

**TUMWATER PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

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**CONVENE:** 7:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Elizabeth Robbins and Commissioners Terry Kirkpatrick, Brandon Staff, Michael Tobias, and Anthony Varela.

Excused: Commissioner Grace Edwards.

Staff: Planning Manager Brad Medrud and Senior Planner Alex Baruch.

**CHANGES TO AGENDA:** Agenda items 7 and 8 were switched.

**COMMISSIONER’S REPORTS:** There were no reports.

**MANAGER’S REPORT:** Manager Medrud reported the City is conducting a second interview for a planner position.

The open house is currently available online. A report on the results will be provided at the next meeting.

The next meeting is a joint session with the City Council at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There were no public comments.

**2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE – CONSERVATION:** Planner Baruch thanked Commissioners for providing feedback on the Conservation Element. The staff report includes updated text for some of the items based on feedback. The goal of the review is to review the current drafts of goals, policies, and actions. Following additional feedback, another draft of the element will be presented in October.

Planner Baruch reviewed proposed changes to goals, policies, and implementation actions from the original draft proposed by staff:

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-1	Use best available science when developing and implementing environmental management policies and regulations. (New goal) <i>Refer to the PSRC Policy Strength Continuum to include conditions for success</i>	Recognize the significant role played by natural features and systems in determining the overall environmental quality and livability of Tumwater.

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Chair Robbins noted the term “best available science” is well known and defined within the realm of government. She asked whether the term is commonly understood by the public. Manager Medrud responded that although the format for the document is undergoing design, the intent is to provide definitions of readily used terms on the website in addition to the definition as defined in Washington Administrative Code (WAC). In this instance, “best available science” (BAS) should be included as required by the state for this specific element. The term is included throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Planner Baruch added that the term is a requirement within the checklist for critical areas to demonstrate how the City utilizes BAS.

Commissioner Varela asked about the potential of the public exploring the definition of BAS online to learn about the current definition. Manager Medrud replied that critical areas encompass many features ranging from wetlands to habitat to geologically hazardous areas. Current published BAS exists for each of those elements. In previous iterations, the City provided links to the information.

Chair Robbins said that although she favors the inclusion of BAS, leading the section with a procedural activity appears to sidestep the overarching goal. She asked about the possibility of including BAS within the language rather than leading with the term.

Manager Medrud offered an alternative of explaining the term to the public as the term is a key component of state requirements. Providing more information and background would be preferable rather than eliminating the term. Policies and implementations are focused on activities that go hand in hand with BAS.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-1.1	Wetlands, streams, shorelines of the state, fish and wildlife habitats, aquifers and critical aquifer recharge areas including wellhead protection areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas are designated as environmentally sensitive areas in accordance with the Growth Management Act to protect the functions and values of these critical areas as well as to protect against threats to health, safety, and property. (Updated current policy)	Designate and protect critical areas including wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas in accordance with the Growth Management Act to protect the functions and values of these areas as well as to protect against threats to health, safety, and property.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick questioned whether Policy C-1.1 is

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standard bureaucratic language as the policy is unreasonably long and difficult to understand. There are other similar policies as well. Manager Medrud advised that the policy could be revised to improve structure and readability.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick added that actions are not necessarily needed, and his preference is to include more goals without actions. He cited Action C-6.4.1 as a more preferable format as it includes subsections describing each action.

Manager Medrud requested clarification as to Commissioner Kirkpatrick’s note on the spreadsheet reflecting no action for several policies.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick admitted that he misread the instructions for reviewing the format. In addition to reviewing the format, he addressed policies and goals. He believes policies are not effective without assigned actions, which he noted for policies lacking actions.

Commissioner Varela suggested reducing the paragraph in Policy C-1.1 by including BAS to eliminate text. If a person has questions, reference material could be cited. Manager Medrud suggested including a bolded list of critical areas that are identified for protection rather than a lengthy paragraph.

