

Building Community Resilience

GMA Comprehensive Plan Recommendations for Climate Planning in Skagit County

ENVS 374: Land Use Regulations and Technical Writing

June 2023



**Sustainable
Communities
Partnership**



About SCP

Western's Sustainable Communities Partnership (SCP) program focuses the expertise, energy, and ideas of faculty and students upon the issues that communities face as our society transitions to a more sustainable future. SCP partners with communities each academic year, facilitating a program in which Western courses complete community-engaged learning projects that address challenges identified by the partner.



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SCP Partner for 2022-23: Skagit County

SCP is proud to partner with Skagit County during the program's seventh year. One Western course and one graduate student coordinator tackled projects identified in collaboration with Skagit County staff.

Acknowledgments

This project has been made possible through a generous grant by the Bullitt Foundation. This grant has allowed the SCP program to prioritize high impact climate resilience projects.

SCP is housed within Western's Sustainability Engagement Institute.



PREFACE

During spring 2023, several jurisdictions in Skagit County partnered with Western Washington University's (WWU) Sustainable Communities Partnership program to support consistent and coordinated climate planning across jurisdictional boundaries. Through this partnership and with staff support from the Skagit Council of Governments Growth Management Act Technical Advisory Committee (GMATAC), the project supported the cities of Anacortes, Burlington, La Conner, Mount Vernon, and Sedro Woolley in their climate planning efforts. This work is timely given that the Washington State Legislature passed HB 1181 in May, requiring all cities planning under the Growth Management Act to incorporate climate change and resiliency policies into their plans. WWU faculty member, Dr. Tamara Laninga, and upper-level students in Dr. Laninga's Land Use Regulations and Technical Writing course (ENVS 374) developed draft climate change mitigation and adaptation goals, objectives, and policies for jurisdictions to consider adopting into their existing Growth Management Act (GMA) comprehensive plans. The WWU students recommended language for the following GMA elements: transportation, housing, land use, economic development, utilities, capital facilities, environment, and/or parks and recreation.

The language included in the remainder of this report represents recommendations and does not constitute a policy decision from the participating jurisdictions. The project team encourages the participating jurisdictions to include the recommendations in their next comprehensive plan updates. If a strong collaborative effort to progress climate planning can be put forth and maintained, the larger community of Skagit County will benefit from increased resilience to climate change.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2021, the Sustainability Engagement Institute received a grant from the Bullitt Foundation for community-university climate resilience partnership projects. This grant-funded project supports the integration of climate change planning into Growth Management Act (GMA) comprehensive plans. During spring 2023, several jurisdictions in Skagit County partnered with Western Washington University's (WWU) Sustainable Communities Partnership program to support consistent and coordinated climate planning across jurisdictional boundaries. Through this partnership and with staff support from the Skagit Council of Governments Growth Management Act Technical Advisory Committee (GMATAC), the project supported the cities of Anacortes, Burlington, La Conner, Mount Vernon and Sedro Woolley with recommendations to incorporate customized climate change mitigation and adaptation goals, objectives, and policies into each city's existing comprehensive plans.

Climate Impacts in Skagit County

Planning allows jurisdictions to be proactive in preparing for future changes within communities. Part of this future involves climate change, the impacts, and implications of which need to be understood and addressed. The first step to planning for a more resilient future includes understanding the observed and projected impacts that climate change will have within a community.

As described by the Skagit Climate Science Consortium, the primary drivers of climate impacts include changes in temperature, precipitation, and hydrology patterns, and sea level rise. These drivers result in observed and projected impacts in Skagit County such as increased wildfire risk, degraded air quality, reduced snowpack, reduced streamflow, increased risk of drought during summer months, increased landslide risk, increased erosion rates, increased sediment transport, and increased flooding risk in winter months. Between 1895 and 2010, the average annual temperature in Sedro Woolley has increased 1.6 degrees F, the mean sea level at Friday Harbor has increased by 4 inches, and “the nearly 400 active glaciers in the North Cascades have lost an estimated 50% of glacial mass since the start of the 20th century” (SC2, 2015). Each of these impacts will have environmental, public health, safety, social, and economic consequences within Skagit County.

Climate Planning and the Growth Management Act

While climate impacts are projected to affect the way and quality of life in Skagit County, planning for these changes will make communities more resilient to climate change and natural hazards. **Resilience** is the ability for human and natural systems to maintain function in the face of external stresses such as those mentioned in the previous section. By including climate-friendly goals, policies, and objectives in planning documents, today, Skagit County communities

will be more prepared to respond to the projected impacts of climate change in the future. Climate planning typically includes two strategies: mitigation and adaptation. **Mitigation strategies** reduce the rate and extent of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Examples of mitigation strategies include higher-density development, reducing vehicle emissions, encouraging multimodal transit, promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy production, and planting native and drought resistant trees and vegetation. **Adaptation strategies** address the impacts of climate change by increasing resilience to and decreasing vulnerability to climate impacts. Examples of adaptation strategies include climate-aware zoning and permitting and hazard risk reduction. Both mitigation and adaptation strategies have essential roles in increasing community resilience to climate impacts.

In 2023, the Washington Legislature passed Bill 1181, which amends the Growth Management Act adding Goal 14 Climate Change and Resiliency. Cities and counties with comprehensive plan updates due in 2025, will need to include climate change policies. The relevant text from the bill, as passed, is as follows:

Section 14: Climate change and resiliency. Ensure that comprehensive plans, development regulations, and regional policies, plans, and strategies under RCW 36.70A.201 and chapter 47.80 RCW adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate; support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled; prepare for climate impact scenarios; foster resiliency to climate impacts and natural hazards; protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety; and advance environmental justice.

The Washington Department of Commerce published the [Climate Element Planning Guidance](#) (June 2023) to support communities in updating their plans with climate policies. They have also developed an online “Menu of Measures” available at this link:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=ee1c332f795d42afb83e24fa79744aee>.

There are at least two approaches to how to integrate climate change policies into a comprehensive plan. One is to develop a standalone climate change chapter. The other is to integrate climate change policies throughout the comprehensive plan. The Municipal Research and Service Center (MRSC) has an extensive collection of Local Government Climate Change Documents, which includes links to city, county and tribal comprehensive plans with climate change policies in Washington state: <https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/environment/sustainability/climate-change-documents>

The approach taken by the WWU teams was to identify climate change policies that could be integrated throughout the comprehensive plan. Below is a description of numerous GMA elements and how climate planning applies to and can be integrated into them.

[Transportation](#)

A safe, dependable, well-maintained multimodal transportation system that provides good facilities for non-motorized users and pedestrians, and good access to transit, can reduce congestion, promote public health and livability, support community character, manage stormwater runoff, reduce the city's greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, and increase the community's resilience to the effects of climate change.

Housing

Planning for a diversity of low-impact housing options close to urban services and away from potential natural hazards can ensure a community's existing and future housing stock is resilient to the observed and projected impacts of climate change while maintaining the city's quality of life and character. For example, promoting density through infill can improve a city's livability, walkability, and air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions as residents are less dependent on a car for daily needs and destinations. Climate resilient housing also prioritizes efficiency and low-impact building techniques and plans for changing climatic and natural hazard conditions, such as increased frequency and intensity of flooding.

Land Use

Compact, mixed-use, low-impact development and alternative transportation policies can protect public health, safety, and welfare while mitigating for and adapting to climate change, by reducing vehicle emissions, promoting infill development and green building standards, requiring drought-tolerant landscaping, preserving critical areas and working landscapes, shifting development and infrastructure from hazard areas, and supporting sustainable economic development.

Utilities

A durable and robust utility system that deemphasizes reliance on fossil fuels and promotes local energy production through renewable resources or energy conservation measures can reduce a jurisdiction's carbon footprint and increase energy independence. Further, directing development within existing service areas and ensuring equitable access to utility services lowers expenditures and mitigates climate change impacts.

Capital Facilities

Capital facilities need long-term durability and function and thus require policies that limit or remove infrastructure, services, and capital expenditures from areas of current and future climate change impacts. Jurisdictions can implement policies encouraging or incentivizing power generation, water and waste management, and reductions in energy consumption at a district or regional level.

Economic Development

A diverse local economy that relies on local resources, uses renewable power, invests in local businesses, and attracts green industry will be less vulnerable to economic volatility and will support low-carbon economic growth.

Environment

Natural systems and ecosystem services that are protected with policies that retain vegetation and tree canopies, maintain ecosystem functions, support low impact development, and emphasize conservation can enhance air and water quality, protect habitat, recharge groundwater, stabilize local climate, and maintain environmental integrity.

Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreation infrastructure that is located near population centers; retains vegetation and tree canopies; conserves water, energy and habitat; facilitates connectivity and corridors for species migration; and is designed to accommodate climate and demographic changes can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance local air and water quality, mitigate urban heat island effects, and promote human health and wellbeing.

Process

During the spring 2023 academic quarter, WWU faculty member, Dr. Tamara Laninga, and upper-level students in Dr. Laninga's Land Use Regulations and Technical Writing course (ENVS 374) developed draft climate change language for jurisdictional consideration. Teams utilized resources available from the Department of Commerce's Planning Element Planning Guidance (2023) and Menu of Measures (2023), the MRSC's Local Government Climate Change Documents, and the American Planning Association. This was an iterative process where students sent drafts of their recommendations and gave presentations to staff from participating jurisdictions and incorporated their feedback into the final recommendations. The students presented their recommendations to the city councils and/or city staff of each participating jurisdiction in June 2023. This report includes the recommended climate language for each jurisdiction.

Overall Recommendations

The proposed language included in this report represents recommendations and does not constitute a policy decision from the participating jurisdictions. However, the project team hopes that the recommended policies will be useful to jurisdictions as they prepare for their next comprehensive plan updates that will need to include climate change policies. The teams drafted policies that address GMA planning goals consistently across all jurisdiction's comprehensive plans and provided tailored language to highlight unique values, concerns and needs in each community. As a part of further collaboration between participating jurisdictions, the project

team recommends that consistent language be considered for the climate change impacts all jurisdictions in the county are likely to face together. If a strong collaborative effort to progress climate planning can be put forth and maintained, the larger community of Skagit County will benefit from increased resilience.

How to Read the Recommendations

In the following sections, recommended edits or new policies and goals are provided to Anacortes, Burlington, La Conner, Mount Vernon, and Sedro Woolley for different sections of their comprehensive plans. **Red text** represents proposed new text; strikethrough text is suggested for removal.

ANACORTES, WASHINGTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Authors: Isaac Miller, Nicole Laudisio, Hannah Sweeney, Marie Langer, Pierce Bock

To support the city of Anacortes in planning for observed and projected climate impacts, the authors have compiled targeted policy language for the following comprehensive plan elements: land use; housing; economic development; environment and conservation; park, recreation and open space; transportation; capital facilities and utilities. The proposed language is adapted from various sources. This includes, but is not limited to, comprehensive plans from the cities of Bellingham and Seattle and the Washington Department of Commerce Climate Element Planning Guidance.

Recommendations

Chapter 1: Land Use

Proposed to be added to goal LU-7 section g

Regulate off-street parking to address parking demand in ways that reduce reliance on automobiles, improve public health and safety, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lower construction costs to reduce the cost of housing and increase affordable housing, create attractive and walkable environments, and promote economic development throughout the city (Goal G-6 from Land Use Chapter of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan 2016).

