

**PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM**  
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

**AGENDA TITLE:** Comprehensive Plan Update: Public Hearing  
**DEPARTMENT:** Planning & Community Development  
**PRESENTED BY:** Miranda Redinger, Senior Planner  
Steve Szafran, AICP, Senior Planner  
Rachael Markle, AICP, Director P&CD

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Study Session | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommendation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion                | <input type="checkbox"/> Update        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                     |

**INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

This staff report summarizes the following topics as they relate to the 2012 update of the City of Shoreline's Comprehensive Plan:

- History of the process, including staff and Commission review, and public participation;
- Resolution of Big Picture Questions identified as part of the process; and
- Environmental analysis and agency review of the draft.

The focus of the October 18 agenda will be a public hearing on the full, InDesign version of the draft Comprehensive Plan. Following the hearing, Commission may further revise the document and/or make a recommendation to City Council. The Comprehensive Plan Update is currently scheduled as an agenda item at every Council meeting in November, with December 10 slated for potential adoption.

**DISCUSSION**

**Summary of Process**

The State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that cities and counties update their Comprehensive Plans on a regular basis (RCW 36.70A.130 [5]); in the case of King County, the state requirement is for the update to be completed by June 30, 2015. Shoreline's City Council directed staff and the Planning Commission to complete the update by the end of 2012, primarily so that it reflects Vision 2029, which was adopted in April 2009.

The current version of the Plan was last updated in 2005 and contains 300 pages of text and tables. Project goals included revising the document to be more succinct, user-friendly, and graphically interesting.

Approved By:

Project Manager \_\_\_\_\_

Planning Director \_\_\_\_\_

The following criteria were used for *removing* policies and other text:

- Background- Approximately half of the current document (about 150 pages) was background, including information about the City's incorporation and public processes for creating and updating the Plan.
- Redundant- Many policies were restatements of policies found in other elements of the Plan.
- Obsolete- Many policies were outdated or had been accomplished (such as construction of Aurora).
- Regulatory- Many policies were more detailed than is appropriate for a general guiding document.
- Superseded- If the City is already mandated to do something by local, state, or federal regulations, it is unnecessary to have a policy statement about it.

The following criteria were used for *adding* policies or other text:

- To comply with GMA or other updated requirements.
- To support Vision 2029 and Framework Goals, or other Council Goals.
- To promote consistency with other guiding documents:
  - Functional Master Plans (Transportation; Surface Water; Parks, Recreation and Open Space; and Shoreline Master Program);
  - Strategies (Environmental Sustainability, Comprehensive Housing, and Economic Development); and
  - Subarea Plans (North City, SE Neighborhoods, Town Center, and Point Wells).

Following initial staff review and proposed revisions, the update process had two major components.

1. Planning Commission Review:

On January 5, 2012, the Commission discussed a process to complete update the Comprehensive Plan by the following December. Below is a schedule of their review process for individual elements and full drafts.

- February 2- Community Design and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- March 1- Transportation
- April 5- Natural Environment (proposed as a new element, formerly part of Land Use)
- April 19- Capital Facilities and Utilities
- May 3- Economic Development
- May 17- Housing
- June 7- Land Use and Land Use Map
- June 21- Shoreline Master Program and Economic Development
- July 9- Joint dinner meeting with City Council to discuss Big Picture Questions
- August 2- Community Design, Housing, and Land Use
- August 16- Natural Environment, Capital Facilities, and Utilities
- September 20- Full draft of entire Plan
- October 4- Land Use, Capital Facilities, and Utilities
- October 18- Public Hearing on full draft Plan

## 2. Public Participation

Public participation is a major requirement of GMA and an important City value. In order to create opportunities for meaningful involvement by the Shoreline community, staff engaged in the outreach initiatives described below:

- Speaker series- The City hosted five events, with the following speakers and topics:
  - January 25, Community Design Element- Chuck Wolfe, Urban Land Institute, *Six Urbanist Themes for 2012*
  - February 22, Transportation Element- Sara Schott Nicolic, Puget Sound Regional Council, *Equitable Transit Communities*
  - April 12, Natural Environment Element- Jenny Pell, permaculture designer, *Beacon Food Forest*
  - April 25, Economic Development Element- Rob Bennett, Portland Sustainability Institute, *EcoDistricts*
  - September 12, Land Use Element- Matthew Kwatinetz, QBL Real Estate, *Sustainability, Culture, and Integrated Economic Development Strategies*
- Comprehensive Plan Update webpage ([www.shorelinewa.gov/2012update](http://www.shorelinewa.gov/2012update))- This site contains background and purpose of comprehensive planning, an embedded Vision 2029 video, links to the current Plan and Speaker's Series videos, as well as staff reports, draft versions of all elements reviewed to date, and Commission minutes from each discussion.
- Outreach- The Comprehensive Plan Update was featured in the May 2011 *Currents* "Special Planning Edition", and the October 2012 edition, which announced the Public Hearing date. Speaker's Series events have been published in the newsletter as well. Staff also disseminated information about the events through Constant Contact and social media.
- Interested parties- Staff has received input from several organizations, including the King County Housing Development Consortium, King County Public Health, Shoreline Historical Museum, Ronald Wastewater District, Shoreline Water District, several local churches, Futurewise, a state representative, and city residents. Many changes were made based on these recommendations.
- Public Hearing and environmental review- Both of which have a public comment period. No comments have been received to date.

