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Stevens County Comprehensive Plan

Volume I

Prepared for Stevens County

Effective December 8, 2022

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Volume I

Prepared for

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ABBREVIATIONS

GMA	Growth Management Act
LAMIRD	Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development
MID	Major Industrial Development
MPR	Master Planned Resort
Plan	Stevens County Comprehensive Plan
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
SMP	Shoreline Master Program
UGA	Urban Growth Area
WAC	Washington Administrative Code
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

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Preamble

The Constitution of the United States of America is declared by the Constitution of the State of Washington as the supreme law of the land. Both of these documents contain the protections for the rights of Stevens County citizens, and they guarantee our freedoms to pursue activities protected by those documents. The Constitution of the State of Washington declares that a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles is essential to the security of individual rights and the perpetuation of free government, and that the provisions of this Constitution are mandatory, unless by express words they are declared to be otherwise. The people of Stevens County establish this Comprehensive Plan (Plan) in the spirit of these constitutions and embrace all activities that are consistent with the provisions of those basic founding documents and promote active stewardship of the customs, culture, economic viability, social stability, and quality of life of Stevens County. Planning is the means by which society develops a blueprint for a path into the future. It is the responsibility of the current generation to ensure that future generations are provided with the means, opportunity, freedom, and liberty to provide for themselves and their future generations. We are the stewards of our children's future.

Vision

Stevens County is a county where:

- Our children still hold the freedoms and liberties we hold dear
- Our natural resources are well managed, healthy, and productive, and provide a steady, sustainable stream of products for our economic viability, while maintaining and enhancing our opportunities for recreation
- Our citizens are served by an efficient, cost-effective government
- Our economy is vibrant, growing, and diverse
- Our community is safe and proudly recognizes its heritage

Introduction

Organization and Content of Plan

Stevens County's Comprehensive Plan is organized in two sections. **Volume I** provides an overview of Stevens County's land use and planning context and describes the County's approach to Growth Management Act (GMA) compliance. It also contains the Comprehensive Plan's **Goals and Policies**. Volume I of the Plan is organized into sections or "elements" required by the GMA (e.g., Land Use, Natural Resources, Rural, etc.). **Volume II** includes background information and supporting analyses, supporting plans, and technical appendices, including an environmental impact statement

addendum and the **Land Use Map** (Appendix D, Figure 3). This information provides both data required by the GMA and the information underlying County decisions on the Plan.

Stevens County Context and Approach to the Comprehensive Plan

This Comprehensive Plan has been developed to provide a framework of goals and policies that guide the implementation of County natural resources, transportation, and capital planning efforts and regulations, and enhance the opportunity to realize our vision. It is intended to be a guide for the government of the citizens of Stevens County in identifying and respecting the customs, culture, economic viability, social stability, and quality of life found in this unique area; and in applying these values to growth and development as they occur in the County.

This Plan incorporates the efforts of numerous County residents from all walks of life and economic sectors. It embodies the local traditions, values, and visions that each of those residents brought to the effort and is the result of considerable research and thought by each of those participants and the neighbors they represent.

Stevens County has long been respectful of the constitutional concept of private property rights. It has been the custom and culture of citizens of the area to hold their private property rights free from intermeddling by outside government and interest groups, and to respect the private property rights of their neighbors.

The Constitution of the United States of America and the Constitution of the State of Washington contain provisions concerning the taking or damage of private property. The provisions of the Constitution of Washington State are mandatory, unless by express words they are declared to be otherwise. A frequent recurrence to fundamental principles is essential to the security of individual rights and the perpetuity of free government. Accordingly, Stevens County affirms the fundamental protections provided for and mandated by these documents.

The people of Stevens County deserve a Comprehensive Plan and development regulations that work for them, not against them. In addition, responsible fiscal management and fundamental principles of good government require that decision-makers carefully evaluate the effect of their administrative, regulatory, and legislative actions on constitutionally protected rights. The regulation system should protect and improve the health, safety, environment, and well-being of the citizens, and improve the performance of the economy without imposing unacceptable or unreasonable costs on them. The planning goals and policies should recognize that the private sector and private markets are important engines for economic growth; regulatory approaches should respect the role of state, local, tribal, and federal governments; and regulations should be effective, consistent, sensible, and understandable.

Perhaps the greatest challenge faced by all participants has been to balance and harmonize state planning mandates with geographic, economic, and historic realities. The County believes that this Plan creatively and successfully applies and adapts GMA policies to the values of its citizens and to its land use pattern. It addresses the common problems that the GMA seeks to avoid—urban and rural sprawl—while also recognizing that these issues, and their solutions, present themselves differently in Stevens County.

