

# Land Use Element

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## Purpose and Relationship to GMA

The Land Use Element provides the policy basis for directing the Town of Skykomish's spatial growth in order to accommodate the mix of land uses necessary for future development. The Land Use Element is maintained in accordance with the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070) to direct land use decisions that may be proposed over the next 20 years. The GMA requires the Town to maintain:

*A land use element designating the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of land, where appropriate, for agriculture, timber production, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open spaces, public utilities, public facilities, and other land uses.*

*The land use element shall include population densities, building intensities, and estimates of future population growth.*

*The land use element shall provide for protection of the quality and quantity of ground water used for public water supplies.*

*Where applicable, the land use element shall review drainage, flooding, and storm water run-off in the area and nearby jurisdictions and provide guidance for corrective actions to mitigate or cleanse those discharges that pollute waters of the state, including Puget Sound or waters entering Puget Sound.*

This Land Use Element is consistent with the King County Countywide Planning Policies and with other elements of the Skykomish Comprehensive Plan. The Countywide Planning Policies direct jurisdictions within the County to focus growth within its cities and towns. Based on the Countywide Planning Policies, Skykomish must:

- Develop a phasing strategy that identifies areas for growth for the next ten and 20 years;
- Define the growth it intends to accommodate over the next 20 years;
- Plan for 20 year population and employment growth target ranges; and
- Limit growth where services are not yet available.

The planning area is the current Town limits. This area includes approximately 214 acres.

## Organization of the Element

This Element contains the goals and policies necessary to support the Town's responsibility for managing land resources and guiding development through the implementing regulations, guidelines, and standards. This Element also provides for the protection, enhancement, and restoration of critical areas and natural resources.

The Land Use Element is closely linked to the other elements – in particular, the Housing, Transportation, and Utilities Elements.

The Appendix for the Land Use Element contains data and analysis that are used to describe the physical characteristics of the Town and to define and explain basis for the following goals and policies.

## Goals

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### ▪ General

- LU-G1 Plan current and future land uses in accordance with the values and vision of Skykomish residents and business people.
- LU-G2 Preserve Skykomish's character, scale, and residential and commercial quality as new development occurs.
- LU-G3 Maintain, preserve, and enhance the Town's historic, cultural, and archaeological resources to provide a sense of local identity and history to the visitors and residents of the community.
- LU-G4 Identify and protect open space, natural and scenic resources, and shoreline areas.
- LU-G5 Continue to apply adopted community design standards that help to preserve and promote the historic character of the community.
- LU-G6 Encourage reinvestment in and revitalization of the existing commercial area to stimulate business activity in the Town.
- LU-G7 Encourage land uses and the development of commercial services that support tourism and capitalize on Skykomish's proximity to recreational options.
- LU-G8 Restore Skykomish land and water resources affected by industrial contaminants.

### ▪ Parks and Open Space

- LU-G9 Develop, operate, and maintain a system of parks and facilities that are responsive to the needs of Skykomish residents and visitors.
- LU-G10 Plan for, build, and maintain a system of public trails that provide recreational opportunities for town residents and visitors.
- LU-G11 Promote opportunities for public participation in planning parks, trails, and recreation facilities.

- LU-G12 Coordinate with community groups in efforts to identify grant funding to be used for planning, acquisition, and construction of park and trail facilities.
- LU-G13 Create and promote opportunities for private contributions and volunteerism in the acquisition, construction, operation, and maintenance of parks, trails, and recreation facilities.
- LU-G14 Participate with other jurisdictions in promoting a region-wide parks, trails, and recreation system, for recreational as well as educational purposes.

- **Natural Features**

- LU-G15 Protect and enhance Skykomish's natural environment, including air quality, water resources, and critical areas, while minimizing public and private costs.
- LU-G16 Protect people and property from geologic and flooding hazard areas.
- LU-G17 Protect, enhance and, where possible, restore habitat that contributes to the survival and restoration of threatened or endangered species, including anadromous and salmonid fish.
- LU-G18 Promote community-wide stewardship of the natural environment to preserve environmental quality for future generations.

## **Policies**

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- **General**

- LU-P1 Encourage development that creates and maintains a safe, healthy, and diverse community providing affordable housing and reasonable employment opportunities, and protecting the natural environment and significant cultural resources.
- LU-P2 Maintain the Town's Comprehensive Plan consistent with the GMA and King County Countywide Planning Policies (where applicable), and ensure that the adopted land use policies, regulations, and related capital facility plans are consistent with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
- LU-P3 Work with the King County Health Department and the Washington Department of Ecology to develop plans to reduce and ultimately eliminate pollution from malfunctioning on-site septic systems.
- LU-P4 Work with the Department of Ecology, the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad, and other relevant parties to ensure that the community is provided with restitution, full restoration, and clean-up of local toxic contamination.

