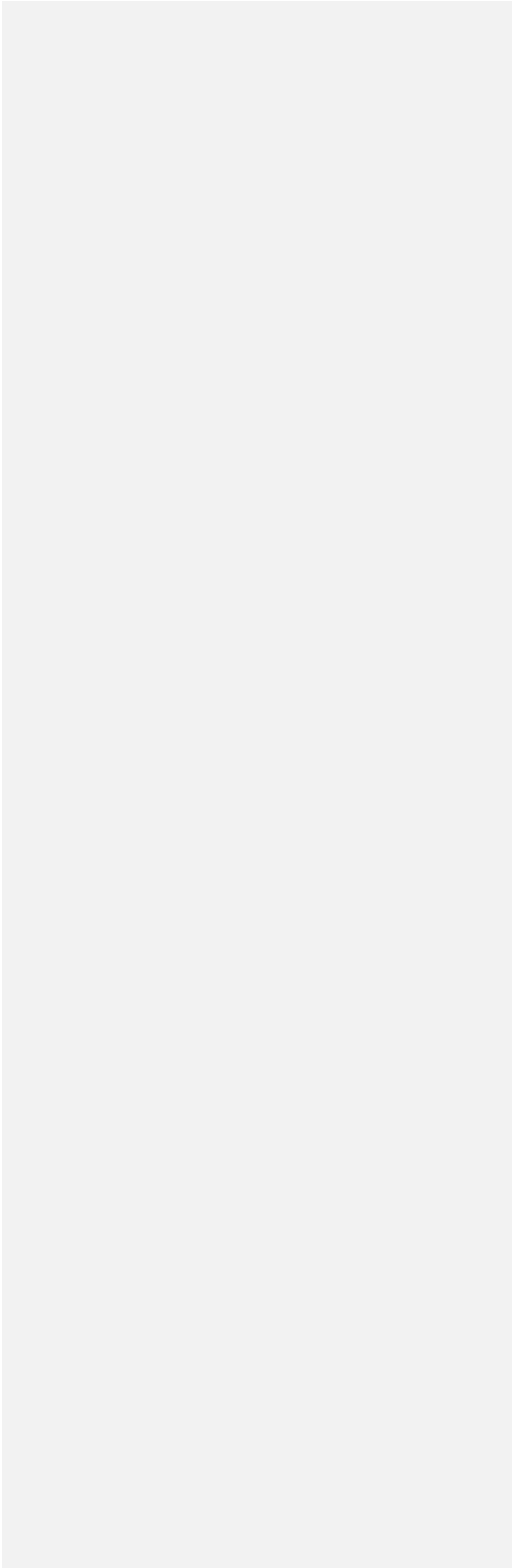
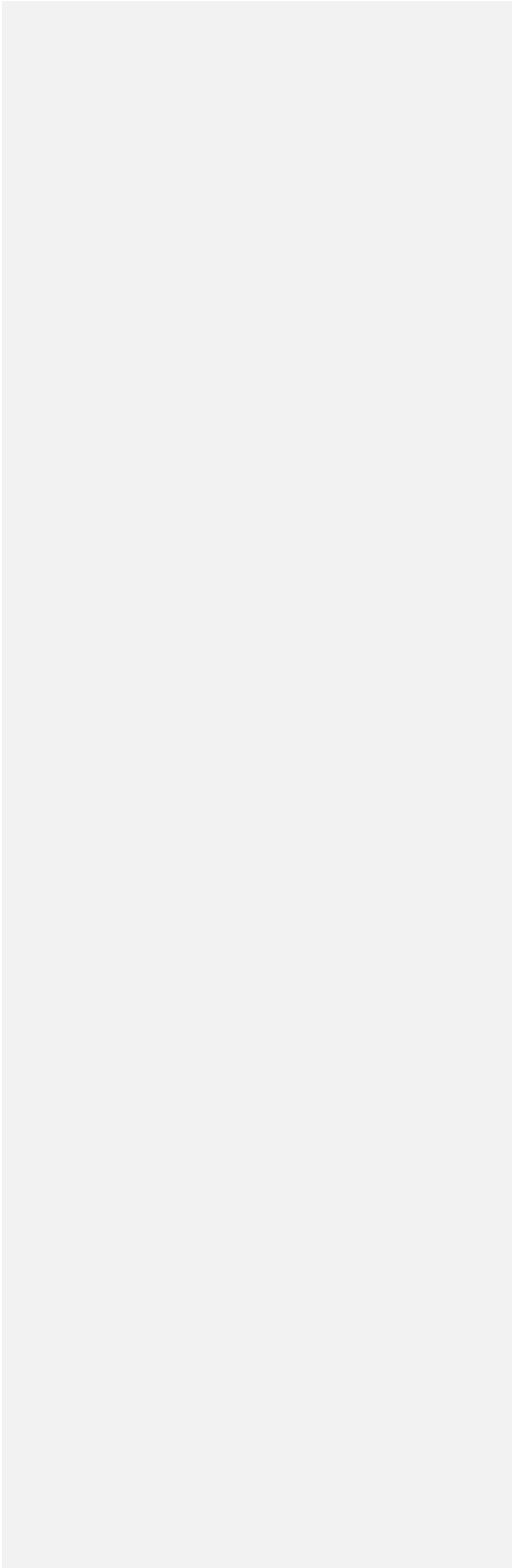


# Chapter 2 – Countywide Planning Policies & Objectives



The Role of the Countywide Planning Policies.....3  
Introduction.....6  
    About Mason County .....6  
    History of Public Engagement .....7  
Vision Statement ..... 11  
Planning Policies.....13  
    1: URBAN GROWTH.....13  
    2: REDUCE SPRAWL .....14  
    3: TRANSPORTATION .....15  
    4: HOUSING .....16  
    5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .....17  
    6: PROPERTY RIGHTS.....18  
    7: PERMITS.....18  
    8: RESOURCE INDUSTRIES .....18  
    9: OPEN SPACE .....18  
    10: ENVIRONMENT .....19  
    11: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.....20  
    12: FACILITIES/SERVICES.....20  
    13: HISTORIC PRESERVATION .....21  
    14: CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCY .....21  
    15: SHORELINES OF THE STATE .....21