Achieve greater parking efficiency by allowing fewer parking spaces per business when several businesses share customer parking, thereby enabling customers to park once and walk to numerous businesses.

Proposed to be added to goal LU-8.2

Discourage the development of major stand-alone park-and-ride facilities within Anacortes. Additions to park-and-ride capacity could be considered:

- At the terminus of a major regional transit system,
- Where opportunities exist for shared parking, or
- Where alternatives to automobile use are particularly inadequate or cannot be provided in a cost-effective manner. (Policy 6.15 from Land Use Chapter of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan 2016)

Chapter 2: Housing

Proposed new goal and policies focused on sustainable development to be added

Goal H-7: Promote and implement sustainable (climate oriented) development and regulations creating green energy & sustainability standards that must be met for new homes/buildings to be built.

1. Policy 7.1: Encourage (climate change oriented) innovation in residential design, construction, and technology (Policy H 4.2 from Housing Chapter of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan 2016).
2. Policy 7.2: Implement regulations to conserve water, energy, and materials; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and otherwise limit environmental and health impacts (Policy H 4.2 from Housing Chapter of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan 2016).
3. Policy 7.3: Consider using sustainability rating systems when designing housing developments and neighborhoods (Policy H-42 from Bellingham Comprehensive Plan Housing Chapter).

Chapter 3: Economic Development

Proposed to be added to goal ED-6: Provide Education and Training. Collaborate with educational institutions to meet employer and workforce needs.

Green-collar jobs. Support job training for green-collar jobs and the equitable transition to renewable energy and a sustainable economy. Use comprehensive planning to designate suitable areas for small, innovative green businesses. Shift economic development and workforce training programs to support local jobs in sustainable businesses. Incorporate clean energy job training programs for local residents into rooftop solar and other energy projects (APA Climate Change Policy Guide Resilient Economy D.2.1).

Add to goal ED-1. Balanced Economy. Foster a balanced, diversified and sustainable local economy that contributes to Anacortes's high quality of life.

Account for the full costs of the economy. Encourage the use of LCA tools when analyzing economic development prospects to provide a fuller dimension and analysis of the long-term social and environmental costs and benefits of projects (APA Climate Change Policy Guide: Resilient Economy D.1.5).

Add to goal ED-2: Retail & Commercial. Enhance commercial businesses which serve the community's needs for goods and services.

Promote density. State and local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, and other regional and local agencies should pursue a policy of intentional densification of urban places with good multimodal connections among mixed-use commercial, low-impact employment, and diverse housing areas (APA Climate Change Policy Guide: Resilient Economy D.1.4).

Chapter 4: Environment & Conservation

Edit language: Goal EC-12. Food security: ~~Promote~~ **Create** a resilient local food system.

Proposal to rename: Goal EC-13. Climate Change. ~~Anacortes should be a regional leader in mitigating and adapting to climate change.~~ **Advance climate adaptation planning now** (APA Guide C.6.1).

Revised all policies to language that is specific, actionable, and accountable. Edit all policies that start with support or consider, to promote.

*Add to Goal EC-2: **Promote solutions that use natural systems, mimic natural processes, or work synergistically with traditional approaches to protect our floodplains and watersheds.***

Chapter 5: Parks, Recreation, & Open Spaces

Proposed to replace policy PR 1.1 of Parks, Rec, Open space chapter: “Provide park areas that are convenient to and accessible for the residents of Anacortes.”

(Updated PR 1.1) - Continue to expand the City’s park holdings and open space opportunities, with special emphasis on serving urban centers and urban villages that are home to marginalized populations and areas that have been traditionally underserved (Policy 1.1 from Parks, Recreation, & Open Spaces Chapter of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan 2022).

Proposed to be added to goal PR-4: “Community Engagement. Engage the public in decisions about planning, acquisition, development and management of the park and recreation facilities and programs.”

Policy PR 4.6 - Provide supplementary emphasis on supplying information for typically underrepresented or disadvantaged communities regarding community events, etc.

Proposed to be added to goal PR-5: “Parks Funding. Ensure adequate funding sources for parks and recreation planning, development, management and maintenance and maintain a plan for capital improvements to guide capital expenditures.”

Policy PR 5.3 - Look for innovative ways to conduct construction and major maintenance of park facilities that will provide training, apprenticeships, youth employment, and living wage opportunities for marginalized populations (Policy 4.4 from Parks, Recreation, & Open Spaces Chapter of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan 2022).

Chapter 6: Transportation

Proposed text to be added to the Mobility Options section of the Transportation chapter:

Policy T-2.20. **Retrofit all local streets** to incorporate pedestrian and bicycle accommodations **and infrastructure** ~~into all new construction (complete streets) as appropriate~~ (Department of Commerce).

Proposed text to be added to the Sustainability section of the Transportation chapter:

Goal T-4. Design and manage the city’s transportation system to minimize the negative impacts of transportation on the natural environment, promote public health and safety, **mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change**, and achieve optimum efficiency (Department of Commerce).

Policy T-4.1. Foster a less polluting system that reduces the negative effects of transportation infrastructure and operation on air quality, the climate, and also the natural environment including the use of techniques to reduce pollutants in storm drains. **Incorporate hydrologic climate impacts into the design of the design of water-crossing infrastructure for fish passage and habitat quality** (Department of Commerce).

Policy T-4.2. ~~Seek the development and implementation of transportation modes and technologies that are energy efficient and improve system performance.~~ **Ensure that transportation infrastructure is not only improving but able to withstand and recover from extreme weather events worsened by climate change. Design and site new and expanded roads and railroads to have the least possible adverse effect on the shoreline, and account for sea-level rise projections** (Department of Commerce).

Chapter 7: Capital Facilities

Proposed text to be added to Goal CF-1, “Support Existing Development and Future Growth”:

Policy CF-1.12: **Develop a green streets toolbox. Plan for future roads to include permeable surfaces, bike lanes, sidewalks, wheelchair-accessible curb dips, and road verges.**

Proposed text to be added to Goal CF-3, “Correct Deficiencies”:

Policy CF-3. **“Evaluate the long-term adequacy of water delivery infrastructure to ensure that changes in hydrological patterns (e.g., increases in flooding frequency or reduction of late-summer water availability associated with climate change) can be anticipated and managed effectively”** (Department of Commerce).

Policy CF-4. **“Establish and maintain government-to-government relations with Native American tribes for the preservation of archaeological sites and traditional cultural properties that are vulnerable to climate impacts”** (Department of Commerce).

Chapter 8: Utilities

Proposed text to be added to Goal U-2, “Sustainable Utility Infrastructure”:

Policy U-2.9: Monitor emissions from utility providers. Use this data to inform emission totals and targets (Department of Commerce 2023).

Policy U-2.10: Develop design standards that require consideration of resilience in utility systems (APA Climate Change Policy Guide 2020).

Additional text to add to Policy U-5, Sustainable Design:

Policy U-5.4: ~~Encourage development of~~ vegetation management policies and plans for utility corridors **that restore native plants and ecosystems.**

BURLINGTON, WASHINGTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Authors: Miles Snook, Louisa Keating, Charlotte King, Meera Shannon, Marek Vermuelen

To support the city of Burlington in planning for observed and projected climate impacts, the student authors have compiled targeted policy language for the following comprehensive plan elements: land use, housing, natural resources, economic development, public facilities and services, parks and recreation, and transportation. The proposed language is adapted from various sources. This includes but is not limited to, Burlington's 2005 and 2023 Comprehensive Plans, the American Planning Association (APA) Climate Change Policy Guide, the APA's Subdivision Design and Flood Hazard Areas, and the Skagit Climate Science Consortium.

Introduction

Proposed text to be added to the Introduction of Burlington's Comprehensive Plan:

(p. 4)

This plan is intended to guide the future growth and development of Burlington. It covers a 20- year period and describes how land will be used and developed, where roads and utilities will be built, and how public services and facilities will be provided. Although this plan will primarily be used by the City, it also affects actions taken by State agencies, the Burlington Edison School District, and other local governments.

By the year 2036, the population of Burlington is expected to grow by 3,808 people. At the same time, 3,516 jobs will be added by local employers. Accommodating additional people and jobs means the City must change in significant ways. **Burlington faces significant climate change impacts, as it is located in the 100-year flood plain. The Skagit Climate Science Consortium predicts that climate change will increase the size and frequency of floods in the Skagit watershed (SCSC).** In 20 years, Burlington will be a very different place than it is now, just as the City is very different today than it was 20 years ago. By making smart decisions and planning carefully, growth can be used to make the City a better place to live. Growth can enhance the quality of public services, expand options for entertainment, shopping, and education, and improve economic conditions for residents and businesses **if done in a manner that enhances our resilience to future climate impacts.**

This plan is built around **five** broad principles. These **five** principles are intended to ensure that the benefits of future change are shared widely by those living, working, and doing business in Burlington while avoiding the pitfalls often encountered by other communities (City of Burlington, 2023).

Proposed text for the fifth principle under the introduction:

Sustainability and Climate Preparedness. Burlington will consider climate-related issues in all policies and actions that guide the development and redevelopment of the

community and that align with climate- and planning-related actions at the federal and state levels. (APA, 2020)

Land Use

(pg. 6)

Burlington’s ability to expand outward is constrained by floodplains and agricultural lands. As a result, the City has long enjoyed a compact footprint. Although this pattern of development makes accommodating growth challenging, it also fosters a strong sense of community identity and allows the City to deliver high-quality services at a relatively low cost. The goals and policies of the Land Use Element are intended to maintain Burlington’s compact footprint while accommodating population growth and economic development. Furthermore, Burlington land use decisions should focus on **restoring, connecting, and protecting natural habitats and sensitive areas (including wetlands, streams, floodplains, etc.)**. Human infrastructure should be redesigned and developed to respect natural systems (i.e., removing stream culverts under roads and restoring open stream channels for improving wildlife movement, while at the same time improving natural stream flows, reducing man-made flooding, and improving resiliency to changing weather patterns as a result of climate change) (APA 2020).

(p. 6)

Development will be discouraged in areas with limited access to transportation, services, and utilities, and areas with significant environmental constraints. **Innovative zoning codes—such as form-based codes—and density bonuses should be adopted that promote infill and mixed-use development within walking distance of public transit and economic centers** (B.5.2 APA 2020).

(p. 6)

Importantly this plan does not include any expansion of the City’s Urban Growth Area or its municipal boundaries. Instead, the City of Burlington will accommodate all of the population and employment growth projected through the year 2036 within the City’s existing municipal boundaries. This pattern of development will minimize infrastructure costs, protect valuable agricultural land, avoid further urban expansions in flood-prone areas, and make future transportation demand more manageable. **This development should also seek to preserve and protect important natural resources and their corresponding ecosystem services, to prevent urban expansion from further damaging these areas and exacerbating climate issues.** (C.2.1 APA 2020).

(p. 7)

UGAs are intended to concentrate growth and development within cities and preserve farmland and natural resources by limiting sprawling development in rural areas. **UGAs should not infringe on important natural assets such as “carbon sinks.” No development will be allowed on certain designated forests and soils within communities and regions so they can maintain their roles as “carbon sinks” and to enhance their long-term resilience to climate change impacts. This includes preserving productive agricultural soils and supporting soil conservation practices and environmentally responsible farming and forestry to maintain soil productivity and reduce emissions and impacts to the natural environment** (C.2.5 APA 2020).

