

# PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA



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## *City of Lake Stevens Vision Statement*

*We are a thriving community that promotes a vibrant economy, preserves natural beauty, and supports an exceptional quality of life for all.*

May 1, 2024 - 6:00 PM

**Hybrid in The Mill (1808 Main Street) or via Zoom**

**Join Zoom Meeting: <https://lakestevenswa.zoom.us/j/84602622564>**

**or call in at: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 846 0262 2564**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Guest Business**
- 4. Action Items**
  - A. Minutes of Planning Commission of April 17, 2024
- 5. Discussion Item**
  - A. Draft Environment and Natural Resources Element and Upcoming Critical Areas Ordinance Update David Levitan
- 6. Commissioner Report**
- 7. Planning Director's Report**
- 8. Adjourn**

### ***THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND***

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# PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

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Hybrid-via Zoom or in the Mill's Sawyers Room

March 20, 2024



**CALL TO ORDER:** 6:00 pm by Chair Connor Davis

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Connor Davis, Vice-Chair Janice Huxford, Commissioner Linda Hoult, Commissioner Nathan Packard, Commissioner Bruce Morton and Commissioner Duerr, Commissioner Jennifer Davis.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Senior Planner David Levitan, Associate Planner Jill Needham and Clerk Jennie Fenrich

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Councilmember Ryan Donaghue via Zoom.

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Chair Connor Davis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:** All seven members present.

**Guest business:** None

**Action Items:** Minutes from March 20, 2024 were approved as submitted. Motion by Commissioner Huxford. Seconded by Commissioner Hoult. The motion carried unanimously.

**Discussion Items:** Senior Planner Levitan provided an overview of changes proposed to the Introduction (Chapter 1) and Economic Development Element (Chapter 6) of the Comprehensive Plan. He highlighted updated background information as well as new maps and graphics and provided an overview of new policy language. Commissioner feedback on the draft policy language included identifying the lake (Lake Stevens) as an economic asset worthy of public investment; ensuring that the city has adequate land for industrial uses; and considering the impacts of regulatory costs on economic development.

**Commissioner Report:** Commissioner Morton asked about a recent rezone proposal and why it had not been reviewed by the Planning Commission. Planner Levitan explained that site-specific rezone proposals are Type IV land use applications, which require a Hearing Examiner public hearing and recommendation to the City Council. Commissioner Huxford reported that neighbors along South Lake Stevens Rd are not happy that Public Works has been not responding to speed mitigation measures they have requested. Chair Connor Davis asked for an update on the new museum.

**Director Report:** No Director's report. Senior Planner Levitan noted that the code amendments from the recent Code Clean Up project are now reflected in the municipal code.

**Adjourn:** Commissioner Hoult motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Duerr to adjourn at 6:59 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Jennie Fenrich, Planning Commission Clerk

# PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT



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**Agenda Date:** 5/1/2024

**Subject:** Draft Environment and Natural Resources Element and Upcoming Critical Areas Ordinance Update

**Contact Person/Department:** David Levitan, Community Development

**Budget Impact:**

**Legal Review:** No

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## **RECOMMENDATION(S)/ACTION REQUESTED:**

No action is required. Staff will present changes proposed to the Environment and Natural Resources Element (Attachment 1) of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan and highlight the process to update the city's critical areas ordinance (CAO), which must be adopted as an implementation task of the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioners are asked to provide initial feedback and identify any desired changes prior to the Commission's public hearing(s) for the Comprehensive Plan later this year

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## **SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:**

The City of Lake Stevens is currently undertaking a periodic update to its comprehensive plan, which under state law must be adopted by December 31, 2024. The current comprehensive plan was adopted in 2015; however, the city has made yearly updates to individual chapters via the annual docketing process, which allows the city to adopt comprehensive plan text and map amendments no more than once per year.

The 2015 comprehensive plan includes an introduction and eight elements (a total of nine chapters), all of which will be updated as part of this periodic update. To date, the Planning Commission has reviewed and provided comments on updated drafts of the following elements:

- The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element (Chapter 5) at their [November 15, 2023 meeting](#); and

- The Public Services and Utilities Element (Chapter 7) at their [March 20, 2024 meeting](#).
- The Introduction (Chapter 1) and Economic Development Element (Chapter 6) at their [April 17, 2024 meeting](#).

In June 2023, the city completed an [audit and gap analysis](#) of the current plan to identify needed changes. That analysis determined that the plan was largely compliant with the Growth Management Act (GMA) but did require several updates to be consistent with recent GMA changes as well as new [multicounty planning policies](#) (MPPs) from the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Vision 2050 and [countywide planning policies](#) (CPPs) adopted by Snohomish County.

In 2023, House Bill 1181 revised the GMA to include a climate change goal and require jurisdictions to adopt a Climate Change element into their comprehensive plans, as well as specific updates to the transportation element. The city's deadline to complete this work is 2029, and the city anticipates adopting a standalone Climate Change element in the future. In the interim, the city will be incorporating climate change goals and policies into existing elements and providing additional background information in the Introduction.

#### Environment and Natural Resource Element (Chapter 1)

Attachment 1 includes proposed updates to the Comprehensive Plan Environment and Natural Resources Element (Chapter 4), which describes the physical environment and natural resources present in Lake Stevens and establishes the policy framework for their protection and enhancement. The element is not a mandatory element under the GMA ([RCW Section 36.70A.070](#)), but does cover several topics that are listed as optional elements under RCW 36.70A.080, including conservation and solar energy. [RCW Section 36.70A.030](#)(11) does define the five types of critical areas that the city must regulate through its Comprehensive Plan and development regulations, while RCW 36.70A.172 requires jurisdictions to use "best available science" when developing policies and regulations to protect critical areas (discussed in more detail below).

The [adopted version of Chapter 4](#) has not been updated since the 2015 periodic update, and as such required substantive changes including:

- Addressing recent updates to the Growth Management Act (GMA), most notably HB 1181 (which implemented requirements to plan for climate change);
- Discussion of the required 2024 update to the city's CAO;
- Updated references to Vision 2050, multicounty policies (MPPs), and countywide planning policies (CPPs) related to the natural environment and natural resources;

- Discussion of the city's Climate Sustainability Plan (CSP), which was adopted in 2023;
- Documenting and assessing the 2044 population, housing and employment growth targets; and
- Accounting for recent annexations and population growth in the city.

As is the case for other topics/elements, many of the substantive changes to the Environment and Climate Change MPPs (Attachment 2) and CPPs (Attachment 3) were focused on climate change adaptation, mitigation and resiliency and addressing equity when planning for the environment and natural resource protection. The city's gap analysis for Chapter 4 (Attachment 4) also notes that the existing element would need additional changes to comply with Vision 2050.

As shown in the track changes to Attachment 1, staff has updated several background sections of Chapter 4 to provide more current information on city plans, policies, and development regulations, as well as a more thorough analysis of the city's ability to meet its 2044 employment growth targets. The draft element also includes updated maps and several additional figures and graphics.

#### Summary of New and Updated Policies

As noted above, most proposed updates to the Chapter 4 goals and policies are focused on addressing climate change, improving equity, and utilizing best available science as it relates to the environment and natural resources and include:

- A new policy (4.4.1) to implement and periodically update the Climate Sustainability Plan;
- A new policy (4.4.10) to consider and priority equity and affordability when planning for climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- Maintaining current information related to natural resource management and environmental protection, such as an updated critical areas inventory (Policy 4.3.4) and tree canopy coverage analysis (Policy 4.4.9); and
- Improving collaboration/partnerships and education programs related to the environment and natural resource protection (Policies 4.1.11, 4.1.16 and 4.4.11)

#### Required Update to Critical Areas Ordinance

The city regulates critical areas [as defined in [RCW Section 36.70A.030](#)(11)] primarily through two ordinances:

- The city's [Shoreline Master Program](#) (SMP) for areas within the jurisdiction of the Shoreline Management Act (SMA; [Chapter 90.58 RCW](#)), which covers areas within 200 feet of the ordinary high water mark of Lake Stevens, Catherine Creek, Little Pilchuck Creek, and associated wetlands; and

- The city's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO; [Chapter 14.88 LSMC](#)), which covers critical areas outside of SMA jurisdiction.

The city last updated its CAO in 2019. As part of this periodic update, the city is required to amend Chapter 14.88 LSMC to reflect best available science (BAS) for the management and protection of critical areas, including:

- Wetlands
- Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas (CARAs)
- Frequently Flooded Areas
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (streams, creeks, etc.)
- Geologically Hazardous Areas

The Department of Ecology (DOE) has provided guidance to local jurisdictions for updating their CAO, including new language related to [wetlands](#) and [CARAs](#). The city is not required to update any of the wetland buffer widths currently included in Chapter 14.88 but will incorporate new best available science related to habitat corridors and proposed buffer reductions. The state has repealed the state wetland delineation manual ([WAC 173-22-080](#)) and replaced it with a revision of [WAC 173-22-035](#), which references the currently approved federal manual for identifying and delineating wetlands. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has prepared updated BAS on other topics since the 2019 CAO update, including [priority habitats and species](#) and [riparian management](#), while the Department of Commerce has prepared a [critical areas checklist](#) to ensure that the CAO update addresses all required components.

Staff has reviewed the updated BAS and guidance from DOE and WDFW and the Commerce checklist and believes that the required CAO updates will be relatively minor in scope. Amendments to Chapter 14.88 are a Type VI land use code amendment, with the Planning Commission making a recommendation to City Council. Staff will schedule work sessions later this summer to review draft code language before scheduling a public hearing.

