housing types and affordability and shall incorporate the adopted Design Guidelines.
- Policy 2.2.2: Coordinate transportation and utility improvement projects with the Land Use Element and the Capital Improvements Plan for the City.

LAND USE GOAL 3: IDENTIFY, PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE CULTURAL RESOURCES AND HISTORIC SITES WITHIN THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON.

OBJECTIVE 3.1: Support visual, literary and cultural arts and activities with the community.

- Policy 3.1.1: Encourage use of regional and community facilities like the Lincoln Theatre and MacIntre Hall for cultural activities to maximize their use and to expand public access to cultural opportunities.

- Policy 3.1.2: Work with other organizations to promote visual, literary and cultural arts and events in the community.
- Policy 3.1.3: Maintain an Arts Commission for the promotion of cultural arts in the community.
- Policy 3.1.4: Encourage local activities that promote the community's history.

OBJECTIVE 3.2: Identify historic buildings and landmarks within the City.

- Policy 3.2.1: Coordinate with community organizations, property owners and local citizens to identify and/or restore historic properties.

LAND USE GOAL 4: PROVIDE A PROCESS FOR THE IDENTIFICATION AND SITING OF ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES.

OBJECTIVE 4.1: Allow for the appropriate siting of essential public capital facilities of a Statewide or Countywide nature.

- Policy 4.1.1: Promote freight mobility projects in and around the Mount Vernon UGA that facilitate the development of economically viable and environmentally sustainable commercial and industrial areas.
- Policy 4.1.2: The applicant for a proposal to site an essential public facility shall provide a justifiable need for the public facility based upon forecasted need and a logical service area.
- Policy 4.1.3: Through the zoning code, the City shall prepare siting criteria for essential public facilities.
- Policy 4.1.1: Any site selected as an essential public facility shall have Comprehensive Plan and zoning designations of Public (P) and an overall Master Plan shall be prepared and accepted by both the City Planning Commission and City Council.
- Policy 4.1.4: In approving essential public facilities, the effect on adjacent uses and/or neighborhoods and methods to mitigate all impacts shall be considered in the approval process.

SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

LAND USE GOAL 5: ENHANCE AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF SINGLE-FAMILY LIVING ENVIRONMENTS THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

OBJECTIVE 5.1: Ensure that new development in the single-family residential designations are designed to provide quality homes and neighborhoods for residents and take care to mitigate impacts of new development on existing neighborhoods.

- Policy 5.1.1: A minimum net density of 4.0 dwelling units per acre for Single Family Residential neighborhoods shall be implemented unless: sensitive areas are documented on the site, it can be shown that sensitive areas near the site will be adversely affected with the proposed development, where designated resources lands exist, where areas are designated as special flood risk areas, where access is restricted, where other physical site constraints limit the number of lots that could be created, or where the existing neighborhoods identified on Map LU-5 would be negatively impacted. The neighborhoods identified on Map LU-5 shall not have a net density of greater than 3.23 dwelling units per acre.
- Policy 5.1.2: Net development densities for Planned Unit Development (PUD) subdivision proposals and subdivision proposals where the transfer (purchase) of development rights (TDR) are proposed may be permitted to have an increase in density.
- Policy 5.1.3: Support site plans for new residential developments that transition to and blend with existing development patterns using techniques such as lot size, depth and width, access points, building location setbacks, and landscaping. Sensitivity to unique features and differences among established neighborhoods should be reflected in site plan design. Interpret development standards to support coordinated structural design, private yards and substantial common space areas.
- Policy 5.1.4: The use of the PUD and TDR ordinances shall be discretionary by the City. PUDs allow for flexibility in standard development regulations in exchange for higher level design and public benefit through the amenities that are included within the PUD development. The PUD and TDR development regulations will only be allowed if neighborhood compatibility parameters can be met with the proposed subdivision.
- Policy 5.1.5: New plats proposed at higher densities than adjacent neighborhood developments may be required to reduce their overall allowed density to mitigate conflicts between old and new development patterns.
- Policy 5.1.6: Zoning and subdivision regulations should ensure adequate setbacks, landscaping, and buffering when development of different types of housing are proposed abutting one another.
- Policy 5.1.7: Encourage re-investment and rehabilitation of existing housing.
- Policy 5.1.8: Interpret development standards to support plats designed to incorporate vehicular and pedestrian connections between plats and neighborhoods.