Further, the County affirms that coordinated and planned growth, together with common goals expressing the public’s interest in the conservation and the wise use of our lands, would encourage stewardship of the environment, sustainable economic development, and the health, safety, and high quality of life enjoyed by the citizens of Stevens County. It is in the public interest that Stevens County citizens and its communities, and other federal and state entities involved in Stevens County, would cooperate and coordinate with one another in the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan. As Stevens County suffers from insufficient economic growth, this Plan remains oriented towards encouraging growth and development. This presents a unique opportunity to provide for ample conditions to foster stewardship of abundant natural resources, promote agricultural activities, and encourage well-planned development throughout the wide variety of environments located throughout the County.

A brief overview of some County characteristics provides insight into several key issues and realities that local citizens and elected officials have grappled with in updating the Comprehensive Plan. Stevens County is 2,481 square miles (the fifth largest in Washington) and in the middle one-third in population size (45,570) (OFM 2019¹). Its low population density (18.4 people per square mile) is widely dispersed, with 78% living in unincorporated areas. About 40% of the total land area is owned by the federal government, state governments, or the Spokane Tribe. There are six incorporated cities, varying in population size from a few hundred people (Marcus, Northport, and Springdale) to between 1,500 and 5,000 (Kettle Falls, Chewelah, and Colville). There are also 20 developed (unincorporated) places that provide housing and a range of retail, commercial, and community services to the surrounding population. These vary in size and may appear as either rural or urban/suburban in character. Some are small rural villages with homes, a general store, gas station/auto repair, and meeting facility, while others are large suburban subdivisions with commercial areas.

Historically, resource-based industries—agriculture, forestry, and mining—have been strong drivers of the County’s economy. While there are some large, corporate landowners and operators, small, independent farms predominate in terms of total number. Recreation and tourism are significant and growing components of the economy—access to skiing, hunting, fishing, hiking, and other

¹ OFM (Washington State Office of Financial Management), 2019. Stevens County: Population Information. Accessed 2019. Available at: <https://ofm.wa.gov/washington-data-research/county-and-city-data>.

recreational pursuits is fueling the growth of local resorts and sales of recreational property and homes. Nevertheless, the County recently ranked in the lowest 10% in terms of per capita income state-wide, noting the County has experienced stagnant per capita income growth in recent years (OFM 2018²).

The focus of the Stevens County Comprehensive Plan is driven in part by the fact that the state and federal government manage nearly 40% of the land mass of Stevens County. Federal and state management of these extensive enclaves intertwines with, and impacts, the ability of private citizens in the County to pursue activities according to their traditional and historical customs and culture. Federal and state management also infuses a never-ending stream of regulations, government employees, and out-of-County opinion into the daily lives of Stevens County citizens. Experience has shown that some of these regulations and opinions have not always worked for the good of Stevens County's people and have sometimes been implemented over their objections and better judgment.

It is the intent of this Plan to be a mechanism whereby the general public, and particularly federal and state managers, can recognize, understand, and honor the customs, culture, economic viability, social structure, and quality of life of the citizens of Stevens County. It is a goal of the planning process that federal and state management actions in Stevens County would be more cooperative and less confrontational than in the past. Stevens County is aware of the statutes requiring federal agencies to consider local land use plans, resolve inconsistencies in federal plans, and provide for meaningful involvement of local officials in the management processes. Progress is being made with some of the federal agencies, but much work remains to be accomplished.

The historical land use pattern reflects the geographic setting, the dispersed population, and the physical remoteness of many portions of the County's extensive land area, as well as the economic activities and lifestyle choice of many residents. Outside of the cities, the largest and fastest growing concentration of population is Lake Spokane, located in the southeastern corner of the County—adjacent to Lake Spokane and the Spokane County line—and approximately 10 miles from the City of Spokane. Many residents easily commute to Spokane to work and shop. Development began in the 1950s and today there is an estimated population of more than 5,250 people. Gross density is more than 0.5 units per acre.

Within the Plan, Stevens County's proposed unincorporated Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) are developed at relatively low densities (ranging from 0.2 to 1.64 dwelling units per acre); and two do not currently have all public services needed to support growth at urban densities. However, these areas are also characterized by a mix of land uses and other elements of urban neighborhoods, are located in the path of growth, are strategically spaced between cities or other unincorporated UGAs,

² OFM, 2018. Stevens County: Per Capita Income. Accessed 2018. Available at: <https://ofm.wa.gov/washington-data-research/county-and-city-data>.

and appear to have the potential to grow and develop more intensively over time. While these areas might not look like typical UGAs in other counties, they are as close as Stevens County comes to intensive urban development outside of cities.