(p. 8)

Development must be directed away from critical areas, aquatic resources, and agricultural land and open space corridors must be identified. **Identify and protect natural wildlife habitat and key**

movement corridors from development. This facilitates an interconnected network of green spaces to allow for the natural movement of wildlife in response to normal migration and changing weather patterns. Utilize available federal and state tools such as Biomap (C.3.1 APA 2020).

(p. 11)

Several areas of the City contain unique natural resources or are subject to particularly hazardous conditions. These areas include Gages Slough, Burlington Hill, and the Skagit River Corridor. These three areas have limited development potential and have been designated as Special Management Areas (SMAs). This plan establishes additional policies and regulations for the SMAs. The SMA policies and regulations are intended to direct growth away from SMAs, limit development densities, discourage land divisions, protect natural resources, and limit exposure to natural hazards. **Understand the carrying capacity of natural ecosystems and implement strategies and incentives to ensure development does not exceed these capacities to avoid imbalances. Restore natural carrying capacities where feasible through strategies such as rewilding** (APA 2020).

(p. 15)

The addition of new land to the City's municipal boundaries will be phased to promote efficient development patterns and ensure urban services, roads, and utilities are extended in a rational, cost-effective manner. **Require multimodal transportation. Develop regulations and design standards that require the accommodation of multimodal transportation. Designing transportation projects to improve multiple forms of mobility, including pedestrians (meeting Americans with Disabilities Act standards), bicycles, scooters, etc., will lower carbon emissions** (APA 2020).

Proposed additional point added to 2.4.4

New development should seek to reduce urban heat island impacts through planning strategies that support natural resource protection such as compact development, biophilic design, and pavement reduction strategies (APA 2020).

Housing

Proposed text to be added to 3.1 Introduction

(p. 37)

The primary objectives of the Housing Element can be summarized as follows:

Adapting to changing conditions. Accommodate a robust supply of housing in a variety of types. At a minimum, the City will accommodate the construction of 1,448 housing units, approximately 60 percent will be attached and 40 percent detached. The needs of the elderly and extended families will be addressed by allowing people to use their homes flexibly through the construction of accessory dwellings.

Maintaining housing affordability. Limit monthly household expenses related to transportation, utilities, and taxes by concentrating housing in locations close to jobs, services, and shopping, and in areas with established utilities. Enable the production of a robust supply of market-rate housing and support the efforts of organizations that provide income assistance and subsidized housing.

Ensure housing is safe and healthy. Uniformly enforce building, fire, and property maintenance codes and regularly inspect places of public accommodation.

Advocate for green building and design. Require or provide strong incentives for all new commercial, mixed-use, municipal, and multifamily buildings to obtain LEED or comparable green rating certification along with provisions that require equitable distribution of housing and business opportunities (APA, 2020).

Proposed text to be added to 3.4.6 Safe and Healthy Housing

(p. 44)

Evaluate and modify existing regulations and codes regarding construction of residential structures in floodplain areas (APA, 2016).

Property owners shall have a plan in place for residents' retreating from increasingly hazardous areas. (APA, 2020) This includes but is not limited to hazards caused by proximity to the floodplain.

Proposed text to be added to 3.4.7 Housing Affordability

(p.45)

To save significant energy, money, and natural resources, reserve and reuse existing non-historic buildings. Promote cultural diversity and the character of the surrounding neighborhood (APA, 2020).

Reuse and recycle existing building materials for which there is a market when buildings cannot be entirely reused (APA, 2020).

Natural Resources

Proposed text to be added to primary objective three of 4.1.

(p. 47)

Maintain or Restore Natural Hydrologic Functions. Stormwater from new development will be managed using techniques that maintain or restore natural hydrologic processes. New impervious surface coverage will be limited, developments will include features such as rain gardens and permeable pavement, and wetlands, water courses, and drainage areas will be maintained or restored. Wetlands will be used as an alternative to traditional tertiary treatment and can help improve wildlife (APA, 2020).

Proposed text to be added to the text of 4.2.

(p. 48-49)

Floodplain development in the City of Burlington is subject to several regulatory requirements, including the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), Washington State area policies and regulations must be based on scientifically valid and up-to-date floodplain management laws, the Growth Management Act (GMA), and the Shoreline Management Act (SMA). These regulatory programs address where development can occur in the floodplain, what type of floodplain development is appropriate, and specify construction techniques and building design standards. The City will work to meet this regulation by collaborating with other municipalities (APA,

2020). Broadly, these regulations are intended to minimize flood damage and property loss, protect lives, and maintain the natural functions of the floodplain.

Proposed text to be added to the primary objective of 4.3.1 Wetlands.

(p. 49)

Given its small size and well-drained soils Burlington has a limited number of wetlands. However, the City is bisected by a Gages Slough, a significant linear complex of wetlands. Wetlands are also located around the base of Burlington Hill and near the south end of Walnut Street. Other small, unmapped wetlands exist throughout the City. These wetlands provide important habitat, flood storage capacity, and storm-water management functions. Given the City's flooding and storm-water management challenges, this plan strongly emphasizes the preservation, restoration, and construction of wetland areas. **The construction of wetlands can help protect wildlife and costs less to build than traditional territory treatment** (APA, 2020).

Proposed text to be added to 4.3.2 Water Quality

(p. 49 -50)

A large concentration of potential sources of water contamination exists in the City, including underground storage tanks, industrial uses, and sites that handle or generate hazardous waste. These uses, coupled with the permeable soils and shallow groundwater found throughout the City, pose a significant risk of groundwater contamination. Stormwater carries pollutants from roads, parking lots, industrial uses, and other developments to Gages Slough and the Skagit River, making property stormwater management imperative. Due to historic development practices buildings and pavement cover much of the City and depressions, water courses, and wetlands have been filled. As a result, localized flooding can occur during storm events and wetland and water courses dry up during summer months. **To decrease the amount of flooding in pavement-heavy areas street trees will be planted and other nature-based solutions will be implemented** (APA, 2020).

Proposed text to be added after 4.3 Current and Future Conditions

(p.51)

4.4 Climate Resilience. The goals and policies of this section are intended to help residents of Burlington combat the effects of climate change in the short, medium, and long term. Moving forward, new private and public development and infrastructure projects need to incorporate climate change considerations and solutions. Based on the goals below, planners will develop community plans and other tools that can help to inform development projects regarding climate change issues (APA, 2020).

3.5.1 Plan for Resilience. Advocate for and lead the development of resilience, hazard mitigation, and Climate Adaptation Plans and incorporate them into all state, local, and community comprehensive planning processes (APA, 2020).

3.5.2 Create Technical Assistance for Development. Provide tools that promote resilient development including checklists, studies, applications, etc., that can be used by states and municipalities as well as developers (APA, 2020).

3.5.3 Utilize Design Guidance. Adopt or reference existing design guidance documents that help mitigate impacts to developments located in identified hazard zones (i.e., sea

level rise standards based on climate projections). Adopt higher design standards and thresholds in areas prone to climate change impacts including sea level rise, extreme heat, wildfires, extreme rainfall, etc. (APA, 2020).

3.5.4 Require Mitigation and Resilience-Based Measures in Development Review. Evaluate resiliency measures as part of the development review process, similar to other more traditional impacts (i.e., stormwater management, traffic, etc.) (APA, 2020).

3.5.5 Provide Economic Incentives for Resilient Development. Create incentive-based programs that promote the creation of development that meets resilience standards (APA, 2020).

Proposed goal to be added to 4.4 (4.5) Goals and Policies 4.4.1 Wetlands

(p.52-4.41)

Goal 7: Construct new wetlands to reclaim natural habitat space alongside preserving natural wetlands (APA, 2020).

Proposed text to be added to Goal 1 of Natural Hydrologic Process under 4.4 (4.5) Goals and Policies

(p. 52 -4.4.3)

Goal 1: Uses that produce, handle, or store significant quantities of hazardous substances shall take steps to prevent contaminants from being released into the groundwater or mixing with flood waters. **Groundwater monitoring wells should be placed at sites that have high numbers of hazardous substances to measure hazard levels** (State of California, 2023).

Economic Development

Proposed text to be added to the Introduction of the Economic Development Element:

(p. 59)

The Economic Development Element describes local economic conditions, includes estimates of future job growth, and explains how the economy will change over time. This element also outlines steps the City will take to enhance **sustainable** business activity, ensure the long-term viability of municipal finances, and improve the well-being of its citizens. This element is focused on efforts to improve the lives of people living or working in the City of Burlington by minimizing the cost of living, providing robust employment opportunities, and improving access to education, job training, and services. It also includes strategies for diversifying the economy and sustaining the City's position as a regional hub for shopping, services, and entertainment. **Lastly, this element ensures that economic development within Burlington is approached with climate change strategies that foster green business growth, develop resilient infrastructure, and support business disaster preparedness and recovery** (APA, 2020).

For many years the City benefited from a robust economy driven by retail sales and car dealerships. While these sectors provided a large number of jobs and supported high-quality municipal services with a robust stream of tax revenue, their dominance also resulted in a local economy constrained by limited wages and a lack of economic diversity. As the economy changes and the population grows, actions must be taken to broaden the City's economic base, contain the cost of living, **address the climate crisis**, and ensure that Burlington's residents and

business owners have the tools they need to compete in the modern economy. (City of Burlington, 2023).

Proposed text to be added as a new goal under 5.5 Goals and Policies:

5.5.7 Sustainability and Climate Resilience: Encourage resilient and sustainable economic development in Burlington. Ensuring that business, commercial, and industrial spaces provide climate-ready infrastructure, and are attuned to a climate strategy (APA, 2020).

Proposed text to be added under the new Goal 7:

1. Develop resilience-based design standards and building codes. Collaborate with supporting professional organizations and disciplines to update and/or develop national resilient development design standards and codes for adoption into local regulations (APA, 2020).
2. Support business disaster preparedness and recovery. Support the development of business disaster recovery and continuity plans and actions and business emergency operations centers to spur faster recovery after a disaster (APA 2020).
3. Advocate for green building and design. Require or provide strong incentives for all new commercial, mixed-use, and municipal buildings to obtain LEED or comparable green rating certification along with provisions that require equitable distribution of housing and business opportunities (APA, 2020).
4. Develop subarea plans that incentivize Transit Oriented Developments (TOD). Develop specific area and economic development plans that encourage and provide incentives for business, commercial, and residential uses to locate near transit stations, while prohibiting displacement of existing residents to the maximum extent practicable (APA, 2020).
5. Combining Industrial and Natural Environmental Development. Work towards combining industrial development with natural environmental development utilizing green buildings/design and green infrastructure/construction. Merging these systems can create a shared energy system to minimize waste and enhance inter-industry cooperation, increasing our climate change adaptation (APA, 2020).
6. Natural Systems Thinking. Promote solutions that use natural systems, mimic natural processes, or work synergistically with traditional approaches to protect our floodplains and watersheds: making use of nature-based infrastructure and industrial developments that work with the land rather than against it. This approach also generates better health outcomes for residents and reinforces climate change resiliency (APA, 2020).