- Policy 5.1.9: Support projects that create neighborhoods with diverse housing types that achieve continuity through the organization of roads, sidewalks, blocks, setbacks, community gathering places, and amenity features.
- Policy 5.1.10: Support residential development incorporating a hierarchy of streets. Street networks should connect through the development to existing streets, avoid “cul-de-sac” or dead end streets, and be arranged in a grid street pattern (or a flexible grid street system if there are environmental constraints).
- Policy 5.1.11: A range and variety of lot sizes and building densities should be encouraged throughout the City.
- Policy 5.1.12: Create and encourage development regulations that encourage in-fill development such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs) or zero lot line developments.
- Policy 5.1.13: Non-residential structures, such as community recreation buildings, that are part of a development, may have dimensions larger than residential structures, but shall be compatible in design and dimensions with surrounding residential development.
- Policy 5.1.14: Non-residential structures should be clustered and connected within the overall development through the organization of roads, blocks, yards, focal points, and amenity features to create a neighborhood.
- Policy 5.1.15: Mixed-use development in the form of limited commercial development, or other non-residential structures (not listed as permitted, accessory or conditional uses within the zoning code for the R-1 district), may be allowed within the single-family zones through a planned process such as a P.U.D or other type of overlay zone.
- Policy 5.1.16: Evaluate fully developed neighborhoods designated Single-Family Residential High Density (SF-HI) to consider a lower density zoning overlay where existing developed conditions are lower density and the neighborhood is not in transition.

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

LAND USE GOAL 6: ENHANCE AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF MULTI-FAMILY LIVING ENVIRONMENTS THROUGHOUT THE CITY THAT PROVIDE AREAS THAT OFFER A LARGER RANGE OF HOUSING OPTIONS IN THE FORM OF MULTI-FAMILY UNITS.

OBJECTIVE 6.1: Ensure that development in the multi-family residential designations are designed to provide quality homes and neighborhoods for residents and to mitigate impacts to existing neighborhoods as new ones develop.

- Policy 6.1.1: The net development density in the multi-family residential designations can be increased as outlined in the zoning regulations associated with each designation.

- Policy 6.1.2: Multi-family residential designations should be in areas of the City where infrastructure is adequate to handle impacts from higher density uses.
- Policy 6.1.3: Due to increased impacts to privacy and personal living space inherent in higher density living environments, new development shall be designed to create a high quality living environment with ample public open spaces within a walkable urban context.
- Policy 6.1.4: Evaluate project proposals in residential multi-family designations to consider the transition to lower density uses where multi-family sites abut lower density zones. Setbacks may be increased, heights reduced, and additional landscape buffering required through site plan review.
- Policy 6.1.5: New multi-family residential projects should demonstrate provisions for an environment that contributes to a high quality of life for future residents, regardless of income level.

RESIDENTIAL AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

LAND USE GOAL 7: ALLOW THE R-A ZONING TO CONTINUE ONLY IF THE PARCEL HAS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATION OF AGRICULTURAL (AG).

OBJECTIVE 7.1: Actively pursue the rezoning of property zoned R-A to make those properties consistent with their respective associated Comprehensive Plan designations.

- Policy 7.1.1: R-A zoned property shall be rezoned to be consistent with their Comprehensive Plan designations any time a development application for anything other than one (1) single-family home or accessory use per lot is proposed.
- Policy 7.1.2: One single-family home or accessory building may be constructed on a parcel zoned R-A without requiring a rezone to another designation if the zoning and Comprehensive Plan designations are not consistent with each other.

OFFICE/RETAIL/COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

LAND USE GOAL 8: SUPPORT EXISTING BUSINESSES AND PROVIDE A DYNAMIC BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT FOR NEW COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES THAT ENHANCE THE CITY’S EMPLOYMENT AND TAX BASE WHILE PROVIDING WELL PLANNED AND ATTRACTIVE FACILITIES.

OBJECTIVE 8.1: Develop and implement an Economic Development Element for the Comprehensive Plan.

- Policy 8.1.1: Support methods of increasing accessibility to commercially zoned areas for both automobile and transit to support the land uses proposed for the district.
- Policy 8.1.2: Private/public partnerships should be encouraged to provide infrastructure development, transportation facilities, public uses, and amenities.

Policy 8.1.3: Residential uses are allowed in the C-1, C-3 and C-4 zoning designations if the criteria for such uses, as outlined within the zoning code for each district, are met. In all other commercial or industrial zoning designations residential uses are allowed if a mixed-use overlay is adopted for a site or if the use is classified as an accessory use such as a watchman, custodian, manager or property owner as specified within each associated zoning district’s regulations.