Chair Robbins offered that current language of Policy C-1 reflected as a general statement incorporating BAS actually reflects the intent of language in new Policy C-1.1. Manager Medrud suggested using the old language of Policy C-1 and utilizing policy language for C-1.2 to address BAS. Language in Policy C-1 is ambiguous. Chair Robbins agreed more specificity or stronger language would be preferable. Manager Medrud agreed because critical areas play an essential role in the health of the community.

In response to a question about the development of the existing goals and policies, Manager Medrud explained that the section was developed either an element in the initial Comprehensive Plan or updated during the 2106 update process. The goals and policies were not developed from any specific metrics nor were they prioritized. The intent of the current update process is to create more actionable policies and implementation actions. Existing policies and goals are valid but need to be framed to address the current environment.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-1.2	Base regulations on the best available science to protect and enhance the functions and values of environmentally sensitive areas. (Splits original policy)	Include best available science in developing policies and development regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas and consider

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conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fisheries, consistent with the Growth Management Act

Commissioner Tobias questioned whether the term, “environmentally sensitive area” is a definition by the City or a state or federal definition. Planner Baruch offered that the term, “critical areas” could replace the language. Manager Medrud supported the recommendation because the terminology is defined as the areas the City must protect.

Commissioner Varela asked about the possibility of highlighting the terms and providing a link to each term. Manager Medrud said it would be similar to BAS by including a hyperlink. The document would not include too many hyperlinks with a goal of achieving a balance.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick supported the policy as it speaks to enhancing the environment as directed by new legislation that was not included in prior elements. Manager Medrud added that the policy offers more opportunities to discuss the meaning of “enhance.”

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-1.3	Protect the ecological integrity of the natural environment while allowing for compatible growth and development.	Protect the ecological integrity of the natural environment while allowing for compatible growth and development.

*Protecting "ecological integrity of the natural environment" could be done in part by regulation and using a future ecosystem services asset inventory to track. Consider it an implementation action by defining ecosystem integrity*

Chair Robbins said Policy C-1.3 appears to be unspecific. She asked about the possibility of revising the policy to improve specificity or if the policy exists to distinguish other critical or environmentally sensitive areas.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick noted the staff notes reflect the development of a definition for ecosystem integrity (C-1.3). He asked whether staff plans to draft a definition or whether boilerplate language is available. Manager Medrud said he is not aware of any boilerplate language.

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Chair Robbins inquired as to whether there is an accepted term that defines ecosystem integrity that speaks to ecological values, functions, or the value of having an intact ecosystem. Manager Medrud advised that defining the term is a pending action by staff.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-1.5	Use studies and plans such as the most recent version of the adopted Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan for Thurston County, the Tumwater Urban Forestry Management Plan, and Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan to inform policy and regulation development and implementation. (Updated and expanded current policy)	Implement the mitigation goals, objectives, and initiatives contained in the most recent version of the adopted Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan for Thurston County.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick referred to the policy and the need to add an action item for expanding any existing regulations to ensure the policy is reflected in the City’s ordinances and plans. Manager Medrud said the policy implements actions already identified in plans and that each plan should be identified distinctly.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-2	Promote conservation of natural resources and the protection of the environment in cooperation with residents, business owners, schools, affected jurisdictions, and tribes. (New goal)	Old policy: C-1.2: Promote conservation of natural resources and the environment in cooperation with residents, business owners, schools, affected jurisdictions, and tribes.
C-2.1	Support education programs in the community that outline the need for natural resource conservation and protection of critical areas and look to create opportunity for community action. (New policy to capture educational component of policies and regulations)	Encourage and support active measures to protect and enhance Tumwater’s natural environment.

Commissioner Tobias said language of “... look to create opportunity for community action.” in new Policy C-2.1 is vague and noncommittal. He suggested language such as, forming a committee to explore an option or replacing the language with language that speaks to direct action.