Public Facilities and Services

Proposed text to be added to section 6.1: Introduction

(p. 73)

The primary objectives of the Public Facilities and Services Element can be summarized as follows:

- Consistency. Investments in public facilities and services will be viewed as a tool for achieving the objectives outlined in other sections of this plan. All financial decisions, including the development and approval of detailed capital plans and annual budgetary decisions, will be consistent with, and implement, the City’s comprehensive plan.
- Value and Sustainability. Spending decisions involving public services and facilities will consider both short and long-term financial impacts and will be made after evaluating the costs and benefits of various options that achieve the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Land use plans and plans for public services and facilities will be developed in tandem to ensure the costs of various development scenarios are fully considered.
- Resilience and Adaptability. Promote resilient and adaptive planning practices to mitigate the effects of climate change. For example, develop resilient-based design standards and building codes, assess capital facilities and identify mitigation and adaptation measures, and collaborate with other Skagit Valley communities to adopt valley-wide climate action strategies. (APA, 2020).
- Maintenance. Public facilities and infrastructure are expensive long-term investments. In order to maximize the value of public tax dollars and avoid the expense of premature replacements the City will budget adequate money for maintenance and repairs and will prioritize maintenance.
- Access. Provide equitable access to Burlington’s public facilities, and community-serving facilities. Adopt universal accessible design requirements for public facilities to better accommodate the needs of older adults and persons experiencing disabilities (APA, 2022). Help to assist residents of lower income, BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities, and anyone else disproportionately at risk of climate change or other misfortune in Burlington (APA, 2020).

Proposed text to be added to section 6.3.2: Sanitary Sewer Service

(p. 76)

Through the year 2036, the City is not planning on financing any major sewer expansions to facilitate new growth in areas that currently **lack** sewer service, including the unincorporated Burlington. **However, the City will review its sewer treatment plant to control and mitigate methane emissions or even convert this waste into energy production** (APA, 2020).

Sewer service is an important tool for managing growth. To avoid burdening existing ratepayers, and to encourage compact and efficient land use patterns, capital spending on sewer infrastructure will be focused on maintaining and upgrading existing sewer infrastructure and accommodating additional growth in areas that already have sewer service. **With sufficient funds, the City of Burlington will research new wastewater treatment options like turning water into energy. This strategy could include the use of gray water or municipal reuse of treated wastewater or the reuse of treated wastewater through a “purple pipe” distribution system** (APA, 2020).

Proposed text to be added to section 6.4.1: Consistency and Coordination

(p. 85)

4. City services, capital infrastructure, or other resources shall not be used to facilitate urban growth or intensive levels of development beyond, or outside of, existing established urban growth areas. **Urban growth should be prioritized in higher-density residential, infill, or redevelopment sites “near activity centers, such as commercial areas, employment centers, transit centers, and parks and recreational facilities” (APA, 2020, p. 12). Increasing urban density within activity centers encourages more affordable and diverse housing options within existing single-use zones (APA, 2020).**

Parks and Recreation

Proposed text to be added to section 7.3.1: Capacity

(p. 95)

1. **Plan for significant open and recreational spaces near mixed-use areas and higher residential and employment densities. Provide walking distance access to parks, trails, open spaces, and natural environments (APA, 2020).**
2. Enlarge the effective service area and allow more people to access the City’s existing parks by constructing trails, paths, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian improvements that connect parks to residential and commercial areas.
3. New park capacity should be added first in underserved areas that are not within walking distance of an existing park, **and secondly to mixed-use areas of higher density (APA, 2020).**
4. Urban growth area expansions and annexations shall not be approved unless a financially feasible plan is developed to maintain existing levels of service and provide new park facilities in the expansion area without compromising the City’s ability to serve existing areas.
5. Major public projects shall incorporate improvements that address the City’s park, open space, and active transportation needs.
6. Support the City’s position as a destination for regional sporting events and as a gateway, to the North Cascades Highway by expanding the number, and capacity, of RV pump-out stations.
7. **Support the development of parks and open space in eco-industrial developments, which would help to grow the amount of open space and recreational areas in the community (APA, 2020).**

Proposed text to be added to section 7.3.2: Access and Inclusion

(p. 96)

Parks and recreation facilities should be designed, operated, and maintained to provide access and opportunity for all members of the community regardless of age or disability. **Standardizing a universal accessibility design to assist members of the community would help to** reduce social, language, or financial barriers that may limit accessibility (APA, 2022).

LA CONNER, WASHINGTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Authors: Adele Delignette, Andrew White, Abbas Theophilus, Jax Thaxton

To support the city of La Conner in planning for observed and projected climate impacts, the student authors have compiled targeted policy language for the following comprehensive plan elements: housing and land use, transportation, parks and open space, and capital facilities. The proposed language is adapted from various sources. This includes but is not limited to, the American Planning Association (APA) Climate Change Policy Guide, Bainbridge Island Comprehensive Plan, and the Washington Department of Commerce Climate Measures.

Policy Recommendations

Housing & Land Use

Under Housing, Goal A

Modify Goal A: Strive to preserve, improve and enhance the existing housing stock, **both for economic vitality and environmental resilience**, including historic structures and sites within the Historic District.

Add Policy 6A-9: **Effectively regulate hazard areas with respect to flood resilience. In instances where development is allowed in hazard zones, require compensation or mitigation from the developer.** (Angus, Neil et al., 2020)

Under Land Use, Goal AA

Modify Policy 5AA-2: Encourage mixed use zoning and mixed-use area development. Encourage mixed-use structures **and identify priority areas**. Mixing uses within a structure **promotes an efficient use of space, fosters community, and** enhances the ability to give interesting form and character to a building.

Transportation

Modify: Eliminate mandatory parking requirement.

~~D-10. Require adequate off-street parking for all zones.~~

D-11. Provide adequate parking space in high demand areas by:

1. Developing a comprehensive parking plan which designates immediate and future parking lot sites and shuttle parking lots,
2. Creating an action plan to implement a comprehensive parking plan over time,
3. Identifying ~~minimum and~~ maximum parking standards.

4. Encourage shared parking agreements between uses that have different hours of operation.

D-12. Survey parking space availability and occupancy to establish a baseline and determine needs for additional space and location **for cars, bicycles, and motorcycles according to the transportation prioritization established in S-6.**

D-13. Parking in the First Street Historic Neighborhood will be consistent with the intent of the district to maintain the compact fabric and consistent rhythm created by the incremental construction of small to medium size buildings on the originally plated small lots. ~~This can be accomplished by removing the requirement for off street parking for buildings in this neighborhood.~~

Add New Policy: Transportation planning for the Tulip Festival

MM-10. Plan for low-cost transportation options during the tourist season in order to mitigate traffic while not prioritizing tourists over residents. This can include congestion pricing during peak tourist season, create a city ride sharing system and provide on-demand shuttles to tourists.

Add New Policy: Creation of evacuation routes.

S-14. Develop an emergency evacuation plan for extreme flooding events. This plan should assess areas likely safe from flooding, designate evacuation routes and transportation mode.

Add: S-16. Ensure the evacuation plan includes the needs of people with disabilities, the elderly, children, non-native English speakers, and residents with no vehicle.

Parks & Open Space

Goal K: Adapt parks and open spaces for resilience to climate change impacts and mitigation against contributions to climate change (Hansen, et al., 2017, p. 68).

Policy 11K-A: Develop and require a Climate Assessment Certification to be applied to and required prior to any fiscal or permitting decision. Include the following criteria for park and recreation infrastructure:

1. Demonstrated consideration of present and future climate-vulnerable site conditions in any capacity or demand calculations, siting and permit approvals.
2. Demonstrated understanding that park and recreation facilities may need to be in vulnerable locations but that if accounted for in planning can become an asset to site design (e.g., wetland areas, fields, retention areas designed for temporary flooding/runoff or inundation while factoring in temporary loss of use to demand models).

3. Require inclusion of future projected conditions/climate scenarios to understand future resource conditions.
4. 11K-B: Design for walkability to and within facilities and prioritize active, multimodal transportation.
5. 11K-C: Create specific climate-informed Low Impact Development regulations and require use in all new or re-developed park and recreation facilities.
6. 11K-D: Identify and map park and recreation infrastructure that is located within hazard areas and create a “Watch List” of vulnerable infrastructure (combined with the list for infrastructure and transportation infrastructure).
7. 11K-E: Create a prioritized plan to repurpose, relocate, or retrofit vulnerable infrastructure.

Capital Facilities

Under “Major Capital Facilities Considerations and Goals”

Consider integrating the last sentences into the previous paragraph and make the following revisions:

~~La Conner School District~~—The Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan for La Conner

School District is the basis that establishes **determines** the School Impact fees assessed to new residential development. This plan is revised within a 6-year timeframe and impact fees are adjusted accordingly.

Under Goal A

Add policy 9A-4: Require public facilities to incorporate energy generation when and where possible (Hansen et al, 2017, Goal CF-4).

Add policy 9A-5: Eliminate capital investments toward new construction in present and future vulnerable/hazard-prone areas, while investing in retrofitting facilities already existing in these areas to be more resilient.

Under Goal B

Add policy 9B-4: Advocate for renewable energy when replacing or upgrading aging infrastructure (Angus, Neil et al., 2020).

Add policy 9B-5: Use recycled materials in the renovation of facilities or construction of new infrastructure where possible.

Sourced from Entry #55 in WA Department of Commerce Climate Measures

Under “Town Facilities Inventory and Needs Assessment”

Since this section is entirely dedicated to the construction of the La Conner-Swinomish Library that is now complete and operational, it is no longer supplementary to the comprehensive plan.

If this section should remain, consider:

- Incorporating crisis or emergency resource centers, flood refuge areas, cooling stations, etc. to existing capital facilities.
- Incorporating the emergency facilities listed above into an all-encompassing new facility.
- Creating a table of all existing capital facilities and an assessment of their existing deficiencies and planned improvements. (Appendix 9-B and the 6-year capital facilities plan are mentioned as having these resources already, however neither are attached to the comprehensive plan or made publicly available to our knowledge).

MOUNT VERNON, WASHINGTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Authors: Brett Bishop, Maree Medeiros, Bridget Miller, Madeline Pysher, and Adin Romano

To better prepare the city of Mount Vernon in planning for anticipated and inevitable climate change impacts, a Western Washington student team has assembled revisions for the 2016 - 2036 Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan. The recommendations include updated goals, objectives, and policies focused around environmental mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. The revisions focus on five of the comprehensive plan's existing elements: Economic Development, Land Use, Housing, Transportation, and Parks & Recreation. The proposed language within the revised elements is pulled from sources that demonstrate significant attention paid to current and future environmental change. These sources include, but are not limited to, existing comprehensive plans, the Skagit Climate Science Consortium, as well as policy guides from the American Planning Association (APA).

Recommendations by Element

Land Use

Proposed text to be added to the Land Use Element Vision.

Mount Vernon is committed to ~~being proactive, rather than reactive, in managing growth within the City.~~ The City will **adopting** and **emphasizing** strategies that promote the City's rich history, natural and man-made beauty, ~~along with~~ **and** its environmental and cultural resources. ~~Emphasis is placed~~ **will be placed** on creating and promoting **sustainable, resilient, community-oriented** land uses ~~that will help~~ to balance ~~land uses~~ where people live, work, and recreate.

Proposed text to be added to GOAL 1: Enhance the quality of life found in the city of Mount Vernon as a place to work, live, and recreate.

(p. 35)

Objective 1.1: Balance residential, commercial, **environmental**, industrial and public land uses within the City.

Policy 1.1.6: Encourage infill development on vacant properties with existing public services and public utilities **that are outside of climate impact zones (floodplains)** (City of Everett, 2015).