## The Role of the Countywide Planning Policies

- These countywide planning policies shall be the foundation for the Mason County Comprehensive Plan.
- As required by RCW 36.70A.120, all elements of the Comprehensive Plan and implementing regulations, including zoning maps, zoning regulations, and any amendments, shall be consistent with and implement these policies.
- As required by RCW 36.70A.120, all planning, land use permitting actions, and capital budgeting decisions shall be made in conformity with the adopted [comprehensive Comprehensive planPlan](#).
- The Mason County Comprehensive Plan ~~adopts by~~ shall reference [and be coordinated with](#) the following functional plans: Shoreline Master Plan, Drainage, Floodplain, Schools, Special Districts, Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Watershed, [Hazard Mitigation Plan](#), [Puget Sound Action Plan](#) and any other functional or subarea plans adopted by Mason County. ~~Each referenced plan shall be coordinated with, and consistent with, the Comprehensive Plan.~~
- All disputes over the proper interpretation of other functional plans and all implementing regulations, including zoning maps and zoning regulations, shall be resolved in favor of the interpretation which most clearly achieves Countywide Planning Policies.
- A definition section will be incorporated into the final Comprehensive Plan document with definitions [for technical terms](#) that are clearly articulated in Mason County Code or state or federal statutes. [If a specific term is not defined or referenced, it takes its normal and customary meaning within the context of how it is used.](#)

**Commented [CH1]:** Verify the intent to adopt by reference for each of these.

Cristina and Kirsten to recommend which should be adopted by reference and which should be listed as "consulted in this update."

Identify which are GMA requirements and which are just helpful information/implementation docs.

Differentiate which elements are outside of the comp plan but are comp plan requirements.

**Table 1. Crosswalk - Countywide Planning Policies and Comprehensive Plan Chapter**

| Comprehensive Plan Element                                 | Development Regulations                    | Countywide Planning Policy                  | Policy Statement   |
|--|--|---|--|
| Chapter 3 Land Use   | MCC 17.07; 17.10-17.17; 17.20-17.35; 17.70 | #1 URBAN GROWTH                             | Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.  |
| Chapter 3 Land Use   | MCC 17.02; 17.05; 17.70; 17.90             | #2 REDUCE SPRAWL                            | Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.   |
| Chapter 8 Transportation                                   | MCC Title 12                               | #3 TRANSPORTATION                           | Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.  |
| Chapter 5 Housing  | MCC 17.11; 17.90                           | #4 HOUSING                                  | Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.   |
| Chapter 10 Economic Development                            | MCC 2.78; 17.07; 17.24                     | #5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT                     | Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities. |
| Chapter 3 Land Use   | MCC 17.01                                  | #6 PROPERTY RIGHTS                          | Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.   |
| Chapter 3 Land Use & Chapter 10 Economic Development       | MCC 15.05                                  | #7 PERMITS                                  | Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.   |
| Chapter 4 Rural  | MCC 8.52; 17.02                            | #8 NATURAL RESOURCE INDUSTRIES              | <del>Natural resource industries.</del> Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forestlands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.   |
| Chapter 3 Land Use, Chapter 4 Rural, & Chapter 9 Parks     | MCC 16.23; 17.07; 17.10; 17.26             | #9 OPEN SPACE                               | Retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities.   |
| Chapter 3 Land Use & Chapter 4 Rural                       | MCC 8.52 Resource Ordinance/Shorelines     | #10 ENVIRONMENT                             | Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.  |
| See Public Involvement Plan                                | MCC 15.09.060                              | #11 <del>CITIZEN-PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</del> | Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.  |
| Chapter 7 Utilities  | MCC Title 13, Title 6                      | #12 PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES          | Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.   |
| Chapter 3 Land Use   | MCC 17.40                                  | #13 HISTORIC PRESERVATION                   | Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.   |
| <u>Chapter 12 Climate Resilience and Hazard Mitigation</u> |  | <u>#14 CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCY</u>    | <u>Ensure that comprehensive plans, development regulations, and regional policies, plans, and strategies under RCW 36.70A.210 and chapter 47.80 RCW adapt to and mitigate the</u>   |

**Commented [CH2]:** Suggest deleting the GMA goal title for consistency with the other goals listed in this table.

**Commented [KP3]:** Include language about updating the CAO to include best available science as it becomes available.

**Commented [CH4]:** New Chapter 12 will be inserted before Plan Implementation and Monitoring.

|   |                           |   |   |
|---|---------------------------|---|---|
|   |                           |   | effects of a changing climate; prepare for climate impact scenarios; foster resiliency to climate impacts and natural hazards; protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety; and advance environmental justice. |
| <a href="#">See Mason County Shoreline Master Program</a> | <a href="#">MCC 17.50</a> | <a href="#">#15 SHORELINES OF THE STATE</a> | For shorelines of the state, the goals and policies of the shoreline management act as set forth in RCW 90.58.020 shall be considered an element of the county's or city's comprehensive plan.  |

**Commented [MW5]:** I'm wondering if it is confusing to include this portion since we are not mandated nor will we be concentrating on the greenhouse gas emissions/vehicle miles this time around.

**Commented [CH6]:** Previously missing from crosswalk/goals - consider adding.

## Introduction

This chapter presents the Countywide Planning Policies used to develop Mason County's Comprehensive Plan. The policies in this document are organized and numbered based on the ~~thirteen~~ ~~fifteen~~ goals adopted in Washington's State's Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A) to guide counties and cities in the development and adoption of comprehensive plans. Table 1 shows which Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan provides additional information, statistics, maps, and other detail related to each policy.