The UGA designations—the County’s most urban-like areas—help to reduce rural growth pressures and help meet the Plan’s larger goal of increasing the proportion of Countywide growth that occurs in cities and in unincorporated UGAs. Designation of a Master Planned Resort (MPR) is also part of this strategy. These unincorporated areas are expected to continue to develop into urban communities over time, with higher densities, a mix of residential and employment activities, urban services, and high-quality development. Additional planning and coordination with service providers is occurring in order to ensure that all services are provided in a timely manner.

Incremental change and adaptation are important components of the Plan and of the County’s approach to managing and regulating development. Over time, as citizens work within the planning parameters, ongoing needs will be identified and development regulations will be adjusted, as necessary. The goals contained within the Plan are designed to set the parameters from which development regulations will be derived to meet the County’s needs (identified during the planning process). Most importantly, this Comprehensive Plan makes provisions for innovative land use management techniques; however, nothing in this document may be construed as authority to take or damage private property without due process.

2022 Comprehensive Plan Update Process

This 2022 update builds on the extensive process used to prepare the prior version of the Plan and environmental review, and the preparation of associated development regulations, which collectively began in 2004 and was completed in 2008 (Stevens County 2008³). This past update resulted in:

- Identification of five unincorporated UGAs, and policies to guide their intensification over time
- Designation of an MPR at 49° North Mountain Resort
- Adjustments to identified resource lands (agriculture, forest, and mineral resources per GMA criteria), and recognition and protection of additional rural agricultural lands, which may not meet the GMA criteria for resource lands, but which are valuable to the County’s economy, lifestyle, and rural character
- Identification of Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development (LAMIRDs), including larger communities, crossroad areas, and recreational and tourist uses (e.g., small resorts), and policies to guide their future growth
- Guidance for determining appropriate rural uses and a range of rural densities, which will be addressed in greater detail in the development regulations

³ Stevens County, 2008. *Stevens County Comprehensive Plan*. 2008.

- Creation of a sub-area planning process, which will be used to help plan urban and rural areas in the future, and identification of the Loon Lake watershed as the County's highest priority for sub-area planning
- A more detailed description of this process is provided in the 2008 version of the County's Comprehensive Plan

The 2022 update process began with public input meetings (held in July and August 2019). This was followed by establishing a County website dedicated to sharing current and updated information and to receiving public input. Additionally, opportunity for input continued with Planning Commission workshops on updated draft Plan elements and draft regulation changes, with a delay in the middle of the planning process due to COVID-19 restrictions on meetings.

Major Changes in the Comprehensive Plan

Changes to the Plan include:

- Updating policies to reflect changes in state law and administrative code since the last update
- Updating the Economic Element to further emphasize strategies for implementation
- Incorporating the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) goals and policies by reference
- Including a new set of water resources policies
- Updating the Transportation and Capital Facilities Elements to address current requirements, and to incorporate the latest version of these facility plans into the Comprehensive Plan by reference
- Updating the associated Volume II supporting information for each element of the Plan



1.0 General Planning Goals and Policies

1.1 General Planning Goals

General Planning Goals guide the development and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

The General Planning Goals of Stevens County are:

- *To assert the rights guaranteed by the constitutions of the United States of America and the State of Washington*
- *To foster stewardship of private and public lands*
- *To enhance economic opportunity to assure continuing compatibility of the Plan with the GMA and the customs and culture of the County; and by providing for early and ongoing public participation in planning processes, supporting sub-area planning efforts, facilitating and encouraging coordination and cooperation between the cities and the County, and providing for regular reviews and updates or revisions to the Plan*

1.2 General Planning Policies

In furtherance of the General Planning Goals and the overall goals of the GMA, the General Planning Policies of Stevens County are:

- GP-1 Protect and maintain the private property rights of the citizens of the County and ensure that private property is not taken or damaged for private or public use without just compensation having first been made.
- GP-2 Ensure decision-makers evaluate carefully the effect of their administrative, regulatory, and legislative actions on constitutionally protected rights.
- GP-3 Review and update designated UGA boundaries and review the Plan for compliance with any amendments to state law as required by the GMA.
- GP-4 Coordinate with the cities to ensure that adequate land areas are located within designated UGAs to absorb anticipated urban growth.

