
APPENDIX C: LEWIS COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES

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COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES FOR LEWIS COUNTY

1. Urban Growth. Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.

- 1.0** Urban growth shall be encouraged within cities and their designated urban growth boundaries or other areas in the County characterized by urban growth and areas approved as new fully contained communities pursuant to RCW 36.70A.350.
- 1.1** Cities and towns and all urban growth areas shall include areas and residential densities sufficient to accommodate the majority of the County's adopted 20-year population projection. A portion of the county's 20-year population projection shall be allocated to new fully contained communities pursuant to RCW 36.70A.350(2). Annual adjustments may be made when supported by appropriate data.
- 1.2** Land use planning for the urban growth areas should provide for urban densities of mixed uses where logical and existing and/or planned urban services are available. Affordable housing policies and urban density policies should have equal value in evaluating and/or planning new or expanded housing areas.
- 1.3** Prior to annexation of an urban growth area or a portion thereof to the respective City, development within adopted urban growth boundaries shall conform to the respective city's urban development standards as established through inter-local agreements.
- 1.4** All jurisdictions whose UGA boundaries adjoin Interstate 5 or other U.S. Highways shall work towards establishing consistent development standards to protect and enhance a locally significant desired community image along the Interstate 5 or U.S. Highway corridors.
- 1.5** The County and those cities whose UGA boundaries adjoin the Interstate 5 and U.S. Highway corridors shall work with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to develop minimum landscape standards for interchanges along the Interstate 5 and U.S. Highways.
- 1.6** Rural areas should have low-density development, which can be sustained by minimal infrastructure improvements. Exceptions may be made for rural areas appropriate for more intense development, including small towns, crossroad commercial areas, resort and tourist facilities, existing development areas, and rural industrial centers consistent with state law. In addition, as further outlined in the Economic Development policies, exceptions may be made for major industrial developments, and master planned locations for major industrial activity outside urban growth areas consistent with state law.

- 1.7** The County and cities shall inform the appropriate jurisdictions concerning proposed development or activities that would impact urban resources and/or urban growth areas.
- 1.8** The County and Cities shall collaborate to provide a mechanism for siting and maintaining both existing and new essential public facilities using a 50-year planning horizon for essential public facilities, including

 - (a) Sewage treatment and municipal water facilities
 - (b) Solid Waste Facilities
 - (c) Port District/PDA industrial facilities
 - (d) Airport locations
 - (e) Other essential public facilities as identified under GMA
- 1.9** The County, in collaboration with the cities, shall establish a level of service inside unincorporated UGAs.
- 1.10.0** The process and factors to amend the UGAs and other comprehensive plan sections is adopted as Appendix A and B and are made part of these policies.
- 1.10.1** Based on growth management population projections made for the county by the Office of Financial Management, the county and each city within the county shall include areas and densities sufficient to permit the urban growth that is projected to occur in the county or city for the succeeding twenty-year period. Each urban area shall permit urban densities and shall include greenbelt and open space areas. An urban growth area determination may include reasonable land market supply factor and shall permit a range of urban densities and uses. In determining this market factor, cities and counties may consider local circumstances. Cities and counties have discretion in their comprehensive planning process to make many choices about accommodating growth.
- 1.10.2** The provision of an adequate supply of land available for urban intensities of development shall be available to accommodate the population and economic growth of Lewis County.
- 1.10.3** The expansion of urban growth areas shall be given priority when need is demonstrated by the local jurisdictions and the lands that are to be incorporated into a UGA exhibit conditions consistent with WAC 365-190-050, 365-190-060, 365-190-070, and 365-195-335. De-designation of resource lands should be limited to where there is no practical alternative.
- 1.10.4** Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan may be initiated by:

 - A. Motion of the Board or Planning Commission.
 - B. Property owner or county resident filing an application with the Planning Commission.

1.10.5 Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan will be:

- A. Submitted from September to December for review the following year. The Planning Commission will review applications beginning the February following the submittal period, with Board of County Commissioners target adoption date of July of the same year.
- B. Processed once a year and coordinated with all proposed amendments concurrently to insure individual and cumulative impacts are weighed.

1.10.6 Requests for Amendments to Urban Growth Areas in the Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed according to the following criteria, as set forth in RCW36.70A.130(3):

A. DETERMINATION OF NEEDED LAND

- I. Is the UGA large enough e.g. is the land existing in inventory of lands within the existing UGA adequate in quantity to accommodate the County's population allocation at urban densities?
- II. Is the inventory available for development including vacant land, underdeveloped lands and land where development is likely?
- III. Is there land within the UGA that can accommodate the urban services needed for urban densities?
- IV. Are there lands outside the City that currently exhibit an urban density and urban character?