## About Mason County

### Geography

Mason County is situated along the southwestern portion of Puget Sound, and encompasses roughly 972 square miles. It borders Jefferson County to the north, Grays Harbor County to the west and southwest, Thurston County to the southeast, Pierce County to the east, and Kitsap County to the northeast. Mason County remains a predominantly rural county despite the urban growth in both Thurston and Kitsap Counties. The City of Shelton, the only incorporated area in Mason County, includes approximately 4.77 square miles, or less than one percent of the County's total land area. Two urban growth areas, Allyn (1.5 square miles) and Belfair (3.9 square miles) are located in the northeast portion of the County adjacent to the eastern border between Mason and Kitsap Counties. Two Native American Tribal Nations, the Skokomish and the Squaxin Island Tribes, have reservations within the boundaries of Mason County.

Three geological provinces combine to form Mason County. They include the Puget Sound Lowland, the Olympic Mountains, and the Black Hills. Additionally, ~~Seven~~ ~~seven~~ watersheds exist within Mason

County. They include Case Inlet, Chehalis, Lower Hood Canal, Oakland Bay, Skokomish, Totten-Little Skookum, and West Hood Canal. Mason County also includes over 700 miles of some of the most pristine shoreline in the state, nearly 100 freshwater lakes, two major rivers, and a number of smaller tributaries and creeks.

Mason County's rich natural resources and open spaces dominate the County's landscape. Combined national, state, and private forests currently account for over fifty (50) percent of the land area that makes up Mason County. Mineral deposits underlie Mason County's ~~top~~ ~~soil~~ ~~topsoils~~. Agricultural and aquaculture areas contribute both to the County's natural beauty and its economy. Mason County also includes substantial open space. Open space within the County hosts wildlife habitat, undeveloped natural areas, and many developed park and recreation sites. These open space areas are managed by federal, state, county, municipal, and private interests.

**Commented [KP7]:** Mention habitat connectivity, climate resilience and ecosystem services, to help w/flooding, thermal regulation, carbon sequestration. Reference w/in this section.

**Commented [CH8]:** Update with current area. Recent annexations have increased this size.

**Commented [CH9]:** UGA and any boundary updates?

**Commented [CH10]:** Confirm no changes.

**Commented [CH11]:** Confirm no changes.

**Commented [CH12]:** Check Belfair Planned Action EIS

## Climate

Mason County's climate can be characterized as moderate-maritime, influenced by the Pacific Ocean, yet sheltered by the Olympic Mountains. Average temperatures range from a high of 78° F. in July to 32° F. in January. The average daily temperature in Mason County is 51° F. The County receives an average of 64 inches of precipitation annually, with average monthly rainfalls ranging from a low in July of 0.8 inches, to a high of 10.4 inches in January.

The *Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington* webtool provides data about potential changes in climate that Mason County may experience. Like much of Western Washington, Mason County may see:

- Changes in precipitation patterns that increase precipitation at certain times of year while also increasing drought events, coupled with a reduction in snowpack that contributes to drought events and low summertime streamflows.
- Reduction in warm-season streamflow and extended periods of lower streamflow that may impact water quality and availability.
- Increases in summertime high temperatures that pose human health risks, as well as increased wildfire danger days which are linked to drought and increasing temperatures.
- Increased wildfire danger days, linked to drought and increasing temperatures.

The extent of potential climate changes locally, nationally, and globally remains to be seen. Jurisdictions in Washington are now required to plan for climate change.

**Commented [CH13]:** Opportunity to add information about climate indicators and potential changes that may occur in the future.

**Commented [MW14]:** I think these two points are very similar and could be combined

## History of Public Engagement

Mason County organized a public process for developing the Countywide Planning Policies (CWPPs) in 1992. That process established a Joint City/County Elected Official Review Board (Board). This Board included the commissioners from both Mason County and the City of Shelton. The Board was guided by the requirements of House Bill 1025 and the Mason County/City of Shelton Regional Strategy Agreement. In addition, the Board used an iterative process for preparing the CWPPs. The approach focused on coordination among Mason County, the City of Shelton, and other public agencies. See Table 2.

| Table 2. Original Drafters of the Countywide Planning Policies – 1992 |
|---|
| City of Shelton and Mason County Departments                          |
| City of Shelton Fire Department                                       |
| Economic Development Council  |
| Fire Districts  |
| Hospital Districts  |
| Mason County Fire Marshal   |
| Mason County Growth Management Advisory Committee                     |
| Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization               |
| Port Districts  |
| Public Utility District No. 1   |
| Public Utility District No. 3   |
| School Districts  |
| Sewer Districts   |
| Shelton City Commission   |
| Shelton/Mason Chamber of Commerce                                     |
| Skokomish Tribal Nation   |
| Squaxin Island Tribal Nation  |
| Water Districts   |

The first draft of the Countywide Planning Policies was completed in late January, 1992. The draft went through an informal review and revision period that ended in March of 1992. The formal review period for the CWPPs began in May, 1992 and continued through August, 1992. Public hearings were held in May and June of 1992. CWPPs were revised to reflect input received through the public review process and the public hearings. Mason County and the City of Shelton jointly adopted the Countywide Planning Policies on August 17, 1992.

In the 2016 - 2036 Comprehensive Plan Update, the Countywide Planning Policies were revisited and updated to incorporate **current** public input, reflect **then-current** trends, and consolidate **what has become** a broad array of goals, policies and objectives throughout the planning documents Mason County has adopted over time.