### **Big Picture Questions**

Staff compiled a list of "big picture questions" to facilitate discussion at the July 9 joint City Council and Planning Commission dinner meeting. Most of those topics were not discussed that evening, but through Commission deliberation, have since been resolved. They are listed here with a staff response that includes policy references within the draft Plan.

### *High Priority Discussion Topics*

- Develop and communicate policies regarding Shoreline's commitment to the timing of Light Rail Station Area planning prior to finalization of station locations.

- Light Rail Station Area Framework Goals are included as Land Use policies LU20-43.
- The Land Use Map includes Special Study Area boundaries encompassing a half-mile radius from potential stations at N 185<sup>th</sup> Street and N 145<sup>th</sup> Street. These boundaries will be refined as the initial task of a public process beginning in 2013.
- Direction relating to potentially increasing height and/or density, and enhancing design standards for commercial, mixed-use, and high density residential areas.
  - LU9: Through a commercial zoning consolidation process, create a new zone to replace the Mixed-Use Zone and the Industrial zone, combine redundant commercial standards, and base transition and design standards on Town Center Subarea Plan, using “form-based” rather than maximum densities.
  - The Plan also creates two Land Use designations for Mixed-Use (LU10 and LU11), one of which applies to areas suited for higher intensity development, such as along the Aurora Corridor, and another better suited to a neighborhood scale for commercial areas along 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and others.
  - Goal CDV: Consolidate redundant commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development standards, and include design and transition standards for all commercial zones.
  - There are numerous policies in the Community Design and Housing Elements that provide direction for design considerations, including transitions to different uses or those with varied intensity.

*Other Big Picture Questions*

Housing

- Direction for Potential Housing Development Code Revision Packet (aging in place, lot to structure ratio, housing styles, Accessory Dwelling Units, Transit-Oriented Development, etc.)
 

The Plan provides guidance to promote a variety of housing styles, including:

  - Goal HII: Encourage development of an appropriate mix of housing choices through innovative land use and well-crafted regulations.
  - H1-H6 fall under the subheading of “Facilitate Provision of a Variety of Housing Choices.”
  - H27: Support opportunities for older adults and people with disabilities to remain in the community as their housing needs change, by encouraging universal design or retrofitting homes for lifetime use.
  - LU31, LU40, LU42, and H17 provide direction for Transit-Oriented Communities.
- Affordable Housing: There was strong community support at the May 17 meeting for being more aggressive about affordability requirements and incentives; should the Plan reflect this?
 

The Plan includes specific recommendations for increasing affordability and addressing homelessness in Shoreline, including:

- Goal H11: Preserve and develop housing throughout the city that addresses the needs of all economic segments of the community, including underserved populations, such as households making less than 30% of Area Median Income.
  - There is an entire subheading called “Promote Affordable Housing Opportunities” that contains policies H7-H19.
  - H29: Support the development of public and private, short-term and long-term housing and services for Shoreline’s population of people who are homeless.
  - H32: Work to increase the availability of public and private resources on a regional level for affordable housing and prevention of homelessness, including factors related to cost-burdened households, like availability of transit, food, health services, employment, and education.
- Cottage Housing: Should it be called something else? Should the City revise regulations to allow this style again?
    - H6: Consider regulations that would allow clustered housing in residential areas, and revise Development Code to allow and create standards for a wider variety of housing styles.
  - Density Bonus: An affordable housing density bonus has been part of the regulations for a long time, but until recently, no one had utilized it. When a local church tried to apply it, it became apparent that it wasn’t achievable because of other lot restrictions, such as lot coverage (at least in single-family zones). Should there be policy language to revise the affordable housing density bonus through exemptions or variances to make it more feasible?
    - H7: Allow an increase in permitted density to facilitate development of affordable housing, and consider creating exemptions to make a density bonus feasible when lot coverage or other development standard would otherwise make it unattainable.
  - Housing Trust Fund- Are there any potential funding sources to establish a mechanism to support increased affordability by means other than policy?
    - H9: Explore the feasibility of creating a City housing trust fund for development of low- income housing.