Policy 1.1.10: Adaptation of new and existing developments to natural disasters and climate change impacts (City of Bellingham, 2016).

Proposed text to be added to 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.

Policy 6.1.6: Establish low-rise multifamily zones to accommodate various housing choices in the low- to moderate-density range suitable for a broad array of households and incomes, including walk-up apartments, town houses, row houses, duplexes, triplexes, and cottage housing (City of Seattle, 2020).

Objective 6.2: Create planned opportunities for compact, mixed-use development through the creation of urban villages.

1. Policy 6.2.1: Focus higher-intensity land uses in mixed-use urban villages and transit corridors, thereby maximizing use of existing infrastructure and services (City of Bellingham, 2016).
2. Policy 6.2.2: Provide significant job opportunities and new housing, allowing residents to live, work, shop, and recreate near their home (City of Bellingham, 2016).
3. Policy 6.2.3: Maintain and promote Mount Vernon's unique neighborhood character while concentrating housing, goods, and services.

Proposed text to be added to 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.

Policy 16.2.2: Conserve natural resource lands and ecosystem functions by preventing land conversion to sprawling or incremental development (Hansen, Nordgren, Mielbrecht, 2016).

Proposed text to be added to 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.

1. Policy 20.1.5: Utilize all hazard mitigation planning, shoreline and floodplain management processes, and capital facilities planning to identify and address local climate change concerns (Hansen, Nordgren, Mielbrecht, 2016).
2. Policy 20.1.6: Assess any proposed project for its ability to function in the long term under climate change (Hansen, Nordgren, Mielbrecht, 2016).
3. Policy 20.1.7: As much as possible, locate all new growth outside of future hazard prone areas (Hansen, Nordgren, Mielbrecht, 2016).

Economic Development

Proposed text to be added to the Vision Statement of the Mount Vernon Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan:

The focus of this economic development plan is improving the economic well-being of Mount Vernon through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, enhancing the City's tax base and increasing the quality of life for those that live and work in Mount Vernon for all while enhancing environmental resources and resiliency measures in Mount Vernon. This plan leverages Mount Vernon's competitive advantages, environmental innovations, key assets and core values to strengthen the City's identity and promote future investment consistent with the community's vision.

Goal 1: Have a strong proactive position towards economic prosperity that promotes a positive civic image, encourages strong environmental consideration, and establishes Mount Vernon as a preferred place for investment.

(p. 16)

Objective 1.1: Provide an adequate job-producing land base to ensure an optimal number of **resiliency-focused** jobs for citizens within the community, and to aid the community in paying for infrastructure and services.

Policy 1.1.1: Consider working towards an adequate supply of commercial and industrial lands and supporting infrastructure to accommodate the City's forecasted growth **in ways that also benefit environmental longevity** (APA, 2021, p. 15).

Policy 1.1.4: Plan for resilience. Advocate for and lead the development of resilience, hazard mitigation, flood awareness, and incorporate resiliency consideration into all local development plans (APA, 2021, p. 15).

Objective 1.2: Determine where the City's competitive advantages lie and identify clusters of **environmentally driven** companies that can power growth (APA, 2021, p. 35).

1. Policy 1.2.1: Maintain the City's focus on local companies that demonstrate high growth potential **and commitment to protecting environmental resources**; and continue to embrace the growing health care cluster led by Skagit Regional Health (APA, 2021, p. 6).
2. Policy 1.2.3: Continue focusing on high tech, **and** value added agriculture, **green industries, and environmental conservation** as new clusters to power growth (APA, 2021, p. 13).
3. Policy 1.2.5: Continue to utilize EDASC's marketing and business recruitment talents to bring new companies to Mount Vernon, **especially those that will respect and encourage Mount Vernon's development in environmentally conscious ways** (APA, 2021, p. 35).

(p. 16-17)

Objective 1.3: To the extent possible, make local and regional planning inclusive and flexible. **Ensure that the environmental impacts of economic development are extensively researched and assessed during the planning process** (APA, 2021, p. 6).

1. Policy 1.3.3: Continue to provide predictable, current, clear, and concise regulations and permitting processes **that have overarching environmental emphases** (APA, 2021, p. 24).
2. Policy 1.3.5: Consider establishing a dashboard of **economic** metrics to measure **economic and environmental** progress and benchmark against other cities in the region (APA, 2021, p. 6). Metrics should include:
 - Personal and household income
 - Income growth vs. Home price growth
 - Homes v. Jobs ratio
 - People v. **green** jobs ratio

- Green jobs v. non-green jobs ratio
 - Median Home Prices
 - Unemployment rate
 - Pollution rate
 - Public Safety measures
 - Police Calls for Service per 1000
 - Violent Crime per 1000 people
 - Educational Attainment
 - Retail sales tax revenue
 - Retail sales tax revenue per capita
 - Value of retail and commercial construction built each year
3. Policy 1.3.7: When possible, seek out opportunities to collaborate and regionally plan with environmentally driven entities such as:
 - Skagit Climate Science Consortium
 - Cascadia Climate Energy
 - EarthShare of Washington
 - Environmental groups - Seattle Networking Guide
 - Northwest Energy Coalition
 - Siemens Energy
 - Sierra Club - Washington State Chapter
 - The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (Environment, Local Organizations, 2023).
 4. Policy 1.3.8: Focus on educating the public on environmental concerns specific to the Mount Vernon area. Additionally, involve the public in projected sustainability measures anticipated for Mount Vernon's environmental concerns (APA, 2021, p. 5).

(p. 17-18)

Objective 1.4: Ensure robust infrastructure and utilities exist to foster economic growth, ~~and~~ prosperity, and environmental resiliency (APA, 2021, p. 15).

Policy 1.4.1: When feasible, give priority to transportation system planning and improvements that ensure the efficient and ethical transport of goods and convenient access for workers of customers to and from places of business (APA, 2021, p. 29).

Objective 1.5: Have a strong proactive ~~position~~ position towards revitalization of the downtown as a preferred place to live, work, and play by implementing resiliency measures to ensure the long term health and safety of the downtown area (APA, 2021, p. 15).

Policy 1.5.1: Consider a new library, ~~and~~ fire station, and floodwall in the downtown area to establish the ~~city's~~ City's commitment to downtown revitalization and resiliency (APA, 2021, p. 14).

Policy 1.5.2: Encourage public/private partnerships to advance the revitalization of the downtown **into a more resilient and environmentally focused area.**

Proposed goal and objectives to be added to Economic Development:

Goal 2: Make Mount Vernon a desirable place for investment by implementing resilience standards for environmental preservation and conservation throughout the economic development process. (APA, 2021, p. 15).

Objective 2.1: Start incentivizing a large influx of green-collar jobs to aid the community in paying for infrastructure and services while also furthering development in resilient and sustainable ways (APA, 2021, p. 13).

Policy 2.1.1: Consider establishing a target of green collar jobs-to-development ratio for the City (APA, 2021, p. 32).

Policy 2.1.2: Consider collaborating with green collar professions in order to implement environmentally conscious designs that improve the City's environmental footprint so as to make Mount Vernon a desirable place for investment (APA, 2021, p. 32).

Objective 2.2: Advocate for an economy that values clean and ethical development (APA, 2021, p. 6).

- 1. Policy 2.2.1: Support strict regulation of pollutants emitted by Mount Vernon's companies and businesses (APA, 2021, p. 6).**
- 2. Policy 2.2.2: Support companies whose energy dependence is focused around renewable sources that are ecologically and economically sustainable (APA, 2021, p. 6).**
- 3. Policy 2.2.3: Adopt resiliency regulations that require sustainable design and construction of new development. (APA, 2021, p. 13).**
- 4. Policy 2.2.4: Incentivize green development and partnerships in long-range planning with existing industries and other communities in the Skagit Valley (APA, 2021, p. 13).**

Transportation

Proposed text to be added to the Vision Statement of the Mount Vernon Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan:

The City will develop and contribute to a well-designed transportation system through reasonable, planned, economically feasible, **equitable, and environmentally proactive** transportation improvements for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, **micromobility users**, and commercial vehicles that support **sustainability and align with** adopted land use plans, ~~protect and improve business access, and protect and enhance the City's neighborhoods~~ **while improving and integrating connectivity between where people live, work, and play.**

Goal 1: Contribute to a well-designed transportation system through reasonable, planned, economically feasible, and environmentally proactive transportation improvements that support

sustainability and align with adopted land use plans, ~~protect or improve business access, and protect the city's neighborhoods~~ while improving and integrating connectivity between where people live, work, and play.

(p. 48)

Policy 1.1.6: Update standards to accommodate the use of new technologies and trends (Active Fairfax, 2021).

Objective 1.2: Coordinate land use and transportation planning to sustainably meet the needs of the City.

1. Policy 1.2.3: When making transportation investments in the urban village, the infill strategy should be recognized and promoted (Seattle OPCD, 2015).
2. Policy 1.2.4: Manage the parking supply in urban villages to incentivize the use of multimodal transportation, improve air quality, reduce the heat island effect, and eliminate reductions in auto trips (Seattle OPCD, 2015).
3. Policy 1.2.5: Design urban villages' transportation infrastructure to support land use goals of walkable, compact, sustainable, and accessible neighborhoods (Seattle OPCD, 2015).

Objective 1.4: Design transportation facilities to preserve and ~~to~~ be consistent with the natural and built environments.

1. Policy 1.4.4: Design, site, and construct new transportation facilities to minimize or avoid environmental impacts to the extent feasible (City of Bellingham, 2016).
2. Policy 1.4.5: Implement cool pavement where possible to reduce stormwater runoff, improve water quality, lower traffic noise, provide a more comfortable built environment, enhance safety, and improve nighttime visibility (Environmental, 2022).
3. Policy 1.4.6: Encourage the efficient use of the existing parking supply before pursuing additional parking facility options (Seattle OPCD, 2015).
4. Policy 1.4.7: Parking lots must utilize some sort of landscaping element to offset water runoff and increase the parking lots albedo.
5. Policy 1.4.8: Ensure that the transportation system will be able to resiliently withstand extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change (Measures, n.d.).

Goal 2: Coordinate efforts with Skagit Transit to promote transit improvement and services to ~~the city's residents and businesses~~ between where people live, work, and play.

(p. 49)

Objective 2.1: Work with Skagit Transit and other jurisdictions to increase the efficiency, sustainability, and convenience of intermodal transportation connections within the regional transportation network.

Policy 2.1.4: Covert at least 70% of the public fleet to zero-emission vehicles by 2036 while correspondingly developing supporting programs and infrastructure for electric vehicles (Measures, n.d.).

Objective 2.2: Reduce dependency on single-occupancy vehicles and increase transit ridership (Seattle OPCD, 2015).

Policy 2.2.1: Support, promote, and provide strategies and programs that are aimed at reducing the number of car trips made in Mount Vernon while educating residents on the use of carpooling, public transportation, and active transportation modes, routes, and facilities (Seattle OPCD, 2015).

Policy 2.2.2: Encourage this mode shift by providing subsidies on vehicle licensing fees when drivers present proof of using their transit pass over the previous year (Measures, n.d.).

Goal 3: Maintain, enhances, and increase pedestrian, and bicycle, and micromobility travel by providing safe and convenient routes for the commuting and recreating public.