### Requested Feedback and Next Steps

Commissioners are asked to provide feedback on the proposed changes to the Environment and Natural Resources Element and ask any questions about the related update to the city's critical areas ordinance. The updated chapters will be circulated to partner agencies and districts and made available for public review, before they are brought back before the Planning Commission during the public hearings to make a recommendation to City Council on the entire comprehensive plan document.

Staff will present updated drafts of the four remaining chapters (Land Use, Housing, Transportation and Capital Facilities) over the next several months, with the Planning Commission public hearing on the full plan anticipated in Summer 2024. The city will also host additional public events allow for additional community feedback on the draft comprehensive plan.

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#### **APPLICABLE CITY POLICIES:**

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#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Attachment 1 - Draft Environment and Natural Resources Element
2. Attachment 2 - Multicounty Planning Policies
3. Attachment 3 - Countywide Planning Policies
4. Attachment 4 - Environment and Climate Change Policy Audit

# **Chapter 4: Environment and Natural Resources**





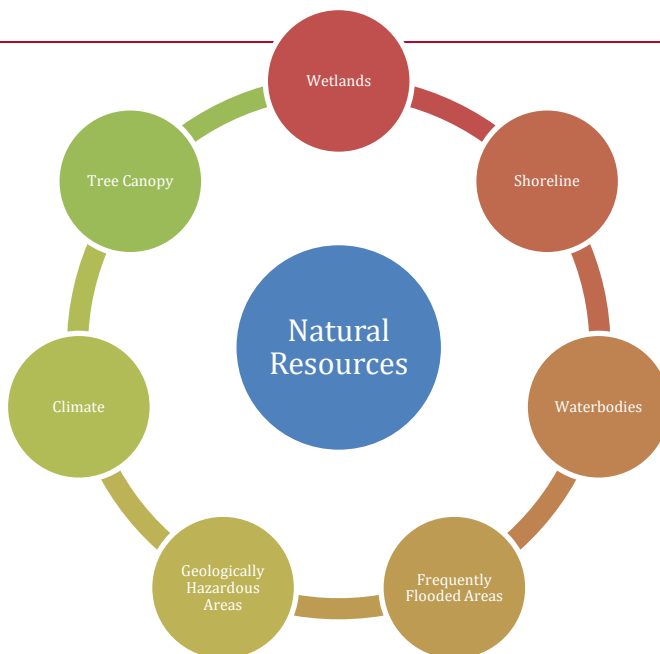
## CHAPTER 4: ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

### A VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

*The city of Lake Stevens will provide effective and ongoing investment to ensure water quality and continued environmental stewardship for current and future generations by protecting fish and wildlife habitat, critical areas and open space corridors; conserving land, air, water and energy resources; planning for the potential impacts of climate change on the natural environment; and integrating the shoreline management of Lake Stevens into land use decisions.*

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains a basic description of the city of Lake Stevens' natural environment, its current condition, and recommendations for its protection and enhancement. ~~This chapter also~~ discusses policies and regulations currently in effect to protect the local environment, including but not limited to critical areas regulations, best available science, shoreline management, tree retention and stormwater management.





As part of the integrated SEPA/GMA approach to this update, this ~~section~~chapter also discusses how critical areas protection factors into the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Finally, ~~this section~~it provides a discussion ~~related to~~of and strategies for reducing adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change by encouraging sustainable development ~~and implementing the city's Climate Sustainability Plan, which was adopted in 2023.~~

Significant habitat and green spaces remain within the city. ~~Most recent housing~~Under current regulations, new developments ~~are have been~~ required to dedicate Native Growth Protection Areas (NGPA) and other buffers around critical areas ~~(wetlands, streams, steep slopes, etc.)~~ to assist in preserving their quality. The city also has tree retention regulations and innovative development and subdivision ~~design~~ regulations ~~that aim to cluster development and maximize the protection these areas of natural resources.~~

The city also maintains a Shoreline Master Program (SMP) that requires land use and environmental protections along the vast shoreline areas (Lake Stevens, ~~and~~ portions of Catherine Creek and Little Pilchuck Creek, and associated wetlands) within the city of Lake Stevens ~~that are subject to the state's Shoreline Management Act (SMA).~~ Critical areas within shoreline jurisdiction are regulated under the ~~Shoreline Master Program~~SMP's critical areas regulations.

The city adopted an updated Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) in ~~2019~~2008 that contains provisions for “Best Available Science” (BAS) ~~and regulates critical areas outside of shoreline jurisdiction.~~ BAS is a requirement of the GMA, and the city ~~is using the~~will continue to update the science used for future CAO updates (the city is required to update its CAO by December 2024 as an implementation task, as discussed in more detail later in this chapter) based on guidance from the Department of Ecology and other state and federal agencies– Best Available Science Document prepared for the city by URS Consultants and which that reflects the unique environmental conditions in Lake Stevens.

## PLANNING CONTEXT

### State Planning

Under Goal 10 of the Growth Management Act (GMA), jurisdictions must adopt policies to protect and enhance the environment and the quality of life of residents. This includes protecting the quality of air and water and availability of water. This goal includes all actions made within urban and rural areas and affects all land use decisions made by the city, specifically those related to the preservation of critical areas and shorelines s within the jurisdiction of the SMA.



In 2023, the GMA was amended to include a new goal (Goal 14) that requires comprehensive plans and development strategies to adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate. As noted in Chapter 1, by 2029 the city will adopt a standalone element within the comprehensive plan addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation, resiliency, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. As part of the 2024 update to the plan, the city has incorporated policies addressing climate change within each of the existing elements, including those related to the environment and natural resources in this chapter.

Goal 8 of tThe GMA also sets requirements to ensure the maintenance and enhancement of natural resource-based industries, such as fishing, forestry and agriculture. This requirement primarily affects regional and rural areas, but the city supports the position that natural resource industries should be maintained throughout Snohomish County through active stewardship and protection of resources.

### Regional Planning

In addition to the GMA goals for environmental protection, enhancement and quality of life, Vision ~~2050~~ ~~2040~~ (discussed in more detail in Chapter 1) supports the protection and preservation of open spaces, natural resources, critical areas, ~~and~~ endangered species, and climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies through the implementation of regional and interdisciplinary strategies among local jurisdictions. These multi-county planning policies (MPPs) emphasize establishing best management practices to preserve long-term integrity and productivity of resource lands, including maintaining currently designated ~~resource~~ resources lands and ensuring compatibility with development on adjacent non-resource lands, ~~as well~~ protecting habitats and open spaces for ecological functions, and establishing long term resilience towards climate impacts.

Vision ~~2050~~ ~~2040~~ also encourages the private, public, and nonprofit sectors to incorporate environmental and social responsibility into their practices, highlighting the need for a clean and pollution free environment for all residents regardless of social or economic status. Finally, Vision ~~2050~~ ~~2040~~ sets goals for reducing climate change impacts by promoting efficient land uses and transportation systems; and reducing energy consumption and waste production through conservation or efficiency. As noted above, the city does not have active resource-based uses within its city limits, but does Vision 2050 Environment Goal (PSRC)

### Environment

**Goal:** The region cares for the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving water quality, and reducing air pollutants. The health of all residents and the economy is connected to the health of the environment. Planning at all levels considers the impacts of land use, development, and transportation on the ecosystem.



## Chapter 4 – Environmental and Natural Resources

consider the effects of land use actions on open space and critical areas within the city limits through its development regulations. The city also coordinates with other jurisdictions and special interest groups on environmental issues, facilities planning and transportation planning.

### Countywide Planning

As detailed in Chapter 1, ~~t~~The Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) for Snohomish County established a countywide framework for developing both county and city comprehensive plans. The role of the CPPs is to coordinate comprehensive plans of jurisdictions in the same county for issues affecting common borders. RCW 36.70A.100 and 36.70A.210 requires that city and county comprehensive plans are consistent with each other and multicounty planning policies, while also respecting the autonomy of cities to exercise their land use powers. The Natural Environment and Climate Change CPPs were last updated in 2021.

Snohomish County and local jurisdictions will act as a steward of the natural environment in an effort to protect and restore natural systems and public health and mitigate climate change. This will be achieved through natural resource and habitat conservation, water quality improvement, and air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions reduction Planning for the future will include addressing climate change and resilience at local and regional levels of government to protect the natural environment and meet the economic and social needs of all residents.

### Countywide Goal for the Natural Environment and Climate Change (Snohomish County)

The city will continue to act as a steward of the natural environment by protecting natural systems, conserving habitat, improving air quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing climate change impacts. This environmental stewardship is balanced with a care for the economic and social needs of the community through the integration of regional (PSRC) and state ~~Commerce~~ goals and regulations into policies designed to protect, enhance, and restore the environment, as well as mitigate and adapt to climate impacts and improve community resiliency.

### Lake Stevens Planning

The city's Environment and Natural Resources Element considers the themes expressed in state, regional, and countywide plans to create a strategy for natural resource protection over the next 20 years. ~~Specifically, the Environment and Natural Resources~~The eElement ~~creates aims to~~ balance ~~between active~~ environmental stewardship ~~and with~~ the goals of addressing economic growth and providing a positive and vibrant development atmosphere.