### Land Use

- Should Shoreline pursue becoming designated as a PSRC Regional Growth Center?
  - Goal LU XI: Nominate Shoreline as a Regional Growth Center as defined by the Puget Sound Regional Council.
- Mandates vs. Incentives: Green building and affordability are two areas most impacted by this debate.
  - LU57, CD44, H2, H8, H13, ED4, ED22, ED23, NE6, NE10, NE18, NE21, NE24, and NE47 mention incentives for energy efficiency and environmentally-friendly design, affordability, historic preservation, mixed-use, and preservation of natural features and functions.

- EcoDistricts: What should the action verbs be- pursue, consider, etc. (or not include concept at all)?
  - LU55: Explore whether “Ecodistricts” could be an appropriate means of neighborhood empowerment, and a mechanism to implement triple-bottom line sustainability goals by having local leaders commit to ambitious targets for green building, smart infrastructure, and behavioral change at individual, household, and community levels.
- Should expanded commercial uses be allowed in High Density Residential?
  - This concept is not addressed in the draft Plan.
- Should Campus zones be allowed to have new uses as part of a Master Development Plan permit instead of requiring an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to do the same?
  - LU18: The Campus land use designation applies to four institutions within the community that serve a regional clientele on a large campus. All development within the Campus land use designation shall be governed by a Master Development Plan Permit. Existing uses in these areas constitute allowed uses in the City’s Development Code. A new use or uses may be approved as part of a Master Development Plan Permit.
- Should standard land use designations be assigned to Special Study Areas (SSAs)?
  - LU19: The Special Study Area designates future subarea planning or Light Rail Station Areas. The underlying zoning for this designation remains unless it is changed through an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map and Development Code.
  - The designation of SSA was removed from all parcels except the Light Rail Station Areas. Staff examined each area previously designated for special study and concluded that the issues that prompted the original designation had been resolved, and that there does not appear to be a time in the foreseeable future for additional study of these areas to be a priority on the Planning and Community Development Department work plan. All areas in question were assigned a land use designation that is compatible to their current zoning. Technically, Ballinger Commons is developed at 6.5 dwelling units per acre, and the draft Land Use Map designates it as Low Density Residential, which perpetuates a nonconformance that could be resolved in the future based on Council direction.

Capital Facilities/Utilities

- Does Council have direction for what these elements should say about potential SPU (or other utility) acquisition?
  - CFI: Provide adequate public facilities that address past deficiencies and anticipate the needs of growth through acceptable levels of service, prudent use of fiscal resources, and realistic timelines.

To support Goal CF I:

- Acquire Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) water system in Shoreline;
- As outlined in the 2002 Interlocal Operating Agreement, complete the assumption of the Ronald Wastewater District; and prepare for the expiration of the Shoreline Water District franchise (scheduled for 2027) by evaluating assumption and consolidation with the City's water system acquired from the City of Seattle (SPU).
- There are other references to potential acquisitions or assumptions throughout the Capital Facilities and Utilities Goals and Policies, and Analyses.

### Economic Development

- Home based businesses: How does the City balance desire to create more local economic development opportunities with neighborhood concerns like parking, signage, etc.?
  - ED3: Encourage and support home-based businesses in the City, provided that signage, parking, storage, and noise levels are compatible with neighborhoods.
  - U16: Promote opportunities for distance learning and telecommuting to implement economic development and climate initiatives, such as encouraging more home-based businesses that provide jobs without increased traffic.
- Clean/Green Industries- How does the City encourage living wage, "clean tech" jobs while mitigating potential conflicts with adjacent uses?
  - LUX: Allow areas in the city where clean, green industry may be located.
  - LUIX: Minimize or mitigate potential health impacts of industrial activities on residential communities, schools, open space, and other public facilities.
  - CD4: Buffer the visual impact on residential areas of commercial, office, industrial, and institutional development.
- Food carts- Does the City want to promote these and other incubator initiatives?
  - This concept is not addressed in the draft Plan.

### Natural Environment

- Transfer of Development Rights (TDR): Does the City want to keep or refine language to consider developing or participating in a program? If so, state, regional, and/or local?
  - LU58: Support regional and state Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs throughout the city where infrastructure improvements are needed, and where additional density, height and bulk standards can be accommodated.
  - NE6: Provide incentives for site development that minimizes environmental impacts. Incentives may include density bonuses for cluster development and/or a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program.