(p. 50)

Objective 3.1: Provide an active non-motorized transportation system that effectively serves the needs of pedestrian and bicycle all active transportation users; and encourages non-motorized travel and provides encouraging active transportation by providing a continuous network of attractive and accessible sidewalks, footpaths, bike routes, pathways, and trails throughout the City.

Goal 5: Develop a funding and implementation program for needed transportation improvements that support adopted land use policies and environmental stewardship while appropriately distributing transportation costs between public and private development.

(p. 50-51)

Objective 5.2: Prepare a transportation financing plan that optimizes the effective use of City funds and leverages other funding sources.

1. Policy 5.2.3: Allow for the funding of multi-modal growth-related traffic improvements proportionately by impact fees, or other mechanisms, that apportion costs in relation to impacts charged to new development.
2. Policy 5.2.4: Require traffic impact fees on new developments that are assessed to impede LOS standards below E, creating an unstable flow.
3. Policy 5.2.5: Create an Urban Village Transportation Impact Fee Reduction Program that incentivizes redevelopment and infill within designated Urban Villages (City of Bellingham, 2016).
4. Policy 5.2.5: Develop a soft-subsidy program for traffic impact fees on affordable housing units, and exempt non-profits from paying traffic impact fees on affordable housing units.

Goal 7: Integrate the principles and practices of complete streets into the city’s planning and execution of projects so that all residents and visitors, regardless of their age, ability, or financial resources, can safely and efficiently use the public right of way to meet their transportation needs regardless of their preferred mode of travel.

(p. 51-52)

Objective 7.1: To plan for, design, construct, operate, and maintain an appropriate and cohesive transportation system that will meet the needs of motorists, pedestrians, bicycles, **micromobility users**, wheelchair users, transit vehicles and riders, freight haulers, agricultural vehicles, emergency responders, and residents of all ages and abilities.

Policy 7.1.7: “When communicating about multimodal transportation programs or projects, develop outreach materials that are accessible through various media to a wide range of constituents in multiple languages” (City of Bellingham, 2016, p. 17).

Objective 7.2: Provide well-connected, sustainable, and safe mobility options for all users (City of Bellingham, 2016).

- 1. Policy 7.2.1: Provide mobility opportunities and choices for people with special transportation needs, whether they be school children, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, or low-income populations (City of Bellingham, 2016).**
- 2. Policy 7.2.2: Whenever possible encourage the improvement of bicycle, pedestrian, and micromobility facility safety in all WSDOT projects (City of Bellingham, 2016).**
- 3. Policy 7.2.3: Develop a program for low-income residents that allows them to purchase or lease electric modes of transportation through a local subsidy (Measures, n.d.).**

Parks and Recreation

(pg. 5)

Move “PLAN ORGANIZATION” in Chapter 1 here (before the start of Chapter 1)

Text to add to “PLAN ORGANIZATION”:

Chapter I, Introduction: ~~an overview of the document organization~~, discussion of opportunities for public comment, and an overview of the public process.

Chapter 2, Goals: a list of goals, objectives, and policies (Adjust following chapter numbers accordingly)

(pg. 6)

Proposed text to add to Chapter 1 introduction paragraph:

Mount Vernon is located in the heart of Skagit County, an area known worldwide for its abundance of natural and recreational resources. Mount Vernon is the largest city in Skagit County with a diverse and vibrant community that shows great interest in ~~access to recreational opportunities~~ **outdoor recreation**. This report **presents goals, and** discusses the findings and recommendations for meeting park and recreation services in Mount Vernon. This Parks and

Recreation Comprehensive Plan (PRCP) is an update to previous plans and it reflects the changes in both supply and demand for parks and recreation, and the urgency of climate change impacts since the most recent 2007 plan. Our commitment is to continually strive to create and maintain quality services and leisure experiences that which are readily accessible to connect the public to the natural world.

Delete “MISSION STATEMENTS” in Chapter 1

Move “Parks and Recreation” statement as a final sentence in introduction paragraph above

Delete “Department Goals” in Chapter 1

(pg. 6-7)

Proposed text to add to “PURPOSE OF THE PLAN” in Chapter 1:

A strong parks and recreation system is essential for a thriving community. Recreation mentally and physically benefits the individuals, and as well as, the society as a whole; both mentally and physically, by connecting both to the environment. It is the overall goal of this plan to provide direction over the relative short term of the next six years so that Mount Vernon Parks and Recreation may work smartly in fulfilling specific needs as deliberately as possible. This plan will establish a sense of direction for Mount Vernon to follow in serving the recreational needs of its residents and the natural environmental. The update is a Growth Management Act (GMA) requirement and fulfills grant funding eligibility criteria required by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). It helps to provide direction for MVPR in regards to property acquisition, park development, capital improvement planning, and programs for the next six years.

(pg. 9)

Proposed text for new Chapter 2: Goals:

(Goal 1 is based off “Department Goals” in Chapter 1 and “GUIDING PRINCIPLES” in Chapter 10)

Goal 1: Adequately meet residents' need for recreation space

Objective 1.1: Provide a variety of outdoor spaces so all residents have the opportunity to play, learn, and strengthen the community. (Seattle OPCD, 2015, pg 140).

- 1. Policy 1.1.1: Ensure ease of access by maximizing connection to mass and non-motorized transit routes.**
- 2. Policy 1.1.2: “Explore innovations in planning, development, and ongoing stewardship/management of parks and recreation” (taken from Chapter 10, pg. 93) to keep up with community needs.**
- 3. Policy 1.1.3: Develop affordable park activities based on desires of the surrounding community through social, and active and passive recreation opportunities.**

4. Policy 1.1.4: Follow accessibility requirements through use of ramps, playgrounds, restrooms, picnic areas, and all other facilities to ensure equal access.

Objective 1.2: Acquire more parklands/facilities when there is opportunity to do so.

1. Policy 1.2.1: Target the creation of parks in areas that are under-served (City of Bellingham Parks Element, 2016, pg. 3).
2. Policy 1.2.2: As infill and denser development occurs, utilize small unused lots as outdoor space for pocket parks and tot lots.
3. Policy 1.2.3: “Work with community groups, agencies, and individuals to partner in park acquisition and development” (*taken from Chapter 10, pg. 93*).
4. Policy 1.2.4: Aim to acquire critical habitat and important natural areas that will serve to benefit wildlife and residents.
5. Policy 1.2.5: When possible, acquire floodplains (with greatest predicted magnitude) to limit flooding impacts on infrastructure and development.

Objective 1.3: Work to maintain and upgrade existing parkland for regional and community use.

1. Policy 1.3.1: Ensure that park infrastructure improvements have the ability to function in the long-term (APA, 2021, pg. 58).
2. Policy 1.3.2: Utilize qualitative and quantitative methods, using a diverse array of participants, to establish park and recreation needs, such as level of service and use pattern measures, and surveys.
3. Policy 1.3.3: Anticipate for park facilities’ accommodation to changes in capacity and population increase.
4. Policy 1.3.4: Engage with community members on the design of new facilities and parks through active public involvement.

(Goal 2 is primarily based on the APA’s suggestions for climate change ready Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan Elements)

Goal 2: Utilize parkland to preserve natural areas and mitigate climate impacts for people, infrastructure, and local ecology.

Objective 2.1: Adapt parks to mitigate impacts of climate change.

1. Policy 2.1.1: Preserve vegetation and tree canopy as a method to enhance local air and water quality, and combat the urban heat island effect (APA, 2021, pg. 58).
2. Policy 2.1.2: Work to maintain ecosystem function and integrity while systems and habitats migrate and change over time. This can be done through the establishment of species corridors, protected areas for migratory species, removing harmful invasive species, etc (APA, 2021, pg. 58).
3. Policy 2.1.3: Aim for on-site facilities to utilize renewable energy sources and to reduce their use of energy and water (APA, 2021, pg. 58).

4. Policy 2.1.4: Build on existing trail system to connect residents to other outdoor recreation areas; simultaneously creating wildlife corridors and decreasing the effect accessing parkland has on auto-dependence.

Objective 2.2: Use parks to educate citizens about impacts of climate change.

Policy 2.2.1: Provide environmental education opportunities such as interpretive signage or other educational programs to promote the value of the natural environment throughout the park system (City of Bellingham Parks Element, 2016, pg. 3). Use these opportunities to point out noticeable impacts to park ecology caused by climate change.

Policy 2.2.2: Work to increase awareness and appreciation of nature and provide opportunities for residents to help protect or restore the environment (Seattle OPCD, 2015, pg 142).

Housing

Proposed text to be added to the Vision Statement of the Mount Vernon Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan:

The City of Mount Vernon is a welcoming community, characterized by a home-town atmosphere, with diverse housing options available to a full spectrum of its residents throughout their lives. Mount Vernon strives to meet a high standard of livability ~~with a mix of home ownership and rental opportunities~~ and is committed to protecting and improving existing residential neighborhoods **with a focus on infill developments and multifamily housing**, ~~balancing new development with the~~ rehabilitation of existing housing, **green and sustainable building materials and methods**, and ensuring that residents have opportunities to work near their homes without having to commute long distances.

NOTE: *With the passing of WA House Bill 1110 many of the City's goals for infill development will be implemented without the needed approval of the City or other related entities. Regardless, outlining the necessary changes in this Comprehensive Plan will serve to lay the foundation and vision for the City to follow.*

Proposed text to be added to 8.0 Goals, Objectives & Policies

Goal 1: Enhance Mount Vernon's cultural and economic vitality by encouraging the development of housing solutions of all types that provide varied densities, sizes, **resiliency**, costs and locations that are safe, **outside of identified hazard areas** decent, accessible, attractive, appealing and affordable to a diversity of ages, incomes, and cultural backgrounds.

Policy 1.1.4: Continue to promote plans and policies that encourage in-fill residential projects in close proximity to neighborhood centers, shopping and retail facilities, parks, transit routes and other service uses **while developing and enforcing regulations that prohibit and/or mitigate the development of new projects in identified hazard zones. In**

instances where development is allowed in hazard zones, require compensation or mitigation from the developer (APA, 2021 pg 14).

Policy 1.1.5: Continue to promote plans and regulations that allow incentives such as bonus densities and flexible design standards that support and promote the construction of new innovative or affordable housing styles, compatible with the planned uses of surrounding sites while adopting sustainability regulations. The city will support energy and water efficient design and construction standards at local, state, and federal levels. Develop regulatory mechanisms to incentivize or require sustainable design, construction, and operations of new development and redevelopment. ~~Ground-related housing types such as cottages, townhouses, zero lot line developments and other types are examples of housing choices that promote individuality and ownership opportunities.~~ Consider adopting new development regulations that would offer new ways to encourage missing middle housing choices (APA, 2021, pg 13).

Goal 2: Promote the preservation, sustainable maintenance, enhancement and resiliency of existing housing and residential neighborhoods throughout the city.

Policy 2.1.1: Encourage infill housing on vacant or underutilized parcels having adequate services, and ensure that the infill development is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. Require or provide strong incentives for all new housing to obtain LEED or comparable green rating certification along with provisions that require equitable distribution of housing and business opportunities (APA, 2021, pg 13).

Policy 2.2.2: Encourage private reinvestment in residential neighborhoods and private rehabilitation of existing housing by providing information, creating incentive-based programs that promote development that meets resilience standards, ~~technical assistance,~~ and referrals to appropriate agencies and organizations (APA, 2021, pg 15).

