Comprehensive Plan Goals & Policies

Guiding our Storm and Surface Water Utility

Olympia's Comprehensive Plan provides strong vision and guidance on the community's aspirations and expectations for Olympia's water resources and natural environment.

The following Comprehensive Plan goals and policies will help shape the Storm and Surface Water Plan update.

Olympia Comprehensive Plan

Goals

Natural Environment

- **GN2** Land is preserved and sustainably managed.
- **GN4** The waters and natural processes of Budd inlet and other marine waters are protected from degrading impacts and significantly improved through upland and shoreline preservation and restoration.
- **GN5** Ground and surface waters are protected from land uses and activities that harm water quality and quantity.
- **GN6** Healthy aquatic habitat is protected and restored.
- **GN11** All members of the community can experience the natural environment through meaningful volunteer experiences, active recreation, and interactive learning opportunities.

Utilities

- **GU1** Utility and land use plans are coordinated so that utility services can be provided and maintained for proposed future land uses.
- **GU2** Reliable utility service is provided at the lowest reasonable cost, consistent with the City's aims of environmental stewardship, social equity, economic development and the protection of public health.
- **GU3** Utilities are developed and managed efficiently and effectively.
- **GU10** The frequency and severity of flooding are reduced and hazards are eliminated, except during major storm events.
- **GU11** The City uses best available information to implement a sea level rise management plan that will protect Olympia's downtown.

Olympia Comprehensive Plan
Policies

Natural Environment

GN2 **Land is preserved and sustainably managed.**

PN2.1 Acquire and preserve land by a set of priorities that considers environmental benefits, such as stormwater management, wildlife habitat, or access to recreation opportunities.

PN2.2 Preserve land when there are opportunities to make connections between healthy systems; for example, land parcels in a stream corridor.

PN2.3 Identify, remove, and prevent the use and spread of invasive plants and wildlife.

PN2.4 Preserve and restore native plants by including restoration efforts and volunteer partnerships in all city land management.

PN2.5 Design improvements to public land using existing and new vegetation that is attractive, adapted to our climate, supports a variety of wildlife, and requires minimal, long-term maintenance.

PN2.6 Conserve and restore wildlife habitat in both existing corridors and high-priority separate sites.

PN2.7 Practice sustainable maintenance and operations activities that reduce the City's environmental impact.

PN2.8 Evaluate, monitor, and measure environmental conditions, and use this data to develop short- and long-term management strategies.

Olympia Comprehensive Plan

Policies

Natural Environment

GN4 **The waters and natural processes of Budd inlet and other marine waters are protected from degrading impacts and significantly improved through upland and shoreline preservation and restoration.**

PN4.1 Plan for the health and recovery of Budd Inlet on a regional scale and in collaboration with local tribes and all potentially affected agencies and stakeholders.

PN4.2 Prioritize and implement restoration efforts based on the best scientific information available to restore natural processes and improve the health and condition of Budd Inlet and its tributaries.

PN4.3 Restore and protect the health of Puget Sound as a local food source.

PN4.4 As a party of significant interest, support the process for determining a balanced, scientifically grounded and sustainable approach to the management of the Deschutes River, state-owned Capitol Lake and Budd Inlet.

GN5 **Ground and surface waters are protected from land uses and activities that harm water quality and quantity.**

PN5.1 Reduce the rate of expansion of impervious surface in the community.

PN5.2 Increase the use of permeable materials and environmentally-beneficial vegetation in construction projects.

PN5.3 Retrofit existing infrastructure for stormwater treatment in areas with little or no treatment.

PN5.4 Require prevention and treatment practices for businesses and land uses that have the potential to contaminate stormwater.

PN5.5 Improve programs and management strategies designed to prevent and reduce contamination of street runoff and other sources of stormwater.

