

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MEMO

DATE: 06/04/2025

TO: Planning Commission and Citizen Advisory Committee

FROM: Stacie Pratschner, Director

SUBJECT: Review Draft #1: Land Use Element Goals and Policies

BACKGROUND: The attached document contains draft Goals and Policies for the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. As noted in RCW [36.70A.070\(1\)](#), the land use element goals and policies should, at minimum, focus on the distribution, location and extent of uses of land; building intensities; establish protections for critical areas and address flooding and stormwater runoff; address environmental justice and greenhouse gas emissions; and include efforts to promote physical activity and reduce vehicles miles traveled¹.

The attached draft Goals and Policies are exclusive to the Land Use Element; and there are other Elements that will also be updated in 2025 and 2026. For example, the Housing Element will expand upon and will include additional housing related Goals and Policies. Similarly, the Transportation Element will expand upon and will include additional Goals and Policies regarding trails, vehicular traffic, multi-modal facilities, et cetera.

REQUEST: Review of, and comments on, the attached draft Goals and Policies for the Land Use Element. When reviewing and commenting on this document please keep the following questions in mind:

1. Do the Goals and Policies reflect the values and needs of our community?
2. What stands out to you as particularly strong or important?
3. Are there any concerns or unintended consequences you see?
4. Is anything missing or unclear? Who might be left out?

The above suggestions are made in an attempt to avoid line-item editorial comments (i.e. grammar, sentence structure, and the like) because with the first several drafts of this document we need to focus on overall land use concepts and longer-term possibilities versus focusing on less important grammatical details. Once the overall content is roughly right, a final draft will be reviewed to ensure its grammar, voice, and related editorial issues are addressed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Following is the Vision Statement for the Land Use Element adopted under the 2016 – 2036 Comprehensive Plan update that will also need to be updated with the Goals and Policies contained in the attached materials:

LAND USE ELEMENT VISION: *Mount Vernon is committed to being proactive, rather than reactive, in managing growth within the City. The City will adopt and emphasize strategies that promote the City's rich history, natural and man-made beauty, along with its environmental and cultural resources. Emphasis will be placed on creating and promoting land uses that will help to balance land uses where people live, work, and recreate.*

The accompanying Goals and Policies are organized under the following headings:

- GENERAL DISTRIBUTION, LOCATION & COORDINATION OF LAND USES
- QUALITY OF LIFE
- PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS
- PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & REGIONAL COORDINATION
- EQUITABLE HOUSING, HEALTH & COMMUNITY STABILITY
- CULTURAL RESOURCES & HISTORIC SITES
- RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING
- NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT & JOBS
- CRITICAL AREAS
- CLIMATE
- ANNEXATIONS

ATTACHED:

- Draft #1 Updated Goals and Policies of the Land Use Element

¹ Please note the last two items will be provided in a separate package of goals and policies that respond to climate and environmental justice planning requirements.

LAND USE ELEMENT
DRAFT GOALS AND POLICIES

2016 GOAL, OBJECTIVE, OR POLICY NUMBER	2016 GOAL/OBJECTIVE/POLICY LANGUAGE	2025 NEW GOAL/OBJECTIVE/ POLICY LANGUAGE	TYPE/REASON FOR CHANGE	CITY COUNCIL, PLANNING COMMISSION, CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE & OTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS
GENERAL DISTRIBUTION, LOCATION & COORDINATION OF LAND USES				
		Goal 1: Direct future growth by identifying the location and intensity of land uses consistent with the community’s vision.	New Goal	
LU-P-1.1.3	Provide adequate capacity for the City’s projected residential growth and provide enough commercial/industrial areas within the City to balance residential growth.	Policy 1.0: Ensure adequate land is designated in appropriate locations for existing and projected population, housing, jobs, commerce, commercial floorspace, recreation, open spaces, utilities and facilities, and other needed land uses.	Updated and combined Objective 1.1 and Policies 1.1.3 and 2.1.1	The previous update failed to provide adequate capacity for the City’s residential growth; this update must acknowledge that the City plans to address pent-up existing demand for housing (plus projected demand), if it wants be taken seriously.
LU-P-2.1.1	Designate land for housing, commerce, recreation, public utilities and facilities and other land uses on the official Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.		Combined with Proposed Policy 1.0	
LU-O-1.1	Balance residential, commercial, industrial and public land uses within the City.		Combined with Proposed Policy 1.0	
LU-P-1.1.6	Encourage infill development on vacant properties with existing public services and public utilities.	Policy 1.1: Facilitate infill development and encourage redevelopment of underutilized land.	Updated and changed Policy 1.1.6 to broaden policy to also address redevelopment of underutilized land.	Not strong enough; past infill development has been more difficult in the City than greenfield development and was thus rare. There must be a positive preference or incentive for infill—otherwise it will remain rare.
		Policy 1.2: Locate the highest intensity residential areas close to and near shops and services, employment centers, transportation hubs, and in areas of the City where infrastructure is adequate to handle impacts from higher intensity development.	New Policy	Will require NEW mixed-use comp plan designations (e.g. not enough to just make C2-type commercial zones mixed-use).
LU-P-1.1.5	Integrate non-residential uses such as parks, social and religious uses, where appropriate, into residential neighborhoods to create communities that have a full range of public facilities and services. These non-residential uses shall be sited, designed, and scaled to be compatible with the existing residential character.	Policy 1.3: Integrate non-residential uses such as parks, social and religious uses, or corner stores, into residential neighborhoods to create communities that have a full range of public facilities and services.	Updated with simplified language	Adding corner stores here is good; consider adopting Anacortes’ existing code allowing small stores in residential areas with a conditional use permit.
LU-P-1.1.7	Public transportation transit stops constructed as part of a development shall be safe, clean, comfortable, and attractive.	Policy 1.4: Coordinate land use and transportation planning to create walkable, connected, and inclusive communities. Ensure all residents have safe, convenient access to housing,	Policy 1.1.7 updated and rewritten	Sounds great—let’s create this!

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		jobs, schools, parks, services, and gathering places. Align decisions to reduce congestion, improve safety for walking and biking, and support public health and quality of life.		
LU-O-2.1	Implement the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.	Policy 1.5: Maintain and implement the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. Ensure yearly updates to the Comprehensive Plan map and/or text are accompanied by changes to the zoning map and development regulations to maintain consistency between these documents and maps.	Updated and combined Goal 2, Objective 2.1 and Policies 2.1.2, 2.1.3	Map does not currently provide for enough future housing (or previous pent-up demand) and must be dramatically improved , if this update is to be taken seriously.
LU-P-2.1.2	Update on a yearly basis the official Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, as appropriate.		Not needed - combined with Proposed Policy 1.5	
LU-P-2.1.3	Ensure that the yearly updates to the Comprehensive Plan map and text are accompanied by changes to development regulations and the zoning map, so that these items are consistent.		Not needed - combined with Proposed Policy 1.5	
LU-G-2	Provide for orderly development within the city of Mount Vernon that is consistent with adopted plans and development regulations.		Not needed - combined with Proposed Policy 1.5	
		Policy 1.6: Maintain criteria, development regulations, and procedures allowing for the appropriate siting of essential public facilities. Update existing essential public facility development regulations to include the siting of organic materials management facilities.	Updated and rewritten Goal 4, Objective 4.1 and Policies 4.1.2 – 4.1.5 Addresses Commerce requirement for addressing siting of organic materials management facilities	
LU-G-4	Provide a process for the identification and siting of Essential Public Facilities.		Not needed, replaced with Proposed Policy 1.6	
LU-O-4.1	Allow for the appropriate siting of essential public capital facilities of a Statewide or Countywide nature.		Not needed, replaced with Proposed Policy 1.6	
LU-P-4.1.2	The applicant for a proposal to site an essential public facility shall provide a justifiable need for the public facility based upon forecasted need and a logical service area.		Not needed, replaced with Proposed Policy 1.6	