This balance has been achieved ~~pursuant to a consolidation and update~~ by updating and consolidating of the Goals and Policies section to ensure that the city is adequately protecting critical areas; ~~implementing current NPDES federal and state regulations such as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES);~~ protecting wildlife habitat; administering the Shoreline Master Program consistently; and providing residents of all social and economic statuses a healthy environment with minimal exposure to pollution.

In 2023, the city adopted a Climate Sustainability Plan which identified the importance of addressing climate change to maintain the city's natural resources and quality of life, and established strategies related to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Several of these strategies have been incorporated into new goals and policy language at the end of this chapter and other chapters. These policies bridge the natural environment, transportation, land use, building and energy, and waste management in an effort to create a more resilient and responsible community.

### DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING AREA AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The city of Lake Stevens UGA occupies a Pleistocene glacial terrace, rising east from the floodplain of the Snohomish River in the foothills of the Cascades. Plateaus, steep ravines, wetlands, stream corridors, three drainage basins and Lake Stevens characterize the physical environment of the city. The city is located on a relatively level plateau, with minor variations in topography along the lakefront and other drainage basins. The city's central lake is the most prominent environmental feature in the community and is sensitive to the effects of urban development.

#### Geology and Soils

The Soils Survey conducted by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service ~~includes detailed soils maps (Figure 4.2). Generally~~ notes that the resident soils in the area are generally suitable for urban development. Site-specific soils studies indicate many areas have relatively shallow soils above hardpan. While this may be helpful to provide a solid foundation for buildings, it limits infiltration of stormwater and urban runoff.

#### Surface Waters

~~The Lake Stevens UGA encompasses three major drainage basins: the Lake Stevens Drainage Basin, the Sunnyside Drainage Basin and the Pilchuck Drainage Basin. All waters within the UGA eventually drain into Puget Sound, draining either directly into Ebey Slough or through the Pilchuck and Snohomish Rivers. The Lake Stevens Basin includes several streams: Kokanee (Mitchell) Creek, Stevens Creek, Lundeen Creek and the Lake Outflow Channel. Catherine Creek and the Little Pilchuck are the primary streams flowing into the Pilchuck system. Lands on the western side of Lake Stevens drain toward the Sunnyside system.~~



The Lake Stevens UGA drains to the Puget Sound by means of through three receiving surface water basins and numerous other streams in 23 catchments (defined areas of land through which water moves and collects). The three basins are:

- the Ebey Slough basin (also called the Sunnyside basin), which encompasses most of the city west of State Route 9 and north of 20<sup>th</sup> Street SE;
- the Snohomish River basin, which includes a portion of the city south of 20<sup>th</sup> Street SE; and
- the Pilchuck River basin, which covers the remainder of the city, with Lake Stevens as a significant sub-watershed.

Feeding and connecting to these waters are s

Smaller water bodies are, scattered across the city, including Burri Creek, Catherine Creek, Frontier Creek, Hulbert Creek, Kokanee (Mitchell) Creek, Kuhlman Creek, Little Pilchuck Creek, Lower Stevens Creek (the outflow channel from Lake Stevens), Lundeen Creek, Stitch Creek, Stitch Lake, Upper Stevens Creek, and numerous unnamed natural channels, which connect into the major basins. The city's Public Works Department manages water bodies within its limits as part of its Surface Water program (discussed later in this chapter) and is subject to regulation under the NPDES permit for Phase II Municipal Storm Separate Sewer Systems (MS4).

Surface Water—Lake Stevens, encompassing approximately 1,040 acres, is the most dominant physical feature within the city and its UGA. The lake provides an obvious social, recreational and aesthetic focal point for the community. It shapes the local microclimate and it is an important regional habitat for several fish, mammal, reptile, amphibian, and bird species, including protected salmonid species. The Lake Stevens, and portions of Catherine Creek and the Little Pilchuck Creek, and associated wetlands (including those near Stich Lake) are subject to the Shoreline Management Act (SMA), while areas adjacent to Lake Stevens and Catherine Creek and considered are designated as flood hazard zones by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Wetlands are often contiguous with surface water bodies in the city.

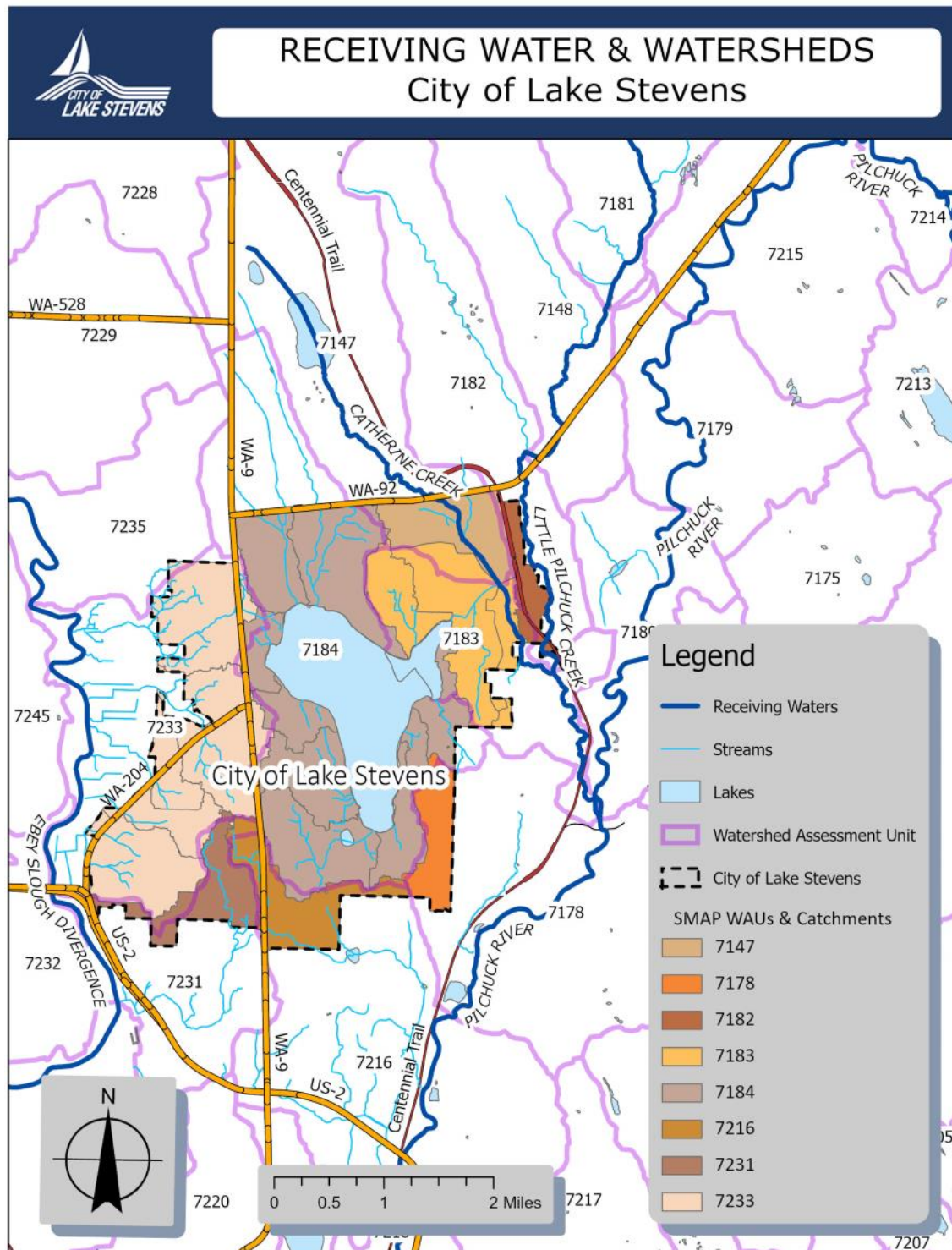


Figure 4.X – Receiving Water and Watersheds (Format to be Updated)



### Ground Water

~~The~~ Snohomish County Public Utilities District No. 1 (PUD) provides drinking water to the UGA, as further detailed in Chapter 7. mostly from Spada Lake, however, provides most of the city's drinking water supply, which is supplemented by the PUD ~~operates a public wells~~ within the city to augment the water supply and surrounding areas. A few residents use wells as their main source of drinking water. The aquifer for these wells is found in the northeastern corner of the city, generally under the industrially zoned area. The depth of the aquifer is approximately 35-120 feet deep and most uses should not affect ~~the~~ groundwater quality. ~~The~~ water quality is good if not overdrawn (whereupon iron may become a problem) and for most of the year does not require chlorination.

### Fauna

Although much natural habitat has been lost to urbanization, the Lake Stevens area supports a variety of species of fish (salmon, trout, bass, catfish, perch, etc.), birds (waterfowl, songbirds, raptors and others), amphibians, reptiles, and insects and other invertebrates. Lake Stevens provides a critical resource to migrating waterfowl.—

The state and federal governments list numerous species in the region as endangered, threatened or a candidate species. The city hosts seasonal cohort runs of several different salmon species, and is notable for having Kokanee, Steelhead, Chinook, Coho and Chum salmon in various waterbodies at different times of the year, including most notably different salmon species.

### Flora

The area supports deciduous and coniferous trees (Douglas fir, spruce, hemlock, cedar, alder, cottonwood, and maple) as well as native shrubs, herbs, grasses, and wetland plants.