Olympia Comprehensive Plan
Policies

Natural Environment

GN6 **Healthy aquatic habitat is protected and restored.**

PN6.1 Restore and manage vegetation next to streams, with an emphasis on native vegetation, to greatly improve or provide new fish and wildlife habitat.

PN6.2 Maintain or improve healthy stream flows that support a diverse population of aquatic life.

PN6.3 Establish and monitor water quality and aquatic habitat health indicators based on the best scientific information available.

PN6.4 Use regulations and other means to prevent a net loss in the function and value of existing wetlands, while striving to increase and restore wetlands over the long-term.

PN6.5 Retain and restore floodways in a natural condition.

PN6.6 Preserve and restore the aquatic habitat of Budd Inlet and other local marine waters.

PN6.7 Partner with other regional agencies and community groups to restore aquatic habitat through coordinated planning, funding, and implementation.

PN6.8 Evaluate expanding low impact development approaches citywide, such as those used in the Green Cove Basin.

PN10.3 Maintain City land and properties using non-chemical methods whenever possible; use standard Integrated Pest Management practices and other accepted, natural approaches to managing vegetation and pests.

Olympia Comprehensive Plan
Policies

Natural Environment

GN11 **All members of the community can experience the natural environment through meaningful volunteer experiences, active recreation, and interactive learning opportunities.**

PN11.1 Ensure that all members of the community have access to a nearby natural space that gives them opportunities to see, touch, and connect with the natural environment.

PN11.2 Give all members of our community opportunities to experience, appreciate, and participate in volunteer stewardship of the natural environment.

PN11.3 Provide environmental education programs, classes, and tours that teach outdoor recreation skills and foster an understanding and appreciation for the natural environment.

PN11.4 Provide education and support to local community groups and neighborhoods who want to monitor and care for their local park or natural area.

PN11.5 Foster a sense of place and community pride by carefully stewarding the trees, plants, and wildlife unique to Puget Sound.

Olympia Comprehensive Plan

Policies

Utilities

GU1 **Utility and land use plans are coordinated so that utility services can be provided and maintained for proposed future land uses.**

PU1.2 Require new developments to construct drinking water, wastewater and stormwater utilities in ways that meet the community development, environmental protection, and resource protection goals of this Plan, and that are consistent with adopted utility plans and extension policies.

PU1.3 Evaluate land use plans and utility goals periodically to ensure growth is guided by our knowledge of current environmental constraints and the latest available utility technology.

PU1.4 Make necessary improvements to utility facilities that do not currently meet minimum standards. Prioritize capital improvements to existing systems based on age, condition, risk of failure, and capacity.

PU1.5 Ensure that public utility and transportation-related facilities constructed in Olympia and its Growth Area meet City standards for safety, constructability, durability and maintainability. (See City of Olympia Engineering Design and Development Standards.)

PU1.6 Annually update the utility portions of the Capital Facilities Plan to reevaluate infrastructure priorities.

Olympia Comprehensive Plan

Policies

Utilities

GU2 **Reliable utility service is provided at the lowest reasonable cost, consistent with the City's aims of environmental stewardship, social equity, economic development and the protection of public health.**

PU2.1 Ensure that new development projects pay for their own utility infrastructure based on their expected needs for the next 20 years. Also require them to contribute to their portion of existing infrastructure. Routinely review new-development charges (such as general facility charges) when updating utility master plans, or more frequently as needed.

PU2.2 Ensure that utility fees, such as rates and general facility charges, are structured to reasonably reflect the actual cost of providing services to each customer class. Fees must also encourage customers to conserve water and reduce their demand on our wastewater treatment system.

PU2.3 Provide special rates for low-income senior and low-income, disabled utility customers.

PU2.4 Ensure that adequate funds are generated by the City's utilities to maintain utility services and capital improvement programs.

PU2.5 Use fiscally responsible management practices in order to maintain favorable bond ratings for the City's utilities.

PU2.6 Provide service to existing and new customers consistent with the legal obligation of City utilities to provide service.