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LU-P-4.1.3	Through the zoning code, the City shall prepare siting criteria for essential public facilities.		Not needed, replaced with Proposed Policy 1.6	
LU-P-4.1.4	Any site selected as an essential public facility shall have Comprehensive Plan and zoning designations of Public (P) and an overall Master Plan shall be prepared and accepted by both the City Planning Commission and City Council.		Not needed, replaced with Proposed Policy 1.6	
LU-P-4.1.5	In approving essential public facilities, the effect on adjacent uses and/or neighborhoods and methods to mitigate all impacts shall be considered in the approval process.		Not needed, replaced with Proposed Policy 1.6	
		Policy 1.7: Ensure internal consistency within the Comprehensive Plan Elements and externally with related plans and studies referenced within the Plan.	Updated and rewritten Objective 2.2 and 8.1 and Policy 2.2.2	
LU-O-2.2	Establish densities and development standards that provide for efficient infrastructure and service delivery.		Not needed – combined with Policy 1.7	
LU-P-2.2.2	Coordinate transportation and utility improvement projects with the Land Use Element and the Capital Improvements Plan for the City.		Not needed – combined with Policy 1.7	
LU-O-8.1	Develop and implement an Economic Development Element for the Comprehensive Plan.		Not needed – combined with Policy 1.7	
		Policy 1.8: Coordinate with Skagit County to establish a shared method for monitoring urban growth, buildable land, and housing production by Area Median Income (AMI) category within the city.	New policy per CPP-1.9	
LU-P-2.1.4	Each year when the Comprehensive Plan is updated an inventory of new public uses such as Churches, Parks, Cemeteries, and Schools that have been allow as conditional or special uses shall be completed and these areas shall be redesigned with the appropriate Comprehensive Plan designation and rezoned as Public (P).		Proposed to be removed	
QUALITY OF LIFE				
LU-G-1	Enhance the quality of life found in the city of Mount Vernon as a place to work, live and recreate.	Goal 2: Enhance the quality of life in the City of Mount Vernon as a place to work, live and recreate.	Updated for Grammar (oxford comma)	

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LU-O-1.3	Foster business creation and retention and contributes to the quality of life of the citizens of the City of Mount Vernon.	Policy 2.0: Foster the creation and retention of local businesses to strengthen economic resiliency and enhance quality of life. Support locally owned businesses that provide stable employment and essential goods and services within the community. Promote a diverse and adaptable local economy that reflects community needs and can respond to changing market conditions.	Updated to focus on “local” businesses, Objective became a Policy, and renumbered	
		Policy 2.1: Maintain and promote land uses that support and enhance access to close, safe and convenient areas for physical activity, social connectivity, goods, services, and other daily needs of city residents.	Proposed new Policy	Without upzoning/redesignating areas around the downtown core, access to all this will be more difficult. Need to update the Comprehensive Plan map.
LU-P-1.3.1	Provide adequate land for commercial and industrial development that provides jobs and augments the City’s tax base.		Proposed to be Removed -addressed in Economic Development Element	
LU-P-1.3.2	Ensure zoning regulations accommodate a range of allowable businesses, commercial and industrial uses in appropriate locations throughout the City.		Proposed to be Removed -addressed in Economic Development Element	
LU-P-4.1.1	Promote freight mobility projects in and around the Mount Vernon UGA that facilitate the development of economically viable and environmentally sustainable commercial and industrial areas.		Proposed to be Removed -addressed in Economic Development Element	
		Policy 2.2: Property rights shall not be taken for public use without just compensation, and proposed regulatory or administrative actions shall not result in unconstitutional taking of land.	New policy needed to be consistent with CPPs	
		Policy 2.3: The rights of property owners operating under current land use regulations shall be preserved unless clear public health, safety, or welfare purposes are served by more restrictive regulations.	New policy needed to be consistent with CPPs	

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PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS				
		Goal 3: Ensure transparent and efficient permitting processes for all types of development.	New goal and associated policies to respond to state legislation regarding permit review processing.	
LU-P-1.3.3	Review on a regular basis existing development regulations to remove unnecessary requirements that unnecessarily hinder the development process.	Policy 3.0: Continue to review existing development regulations on a regular basis to remove unnecessary requirements that hinder the development process.	Updated to correct grammar	Not strong enough —no practical effect after previous plan. Suggest we annually compare our requirements to neighboring cities and have staff either defend or remove unique regulations.
		Policy 3.1: Continue to track and review permitting performance metrics on a regular basis to identify consistency with permitting timelines, and to promote accountability and continuous improvement.	New policy	
		Policy 3.2: Continue to regularly review and update permitting procedures to identify inefficiencies, remove unnecessary steps, and reflect best practices and community goals.	New policy	Not strong enough—what does “best practices” mean? Suggest we again compare our permitting procedures to neighboring cities.
		Policy 3.3: Continue to evaluate permitting materials and checklists to ensure that these materials are user-friendly and incorporate plain-language to help applicants navigate requirements with ease.	New policy	
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & REGIONAL COORDINATION				
		Goal 4: Ensure inclusive, transparent, and meaningful public participation and regional coordination in all aspects of the planning process.	New goal to respond to changes in GMA Public Participation Goal and CPP-11	Lofty goal—will require cultural changes! (Also, spell check on “regional”)
		Policy 4.0: Ensure that planning processes are accessible and inclusive, particularly for historically underrepresented communities, by addressing language, cultural, technological, and physical barriers.	New policy to respond to changes in GMA Public Participation Goal and CPP-11	Lofty goal—will require cultural changes!

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		Policy 4.1: Evaluate and refine public engagement efforts regularly to ensure effectiveness and responsiveness to community needs and preferences.	New policy to respond to changes in GMA Public Participation Goal and CPP-11	
		Policy 4.2: Build community capacity by offering educational tools and engagement training to help community members understand planning issues and contribute effectively.	New policy to respond to changes in GMA Public Participation Goal and CPP-11	
		Policy 4.3: Ensure those most disproportionately impacted by City-decisions have equitable access to participate in planning discussions (e.g., evening meetings, translation services, et cetera).	New policy to respond to changes in GMA Public Participation Goal and CPP-11	
		Policy 4.4: Coordinate and engage with public agencies, tribes, and other organizations on matters of future growth and development.	New policy to comply with Commerce Checklist – tribal and public participation.	
		Policy 4.5: Recognize and work to enhance contiguous systems that cross jurisdictional boundaries in community planning, development, and design; including natural systems, utility infrastructure, and transportation systems.	New policy	
EQUITABLE HOUSING, HEALTH & COMMUNITY STABILITY – THIS SECTION WILL NEED TO BE SUPPLEMENTED IN 2026 TO COMPLY WITH STATE LAW				
		Goal 5: Update development regulations to prioritize and create streamlined processes to approve the siting of housing for vulnerable populations such as those experiencing or at risk of homelessness, living with disabilities and chronic health conditions, recovering from disasters, or facing behavioral health or substance abuse challenges.	New Goals per Commerce Checklist	Current land use map and regulations work to prevent new multifamily housing; this goal will not be met by simple tweaks and will require dramatic improvements to zoning, land use designations, and development regulations.
		Policy 5.0: Ensure land use and zoning designations are sufficient to provide housing affordable to all income levels, prioritizing those for moderate-, low-, very low-, and extremely low-incomes.	New policy per Commerce Checklist	Current land use map and regulations work to prevent new multifamily housing; this goal will not be met by simple tweaks and will require dramatic improvements to zoning, land use designations, and development regulations.