Most of the habitats are disjointed and greatly impacted by urbanization, logging and agricultural activities. The city currently has a ~~t~~Tree r~~Retention~~ regulations that requires protection of significant trees, or significant stands of trees and the replacement of trees lost to urban development at a 3:1 ratio. It also has regulations for critical areas and encourages innovative subdivision design (e.g., planned residential developments, cluster subdivisions, etc.) and low impact development (LID) and green infrastructure in an effort to protect environmental resources.

There are no areas within the city designated for resource extraction or cultivation.



### Climate and Weather

Summers in Lake Stevens are mild and warm (average daytime temperature in the 70's) and winters are comparatively mild (average daytime temperature in the mid-40's). The frost-free period for the city generally begins in April and ends near the first of October. Precipitation is in the form of rain and snow, averaging 39 inches annually (average low of 1.1 inches in August to an average high of 5.9 inches during the winter months of November through December). Relative humidity is high due to the water influences. The prevailing wind is westerly or northwesterly most of the year.

### Air Quality

The city of Lake Stevens coordinates with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) to ensure compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Air Act. The city requires PSCAA review of all demolition permit applications in an effort to reduce levels of fine particulates and air toxins from construction site activity. The city also coordinates commercial building permit applications that propose emissions with PSCAA as a fellow project reviewer and (when applicable) as a SEPA lead. This public agency coordination moves the city towards its goal of improving air quality and playing an active role in reducing the impacts of climate change in the Puget Sound region.

Recent years have seen the city experience more frequent occurrences of reduced air quality from wildfires in the region. The Climate Sustainability Plan identifies goals and strategies for adapting to the potential environmental impacts of reduced air quality.



**Reduced air quality from wildfire smoke (Source: Everett Herald)**



### Sustainability and Climate Change

As noted in the city's Climate Sustainability Plan (CSP), climate change is a global challenge, and its impacts of greenhouse gasses affect every community. The region has begun to observe the effects of climate change particularly in the character of precipitation and heat. Longer periods of dry, intense heat are anticipated in the future and will pose direct risk to residents, especially elderly and historically underserved communities of color, and have greatly exacerbated the threat and intensity of wildfires and smoke. Perennial streams may remain dry for increasingly long periods of time and stream temperatures may increase, adversely affecting local fish populations and increasing the need for mitigation strategies such as shading along stream channels. Heavy precipitation events, flooding, and decreased snowpack are all real threats to the region's stability and security moving forward. Many U.S. cities have adopted climate change policies in response to often inadequate federal-level action (Bushman, Peterman and Wolfram: 2007).

The city of Lake Stevens is committed to addressing new state climate goals and the central Puget Sound region's contribution to climate change by, at a minimum, complying with state initiatives and directives regarding climate change, and the reduction of greenhouse gasses, and increasing community resiliency through adaptation and mitigation strategies. The 2023 CSP establishes a comprehensive list of these strategies and actions, which have been incorporated into new policies in this and other chapters.

The city will, in addition to consistent implementation of the Shoreline Master Program SMP, CAO, the Critical Area's code in Chapter 14 LSMC and inter-agency partnerships, enact goals and policies that encourage a reduction in the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers to improve both water and air quality, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and plans for adapting to the impacts of climate change. By 2029, the city intends to adopt a standalone Climate Change element in this plan, and the city will continue to take an active stewardship role in identifying and addressing the impacts of climate change by promoting the use of innovative, sustainable, and environmentally sensitive development practices, including design, materials, construction, and ongoing maintenance.

### Aquifer Recharge

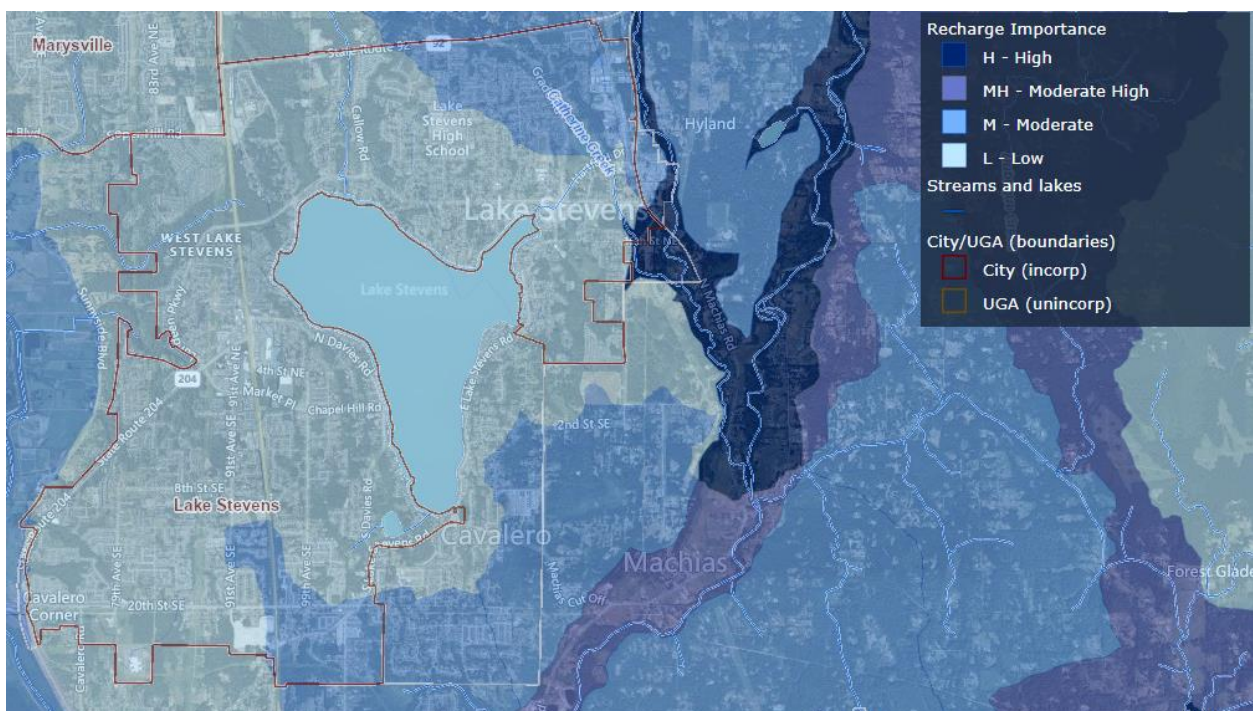
Aquifer recharge is the movement of water from the ground surface (the unsaturated zone) to the saturated zone, and is vital for both effective water resource management and the continued functioning of the hydrologic cycle (Nimmo et. al.: 2005). Many land use actions have the potential to affect both the quantity and quality of groundwater, including the application of fertilizers and pesticides, the addition of impervious surfaces, and demand for water from new residential and commercial development.



## Chapter 4 – Environmental and Natural Resources

A few residents in Lake Stevens draw water from wells whose aquifers are located in the northeastern corner of the city, ~~and the~~. While the water quality is generally good if not overdrawn, the area is adjacent to the city's Lake Stevens Industrial Center (LSIC) and falls within a high recharge importance area as shown in Figure 4.XX, making them potentially susceptible to contamination and pollution. Planned improvements to sanitary sewer infrastructure in the area should eliminate potential septic recharge, while implementation of the city's surface water source control program will also assist with aquifer protection.

The city will continue to prioritize the protection of aquifer recharge areas as required by the GMA pursuant to application of through impervious surface limitations for development, ~~the requirements~~ for stormwater systems ~~that to~~ meet Department of Ecology standards, converting septic systems to sanitary sewer, and robust protection of wetlands and other critical areas that provide invaluable functions in groundwater storage and recharge. This is especially important as the city anticipates additional commercial and industrial employment growth in the LSIC over the next twenty years.



**Figure 4.XX: Recharge Importance Designations in City (Department of Ecology)**



### CRITICAL AREAS

~~In the city of Lake Stevens~~ Critical areas in Lake Stevens, as defined by the ~~Growth Management Act (GMA: RCW 36.70A)~~, include wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (including streams), frequently flooded areas and geologically hazardous areas, as shown in Figure 4.XX. The GMA requires the city to adopt policies and implement development regulations to protect the functions and values of all identified critical areas. The city administers these regulations through Chapter 14.88 of the Lake Stevens Municipal Code (LSMC), the city's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO), and is charged with the responsibility to designate, classify and protect critical areas within the community.