- GP-5 Following direction in the Countywide Planning Policies, continue to build and strengthen relationships with the cities, with adjacent counties, and with state, federal, and local agencies in support of coordinated planning and interjurisdictional partnerships.
- GP-6 Establish procedures to ensure early and continuous participation by the public in the development and amendment of plans and implementation programs. Citizen participation plans will provide for:
- A. Broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives
 - B. Opportunity for written and spoken comments
 - C. Public meetings after effective notice
 - D. Provisions for open discussion and consideration of public comments
 - E. Communication programs and full use of the County website
- GP-7 Support and establish priorities for sub-area planning in unincorporated UGAs, LAMIRDs, and other identifiable community areas, recognizing that the timing, sequence and substance of sub-area planning efforts must be balanced against other mandated or priority planning programs and available County resources.
- GP-8 When Citizen Advisory Committees are formed, include broad representation from stakeholder groups, which may include landowners, agricultural, forestry, mining, and business interests, environmental groups, private community groups, tribal governments, special districts, and other governmental agencies.
- GP-9 Follow the public participation requirements of the GMA and the procedures set forth in Stevens County Code, when developing and considering amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations, and adoption of sub-area plans.
- GP-10 Adopt development regulations to implement the Plan that are simple and effective, that minimize costs, and that will be responsive to new issues as development markets and economic conditions and opportunities change over time.
- GP-11 Allow the Plan to be amended once per year, or as may be allowed pursuant to the GMA provisions for sub-area planning, capital facilities, or emergencies, while ensuring that proposed Plan amendments:
- A. Are consistent with the goals and policies adopted herein, and
 - B. Are considered together to ensure that the impacts of the changes can be fully evaluated, and
 - C. Follow the process established by the Board to ensure a simple and effective program
- GP-12 Provide a means of allowing applicants to support or fund special staffing needs generated by unusually complex or time-consuming planning, land use, or construction projects.
- GP-13 Ensure that new development provides all necessary improvements necessitated by the development, and mitigates all significant environmental impacts, in accordance with the requirements of County policy and state law.

GP-14

Ensure that policies contained in the following elements of the Comprehensive Plan are consistent with the General Planning Goals and Policies contained within this section.



2.0 Economic Development Element

The Economic Development Element plays an essential role in maintaining the quality of life in Stevens County and was a nearly universal concern voiced by the citizens of Stevens County. A strong economy creates jobs and opportunities for its citizens. Resource-based industries and activities, such as timber production, agriculture, and mining, are prominent and should be encouraged. Supporting recreation, industrial, and commercial businesses is also vital as we develop strategies that will be instrumental in supporting local sustainable businesses. It will also aid in attracting and retaining new, quality businesses and industries. Stevens County has a rich history of entrepreneurial spirit.

2.1 Economic Development Goals

The Economic Development Goals of Stevens County are to:

- *Support retention and expansion of the businesses and industries that exist, sustain our current economy, and promote community stability*
- *Encourage new business and industry to develop and locate within Stevens County*

2.2 Economic Development Policies

In furtherance of the Economic Development Goals and the overall goals of the GMA, the Economic Development Policies of Stevens County are:

- ED-1 Support the retention and expansion of existing local businesses/industries and recruitment of new businesses/industries that provide family-wage jobs.
- ED-2 Encourage the promotion of tourism and tourist-based businesses.
- ED-3 Implement flexible development regulations that do not unduly restrict diversification efforts, and further the diversity of industry and the business community in Stevens County.

- ED-4 Encourage economic growth while protecting the rural character of the County.
- ED-5 Encourage new industrial activities to locate in existing industrial sites or within designated UGAs.
- ED-6 Support the location of sustainable resource-based industries in rural or resource designated areas, particularly when access and proximity to the resource (e.g., mining) is needed, or where clusters of related industry can help provide a competitive market advantage.
- ED-7 Include economic development as one of the considerations in the process of land use planning, transportation planning, infrastructure planning, and the determination of UGAs.
- ED-8 Promote education, on the job training, and vocational training programs that will prepare residents to fill existing and future jobs.
- ED-9 Promote the establishment of research and spin-off activities that will support existing local industries and businesses.
- ED-10 Encourage coordination and cooperation at the local and regional level to combine resources and build consistency in economic development strategies.
- ED-11 Support the development, implementation, and financing of a regional public sewer system facility for economic development purposes within the Lake Spokane UGA.
- ED-12 Promote rural Internet connectivity through improved broadband, including wired and wireless, communication facilities.
- ED-13 Encourage continued collaboration between private enterprise and local, state, and federal agencies and tribal governments, as applicable, to foster and locate unique business opportunities to be located in the County.
- ED-14 Support implementing the County-specific economic development strategy that identifies opportunities and strategies for growing and diversifying the economy.