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CULTURAL RESOURCES & HISTORIC SITES				
LU-G-3	Identify, preserve and enhance the cultural resources and historic sites within the city of Mount Vernon.	Goal 6: Identify, preserve, and enhance cultural resources and historic sites within the City.	Updated to correct Grammar	
LU-O-3.1	Support visual, literary and cultural arts and activities with the community.	Policy 6.0: Work with other organizations to support and promote visual, literary, cultural arts, and activities within the community.	Updated and combine with Policies 3.1.1 and 3.1.2	
LU-P-3.1.2	Work with other organizations to promote visual, literary and cultural arts and events in the community.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 6.0	
LU-P-3.1.1	Encourage use of regional and community facilities like the Lincoln Theatre and MacIntre Hall for cultural activities to maximize their use and to expand public access to cultural opportunities.		Proposed to be Removed	
LU-P-3.1.3	Maintain an Arts Commission for the promotion of cultural arts in the community.	Policy 6.1: Maintain and support the existing Arts Commission for the promotion of cultural arts in the community.	Updated to add the word support	
LU-P-3.1.4	Encourage local activities that promote the community's history.	Policy 6.2: Encourage local activities that promote the community's history.	No change	
LU-O-3.2	Identify historic buildings and landmarks within the City.	Policy 6.3: Identify and promote restoration of historic buildings and landmarks within the City. Allow flexibility in the application of design standards for historic properties to support their preservation, adaptive reuse, and integration into the surrounding context.	Revised to reflect City's role in historic preservation and to address implementation of design review on historic properties.	
LU-P-3.2.1	Coordinate with community organizations, property owners and local citizens to identify and/or restore historic properties.	Policy 6.4: Coordinate with community organizations, property owners, and local citizens to identify and/or restore historic properties.	Comma added	
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT & HOUSING				
LU-G-5	Enhance and improve the quality of single-family living environments throughout the city.	Goal 7: Enhance and improve the quality of living environments throughout the City.	Updated to reflect new State laws	

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LU-P-5.1.1	A minimum net density of 4.0 dwelling units per acre for Single Family Residential neighborhoods shall be implemented unless: sensitive areas are documented on the site, it can be shown that sensitive areas near the site will be adversely affected with the proposed development, where designated resources lands exist, where areas are designated as special flood risk areas, where access is restricted, where other physical site constraints limit the number of lots that could be created, or where the existing neighborhoods identified on Map LU-5 would be negatively impacted. The neighborhoods identified on Map LU-5 shall not have a net density of greater than 3.23 dwelling units per acre.	Policy 7.0: Maintain a minimum density in residential subdivisions to use land efficiently and support compact growth, except in areas with physical limits like flood zones or poor access that reduce the number of homes that can be built.	Updated and combined with Policies 5.1.1, 5.1.11 and 6.1.1	
		Policy 7.1: Support the development of multiple housing units on a single lot in residential zones to expand housing choice, promote efficient land use, and improve housing affordability. Establish a minimum density of at least two units per lot, with higher densities—such as four units—encouraged in areas zoned for increased residential capacity and when affordable housing is incorporated. This approach supports compact, adaptable residential patterns that respond to the needs of a growing and diverse population.	New to reflect new state laws	Have to get this right! • If “higher densities” are only allowed in higher-density areas “and when affordable housing is incorporated”, this policy will be less effective. • Provide incentives for smaller units, such as cottages • Cluster developments over multiple lots when common space is shared?
		Policy 7.2: Promote the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as a means to increase housing diversity, support intergenerational living, and improve housing affordability. Revise zoning regulations to allow up to two ADUs per residential lot to make more efficient use of existing residential properties. Encouraging ADUs provides flexible, lower-cost housing options that integrate well into established neighborhoods while meeting the needs of a changing population.	New to reflect new state laws	How does this interact with middle housing/Policy 7.1? Must be clear that ADUs do not count against units-per-lot limits.
LU-P-6.1.1	The net development density in the multi-family residential designations can be increased as outlined in the zoning regulations associated with each designation.		Combined into Proposed Policy 7.0	
LU-P-5.1.11	A range and variety of lot sizes and building densities should be encouraged throughout the City.		Combined into Proposed Policy 7.0	

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LU-P-5.1.15	Mixed-use development in the form of limited commercial development, or other non-residential structures (not listed as permitted, accessory or conditional uses within the zoning code for the R-1 district), may be allowed within the single-family zones through a planned process such as a P.U.D or other type of overlay zone.	Policy 7.3: Encourage compatible non-residential uses in residential neighborhoods. Prioritize the creation of “third places” that offer informal, welcoming spaces for social interaction beyond home and work, strengthening community ties and supporting daily life needs.	Updated and combined with Policies 5.1.9, 5.5.15 and 5.1.13, and 5.1.14	Consider adopting Anacortes’ existing code allowing small stores in residential areas with a conditional use permit.
LU-P-5.1.9	Support projects that create neighborhoods with diverse housing types that achieve continuity through the organization of roads, sidewalks, blocks, setbacks, community gathering places, and amenity features.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 7.3	
LU-P-5.1.13	Non-residential structures, such as community recreation buildings, that are part of a development, may have dimensions larger than residential structures, but shall be compatible in design and dimensions with surrounding residential development.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 7.3	
LU-P-5.1.14	Non-residential structures should be clustered and connected within the overall development through the organization of roads, blocks, yards, focal points, and amenity features to create a neighborhood.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 7.3	
		Policy 7.4: Support the creation of a variety of housing opportunities near employment locations.	New policy per Commerce Checklist and supports allowing residential uses in C-2 zone	Will require NEW mixed-use comp plan designations (e.g. not enough to just make C2-type commercial zones mixed-use).
LU-P-1.1.1	Maintain the use of the Design Guidelines to achieve attractive new residential developments within the City. Create new Design Guidelines to promote attractive new office, retail, commercial and industrial developments within the City.	Policy 7.5: Establish clear and objective development standards for infill residential development that reflect the community’s design priorities, including: • Providing distinct entries and safe, walkable connections between buildings and streets; • Minimizing the disruption of privacy on adjacent properties; • Minimizing the negative impacts of parking; • Using design techniques and architectural elements like building modulation, window size and patterns, and balconies and bay windows to help new development blend into existing neighborhoods; and	Revise to respond to middle housing implementation guidance provided by the Department of Commerce	Design guidelines will apply only to infill now?

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		Integrating landscape and open space features to enhance livability and visual character.		
LU-P-5.1.7	Encourage re-investment and rehabilitation of existing housing.	Policy 7.6: Encourage the reinvestment in and rehabilitation of existing housing stock to extend its useful life and maintain it as an affordable housing option for a range of income levels.	Updated and combined with Policy 5.1.7	
		Policy 7.7: Provide innovative housing regulations to promote housing diversity and home ownership, through methods such as small-lot subdivisions, zero-lot-line developments, middle housing, and accessory dwelling units.	New policy to support middle housing.	
LU-P-1.1.2	Maintain zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure that adequate setbacks, landscaping and buffering are required where land use impacts occur between residential uses of different intensities; along with residential and non-residential uses.	Policy 7.8: Modernize residential zoning standards—such as setbacks, lot coverage, and parking— to enable a wider range of housing types, facilitate the development of middle housing, and promote equitable access to housing opportunities for all residents.	Revised to reflect changes needed to implement new State laws	Good: this update must acknowledge that the City plans to address past over-emphasis on high parking mandates, low lot coverage, and large setbacks, if it wants be taken seriously.
		Policy 7.9: Identify opportunities to simplify development standards in zoning districts by completing actions including, but not limited to: - Consolidating the number of individual zones into related and simplified groups based on existing conditions and planning objectives; - Renaming zones to better describe the allowed mix of uses; - Eliminating or combining zones that only apply to a limited number of parcels; and - Standardizing development standards across similar zones.	New policy to support middle housing.	So....we need to get the comprehensive plan map designations right, to avoid sabotaging this policy!
LU-P-1.1.8	Consider adopting new zoning designations or amending the development regulations associated with existing zones to encourage the development of affordable housing in residential and commercial areas of the City.	Policy 7.10: Continue to promote regulations that allow incentives such as bonus densities and flexible design standards that support and promote the construction of affordable housing.	Updated and combined with Policies 1.1.8, 2.2.1, 5.1.2, and 5.1.4	The City's affordable housing/bonus density code is only useful if it continues to cap density in high-demand areas. Neighboring cities allow unlimited density in high-demand areas—we should do the same , even if it moots the affordable housing code.
LU-P-5.1.2	Net development densities for Planned Unit Development (PUD) subdivision proposals and subdivision proposals where the transfer (purchase) of development rights (TDR) are proposed may be permitted to have an increase in density.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 7.10	