B. CONSISTENCY WITH GMA OBJECTIVES

- I. Is the amendment made necessary by an emergency that can be eliminated by the extension of urban level of service?
- II. What impact would the amendment have on the existing level of services within the UGA?
- III. What is the ability to provide services within the UGA?
- IV. Will the contemplated amendment result in any environmental degradation?
- V. Does the amendment being considered comply with the objectives of the GMA; does it promote sprawl or does it hinder development within the UGA at an urban density?
- VI. Is the amendment consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and other plans of affected jurisdictions?

1.10.7 The review, evaluation and adoption of amendments will follow the general flow of events as outlined in Appendix A & B of this document and may be further defined by Lewis County Code.

2. Reduce Sprawl. Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped or rural land into sprawling, low-density development.

- 2.0** Provisions for urban levels of services to development within urban growth boundaries and within fully contained communities shall be required.
- 2.1** Development within adopted urban growth areas shall be coordinated and reviewed within the context of the development standards of the respective city, as established through inter-local agreements between the County and cities.
- 2.2** Large-scale commercial and industrial development shall be located in designated UGAs, or areas authorized by state law, where adequate utility services and transportation networks are available or planned.
- 2.3** Water and sewer infrastructure expansion should not occur in areas outside the UGAs and adopted water and sewer district boundaries at urban levels except to address specific health and safety problems.
- 2.4** Lewis County recognizes that sewer is an urban service. Public sewer extension outside Urban Growth Areas shall be provided at a Level of Service (LOS) consistent with state law, and the County's development standards and comprehensive plan for densities and uses associated with size, scale, and intensity for growth in rural parts of the County. Public sewer connections may be permitted only if hookup sites comply with one of the following situations:
 - A. The Lewis County Health Officer has determined that extension of sewer service is necessary to protect public health and safety.
 - B. The public sewer provides service to existing local and major essential public facilities.
 - C. The public sewer provides levels of sewage collection and treatment necessary to facilitate and support infill development or redevelopment of limited areas of more intensive rural development (LAMIRDs).
- 2.5** Lewis county recognizes that water is an urban and rural service. Extension of water service beyond UGAs may be permitted within state adopted Water Service Areas and where required, by the Lewis County Board of Commissioners as described by the following conditions:
 - A. The Lewis County Health Officer has determined that extension of domestic water is necessary to protect public health and safety, or
 - B. Extension of water service outside of UGAs may be allowed provided any connections in the rural lands are consistent with County rural development regulations and do not support urban levels of water service; or where there is a determined need for fire flow and protection.

- C. State approved Water Service Areas may be expanded inside limited areas of more intensive rural development (LAMIRDs) if they are consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.
- 2.6** Developments authorized under RCW 36.70A.350, .360, .362, .365, and .367 may be served by urban sewer and water systems consistent with state law. However, no additional connections may be allowed at urban levels of service in the land between adopted UGAs.

3. Transportation. Encourage efficient multi-modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with County and City comprehensive plans.

- 3.0** The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan should be designed to: 1) facilitate the flow of people, goods and services so as to strengthen the local and regional economy; and 2) conform with the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 3.1** Level of Service (LOS) standards and safety standards shall be established that coordinate and link with the urban growth and urban areas to optimize land use and traffic compatibility over the long term. New or expansion of existing private and public development shall mitigate transportation impacts concurrently with the development and occupancy of the project.
- 3.2** The County and cities should coordinate agreements to cover situations where the impacts created by new or expanded existing private or public development affect adjoining jurisdictions such as between cities or between the County and cities.
- 3.3** All-weather road systems that serve industrial and commercial areas shall be coordinated with state and local governments.
- 3.4** Local jurisdictions should coordinate plans, programs and projects with regional, state and federal agencies to ensure consistency between land use development and transportation facilities.
- 3.5** State and local governments should ensure adequate road access to scenic and recreational areas, to accommodate local and tourist traffic.
- 3.6** Airport authorities should maintain and improve airport facilities to safely accommodate current and future air service demands.
- 3.7.1** State and local agencies should reduce conflicts between rail and vehicular traffic wherever possible and support enhancement of rail and high-speed rail planning efforts in the region.
- 3.8** The County and cities should encourage the use of alternative transportation modes, including mass transit, bicycles, and carpooling when developing improvement programs, designing new development and standards.
- 3.9** Cost effectiveness shall be a consideration in transportation expenditures decisions and a balance established for both safety and service improvements.
- 3.10** Local and State agencies should investigate a full range of actions when improving regional transportation facilities, including transportation systems and demand management programs to improve efficiency and mitigate environmental impacts.
- 3.11** State and local agencies should identify hazardous locations on the regional road system and target resources toward those goals.

