

**SULTAN CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET**

ITEM NO: C-1
DATE: August 24, 2010
SUBJECT: Environmental Element Goals and Policies
CONTACT PERSON: Deborah Knight, City Administrator

ISSUE:

The issue before the city council is to approve the council's recommended changes to the environmental element goals and policies from the July 15, 2010 special meeting.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the city council proposed changes to the environmental element in the 2008 revisions to the 2004 comprehensive plan (Attachment A).

SUMMARY:

This agenda cover transmits the city council's changes to the environmental element discussed by the city council on July 1, 2010 and July 15, 2010. The city council has the opportunity to provide any further direction to city staff.

BACKGROUND:

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and the county-wide planning policies emphasize joint planning and coordination in an effort to address large and small ecosystems. Land use, transportation, air quality and human health are interconnected and from the regional perspective, require integrated planning, regulations, and implementation actions.

The Puget Sound Regional Council climate change initiatives are included in the environment planning policies. Vision 2040 calls for cities within the region to reduce contributions to greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the anticipated impacts of climate change on the ecosystem.

There are many residents who do not believe that climate change is scientific fact or that it is the result of industrial activities. Yet, the city is obligated to align its goals and policies with the multi-county planning policies (MPP) and the county-wide planning policies (CPP) which address climate change initiatives.

The city council will need to carefully discern what is best for the community in its opinion before adopting environmental goals and policies.

DISCUSSION:

The review and recommended changes begin with the goals and policies adopted in the 2008 Revisions (2008 Revisions) to the 2004 Comprehensive Plan (adopted October 2008).

In order to track changes and provide an efficient review, the environmental goals and policies are numbered EN = Environment with headings and subheadings to differentiate goals and policies (e.g. EN 1 is a goal, EN 1.3 is a policy)

Using common editing functions deleted text from the 2008 Revision is shown as ~~strikethrough~~, added text is underlined. Existing text is unchanged.

The following changes were directed by the city council at the special meeting on July 15, 2010:

EN 1.1 Tributary drainage

Where possible, use scientific information ~~where possible to~~ improve and enhance perennial streams, ponds, springs, marshes, swamps, wet spots, bogs and other surface tributary collection areas ~~from during the~~ land use ~~developments~~ development process. (CC 07-15-10 move “where possible” to the beginning of the sentence.)

Where possible, seek to maintain natural biological functions and minimize impacts to natural features. ~~or alterations that would tend to alter natural drainage capabilities, contaminate surface water run off or spoil the natural setting.~~ (CC 07-01-10) (CC 07-15-10 Add a comma after “where possible”)

EN 3.1 ~~Best-to-least-capability~~ Density allocation policies

As much as possible, allocate high density urban development onto lands that are optimally suitable and capable of supporting urban uses, and/or that pose fewest environmental risks—~~including the periphery of the upper plateau.~~ (CC 07-01-10) (CC 07-15-10 delete “including the periphery...”)

4.1 Noise - development characteristics

Promote the use of materials with ~~extra~~-acoustical properties in building developments, landscape and earth berm buffers in site improvements, and other innovations that will reduce noise impacts on residential developments, particularly along ~~SR-2US-2~~ and Sultan's other major traffic corridors. (CC 07-01-10) (CC 07-15-10 delete the word “extra”)

EN 2 Goal: Conserve natural resources and activities

Conserve and protect natural areas within the environment to provide a ~~continuing~~ place for wildlife that are representative of Sultan's ecological heritage. ~~Protect shoreline, agricultural, and~~

~~timber production activities that produce a valued natural and economic product and that reflect Sultan's historical origins. Enforce exacting performance standards governing possible land use developments on lands or sites that may be planned to include wildlife. (Editor's Note: Not consistent with rural city designation. Agriculture and timber production are rural activities)~~
(CC 07-15-10 delete the word "continuing" to read "to provide a place for wildlife...")

EN 2.1 Shoreline resources

Protect ~~the~~ waterfront lands, improvements and features that support the overall ecological function and waterfront and waterway activities along ~~the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers designated~~ shorelines. ~~Enforce exacting performance standards governing possible land use development of, or adjacent, existing recreational boat landings and docks, fishing access areas, and beaches.~~ (CC 07-15-10 replace "the Wallace, Sultan and Skykomish Rivers shoreline" with the phrase "designated shorelines")

EN 2.5.2 Promote the use of ~~site~~ retention ponds, natural drainage methods, and other site improvements that conserve natural drainage features and ~~increase~~ wetland habitats. (MPP En-9) (CC 07-01-10) (CC 07-15-10 delete "increase" to read, "natural drainage features and wetland habitats")

EN 5.1 Waterway

~~Define and regulate the design and operation of water oriented activities including over water structures or water borne improvements such as piers, floats, barges, and the like to protect the navigational capabilities of the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers.~~ Define and regulate activities that ~~may~~ occur within or may affect the natural currents, flows, and even floodways to protect the functional integrity of ~~the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers' designated~~ waterways. (CC 07-01-10) (CC 07-15-10 replace "the Wallace, Sultan and Skykomish Rivers' waterways" with "designated waterways")

5.2.1 To the extent possible, ~~P~~protect fragile ecosystems ~~that provide the waterfront unique value, especially such as~~ fish spawning beds in the natural tributaries of ~~the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers and Winters and Wagley's Creeks designated~~ rivers, streams and creeks. (CC 07-01-10) (CC 07-15-10 replace "the Wallace, Sultan and Skykomish Rivers and Winters and Wagley's Creeks" with "designated rivers, streams and creeks")

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the city council proposed changes to the environmental element in the 2008 revisions to the 2004 comprehensive plan (Attachment A).