OBJECTIVE 8.2: Ensure that office, retail, commercial or industrial development is attractive and blends with the surrounding areas.

- Policy 8.2.1: Support development plans that incorporate the following features:
 - A) Shared access points and fewer curb cuts;
 - B) Internal circulation among adjacent parcels;
 - C) Shared parking facilities;
 - D) Centralized signage; and
 - E) Unified development concepts.
- Policy 8.2.2: Development within defined sub-area plans will be subject to additional design guidelines as delineated in the sub-area plans developed in the future for each center.
- Policy 8.2.3: Public amenity or amenities for customers and employees such as plazas and recreation areas should be encouraged as part of new development or redevelopment.
- Policy 8.2.4: Parking areas should be landscaped especially along public or private roadways, to reduce visual impacts.
- Policy 8.2.5: In areas developed with predominantly office uses, circulation within the site should be primarily pedestrian-oriented.
- Policy 8.2.6: Development should be designed to mitigate potential adverse impacts on adjacent properties with different zoning designations (i.e., residential or public zoning). Careful consideration of impacts from lighting, landscaping, and setbacks should all be evaluated during site design.
- Policy 8.2.7: Landscaping along arterials should be uniform from parcel to parcel to further the visual cohesiveness of the area.
- Policy 8.2.8: On-site landscaping should primarily be located at site entries, in front of buildings, and at other locations with high visibility from public areas.
- Policy 8.2.9: Vehicular connections between adjacent parking areas are encouraged and incentives should be offered to encourage shared parking.
- Policy 8.2.10: Site design for office uses, commercial, and mixed-use developments should consider ways of improving transit ridership through siting, locating of pedestrian amenities, walkways, parking, etc.

NEIGHBORHOOD RETAIL, MIXED USE CENTER (C-4 ZONING CODE) DISTRICT GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

LAND USE GOAL 9: TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL NOISE IMPACTS TO THE SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD ALL NON-RESIDENTIAL USES SHOULD BE CLOSED FOR BUSINESS AT REASONABLE TIMES.

LAND USE GOAL 10: DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS SHALL BE ADOPTED TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE VISUAL, NOISE, ODOR, AND EXHAUST IMPACTS FROM GARBAGE AND RECYCLING RECEPTACLES, LOADING DOCKS, AND DRIVE THROUGH LANES.

LAND USE GOAL 11: PROVIDE A NETWORK OF LOGICAL, SAFE, CONVENIENT, ATTRACTIVE, AND COMFORTABLE PEDESTRIAN NETWORKS ON SIDEWALKS AND TRAILS, TO AND FROM ACCESS POINTS, THROUGH PARKING LOTS TO PLANNED BUILDING ENTRANCES OR OTHER SITE AMENITIES SUCH AS PUBLIC OPEN SPACES TO REINFORCE PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY BETWEEN THE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

OBJECTIVE 11.1: Ensure that a pedestrian network is provided that connects the commercial, residential, and open space uses. This network shall consist of trails, pathways, and widened sidewalks. The commercial uses are intended to primarily serve their surrounding residential areas; and these residents should be able to walk or bike to these areas.

LAND USE GOAL 12: DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS SHALL BE ADOPTED TO REDUCE THE APPARENT MASS OF LARGER COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS, TO PROVIDE VISUAL INTEREST, AND TO HELP BLEND INTO THE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS IN WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED.

LAND USE GOAL 13: ENSURE THAT COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS ARE IN SCALE WITH THE SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

LAND USE GOAL 14: DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS SHALL BE ADOPTED THAT ENSURE THAT MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT, VAULTS, AND OUTDOOR STORAGE ARE SCREENED TO ENHANCE THE APPEARANCE OF THE COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL ZONE.

LAND USE GOAL 15: DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS SHALL BE ADOPTED THAT BALANCE SAFETY AND SECURITY AND THE RESIDENTIAL NATURE IN WHICH COMMERCIAL USES IN THE C-4 ZONE ARE LOCATED.

CRITICAL AREAS GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

LAND USE GOAL 16: RETAIN AND ENHANCE THE EXISTING NATURAL FEATURES AND SENSITIVE AREAS THAT ARE ESSENTIAL TO A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY OF MOUNT VERNON.

OBJECTIVE 16.1: Meet GMA requirements for designation and protection of critical areas in the context of Mount Vernon’s community vision for growth management.