In the 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan Update, the Countywide Planning Policies were reviewed and updated to address public input, recent state legislation related to planning for housing, and the new Growth Management Act goal to plan for climate resilience and accounted for the most impact to the Urban Growth Areas of Allyn and Belfair and considered the possibility of designating Union as a new Urban Growth Area. The foundational documents used to update the Countywide Planning Policies and help support the Comprehensive Plan update are included in Table 3.



| Table 3. Mason County Plans Supporting the <del>2025-2045</del> <del>2016-2036</del> Comprehensive Plan Update |   |                            |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| Topic  | Foundational Plans  | Date of Adoption           |
| Climate Resilience   | Mason County Hazard Mitigation Plan   | 2018, 2023                 |
| Comp Plan  | Mason County Comprehensive Plan   | 1970, 1993, 2005, 2017     |
| Economic Development   | Business Demographic Report, Mason County Economic Development Council                          | 2017                       |
| Economic Development   | Belfair Urban Growth Area Market Analysis, EcoNorthwest   | 2003                       |
| Economic Development   | Targeted Cluster Identification and Strategic Alignment, Pacific Mountain Workforce Development | 2012                       |
| Electricity  | Mason County PUD No.3 Comprehensive Financial Report  | <del>2015</del> 2023       |
| Emergency  | Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan   | 2017                       |
| Environment  | Puget Sound Federal Task Force Action Plan  | 2022                       |
| Fire   | Mason County <del>Community</del> Wildfire Protection Plan                                      | 2012                       |
| Homelessness   | Mason County Homeless Plan  | <del>2016</del> 2019-2024  |
| Housing  | Mason County and City of Shelton Housing Needs Assessment                                       | 2004                       |
| Housing  | Housing Matters: 3 Year Housing and Homelessness Strategy for Mason County Washington           | 2015                       |
| Housing  | Housing Needs Assessment  | 2022                       |
| Solid Waste  | Mason County Solid Waste Management Plan  | 2010 and Update            |
| Solid Waste  | Mason County Solid Waste Investment Needs   | 2016                       |
| Sub-Area   | Belfair Sub-Area Plan   | 2004, 2022                 |
| Sub-Area   | Allyn Sub-Area Plan   | 2006                       |
| Sub-Area   | Southeast Mason Sub-Area Plan   | 1994                       |
| Sub-Area   | North Mason Sub-Area Plan   | 1993                       |
| Sub-Area   | Harstine Island Sub-Area Plan   | 1993                       |
| Stormwater   | Belfair UGA 2018 Basin Plan   | 2018                       |
| Stormwater   | Mason County Stormwater Management Plan   | 2009                       |
| Transportation   | Allyn Circulation Plan  | 2017                       |
| Transportation   | <del>2016-2023</del> 2024 Annual Mason County Bridge Report                                     | <del>2016</del> 2023, 2024 |
| Transportation   | Belfair Mobility Plan   | 2018                       |
| Transportation   | Belfair Planned Action EIS  | 2022                       |

**Commented [CH15]:** Are there other plans missing from this list?

**Commented [MW16R15]:** Allyn Circulation Plan 2017, Belfair Mobility Plan 2018, Belfair UGA 2018 Basin Plan

**Commented [CH17]:** List Puget Sound Action Plan

**Commented [CH18]:** Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

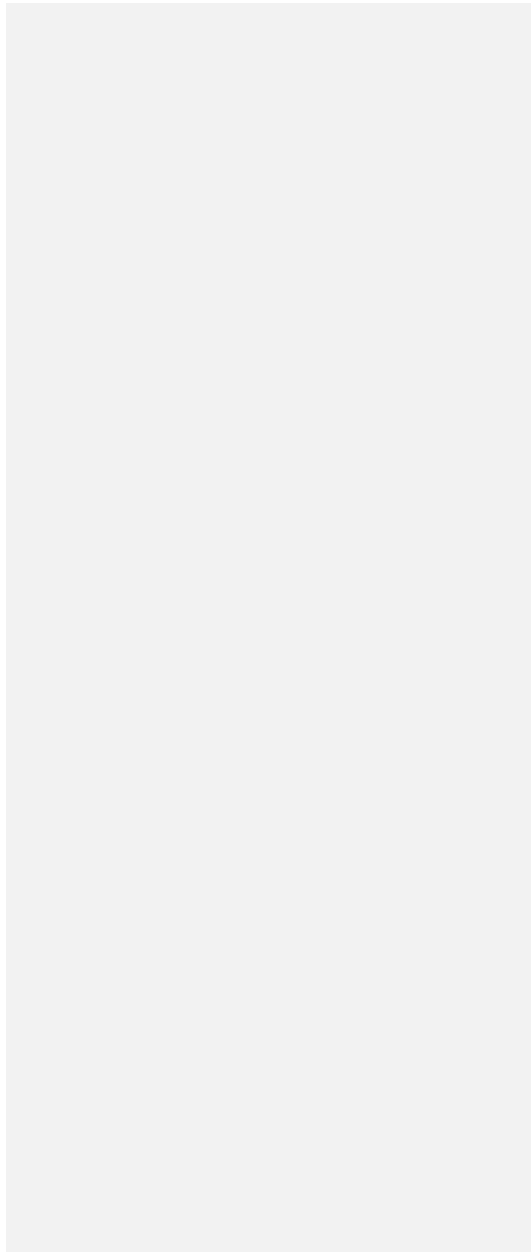
**Commented [KP19]:** Add 2006 WRIA 16 Watershed Management Plan. 14B and 15 are the active plans (but were not approved by Ecology). Discuss w/Public Health to determine which plan should be referenced.

**Commented [KP20]:** Title revision proposed by Fire Marshal.

**Commented [MW21]:** There is a more recent plan from 2019, and the Housing and Homelessness Coordinator will be updating this again (due 2025...?) based on the new requirements that tie it more directly to the Comp Plan <https://www.masoncountywa.gov/forms/Health/homeless-housing-plan-2019-2024.pdf>

**Commented [MW22]:** 2024

|       |   |      |
|-------|---|------|
| Water | Washington State Department of Ecology Water Resource Inventory Area 14 - Storage Assessment Report | 2005 |
|-------|---|------|



## Vision Statement

Mason County will remain a primarily rural county, characterized by quiet tranquility, privacy, natural views, and rural enterprise. Although rural character means different things to different people, aspects of it include: natural vistas, fish, shellfish, wildlife, and natural ecosystems; fewer restrictions and more privacy than in an urban area; Urban Growth Areas that are vibrant economic and social centers; the responsible operation of resource based industries such as timber, mining, agriculture, and aquaculture; and the close ties of family and community to the land.