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LU-P-5.1.4	The use of the PUD and TDR ordinances shall be discretionary by the City. PUDs allow for flexibility in standard development regulations in exchange for higher level design and public benefit through the amenities that are included within the PUD development. The PUD and TDR development regulations will only be allowed if neighborhood compatibility parameters can be met with the proposed subdivision.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 7.10	
LU-P-2.2.1	Have development regulations that allow the use of Planned Use Developments (PUDs). PUDs shall provide for open spaces and protection of critical areas, shall offer a diversity of housing types and affordability and shall incorporate the adopted Design Guidelines.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 7.10	
LU-P-5.1.12	Create and encourage development regulations that encourage in-fill development such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs) or zero lot line developments.	Policy 7.11: Adopt development regulations encouraging housing diversity and home ownership through regulations such as unit lot subdivisions, zero lot line development, middle housing, and accessory dwelling units.	Updated and combined with Policy 5.1.12	
LU-O-1.2	Maintain and enhance the character of existing single family neighborhoods but not preclude redevelopment and/or new development within established neighborhoods.	Policy 7.12: Support existing, lower-density neighborhoods while guiding gradual change to meet diverse housing needs. Ensure new housing: - Fits neighborhood scale and supports livability; - Includes gentle infill—such as ADUs, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, and stacked flats—to expand options; - Contributes positively to neighborhood quality and identity.	Updated to be consistent with new laws that must be implemented	Devil is in the details—what is “gradual change”? What “contributes positively to neighborhood quality and identity”? Seems like this is a way to sabotage increased density on the east side of the City.
LU-P-6.1.3	Due to increased impacts to privacy and personal living space inherent in higher density living environments, new development shall be designed to create a high quality living environment with ample public open spaces within a walkable urban context.	Policy 7.13: Due to increased impacts to privacy and personal living space inherent in higher-density residential development to support a high-quality living environment by providing adequate private and shared open spaces in a walkable urban setting.	Updated and combined Policies 6.1.3 and 6.1.5	
LU-P-6.1.5	New multi-family residential projects should demonstrate provisions for an environment that contributes to a high quality of life for future residents, regardless of income level.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 7.13	

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LU-O-5.1	Ensure that new development in the single-family residential designations are designed to provide quality homes and neighborhoods for residents and take care to mitigate impacts of new development on existing neighborhoods.		Proposed to be Removed	
LU-P-6.1.4	Evaluate project proposals in residential multi-family designations to consider the transition to lower density uses where multi-family sites abut lower density zones. Setbacks may be increased, heights reduced, and additional landscape buffering required through site plan review.	Policy 7.14: Maintain development regulations, such as increased setbacks, reduced building heights, and enhanced landscape buffers, that promote context-sensitive development and smooth transitions between properties with differing abutting land uses.	Updated and combined with Policies 6.1.4, 5.1.3, 5.1.5, and 5.1.6	
		Policy 7.15: Ensure multifamily dwelling units developed through infill—particularly on former parking lots, vacant parcels, or underutilized land—are designed to promote high livability standards, safety, connectivity, and integration into the existing urban fabric.	New policy	
LU-P-5.1.3	Support site plans for new residential developments that transition to and blend with existing development patterns using techniques such as lot size, depth and width, access points, building location setbacks, and landscaping. Sensitivity to unique features and differences among established neighborhoods should be reflected in site plan design. Interpret development standards to support coordinated structural design, private yards and substantial common space areas.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 7.14	
LU-P-5.1.5	New plats proposed at higher densities than adjacent neighborhood developments may be required to reduce their overall allowed density to mitigate conflicts between old and new development patterns.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 7.14	
LU-P-5.1.6	Zoning and subdivision regulations should ensure adequate setbacks, landscaping, and buffering when development of different types of housing are proposed abutting one another.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 7.14	
LU-P-5.1.8	Interpret development standards to support plats designed to incorporate vehicular and pedestrian connections between plats and neighborhoods.		Proposed to be Removed will be addressed in Transportation Element	

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LU-P-5.1.10	Support residential development incorporating a hierarchy of streets. Street networks should connect through the development to existing streets, avoid “cul-de-sac” or dead end streets, and be arranged in a grid street pattern (or a flexible grid street system if there are environmental constraints).		Proposed to be Removed will be addressed in Transportation Element	
LU-P-5.1.16	Evaluate fully developed neighborhoods designated Single-Family Residential High Density (SF-HI) to consider a lower density zoning overlay where existing developed conditions are lower density, and the neighborhood is not in transition.		Proposed to be Removed	
LU-G-6	Enhance and improve the quality of multi-family living environments throughout the city that provide areas that offer a larger range of housing options in the form of multi-family units.		Proposed to be Removed	
LU-O-6.1	Ensure that development in the multi-family residential designations are designed to provide quality homes and neighborhoods for residents and to mitigate impacts to existing neighborhoods as new ones develop.		Proposed to be Removed	
LU-P-6.1.2	Multi-family residential designations should be in areas of the City where infrastructure is adequate to handle impacts from higher density uses.		Proposed to be Removed	
LU-G-7	Allow the R-A zoning to continue only if the parcel has a comprehensive plan designation of agricultural (ag).	Policy 7.16: Allow the R-A zoning to continue only if the parcel has a comprehensive plan designation of agricultural (AG). Restrict the application of the R-A (Residential-Agricultural) zoning district to parcels that have a Comprehensive Plan designation of Agricultural (AG), to ensure consistency between zoning and long-range land use policy.	No change	If we keep this in the Plan, will it happen this time?
LU-O-7.1	Actively pursue the rezoning of property zoned R-A to make those properties consistent with their respective associated Comprehensive Plan designations.		Proposed to be Removed	

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LU-P-7.1.1	R-A zoned property shall be rezoned to be consistent with their Comprehensive Plan designations any time a development application for anything other than one (1) single family home or accessory use per lot is proposed.		Proposed to be Removed	
LU-P-7.1.2	One single family home or accessory building may be constructed on a parcel zoned R-A without requiring a rezone to another designation if the zoning and Comprehensive Plan designations are not consistent with each other.		Proposed to be Removed	
LU-P-1.2.1	Provide development regulations that create a compatible pattern of development within established neighborhoods. The development standards shall address densities, building setbacks, parking and landscaping.		Conflicts with new laws that must be implemented	
LU-P-1.1.4	Allow planned multi-family housing throughout the City in residential and commercial zoning designations through processes such as the Planned Unit Development, other types of overlay zones, or with new subarea plans.		Proposed to be Removed	
NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT & JOBS				
LU-G-8	Support existing businesses and provide a dynamic business environment for new commercial and industrial activities that enhance the city's employment and tax base while providing well planned and attractive facilities.	Goal 8: Support existing businesses and provide a dynamic business environment for new commercial and industrial activities that strengthen the city's employment and tax base, while providing well-planned and attractive facilities.	Updated to correct grammar	Will we have commercial-only zones in the future? We probably shouldn't, so call this "mixed-use commercial" if that's what we intend. We should also define which areas will not allow housing: industrial, commercial/light-industrial, etc.
		Policy 8.0: Promote the development and adaptive reuse of buildings for live-work use, supporting economic development, reducing commutes, increasing housing availability, and fostering vibrant, mixed-use communities.	Proposed new Policy to encourage live/work uses	Will require NEW mixed-use comp plan designations (e.g. not enough to just make C2-type commercial zones mixed-use).
LU-P-8.1.1	Support methods of increasing accessibility to commercially zoned areas for both automobile and transit to support the land uses proposed for the district.	Policy 8.1: Increase accessibility to commercially zoned areas for both automobiles, transit, pedestrians, and cyclists.	Updated and combined with Policy 8.1.1	Will we have commercial-only zones in the future? We probably shouldn't, so call this "mixed-use commercial" if that's what we intend.