Discussion ensued on funding availability for water quality and stormwater improvements. Manager Medrud said the City has

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allocated funding for water quality and stormwater management. Fees paid by businesses and residents for stormwater also support educational efforts. In some cases for water quality and habitat restoration, many of those activities are supported by the City through the Water Resources & Sustainability Department. The Stream Team, a volunteer organization, has been supporting similar efforts within the community. The City’s Green Team is comprised of members representing all departments in the City focusing on ways to improve City operations.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-2.1.3	Support water conservation messaging and outreach. (New implementation action)	
C-2.1.4	Support water quality messaging and outreach for wellhead and source protection. (New implementation action)	

Chair Robbins asked about combining Actions C-2.1.3 and C-2.1.4 because they are similar. Manager Medrud explained that the policies are distinct with different goals. Water conservation speaks to reducing withdrawal of water from aquifers while water quality addresses contaminants flowing to streams and rivers.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-3.1	Protect and enhance water quality by preserving the amenity and ecological functions of water features through land use plans, innovative land development, public education, and stormwater regulations. (New policy)	
C-4	Enhance Natural Drainage Systems. (New goal)	
C-4.1	Develop Watershed Management Plans in partnership with other jurisdictions who are also part of the same watershed. (New policy)	

Commissioner Kirkpatrick commented that new policy C-4-1 is an action rather than a policy and recommended renumbering the section as an action item. Manager Medrud suggested the entire section requires additional review.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-4.2	Develop conservation or	Include best available

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- protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fish habitat, consistent with the Growth Management Act. (Splitting of original policy)
- science in developing policies and development regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas and consider conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fisheries, consistent with the Growth Management Act.
- C-4.3 Protect and enhance natural drainage systems to maintain and improve water quality and reduce public costs. (New policy)
- C-4.6 Require resource industries to use management practices that prevent erosion and sedimentation and pollutants from entering ground or surface waters following State regulations. (New policy)

Chair Robbins recommended expanding the definition of “enhance” in new goal C-4 “Enhance Natural Drainage Systems.” Manager Medrud explained that enhance is a step above protecting, such as adding plantings over time or introducing new species, etc. Enhancing includes activities that improve an existing system through different measures.

Chair Robbins recommended adding “and implement” to C-4.2 “Develop (*and implement*) conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fish habitat, consistent with the Growth Management Act.” Planner Baruch recommended adding an implementation action.

Manager Medrud explained how the new policy intends to provide a host of measures that are beyond critical area protections of stormwater, aquifer recharge areas, and air quality, etc. Prior policies focused on conservation goals and did not expand into different areas. The intent is recognizing the importance by adding a separate policy.

Manager Medrud reported new policy C-4.6, “Require resource industries to use management practices that prevent erosion and sedimentation and pollutants from entering ground or surface waters following State regulations” addresses specific areas in the City. The policy addresses gravel pits, mineral resources, or forest resource lands in the City.

Chair Robbins asked whether the actions under new policy C-5.3 account for any impacts caused by employee teleworking over the last several years and whether the trend is forecasted to continue into

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the planning horizon. Teleworking would contribute to the reduction of commuting and travel by automobile. Manager Medrud said staff is exploring the trend with the City’s transportation consultant. Initially, discussions centered on PM peak hours that have decreased while overall traffic counts have increased throughout the day. Traffic studies were paused during the pandemic and have only recently initiated in spring 2023. The City lacks a full dataset because of insufficient data.

Discussion ensued on ways to encourage people to take advantage of vehicle technologies and add more electric vehicle charging stations around the City. Manager Medrud said those goals are included in the Climate Element. Many goals and policies are moving to the Climate Element from different elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The intent is to consolidate all relevant information within the Climate Element.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick recommended adding action C-5.3.3, “Work with Intercity Transit to expand bus routes in Tumwater.” The goal of reducing the use of vehicles can only be achieved if other alternatives are available to the community. Many of the new low-income housing developments are and will be located at the end of bus lines.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-5	Improve Air Quality. (New goal)	
C-5.2	Require tree and vegetation retention and landscaping to provide filtering of suspended particulates. (New policy)	
C-5.3	Support public transportation, nonmotorized transportation, and transportation demand management programs to reduce vehicle miles traveled, greenhouse gas emissions, and other locally generated air pollutants. (New policy)	
C-5.3.1	Work with local employers to adopt transportation demand management programs to encourage their employees to use alternative forms of transportation to reduce vehicle trips and emissions. (New implementation action)	