3.0 Land Use Element

The Land Use Element provides policies intended to support designation of UGAs and the adoption of development regulations to help implement the Plan. Land use issues, such as policies for MPRs, fully contained communities, and requirements to provide for essential public facilities, are included. The Land Use Element also contains policies for the protection of the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies and review of drainage, flooding, stormwater runoff, and the identification of greenbelts and open space. The Natural Resources Element addresses the designation of natural resource lands through policies, and the protection of the rural character of Stevens County is addressed in the Rural Element.

These three elements of the Plan (Land Use, Natural Resources, and Rural) contribute significantly to shaping the Land Use Map for Stevens County, and guiding the location, type, quality, quantity, and impact of future development in the County. The Countywide Planning Policies also guide formation of the Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies.

3.1 Land Use Goals

The Land Use Goals of Stevens County are:

Urban and Rural Areas, and Resource Lands

- *Create distinct urban and rural areas, and areas characterized by resource uses within Stevens County. Most of the new growth should occur at higher densities in the designated urban areas, to reduce sprawl and maintain the character of rural and resource areas, which should accommodate only minimal growth. Establish logical boundaries for targeted infill.*

General Development

- *Provide or support opportunities and incentives for quality development in the cities, small communities, and rural and resource areas of Stevens County. This is accomplished through a*

planning framework that reduces urban sprawl, provides necessary infrastructure at appropriate levels of service, maintains the overall character of Stevens County, and responds over time to changing conditions.

Interface with Agencies

- *Encourage development of a statement of custom and culture, so that federal and state agencies can ensure that community and local economic stability is considered when the agencies develop and implement plans, policies, or regulations affecting the use of state and federal lands within Stevens County. Sustainable management decisions for public lands shall consider the diversity of customary practices, traditions, culture, and ways of life found throughout the County and, to the extent permitted by applicable law, complies with the County's planning goals and policies and development regulations.*

Essential Public Facilities

- *Provide a consistent process for identifying and appropriately siting essential public facilities.*

Master Planned Resorts

- *Allow development of MPRs meeting the requirements of the GMA to take advantage of Stevens County's natural beauty and to enhance the public's access to areas already characterized by some degree of recreational use.*

Fully Contained Communities and Major Industrial Development

- *Allow development of fully contained communities and Major Industrial Developments (MIDs) that meet the requirements of the GMA.*

3.2 Land Use Policies

In furtherance of these Land Use Goals and the overall goals of the GMA, the Land Use Policies of Stevens County are:

3.2.1 Distribution of Growth

- LU-1 Work to foster and support raising the percentage of new Countywide growth occurring designated urban areas, and to reduce sprawling, low-density development in nonurban areas by:
- A. Maintaining distinct urban and rural areas within Stevens County that are characterized by appropriate land uses and densities
 - B. Maintaining and adjusting, as appropriate, UGAs for cities and small unincorporated communities with adequate existing and planned infrastructure
 - C. Providing for development of MPRs and fully contained communities

- D. Limiting density and intensity of new development in nonurban areas
- E. Coordinating with service providers to ensure that capital improvements in urban areas are timed to respond adequately to current and expected growth
- F. Providing incentives for clustering and using other innovative techniques to promote efficient land use
- G. Ensuring adequate mitigation, such as buffering and transition requirements, between incompatible land use types

LU-2 Show the general distribution and general location and extent of future land uses on the Land Use Map.

3.2.2 *Urban Growth Areas*

LU-3 Maintain UGAs that are adequately sized and permit for appropriate permissible densities to accommodate the urban growth that is projected for the coming 20-year planning period by:

- A. Planning growth within UGAs so it enhances the existing character of the community and reflects the scale of the designated urban area. Encourage a full range of services and commercial uses to serve local residents and provide jobs
- B. Increasing average densities in UGAs incrementally over time. Coordinate density increases with the availability of urban services and facilities
- C. Establishing a target average density of four dwelling units per acre for new development. Seek opportunities for infill or redevelopment at higher densities as well
- D. Ensuring that pre-planning tools are utilized to ensure target densities can be met through future redevelopment of properties. This is accomplished by applying development regulations that direct how property develops over time, permitting projects that can be established on an interim basis, until sewer service can be provided but which does not preclude the ability for future infill development to occur. This will provide a springboard for attracting growth in the near-term and meeting target densities in the long term
- E. Facilitating the goal of encouraging urban growth and minimizing rural sprawl by reviewing and reconsidering designations for LAMIRDS and those UGAs presently without sewer service when periodic updates to the Plan occur. Actual growth and development patterns will be examined, taking into consideration the demonstrated need for future services
- F. Monitoring increases in density over time; identify and address any impediments to achieving target densities
- G. Acknowledging market choices and locational preferences of the local population
- H. Encouraging well-designed and relatively compact development in UGAs to save taxpayers and ratepayers money, conserve water, and provide affordable development options