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LU-P-8.1.2	Private/public partnerships should be encouraged to provide infrastructure development, transportation facilities, public uses, and amenities.	Policy 8.2: Private/public partnerships should be encouraged to provide infrastructure development, transportation facilities, public uses, and amenities.	Updated and combined with Policy 8.1.2	
LU-P-8.1.3	Residential uses are allowed in the C-1, C-3 and C-4 zoning designations if the criteria for such uses, as outlined within the zoning code for each district, are met. In all other commercial or industrial zoning designations residential uses are allowed if a mixed-use overlay is adopted for a site or if the use is classified as an accessory use such as a watchman, custodian, manager or property owner as specified within each associated zoning district's regulations.		Proposed to be Removed	
LU-O-8.2	Ensure that office, retail, commercial or industrial development is attractive and blends with the surrounding areas.	Policy 8.3: Ensure that office, retail, commercial or industrial development is attractive and blends with the surrounding areas.	No change	This implies mixed-use development without saying it; the City should be specific if it wants mixed-use.
LU-P-8.2.1	Support development plans that incorporate the following features: a. Shared access points and fewer curb cuts; b. Internal circulation among adjacent parcels; c. Shared parking facilities; d. Centralized signage; and e. Unified development concepts.	Policy 8.4: Support development plans that incorporate the following features: • Shared access points and fewer curb cuts; • Internal circulation among adjacent parcels; • Shared parking facilities; • Centralized signage; and • Unified development concepts.	No changes except for numbering	This implies mixed-use development without saying it; the City should be specific if it wants mixed-use.
LU-P-8.2.2	Development within defined sub-area plans will be subject to additional design guidelines as delineated in the sub-area plans developed in the future for each center.		Proposed to be removed	
LU-P-8.2.3	Public amenity or amenities for customers and employees such as plazas and recreation areas should be encouraged as part of new development or redevelopment.		Proposed to be removed	
LU-P-8.2.4	Parking areas should be landscaped especially along public or private roadways, to reduce visual impacts.		Proposed to be removed	
LU-P-8.2.5	In areas developed with predominantly office uses, circulation within the site should be primarily pedestrian-oriented.	Policy 8.5: Ensure commercial and office developments provide safe, direct, and convenient internal pedestrian networks that connect buildings, parking areas, public sidewalks, and nearby transit stops. Support site designs that:	Updated and combined with Policies 8.2.5, 8.2.7, 8.2.8, and 8.2.9	This implies mixed-use development without saying it; the City should be specific if it wants mixed-use.

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		• Include clearly defined walkways between building entrances, parking areas, and public streets; • Provide shaded, accessible, and well-lit pedestrian routes throughout the site; • Integrate pedestrian paths with adjacent sidewalks, trails, and transit infrastructure; • Enhance the pedestrian experience through landscaping, seating, and other human-scale design elements.		
LU-P-8.2.7	Landscaping along arterials should be uniform from parcel to parcel to further the visual cohesiveness of the area.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 8.5	
LU-P-8.2.8	On-site landscaping should primarily be located at site entries, in front of buildings, and at other locations with high visibility from public areas.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 8.5	
LU-P-8.2.9	Vehicular connections between adjacent parking areas are encouraged and incentives should be offered to encourage shared parking.		Not needed – combined with Proposed Policy 8.5	
LU-P-8.2.6	Development should be designed to mitigate potential adverse impacts on adjacent properties with different zoning designations (i.e., residential or public zoning). Careful consideration of impacts from lighting, landscaping, and setbacks should all be evaluated during site design.	Policy 8.6: Development should be designed to mitigate potential adverse impacts on adjacent properties with different uses. Careful consideration of impacts from lighting, landscaping, and setbacks should all be evaluated during site design.	Updated to replace the “zoning designations” with “uses” and new numbering	Seems like this could prevent legal development in existing neighborhoods, neutralizing the effect of upzoning.
LU-P-8.2.10	Site design for office uses, commercial, and mixed-use developments should consider ways of improving transit ridership through siting, locating of pedestrian amenities, walkways, parking, etc.	Policy 8.7: Site design for office uses, commercial, and mixed-use developments should consider ways of improving transit ridership through siting, locating of pedestrian amenities, walkways, parking, etc.	No change except for numbering	
LU-G-9	To minimize potential noise impacts to the surrounding residential neighborhood all non-residential uses should be closed for business at reasonable times.		Proposed to be removed	
LU-G-10	Development regulations shall be adopted to reduce the negative visual, noise, odor, and exhaust impacts from garbage and recycling receptacles, loading docks, and drive through lanes.		Proposed to be removed	

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LU-G-11	Provide a network of logical, safe, convenient, attractive, and comfortable pedestrian networks on sidewalks and trails, to and from access points, through parking lots to planned building entrances or other site amenities such as public open spaces to reinforce pedestrian activity between the commercial development and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.	Policy 8.8: Provide a network of logical, safe, convenient, attractive, and comfortable pedestrian networks on sidewalks and trails, to and from access points, through parking lots to planned building entrances or other site amenities such as public open spaces to reinforce pedestrian activity between the commercial development and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.	Updated to apply to new residential uses proposed in areas dominated by commercial uses	Mixed use?
LU-O-11.1	Ensure that a pedestrian network is provided that connects the commercial, residential, and open space uses. This network shall consist of trails, pathways, and widened sidewalks. The commercial uses are intended to primarily serve their surrounding residential areas; and these residents should be able to walk or bike to these areas.		Removed – will be addressed in Transportation Element	
LU-G-12	Development regulations shall be adopted to reduce the apparent mass of larger commercial buildings, to provide visual interest, and to help blend into the residential neighborhoods in which they are located.		Proposed to be removed	
LU-G-13	Ensure that commercial buildings are in scale with the surrounding residential neighborhoods.		Proposed to be removed	
LU-G-14	Development regulations shall be adopted that ensure that mechanical equipment, vaults, and outdoor storage are screened to enhance the appearance of the commercial buildings within the neighborhood commercial zone.		Proposed to be removed	
LU-G-15	Development regulations shall be adopted that balance safety and security and the residential nature in which commercial uses in the C-4 zone are located.		Proposed to be removed	
		Goal 9: Create new and encourage the revitalization of mixed-use areas into connected, walkable, and community-focused environments that strengthen ties to nature and local identity.	Proposed New Goal	
		Policy 9.0: Support development in mixed-use districts that: Revitalizes vacant or underused sites like large parking lots and aging centers;	Proposed New Policy	Will require NEW mixed-use comp plan designations (e.g. not enough to just make C2-type commercial zones mixed-use).

2016 GOAL, OBJECTIVE, OR POLICY NUMBER	2016 GOAL/OBJECTIVE/POLICY LANGUAGE	2025 NEW GOAL/OBJECTIVE/ POLICY LANGUAGE	TYPE/REASON FOR CHANGE	CITY COUNCIL, PLANNING COMMISSION, CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE & OTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS
		- Supports a mix of retail, office, and residential uses in multistory structures; or mixed uses in a horizontal orientation; - Integrates parks, greenways, and natural features; - Improves walking, biking, and access to public spaces; - Encourages placemaking with quality design.		
		Policy 9.1: Maintain and enhance neighborhood retail centers to serve as business centers and as walkable focal points for the local community.	Proposed New Policy	
CRITICAL AREAS				
LU-G-16	Retain and enhance the existing natural features and sensitive areas that are essential to a high quality of life in the community of Mount Vernon.	Goal 10: Retain and enhance the existing natural features and sensitive areas that are essential to a high quality of life in the community of Mount Vernon.	No change except for numbering	
LU-O-16.1	Meet GMA requirements for designation and protection of critical areas in the context of Mount Vernon’s community vision for growth management.	Policy 10.0: Meet GMA requirements for designation and protection of critical areas in the context of Mount Vernon’s community vision for growth management.	No change except for numbering and made objective a policy	
LU-P-16.1.1	The Skagit River will be one of the major natural features affecting development, and it also provides opportunities for increased public access and activity. The dikes, notwithstanding potential legal problems, provide an important community resource for public trails extending beyond Mount Vernon into Skagit County.		Remove – more narrative than policy	
LU-P-16.1.2	Downtown and the West Side of Mount Vernon are the most logical areas to concentrate direct river access, enhancement efforts and river-oriented activities.	Policy 10.1: Downtown and the West Side of Mount Vernon are the most logical areas to concentrate direct river access, enhancement efforts and river-oriented activities.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-16.1.3	With development regulations, support retention of natural areas and include design criteria to achieve subdivision and site layouts which will be sensitive to the environmental constraints and optimize open space and views. Key areas of consideration and emphasis for development include: - Steep slopes; - Streams with associated wetlands;	Policy 10.2: With development regulations, support retention of natural areas and include design criteria to achieve subdivision and site layouts which will be sensitive to the environmental constraints and optimize open space and views. Key areas of consideration and emphasis for development include: Steep slopes;	No change except for numbering	