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Attachment A – Final mark-up version council recommended changes to the environmental goals and policies.
2. Attachment B – Final clean version council recommended changes to the environmental goals and policies.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENT

Regional Context

The regional plan, Vision 2040, contains an “overarching goal” for the environment:

“...care for the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving water quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and addressing potential climate change impacts...Planning at all levels should consider the impacts of land use, development patterns, and transportation on the ecosystem.”

Vision 2040 stresses the importance of the natural environment in providing ecological and aesthetic benefits, and protecting water and air. The term “restore” is used primarily to mean re-establishing to an ecologically functioning state, in which natural systems are healthy for plants, animals and humans.

Key concepts identified in Vision 2040 include:

Environmental Stewardship – Coordinate environmental planning across jurisdictions. Use scientific disciplines and new techniques such as low-impact development (LID), green building practices, green street programs, and other sustainable design practices.

Earth and Habitat – Preserve habitat and native vegetation, as well as identifying and enhancing the region’s open spaces.

Water Quality – Maintain and restore the ecological function of the region’s waterways and estuaries. Reduce water pollution and take steps to address the impacts of climate change on the region’s water quality and supply.

Air Quality – The overall quality of the region's air will be better than it is today.

Climate Change – Reduce the contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the anticipated impacts of climate change. Maximize energy efficiency and increase renewable energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions of new vehicles, reduce motor vehicle miles traveled, improve the convenience and safety of nonpolluting transportation modes such as bicycling and walking, increase recycling and reduce waste.

Growth Management Requirements

The Growth Management Act includes thirteen planning goals to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations of cities that are

required or choose to plan under RCW 36.70A.040. Goal number ten¹ requires cities to: Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.

The Environmental Element is an optional element of the comprehensive plan.

Snohomish Countywide Planning Policies

Countywide Planning Policies form the basis of coordinated countywide environmental strategies for environmental stewardship, earth and habitat, water quality, air quality, and climate change. Related policies in the Development Patterns and Transportation sections address some of the major sources of air quality and climate change pollutants. Protecting and enhancing the quality of the natural environment is central to providing for the quality of life for residents of Snohomish County.

Snohomish County and local jurisdictions will act as a steward of the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving air and water quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and addressing potential climate change impacts. Planning for the future will embrace sustainable ways to integrate care of the environment with economic and social needs.

Organization

Under Vision 2040, the Environmental Element is divided into five topic headings:

1. Environmental stewardship
2. Earth and habitat
3. Water quality
4. Air quality
5. Climate change (New for Sultan)

Editor's Note

The following draft goals and policies are built on the framework of the City of Sultan 2008 Revised Comprehensive Plan.

Goals and policies in the 2008 Revision are not numbered. The goals and policies proposed for the 2011 Comprehensive Plan Update are numbered in the proposed version to allow readers and comments to be easily referenced. A numbering system will be adopted in the final revision of the 2011 Update. New proposed text and policies are shown as underline. Text and policies proposed to be deleted are shown as ~~strikethrough~~.

¹ RCW 36.70A.020(10)

Topic 1. Environmental Stewardship

Vision 2040 Goal:

The region will safeguard the natural environment by meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- Coordination between local jurisdictions
- Integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessment at a regional level.
- Locate development to minimize impacts to natural features.
- Promote the use of innovative and environmentally sensitive development practices
- Use scientific information when implementing environmental standards
- Mitigate noise caused by traffic, industrial and other uses

Sultan 2040 Goal

Goal EN-1: Respect the natural environment

Maintain, as much as possible, a harmonious relationship between the natural environment and Sultan's proposed future urban development. ~~Enforce exacting performance standards governing possible developments within land or soil areas that are subject to moderate and severe hazards using best available science in accordance with RCW 36.70A.172 and WAC 365-195, Section 9. In accordance with GMA guidelines (RCW 36.70A.030(5), critical areas subject to moderate and severe risk include wetlands, areas with a critical recharging affect on aquifers, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas. (PB 06-08-10)~~

[Editor's Note EN-1 specific implementation standards incorporated into critical areas regulations.](#)

EN 1.1 Tributary drainage

Where possible, use scientific information ~~where possible to~~ improve and enhance perennial streams, ponds, springs, marshes, swamps, wet spots, bogs and other surface tributary collection areas ~~from during the land use developments development process. (CC 07-15-10 move "where possible" to the beginning of the sentence.)~~

Where possible, seek to maintain natural biological functions and minimize impacts to natural features. ~~or alterations that would tend to alter natural drainage capabilities, contaminate surface water run-off or spoil the natural setting. (CC 07-01-10) (CC 07-15-10 Add a comma after "where possible")~~

~~EN 1.1.1 Use scientific information to establish buffer zones or mitigation measures of official or legal standing that are wide enough to maintain and preserve the growth of native plants and materials that perform natural biological functions and minimize impacts to natural features, particularly along the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers, Winters and Wagley's Creeks, and extensive wetlands within Sultan. Wetlands should be rated consistent with the Washington State Department of Ecology's Wetlands Rating System for Western Washington (Publication No. 93-074).~~

~~PB 06-08-10 recommended combining EN 1.1.1 into EN 1.1~~

~~Editor's Note: EN 1.1 and EN 1.1.1 are too specific for policies. Should be implemented through critical areas regulations. Tie to MPP EN-6 requiring scientific information at all levels of planning.~~

~~EN 1.2 Stream and drainage corridors~~

~~Improve and enhance buffer zones along the banks of perennial streams, creeks and other tributary drainage systems to allow for the free flow of storm run-off and to protect run-off water quality. Establish buffer zones of official or legal standing that are wide enough to maintain and preserve the natural biological functions of streams draining into the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers, Winters and Winters and Wagley's Creeks, and their tributaries.~~