4. Housing. Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.

- 4.0** Public/private partnerships should be encouraged to build affordable housing to meet the housing needs of people with low and moderate incomes and special needs populations.
- 4.1** The Comprehensive Plan and development regulations should include innovative land use management and construction techniques to promote affordable housing.
- 4.2.1** The existing affordable housing stock should be maintained where economically viable and efforts to rehabilitate older and substandard housing, which are otherwise consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies, should be encouraged.

5. Economic Development. Encourage economic development throughout Lewis County that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the Lewis County's natural resources, public services and public facilities.

- 5.0** The development of industries should be encouraged within the cities, urban growth areas, designated Limited Areas of More Intense Rural Development (LAMIRDs), and within those unincorporated areas of Lewis County that satisfy the requirements set forth in RCW 36.70A.365 and .367.
- 5.1** Agriculture, forestry and mineral extraction shall be encouraged in rural areas. The development of resource related commercial and industrial activities shall be encouraged in appropriate areas such as designated commercial resource lands, LAMIRDs, UGAs, or next to resource related uses.
- 5.2** A diversified economic base should be encouraged to minimize the vulnerability of the local economy to economic fluctuations.
- 5.3** The County and cities should designate adequate land within the UGAs to provide for future industrial and commercial needs.
- 5.4** Tourism and recreation should be promoted as a strategy that protects the character of rural and urban areas, and supports economic development.
- 5.5** Comprehensive plans and development regulations should designate adequate land within the UGAs to provide for future industrial and commercial needs.
- 5.6** Value added industries shall be encouraged.
- 5.7** Recreational or tourist activities directly related to or dependent upon water bodies should be encouraged. Tourism and recreation should be promoted as a strategy that protects the character of rural and urban areas.
- 5.8** Lewis County shall encourage the development of new fully contained communities and master-planned resorts to broaden the County's economic base, consistent with state law.
- 5.9** Lewis County should encourage commercial/industrial development along major transportation corridors and where the potential for expansion of water and sewer development exists consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and state regulations.

6. Property Rights. Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.

- 6.0** The rights of property owners shall be considered in the creation or revision of development regulations.
- 6.1** Non-regulatory incentives such as conservation easements, land exchanges, land banking, assessment relief and similar incentive programs shall be included, where appropriate, in development regulations.

7. Permits. Applications for local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.

- 7.0 To better serve the public, inter-agency agreements with other permitting agencies should be pursued to facilitate projects that require multi-agency permits.
- 7.1 The County and cities should work together to develop consistent permitting systems.
- 7.2 All jurisdictions shall formally document administrative interpretations of development regulations and make them available to the public.
- 7.3 Permitting for development within adopted urban growth areas shall be coordinated and reviewed within the context of the development standards of the respective city as established through inter-local agreements between the County and cities.

8. Natural Resource Industries. Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries including productive timber, agricultural, mineral extraction and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forestlands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.

- 8.0** Land uses adjacent to agricultural, forest, or mineral resource lands shall not interfere with the continued use of these designated lands for the production of food or agricultural based products, or timber, or for the extraction of minerals. Encroachment on resource lands by incompatible uses shall be prevented by maintenance of adequate buffering between conflicting activities.
- 8.1** Approvals for plats, short plats, building permits and other residential development permits that are issued for development activities on or adjacent to designated natural resource areas should include a notice that certain activities may occur that are not compatible with residences. These notices should be filed for record with Lewis County.
- 8.2** Fishery resources, including the County's river systems inclusive of their tributaries, as well as the area's lakes, and associated wetlands, should be protected and enhanced for continued productivity.
- 8.3** Tourism and recreation, including economic opportunities that provide supplemental income to the natural resources industries, should be encouraged.
- 8.4** All jurisdictions should encourage best management practices (BMP) to reduce adverse environmental impacts on natural resources
- 8.5** Lands adjacent to urban growth areas which are designated resource lands may be incorporated into the urban growth area if:
 - A. A need is established for expansion into that resource land where there is no practical alternative in order to accommodate future urban population, commercial/industrial, or recreational uses, and
 - B. The factors in the WAC 365-190-050, 365-190-060, 365-190-070, and 365-195-335 are considered, and
 - C. Findings are made relating to the changing conditions which led to the natural resource de-designation. (Such findings constitute a removal from the resource designation).

9. Open Space and Recreation. Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.

- 9.0** The use of Open Space and Forestry Taxation Laws shall be encouraged as a useful method of resource preservation.
- 9.1** Parks, recreation, scenic areas and scenic byways, and viewing points should be encouraged.
- 9.2** The Lewis County river systems and tributaries are a resource that should be protected, enhanced, and utilized for active and passive recreation.
- 9.3** Encourage cluster housing and innovative techniques for planned developments in the County to provide open space systems and recreational opportunities.
- 9.4** Land use planning for the adopted urban growth areas shall encourage greenbelt or open space uses and encourage the protection of wildlife habitat areas.