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	- Habitat areas; and, - Natural vegetation. Programs should be expanded for non-detrimental access to these areas and opportunities for interpretation and education be provided.	- Streams with associated wetlands; - Habitat areas; and, - Natural vegetation. Programs should be expanded for non-detrimental access to these areas and opportunities for interpretation and education be provided.		
LU-O-16.2	Preserve open space, sensitive resources and maintain varied uses.	Policy 10.3: Preserve open space, sensitive resources and maintain varied uses.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-16.2.1	Provide public access and recreation opportunities, where appropriate.	Policy 10.4: Ensure public access and recreational opportunities are provided in a manner that preserves the natural functions of open space corridors and sensitive areas, avoiding any negative impact on their ecological integrity.	Amended to expand on how open spaces can serve multiple purposes	
		Policy 10.5: Enter into inter-agency agreements with local Tribes, and other state and local agencies, for compliance with watershed protection efforts.	New policy per CPP-10.12	
LU-G-17	Identify critical areas as defined in RCW 36.70A.030 that include: floodways of 100 year floodplains; landslide, erosion, and seismic hazards, including steep slopes over 40 percent; wetlands and their protective buffers; streams and their protective buffers; Critical aquifer recharge areas; and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas.	Goal 11:: Identify critical areas as defined in RCW 36.70A.030 that include: floodways of 100 year floodplains; landslide, erosion, and seismic hazards, including steep slopes over 40 percent; wetlands and their protective buffers; streams and their protective buffers; Critical aquifer recharge areas; and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-17.1.1	Maintain an up-to-date inventory of environmentally sensitive areas including descriptions of criteria for designation and maps. The inventory of environmentally sensitive areas should be reviewed and updated regularly based upon changing conditions or new information. The final identification of environmentally sensitive or critical areas, hazardous sites or portions of sites should be established during the review of project proposals.	Policy 11.0: Maintain an up-to-date inventory of environmentally sensitive areas including descriptions of criteria for designation and maps.	Simplified language and new numbering	
LU-P-17.1.2	Consider the best available science to determine critical area buffers and maintain achievable ecological functions of those buffers. Use easements or equivalent protective measures to protect critical areas and critical area buffers that are not protected through public ownership.	Policy 11.1: Use best available science to determine critical area buffers and maintain achievable ecological functions of those buffers.	Word “consider” removed as BAS is required Split LU-P-17.1.2 into two distinct policies	

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		Policy 11.2: Use easements or equivalent protective measures to protect critical areas and critical area buffers that are not protected through public ownership, and to prevent encroachment of incompatible uses.	Split LU-P-17.1.2 into two distinct policies; strengthened per CPP-8.1	
LU-P-17.1.3	Use acquisition, enhancement, regulations, and incentive programs independently or in combination with one another to protect and enhance critical area functions.	Policy 11.3: Use acquisition, enhancement, regulations, and incentive programs independently or in combination with one another to protect and enhance critical area functions.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-17.1.4	Consider allowing alterations to critical areas, after all ecological functions are evaluated, the least harmful and reasonable alternatives are identified, and affected significant functions are appropriately mitigated, to: • Maintain and improve a critical area; or, • Avoid denial of reasonable use of the property; or • Meet other priority growth management goals and programs consistent with GMA and the City Comprehensive Plan.	Policy 11.4: Consider allowing alterations to critical areas, after all ecological functions are evaluated, the least harmful and reasonable alternatives are identified, and affected significant functions are appropriately mitigated, to: • Maintain and improve a critical area; or, • Avoid denial of reasonable use of the property; or • Meet other priority growth management goals and programs consistent with GMA and the City Comprehensive Plan.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-17.1.5	Establish mitigation priorities such as impact avoidance, impact minimization, and compensation in critical area regulations. Mitigation sites should be located strategically to alleviate habitat fragmentation.	Policy 11.5: Establish critical area mitigation priorities to strategically minimize habitat fragmentation, including impact avoidance, minimization, and compensation.	Simplified language and changed numbering	
LU-P-17.1.6	Provide incentives to private land owners, and develop City or inter-jurisdictional programs, designed to protect ecological functions for streams, riparian area, and wetlands.	Policy 11.6: Provide incentives to private landowners, and develop City or inter-jurisdictional programs, designed to protect and enhance ecological functions for streams, riparian area, and wetlands.	Grammer; strengthened per CPP-10.	
LU-P-17.1.7	Review adopted clearing and grading regulations and revise them to address critical area protection. These regulations should set seasonal clearing restrictions that limit clearing and grading activities during the rainy seasons. Critical areas, including sloped and riparian areas, should not be exposed during this time.	Policy 11.7: Ensure clearing and grading regulations set seasonal restrictions to limit land disturbing activities during the rainy seasons.	Simplified language and changed numbering	
LU-P-17.1.8	Grading and construction activities should implement erosion control Best Management Practices and other development controls as necessary to reduce sediment and pollution discharge from construction sites to minimal levels.	Policy 11.8: Require Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other development controls to reduce sediment and pollution discharge from construction sites.	Simplified language and changed numbering	

2016 GOAL, OBJECTIVE, OR POLICY NUMBER	2016 GOAL/OBJECTIVE/POLICY LANGUAGE	2025 NEW GOAL/OBJECTIVE/ POLICY LANGUAGE	TYPE/REASON FOR CHANGE	CITY COUNCIL, PLANNING COMMISSION, CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE & OTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS
LU-P-17.1.9	Encourage the use of native plants in landscaping requirements, erosion control projects, and the restoration of stream banks, lakes, shorelines and wetlands.	Policy 11.9: Encourage the use of native plants in landscaping requirements, erosion control projects, and the restoration of stream banks, lakes, shorelines, and wetlands.	Comma added and changed numbering	
LU-P-17.1.10	Expand programs for non-detrimental access to critical areas and provide opportunities for interpretation and education.	Policy 11.10: Expand programs for non-detrimental access to critical areas and natural open space corridors to provide opportunities for interpretation, recreation, and education.	Included reference to natural open spaces and recreation and changed numbering	
LU-G-18	Maintain, and improve where possible, water quality.	Goal 12: Maintain, and improve where possible, water quality.	Updated numbering	
LU-P-18.1.1	Require adequate erosion and sedimentation controls from new construction sites.	Policy 12.0: Require adequate erosion and sedimentation controls from new construction sites.	Updated numbering	
LU-P-18.1.2	Require adequate water controls for new development.	Policy 12.1: Require adequate water controls for new development.	Updated numbering	
LU-P-18.1.3	Implement public education programs to reduce the source of pollutants entering surface waters.	Policy 12.2: Implement public education programs to reduce the source of pollutants entering surface waters.	Updated numbering	
		Policy 12.3: Recognize the Skagit River as pivotal freshwater resource, and manage development within its watershed consistent with best management practices that enhance the integrity of the aquatic resources of the river.	New policy per CPP-10.5	
LU-G-19	Develop a continuous and comprehensive program for managing surface water.	Goal 13: Develop a continuous and comprehensive program for managing surface water.	No change except numbering	
LU-P-19.1.1	Ensure funding source(s) for program implementation.	Policy 13.0: Ensure funding source(s) for the implementation of the City's Stormwater Management Program.	Clarifying language added and changed numbering	
LU-P-19.1.2	Coordinate the City program with the Skagit County Program.	Policy 13.1: Coordinate the City's program with the Skagit County Stormwater Management Program.	Clarifying language added and changed numbering	
LU-P-19.1.3	Develop a network of publicly-owned or preserved natural open space for protecting environmentally sensitive land, creating a sense of openness, provide scenic views and provide space for trail systems.	Policy 13.2: Develop a network of publicly-owned or preserved natural open space for protecting environmentally sensitive land, creating a sense of openness, provide scenic views and provide space for trail systems.	No change except numbering	