~~Delete EN 1.2 duplicates EN 1.1.1~~

~~EN 1.3 Floodplains~~

~~Maintain and, where possible, protect alluvial soils, retention ponds and other floodplains or flooded areas from land use developments that would alter the pattern or capacity of area floodways, or that would interfere with the natural drainage process particularly within the Sultan and Skykomish Rivers floodplains. MPP-EN-3 (CC 07-01-10 punctuation only)~~

~~EN 1.4 Dams and beaches~~

~~Enforce control zones and exacting performance standards governing land use developments around retention pond dams, and along shorelines to maintain and, protect where possible, natural features that may mitigate against possible environmental damage due to dam breaches, severe storms and other natural hazards or failures, particularly along the Sultan River within the impact zone of a Sultan River Dam failure. (CC 07-01-10 punctuation only)~~

~~EN 1.5 Impermeable Protect soils~~

~~Where possible, protect or mitigate damage to soils with extremely poor permeability, high water tables, or very poor compressive strengths from during the land use developments development process. that could contaminate surface water run off, contaminate ground water supplies, erode or silt natural drainage channels, overflow natural drainage systems, and otherwise increase natural hazards.~~

~~EN1.6 High water table and aquifer recharge~~

~~Protect soils with high water tables and over aquifers from land use developments that create high surface water run off with possible oil, grease, fertilizer or other contaminants that could be absorbed into the ground water and aquifer system.~~

EN1.7 Non-compressive soils

~~Protect soils with very poor compressive strengths, like muck, peat bogs and some clay and silt deposits, from land use developments or improvements that will not be adequately supported by the soil's materials—particularly along the Winters and Wagley's Creeks corridor.~~

Editor's Note: Combine EN 1.5, EN 1.6 and EN 1.7

EN1.8 Bedrock escarpments, landslide and soil erosion

~~Enforce exacting performance standards governing land use developments on~~Where possible, protect or mitigate damage from development on lands containing shallow depths to bedrock or bedrock escarpments, particularly where combined with slopes that are susceptible to landslide hazards or soil erosion.

EN1.9 Landslide

~~Protect soils in steep slopes composed of poor compressive materials, or have shallow depths to bedrock, or have impermeable subsurface deposits or that contain other characteristic combinations that are susceptible to landslide or land slumps—particularly along the bluff between the Sultan River valley floor and the upper plateau.~~

EN1.10 Erosion

~~Enforce exacting performance standards governing possible land use developments on soils that have moderate to steep slopes that are composed of soils, ground covers, surface drainage features or other characteristics that are susceptible to high erosion risks—particularly along the bluff between the Sultan River valley floor the upper plateau.~~

Editor's Note: Combine EN 1.8, EN 1.9 and EN 1.10

EN 3 Goal: Land management policies

~~Allocate and manage the land's environmental capability and suitability in the most reasonable—and effective manner. Allow innovation and flexibility, yet ensure the environment is not degraded or that urban use does not create public hazards or nuisances~~Locate development in a manner that minimizes impacts to natural features. Support the use of innovative environmentally sensitive development practices, including design, materials, construction, and on-going maintenance. (MPP-En-5) CC 07-01-10

EN 3.1 ~~Best-to-least capability~~Density allocation policies

As much as possible, allocate high density urban development onto lands that are optimally suitable and capable of supporting urban uses, and/or that pose fewest environmental risks—~~including the periphery of the upper plateau.~~ (CC 07-01-10) ~~(CC 07-15-10 delete “including the periphery...)~~

EN 3.1.1 To the extent necessary, allocate urban uses away from lands or soils that have severe environmental hazards – such as flood hazard.

EN 3.1.2 ~~Designate-Protect~~ lands and soils with severe limitations ~~for low intensive rural uses or leave in the natural state~~—particularly wetlands, drainage corridors and lands with seasonal high water tables or ~~over~~ aquifers. (CC 07-01-10)

EN 3.2 Performance criteria Innovative development practices

~~As much as practical, incorporate environmental concerns into performance standards rather than outright restrictions. Use review processes that establish minimum performance criteria that developers must satisfy in order to obtain project approvals, and hold the developer liable for the successful accomplishment of proposed performance requirements.~~ As much as possible, allow for innovation during the development process to maintain and improve natural systems ~~and more detailed investigations~~, provided the end result will not risk environmental hazards or otherwise create public problems or nuisances. (MPP En-5)

EN 3.3 Sensitive lands review ordinance

~~Maintain a sensitive land review process that requires proposed development projects meet minimum performance standards that recognize land and soil limitations and capabilities. The standards should be consistent with soil capabilities and the land use allowances provided in the underlying zoning assumptions. The standards should also be consistent with those standards defined in Snohomish County's Sensitive Areas Ordinance to provide consistent standards between the unincorporated and to be annexed portions of the Sultan urban growth area.~~

Editor's Note: EN 3.3 is implemented through Sultan's critical areas ordinance.

EN 4 Goal: Urban use operating standards

~~Establish minimum acceptable performance standards governing~~ To the extent possible, mitigate noise, air, light, glare, and other operating characteristics or permitted urban uses that affect the quality of the natural and/or manmade environment.