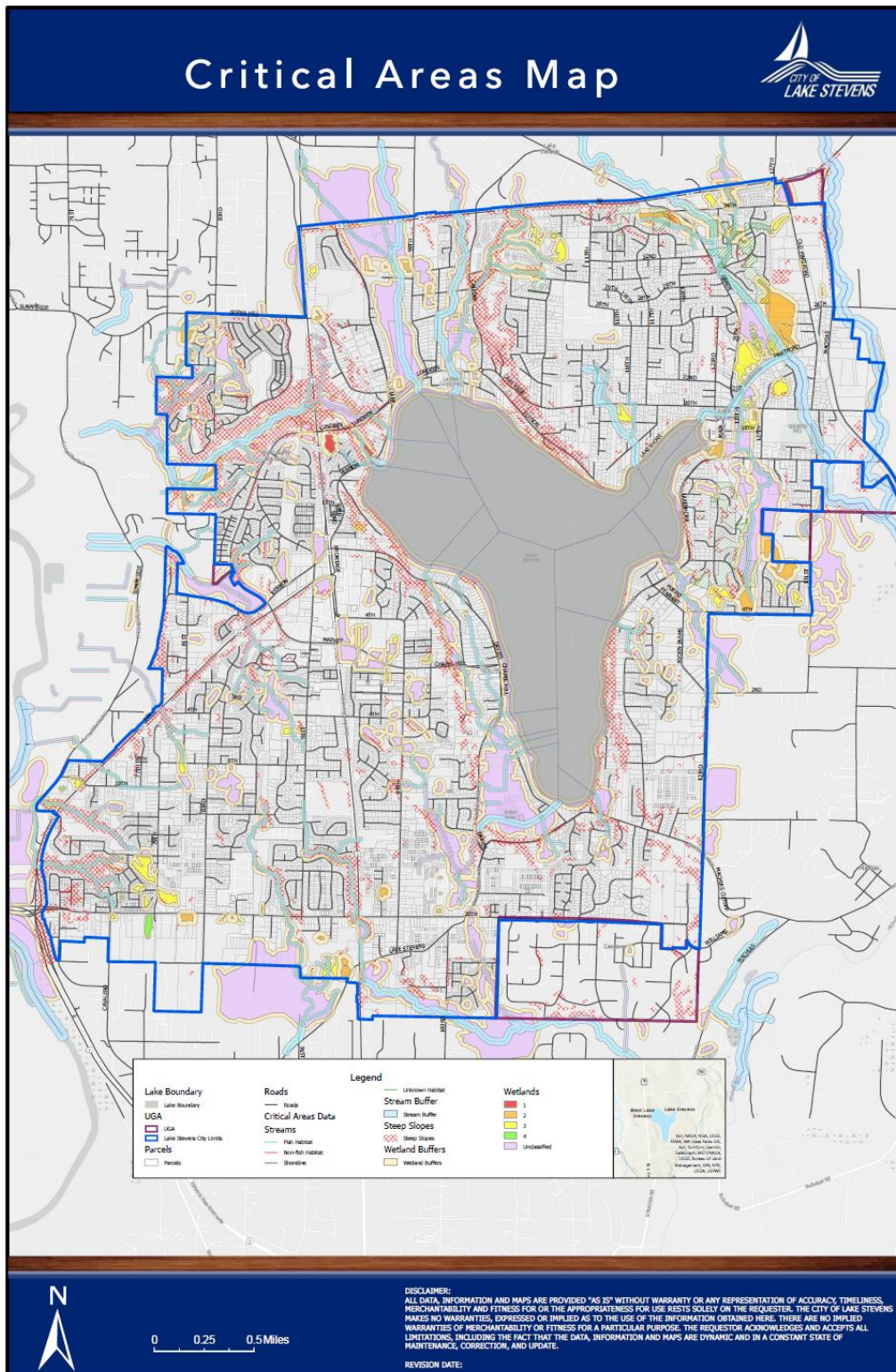
The city's last major update occurred in 2019 with the adoption of Ordinance 984, which incorporated new guidance for wetland ratings from the Department of Ecology and other updated best available science (BAS). The city is required to update its CAO by December 31, 2024, which is being done concurrently with the 2024 periodic update to this plan. As part of the CAO update, the city will incorporate updated BAS for wetlands, streams and other critical areas.

#### Fish & Wildlife Conservation Areas (streams and other water bodies)

Lake Stevens is ~~the most visible and treasured water body within the city of Lake Stevens. The lake encompasses approximately~~ 1,040 acres in size and provides not only recreational enjoyment, but serves as an important regional habitat for several fish, mammal, reptile, amphibian and bird species. Stitch Lake is located in the southern part of the city and encompasses approximately 9 acres. Lake Stevens and Stitch Lake and their shoreline-associated wetlands are subject to the Shoreline Management Act (SMA). The lakes and local streams - and considered flood hazard zones. The Lake Stevens drainage basin encompasses a number of streams and creeks, including ~~the~~ Kokanee (Mitchell) Creek, Stevens Creek, Lundeen Creek, Catherine Creek, and ~~the~~ Little Pilchuck Creek. These areas provide aquatic and riparian habit for a variety of species and are home to priority habitats and species including Chinook, Coho Salmon, Bull Trout, Steelhead, the Northern Spotted Owl, and Marbled Murrelet.



## Chapter 4 – Environmental and Natural Resources



**Figure 4.XX1 - Critical Areas Overview**



### Flood Hazard Areas

According to ~~the~~ Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), areas prone to floods from a 100-year storm are limited to properties mostly fronting Catherine Creek and the lake. Snohomish County partnered with FEMA in 2019 to produce updated Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM) for the region. These areas are designated as Zone A flood hazard areas. Flooding in the downtown area has been observed when area wetlands, streams and ditches have more water than they can hold.

The city regulates flood hazard areas through Chapter 14.64 LSMC and Chapter 14.88 – Part V, which was last updated in 2020 to comply with FEMA model regulations. Additional updates are expected in the future. –Efforts to remap the FIRM areas associated with the lake outlet channel may present opportunities for increased floodplain restoration in the lower Stevens Creek area.

### Geologically Hazardous Areas

The geologically-recent retreat of glaciers from the Snohomish County landscape has left many steep hillsides that are susceptible to naturally occurring landslides, earthquakes, erosion, and other geological events. Steep slopes are present within the community adjacent to the western boundary of Lake Stevens, and within the northwestern portion of the city. Proposed developments within 200 feet of any area that is designated as geologically hazardous are subject to the requirement for a geological assessment that analyzes the potential impacts of said development on or off site.

### Wetlands

Wetlands are fragile ecosystems which assist in the reduction of erosion, flooding and ground and surface water pollution. Wetlands also provide an important habitat for wildlife, plants, and fisheries. Wetlands also provide invaluable functions in aquifer recharge and groundwater storage. ~~Extensive~~Numerous wetlands have been identified ~~throughout~~in Lake Stevens and the UGA – some on a very general basis from aerial mapping. Others have been precisely mapped where development has occurred over the past few years. -Generally, as properties develop the wetlands are more accurately delineated and mapped based on site-specific report. The city's local regulations ~~must~~ comply with ~~both~~ federal and state standards ~~to-and~~ encourages development that avoids or mitigates wetland impact, and discourages the alteration of land that results in significant degradation of wetlands.



### Transfer of Development Rights

The city of Lake Stevens has ~~adopted conceptualized a~~ Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) ~~regulations in Chapter 14.88 LSMC~~ program to encourage density in key locations and limit development in environmentally critical areas. ~~This program is expressed through the allowance of cluster subdivisions pursuant to Chapter 14.48 LSMC, allowing developers to take advantage of smaller lot sizes and retaining the environmentally sensitive portion of the subject parcel as a protected tract with no further development rights.~~ LSMC 14.88.920 contains provisions for designating critical areas as sending and receiving districts. These regulations have been utilized infrequently since their adoption, but the city anticipates more frequent use as future development becomes increasingly reliant on sites encumbered by critical areas.

### **SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM**

The city of Lake Stevens manages the shoreline environment through implementation of the Shoreline Master Program (SMP). The Washington State Shoreline Management Act (SMA), passed in 1971, provides guidance and prescribes the requirements for locally-adopted Shoreline Master Programs. The SMA establishes a broad policy areas within its jurisdiction (200 feet of the ordinary high-water high-water mark of the water body), giving preferences to uses that:

- Protect shoreline natural resources, including water quality, vegetation and fish and wildlife habitat;
- Depend on the proximity to the shoreline (i.e., “water-dependent uses”); and
- Preserve and enhance public access or increased recreational opportunities for the public along shorelines.