2016 GOAL, OBJECTIVE, OR POLICY NUMBER	2016 GOAL/OBJECTIVE/POLICY LANGUAGE	2025 NEW GOAL/OBJECTIVE/ POLICY LANGUAGE	TYPE/REASON FOR CHANGE	CITY COUNCIL, PLANNING COMMISSION, CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE & OTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS
		Policy 13.3: Ensure surface water runoff and drainage facilities are designed to prevent destruction of private property and the degradation of water quality.	New policy per CPP-6.3	
		Policy 13.4: Recognize the importance of wetlands, woodlands, watersheds, and aquifers have on hydrologic systems, and ensure management of these natural features continues to protect surface and groundwater quality.	New policy per CPP-10.4	
LU-G-20	Protect public health, safety, and property from the effects of natural hazards. Provide for an increased level of safety to the citizens of Mount Vernon, and provide for an increased level of protection for public infrastructure.	Goal 14: Promote environmental justice by protecting public health, safety, and property from the effects of natural hazards and impacts of climate change.	Simplified goal language; added language consistent with Commerce Checklist and changed numbering	
LU-P-20.1.1	Protect Life and Property. Implement mitigation activities that will assist in protecting lives and property by making homes, businesses, infrastructure, and critical facilities more resistant to natural hazards. Support the continuation of the Skagit Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) Program to provide citizens from all areas of Skagit County with the information and tools they need to help themselves, their families, and their neighbors in the hours and days immediately following an emergency or disaster event.	Policy 14.0: Implement mitigation activities that will assist in protecting life and property by making homes, businesses, infrastructure, and critical facilities more resistant to natural hazards.	Split into two policies from LU-P-20.1.1 Meets commerce requirement 'b' of climate section	
		Policy 14.1: Support the continuation of the Skagit Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.) Program to provide citizens from all areas of Skagit County with the information and tools they need to help themselves, their families, and their neighbors in the hours and days immediately following an emergency or disaster event.	Split into two policies from LU-P-20.1.1 Commerce requirement 'b' of climate section	
		Policy 14.2: Adopt portions of, or all of, the wildland urban interface (WUI) code to reduce wildfire risk, separate human development from wildfire prone landscapes, and to protect existing residential development and infrastructure.	New policy to cover Commerce requirement 'p' of land use section	
		Policy 14.3: Identify environmental health disparities and work to reduce the burden on communities most affected by natural hazards and climate change	New policy to cover Commerce requirement 'o' of land use section	

2016 GOAL, OBJECTIVE, OR POLICY NUMBER	2016 GOAL/OBJECTIVE/POLICY LANGUAGE	2025 NEW GOAL/OBJECTIVE/ POLICY LANGUAGE	TYPE/REASON FOR CHANGE	CITY COUNCIL, PLANNING COMMISSION, CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE & OTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS
LU-P-20.1.2	Encourage homeowners and businesses to purchase insurance coverage for damages caused by natural hazards.	Policy 14.4: Encourage homeowners and businesses to purchase insurance coverage for damages caused by natural hazards.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-20.1.3	Encourage homeowners and businesses to take preventative actions in areas that are especially vulnerable to natural hazards.	Policy 14.5: Encourage homeowners and businesses to take preventative actions in areas that are especially vulnerable to natural hazards.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-20.1.4	Develop and implement additional education and outreach programs to increase public awareness of the risks associated with natural hazards. Continue the current flood awareness programs conducted by various jurisdictions as part of the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System.	Policy 14.6: Develop and implement additional education and outreach programs to increase public awareness of the risks associated with natural hazards.	Split LU-P-20.1.4 into two distinct policies	
		Policy 14.7: Continue the current flood awareness programs conducted by various jurisdictions as part of the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System.	Split LU-P-20.1.4 into two distinct policies	
LU-G-21	Preserve, protect, and where possible, restore natural habitat for the conservation of salmonid species listed under the federal ESA, through the use of management zones, development regulations, incentives for voluntary effort of private landowners and developers, land use classifications or designations, habitat acquisition programs or habitat restoration projects.	Goal 15: Preserve, protect, and restore, where possible, habitat for the conservation of salmonid species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA).	Split LU-G-21 into separate goal and policy and changed numbering	
		Policy 15.0: Use management zones, development regulations, incentives, habitat acquisition programs, and habitat restoration projects to improve the health of salmonid habitat.	Split LU-G-21 into separate goal and policy and changed numbering	
LU-O-21.1	Preserve fish and wildlife habitat, where appropriate.	Policy 15.1: Support the preservation of fish and wildlife habitat.	Removed 'where appropriate'. Could be a policy.	
LU-P-21-1.1	Consider a system for stream typing that is compatible with other jurisdictions' typing system.		Removed as City has already adopted typing system similar to other jurisdictions	

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		Policy 15.2: Consider the presence of potential threatened or endangered wildlife when evaluating commercial, industrial, or residential development.	New policy per CPP-10.11	
LU-G-22	Preserve and protect, where possible, identified wetlands within the city.	Goal 16: Preserve and protect, where possible, identified wetlands within the city.	No change except for numbering	
LU-O-22.1	Preserve wetlands and implement a wetlands management strategy.		Removed – not needed as City has adopted BAS into Chapter 15.40 MVMC	
LU-P-22.1.1	Determine wetland boundaries using the procedures provided in the following manuals: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2010. Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region (Version 2.0), ed. J. S. Wakeley, R. W. Lichvar, and C. V. Noble. ERDC/EL TR-10-3. Vicksburg, MS: U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center. And all applicable guidance not superseded by more recent guidance in: Environmental Laboratory. 1987. Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual, Technical Report Y-87-1, U.S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, Miss. Or the scientifically accepted replacement methodology based on better technical criteria and field indicators as directed by the City following consultation with the WA State Department of Ecology and U.S. Corps of Engineers.	Policy 16.0: Determine wetland boundaries using the procedures provided in the following manuals: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2010. Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast Region (Version 2.0), ed. J. S. Wakeley, R. W. Lichvar, and C. V. Noble. ERDC/EL TR-10-3. Vicksburg, MS: U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center. And all applicable guidance not superseded by more recent guidance in: Environmental Laboratory. 1987. Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual, Technical Report Y-87-1, U.S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, Miss. Or the scientifically accepted replacement methodology based on better technical criteria and field indicators as directed by the City following consultation with the WA State Department of Ecology and U.S. Corps of Engineers.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-22.1.2	Provide a classification system for wetlands that allows for the designation of both regionally and locally unique wetlands.	Policy 16.1: Provide a classification system for wetlands that allows for the designation of both regionally and locally unique wetlands.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-22.1.3	Promote mitigation projects that create or restore wetland areas or enhance existing wetland areas. Ensure wetland mitigation projects in the City attain the same ecological functions as natural wetlands of equivalent quality. Preserve land used for wetland mitigation in perpetuity. Monitoring and maintenance should be provided until the success of the site is established.	Policy 16.2: Promote mitigation projects that create or restore wetland areas or enhance existing wetland areas.	Split LU-P-22.1.3 into four distinct policies and changed numbering	

