

Environmental Element Policy Discussion



Planning Commission
Meeting
February 5, 2024



Organized by following topics:

- Environmental Protection
- Climate Planning and Resiliency (now to be addressed fully within a Climate Change Element)

January 16, 2024

- Water Resources, Aquifers and Critical Recharge Areas
- Snoqualmie River, Stream Corridors and Wetlands
- Geologic and Flood Hazard Areas
- Goals
- Revisions to Environmental Protection policies

February 5, 2024

Draft Environmental Policies

Water Resources, Aquifers and Critical Recharge Areas



- Preserve and protect natural surface water storage sites, such as wetlands, aquifers, streams, and water bodies as these are critical features that support hydrological functions, water quality, regulate surface flows and recharge groundwater. **Vision 2050**
- Coordinate the management and restoration of the Snoqualmie watershed through participation in the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum and the implementation of the Puget Sound Action Agenda.
- Ensure that local regulations for surface and stormwater management allow for and encourage Low-Impact Development (LID) and natural drainage practices. Support retrofitting basins to improve stormwater management and quality.
- Encourage building construction that uses alternative techniques to minimize impervious surfaces and reduce harmful impacts to the natural environment and proximate waterways.

Draft Environmental Policies

Water Resources, Aquifers and Critical Recharge Areas



- Actively investigate and promote water conservation strategies to efficiently use the City's legal access to water, and to reduce the amount of wastewater to be treated, through such measures as rotating irrigation schedules, and by incentivizing or requiring installation of water-wise landscaping throughout the City.
- Seek funding to support stormwater retrofitting and green technologies in areas where water quality is impacted by stormwater.
- Work with the State Department of Ecology, King County, Tribes and other stakeholders to reduce or eliminate pollution sources and protect public health.
- Work in conjunction with King County to take corrective action to remove contaminant loading due to failing septic systems and stormwater runoff in susceptible recharge areas.

Draft Environmental Policies

Snoqualmie River, Stream Corridors & Wetlands



- Minimize stream crossings, utilizing bridges rather than culverts whenever feasible, and minimize new utility crossing impacts, when possible, by using techniques such as bridges, tunneling, or other innovative methods.
- Participate in regional species protection efforts, including salmon habitat enhancement and restoration. Identify, prioritize, and eliminate physical barriers (such as fish-blocking culverts), and other impediments to anadromous fish spawning and rearing habitat. **Vision 2050**
- Maintain infrastructure located within stream corridors in accordance with Best Management Practices that minimize water quality impacts and pursue design modifications or alternative siting options for when significant alterations are undertaken.

Draft Environmental Policies

Snoqualmie River, Stream Corridors & Wetlands



- Protect wetlands areas, functions and values within the City and urban growth area and allow the creation of wetlands where feasible and appropriate.
- Restore previously disturbed wetland and stream buffers where feasible and maintain restored buffers.
- Ensure wetland regulations allow for conservation easements and other techniques to preserve their health and existence.

Draft Environmental Policies

Geologically and Flood Hazardous Areas



- Protect properties and ecological functions in the floodplain with development regulations that are guided by standards established by FEMA, and the Department of Ecology.
- Pursue strategies to lower the City's classification rating in the federal FEMA program, which provides a discount federally backed flood insurance premiums for property owners.
- Pursue the reduction of accelerated erosion and sedimentation due to construction and construction-related activities.

Draft Environmental Policies

Geologically and Flood Hazardous Areas



- Protect areas with severe geologic hazard potential, limiting development in hazard areas or requiring development to minimize grading and enhance native vegetation to the greatest extent possible.
- Seek to restore natural vegetative cover and natural drainage features on degraded sites including the removal of invasive weeds as necessary.

Draft Environmental Policies

GOALS



- **Environmental Protection:** The health and ecosystem services and functions provided by the City's natural environment are protected and enhanced, and potential hazards to citizen health, welfare and property are minimized.
- **Water Resources, Aquifers and Critical Recharge Areas:** Rivers, streams, aquifer recharge areas and other water resources within the City are protected and managed for multiple beneficial uses.

Draft Environmental Policies

GOALS



- **Snoqualmie River, Stream Corridors and Wetlands:** Natural hydraulic, hydrologic and habitat functions, and scenic and recreational values, of rivers, streams, wetlands and natural drainage courses, are protected.
- **Geologic and Flood Hazard Areas:** Public health and property damage risk associated with flood and geologic hazard areas have been reduced, while preventing irreparable harm to regionally significant ecological resources.

Draft Environmental Policies

GOALS



	Environmental Protection	Water Resources	Streams and Wetlands	Geologic and Flood Hazards
Proposed Policies Orange text depicts policies reviewed by Planning Commission at 1/16/24 Meeting Orange <u>underline</u> depicts Tribal recommendations subsequent 1/16/24 PC Meeting				
Incorporate and utilize applicable best available science for purposes of designating and protecting all regulated critical areas and anadromous fisheries that need “special consideration” for their conservation and protection.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Protect Snoqualmie's environmental critical areas, habitat, and the natural environment through land use plans, surface water management plans and programs, comprehensive park plans, development regulations and site-specific project review <u>and consultation with affected Tribes.</u> Vision 2050	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure the protection and recovery of ecosystems to provide healthy habitat and support fish, wildlife, and plant populations in a changing climate. <u>This includes actively managing lands through controlling noxious weeds, restoring native vegetation, and monitoring project results.</u>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinate with governmental agencies, non-profit organizations and Tribes to protect and enhance the environment through <u>individual project notifications</u> , countywide and watershed planning, fish and wildlife resource management, and habitat protection networks across jurisdictional boundaries.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Establish and maintain relations <u>Follow the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent with regard to</u> Native American tribes for the preservation of archaeological sites and traditional cultural properties that are vulnerable to climate impacts.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Actively manage city forest lands to decrease climate-exacerbated risks from severe wildfires, protect residents, and improve ecosystem health and habitat and encourage others to do so.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Draft Environmental Policies