10. Environment. Protect the environment and enhance Lewis County's high quality of life including air and water quality, and the availability of water.

- 10.0** All jurisdictions should encourage the enhancement of the functions and values for critical areas when developing sub-area plans and development regulations.
- 10.1** Floodplains, wetlands, watersheds and aquifers are essential components of the hydrologic system and shall be managed through interagency agreements to protect surface and groundwater quality.
- 10.2** All jurisdictions shall recognize the river systems within the County as pivotal freshwater resources and public water supply and shall manage development within the greater watershed in a manner consistent with planning practices that do not seriously degrade the integrity of the resource.
- 10.3** Septic systems, disposal of dredge spoils, and land excavation, filling and clearing activities shall conform with critical area development regulations and not have a significant adverse affect on Lewis County water bodies with respect to public health, fisheries, aquifers, water quality, wetlands, and fish and wildlife habitat.
- 10.4** All jurisdictions shall consider threatened, endangered, or sensitive fish and wildlife species when evaluating and conditioning commercial, industrial or residential development.
- 10.5** Lewis County, in cooperation with appropriate local, state and federal agencies should continue to develop and update the comprehensive flood control management program.
- 10.6** Floodplains, lakes, rivers, streams, and other water resources should be managed for multiple beneficial uses including, but not limited to flood and erosion control, fish and wildlife habitat, agriculture, aquaculture, open space and water supply. Use of water resources should to the fullest extent possible preserve and promote opportunities for other uses.
- 10.7** All jurisdictions should work towards developing policies and regulations outlining best management practices (BMP) within aquifer recharge areas to protect the quality of groundwater.
- 10.8** Recycling programs should be encouraged.

11. Citizen Participation and Coordination. Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.

- 11.0** All jurisdictions shall maintain procedures to provide for the broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives for public inspection; opportunities for written comments; public hearings after effective notice; open discussions; communication programs and information services; consideration of and response to public comments; and the notification of the public for the adoption, implementation, and evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 11.1** All jurisdictions shall continue to encourage public awareness of the Comprehensive Plan by providing for public participation opportunities and public education programs designed to promote a widespread understanding of the Plan's purpose and intent.
- 11.2** All jurisdictions shall provide regular and ongoing opportunities for public review and comment throughout the Comprehensive Plan development process.
- 11.3** All jurisdictions shall provide policies and processes to address public notification costs associated with land use applications.
- 11.4** All jurisdictions shall encourage citizen participation throughout the planning process as provided by state statute and codes for environmental, land use, and development permits.
- 11.5** All jurisdictions shall encourage broad based citizen involvement in the development of the Comprehensive Plan elements, sub-area plans, and functional plans, and development regulations.
- 11.6** Amendment to the county wide planning policies shall be consistent with an adopted approval process.

12. Public Facilities and Services. Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.

- 12.0** Public facilities and services shall be integrated and consistent with locally adopted comprehensive plans and implementing regulations.
- 12.1** If communities within a defined region are required to accept regional public facilities, then the federal, state and County and other regional public facilities located within the corporate boundaries of cities shall be required to provide fees related to the impacts of the public facilities. All jurisdictions shall provide a process for siting essential public facilities and a local comprehensive plan may not preclude the siting of essential public facilities.
- 12.2** Lands shall be identified for public purposes, such as: utility corridors, transportation corridors, landfills, sewage treatment facilities, recreation, schools and other public uses. All jurisdictions shall work together to identify areas of shared need for public facilities.
- 12.3** The financing for system improvements to public facilities to serve new development may provide for a balance between impacts fees and other sources of public funds.
- 12.4** New development shall pay for or provide for its share of new infrastructure through fees or as mitigation measures.
- 12.5** Citizens shall have the opportunity to participate in and comment on proposed capital facilities financing.
- 12.6** Special district comprehensive plans shall be consistent with the comprehensive plans and development regulations of the general-purpose local governments.

13. Historic Preservation. Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance to Lewis County.

- 13.0** All jurisdictions are encouraged to work cooperatively towards identifying, evaluating, and protecting historic resources and encouraging land use patterns that protect and enhance such historic resources.
- 13.1** All jurisdictions should cooperate with local historic preservation groups to ensure coordination of plans and policies by the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.
- 13.2** All jurisdictions should cooperate with local historic preservation groups to acknowledge and recognize historic sites, structures, and areas in their comprehensive plans, which have local importance, but may not formally be listed in the state and federal registers

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