PU2.7 Use pricing to encourage utility customers to reduce waste, recycle, conserve water, and help protect our surface water quality.

PU2.8 Use debt financing responsibly to support needed capital facility investments and "smooth" rate impacts.

PU2.9 Use Developer Reimbursement Agreements that include "latecomer fees" and similar tools to enable property owners to recover some of the initial costs of extending infrastructure to serve their developments, when others connect to such extensions at a later date.

PU2.10 Consider the social, economic and environmental impacts of utility repairs, replacements and upgrades.

Olympia Comprehensive Plan

Policies

Utilities

GU3 **Utilities are developed and managed efficiently and effectively.**

PU3.1 Coordinate public utility functions (such as operations and maintenance, public education and outreach, and Capital Facilities planning) for drinking water, wastewater, storm and surface water, and waste resources.

PU3.2 Regularly revise the Olympia Municipal Code and Engineering Development and Design Standards to give detailed guidance on how utility services should be delivered and paid for in accordance with the principles established in this Comprehensive Plan.

PU3.3 Update all utility master plans regularly and in accordance with state law.

PU3.4 Coordinate long-term planning and scheduling of utility capital improvements with neighboring jurisdictions and other local agencies, such as LOTT.

PU3.5 Work with neighboring jurisdictions to provide regionally coordinated utility systems for urban services that benefit from a regional approach.

PU3.6 Locate public and private utilities in public rights-of-way and/or easements on private property in a manner to facilitate safe and efficient operation, maintenance and repair, and to minimize conflicts. Provide guidance within the Engineering Design and Development Standards that shows how and where public and private utilities should be located, including opportunities for co-location.

PU3.7 Evaluate programs for effectiveness and efficiency on a regular basis.

PU3.8 Contribute a portion of utility revenue each year to educational programs for schools, neighborhoods and community organizations to help meet utility goals.

PU3.9 Ensure consistent maintenance, asset management, and emergency management practices for all utilities.

Olympia Comprehensive Plan
Policies

Utilities

GU10 **The frequency and severity of flooding are reduced and hazards are eliminated, except during major storm events.**

PU10.1 Improve stormwater systems in areas that are vulnerable to flooding.

PU10.2 Emphasize the importance of emergency preparedness.

PU10.3 Evaluate the structural integrity of aging stormwater pipes and repair as needed.

PU10.4 Inspect private and public stormwater systems to identify required maintenance and repairs.

PU10.5 Inventory and inspect City-owned culverts and ditches and perform maintenance if needed.

PU10.6 Ensure that private pipe and pond systems are maintained.

Olympia Comprehensive Plan

Policies

Utilities

GU11 **The City uses best available information to implement a sea level rise management plan that will protect Olympia's downtown.**

PU11.1 Evaluate different scenarios for sea level rise, including varying magnitudes and time horizons, and develop a progression of adaptation and response actions for each scenario.

PU11.2 Develop plans, cost estimates and financing options for addressing sea level rise that include regulatory, engineering and environmentally sensitive solutions.

PU11.3 Maintain public control of downtown shorelines that may eventually be needed to help manage flood water.

PU11.4 Incorporate sea level rise planning into the design of public and private infrastructure where needed.

PU11.5 Use the best available science and the experiences of other communities in formulating plans for sea level rise.

PU11.6 Partner with government entities and other key stakeholders, such as, the federal government, State of Washington, LOTT Clean Water Alliance, Port of Olympia, Squaxin Island Tribe, downtown property owners, businesses and residents, environmental groups, and other interested parties.

PU11.7 Engage the community in a discussion of various sea level rise scenarios, how the City will respond to lessen the impact, and what the costs would be.

PU11.8 Require development to incorporate measures, such as higher finished floor elevations, that will reduce risks and avoid future costs associated with rising sea levels; and to encourage acknowledgment of such risks by state and federal agencies.

Olympia