- I. Integrating health and safety features and considerations in new residential developments and promote development patterns that increase physical activity

LU-4 Consider the following factors, which are based on criteria contained in the GMA, when designating or revising a boundary for a UGA:

- A. Existing land use and the overall character of the area, including whether the area is characterized by urban growth in the context of Stevens County
- B. Whether communities have, or are planned to have, adequate public facilities and service capacities, including public water and sewer systems
- C. Location of the area in the context of Stevens County's land use pattern, including proximity to other UGAs
- D. The adequacy of existing and future utility and transportation systems
- E. The presence of critical areas and extensive environmental constraints
- F. Economic development strategies
- G. The fiscal capacity of the responsible jurisdiction to fund and maintain services and infrastructure

LU-5 Maintain UGAs in addition to those surrounding incorporated cities in order to:

- A. Attract development to existing small communities with urban growth potential due to their location, inherent character, ability to accommodate additional growth, and/or potential market opportunities
- B. Make use of existing urban infrastructure
- C. Provide the opportunity for new or upgraded urban facilities and infrastructure
- D. Support continuation or redevelopment of existing industrial and commercial uses
- E. Provide for the distribution or location of needed urban services and uses in underserved areas of the County
- F. Help diminish the percent of new population that locates in rural parts of the County
- G. Prepare for reasonably expected growth in areas of the County most likely to experience growth pressures

LU-6 Establish a cooperative process and schedule to facilitate potential annexation, working with cities to plan for future development and to coordinate provision of services and facilities in unincorporated UGAs adjacent to city boundaries. This process should include consultation on development proposals, and coordination of policies and timing for utility extension(s).

LU-7 Identify and designate open space areas and greenbelts within and between UGAs that will help to define and separate urban portions of the County. Such lands may be characterized by low-density activities, critical areas, wildlife habitat or migration routes, or other landscape features. Allowances should be made for greenbelt and open space areas when determining land requirements for UGAs.

- LU-8 The County designates the following unincorporated UGAs: Addy, Clayton, Hunters, Lake Spokane, and Valley.
- LU-9 The County designates UGAs adjacent to the following incorporated cities: Colville, Chewelah, Marcus, and Kettle Falls. Infill development, higher density zoning, and small lot sizes should be encouraged where services have already been provided and sufficient capacity exists. UGAs outside the corporate limits of a municipality should be subject to joint municipality-County planning. Joint planning should coordinate (but not be limited to) the following:
- A. Zoning, subdivision, and other land use approvals in designated UGAs of municipalities
 - B. Appropriate service level standards for determining adequacy and availability of public facilities and services
 - C. The rate, timing, and sequencing of city or town limit changes
 - D. The provision of capital improvements to an area and which jurisdiction(s) will provide these improvements
 - E. Consideration of how economic development may best be encouraged and supported
- LU-10 Where specific development proposals require review for compliance with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and other applicable County codes, ensure that reasonable provisions are made to protect air quality, public drinking water supplies, and mitigate adverse water quality impacts based on evaluation of pollution sources in the area and nearby jurisdictions, for drainage, flooding, and stormwater management.
- LU-11 Use the Department of Ecology’s Stormwater Manual for Eastern Washington as a guide for planning and for implementing stormwater best management practices.
- LU-12 The County acknowledges and supports the Water Resource Inventory Area plans and projects including those located in Stevens County and other counties. The County will use the data and recommendations gathered during the planning, implementation, and management of those plans and projects as tools, as appropriate, for its ongoing planning and to provide guidance for the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.
- LU-13 The County supports the adopted Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and the County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and the actions and projects identified therein. As appropriate, the County will use the data and recommendations gathered during the planning and implementation of those Plans to provide guidance for the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.

3.2.3 *Custom and Culture*

- LU/CC-1 Define and develop a natural resources management plan to support communications and coordination with state and federal agencies.
- LU/CC-2 Identify and advise all agencies managing state and federal lands within the County of the customs and culture of Stevens County for their coordination.

3.2.4 *Open Space*

- LU/OS-1 Open space and greenbelts in Stevens County occur in a variety of public and private lands, landscapes, and natural resources. The components of open space and greenbelts include forest and agriculture lands, lands developed at rural densities, critical areas such as wetlands and riparian corridors, and lands dedicated to recreational uses.
- LU/OS-2 In addition to the areas described in LU/OS-1, the County's designated UGAs also contain parks and recreation lands. Open space and greenbelts within the UGAs are further defined and connected with surrounding rural lands between UGAs that are expected to remain open in character and appearance.
- LU/OS-3 The County preserves the County's open space and character by planning for UGAs, though the designation and protection of critical areas, and by implementing and applying development regulations encouraging clustering and providing for a variety of rural densities and activities. Private lands that function as open space do not require or imply access to the public.
- LU/OS-4 Open space corridors within and between UGAs in Stevens County are identified as lands that provide recreation, trails, wildlife habitat, and connection of critical areas. They are identified on the Open Space Corridors Map and include trail systems, riparian corridors, wetlands and their associated buffers, publicly owned lands, transportation corridors, and golf courses.