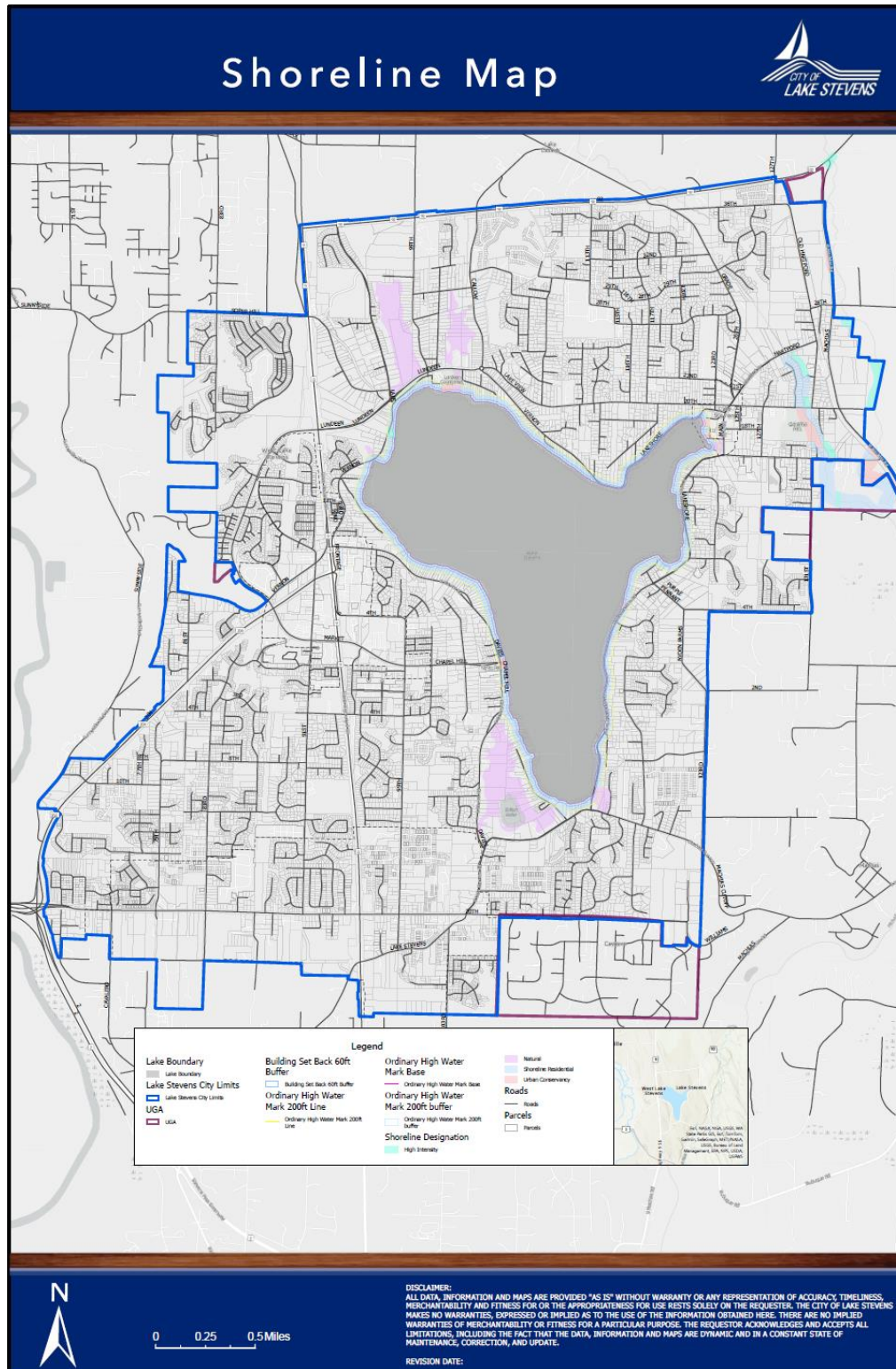


Figure 4.XXX – Shoreline Designations



## Chapter 4 – Environmental and Natural Resources

The SMA establishes a balance of authority between local and state government. Under the SMA, Lake Stevens adopted a Shoreline Master Program that is based on state guidelines but tailored to the specific needs of the community. The program represents a comprehensive vision of how shoreline areas will be used and developed over time.

Areas within SMA jurisdiction are assigned a shoreline environment designation in the city's SMP, based on site conditions and prevalent land uses. As shown in Figure 4.XXX, the majority of most areas along the shores of Lake Stevens have a designation of Shoreline Residential, reflecting the residential nature of the waterfront area. Parks such as North Cove Park, Sunset Park, and Davies Park Beach have a designation of Urban Conservancy, which aim to "protect and restore" ecological functions and allow for public access. The Natural designation applies to wetland complexes adjacent to Lake Stevens and Stitch Lake, while the High Intensity designation applies to limited areas with commercial and industrial uses, most notably along Little Pilchuck Creek within the Lake Stevens Industrial Center.

The city of Lake Stevens' identity is strongly influenced and defined by its setting around the lake. The lake provides varied recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Therefore, the utilization, protection, restoration and preservation of the shoreline must be considered for all development within shoreline areas.

Historically, the city and Snohomish County shared jurisdiction of Lake Stevens, with the city regulating uses and development within city boundaries, and the County within the southeast portion of the lake that is still within the Urban Growth Area unincorporated areas. Following a series of annexations between 2006 and 2021, the city now has jurisdiction over all areas along the lake within SMA jurisdiction, as well as the lake itself.

The city adopted Snohomish County's ~~Shoreline Master Program~~ SMP in 1974. Over the ~~almost four~~ five decades since the original adoption of a ~~Shoreline Master Program~~ SMP, the lake-front environment has substantially changed with additional single-family homes and subdivided lots, additional docks and bulkheads and the loss of habitat along the shoreline. Impervious surfaces have increased both within the shoreline area and in adjacent watersheds, thus increasing surface water flows and impacting water quality and habitat for fish and other animals.

To address these changes, comply with the mandates of the Shoreline Management Act, and enable the city to plan for emerging issues, the city initiated an extensive update of its Shoreline Master Program in 2009, with final adoption in 2014. This was followed by a state-mandated periodic update in 2019. The city is currently scheduled to complete its next SMP periodic update by 2027, and has undertaken efforts to simplify shoreline management and development in recent years, including the development of a User's Guide in 2023.



Overall, Tthe ~~Program will~~SMP aims to preserve the public’s opportunity to enjoy the physical and aesthetic qualities of Lake Stevens, Stitch Lake, Catherine Creek and Little Pilchuck Creek while protecting the functions of the shorelines so that at a minimum, the city achieves a “no net loss” of ecological functions as required for shorelines of the State.

### **SURFACE WATER PROGRAM**

The City’s Surface Water Program was created to meet NPDES requirements and establish municipal code provisions allow for permitting for stormwater impacts according to the current Stormwater Management Manual. The objective of the program is to anticipate and prevent further degradation of receiving waters from stormwater, with a higher goal of improving downstream water quality. The city has implemented or coordinated with various habitat restoration projects within the city and has adopted the Department of Ecology Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington to address appropriate minimum requirements for new and existing development.



## GOALS AND POLICIES

**GOAL 4.1: SUSTAIN ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY THROUGH THE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES, AND REQUIRE DEVELOPMENT TO BE SENSITIVE TO SITE CHARACTERISTICS AND PROTECT NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.**

### Policies

4.1.1 ~~The city will c~~Continue to prioritize the protection of wetlands, streams and creeks, lakes and ponds, aquifer recharge areas, geologically hazardous areas (e.g., steep slopes and erosion areas), significant trees, fish and wildlife habitat areas and corridors, cultural resources, and frequently flooded areas through land use policies, regulations and decisions based on best available information and in coordination with state and regional priorities.

4.1.2 Promote the retention of significant trees during development, recognizing their value for stormwater management and water quality, oxygen production and carbon sequestration.

4.1.3 Preserve existing vegetation as much as possible due to its vital role in maintaining wildlife habitat and preventing additional storm water runoff or soil erosion from new developments.

4.1.4 Protect salmonid streams and natural drainage ways and associated buffers from adverse impacts of land development in order to maintain the stream flow regime necessary for continued life cycle activities, avoid unnatural bank or bed erosion and increased turbidity and increase water quality.

4.1.5 Allow density transfers as part of subdivisions on properties with critical areas from the critical areas to the non-sensitive portions of the site.

4.1.6 Promote and encourage sustainable development through efficient land use, green building design, flexibility of design (Low Impact Development, cluster development) and water conservation and water quality protection.

4.1.7 Require all phases of conversion of forest lands to comply with the GMA, an issued Forest Practice Permit and be consistent with adopted critical areas regulations.

4.1.8 Continue to meet the requirements of the most current ~~Adopt the 2012~~ DOE Stormwater Manual and to comply with ~~new~~ stormwater NPDES regulations.



4.1.9 Use best management practices to ensure protection of water resources during and after construction, including bank stabilization techniques, site design, construction timing and practices, use of bio-engineering and current erosion and drainage control methods as defined in the current Stormwater Management Manual of Western Washington.

4.1.10 Protect native and non-invasive naturalized plant communities by encouraging management and control of ~~non-native~~ invasive plants and noxious weeds, including aquatic and terrestrial plants. Environmentally sound methods of vegetation control should be used to control noxious weeds.

4.1.11 Encourage ~~and~~ support and develop partnerships with local community programs to enhance natural resources and increase environmental education.

4.1.12 Minimize land clearing, soil disturbance, and non-point runoff affecting water quality, erosion and sedimentation.

4.1.13 Promote the detention and treatment of stormwater and encourage innovative methods for regional stormwater facilities, green infrastructure, stormwater parks, and advanced treatment for emerging contaminants to maintain hydrological functions and water quality within ecosystems and watersheds. Promote retention of stormwater and encourage regional stormwater treatment solutions to maintain hydrological functions and water quality within ecosystems and watersheds.

4.1.14 Minimize adverse stormwater impacts generated by the removal of vegetation and alteration of landforms.

4.1.15 Encourage and support the retention of natural open spaces or land uses which maintain hydrologic function and are at low risk to property damage from floodwaters within frequently flooded areas.

4.1.16 Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and local tribes on the protection of natural resources.

**GOAL 4.2: IMPLEMENT THE STATE SHORELINES MANAGEMENT ACT ALONG SHORELINES OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE IN THE CURRENT OR ULTIMATE CITY LIMITS OF LAKE STEVENS. PROTECT AND ENHANCE SHORELINE VISUAL AND PHYSICAL ACCESS CONSISTENT WITH PUBLIC TRUST DOCTRINE PRINCIPLES.**



### Policies

4.2.1 New development within the shorelines jurisdiction shall meet the procedural, building and development land use requirements as consistent with the adopted Shoreline Master Program.

4.2.2 Promote development of convenient recreational opportunities, activities and public access to public shorelines as consistent with the adopted Shoreline Master Program.

4.2.3 Extend appropriate shorelines designations to areas within shorelines jurisdictions as they annex into the city.

4.2.5 Educate property owners within shorelines jurisdictions on the proper maintenance of docks and decks, grass and gardens and driveways or cars to reduce the types of pollutants potentially reaching the lake or creeks as consistent with the adopted Shoreline Master Program

4.2.6 Recognize that the vast majority of shoreline property is in private ownership, and encourage the creation of easements to allow public access through donation or purchase, particularly in areas adjacent to publicly owned shorelines.