### The Urban Growth Areas

The Urban Growth Areas of Shelton, Belfair, and Allyn as well as Rural Activity Centers throughout the County will serve as the principal housing, economic, civic, and social centers including commercial, industrial, and airport and business hubs. Each will have a compact core area anchored by retail, service industries, government, housing and education facilities. The regional health center in Shelton will grow and continue to serve as a regional health center serving the Olympic Peninsula, and regional retail will be centered in the City's Olympic Highway North area. The three Urban Growth Areas will provide a strong employment and tax base.

**Commented [CH23]:** Reviewing feasibility of establishing a Union UGA. This is reflected in updated CPPs, below.

**Commented [KP24]:** Shelton supports health services, but recognizes there should be other medical services out in the County.

**Commented [CH25]:** Updated per discussion w/ City of Shelton.

### The Rural Areas

Natural resources will continue to provide the foundation of the County's economy. Forestry, agriculture, aquaculture including shellfish and other fisheries industries, Christmas tree farming, and mining industries will provide the natural resource employment. Rural Activity Centers and compatible businesses such as cottage industries will continue to be encouraged and supported. The County's abundance of natural attractions including mountains, lakes, rivers, and wildlife will continue to support the County's thriving tourist industries, including Master Planned Developments. The County's land use regulations will protect natural resource lands and industries against encroachment from incompatible, competing uses.

**Commented [MW26]:** I'm not sure we even have any master planned developments., though provisions have been on the books for a long time.

### Housing

Residential growth within the County will primarily occur in the Urban Growth Areas of Shelton, Belfair, and Allyn. Mason County will offer a range of affordable rural and urban housing choices including single family, multifamily, and mixed-use. Innovations in housing that provide affordable choices will be encouraged, in compliance with Missing Middle measures, including buildings that are compatible in scale, form, and character with single-family houses and contain two or more attached, stacked, or clustered homes including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, fiveplexes, sixplexes, townhouses, stacked flats, courtyard apartments, and cottage housing. Homeowner/Homeowner associations will be encouraged to support compact, well-maintained/well-maintained housing in rural areas.

**Commented [CH27]:** Should middle housing options be considered?

**Commented [MW28R27]:** There are a few more examples of middle housing that aren't currently mentioned/allowed in the Belfair and Allyn UGA codes that might be worth allowing. Would be interesting to hear from the developer/builder realm on this.

**Commented [KP29]:** Include reference to support affordability in both rental and homeownership opportunities.

### The Environment and Open Space

Mason County will protect the environment in a way that is compatible with the needs of a growing population. One focus will be watersheds and their water quality and quantity. The county/County

will also conserve an open space network that will include wildlife habitat and corridors, greenways, estuaries, parks, trails and campgrounds. This system will help preserve the County's environment and rural character, support the County's tourism industry, and meet the recreation needs of County residents.

### Climate Resilience and Hazard Mitigation

Mason County will continue collaborating with other jurisdictions on hazard mitigation planning that will form the foundation of community resilience and disaster preparedness in the County and its incorporated and unincorporated communities. Mason County has experienced or been affected by many natural disasters, including severe weather events, flooding, earthquake, volcanic eruption, and wildfires, and will build community resilience, response capacity, continuity of operations, and system recovery to serve its residents and facilitate a rapid return to normal following disaster events. Mason County will continue to implement the strategies identified in its Hazard Mitigation Plan to lessen the impacts of natural disasters within the County.

**Commented [CH30]:** Drafted with information from 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan. Will be revised with info from community survey.

**Commented [KP31]:** Revision proposed by Fire Marshal.

## Planning Policies

Mason County's Comprehensive Plan addresses each of the ~~thirteen~~ ~~fifteen~~ GMA goals according to the vision shared by County residents. The following discussion identifies the Countywide Planning Policies for Mason County organized by the GMA goal they address.

### 1: URBAN GROWTH

GMA encourages concentrating development where adequate public facilities and services exist, or which can be provided within a reasonable amount of time. In conjunction with the City of Shelton, Mason County has adopted County-Wide Planning Policies (CWPP), some of which deal specifically with the issue of urban growth and are designed to ensure growth can be supported by adequate public infrastructure and services.

- 1.1. ~~Designate~~ Maintain Urban Growth Areas around the incorporated City of Shelton and two unincorporated areas of Belfair and Allyn. Prioritize urban growth; where infrastructure exists or, ~~infrastructure~~ is planned, as identified in an approved Capital Facilities Plan, or services can be reasonably and economically extended; where there is a sufficient supply of environmentally sound developable land to support urban densities and urban growth forecasted for the 20-year planning cycle; ~~;~~ and where the community's vision has identified its area as an Urban Growth Area.

**Commented [CH32]:** Changing this to "developable" broadens potential exclusions to include lands with historic cultural significance etc.

- 1.2. Explore the feasibility of establishing a new Urban Growth Area around the unincorporated Union community. Plan for utilities, including a public sewer system and water reclamation for large-scale potable water users such as golf courses. Coordinate with Tribes to ensure any new UGA is sensitive to Tribal interests and treaty rights.

- 1.3. Coordinate planning, zoning, and development standards in the Shelton Urban Growth Area with the City of Shelton to ensure consistency in development patterns, logical transition from urban to rural uses, adequate provision of infrastructure and services, and to facilitate annexation as envisioned in the Growth Management Act.

**Commented [CH33]:** This policy opens the door to an Interlocal Agreement or similar tool that would delegate certain planning and permitting authorities to the City of Shelton. This allows a more seamless transition to City services and supports annexation consistent with the GMA.

- ~~1.2.1.4.~~ Mixed-use developments, multi-family developments, employment centers, and other urban land uses are ~~appropriate development to be~~ encouraged within designated Urban Growth Areas, ~~in order to make efficient use of urban-level infrastructure and services and~~ to protect rural character in the remainder of the County.