3.2.5 *Essential Public Facilities*

- LU/EPF-1 When siting essential public facilities, include the process set forth in Countywide Planning Policy No. 3, as supplemented by development regulations, to ensure that essential services are available at a reasonable cost to the public and that impacts to neighborhoods and the natural environment are minimized or mitigated.
- LU/EPF-2 Encourage essential public facilities located outside of UGAs to have a self-sustaining design that avoids the extension of municipal services into rural or resource lands.
- LU/EPF-3 Include a cooperative process with affected municipalities when proposals for essential public facilities are proposed within UGAs.
- LU/EPF-4 Ensure that development regulations do not preclude the siting of essential public facilities.
- LU/EPF-5 Land use in the area around public airports and underlying the air approach should be planned with safety problems in mind.

3.2.6 *Master Planned Resorts*

- LU/MPR-1 Allow new MPRs as described by the GMA (RCW 36.70A.360 and RCW 36.70A.362). Reserve a portion of the 20-year growth projection for allocation to one or more MPRs. Review and consider redistributing this reserved allocation every time a periodic

update of the Comprehensive Plan is performed, if an MPR has not been approved since the last update.

LU/MPR-2 When designating new MPRs, include the following considerations or criteria in the decision-making process:

- A. A MPR means a self-contained and fully integrated planned unit development, in a setting of significant natural amenities, with primary focus on destination resort facilities consisting of short-term visitor accommodations associated with a range of developed on-site indoor or outdoor recreational facilities
- B. A MPR may include other residential uses within its boundaries, but only if the residential uses are integrated into and support the on-site recreational nature of the resort
- C. New urban or suburban land uses in the areas immediately adjacent to or in close proximity to the MPR shall be precluded. Cluster development according to County rules will not be considered urban or suburban development, and expansion of existing uses and facilities outside the MPR may be allowed consistent with adopted policies and development regulations for rural areas
- D. If a proposed MPR is located on land that otherwise would be designated as forest land or agricultural land, the County must find that the land is better suited, and has more long-term importance, for the MPR than for the commercial harvesting of timber or agricultural production
- E. Any proposed MPR must comply with all County regulations, including the protection of critical areas
- F. Capital facilities, utilities, and services, including those related to sewer, water, stormwater, security, fire suppression, and emergency medical, provided on site shall be limited to meeting the needs of the MPR. On-site and off-site infrastructure impacts must be fully considered and mitigated
- G. The MPR must mitigate on-site and off-site impacts through site development standards and guidelines. The standards and guidelines shall include aesthetic, functional, and environmental considerations to sensitively site and design buildings and amenities in relation to important on-site natural features and to respect the rural character of the surrounding area
- H. The overall density of the MPR shall be determined by the resort's master plan and the availability of infrastructure and services. A portion of the County's 20-year population growth forecast shall be allocated to the MPR corresponding to its expected permanent residential population
- I. Identify open space and greenbelts within MPR that will help to support and buffer various resort functions

- LU/MPR-3 New MPRs shall be designated on the Land Use Map, using the process applicable to Comprehensive Plan amendments. Such designation may occur concurrent with review and approval of a master plan and development agreement by the Stevens County Board of County Commissioners.
- LU/MPR-4 New MPR development agreements shall address standards for the design and development of the resort. MPRs will be implemented through subdivisions, binding site plans, development permit review, environmental review, and other appropriate development entitlement processes.

3.2.7 *Fully Contained Communities*

- LU/FCC-1 Allow fully contained communities outside initially designated UGAs using the criteria and standards of the GMA (RCW 36.70A.350) and Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 365-196-345. Reserve a portion of the 20-year growth projection for allocation to one or more new fully contained communities.
- LU/FCC-2 Designate fully contained communities on the Land Use Map, using the process used for Comprehensive Plan amendments. Such designation may occur currently with the County’s review and approval of a master plan and development agreement.
- LU/FCC-3 Adopt development regulations for reviewing and deciding upon proposed fully contained communities to ensure the criteria and standards in the GMA are met.