- Policy 16.1.1: The Skagit River will be one of the major natural features affecting development, and it also provides opportunities for increased public access and activity. The dikes, notwithstanding potential legal problems, provide an important community resource for public trails extending beyond Mount Vernon into Skagit County.
- Policy 16.1.2: Downtown and the West Side of Mount Vernon are the most logical areas to concentrate direct river access, enhancement efforts and river-oriented activities.
- Policy 16.1.3: With development regulations, support retention of natural areas and include design criteria to achieve subdivision and site layouts which will be sensitive to the environmental constraints and optimize open space and views. Key areas of consideration and emphasis for development include:
 - Steep slopes;
 - Streams with associated wetlands;
 - Habitat areas; and,
 - Natural vegetation.
 Programs should be expanded for non-detrimental access to these areas and opportunities for interpretation and education be provided.

OBJECTIVE 16.2: Preserve open space, sensitive resources and maintain varied uses.

- Policy 16.2.1: Provide public access and recreation opportunities, where appropriate.

LAND USE GOAL 17: IDENTIFY CRITICAL AREAS AS DEFINED IN RCW 36.70A.030 THAT INCLUDE: FLOODWAYS OF 100 YEAR FLOODPLAINS; LANDSLIDE, EROSION, AND SEISMIC HAZARDS, INCLUDING STEEP SLOPES OVER 40 PERCENT; WETLANDS AND THEIR PROTECTIVE BUFFERS; STREAMS AND THEIR PROTECTIVE BUFFERS; CRITICAL AQUIFER RECHARGE AREAS; AND FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION AREAS.

- Policy 17.1.1: Maintain an up-to-date inventory of environmentally sensitive areas including descriptions of criteria for designation and maps. The inventory of environmentally sensitive areas should be reviewed and updated regularly based upon changing conditions or new information. The final identification of environmentally sensitive or critical areas, hazardous sites or portions of sites should be established during the review of project proposals.
- Policy 17.1.2: Consider the best available science to determine critical area buffers and maintain achievable ecological functions of those buffers. Use easements or equivalent protective measures to protect critical areas and critical area buffers that are not protected through public ownership.

- Policy 17.1.3: Use acquisition, enhancement, regulations, and incentive programs independently or in combination with one another to protect and enhance critical area functions.
- Policy 17.1.4: Consider allowing alterations to critical areas, after all ecological functions are evaluated, the least harmful and reasonable alternatives are identified, and affected significant functions are appropriately mitigated, to:
- Maintain and improve a critical area; or,
 - Avoid denial of reasonable use of the property; or
 - Meet other priority growth management goals and programs consistent with GMA and the City Comprehensive Plan.
- Policy 17.1.5: Establish mitigation priorities such as impact avoidance, impact minimization, and compensation in critical area regulations. Mitigation sites should be located strategically to alleviate habitat fragmentation.
- Policy 17.1.6: Provide incentives to private land owners, and develop City or inter-jurisdictional programs, designed to protect ecological functions for streams, riparian area, and wetlands.
- Policy 17.1.7: Review adopted clearing and grading regulations and revise them to address critical area protection. These regulations should set seasonal clearing restrictions that limit clearing and grading activities during the rainy seasons. Critical areas, including sloped and riparian areas, should not be exposed during this time.
- Policy 17.1.8: Grading and construction activities should implement erosion control Best Management Practices and other development controls as necessary to reduce sediment and pollution discharge from construction sites to minimal levels.
- Policy 17.1.9: Encourage the use of native plants in landscaping requirements, erosion control projects, and the restoration of stream banks, lakes, shorelines and wetlands.
- Policy 17.1.10: Expand programs for non-detrimental access to critical areas and provide opportunities for interpretation and education.

LAND USE GOAL 18: MAINTAIN, AND IMPROVE WHERE POSSIBLE, WATER QUALITY.

- Policy 18.1.1: Require adequate erosion and sedimentation controls from new construction sites.
- Policy 18.1.2: Require adequate water controls for new development.
- Policy 18.1.3: Implement public education programs to reduce the source of pollutants entering surface waters.

LAND USE GOAL 19: DEVELOP A CONTINUOUS AND COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM FOR MANAGING SURFACE WATER.

- Policy 19.1.1: Ensure funding source(s) for program implementation.
- Policy 19.1.2: Coordinate the City program with the Skagit County Program.

Policy 19.1.3: Develop a network of publicly-owned or preserved natural open space for protecting environmentally sensitive land, creating a sense of openness, provide scenic views and provide space for trail systems.