4.2.7 Acquire land for permanent public access to the water, and protect open space as consistent with the adopted Shoreline Master Program.

4.2.8 Consider the compatibility of proposed upland uses with those allowed in each adjacent shoreline environment as ~~consider-defined~~ in RCW 90.58.340.

4.2.9 Consider potential shorelines impacts from cumulative development actions of upland properties.

4.2.10 Provide ~~for~~ adequate access, utilities and public services to meet current and future needs for uses along the shoreline as consistent with the adopted Shoreline Master Program.

**GOAL 4.3: PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, SURFACE WATER AND GROUND WATER AND AQUIFER RECHARGE AREAS, CONSERVE ALL CRITICAL AREAS INCLUDING WETLANDS, SHORELINES, CREEKS/STREAMS, GEOLOGICAL HAZARD AREAS AND WILDLIFE HABITATS BY LOCATING DEVELOPMENT WITHIN ~~GEOGRAPHICALLY~~ GEOGRAPHICALLY SUITABLE AND GEOLOGICALLY STABLE AREAS, AND COORDINATE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS WITH STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES.**



### Policies

4.3.1 Review critical areas regulations which reflect the Best Available Science (BAS) pursuant to the GMA. These regulations must protect the functions and values of these areas and not unduly reduce property rights by requiring greater protection measures which offer diminishing beneficial returns.

4.3.2 Ensure compatibility of land uses with topography, geology, soil suitability, surface water, ground water, frequently flooded areas, wetlands, climate and vegetation and wildlife.

4.3.3 Identify and protect wildlife corridors and improve habitat connectivity both inside and outside the UGA through critical areas avoidance, protection and mitigation.

~~4.3.4 Permit development, fill, or encroachments in floodways, frequently flooded areas, highly erodible areas and other critical areas using Best Management Practices (BMP's) and Best Available Science (BAS).~~

4.3.4 Maintain a current inventory of critical areas in the city.

4.3.5 Support wetlands protection through non-regulatory approaches such as the adopt-a-wetland conservation program and low impact development.

4.3.6 Work with the Land Trust, non-profit conservation groups, and ~~other~~ similar organizations to protect wetlands and other critical areas.

4.3.7 Support the restoration of degraded shorelines and other critical areas to help minimize erosion, sedimentation and flooding.

4.3.8 Protect natural drainage systems and courses associated with floodways, floodplains, or other areas subject to flooding.

**GOAL 4.48: WORK WITH PUBLIC AGENCIES AND PRIVATE PARTNERS TO DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO PREPARE FOR AND MITIGATE POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, BOTH ON CITY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND THE GENERAL LAKE STEVENS COMMUNITY.**

### Policies

4.4.1 Implement and periodically update the actions and strategies in the city's Climate Sustainability Plan.



## Chapter 4 – Environmental and Natural Resources

4.48.21 Develop adaptive mitigation strategies that can be used by both the public and private sectors to help mitigate the potential impacts of new and ongoing development and operations.

4.48.32 Review comprehensive, strategic and specific plans to determine if city policies are appropriately targeted to prepare for and mitigate potential impacts of climate change.

4.48.43 Make energy efficiency and resource conservation a priority through retrofitting city facilities, promoting recycling or waste reduction behaviors, and automating energy conservation in facility operations.

4.48.54 Conserve fossil fuels and support federal and state policies and legislation that will lead to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

4.48.65 Develop adaptive land use policies and development policies-regulations that result in reduced greenhouse gas emissions for new development and redevelopment.

4.48.76 Monitor and evaluate opportunities to utilize state tools and resources to stay compliant with state environmental and energy strategies.

4.4.8 Support Snohomish County PUD in efforts to improve climate resilience by constructing new water storage systems to provide back-up water supplies during droughts.

4.4.9 Track and monitor tree canopy coverage in the city in an effort to better capture carbon dioxide and stormwater runoff and increase shading.

4.4.10 Consider and prioritize equity and affordability in climate adaption and mitigation strategies and actions, such as increased tree canopy coverage in lower income communities and other vulnerable populations.

4.4.11 Work with local schools, tribes, environmental organizations and partner agencies to educate the public on the impacts of, and strategies for addressing, climate change.

4.4.12 Encourage climate-resilient vegetation and landscaping.

4.4.13 Incorporate emissions reduction and other environmental requirements into the city's contracting process.

**MPP-RGS-11**

Encourage growth in designated countywide centers.

**MPP-RGS-12**

Avoid increasing development capacity inconsistent with the Regional Growth Strategy in regional geographies not served by high-capacity transit.

**MPP-RGS-13**

Plan for commercial, retail, and community services that serve rural residents to locate in neighboring cities and existing activity areas to avoid the conversion of rural land into commercial uses.

**MPP-RGS-14**

Manage and reduce rural growth rates over time, consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy, to maintain rural landscapes and lifestyles and protect resource lands and the environment.

**MPP-RGS-15**

Support the establishment of regional funding sources to acquire conservation easements in rural areas.

**MPP-RGS-16**

Identify strategies, incentives, and approaches to facilitate the annexation or incorporation of unincorporated areas within urban growth areas into cities.

## Environment

**Goal:** The region cares for the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving water quality, and reducing air pollutants. The health of all residents and the economy is connected to the health of the environment. Planning at all levels considers the impacts of land use, development, and transportation on the ecosystem.

**MPP-En-1**

Develop and implement regionwide environmental strategies, coordinating among local jurisdictions, tribes, and countywide planning groups.

**MPP-En-2**

Use integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessment at regional, countywide, and local levels.

**MPP-En-3**

Maintain and, where possible, improve air and water quality, soils, and natural systems to ensure the health and well-being of people, animals, and plants. Reduce the impacts of transportation on air and water quality and climate change.

**MPP-En-4**

Ensure that all residents of the region, regardless of race, social, or economic status, have clean air, clean water, and other elements of a healthy environment.

**MPP-En-5**

Locate development in a manner that minimizes impacts to natural features. Promote the use of innovative environmentally sensitive development practices, including design, materials, construction, and on-going maintenance.

**MPP-En-6**

Use the best information available at all levels of planning, especially scientific information, when establishing and implementing environmental standards established by any level of government.

**MPP-En-7**

Reduce and mitigate noise and light pollution caused by transportation, industries, public facilities, and other sources.

**MPP-En-8**

Reduce impacts to vulnerable populations and areas that have been disproportionately affected by noise, air pollution, or other environmental

**MPP-En-9**

Enhance urban tree canopy to support community resilience, mitigate urban heat, manage stormwater, conserve energy, improve mental and physical health, and strengthen economic prosperity.

**MPP-En-10**

Support and incentivize environmental stewardship on private and public lands to protect and enhance habitat, water quality, and other ecosystem services, including protection of watersheds and wellhead areas that are sources of the region's drinking water supplies.

**MPP-En-11**

Designate, protect, and enhance significant open spaces, natural resources, and critical areas through mechanisms, such as the review and comment of countywide planning policies and local plans and provisions.

**MPP-En-12**

Identify, preserve, and enhance significant regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictional boundaries through implementation and update of the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan.

**MPP-En-13**

Preserve and restore native vegetation and tree canopy, especially where it protects habitat and contributes to overall ecological function.

**MPP-En-14**

Identify and protect wildlife corridors both inside and outside the urban growth area.

**MPP-En-15**

Provide parks, trails, and open space within walking distance of urban residents. Prioritize historically underserved communities for open space improvements and investments.

**MPP-En-16**

Preserve and enhance habitat to support healthy wildlife and accelerate the recovery of salmon, orca, and other threatened and endangered species and species of local importance.

**MPP-En-17**

Maintain and restore natural hydrological functions and water quality within the region's ecosystems and watersheds to recover the health of Puget Sound.

**MPP-En-18**

Reduce stormwater impacts from transportation and development through watershed planning, redevelopment and retrofit projects, and low-impact development.

**MPP-En-19**

Reduce the use of toxic pesticides, fertilizers, and other products to the extent feasible and identify alternatives that minimize risks to human health and the environment.

**MPP-En-20**

Restore – where appropriate and possible – the region's freshwater and marine shorelines, watersheds, and estuaries to a natural condition for ecological function and value.

**MPP-En-21**

Continue efforts to reduce pollutants from transportation activities, including through the use of cleaner fuels and vehicles and increasing alternatives to driving alone, as well as design and land use.

**MPP-En-22**

Meet all federal and state air quality standards and reduce emissions of air toxics and greenhouse gases.

**Climate Change**

**Goal:** The region substantially reduces emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change in accordance with the goals of the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (50% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050) and prepares for climate change impacts.

**MPP-CC-1**

Advance the adoption and implementation of actions that substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions in support of state, regional, and local emissions reduction goals, including targets adopted by the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency.

**MPP-CC-2**

Reduce building energy use through green building and retrofit of existing buildings.

**MPP-CC-3**

Reduce greenhouse gases by expanding the use of conservation and alternative energy sources, electrifying the transportation system, and reducing vehicle miles traveled by increasing alternatives to driving alone.

**MPP-CC-4**

Protect and restore natural resources that sequester and store carbon such as forests, farmland, wetlands, estuaries, and urban tree canopy.

**MPP-CC-5**

Pursue the development of energy management technology as part of meeting the region's energy needs.