## **Environmental Review and Checklists**

The adoption of a Comprehensive Plan is considered a non-project action under the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) because no permit or license is issued by the City; this action is subject to environmental review under SEPA. To fulfill this requirement, an environmental checklist was prepared to assist in identifying likely adverse significant impacts, and determining mitigation for the impacts that do not rise to the level of being significant.

Existing environmental documents were evaluated to assist in framing the scope of the environmental review. As with any environmental review, background information is valuable. Existing environmental documents are often consulted to see what and how environmental issues were addressed during prior planning efforts. If the existing documents meet the needs of the proposal, they can be formally adopted. The City adopted several documents used in previous actions, ranging from the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) issued for the original Comprehensive Plan to technical memoranda prepared by consultants addressing some of the new policies included in the update.

A formal Notice of Adoption was issued by the City on September 27, 2012. The checklist for this proposal incorporated and expanded on information in the adopted documents. The checklist and background information were made available to the public when the Responsible Official issued a decision on the significance of potential impacts.

To make this Threshold Determination, consideration must be given to environmental and technical information when evaluating the significance of impacts. The technical information considered included the draft Comprehensive Plan policies, Development Code regulations, and adopted Master Plans (Transportation; Surface Water; and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space). The document was reviewed for consistency with King County's Countywide Planning Policies, the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040, and the City of Shoreline's Vision 2029.

Based on evaluation of the available information, staff found that the update will not require changes to the natural or built environment, and no probable significant impacts were identified. Staff recommended a Threshold Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS). The DNS was issued by the Responsible Official on October 3, 2012. The DNS was noticed, along with the public hearing on October 3, 2012, and the comment period ends on October 18.

Staff also prepared required check-lists and submitted the draft Plan for review by the Puget Sound Regional Council, King County, and the Washington Departments of Commerce and Ecology. These agencies require that Comprehensive Plans be submitted for review within 60 days of potential adoption.



## **NEXT STEPS**

Criteria for amending the Comprehensive Plan are delineated in SMC 20.30.340-Amendment and review of the Comprehensive Plan (legislative action). The regulation is included below in *italics*, with staff response immediately following.

**A. Purpose.** *A Comprehensive Plan amendment or review is a mechanism by which the City may modify the text or map of the Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the provisions of the Growth Management Act, in order to respond to changing circumstances or needs of the City, and to review the Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis.*

**B. Decision Criteria.** *The Planning Commission may recommend and the City Council may approve, or approve with modifications an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan if:*

1. *The amendment is consistent with the Growth Management Act and not inconsistent with the Countywide Planning Policies, and the other provisions of the Comprehensive Plan and City policies; or*
  - Staff reviewed the Plan for consistency with the Growth Management Act and Countywide Planning Policies, and for internal consistency with other Plan elements and City policies, and determined that the draft document meets this requirement.
  
2. *The amendment addresses changing circumstances, changing community values, incorporates a sub area plan consistent with the Comprehensive Plan vision or corrects information contained in the Comprehensive Plan; or*
  - This update captures a snapshot of Shoreline in 2012, and will guide growth according to the vision established by the community and Council. Changing circumstances and values that are reflected in this update include an evolution of the city from a suburban fringe to a more self-sustaining urban environment, with a desire for more local jobs, services, and amenities, a multi-modal transportation system, and potential management of utilities. Another example of evolving values is the inclusion of economic and social equity considerations in addition to the focus on environmental sustainability.
  
3. *The amendment will benefit the community as a whole, will not adversely affect community facilities, the public health, safety or general welfare.*
  - Policies included in the draft 2012 Comprehensive Plan are intended to benefit the community, and promote public health, safety, and general welfare. Examples include Community Design policies meant to direct development of design and transition standards, Natural Environment policies meant to protect natural resources and functions, Transportation policies meant to promote walkability and connectivity, and Housing policies meant to offer a variety of housing choices and levels of affordability appropriate for a diverse population.

Following the public hearing, if the Commission believes these criteria have been met, they may make a recommendation to Council. Staff would then present the draft to Council, with the goal of adoption on December 10, 2012.

If you have questions or comments prior to the meeting, please contact Miranda Redinger at (206) 801-2513 or by email at [mredinger@shorelinewa.gov](mailto:mredinger@shorelinewa.gov).

## **ATTACHMENTS**

A Word version of the draft Comprehensive Plan that will be the subject of the public hearing was placed on the City's project web page ([www.shorelinewa.gov/2012update](http://www.shorelinewa.gov/2012update)) on October 3. Planning Commission received a hard copy of the InDesign version of this draft at their October 4 meeting. An updated digital copy of the InDesign version was sent to Plancom and posted on the project web page on Thursday, October 11. The Notice of Adoption, SEPA checklist, and SEPA DNS are also posted on the web page. Therefore, there are no physical attachments for this staff report.