LAND USE GOAL 20: PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND PROPERTY FROM THE EFFECTS OF NATURAL HAZARDS. PROVIDE FOR AN INCREASED LEVEL OF SAFETY TO THE CITIZENS OF MOUNT VERNON, AND PROVIDE FOR AN INCREASED LEVEL OF PROTECTION FOR PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE.

Policy 20.1.1: Protect Life and Property. Implement mitigation activities that will assist in protecting lives and property by making homes, businesses, infrastructure, and critical facilities more resistant to natural hazards. Support the continuation of the Skagit Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) Program to provide citizens from all areas of Skagit County with the information and tools they need to help themselves, their families, and their neighbors in the hours and days immediately following an emergency or disaster event.

Policy 20.1.2: Encourage homeowners and businesses to purchase insurance coverage for damages caused by natural hazards.

Policy 20.1.3: Encourage homeowners and businesses to take preventative actions in areas that are especially vulnerable to natural hazards.

Policy 20.1.4: Develop and implement additional education and outreach programs to increase public awareness of the risks associated with natural hazards. Continue the current flood awareness programs conducted by various jurisdictions as part of the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System.

LAND USE GOAL 21: PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND WHERE POSSIBLE, RESTORE NATURAL HABITAT FOR THE CONSERVATION OF SALMONID SPECIES LISTED UNDER THE FEDERAL ESA, THROUGH THE USE OF MANAGEMENT ZONES, DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, INCENTIVES FOR VOLUNTARY EFFORT OF PRIVATE LANDOWNERS AND DEVELOPERS, LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS OR DESIGNATIONS, HABITAT ACQUISITION PROGRAMS OR HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS.

OBJECTIVE 21.1: Preserve fish and wildlife habitat, where appropriate.

Policy 22.1.1: Consider a system for stream typing that is compatible with other jurisdictions' typing system.

LAND USE GOAL 22: PRESERVE AND PROTECT, WHERE POSSIBLE, IDENTIFIED WETLANDS WITHIN THE CITY.

OBJECTIVE 22.1: Preserve wetlands and implement a wetlands management strategy.

- Policy 22.1.1: Determine wetland boundaries using the procedures provided in the following manuals: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2010. Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region (Version 2.0), ed. J. S. Wakeley, R. W. Lichvar, and C. V. Noble. ERDC/EL TR-10-3. Vicksburg, MS: U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center. And all applicable guidance not superseded by more recent guidance in: Environmental Laboratory. 1987. Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual, Technical Report Y-87-1, U.S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, Miss. Or the scientifically accepted replacement methodology based on better technical criteria and field indicators as directed by the City following consultation with the WA State Department of Ecology and U.S. Corps of Engineers.
- Policy 22.1.2: Provide a classification system for wetlands that allows for the designation of both regionally and locally unique wetlands.
- Policy 22.1.3: Promote mitigation projects that create or restore wetland areas or enhance existing wetland areas. Ensure wetland mitigation projects in the City attain the same ecological functions as natural wetlands of equivalent quality. Preserve land used for wetland mitigation in perpetuity. Monitoring and maintenance should be provided until the success of the site is established.

LAND USE GOAL 23: PRESERVE AND PROTECT, WHERE POSSIBLE, IDENTIFIED PRIORITY HABITAT AREAS WITHIN THE CITY.

OBJECTIVE 23.1: Develop a classification system, particularly of habitats of local importance, in addition to Federal or State endangered, threatened or sensitive species.

- Policy 23.1.1: Establish protection measures for priority habitat areas given the variety and complexity of species within these areas.

LAND USE GOAL 24: PROTECT, ENHANCE, AND RESTORE EXISTING FLOOD STORAGE AND CONVEYANCE FUNCTIONS AND ECOLOGICAL VALUES OF FLOODPLAINS.

OBJECTIVE 24.1: Implement strategies to prevent property damage from flooding.

- Policy 24.1.1: Prevent property damage from flooding by implementing the following development regulations:
- Require adequate peak flow controls for new development.
 - Perform the necessary analysis and recommend solutions for existing flooding problems.
 - Employ management strategies in flood prone areas to ensure that new development is not exposed to significant flood risk.
- Policy 24.1.2: Continue to implement FEMA flood hazard regulations.