GOALS



	Environmental Protection	Water Resources	Streams and Wetlands	Geologic and Flood Hazards
Proposed Policies Orange text depicts policies reviewed by Planning Commission at 1/16/24 Meeting Orange underline depicts Tribal recommendations subsequent 1/16/24 PC Meeting				
<u>Apply Best Available Science, including Traditional Ecological Knowledge, to protect critical areas such as wetlands, landslide hazard and erosion-prone areas, and maintain these areas in their natural condition, including native vegetation preservation.</u>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Control the spread of noxious weeds as identified by King County Noxious Weed Control Board from public properties, particularly in more fire-prone areas like roadsides and utility corridors and if possible, educate citizens about the control of noxious weeds on private property.	✓	✓	✓	
Support integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessment. Vision 2050	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promote innovative and environmentally sensitive practices in site planning, design, materials selection, construction and maintenance. Vision 2050	✓	✓	✓	✓
Encourage environmental stewardship on private and public lands through partnerships and voluntary efforts that protect, restore and enhance the quality and functions of critical areas and associated buffers. Vision 2050	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support programs that ensure 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 by climate change. Vision 2050	✓	✓	✓	✓

Draft Environmental Policies

GOALS



	Environmental Protection	Water Resources	Streams and Wetlands	Geologic and Flood Hazards
Proposed Policies				
Preserve and protect natural surface water storage sites, such as wetlands, aquifers, streams, and water bodies as these are critical features that support hydrological functions, water quality, regulate surface flows and recharge groundwater. Vision 2050	✓	✓	✓	
Coordinate the management and restoration of the Snoqualmie watershed through participation in the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum and the implementation of the Puget Sound Action Agenda.	✓	✓	✓	
Ensure that local regulations for surface and stormwater management allow for and encourage Low-Impact Development (LID) and natural drainage practices. Support retrofitting basins to improve stormwater management and quality.	✓	✓		
Encourage building construction that uses alternative techniques to minimize impervious surfaces and reduce harmful impacts to the natural environment and proximate waterways.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Actively investigate and promote water conservation strategies to efficiently use the City's legal access to water, and to reduce the amount of wastewater to be treated, through such measures as rotating irrigation schedules, and by incentivizing or requiring installation of water-wise landscaping throughout the City.	✓	✓		
Work with the State Department of Ecology, King County, Tribes and other stakeholders to reduce or eliminate pollution sources and protect public health.	✓	✓	✓	

Draft Environmental Policies

GOALS



	Environmental Protection	Water Resources	Streams and Wetlands	Geologic and Flood Hazards
Proposed Policies				
Seek funding to support stormwater retrofitting and green technologies in areas where water quality is impacted by stormwater.				
Work in conjunction with King County to take corrective action to remove contaminant loading due to failing septic systems and stormwater runoff in susceptible recharge areas.	✓	✓	✓	
Minimize stream crossings, utilizing bridges rather than culverts whenever feasible, and minimize new utility crossing impacts when possible, by using techniques such as bridges, tunneling, or other innovative methods.	✓	✓	✓	
Participate in regional species protection efforts, including salmon habitat enhancement and restoration. Identify, prioritize, and eliminate physical barriers (such as fish-blocking culverts), and other impediments to anadromous fish spawning and rearing habitat. Vision 2050	✓	✓	✓	
Maintain infrastructure located within stream corridors in accordance with Best Management Practices that minimize water quality impacts and pursue design modifications or alternative siting options for when significant alterations are undertaken.		✓	✓	
Protect wetlands areas, functions and values within the City and urban growth area and allow the creation of wetlands where feasible and appropriate.		✓	✓	
Restore previously disturbed wetland and stream buffers where feasible and maintain restored buffers.		✓	✓	

Draft Environmental Policies

GOALS



	Environmental Protection	Water Resources	Streams and Wetlands	Geologic and Flood Hazards
Proposed Policies				
Ensure wetland regulations allow for conservation easements and other techniques to preserve their health and existence.	✓	✓	✓	
Protect properties and ecological functions in the floodplain with development regulations that are guided by standards established by FEMA, and the Department of Ecology.	✓			✓
Pursue strategies to lower the City's classification rating in the federal FEMA program, which provides a discount federally backed flood insurance premiums for property owners.				✓
Pursue the reduction of accelerated erosion and sedimentation due to construction and construction-related activities.	✓			✓
Protect areas with severe geologic hazard potential, limiting development in hazard areas or requiring development to minimize grading and enhance native vegetation to the greatest extent possible.	✓			✓
Seek to restore natural vegetative cover and natural drainage features on degraded sites, including the removal of invasive weeds as necessary.	✓			✓