4.1 Noise - development characteristics

Promote the use of materials with ~~extra~~-acoustical properties in building developments, landscape and earth berm buffers in site improvements, and other innovations that will reduce noise impacts on residential developments, particularly along ~~SR-2US-2~~ and Sultan's other major traffic corridors. (CC 07-01-10) ~~(CC 07-15-10 delete the word "extra")~~

EN 4.2 Noise - operating characteristics

During the development approval process, seek to minimize impacts on ~~Protect~~-urban residential areas from obnoxious or distracting noises, particularly during evening hours, and especially of a kind created by controllable activities. ~~Enforce exacting performance standards governing possible land use developments that create noise that can exceed acceptably defined levels.~~

EN 4.3 Groundwater

~~Prevent groundwater contamination risks.~~ To the extent practical, cooperate with Snohomish County and other public agencies to create and implement plans that will ~~prevent prevent groundwater contamination risks from~~ future developments in high-risk areas. (MPP En-1)

EN 4.4 Stormwater – development standards

~~Prevent surface water contamination and erosion of natural surface drainage channels due to ill-conceived or poorly designed urban development. Promote the use of stormwater retention systems and holding areas, natural drainage and percolation systems, permeable surface improvements, clustered developments, and other concepts that will reduce stormwater volumes and velocities.~~ (Editor's Note: Move EN 4.4 Stormwater development standards to the utility element)

EN 4.5 Stormwater – operating standards

~~Enforce exacting performance standards governing the use of stormwater runoff, fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, dumping of wastes, trapping of greases and other byproducts, and other pollutants from grounds improvements, oils, greases and other pollutants from impervious surfaces. Such contaminants can be carried into the natural drainage system and spoil the quality of surface water bodies, particularly impacts that result from temporary construction and development activities. As much as possible, treat stormwater with natural filtering methods including the use of open drainage swales and detention ponds, and biofiltration systems to settle out and trap pollutants.~~ (Editor's Note: Move EN 4.5 Stormwater development standards to the utility element)

EN 4.6 Air – operating standards

~~Enforce exacting performance standards governing the emission of carbons, gases or other particles into the atmosphere; and the creation of burnt materials, smoke, dust or other polluting byproducts that could degrade air quality. Develop and adopt an ordinance to regulate the burning of wood in stoves and fireplaces during temperature inversion conditions.~~ (Editor's Note: Move EN 4.6 Air - operating standards to the Topic 4 Air Quality)

~~**EN 4.7 Restrict urban or dense development on lands and soils with severe environmental limitations**—such as wetlands, flood hazards, steep or unstable slopes, landslide, erosion, and other hazards to reduce risk to potential occupants and the rest of the community. Update critical area maps using advanced GIS and global positioning data and create a critical area overlay on zoning maps. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks) (Editor's Note: Duplicates EN 1.8)~~

~~**EN 4.8 Conserve those**Identify **lands and soils that have socially valuable characteristics** - such as historic features, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas to preserve Sultan's character. Designate socially valuable landmarks and sites on an overlay of land use plan and zoning maps. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks) (Editor's Note: Consistent with MPP En-8. Move to implementation strategies)~~

Topic 2. Earth and Habitat**Vision 2040 Goal:**

The region will preserve the beauty and natural ecological processes of the Puget Sound basin through the conservation and enhancement of natural resources and the environment.

- Identify, preserve, and enhance regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictions.
- Designate, protect, and enhance significant open spaces, natural resources, and critical areas.
- Preserve and enhance habitat to prevent species from inclusion on the Endangered Species List.
- Identify and protect wildlife corridors both inside and outside the urban growth area.
- Preserve and restore native vegetation to protect habitat, especially where it contributes to the overall ecological function.

Sultan Goal**Earth and Habitat*****Goal EN-2: Conserve natural resources and activities******EN 2 Goal: Conserve natural resources and activities***

Conserve and protect natural areas within the environment to provide a ~~continuing~~ place for wildlife that are representative of Sultan's ecological heritage. ~~Protect shoreline, agricultural, and timber production activities that produce a valued natural and economic product and that reflect Sultan's historical origins. Enforce exacting performance standards governing possible land use developments on lands or sites that may be planned to include wildlife. (Editor's Note: Not consistent with rural city designation. Agriculture and timber production are rural activities)~~ (CC 07-15-10 delete the word "continuing" to read "to provide a place for wildlife...")

EN 2.1 Shoreline resources

Protect ~~the~~ waterfront lands, improvements and features that support the overall ecological function and waterfront and waterway activities along ~~the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers designated~~ shorelines. ~~Enforce exacting performance standards governing possible land use development of, or adjacent, existing recreational boat landings and docks, fishing access areas, and beaches. (CC 07-15-10 replace "the Wallace, Sultan and Skykomish Rivers shoreline" with the phrase "designated shorelines")~~

EN 2.2 ~~Agricultural resources~~ Wildlife corridors

~~Enforce exacting standards governing possible land use development of, or adjacent, existing agricultural areas and activities.~~ Promote the use of clustered development patterns, common area conservancies, ~~negative native~~ growth areas and other innovative concepts that conserve or allow the possible coexistence of ~~rural, agricultural activities~~ wildlife corridors within or adjacent to Sultan's developing urban area—~~particularly along the SR 2 highway corridor.~~ (Editor's Note: agricultural activities are outside the city's planning area. Refocus EN 2.2 on protecting wildlife corridors consistent with MPP En-11) (CC 07-01-10 punctuation only)

EN 2.3 Mining resources

~~Enforce exacting performance standards governing the possible establishment and operation of mineral extraction activities where allowed. Require the use of landscaped buffer areas and other methods that shelter and physically and visually screen surrounding areas from mineral extraction sites. Require the prior development, approval, and performance guarantees of suitable and environmentally appropriate reclamation and rehabilitation plans for~~ Establish policies and strategies to require restoration and/or mitigation of proposed mineral extraction sites and activities. CPP Env-5 (CC 07-01-10)

EN 2.4 ~~Open space~~ wildlife habitat

~~Enforce exacting standards governing the land use development of existing, natural open space areas that contain prime wildlife habitat characteristics—particularly along the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers. Promote the use of clustered development patterns, common area conservancies, and other innovative concepts that conserve or allow, the possible coexistence of natural, open space areas and corridors within or adjacent to Sultan's developing urban area and between the Sultan urban growth area and surrounding unincorporated rural areas.~~ (Editor's Note: Duplicates revised EN 2.2)

EN 2.5 Wetland wildlife habitat

~~EN 2.5.1 Protect lands, soils or other wetland areas that have prime wildlife habitat characteristics—especially the extensive wetlands located within the urban growth area.~~