- **Development Review**

**LU-P5** Require proposed development to review and demonstrate consistency with Skykomish's Comprehensive Plan, applicable development regulations, and sound environmental management practices during project review.

**LU-P6** Utilize the policies and guidelines of the adopted Shoreline Master Program when reviewing development in the shoreline area.

- **Urban Growth Boundary, Annexation, Growth Strategies**

**LU-P7** Coordinate with King County to ensure that Skykomish's Urban Growth Boundary is adequate to accommodate the 20-year growth target for households and employment.

**LU-P8** Allow annexations only when the land is located within the Town's Urban Growth Boundary, is contiguous to the existing Town boundaries, urban services can logically be extended, natural resources and critical areas are protected, and the property to be annexed is capable of paying for its impact on Town services. Town services include public safety, water service, utilities, streets, and schools.

- **Residential Land Use**

**LU-P9** Home businesses may be allowed if they are resident occupied and operated, and compatible with adjacent residential land uses; that is, they do not: 1) generate significant noise; 2) require frequent freight pick-ups and deliveries; 3) significantly increase traffic or demand for parking; or 4) involve outdoor storage of materials or equipment.

**LU-P10** The Town of Skykomish zoning and subdivision regulations for residential development shall require urban standards, including, but not limited to:

- a. Paved streets, curbs, and sidewalks;
- b. Adequate parking;
- c. Street lighting and street trees; and
- d. Public water supply.

- **Commercial Land Use**

**LU-P11** The Town of Skykomish's zoning and other development regulations for commercial and retail developments should, where appropriate, encourage a sense of community and create enjoyable outdoor areas. When constructed or improved, commercial development should provide the following improvements including, but not limited to:

- a. Paved streets;
- b. Sidewalks (and designated bicycle lanes where appropriate and consistent with the Transportation Element);
- c. Adequate parking;
- d. Attractive landscaping along or within streets, sidewalks, and parking areas;
- e. Adequate storm water control, including curbs, gutters and stormwater management facilities; and
- f. Public and private utilities.

- **Parks, Trails, Open Space**

**LU-P12** Seek opportunities to promote participation in the King County open space program, where appropriate.

**LU-P13** Encourage the preservation of open space through the King County Current Use Taxation-Open Space program, where appropriate.

**LU-P14** Require new development to contribute to the size and/or improvement of recreational and open space areas.

**LU-P15** Support the expansion, enhancement, and maintenance of regional trails such as the Iron Goat Trail and Pacific Crest Trail.

- **Historic Preservation**

**LU-P16** Coordinate with community groups to develop and implement a program to identify and preserve buildings and structures of historic value that contribute to the “small town” feel of the community.

**LU-P17** Encourage the continued protection, preservation, and rehabilitation of significant archaeological resources and historic sites, including those sites and areas designated as King County landmarks, such as Skykomish Historic Commercial District, Railroad Avenue and the Skykomish Masonic Hall.

**LU-P18** Ensure that building codes adopted by the town include provisions to enable protection of the historic character of buildings while ensuring that the retrofitted buildings meet the intent of current life/safety provisions.

**LU-P19** Encourage appropriate efforts to rehabilitate sites and buildings with unique or significant historic characteristics.

**LU-P20** Historic properties that exhibit characteristics consistent with the designation criteria of the U.S. Department of the Interior, Federal Register

of Historic Places program, may be designated by the Town as locally significant.

▪ **Aesthetics, Design**

**LU-P21** Encourage “clean up/fix up” campaigns periodically. The Town Council should encourage other public agencies and service clubs to become actively involved.

▪ **Natural Features**

*General*

**LU-P22** Areas where natural features and resources are fragile or development would pose hazards to health or property are designated critical areas (RCW 36.70A.060). Critical areas include:

- a. Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas;
- b. Wetlands;
- c. Areas with a critical recharging affect on groundwater used for water supply;
- d. Frequently flooded areas; and
- e. Geologically hazardous areas, including erosion hazard areas, landslide hazard areas, seismic hazard areas, and coal mine hazard areas.

**LU-P23** With Town oversight, developers shall be responsible for determining whether there are critical areas on proposed project sites, and for identifying the nature and extent of the critical areas.