Chair Robbins questioned the intent of the staff note for policy C-5 of, “Should we investigate wildfire hazards and air quality hazards?” Manager Medrud replied that the remark was posed by the Sustainability Coordinator and has not been addressed by staff. Chair Robbins recommended citing some resources such as hazard



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maps or other information. Manager Medrud referred to the Hazard Mitigation Plan that addresses wildfire. The state is also addressing hazards to property caused by wildfires.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick suggested the policy on air quality would likely be addressed regionally rather than independently by each city. Manager Medrud said the policy would also be addressed as part of the adaptation plan section of the Climate Element as a hazard more likely caused by climate change.

Chair Robbins added that the policy might benefit by including a pie chart depicting sources of air pollutants, such as wildfires and transportation and their contribution to air quality problems.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick cited new policy C-5.2 and suggested revising the policy to state, “Require appropriate tree, vegetation retention, and landscaping to provide filtering of suspended particulates” to avoid the plantings of inappropriate vegetation. Chair Robbins suggested including a reference to the Urban Forestry Management Plan as well. Manager Medrud noted staff is developing a street tree list for the City as well as some similar guidance for landscaping.

Commissioner Kirkpatrick referred to new policy C-5.3. Today, many areas of the City are not served by Intercity Transit. Many of those residents likely cannot afford a vehicle. If the City promotes low-income housing, it is imperative to provide alternate means of transportation for those residents to access jobs and services. Adding an action within the element might prompt more action by Intercity Transit.

Manager Medrud replied that new policy C-5.3 should be moved to the Transportation Plan. A new C-5.3 and corresponding actions could refer to goals, policies, and actions in the Transportation Plan. Suggested policy language could state, “Look for ways to reduce greenhouse gas emission in line with the Transportation Plan policies and policies in the Climate Element.”

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-6	Protect Streams and Lakes. (New goal)	
C-6.1	When impacts from new development cause the loss of natural functions or wildlife habitat, require that environmental protections be implemented and monitored for success. (New policy)	
C-6.5	Require the use of stormwater infiltration techniques where feasible in private and public developments to maintain or restore natural flows in	

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streams and protect aquatic habitat and recreation resources. (New policy)

Manager Medrud suggested the language in new policy C-6.5 citing “where feasible” should be defined, as it could be misinterpreted. He recommended a review of the City’s Stormwater Drainage Manual. Chair Robbins agreed because if it is intended to imply financially, it may not be financially possible for the City to pursue.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-6.5.2	Retain existing wetlands, natural drainage systems, and their associated buffers on the site of new development and require the maintenance of natural features. New implementation action)	

Commissioner Kirkpatrick questioned staff notes indicating, “Maintenance would be through monitoring bonds.” Manager Medrud explained that the note refers to maintenance by different components of monitoring, bonds, or other measures. Financial bonds are typically effective until plantings have been established by approximately three to five years or longer for critical areas. It provides the City the ability to ensure financial responsibility for replanting in those situations where plants died, and a replanting is necessary. Planner Baruch added that in most cases, the bond is secured in areas where buffers have been disturbed or reduced buffers have been allowed with mitigation. Monitoring through reports is required for a period of years.

Chair Robbins questioned the possibility of concerns by developers of securing a bond for many years. Manager Medrud said the practice is standard especially in those circumstances where buffers have been reduced to accommodate construction of a project. A bond is obtained to ensure the buffer maintains its functionality, which has been a common development practice since the early 90s.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-7	Enhance Wetlands (New goal)	
C-7.1	Protect wetlands not as isolated units, but as ecosystems that provide essential services, and their functionality within watersheds. (Current policy)	Protect wetlands not as isolated units, but as ecosystems, and essential elements of watersheds.