EN 2.5.2 Promote the use of ~~site~~ retention ponds, natural drainage methods, and other site improvements that conserve natural drainage features and ~~increase~~ wetland habitats. (MPP En-9) CC 07-01-10) (CC 07-15-10 delete “increase” to read, “natural drainage features and wetland habitats”)

~~EN 2.5.3 Establish exacting performance standards governing the preservation of wetlands and drainage corridors, steep slopes and wooded areas as natural habitats and wildlife migration corridors.~~

(Editor's Note: EN 2.5.1 and 2.5.3 duplicate EN 1)

~~EN 2.5.4~~ During the development review and approval process, work to ~~control or mitigate~~ adverse impacts associated with land development and to ~~reduce-maintain~~ the amount of natural cover and habitat ~~that would otherwise be reduced or destroyed to the extent possible.~~ (MPP En-10) PB 06-08-10

EN 2.6 Woodland wildlife habitat

~~EN 2.6.1~~ Protect lands, soils or other wooded areas that have prime woodland habitat characteristics—especially the bluff between the Sultan River valley, Winters and Wagley’s Creeks, and the upper plateau.

~~EN 2.6.2~~ Promote the use of buffer zones and corridors, common areas, trails and paths, and other innovative concepts that conserve or increase woodland habitats.

(Editor’s Note: En 2.6.1 and EN 2.6.2 duplicate EN 1)

EN 2.6.3 Promote the use of clustered development patterns, common area conservancies, and other innovative concepts that conserve or allow the possible coexistence of wooded open space corridors within or adjacent to Sultan's developing urban area and between the Sultan urban growth area and surrounding unincorporated rural areas. (MPP En-9)

EN 2.7 Urban flora and fauna

~~EN 2.6.4~~ Incorporate performance-oriented development standards that retain and enhance natural flora and fauna within Sultan's urban environment—especially the wetland and wooded habitat areas. Promote the retention and/or vegetation development of tree stands and wooded areas, landscaped buffer areas and yards, site and area shrubbery, and other natural and established plantings that provide greenery, and habitat, visual interest and relief within Sultan's developed areas. Establish design standards that will replant buffer and developed areas with natural landscape materials and settings that will reestablish wildlife habitats affected by development constructions. ~~(Editor’s Note: Not certain a majority of residents supportive of design standards. Need direction from PB and Council.) CC-07-01-10)~~

Topic 3. Water Quality

Vision 2040 Goal:

The region will meet or do better than standards established for water quality. The quality of the water flowing out of the region – including Puget Sound – should be as good as or better than the quality of water entering the region.

- Maintain natural hydrological functions within the region's ecosystems and watersheds and, where feasible, restore them to a more natural state.
- Restore – where appropriate and possible – the region’s freshwater shorelines, watersheds, and estuaries to a natural condition for ecological function and value.

- Reduce the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers to the extent feasible.
- Identify and address the impacts of climate change on the region's hydrological systems.

Sultan Vision 2040

Water Quality

Goal EN-5: Protect Natural Quality

EN 5 Goal: Protect natural quality

Preserve and protect the unique, interdependent relationship between Sultan's water, land, and cultural heritage.

EN 5.1 Waterway

~~Define and regulate the design and operation of water-oriented activities including over-water structures or water-borne improvements such as piers, floats, barges, and the like to protect the navigational capabilities of the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers.~~ Define and regulate activities that may occur within or may affect the natural currents, flows, and even floodways to protect the functional integrity of the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers' designated waterways. (CC 07-01-10) (CC 07-15-10 replace "the Wallace, Sultan and Skykomish Rivers' waterways" with "designated waterways")

EN 5.2 Habitats

Preserve natural habitat areas, including banks, streams, and associated wetlands, from disruption.

5.2.1 To the extent possible, Pprotect fragile ecosystems that provide the waterfront unique value, especially such as fish spawning beds in the natural tributaries of the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers and Winters and Wagley's Creeks designated rivers, streams and creeks. (CC 07-01-10) (CC 07-15-10 replace "the Wallace, Sultan and Skykomish Rivers and Winters and Wagley's Creeks" with "designated rivers, streams and creeks")

EN 5.3 Water and shoreline quality

~~Define and regulate activities~~ Work Support programs to reduce the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers that contaminate or pollute the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers, and Winters and Wagley's Creeks and shorelines including the use or storage of chemicals, pesticides, fertilizers, fuels and lubricants, animal and human wastes, erosion, and other potentially polluting practices or conditions. (Consistent with MPP En-15)

EN 5.4 Natural setting

Preserve Sultan's natural shoreline and waterway setting to the maximum extent feasible. ~~Control dredging, excavations, land fill, construction of bulkheads, piers, docks, landings or other improvements that will restrict the natural functions or visual character of the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers or shorelines. Utilize natural materials and designs where improvements are considered to blend new constructions with the natural setting and with older structures. (Editor's note – duplicates shoreline policies)~~

Editor's Note: Move EN 6 and EN 7 to Shoreline. Ensure consistency with Shoreline goals, policies and implementation strategies.**~~EN 6 Goal: Maintain a mixed use waterfront~~**

~~Retain a mixed use waterfront including those agriculture, fishing, boating, and tourist uses that provide Sultan's shoreline unique appeal.~~

~~EN 6.1 Fishing~~

~~Preserve fishery developments as a significant cultural and economic resource. Retain important fishing support services and promote development of additional docking and landing facilities consistent with fishing needs.~~

~~EN 6.2 Pleasure boating~~

~~Encourage the development of temporary docking and landing facilities for day use and transient watercraft. Retain open surface water area to the maximum extent possible to facilitate safe and convenient watercraft circulation.~~