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		Policy 16.3: Preserve land used for wetland mitigation in perpetuity.	Split LU-P-22.1.3 into four distinct policies	
		Policy 16.4: Provide monitoring and maintenance for wetland mitigation sites until their success is established.	Split LU-P-22.1.3 into four distinct policies	
LU-G-23	Preserve and protect, where possible, identified priority habitat areas within the city.	Goal 17: Preserve and protect, where possible, identified priority habitat areas within the city.	No change except for numbering	
LU-O-23.1	Develop a classification system, particularly of habitats of local importance, in addition to Federal or State endangered, threatened or sensitive species.	Policy 17.0: Develop a classification system, particularly of habitats of local importance, in addition to Federal or State endangered, threatened or sensitive species.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-23.1.1	Establish protection measures for priority habitat areas given the variety and complexity of species within these areas.	Policy 17.1: Establish protection measures for priority habitat areas given the variety and complexity of species within these areas.	No change except for numbering	
LU-G-24	Protect, enhance, and restore existing flood storage and conveyance functions and ecological values of Floodplains.	Goal 18: Protect, enhance, and restore existing flood storage, conveyance functions, and ecological values of floodplains in Mount Vernon.	Updated to correct grammar	
LU-O-24.1	Implement strategies to prevent property damage from flooding.		Removed – already covered under Policy 24.1.1	
LU-P-24.1.1	Prevent property damage from flooding by implementing the following development regulations: - Require adequate peak flow controls for new development. - Perform the necessary analysis and recommend solutions for existing flooding problems. - Employ management strategies in flood prone areas to ensure that new development is not exposed to significant flood risk.	Policy 18.0: Prevent property damage from flooding by implementing the following development regulations: - Require adequate peak flow controls for new development. - Perform the necessary analysis and recommend solutions for existing flooding problems. Employ management strategies in flood prone areas to ensure that new development is not exposed to significant flood risk.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-24.1.2	Continue to implement FEMA flood hazard regulations.	Policy 18.1: Continue to implement FEMA flood hazard regulations.	No change except for numbering	

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LU-P-24.1.3	Identify locations for regional surface water facilities in areas of anticipated extensive development and redevelopment, particularly in Downtown. Promote the establishment of regional surface water management facilities to support infill development and preclude the need for individual on-site ponds and facilities, provide development incentives, encourage efficient use of land, and reduce overall facility maintenance costs.	Policy 18.2: Identify locations for regional surface water facilities in areas of anticipated extensive development and redevelopment, particularly in Downtown.	Split LU-P-24.1.3 into two policies and updated numbering	
		Policy 18.3: Promote the establishment of regional surface water management facilities to support infill development and preclude the need for individual on-site ponds and facilities, provide development incentives, encourage efficient use of land, and reduce overall facility maintenance costs.	Split LU-P-24.1.3 into two policies and updated numbering	
LU-P-24.1.4	Require adequate peak flow controls for new development.		Remove – covered by code	
LU-P-24.1.5	Perform the necessary analysis and recommend solutions for existing flooding problems.	Policy 18.4: Perform the necessary analysis and recommend solutions for existing flooding problems within the city.	Updated and renumbered	
LU-P-24.1.6	Employ management strategies in flood prone areas to ensure that new development is not exposed to significant flood risk.	Policy 18.5: Employ management strategies in flood prone areas to ensure that new development is not exposed to significant flood risk.	No change except for numbering	
LU-G-25	Find long term, environmentally responsible, and cost-effective methods to reduce the risk from flood damage.	Goal 19: Find long term, environmentally responsible, and cost-effective methods to reduce the risk from flood damage.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-25.1.1	Work to become engaged and well informed to diligently address and implement measures to systematically reduce the risks from flooding.	Policy 19.0: Work to become engaged and well informed to diligently address and implement measures to systematically reduce the risks from flooding.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-25.1.2	Work to systematically eliminate as many threats from flooding as possible which will achieve long term economic posterity for the region as well as the City.	Policy 19.1: Work to systematically eliminate as many threats from flooding as possible which will achieve long term economic posterity for the region as well as the City.	No change except for numbering	
LU-G-26	Preserve and protect, where possible, identified steep and erosive slopes within the city.	Goal 20: Preserve and protect, where possible, identified steep and erosive slopes within the city.	No change except for numbering	

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LU-P-26.1.1	Minimize soil disturbance and maximize retention and replacement of native vegetative cover in erosion hazard areas through development regulations.	Policy 20.0: Minimize soil disturbance and maximize retention and replacement of native vegetative cover in erosion hazard areas through development regulations.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-26.1.2	Require increased surface water requirements in areas draining over steep and erosive slopes.	Policy 20.1: Require increased surface water requirements in areas draining over steep and erosive slopes.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-26.1.3	Discourage development on landslide hazard areas, including steep slopes over 40 percent. Restrict development unless the risks and adverse impacts associated with such development can be reduced to a non-significant level.	Policy 20.2: Discourage development on landslide hazard areas, including steep slopes over 40 percent. Restrict development unless the risks and adverse impacts associated with such development can be reduced to a non-significant level.	No change except for numbering	
LU-P-26.1.4	In areas with severe seismic hazards, apply Uniform Building Code, and any other necessary special building design and construction measures to minimize the risk of structural damage, fire and injury to occupants, and to prevent post-seismic collapse.	Policy 20.3: In areas with severe seismic hazards, apply Uniform Building Code, and any other necessary special building design and construction measures to minimize the risk of structural damage, fire and injury to occupants, and to prevent post-seismic collapse.	No change except for numbering	
CLIMATE - TO BE ADDED WITH 2026 UPDATES				
ANNEXATIONS – TO BE UPDATED AS NEEDED WITH 2026 UPDATES				
LU-G-27	Annex properties into the city when the city council finds the annexation is justified.	NA in 2025	No change currently proposed – this will be reviewed and updates proposed in 2026	
LU-O-27.1	Encourage development and re-development within the existing City limits before additional lands are annexed into the City.	NA in 2025	No change currently proposed – this will be reviewed and updates proposed in 2026	

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LU-P-27.1.1	The first priority of the City shall be to annex and provide urban services (i.e., sewer, fire, transportation, drainage, parks, open space, schools and landscaping, etc.) on a priority basis to those areas immediately adjacent to the City where available services can most easily and economically be extended.	NA in 2025	No change currently proposed – this will be reviewed and updates proposed in 2026	
LU-P-27.1.2	Work with Skagit County to establish procedures for the development of land within the Urban Growth Areas.	NA in 2025	No change currently proposed – this will be reviewed and updates proposed in 2026	
LU-P-27.1.3	The City Council shall not initiate an annexation unless the following criteria can be met with a proposal. These criteria have been developed following the adoption of the City’s Buildable Lands Analysis and E.D. Hovee’s report entitled, “Commercial and Industrial Land Needs Analysis”, dated September 2006. These reports show that the City does not have a balance between projected residential and commercial/industrial uses. The annexation area is determined to be necessary and appropriate to meet the population and/or employment targets. a. The annexation of residentially zoned areas shall not occur until additional areas zoned for commercial/industrial uses are officially designated such that a balance between residential and commercial/industrial uses can be achieved within the City. b. The annexation is a logical extension of the City’s boundaries. c. The City finds that adequate municipal services exist to serve the area, and that the factors outlined within RCW 36.93.170(2) are complied with. d. The City finds that the boundaries of the proposed annexation are drawn in a manner that makes the provision of public services geographically and economically feasible. e. The City finds that it has the capacity to provide City services within the existing City limits; and, those services to annexation areas without major upgrades to these services. f. The City finds that there are not negative economic impacts to the City with the extension of services. The City finds that it can afford to provide City services without having to use funds that would otherwise be spent on already incorporated areas of the City. The City finds that the annexation will not create financial stress on the City’s ability to provide required services to the annexation area.	NA in 2025	No change currently proposed – this will be reviewed and updates proposed in 2026	

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LU-O-27.2	Preservation of natural neighborhoods and communities.	NA in 2025	No change currently proposed – this will be reviewed and updates proposed in 2026	
LU-O-27.3	Creation and preservation of logical service areas.	NA in 2025	No change currently proposed – this will be reviewed and updates proposed in 2026	
LU-P-27.3.1	Annex areas into the City based on the premise of limiting sprawl, providing for efficient provision of public services and facilities, serving areas where the cost of extending infrastructure consistent with adopted capital improvement plans is the most cost efficient, and avoiding “leap-frog” development and annexations.	NA in 2025	No change currently proposed – this will be reviewed and updates proposed in 2026	
LU-O-27.4	Prevent abnormally irregular boundaries.	NA in 2025	No change currently proposed – this will be reviewed and updates proposed in 2026	