- ~~1.3.1.5.~~ Encourage development in Urban Growth Areas where:

- infrastructure exists or is planned; or
- infrastructure is provided by the developer according to locally established minimum urban standards.

- 1.6. Encourage development in Urban Growth Areas where:

- services, such as public transit, emergency response, fire protection, schools, and other public services, have adequate capacity; or

- services can be expanded through County action or via private investment from the developer.

## 2: REDUCE SPRAWL

GMA discourages the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low density development. Several of Mason County's CWPPs are designed to reduce the impacts of growth, including sprawl, in areas outside of Urban Growth Areas. Rural areas now exist throughout Mason County and contribute to a large measure of the quality of life enjoyed by residents. These areas are characterized by low housing densities, wilderness and recreational living opportunities, and open space. Other rural qualities include tranquility, low traffic volumes, natural views, privacy, and rural enterprise.

2.1. Rural areas now exist throughout Mason County and contribute to a large measure of the quality of life enjoyed by residents. These areas are characterized by low housing densities, wilderness and recreational living opportunities, and open space. Other rural qualities include tranquility, low traffic volumes, natural views, privacy, and rural enterprise. Designate rural areas in Mason County. Rural areas include those portions of the County that lie outside designated growth areas, master planned communities, home owner's/homeowner's associations, and destination resorts, and may have lower standards of infrastructure and service that reflect and maintain this rural character. Intensive development will be is discouraged in these rural areas due to the difficulty of providing cost-effective services and, or because rural areas are character-defining features of Mason County the disappearance of rural areas from the landscape would impact the character of the county. Rural areas of Mason County should be designated as such and protected from encroachment by intensive development.

2-1-2.2. Rural development and accompanying water availability, including permit exempt wells, shall be consistent with protection of natural surface water flows and groundwater recharge. Rural areas include those portions of the County that lie outside designated growth areas, master planned communities, home owner's associations, and destination resorts, and may have lower standards of infrastructure and service that reflect and maintain this rural character.

2-2-2.3. The Comprehensive Plan will include a Rural Element protecting Protect the County's rural character, lifestyles, and values.

2-3-2.4. Establish Level of Service Standardsstandards, timely development of essential infrastructure and provision of services, and adherence to design standards for rural and urban areas.

2-4-2.5. Establish a rural land use system that provides for continued vitality of our activity centers that may become urban-Urban growth-Growth areas-Areas or incorporated communities. The categories of these areas include rural activity centers, hamlets, commercial centers, industrial areas, and tourist and recreational areas.

### 3: TRANSPORTATION

GMA encourages the development of efficient, multi-modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and are coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.

- 3.1. Coordinate multimodal transportation systems with neighboring counties, Tribes, and the City of Shelton to encourage efficiency and align transportation with regional priorities. Encourage efficient multi-modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.
- 3.2. Establish Level of Service standards that encourage densities in Urban Growth Areas where services such as public transit, sidewalks, car-pooling, etc., are available.
- 3.3. Establish multimodal Level of Service Standards standards, timely development of essential infrastructure, and adherence to design standards for rural and Urban Growth Areas.
- 3.4. Protect functions of designated high-volume high-volume corridors by restricting individual access points.
- ~~3.4~~ 3.5. Promote safety and security for the multimodal transportation system.
- ~~3.5~~ 3.6. Promote interconnecting street networks which provide alternative routes.
- ~~3.6~~ 3.7. Develop policies and Encourage encourage use of varied multi-modal transportation alternatives that support health and wellbeing through physical activity by providing bikeways, sidewalks, trails, public transit, etc., and system connectivity as appropriate to location and terrain, especially in Urban Growth Areas, and accommodating the young, aging, and disabled.
- ~~3.7~~ 3.8. Ensure that cooperative planning efforts continue with the Peninsula Regional Transportation Policy Organization and the County's Citizen Advisory Panel on the Transportation Improvement Program, and that policies of the County and the organization are consistent and coordinated, with the Comprehensive Plan as the guiding document for Mason County.
- 3.9. The County and the City and Urban Growth Area should work cooperatively with the Mason County Transit Authority (MCTA) to provide equitable public transit throughout the County.
- 3.10. Local and County transportation plans should consider rail, marine, and aviation transportation as an integral part of the area's transportation system.
- 3.11. Incorporate technological advances into transportation systems planning by encouraging coordination among jurisdictions and Mason County Transit where feasible and applicable.
- 3.12. Encourage the development of transportation funding resources that support land use goals and strategies.

~~3-8-3.13.~~ Protect transportation assets through proper operations, maintenance, and preservation activities to provide safe, efficient, and reliable movement of people, goods, and services.

## 4: HOUSING

GMA ~~encourages~~ requires the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population, promotes a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourages ~~the~~ preservation of existing ~~the~~ housing stock.

~~4.1.~~ Incentivize affordable housing, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage ~~the~~ preservation of existing housing stock.

~~4-1-4.2.~~ Coordinate processes for supporting affordable housing between Mason County and the City of Shelton. Define and establish the need for affordable housing countywide through creation of a collaborative City/County Housing Plan that provides for a mix of housing types for housing at all income levels.

~~4.3.~~ Encourage affordable housing through innovation including infill housing incentives, variety of lot sizes, mixed use, multifamily units, and density bonuses for affordable units. ~~Selecting innovative techniques to support affordable housing should meet other Countywide Planning Policies for urban and rural development.~~

~~4-2-4.4.~~ Encourage affordable housing in rural areas by utilizing the supply of existing ~~platted~~ smaller lots which can meet applicable ~~subdivision, environmental and building development~~ regulations, ~~;~~ and by ensuring ~~existing legally built~~ the lots retain their conforming status, and by allowing manufactured housing, mobile homes, micro or tiny homes and other options in both urban and rural areas. ~~It is recognized that the techniques for encouraging affordable housing will differ in rural and urban areas.~~

~~4-3-4.5.~~ Encourage the preservation of historic structures for use ~~as,~~ or conversion to single or multi-family housing.