Chair Robbins and Commissioner Tobias recommended revising new policy C-7.1 to reflect the protection of wetlands on both an individual basis and as a wider ecosystem to ensure all wetlands are

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protected rather than based on size.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-7.2.1	Enforce development regulations for wetlands. (New implementation action)	

Commissioner Kirkpatrick questioned the removal of “significant” from the first draft of new implementation action C-7.2.1. Manager Medrud replied that there are different categories of wetlands based on size and habitat value. The City is required to protect all wetlands regardless of the category of the wetland. Commissioner Kirkpatrick said his concern is that many wetlands have been classified by the public rather than through BAS. In many areas, some wetlands only have water for three months during the year, which are less significant than other wetlands, such as the wetlands near the entrance to Nisqually River. Manager Medrud responded that some wetlands serve as habitats for species that thrive in areas that are only inundated with water for a portion of the year. Each wetland has a different ecological value regardless of the presence of or lack of water.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-7.4.1	Enforce regulations that allow the reasonable use of property as defined by State law. (New implementation action)	

Commissioner Kirkpatrick suggested citing the state regulation (RCW) as the action is too vague. Manager Medrud affirmed the request as well as adding the state definition of “reasonable use of property.”

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-7.5	Stormwater treatment and flow control sites associated with wetlands must be maintained in a manner that ensures the ecological functions of the wetland to minimize impacts to critical area habitat. (New policy)	
C-7.5.1	Enforce regulations that would ensure the water level fluctuations within wetland areas due to stormwater treatment and flow control objectives are maintained like natural conditions as part of new development. (New implementation action)	

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Commissioner Kirkpatrick questioned the process the City employs to ensure maintenance of water levels. Manager Medrud said the issue is whether the City utilizes wetlands for stormwater retention. Planner Baruch added that typically, stormwater retention or other stormwater facilities are located outside of wetlands; however, there are many instances where water from stormwater ponds is released to wetlands over time or as part of the natural flow of redirecting water in smaller amounts. Water monitoring is accomplished through observations of stormwater facilities. City staff monitors areas located near aquifer recharge areas or wellhead protection areas to ensure particulates are measured and identified prior to infiltration to wells to ensure no contaminants enter wells.

Chair Robbins noted that “Enforce regulations” is redundant, as all regulations should be enforced. She questioned the intent of the implementation action.

Manager Medrud questioned whether C-7.4.1 is necessary to include because the state allows development of property. An implementation action is unnecessary as development is allowed by the state. Chair Robbins suggested that the intent is to apply regulations and monitor their effectiveness. Manager Medrud responded that there are no actions necessary to monitor because the City is required to allow development under state law. Commissioner Kirkpatrick recommended deleting “Enforce regulations that would” from C-7.5.1.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-8	Protect Groundwater. (New goal)	
C-8.1	Protect aquifers, aquifer recharge areas, and wellhead protection areas from contamination. (Updated policy)	Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies.
C-9	Protect Geological Hazardous Areas, such as Steep Slope, Landslide, Erosion, and Seismic Hazard Areas. (New goal)	
C-9.1	Regulate development intensity, site coverage, and vegetation removal in geologically hazardous areas to minimize drainage problems, soil erosion, siltation, and landslides. (Current policy)	Regulate development intensity, site coverage, and vegetation removal in geologically hazardous areas in order to minimize drainage problems, soil erosion, siltation, and landslides.

Chair Robbins asked whether C-9.1 applies to seismic hazards. Manager Medrud affirmed geological hazard areas include seismic hazards.

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<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-9.3	Design land use development to prevent property damage and environmental degradation and enhance greenbelt and wildlife habitat values. (New policy)	

Manager Medrud questioned the placement of C-9.3. Chair Robbins agreed the policy does not appear to apply to the goal unless those areas are particularly vulnerable to geological hazards. Planner Baruch offered that the policy speaks to land use development near geological areas to ensure the City requires appropriate studies to avoid any degradation of geological hazardous areas. Chair Robbins recommended adding language that speaks to proper site design that accounts for geological hazards.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-9.5	Require erosion and sedimentation prevention best management practices be used on construction projects. (New policy)	

Commissioner Varela asked whether best management practices are defined by the industry or whether it is a company construction standard. His concern is that the standards may vary dependent upon the source. Manager Medrud advised that best management practices are defined and typically included in the Stormwater Management Plan.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-9.6	Require appropriate engineering, building design, and construction measures to minimize the risk of structural damage and fire and injury to occupants, and to prevent post-seismic collapse in areas with severe seismic hazards. (New policy)	