Goal 4: Encourage safe, decent, accessible, attractive and affordable housing development that meets community needs and is integrated into, and throughout, the community including areas of higher land cost and hazard prone areas where greater subsidies may be needed.

Policy 4.2.2: Encourage relocation assistance and replacement housing to be developed, where feasible, to help low-income households when displacement is unavoidable. Plan for retreat from increasingly hazardous areas. At some point it will be imperative to transition people away from areas that have increased risks. This will be especially critical for those without the means to move themselves (APA, 2021, pg 14).

SEDRO WOOLLEY, WASHINGTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Authors: Allen Baughman, Kaylee Coble, Keegan Curry, Noa Simon, Tyler Stewart

To support the city of Sedro Woolley in planning for observed and projected climate impacts, the student authors have compiled targeted policy language for the following comprehensive plan elements: GMA and vision statement, land use, transportation, public utilities, housing, parks and recreation, and capital facilities. The suggestions are based on guidance from the American Planning Association, the Skagit Valley Science Consortium, and the WA State Department of Commerce. Overall, the updated comprehensive plan represents a step forward in addressing the challenges posed by climate change and promoting sustainable development in Sedro-Woolley.

Chapter 1: GMA and Vision Statement

Growth Management Act Goals

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation - Plan and prepare for the long-term effects of climate change. Improve infrastructure to increase efficiencies in transportation, reduce carbon emissions, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and mitigate the risks of natural hazards such as flooding and forest fires.

Goal GMA14: Establish goals and policies within the comprehensive plan that prioritize reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled; prepare for climate impact scenarios; foster resilience to climate impacts and natural hazards; protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety; and advance environmental justice.

Goal LU1: To safely accommodate population growth without causing urban sprawl.

1. Policy LU1.3: Allow for expansion of Sedro-Woolley through annexations ~~primarily for single-family residential development~~ **once infill densification goals have been met in residential areas** (APA, 2020).
2. Policy H3.13: **Advocate for green building and design. Require or provide strong incentives for all new commercial, mixed-use, municipal, and multifamily buildings to obtain LEED or comparable green rating certification along with provisions that require equitable distribution of housing and business opportunities** (APA, 2020).
3. Policy U3.2: ~~Promote conservation of water and electricity within the urban growth area. Work with utilities, service agencies, and other jurisdictions to promote conservation products and programs~~ **Champion water and electricity conservation in the urban growth area by collaborating with various entities to advocate green infrastructure and natural system-based conservation methods.**

Vision Statement

Growth and Land Use

The city expands slowly, **prioritizing infill development and increasing mixed-use commercial zoning where applicable** ~~through annexations primarily for residential development.~~

Other Commercial Development

Development in these areas caters to the highway traveler and does not compete with downtown retail and tourism. **Spot-zoned commercial development provides day-to-day essentials in higher-density residential areas to increase walkability.**

Housing

Residential areas are zoned to **promote infill development and provide access to public transit.** ~~protect the dominance of the single-family home.~~

Transportation

The city's transportation system expands to meet **growing demand and promote active use; increased accessibility to public transit and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure allows residents to move about the city throughout the day with multimodal options.**

Parks and Open Space

New residential developments are encouraged to preserve open green areas **and provide ample tree coverage** for the public.

Infrastructure

Solar panels adorn the rooftops of many of the residents' homes, reducing energy demand with a localized power grid. Every residential neighborhood in Sedro-Woolley enjoys paths, sidewalks, and street trees on every street.

Chapter 2: Land Use

Goal LU1: To safely accommodate population growth without causing urban sprawl.

Policy LU1.3: Allow for expansion of Sedro-Woolley through annexations ~~primarily for single-family residential development~~ **once infill densification goals have been met in residential areas (APA, 2020).**

Goal LU2: To coordinate land use decisions within and surrounding the urban growth area with other jurisdictions.

Policy LU2.1: Support inter-jurisdictional efforts to address problems that may arise having regional impacts. **Establish a localized climate change adaptation and the resiliency task force through the Skagit County of Governments to address regional climate impacts with a coordinated approach (APA, 2020).**

Goal LU3: To provide concurrent urban services.

Policy LU3.1: Coordinate land use decisions to consider all elements of the comprehensive plan to promote an urban environment that is safe, walkable, and reduces environmental impacts.

Goal LU4: To reduce damage from natural disasters and preserve the characteristics of the natural environment.

Policy LU4.6: Establish regulations to create and maintain open space buffers around populated areas to reduce the risk of property damage to wildfires.

Goal LU5: To preserve community character.

Policy LU5.9: Increase tree canopy cover to boost carbon sequestration, reduce the heat island effect, and improve air quality, prioritizing residential communities.

Shoreline Conservation Element

SCO3: Increase aquatic habitat resilience to low summer flows by increasing water residence time, storing water on the landscape, conserving water, protecting groundwater, keeping waters cool, and protecting water quality (DoC, n.d.).

Chapter 3: Transportation

Goal T1: To provide safe, passable streets within the City of Sedro-Woolley

1. Policy T1.2: Adopt design standards to which all new streets must be constructed. Adopt design standards for neighborhood streets that support prioritize pedestrian safety and reflect the volume of traffic at build-out.
2. Policy T1.3: Consider Prioritize non-motorized and rail modes in the design of transportation projects.
3. Policy T1.4: Improve arterial and collector streets identified as deficient in level of service to the adopted design standard, consistent with the transportation element of the comprehensive plan.

Goal T2: To provide an efficient street network that emphasizes emphasizing circulation and accident prevention.

Goal T3: To benefit social well-being and, economic development, and climate resilience through street design.

1. Policy T3.1: Use clearly marked sidewalks in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) to delineate pedestrian and auto traffic in areas where potential hazards exist, or can be expected from development consistent with proposed land use—all new developments (APA 2020).
2. Policy T3.3: Provide clearly marked and protected bicycle travel corridors in accordance with the adopted non-motorized plan included in the Transportation Element (APA 2020).

3. Policy T3.5: Provide crosswalks in accordance with the MUTCD and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which are clearly marked, to both driver and pedestrian. **Include** additional measures, such as overhead signage, ~~may be included,~~ as appropriate.
4. Policy T3.8: ~~Consider~~ **Prioritize** the needs of future transit service when improving other arterials, minor arterials, and major collectors.
5. Policy T3.9: ~~Recognize~~ **Prioritize** the pedestrian as a principal user of the central business district (CBD). Continue to encourage retail development and redevelopment in the CBD that appeals primarily to the pedestrian.

Goal T4: To encourage alternate modes of transportation in accordance with the principles outlined in the City's adopted Complete Streets Resolution 952-17, ~~and~~ SWMC Chapter 15.40.030, **and the climate change section required by the GMA.**

1. Policy T4.1: Establish a committee to review **and propose** alternate transportation options ~~and propose alternatives~~ appropriate to Sedro-Woolley's anticipated population growth and density. Options to evaluate include trails, rails, transit, walking, etc.
2. **Policy T4.10: Develop regulation and design standards that accommodate multimodal and micro-mobility transportation options (pedestrians, bicycles, scooters, etc) to reduce carbon emissions** (Skagit Valley Climate Consortium).
3. **Policy T4.11: Increase transit service and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian paths to the Central Business District to support active lifestyles and lower carbon emissions.**

Goal T5: To promote the community's vision **of increased public transportation** among regional transportation agencies.

1. Policy T5.1: Coordinate with the Washington State Department of Transportation (**WSDOT**) to provide public input on any current or future plans concerning State Route 20 or State Route 9. Provide public input to the development of these plans.
2. Policy T5.4: Coordinate with the Burlington Northern and Sante Fe Railroad to provide public input on future plans for the railroad right-of-way within the ~~urban growth area~~ **UGA**. Private property owners must be compensated as needed, unless arrangements are made for a dedication of right-of way in lieu of a park fee.
3. **Policy T5.6: Improve public transit speed, frequency, and reliability so that it can be a realistic and dependable alternative to cars.**

Goal T6: To fund and implement transportation improvements that serve the City.

1. Policy T6.3: Continue to work with Skagit County to mitigate traffic impacts of developments within the ~~urban growth area~~ **UGA** consistent with the City's transportation element and mitigation requirements.
2. Policy T6.5: ~~Level of service~~ **LOS** and safety deficiencies in areas of high population density and traffic volume pose the most immediate needs, and should be improved first.
3. **Policy T6.7: Transition publicly owned fleets to zero emission vehicles by 2035 in order**

to decrease carbon emissions (Skagit Valley Climate Consortium).

Goal T7: To provide an adequate transportation system current with the traffic-related impacts of new development.

1. Policy T7.1: Maintain the adopted ~~Level of Service (LOS)~~ standard for all roadways classified as arterials or state highways.
2. Policy T7.2: Maintain ~~the level of service~~ **LOS D** for SR 20, SR 9, and minor arterials within the City and UGA ~~as LOS D~~.
3. Policy T7.3: Maintain ~~the level of service~~ **LOS C** for other and minor arterials and collectors within the City and UGA ~~as LOS C~~.
4. Policy T7.4: Maintain the adopted Transportation Concurrency Management program to ensure adequate transportation facilities are available concurrent with development, as required by the ~~Growth Management Act~~ **GMA**.

Chapter 4: Public Utilities

Goal U3: To benefit community aesthetics and protect the environment.

1. Policy U3.1: ~~Maintain infrastructure design and construction standards which are environmentally sensitive, cost-effective, and safe. Facilities should be designed to be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods~~ **Uphold environmentally sensitive, cost-effective, and safe standards in infrastructure design and construction, ensuring facilities are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and attentive to the protection of natural areas.**
2. Policy U3.2: ~~Promote conservation of water and electricity within the urban growth area. Work with utilities, service agencies, and other jurisdictions to promote conservation products and programs~~ **Champion water and electricity conservation in the urban growth area by collaborating with various entities to advocate green infrastructure and natural system-based conservation methods.**
3. Policy U3.4: Require city notification before vegetation removal within a city right-of-way or sensitive area by private service providers. **Support restoration and enhancement of these natural areas where possible.**
4. Policy U3.6: Encourage professional and sensitive vegetation management within utility right-of-ways, recognizing utilities' needs for clearance between trees and lines. **Include the importance of protecting natural areas in the urban space in these management practices.**
5. Policy U4.12: **Promote the protection of floodplains and other vegetated buffers around and along rivers, streams, and wetlands.**

Chapter 5: Housing

Goal H1: To provide **ecologically** sound, adequate housing **of mixed types** for all current and future Sedro-Woolley residents.

Policy H1.6: Encourage sustainable housing practices to provide energy efficiency and environmentally responsive design. (This could be fused with APA B.7.1 to create a stricter outlined policy on sustainable building: *B.7.1 Advocate for green building and design. Require or provide strong incentives for all new commercial, mixed-use, municipal, and multifamily buildings to obtain LEED or comparable green rating certification along with provisions that require equitable distribution of housing and business opportunities.*) (APA 2020).

Policy H1.7: Support more diverse and affordable housing options, with a focus on sustainable innovative construction types. Encourage development that provides a mix of market-rate and income-deed-restricted units in a wider range of housing types such as apartments, townhomes, and duplexes (“missing middle housing”). (APA, 2020).

Goal H2: To provide affordable housing of **mixed types** for all current and future Sedro-Woolley residents.