**MPP-CC-6**

Address impacts to vulnerable populations and areas that have been disproportionately affected by climate change.

**MPP-CC-7**

Advance state, regional, and local actions that support resilience and adaptation to climate change impacts.

**MPP-CC-9**

Identify and address the impacts of climate change on the region's hydrological systems.

**MPP-CC-10**

Address rising sea water by siting and planning for relocation of hazardous industries and essential public services away from the 500-year floodplain.

**MPP-CC-11**

Support achievement of regional greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals through countywide planning policies and local comprehensive plans.

**MPP-CC-12**

Prioritize transportation investments that support achievement of regional greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, such as by reducing vehicle miles traveled.

## Development Patterns

**Goal:** The region creates healthy, walkable, compact, and equitable transit-oriented communities that maintain unique character and local culture, while conserving rural areas and creating and preserving open space and natural areas.

### Building Urban Communities

**MPP-DP-1**

Develop high-quality, compact urban communities throughout the region's urban growth area that impart a sense of place, preserve local character, provide for mixed uses and choices in housing types, and encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use.

**MPP-DP-2**

Reduce disparities in access to opportunity for the region's residents through inclusive community planning and targeted public and private investments that meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.

**MPP-DP-3**

Enhance existing neighborhoods to provide a high degree of connectivity in the street network to accommodate walking, bicycling, and transit use, and sufficient public spaces.

1 quality of the natural environment and combating and mitigating the impacts of climate change  
2 are central to providing high quality of life for residents of Snohomish County.

### 3       **The Natural Environment and Climate Change Goal**

4 Snohomish County and local jurisdictions will act as a steward of the natural environment in an  
5 effort to protect and restore natural systems and public health and mitigate climate change. This  
6 will be achieved through natural resource and habitat conservation, water quality improvement,  
7 and air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions reduction Planning for the future will include  
8 addressing climate change and resilience at local and regional levels of government to protect the  
9 natural environment and meet the economic and social needs of all residents.

## 10   **The Natural Environment Policies**

**Env-1**       All jurisdictions shall protect and enhance natural ecosystems through their comprehensive plans, development regulations, capital facilities programs, and management practices. Jurisdictions should work collaboratively, employing integrated and interdisciplinary approaches, to consider regional and countywide strategies and assessments, as well as best available qualitative and quantitative information, in formulating plans and regulations that are specific to their community.

**Env-2**       The County and cities should work collaboratively to identify, designate, and protect regional open space networks and wildlife corridors both inside and outside the Urban Growth Area and across the jurisdictional boundaries. Jurisdictions should establish policies and coordinated approaches to preserve and enhance these open space networks and corridors and ensure that all residents have access to parks and open space.

**Env-3**       The County and cities shall work collaboratively to create goals and policies intended to implement and address the needs identified in the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan.

**Env-4**       The County and cities should identify and protect, enhance, or restore wildlife corridors and important habitat areas that support designated species of local or state significance, such as orca and salmon, and those areas that are critical for survival of endangered or threatened species.

**Env-5**       The County and cities should work with neighboring jurisdictions and tribes to identify and protect significant open space areas, natural resources, and critical areas through appropriate local policies, regulations or other mechanisms such as public acquisition, easements, voluntary agreements, supporting the efforts of conservation organizations, and other best practices.

- Env-6** In recognition of the broad range of benefits from ecological systems, the County and cities should establish policies and strategies to restore – where appropriate and possible – the region’s freshwater and marine shorelines, watersheds, and estuaries to a natural condition for ecological function and value.
- Env-7** The County and cities should reduce and mitigate the stormwater impacts of land development and redevelopment through collaboration in watershed planning, implementation of low impact development, and other best practices.
- Env-8** The County and cities shall work to maintain and improve air and water quality and ensure that all residents have equitable access to clean air and water.
- Env-9** The County and cities should reduce the impacts of light and noise pollution upon residents, including an emphasis on reducing these impacts on vulnerable populations, through land use, development, and transportation decisions.
- Env-10** The County and cities should support the use of integrated pest management and other programs that work to reduce the use of toxic pesticides and other products that present a risk to the health of the environment and humans.
- Env-11** The County and cities should establish and/or support programs that manage and work to reduce the spread of invasive species that are harmful to natural ecological function and habitat throughout the county.

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## 2 **Climate Change Policies**

- CC-1** The County and cities shall incorporate emissions reduction actions into local plans and collaborate with regional and state agencies on initiatives to ensure that air quality meets or exceeds established state and federal standards and greenhouse gas emissions are reduced in accordance with the goals of the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency. Any initiatives which exceed established state and federal standards shall be voluntary between jurisdictions and are not required by CC-1.
- CC-2** The County and cities should support the implementation of the state’s climate change initiatives and work toward developing a common framework to analyze climate change impacts when conducting environmental review under SEPA.
- CC-3** The County and cities should establish and/or support programs that work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy conservation, including the retrofit of existing buildings, expansion of alternative/clean energy within the public and private sector, and the use of environmentally sustainable building techniques and materials.

- CC-4** The County and cities should use natural systems to reduce carbon in the atmosphere by establishing programs and policies that maintain and increase natural resources that sequester and store carbon, such as forests, vegetative cover, wetlands, farmland, and estuaries.
- CC-5** The County and cities should plan for climate adaptation and resilience by establishing a planning framework in local plans and coordinating regionally to identify, anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to likely impacts of climate change on natural systems, infrastructure, public health, and the economy. These efforts should identify measures to mitigate climate impacts and include a focus on minimizing these impacts upon highly impacted and vulnerable populations.
- CC-6** The County and cities should support the achievement of regional greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets through adoption of policies and implementation of actions including identification of emissions reduction goals in local plans and providing support for land use, transportation, and development policies that reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.
- CC-7** Jurisdictions should consider rising sea level by planning for the siting of new and relocation of existing essential public facilities and hazardous industries to areas that are outside the 500-year floodplain.

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## Environment

| Environment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Page or Policy Ref                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Protect critical areas, habitat, and water quality and coordinate planning with adjacent jurisdictions, tribes, countywide planning groups, and watershed groups (MPP-En-1, En-6, En-11-12, En-14, En-16, En-Action-3)                                                                                           | All Goals in Environment & Natural Resources Chapter and their associated policies            |
| Advance integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessments (MPP-En-2)                                                                                                                                                                                                        | None                                                                                          |
| Promote innovative and environmentally sensitive development practices in siting, design, materials selection, construction, and maintenance (MPP-En-5)                                                                                                                                                          | Policy 4.1.6                                                                                  |
| Support programs to ensure that all residents, regardless of race, social, or economic status, have clean air, clean water, and other elements of a healthy environment and prioritize the reduction of impacts to vulnerable populations that have been disproportionately affected (MPP-En-3-4, En-7-8, En-21) | None                                                                                          |
| Support and incentivize environmental stewardship on private and public lands (MPP-En-10)                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Support in 4.1.1, 4.1.4, 4.1.7, 4.1.15, 4.3.6, 4.3.3, throughout.; incentives in 4.1.5, 4.1.6 |
| Identify open space, trail, and park resources and needs, and develop programs for protecting and enhancing these areas (MPP-En-11-12, En-15, En-Action-4)                                                                                                                                                       | Chapter 5 P-26 to 28, Goals 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, and associated policies                       |
| Protect and restore native vegetation and tree canopy (MPP-En-9, En-13)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Native Growth Protection Areas: referenced in PROS Element Table 5.1 & Policy 4.1.2, 4.1.10   |
| Protect and restore hydrological functions and water quality, including restoring shorelines and estuaries, removing fish-blocking culverts, reducing use of toxic products, and retrofitting basins to manage stormwater (MPP-En-16-20)                                                                         | Goals 4.2 and 4.3; associated policies 4.2.1, 4.2.9, 4.3.2, 4.3.6, 4.3.7                      |
| Ensure all federal and state air quality standards are met and reduce emissions of air toxics and greenhouse gases (WAC 173-420-080, MPP-En-22)                                                                                                                                                                  | 8.13.1, Chapter 4 P. E-6                                                                      |

## Climate Change

| Climate Change                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Page or Policy Ref                                                                   |
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| Support achieving regional greenhouse gas emission reduction goals by:<br>Electrifying the transportation system,<br>· Reducing vehicle miles traveled through increasing alternatives to driving alone and using land use strategies that reduce trips and trip length, and<br>· Expanding the use of conservation, alternative energy sources, and energy management technology (MPP-CC-1, CC-3, CC-5, CC-11-12, CC-Action-3) | 4.9.2, 4.9.4, 8.13.2, 8.13.3, 8.13.5                                                 |
| Reduce building energy use through green building and retrofit of existing buildings (MPP-CC-2, CC-Action-3, DP-46)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 4.1.6                                                                                |
| Protect and restore natural resources that sequester and store carbon (MPP-CC-4)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 4.1.1, 4.1.3, 4.3.5                                                                  |
| Address impacts to vulnerable populations and areas that have been or will be disproportionately affected by climate change (MPP-CC-6, CC-8, CC-Action-3, CC-Action-4)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | None                                                                                 |
| Identify and address the impacts of climate change and natural hazards on the region to increase resilience (MPP-CC-7-10, CC-Action-4)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | None                                                                                 |
| Address rising sea water by siting and planning for relocation of hazardous industries and essential public services away from the 500-year floodplain (MPP-CC-10)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | No mention of relocation, but policies under Goal 4.3 mention mitigation of flooding |