**LU-P24** Protect and enhance critical areas, and give special consideration to measures to protect and enhance habitat for anadromous and salmonid fish, consistent with the best available science and in accordance with RCW 36.70A.172.

**LU-P25** It shall be the developer’s responsibility to demonstrate through engineering studies and designs that any impacts on critical areas will not result in significant risk to public health or safety, public or private property, or the environment. Project proposals unable to demonstrate that such risk does not exist shall be denied.

**LU-P26** Seek funding to develop a local natural hazards mitigation plan with the intent of reducing the City’s exposure to floods and landslides, minimizing reliance on federal and state programs for disaster mitigation, protecting public and private property, saving lives, and using community resources wisely. This planning process is intended to develop a list of capital projects that, as funding allows, will achieve these goals.

### Incentives, Education, Planning, and Regulations

- LU-P27** Promote environmental stewardship by seeking opportunities to educate citizens and establish partnerships with entities that share similar environmental concerns or stewardship opportunities.
- LU-P28** Seek opportunities to coordinate with the community and other jurisdictions (federal, tribal, state, and local) to protect and enhance the natural environment.

### Water Resources

#### **General Water Resources Protection**

- LU-P29** Development shall occur in a manner that supports the continued ecological and hydrologic functioning of water resources and avoids significant adverse impacts on water quality or water quantity.
- LU-P30** Encourage conservation of water resources.
- LU-P31** River and stream channels should be preserved, protected and enhanced for their hydraulic, ecological, and aesthetic functions in accordance with the Shoreline Master Program and critical areas regulations.

#### **Groundwater**

- LU-P32** Consider the potential impacts of its land use actions on aquifers that serve as potable water supplies. The depletion or degradation of aquifers needed for potable water supply shall be avoided or mitigated; otherwise, a proven, feasible replacement source of potable water supply shall be planned and developed to compensate for potential lost supplies.
- LU-P33** Protect groundwater recharge quality and quantity by coordinating with the County to implement appropriate wellhead protection programs and adopt provisions to avoid groundwater contamination.

#### **Rivers and Streams**

- LU-P34** Coordinate with King County and other jurisdictions in efforts to promote restoration of stream channels and associated riparian areas to enhance water quality and fish and wildlife habitat and to mitigate flooding and erosion.
- LU-P35** Adopt and implement, to the extent feasible, the Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan to restore and protect the biological health and diversity of the Puget Sound Basin. The Town shall seek technical and funding assistance from Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team to ensure that assistance on specific issues and concern are addressed.

### Wetlands

**LU-P36** Participate with King County and other jurisdictions and interested parties in developing a wetland mitigation banking program.

### Floodplains

**LU-P37** The existing hydraulic (flood storage and conveyance) and ecological functions of floodplains shall be protected and, where possible, enhanced or restored.

### Vegetation

**LU-P38** Strive to preserve, replace, or enhance native vegetation that contributes to the Town's scenic beauty. To the maximum extent possible, the Town shall preserve its visual identity as a small town situated in a lush green setting.

**LU-P39** The use of native plants in new landscapes including erosion control projects, and the restoration of stream banks, lakes, shorelines, and wetlands shall be encouraged where possible.

**LU-P40** Protect existing native plant communities by encouraging management and control of non-native invasive plants, including aquatic plants.

**LU-P41** Actively encourage the use of environmentally safe methods of vegetation control. Herbicide use shall be minimized.

### Fish and Wildlife Habitat

**LU-P42** Protect salmonid habitats by ensuring that land and infrastructure development (transportation, water, sewer, electricity, gas) include riparian and stream habitat conservation measures developed by the Town and/or service providers, the County, tribes, or state and federal agencies.

### Geologic Hazard Areas

#### **Erosion and Landslide Hazard Areas**

**LU-P43** Grading and construction activities shall incorporate erosion control Best Management Practices and other development controls as necessary to reduce sediment discharge from construction sites to minimal levels. Development controls shall include seasonal restrictions on clearing and grading.

**LU-P44** Land uses permitted in erosion, steep slope, and landslide hazard areas shall minimize soil disturbance and maximize retention and replacement of native vegetative cover.

- LU-P45** Landslide hazard areas and areas with slopes of 40 percent or greater shall not be developed unless the risks and adverse impacts associated with such development can be reduced to a non-significant level.
- LU-P46** Development within landslide hazard areas with slopes less than 40 percent and their buffers shall not decrease slope stability on contiguous properties. Mitigation shall be based on the best available engineering and geological practices in order to eliminate or minimize the risk of landslide damage to public welfare or property or to salmonid habitats.