Commissioner Robbins questioned whether the new policy also accounts for minimizing risks to ecological systems in addition to the built environment. Manager Medrud advised that the policy speaks only to buildings, property, and life. Chair Robbins cited an example of a situation of an office building that experienced a fire or another destructive event that resulted in contamination to a nearby stream or caused air quality issues. The policy lacks any reference to the risk to the environment. Manager Medrud said the policy

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focuses on geological hazards to include seismic hazards. Seismic hazards are typically addressed in the building code and structural regulations, etc. The policy speaks to a specific hazard rather than hazards to the natural environment.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-10	Preserve Floodplains (New goal)	

Commissioner Tobias asked whether property located within a floodplain could be used for other purposes other than as a buffer zone. Manager Medrud cited the golf course as an example of property located within a floodplain. Those areas are often used for recreation and do not include structures. The focus is to avoid the construction of permanent structures that could be lost during a flood event.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-10.5.1	The Federal Emergency Management Agency designates floodplain areas. Enforce regulations that restrict development in such areas. (New implementation action)	

Chair Robbins said the City recently received the updates to FEMA maps. She asked whether the action is based on the new updates. Manager Medrud said staff can explore some of the new policy language to condense some of the language as it speaks to both policy and regulatory requirements.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-10.6	Allow no permanent structures within the floodway due to risks associated with deep and fast-flowing waters unless appropriate flood control measures have been taken. Allow no land uses in a floodway that would divert water from the floodway, change flood elevation or obstruct natural flow, unless appropriate flood control measures have been taken such that there are no additional offsite impacts and no degradation of water quality. Allow no development in the floodway fringe that would reduce the	

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existing level of flood storage.  
(New policy)

Commissioner Kirkpatrick pointed out that the new policy addresses three different policies. Planner Baruch responded that staff can explore formatting options to avoid three topic areas.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-11	Enhance Wildlife Habitat (New goal)	
C-11.1	Identify, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat corridors to minimize habitat fragmentation, especially along existing linkages and in patches of native habitat by enhancing vegetation composition and structure and incorporating indigenous plant species compatible with the site. (Modification of current policy)	Protect wildlife corridors to minimize habitat fragmentation, especially along existing linkages and in patches of native habitat by enhancing vegetation composition and structure and incorporating indigenous plant species compatible with the site.
C-11.2	Protect and preserve habitats for species, which have been identified as endangered, threatened, or sensitive by the state or federal government, giving special consideration to conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance suitable habitat. (Current policy)	Protect and preserve habitats for species, which have been identified as endangered, threatened, or sensitive by the state or federal government, giving special consideration: to conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fisheries.
C-11.3	Maintain habitats that support the greatest diversity of fish and wildlife through conservation and enhancement of critical areas. (Current policy)	Maintain habitats that support the greatest diversity of fish and wildlife through conservation and enhancement of critical areas.
C-11.4	When developing on forested property adjacent to steep slopes, wetlands, stream ravines, or stream corridors, encourage development to provide additional buffer areas to provide wildlife and fish habitat. (New policy)	

Commissioner Kirkpatrick suggested substituting stronger language for “encourage.” Manager Medrud suggested adding options for incentivizing rather than encouraging.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-11.5	Foster native vegetation and	

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	control invasive species to preserve and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. (New policy)	
C-12	Support Urban Agriculture (New goal)	
C-12.1	Recognize the importance of farmland conservation and local food production in maintaining the quality of life and long-term sustainability of Tumwater. (Current policy)	Recognize the importance of farmland conservation and local food production in maintaining the quality of life and long-term sustainability of Tumwater.
C-12.2	Work with community groups to support the continued viability of agriculture and encourage community support for it. (Current policy)	Work with community groups to support the continued viability of agriculture and encourage community support for it.
C-12.2.1	Support the efforts of the Thurston Food System Council and similar organizations to develop a vibrant food system through access to healthy, local, affordable, culturally appropriate, sustainably produced food to assist the community in having reliable access to enough affordable nutritious food. ( Existing implementation action	Support the efforts of the Thurston Food System Council to develop a vibrant food system through access to healthy, local, affordable, culturally appropriate, sustainably produced food to assist the community in having reliable access to sufficient quantity of affordable nutritious food.