~~4-4-4.6.~~ As part of a comprehensive program to address affordability, ~~eliminate barriers to construction of affordable housing in~~ ~~examine current~~ local regulations and policies ~~for impacts on housing cost~~. Prior to adoption of any new ordinance or regulation affecting homebuilding, evaluate the impact on the provision of affordable housing options.

~~4-5-4.7.~~ Affordable housing ~~for households making below 80 percent of the Area Median Income should be focused within the City of Shelton and unincorporated Urban Growth Areas with~~ ~~should be~~ convenient ~~access~~ to public transportation, major employment centers, and public services.

~~4-6-4.8.~~ Assess affordable housing needs ~~will be examined~~ in both ~~city~~ urban and rural contexts ~~and develop -S~~ strategies to address housing affordability ~~will that~~ reflect local definitions of affordable housing, urban and rural values, cost and availability of land, infrastructure cost ~~and availability, the capacity of public services,~~ private property rights, and broad-based ~~citizen-public~~ involvement.

**Commented [MW34]:** Hasn't updated legislation changed "encourage(s)" to "require(s)"?

**Commented [KP35]:** Reference diversity of rental and ownership options.

**Commented [CH36]:** This is an implementation action that could be moved to the Housing Element.

**Commented [CH37]:** Barriers might include costs, permitting requirements, infrastructure gaps, etc.

**Commented [KP38]:** While there is focus on 80% AMI, we also need workforce housing that is 120% of AMI. Include language about this bracket, perhaps in a separate policy. Encouraging 80-120% in specific areas.



4.9. The County will consider direct participation in the development and/or management of affordable and low-income housing.

~~4.7.4.10.~~ Housing plans and policies should prevent or mitigate the physical, economic, and cultural displacement of low-income households due to planning, public investments, private development, and market pressures.

## 5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GMA encourages economic development that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promotes economic opportunity for all ~~citizens~~ residents of the County, especially for unemployed and disadvantaged persons, and encourages growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the County's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.

- 5.1. Encourage economic development throughout the County that is consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan, ~~and~~ promote economic opportunity for all ~~citizens~~ residents of the County, especially for unemployed and disadvantaged persons, ~~and encourage~~ including encouraging ~~growth investment~~ in areas experiencing slower economic growth, all within the capacities of Mason County's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.
- 5.2. Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries including productive timber, agriculture, aquaculture, mining, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive natural resources ~~or~~ potentially productive natural resources; and discourage incompatible uses. Assure that adjacent land uses do not contribute to the demise of the ~~long term~~ long-term commercially productive resource extraction and agricultural lands, forest, aquaculture, and agricultural production lands and the ~~resource-based~~ resource-based industries associated with these areas.
- 5.3. Establish coordinated incentives to promote economic development ~~with respect to~~ consistent with Vision Statements and Goals for each Urban Growth Area.
- 5.4. Promote economic development activities where services needed by such activities already exist or can be easily and economically provided. Coordinate with service providers to review economic development activities as early as possible.
- 5.5. Promote economic development where off-site impacts, such as transportation, can be effectively managed.
- 5.6. In environmentally sensitive areas, ensure land use permit processes control activities ~~which~~ that may have a detrimental effect on public health, safety, or the environment, consistent with state and federal requirements.
- 5.7. Increase economic vitality in Mason County by stimulating the creation of jobs in tourism, trades, and other areas that provide livable wages and that promote economic diversity, stabilization, and maintenance of a ~~high quality~~ high-quality environment.

Commented [KP39]: Revision proposed by Fire Marshal.

Commented [CH40]: Should this be considered as a way to address some of the growth sectors identified in the Economic Development element?

5.8. Support school district, post-secondary, and higher education efforts including vocational education training, and education of a highly trained, technically skilled population that aligns with key economic development opportunities and industry sectors.

~~5.8.5.9.~~ Facilitate investment in tourism by prioritizing establishment of hotels, event centers, and other tourist facilities within the Urban Growth Areas.

## 6: PROPERTY RIGHTS

GMA states, "Property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions. Further, private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made."

6.1. Non-conforming uses, structures, and parcels shall be allowed alterations and expansions when appropriate.

~~6.1.~~ If private property must be acquired for public purposes, provide fair and market-based compensation negotiated during the acquisition process.

## 7: PERMITS

Both GMA and Mason County express that applications for land use and planning permits be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.

7.1. Applications for permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.

## 8: RESOURCE INDUSTRIES

GMA recommends Counties maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries including productive timber, agriculture, aquaculture, mining, and fisheries industries, and encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and provide mitigation opportunities for incompatible uses.

8.1. Maintain an inventory of productive or potentially productive natural resource and agricultural lands and ensure ongoing regulatory protections for those lands.

8.2. Discourage the siting of incompatible land uses near natural resources and agricultural lands.

~~8.1.8.3.~~ Provide mitigation for incompatible land uses sited near natural resources and agricultural lands.

## 9: OPEN SPACE

GMA encourages the retention of open space and the development of recreational opportunities. GMA further encourages conservation of fish and wildlife habitat, and increased access to natural resource lands, water, and developed parks. GMA also ~~and~~ requires mapping of open space corridors.

**Commented [KP41]:** This statement could also be replicated up in the Environment section in relation to location near critical areas.