~~EN 6.3 Commercial uses~~

~~Encourage development of water oriented commercial uses in locations that can be provided adequate and unobtrusive supporting services including parking. Require commercial developments to provide public facilities and access to shoreline banks, dikes, docks, walkways, and other facilities including vistas.~~

~~EN 6.4 Recreation~~

~~Develop existing publicly owned shoreline properties to provide additional public access where appropriate — particularly in Reese and Sportsmen's Parks. Acquire additional sites, where possible, along the Wallace and Skykomish Rivers. Create a mixture of active and passive public facilities that do not intrude on the natural features of the shoreline.~~

~~EN 7 Goal: Preserve a quality urban waterfront~~

~~Define and enforce the highest quality standards concerning present and future land use developments within Sultan's waterfront areas.~~

~~EN 7.1 Balance and scale~~

~~Maintain a balance in waterfront land use development so that any single use does not overpower or detract from the others. Maintain a human, pleasing scale so that new structures do not overpower existing facilities and do not dominate the shoreline in terms of size, location or appearance.~~

~~EN 7.2 Access and visibility~~

~~Create an accessible shoreline including the development of public parks, fishing and boat docks, picnic and passive overlooks, and viewpoints. Require private developments to provide equivalent access and visibility to tenants and users of new private developments, users of the waterway, and the public at large.~~

~~EN 7.3 Amenities~~

~~Require waterfront developments to provide amenities commensurate with the project's enjoyment of the natural, public resource including where desirable, additional docks or landings, paths or walks, picnic and seating areas, fishing piers or areas, overlooks and viewpoints.~~

~~EN 7.4 Supporting improvements~~

~~Enforce suitable standards governing shoreline improvements equal to the standards enforced in other developments within the Sultan urban area. Illustrate and enforce design standards that control scale, construction materials, drainage patterns, site coverage, landscaping and screening, signage, and other features of unique importance to the waterfront setting.~~

~~Encourage innovative, effective solutions that cluster and share common improvements, reduce paved areas, and otherwise blend constructions with the natural setting or with desirable features of Sultan's built environment.~~

Topic 4. Air Quality

~~EN 4.6 Air operating standards~~

~~Enforce exacting performance. Maintain or do better than existing As required by law, comply with standards governing the emission of carbons, gases or other particles into the atmosphere; and the creation of burnt materials, smoke, dust or other polluting byproducts that could degrade air quality. Develop and adopt an ordinance to regulate the burning of wood in stoves and fireplaces during temperature inversion conditions. (CC 07-01-10)~~

Topic 5. Climate Change (New for Sultan)

EN 5 Address the central Puget Sound region's contribution to climate change by, at a minimum, committing to comply with state initiatives and directives regarding climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gases. When required by state law, work to include an analysis of climate change impacts when conducting an environmental review process under the State Environmental Policy Act.

[EN 5.1 Seek opportunities to reduce the rate of energy use per capita, both in building use and in transportation activities.](#)

[EN 5.2 Promote the development of energy management technology as part of meeting the region's energy needs.](#)

[EN 5.3 Reduce greenhouse gases by supporting the use of conservation and alternative energy sources and by adopting comprehensive plan policies aimed at reducing vehicle miles.](#)

[EN 5.4 Take positive actions to reduce carbons, such as supporting measures to increase the number of trees in urban portions of the region.](#)

[Editor's Note: Move EN 4.7 through EN 4.17 to Implementation Strategies](#)

Implementation Strategies

EN 4.7 Restrict urban or dense development on lands and soils with severe environmental limitations - ~~such as wetlands, flood hazards, steep or unstable slopes, landslide, erosion, and other hazards to reduce risk to potential occupants and the rest of the community. As staff time and resources allow,~~ [Update critical area maps using advanced GIS and global positioning data and create a critical area overlay on zoning maps. \(Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks\) CC 07-01-10](#)

EN 4.8 ~~Conserve those~~ Identify city owned lands and soils that have socially valuable characteristics ~~—such as historic features, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas to preserve Sultan's character.~~ Designate socially valuable landmarks and sites on an overlay of land use plan and zoning maps. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks) [CC 07-01-10](#)

EN 4.9 Restrict high density development within the Sultan and Skykomish River floodways - to reduce risk and damage from flooding, ~~especially should the Sultan Dam fail. Adopt the non-structural flood reduction program and initiate~~ [Pursue](#) acquisition of repetitive flood loss properties within the floodway zone. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks) CC 07-01-10

EN 4.10 Direct urban development to those lands and soils that are most environmentally capable of being developed for urban uses—, including land along the east segment of ~~SR-2US-2~~ and on the plateau to reduce risk and maximize land use potential. Designate high-density residential development zones on the plateau. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks) [CC 07-01-10](#)

EN 4.11 Conserve the steep bluffs as wooded natural areas - to reduce landslide hazard, conserve wildlife habitat, and preserve the woodlands scenic values. Create hillside/woodland cluster provisions. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks)

EN 4.12 Conserve river corridors— to reduce flood risk, protect wetland and wildlife habitat, preserve scenic value, improve water quality and provide public access. Acquire repetitive flood loss properties for habitat. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks) CC 07-01-10

~~**EN 4.12 Conserve the Sultan Riverfront between River Park, Osprey Park, and the Oxbow in open space**~~— to reduce flood risk, protect wetland and wildlife habitat, preserve scenic value, and provide public access. Acquire repetitive flood loss properties for habitat. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks)

~~**EN 4.13 Conserve both sides of the Skykomish River between the Sultan River and 8th Street**~~— to protect wildlife habitat, preserve scenic value, and provide public access. Acquire repetitive flood loss properties for habitat. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks)

~~**EN 4.14 Conserve the north bank of the Wallace River/Sprague Slough from Cemetery Park to the end of Sultan Startup Road**~~— to reduce flood risk, protect wildlife habitat, preserve scenic value, and provide public access. Acquire repetitive flood loss properties for habitat. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks)