- Policy 24.1.3: Identify locations for regional surface water facilities in areas of anticipated extensive development and redevelopment, particularly in Downtown. Promote the establishment of regional surface water management facilities to support infill development and preclude the need for individual on-site ponds and facilities, provide development incentives, encourage efficient use of land, and reduce overall facility maintenance costs.
- Policy 24.1.4: Require adequate peak flow controls for new development.
- Policy 24.1.5: Perform the necessary analysis and recommend solutions for existing flooding problems.
- Policy 24.1.6: Employ management strategies in flood prone areas to ensure that new development is not exposed to significant flood risk.

LAND USE GOAL 25: FIND LONG TERM, ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE, AND COST EFFECTIVE METHODS TO REDUCE THE RISK FROM FLOOD DAMAGE.

- Policy 25.1.1: Work to become engaged and well informed to diligently address and implement measures to systematically reduce the risks from flooding.
- Policy 25.1.2: Work to systematically eliminate as many threats from flooding as possible which will achieve long term economic posterity for the region as well as the City.

LAND USE GOAL 26: PRESERVE AND PROTECT, WHERE POSSIBLE, IDENTIFIED STEEP AND EROSION SLOPES WITHIN THE CITY.

- Policy 26.1.1: Minimize soil disturbance and maximize retention and replacement of native vegetative cover in erosion hazard areas through development regulations.
- Policy 26.1.2: Require increased surface water requirements in areas draining over steep and erosive slopes.
- Policy 26.1.3: Discourage development on landslide hazard areas, including steep slopes over 40 percent. Restrict development unless the risks and adverse impacts associated with such development can be reduced to a non-significant level.
- Policy 26.1.4: In areas with severe seismic hazards, apply Uniform Building Code, and any other necessary special building design and construction measures to minimize the risk of structural damage, fire and injury to occupants and to prevent post-seismic collapse.

ANNEXATION GOAL, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

LAND USE GOAL 27: ANNEX PROPERTIES INTO THE CITY WHEN THE CITY COUNCIL FINDS THE ANNEXATION IS JUSTIFIED.

- OBJECTIVE 27.1:** Encourage development and re-development within the existing City limits before additional lands are annexed into the City.

- Policy 27.1.1: The first priority of the City shall be to annex and provide urban services (i.e., sewer, fire, transportation, drainage, parks, open space, schools and landscaping, etc) on a priority basis to those areas immediately adjacent to the City where available services can most easily and economically be extended.
- Policy 27.1.2: Work with Skagit County to establish procedures for the development of land within the Urban Growth Areas.
- Policy 27.1.3: The City Council shall not initiate an annexation unless the following criteria can be met with a proposal. These criteria have been developed following the adoption of the City’s Buildable Lands Analysis and E.D. Hovee’s report entitled, “Commercial and Industrial Land Needs Analysis”, dated September 2006. These reports show that the City does not have a balance between projected residential and commercial/industrial uses.
- The City Council shall not initiate an annexation unless the following criteria can be met with a proposal. These criteria have been developed following the adoption of the City’s Buildable Lands Analysis and E.D. Hovee’s report entitled, “Commercial and Industrial Land Needs Analysis”, dated September 2006. These reports show that the City does not have a balance between projected residential and commercial/industrial uses.
- A. The annexation area is determined to be necessary and appropriate to meet the population and/or employment targets.
 - B. The annexation of residentially zoned areas shall not occur until additional areas zoned for commercial/industrial uses are officially designated such that a balance between residential and commercial/industrial uses can be achieved within the City.
 - C. The annexation is a logical extension of the City’s boundaries.
 - D. The City finds that adequate municipal services exist to serve the area, and that the factors outlined within RCW 36.93.170(2) are complied with.
 - E. The City finds that the boundaries of the proposed annexation are drawn in a manner that makes the provision of public services geographically and economically feasible.
 - F. The City finds that it has the capacity to provide City services within the existing City limits; and, those services to annexation areas without major upgrades to these services.
 - G. The City finds that there are not negative economic impacts to the City with the extension of services.
 - H. The City finds that it can afford to provide City services without having to use funds that would otherwise be spent on already incorporated areas of the City.
- The City finds that the annexation will not create financial stress on the City’s ability to provide required services to the annexation area.

OBJECTIVE 27.2: Preservation of natural neighborhoods and communities

OBJECTIVE 27.3: Creation and preservation of logical service areas.

Policy 27.3.1: Annex areas into the City based on the premise of limiting sprawl, providing for efficient provision of public services and facilities, serving areas where the cost of extending infrastructure consistent with adopted capital improvement plans is the most cost efficient, and avoiding “leap-frog” development and annexations.

OBJECTIVE 27.4: Prevent abnormally irregular boundaries.