**Commented [KP42]:** Point out habitat connectivity, even across jurisdictions.

- 9.1. Designate and map open space areas in coordination with the ~~incorporated~~ City of Shelton and unincorporated ~~areas designated as~~ Urban Growth Areas. Criteria for designation shall include:
  - provides multiple use open space
  - environmentally unique and/or fragile
  - separates incompatible land uses
  - consistency with the UGA's vision statement
  - traditional cultural places and landscapes-
- 9.2. Provide accessible public open space and protect environmentally important areas without compromising private property rights.
- 9.3. Identify and prioritize open space areas, both urban and rural, ~~which may be conserved for protection~~ through acquisition, conservation easements, life estates, conservation future program, ~~and/or~~ conveyance to a land trust, and/or another method of conservation. Assure that private property rights are protected.
- 9.4. Encourage increased access to publicly owned natural resource lands. Protect existing public access to shorelines and water. Encourage acquisition of lands to provide additional public shoreline and water access. especially in underserved areas.
- 9.5. Encourage retention of open space and the development of recreational opportunities like parks and public-use recreation areas appropriate for camping, hiking, horseback riding, and off-leash dog exercise.

## 10: ENVIRONMENT

GMA strives to protect the environment and enhance the quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.

- 10.1. ~~In order to~~ To protect public health and water quality, septic systems and/or appropriate alternative disposal systems will be installed where appropriate in rural areas, according to adopted County health codes. Alternative sewage collection and treatment systems should be considered as an option when public health is in jeopardy, ~~and~~ and/or to correct environmental damage and when consistent with land use designations in the Comprehensive Plan. Development permits and/or franchises for sewage treatment systems should be granted when consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- 10.2. Mason County and the ~~cities therein~~ City of Shelton shall protect drinking water supplies from contamination, ensure that water for development is both legally and physically available, and identify and reserve future supplies.

**Commented [KP43]:** Would like to include low impact development as a tool that can be used by developers. Can build more density if these tools are used. Perhaps a new Policy 10.5 that "encourages" LID as a tool for stormwater treatment.

10.3. In environmentally sensitive areas, ensure land use permit processes control activities ~~which that~~ may have a detrimental effect on public health, safety, environment, and physical integrity of the area consistent with state and federal requirements.

~~10.3.~~10.4. Encourage water reuse and reclamation for large-scale potable water users, such as golf courses, parks, and schools.

## 11: CITIZEN-PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

GMA encourages the involvement of residents, property owners, and business owners in the planning process and coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.

11.1. Encourage the involvement of ~~citizens~~ residents, property owners, and business owners in the planning process and coordinate between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.

11.2. Mason County and the City of Shelton will maintain joint procedures for review of land development activities within the City's Urban Growth Area.

**Commented [CH44]:** Revise if the City will be granted planning/permitting authority.

## 12: FACILITIES/SERVICES

GMA strives to ensure that public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time of occupancy without decreasing the level of service provided.

12.1. Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development ~~shall be~~ are adequate to serve the development at the time of occupancy without decreasing current levels below locally established minimum standards. Require concurrent provision of infrastructure and utilities where necessary. Consider assessing development fees in the form of environmental mitigation fees or impact fees for public services.

**Commented [KP45]:** Consider revising this statement to remove the word "require". Allow for flexibility enough for property owners.

12.2. Mason County and the ~~cities therein~~ City of Shelton, shall ~~develop~~ maintain, with public participation, a cooperative regional process to site essential public facilities of regional and statewide importance. ~~The objective of the process shall be to ensure that s~~ Such facilities ~~are will be~~ located ~~so as~~ to protect environmental quality, optimize access and usefulness to all jurisdictions, and equitably distribute benefits ~~and~~ burdens throughout the region or county.

**Commented [KP46]:** I really understand what Kristin is saying. I think the word "require" isn't clear on whom is required to do what. We always try to accommodate, but it's not always a simple process. Are we talking about "coordinating" between agencies, or are we "requiring" from some particular group (developers, providers, county planners, etc?).

12.3. Major public facilities that generate substantial travel demand should be sited along or near major transportation and public transit corridors.

12.4. Sharing of corridors for major utilities, trails, and other transportation rights of way is encouraged.

12.5. Advance waste reduction efforts through support of state and federal programs, ~~and through~~ public information and education programs, and other available, appropriate methods.

## 13: HISTORIC PRESERVATION

GMA states that jurisdictions should, "identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical, cultural, or archeological significance".

13.1. Support the efforts of the Mason County Historic Preservation Commission created to identify and actively encourage the conservation of Mason County's historic resources (MCC 17.40).

13.2. Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archeological significance through enforcement of regulations that implement the State's goals and objectives for historic preservation at the local level.

~~13.2-13.3.~~ Consult with Tribes and other government entities to ensure the protection of archeologically and culturally significant lands, sites, and structures.

**Commented [KP47]:** Edit proposed by Historic Preservation Commission.

**Commented [KP48]:** Edit proposed by HPC.

## 14: CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCY

GMA requires jurisdictions to ensure that comprehensive plans, development regulations, and regional policies and plans address climate change and natural hazards, foster resiliency, advance environmental justice, and protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health in the face of a changing climate.

14.1. Continue coordinated hazard mitigation and community resilience planning efforts with the City of Shelton, Skokomish Tribe, Squaxin Island Tribe, Public Utility Districts 1 and 3, ~~Central Mason Fire and Emergency Services, Mason County Fire District #4, Fire District 16,~~ all fire districts serving Mason County and other interested agencies.

14.2. Plan for and consider the impacts of climate change on communities and industries in Mason County, including sea level rise, flooding, wildfires, and extreme weather events, on both existing and new development.

14.3. Support efforts to increase the resilience of public services and infrastructure, including transportation, utilities, emergency response, and others, by preparing for disasters and coordinating planning for continuity of operations and system recovery.

14.4. Plan for coordinated efforts with tribal governments and other agencies to provide for, and protect, clean and abundant surface water, which is a treaty-protected resource.

**Commented [KP49]:** Revision proposed by Fire Marshal.

## 15: SHORELINES OF THE STATE

GMA strives to implement the Shoreline Management Act through consistency with a local Shoreline Master Program.

15.1. Implement the Mason County or City Shoreline Master Program, as necessary.

**Commented [CH50]:** Any desire to include this here?

**Commented [MW51R50]:** I like tying the SMP in here

**Commented [CH52]:** Critical areas in shorelines