~~**EN 4.15 Conserve the Winters and Wagley's Creeks corridor and adjacent wetlands from Sultan Basin Road across Rice Road and to the edge of the plateau at Pacific Northwest Pipeline**~~— to reduce flood risk, protect wildlife habitat, improve surface water quality, preserve scenic value, and provide public access. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks)

~~**EN 4.16 Conserve the wetlands located at the bottom of the plateau slope from Fir Street through the high school to the Oxbow**~~— to reduce flood risk, protect wildlife habitat, improve surface water quality, preserve scenic value, and provide public access. (Relocated from 3. Implementation Tasks)

~~**EN 4.17 Conserve the wetlands located on top of the plateau from Kessler to Rice Road**~~— to reduce flood risk, protect wildlife habitat, improvement surface water quality, preserve scenic value,

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENT

Regional Context

The regional plan, Vision 2040, contains an “overarching goal” for the environment:

“...care for the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving water quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and addressing potential climate change impacts...Planning at all levels should consider the impacts of land use, development patterns, and transportation on the ecosystem.”

Vision 2040 stresses the importance of the natural environment in providing ecological and aesthetic benefits, and protecting water and air. The term “restore” is used primarily to mean re-establishing to an ecologically functioning state, in which natural systems are healthy for plants, animals and humans.

Key concepts identified in Vision 2040 include:

Environmental Stewardship – Coordinate environmental planning across jurisdictions. Use scientific disciplines and new techniques such as low-impact development (LID), green building practices, green street programs, and other sustainable design practices.

Earth and Habitat – Preserve habitat and native vegetation, as well as identifying and enhancing the region’s open spaces.

Water Quality – Maintain and restore the ecological function of the region’s waterways and estuaries. Reduce water pollution and take steps to address the impacts of climate change on the region’s water quality and supply.

Air Quality – The overall quality of the region's air will be better than it is today.

Climate Change – Reduce the contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the anticipated impacts of climate change. Maximize energy efficiency and increase renewable energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions of new vehicles, reduce motor vehicle miles traveled, improve the convenience and safety of nonpolluting transportation modes such as bicycling and walking, increase recycling and reduce waste.

Growth Management Requirements

The Growth Management Act includes thirteen planning goals to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations of cities that are

required or choose to plan under RCW 36.70A.040. Goal number ten² requires cities to: Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.

The Environmental Element is an optional element of the comprehensive plan.

Snohomish Countywide Planning Policies

Countywide Planning Policies form the basis of coordinated countywide environmental strategies for environmental stewardship, earth and habitat, water quality, air quality, and climate change. Related policies in the Development Patterns and Transportation sections address some of the major sources of air quality and climate change pollutants. Protecting and enhancing the quality of the natural environment is central to providing for the quality of life for residents of Snohomish County.

Snohomish County and local jurisdictions will act as a steward of the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving air and water quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and addressing potential climate change impacts. Planning for the future will embrace sustainable ways to integrate care of the environment with economic and social needs.

Organization

Under Vision 2040, the Environmental Element is divided into five topic headings:

6. Environmental stewardship
7. Earth and habitat
8. Water quality
9. Air quality
10. Climate change (New for Sultan)

Editor's Note

The following draft goals and policies are built on the framework of the City of Sultan 2008 Revised Comprehensive Plan.

Goals and policies in the 2008 Revision are not numbered. The goals and policies proposed for the 2011 Comprehensive Plan Update are numbered in the proposed version to allow readers and comments to be easily referenced. A numbering system will be adopted in the final revision of the 2011 Update. New proposed text and policies are shown as underline. Text and policies proposed to be deleted are shown as ~~strikethrough~~.

² RCW 36.70A.020(10)

Topic 1. Environmental Stewardship

Vision 2040 Goal:

The region will safeguard the natural environment by meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- Coordination between local jurisdictions
- Integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessment at a regional level.
- Locate development to minimize impacts to natural features.
- Promote the use of innovative and environmentally sensitive development practices
- Use scientific information when implementing environmental standards
- Mitigate noise caused by traffic, industrial and other uses

Sultan 2040 Goal

Goal EN-1: Respect the natural environment

Maintain, as much as possible, a harmonious relationship between the natural environment and Sultan's proposed future urban development.

EN 1.1 Tributary drainage

Where possible, use scientific information to improve and enhance perennial streams, ponds, springs, marshes, swamps, wet spots, bogs and other surface tributary collection areas during the land use development process

EN 1.2 Where possible, seek to maintain natural biological functions and minimize impacts to natural features.

EN 1.3 Floodplains

Maintain and, where possible, protect soils, retention ponds and other floodplains or flooded areas from land use developments that would alter the pattern or capacity of area floodways, or that would interfere with the natural drainage. MPP-EN-3

EN 1.4 Dams and beaches

Maintain and, protect where possible, natural features that may mitigate possible environmental damage due to dam breaches, severe storms and other natural hazards or failures. punctuation only)

EN 1.5 Protect soils

Where possible, protect or mitigate damage to soils with extremely poor permeability, high water tables, or very poor compressive strengths during the land use development process.

EN 1.8 Bedrock escarpments, landslide and soil erosion

Where possible, protect or mitigate damage from development on lands containing shallow depths to bedrock or bedrock escarpments, particularly where combined with slopes that are susceptible to landslide hazards or soil erosion.

EN 3 Goal: Land management policies

Locate development in a manner that minimizes impacts to natural features. Support the use of innovative environmentally sensitive development practices, including design, materials, construction, and on-going maintenance. (MPP-En-5)

EN 3.1 Density allocation policies

As much as possible, allocate high density urban development onto lands that are optimally suitable and capable of supporting urban uses, and/or that pose fewest environmental risks.