Commissioner Tobias asked whether the action also encompasses Tumwater Fresh/GRuB. Manager Medrud advised that the City plans to prepare a food security plan as an implementation action to promote urban agriculture. The plan’s intent is to ensure all community members have access to healthy food. The plan will explore distribution and locally sourced food and ensuring City regulations are not obstructing those goals. The existing Conservation Element does not include designated agricultural lands as required by the Growth Management Act (large-scale agriculture –commercial); however, the City supports small-scale urban agriculture, which is captured in the update of the element.

Chair Robbins suggested altering the title of C-12 to state, “Support urban agriculture for food production” to distinguish the policy from new goal C-13. Manager Medrud supported the recommendation.

<b>Goal/Policy</b>	<b>Initial Staff Proposed Language</b>	<b>Current Goal, Policy, or Action Language</b>
C-13	Support Urban Forestry (New goal).	
C-13.1	Maximize retention of a healthy tree cover and native vegetation and encourage restoration, replacement, and enhancement of unhealthy	Maximize retention of a healthy tree cover and native vegetation and encourage restoration, replacement, and enhancement of unhealthy



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	trees and disturbed vegetation as recommended in the adopted Tumwater Urban Forestry Management Plan consistent with the Growth Management Act and the requirements of protected habitat. (Modified policy)	trees and disturbed vegetation.
C-13.2	Ensure that harvesting for conversion to other uses occurs in a manner compatible with land uses of the surrounding area and maintenance of water quality and environmentally critical areas. ( Current policy)	Ensure that harvesting for conversion to other uses occurs in a manner compatible with land uses of the surrounding area and maintenance of water quality and environmentally critical areas.
C-14	Protect Mineral Resource Lands (New goal)	
C-14.1	Allow mineral extraction industries to locate where prime natural resource deposits exist and where extraction will not cause the degradation of sensitive areas. (Modified policy)	Allow mineral extraction industries to locate where prime natural resource deposits exist.
C-14.2	Conserve designated mineral resource lands of long-term commercial significance for mineral extraction, and the use of adjacent lands should not interfere with the continued use of the designated mining sites that are being operated in accordance with applicable best management practices and other laws and regulations. (Current policy)	Conserve designated mineral resource lands of long-term commercial significance for mineral extraction, and the use of adjacent lands should not interfere with the continued use of the designated mining sites that are being operated in accordance with applicable best management practices and other laws and regulations.
C-14.3	Restore mineral extraction sites as the site is being mined. The site should be restored for appropriate future use, and it should blend with the adjacent landscape and contours. (Current policy)	Restore mineral extraction sites as the site is being mined. The site should be restored for appropriate future use, and it should blend with the adjacent landscape and contours.

The Commission discussed the possibility of adding language to address situations where a mineral site is closed or the resource has been expended. Manager Medrud advised that operators of mineral resource lands must obtain a permit from the Department of Natural Resources. Closure of mineral resource areas are regulated by the state. Most mineral sites located within the City are located in industrial zones, which is a better use of the property if mining ceases because of its location and isolation from other zoning districts.

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**2025 COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN PERIODIC  
UPDATE – LANDS FOR  
PUBLIC PURPOSES AND  
UTILITIES:**

Due to the lack of time, Manager Medrud encouraged the Commission to review the proposed changes. A review of the element is scheduled at the July 23, 2024 meeting.

**MOTION:**

**Commissioner Tobias moved, seconded by Commissioner Varela, to reschedule the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – Lands for Public Purposes and Utilities Element to the July 23, 2024 regular meeting. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**NEXT MEETING DATE:**

The next meeting is scheduled on June 25, 2024.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Commissioner Varela moved, seconded by Commissioner Staff, to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

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