Policy H2.9: Prioritize and incentivize local infill housing and development around transit nodes that connect to a regional transportation system.

Policy H2.10: Promote higher density in activity centers. (APA, 2020) Pursue opportunities to locate higher-density residential development on infill or redevelopment sites near activity centers, such as the central business district, SWIFT Center, parks and recreational facilities and Skagit Transit route stops. Support opportunities to increase density in existing developments where appropriate as in line with WA State’s updated zoning regulations and strategies to encourage more affordable and diverse housing options in areas previously classified as single-use zones, as in line with recently passed legislation, HB1110 (2023) and HB1220 (2021).

Goal H3: To benefit social well-being, **climate resiliency** and health through housing design.

Policy H3.13: Advocate for green building and design. Require or provide strong incentives for all new commercial, mixed-use, municipal, and multifamily buildings to obtain LEED or comparable green rating certification along with provisions that require equitable distribution of housing and business opportunities. (APA, 2020)

Chapter 6: Parks & Recreation

Goal P1: To provide ample park and recreation facilities to meet current and future demands **including climate resiliency**.

1. Policy P1.8: Work with the parks department to develop ways to acquire new land **and to add more tree coverage and native plants for future parks** (EcoAdapt, 2017).
2. Policy P1.13: Coordinate with local service organizations in the development and improvement of city parks' **sustainable** facilities
3. Policy P.14: Require alternate energy facilities in recreational areas like solar energy
4. Policy P.15: Build resiliency using green infrastructure for building park facilities such as rainwater retention ponds, and floodable fields (APA, 2020).

5. Policy P.16: Integrate flood storage in park management. Consider flood mitigation and adaptation in future park planning.
6. Policy P.17: Add recycling and compost bins at public parks and recreational areas.
7. Policy P.18: Avoid using turf in parks or recreational areas.
8. Policy P.19 Integrate green infrastructure in recreational buildings (APA, 2020).

Goal P2: To provide a variety of leisure environments and experiences that are efficient to administer and maintain.

Policy P2.1: Increase the number of natural areas preserved **and restored** within Sedro-Woolley’s developed urban area, especially along shorelines, steep hillsides, wetlands, and stream corridors.

Policy P2.4: **Work with the parks department to better screen parks to include wild animal safety along with pedestrian safety.**

Goal P3: To provide recreation programming and activities **sustainably**.

Policy P3.3: **Build indoor recreational areas using sustainable materials like mass timber or precast concrete.**

Chapter 7: Capital Facilities

Purpose of the Capital Facilities Plan

The CFP element should contain at least the following features: ...An inventory of existing capital facilities **owned by public entities, including green infrastructure**, also referred to as “public facilities,” showing the locations and capacities of the capital facilities...

A capital facilities plan is an important planning tool...and determined the level of service it can provide its existing and future residents. **It identifies needed capital improvements and a reasonable financial plan to pay for them while considering impacts and adaptations related to climate change.** It identifies needed capital improvements and a reasonable financial plan to pay for them.

GOAL CF3: Goal CF3: To assure that capital improvements necessary to carry out the comprehensive plan are provided when ~~they are~~ needed.

1. Policy CF3.13: ~~Maintain a safe and cost-effective storm and surface water collection system.~~ **Prioritize a safe, cost-effective, and environmentally conscious storm and surface water collection system by incorporating the use of green infrastructure and natural systems.**
2. Policy CF3.14: ~~Establish controls to protect surface and groundwater quality. Educate the public on water quality issues.~~ **Enforce controls to safeguard surface and groundwater quality. Implement robust public education campaigns that not only**

address water quality issues but also emphasize the importance of protecting natural areas.

3. Policy CF3.15: ~~Design surface water systems to handle peak runoff flows and provide stormwater storage during high flow periods.~~ Develop surface water systems with a comprehensive approach to manage peak runoff flows and ensure sufficient stormwater storage during high flow periods. This design process should include explicit consideration for the protection of natural areas, such as floodplains and other vegetated buffers, to support adaptation to climate impacts.
4. Policy CF3.18: ~~Carefully control development in steep slopes where surface water runoff can create unstable conditions. Maintain natural vegetation for slope stabilization~~ Minimize development on steep slopes to mitigate surface water runoff-induced instability and maintain natural vegetation for enhanced resilience to climate impacts.
5. Policy CF3.20: ~~Encourage low-impact development to reduce stormwater infrastructure and improve water quality.~~ Promote low-impact development strategies that integrate the protection of natural areas and implement green infrastructure to manage stormwater efficiently, improve water quality, and minimize risks of flooding and erosion.
6. Policy CF3.21: ~~Ensure that the quality of water leaving the city is essentially the same quality as water entering the city. Assert influence to ensure neighboring jurisdictions exercise responsibility in promoting good water quality.~~ Strive to maintain consistent water quality in and out of the city and influence neighboring jurisdictions towards shared water quality goals.
7. Policy CF3.24: Foster natural area protection, restoration, and enhancement through the development and implementation of effective policies, regulations, and land stewardship.

New Goal CF4: Support Targeted Hardening of Infrastructure to protect public safety and the environment.

Statement: The City of Sedro Woolley recognizes the urgent need to address the impacts of climate change on infrastructure investments. We will advance climate adaptation planning to ensure our infrastructure investments are resilient and adaptable to changing climate conditions. We will support targeted infrastructure hardening to protect public health, safety, and the environment from the impacts of climate change, such as rising sea levels, floods, and wildfires.

1. Policy CF4.1: Incorporate climate adaptation considerations into all infrastructure planning and investment decisions in Sedro Woolley. This includes both new projects and upgrades to existing infrastructure.
2. Policy CF4.2: Develop and implement climate adaptation plans for all critical infrastructure in Sedro Woolley, including water supply, transportation, energy, and communication systems.
3. Policy CF4.3: Ensure that all infrastructure investments in Sedro Woolley are designed to be flexible and scalable, with the ability to adapt to changing climate conditions.

4. Policy CF4.4: Where feasible, prioritize natural and nature-based solutions for climate adaptation in Sedro Woolley to reduce vulnerability and risk.
5. Policy CF4.5: Collaborate with regional and local partners to develop coordinated climate adaptation plans and strategies for Sedro Woolley.
6. Policy CF4.6: Regularly review and update climate adaptation plans and strategies for Sedro Woolley to ensure they remain relevant and practical.
7. Policy CF4.7: Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of climate adaptation measures in Sedro Woolley and adjust plans and strategies as needed.

Chapter 8: Economic Development

Factors Influencing the Planning Area

Scientists estimate the changing climate will bring more frequent and severe storms, warming temperatures, and increasing flood severity (Skagit Valley Science Consortium, 2015). These dynamics each carry the possibility of short and long-term economic disruptions. The creation of climate resiliency measures has the potential for offsetting these disruptions and contributing to the economic stability of local industries.

Goal E2: To Increase economic opportunities.

1. Identify facilities which may be used for small businesses. Assist efforts to reuse older buildings, redevelop vacant property, and revitalize the existing central business district (CBD) by emphasizing sustainable and resilient practices.
2. Policy E2.10: Reinforce local employment opportunities and economic activity through developing Sedro Woolley’s pedestrian networks and bicycle facilities to promote active transportation and increase accessibility to employment and commercial areas.
3. Policy E2.11: Work cooperatively with the Skagit Transit Authority to enhance the mobility of residents, reduce reliance on private vehicles, and improve access to job opportunities and services within Sedro Woolley utilizing public transportation.

Goal E.3 To realize Sedro-Woolley’s image as the “Gateway to the North Cascades.”

Policy E3.21: Increase available shade and green space in the central business district. Aim to increase shade areas to encourage walkability and combat the heat island effect during increased heat.

Goal E.4 - Promote adaptive and climate-resilient systems to reduce the impacts of climate-related events and long-term changes on the local economy. Plan for an increased frequency of high-temperature days during the summer, increased precipitation, and flood events during the winter. Develop contingency plans for flooding along Highway 20. Promote development that reduces the heat island effect.

Policy E4.1: Plan for economic development that balances community needs and a regional climate strategy (L. Hansen, S. Nordgren, E. Mielbrecht. 2017).

Goal E.5 Account for the full costs of the economy.

Policy E5.1 Encourage the use of life cycle analysis tools when analyzing economic development prospects to provide a fuller dimension and analysis of the long-term social and environmental costs and benefits of projects (APA, 2020).

GLOSSARY

Active Transportation: Transportation methods that include all human-powered mobility devices such as walking, biking, and manual wheelchairs.

Adaptation: Strategies address the impacts of climate change, such as rising sea levels, increased temperatures, or extreme weather events, and aim to enhance the resilience of cities and communities.

Climate oriented development: Housing development, which was built with environmentally sustainable materials and processes, as well as green energy standards in mind. To help mitigate as well as adapt to climate change.

Climate scenarios: Projections depicting possible future climate conditions based on different assumptions about greenhouse gas emissions, temperature changes, precipitation patterns, and other climate factors.

Comprehensive plan: A long-term vision and policy framework guiding the development and growth of a city. It addresses land use, transportation, infrastructure, economic development, housing, and other key aspects to ensure coordinated and sustainable development.

Congestion pricing: A strategy charging a fee to vehicles for entering certain congested areas or using specific roads during peak times. The aim is to manage traffic flow, reduce congestion, and encourage the use of alternative transportation modes by incentivizing carpooling, public transit, or off-peak travel.

Flood resilience: The capacity of a city or community to withstand and recover from flooding events.

Green Energy: Any energy type that is generated in a sustainable manner from natural resources, such as sunlight, wind, or water.

Hazard zones: Areas prone to specific risks or hazards, such as flood zones, earthquake zones, or wildfire-prone areas.

Infill: developing vacant or under-utilized parcels within existing urban areas that are already largely developed.

Mitigation: Measures taken to reduce or prevent the severity of negative impacts or risks due to climate change.

Micromobility: Transportation using lightweight electric vehicles such as e-bikes, scooters, or wheelchairs.

Microtransit: On-demand transportation services that use smaller vehicles, like vans, to provide flexible and customized transportation options within a specific area.

Missing Middle Housing: A range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with detached single-family homes.

Mixed Use Development: A development that combines residential functions with commercial or even industrial ones but can also encompass cultural and institutional uses as well as public amenities.

Multimodal Transportation: Transportation methods that include walking, cycling, riding feeder public transportation systems (e.g., taking the bus to connect to commuter rail at a station), and driving that consider Universal Design.

Resiliency: Designing and implementing strategies that enhance the ability of cities to adapt, recover, and thrive in the face of various challenges, including natural disasters, climate change, or economic shocks.

Single occupancy vehicle: A single person (the driver) occupies a vehicle.

Sustainable: able to be maintained at a certain rate or level.

Sustainability rating systems: A rating system in which the materials used in construction, processes used in construction, and energy sources put into the housing unit/building are quantified through a system which gives a numerical value to exemplify how sustainable/sustainably developed a home/building is.

Urban Village: activity centers that provide pleasant living, shopping, and working environments; strong pedestrian accessibility; adequate, well-located open spaces; an alternative, well-connected street system; and a balance of retail, office, residential and public spaces.

Zoning: The division of land into different zones with specific regulations and permitted uses. It controls the type of activities allowed in different areas, such as residential, commercial, industrial, or open space.

REFERENCES

The below list of references includes both works that were directly cited throughout this report and those that were referenced throughout the student research process.

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