EN 3.1.1 To the extent necessary, allocate urban uses away from lands or soils that have severe environmental hazards – such as flood hazard.

EN 3.1.2 Protect lands and soils with severe limitations particularly wetlands, drainage corridors and lands with seasonal high water tables or aquifers.

EN 3.2 Innovative development practices As much as possible, allow for innovation during the development process to maintain and improve natural systems, provided the end result will not risk environmental hazards or otherwise create public problems or nuisances. (MPP En-5)

EN 4 Goal: Urban use operating standards

To the extent possible, mitigate noise, air, light, glare, and other operating characteristics or permitted urban uses that affect the quality of the natural and/or manmade environment.

4.1 Noise - development characteristics

Promote the use of materials with acoustical properties in building developments, landscape and earth berm buffers in site improvements, and other innovations that will reduce noise impacts on residential developments, particularly along US-2 and Sultan's other major traffic corridors.

EN 4.2 Noise - operating characteristics

During the development approval process, seek to minimize impacts on urban residential areas from obnoxious or distracting noises, particularly during evening hours, and especially of a kind created by controllable activities.

EN 4.3 Groundwater

To the extent practical, cooperate with Snohomish County and other public agencies to create and implement plans that will prevent groundwater contamination risks from future developments in high-risk areas. (MPP En-1)

EN 4.8 Identify lands and soils that have socially valuable characteristics - such as historic features, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas to preserve Sultan's character.

Topic 2. Earth and Habitat

Vision 2040 Goal:

The region will preserve the beauty and natural ecological processes of the Puget Sound basin through the conservation and enhancement of natural resources and the environment.

- Identify, preserve, and enhance regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictions.
- Designate, protect, and enhance significant open spaces, natural resources, and critical areas.
- Preserve and enhance habitat to prevent species from inclusion on the Endangered Species List.
- Identify and protect wildlife corridors both inside and outside the urban growth area.
- Preserve and restore native vegetation to protect habitat, especially where it contributes to the overall ecological function.

Sultan Goal

Earth and Habitat

Goal EN-2: Conserve natural resources and activities

EN 2 Goal: Conserve natural resources and activities

Conserve and protect natural areas within the environment to provide a place for wildlife that are representative of Sultan's ecological heritage.

EN 2.1 Shoreline resources

Protect waterfront lands, improvements and features that support the overall ecological function and waterfront and waterway activities along designated shorelines.

EN 2.2 Wildlife corridors

Promote the use of clustered development patterns, common area conservancies, native growth areas and other innovative concepts that conserve or allow the possible coexistence of wildlife corridors within or adjacent to Sultan's developing urban area. (Editor's Note: agricultural

activities are outside the city's planning area. Refocus EN 2.2 on protecting wildlife corridors consistent with MPP En-11)

EN 2.3 Mining resources

Establish policies and strategies to require restoration and/or mitigation of proposed mineral extraction sites and activities. CPP Env-5

EN 2.5 Wetland wildlife habitat

EN 2.5.2 Promote the use of retention ponds, natural drainage methods, and other site improvements that conserve natural drainage features and wetland habitats. (MPP En-9)

EN 2.5.4 During the development review and approval process, work to control or mitigate adverse impacts associated with land development to maintain the amount of natural cover and habitat to the extent possible. (MPP En-10)

EN 2.6 Woodland wildlife habitat

EN 2.6.3 Promote the use of clustered development patterns, common area conservancies, and other innovative concepts that conserve or allow the possible coexistence of wooded open space corridors within or adjacent to Sultan's developing urban area and between the Sultan urban growth area and surrounding unincorporated rural areas. (MPP En-9)

EN 2.6.4 Promote the retention and/or development of tree stands and wooded areas, landscaped buffer areas and yards, site and area shrubbery, and other natural and established plantings that provide greenery and habitat.

Topic 3. Water Quality

Vision 2040 Goal:

The region will meet or do better than standards established for water quality. The quality of the water flowing out of the region – including Puget Sound – should be as good as or better than the quality of water entering the region.

- Maintain natural hydrological functions within the region's ecosystems and watersheds and, where feasible, restore them to a more natural state.
- Restore – where appropriate and possible – the region's freshwater shorelines, watersheds, and estuaries to a natural condition for ecological function and value.
- Reduce the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers to the extent feasible.
- Identify and address the impacts of climate change on the region's hydrological systems.

Sultan Vision 2040**Water Quality*****Goal EN-5: Protect Natural Quality*****EN 5 Goal: Protect natural quality**

Preserve and protect the unique, interdependent relationship between Sultan's water, land, and cultural heritage.

EN 5.1 Waterway

Define and regulate activities that occur within or may affect the natural currents, flows, and even floodways to protect the functional integrity of designated waterways.

EN 5.2 Habitats

Preserve natural habitat areas, including banks, streams, and associated wetlands, from disruption.

5.2.1 To the extent possible, protect fragile ecosystems such as fish spawning beds in the natural tributaries of designated rivers, streams and creeks.

EN 5.3 Water and shoreline quality

Support programs to reduce the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers that contaminate or pollute creeks and shorelines. (Consistent with MPP En-15)

EN 5.4 Natural setting

Preserve Sultan's natural shoreline and waterway setting to the maximum extent feasible.

Topic 4. Air Quality**EN 4.6 Air operating standards**

As required by law, comply with standards governing the emission of carbons, gases or other particles into the atmosphere and the creation of burnt materials, smoke, dust or other polluting byproducts that could degrade air quality.

Topic 5. Climate Change (New for Sultan)

EN 5 Address the central Puget Sound region's contribution to climate change by, at a minimum, committing to comply with state initiatives and directives regarding climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gases. When required by state law, work to include an analysis of climate change impacts when conducting an environmental review process under the State Environmental Policy Act.

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