3.2.8 *Major Industrial Developments*

- LU/MID-1 Consider the siting of MIDs in conformance with the criteria and standards of the GMA (RCW 36.70A.365 and RCW 36.70A-367).
- LU/MID-2 MIDs shall be sited with sufficient buffering to mitigate off-site impacts to adjacent properties.
- LU/MID-3 Off-site impacts to agricultural lands, forest lands, and mineral resource lands, including but not limited to vehicular traffic and groundwater discharges, shall be mitigated.

3.2.9 *Critical Areas*

- LU/CA-1 Provide protections to critical areas in the County’s development regulations as required by RCW 36.70A.170, RCW 36.70A.172, RCW 36.70A.060, and RCW 36.70A.700.

3.2.10 *Historic and Cultural Resources*

- LU/HC-1 Respect and retain Stevens County’s historic, cultural, and archaeological resources and comply with requirements for the preservation of lands, sites, and structures with historic or archaeological significance consistent with state and federal law.

3.2.11 *Tribal Sovereignty*

LU/T-1 Recognize the jurisdiction of the Spokane Tribe over tribal reservation lands. The County's Comprehensive Plan and development regulations apply only to fee-owned lands within the reservation.

3.2.12 *Land Use Map*

LU/MAP-1 The Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Map identifies the general type, extent, and location of land uses defined in the Comprehensive Plan.

- A. Major land uses that should be designated on the map include UGAs, rural areas (including larger LAMIRDs and existing crossroad development), natural resource lands (agriculture, forest, and mineral lands), Master Planned Resorts, and fully contained communities. Land use designations shall be based on the criteria contained in the Plan
- B. The map will provide a general guide for property owners, government agencies and tribal entities, and will be the basis for zoning and other land use controls
- C. More specific classifications of land, and standards for specific uses and densities of land use, shall be indicated on the zoning map and in development regulations that implement the Comprehensive Plan

LU/MAP-2 The Land Use Map included in this Plan (see Volume II, Appendix D Map Folio, Figure 3) will be used to govern land use decisions, such as subdivisions, rezoning, and the protection of resources areas.

LU/MAP-3 The Land Use Map will be reviewed as a part of the periodic review process, and amended as appropriate, in conjunction with the County's ongoing review and amendment of its Comprehensive Plan. Amendments may be proposed by the County, in response to new information or County-initiated planning activities, or by property owners and/or governmental entities. Procedures, timing, and criteria for map amendments are specified in development regulations.



4.0 Natural Resources Element

The Natural Resources Element guides the County in fulfilling the GMA requirement to designate and adopt regulations to promote stewardship of agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands of long-term commercial significance.

4.1 Natural Resources Goals

The Natural Resource Goals of Stevens County are to:

- *Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries in the County, protect critical areas including surface and groundwater resources, and provide for the stewardship and productive use of forest, mineral, and agricultural lands*
- *Conserve, maintain, and manage existing ground and surface water resources to meet existing and future water supply needs for cities, farms, industry, and rural growth*

4.2 Natural Resources Policies

In furtherance of the Natural Resources Goals and the overall goals of the GMA, the Natural Resources Policies of Stevens County are:

- NR-1 Ensure that the use of lands adjacent to agricultural, forest, or mineral resource lands does not interfere with the continued use, in the accustomed manner and in accordance with best management practices, of the designated lands.
- NR-2 Designate sufficient commercially significant agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands to ensure the County maintains a critical mass of such lands for present and future use.
- NR-3 In determining which lands to designate for long-term commercial agricultural use, comply with the requirements of the GMA and consider the guidance provided at WAC 365-190 and the following:
- A. NRCS Soils classification

- B. The presence of nearby UGAs, LAMIRDs, or small communities that might impinge on or detract from the viability of long-term agricultural use
- C. Location in a floodplain
- D. Current parcel sizes, ownership, and use, to the degree known
- E. Taxation as agricultural land or enrollment in an agricultural conservation program
- F. The overall size and shape of the potential area to be designated and the adjacent or surrounding geography or terrain

NR-4 Designations of agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands should recognize that Stevens County overall has limited areas of high-quality soils to support agricultural activities and that agricultural and mining uses will also occur on lands that are designated as forest resource lands:

- A. Recognize the Countywide Right-to-Farm Ordinance, which protects both designated and non-designated resource lands.

NR-5 Clustering or other innovative techniques applicable to agricultural resource lands should ensure that development is limited appropriately on the most valuable soils. The County will also investigate transfer of development rights and use of conservation easements to help conserve its agricultural and forest resources.

NR-6 In determining which lands to designate for long-term commercial forest use, comply with the requirements of the GMA and consider the guidance provided at WAC 365-190 and the following:

- A. The presence of nearby UGAs, LAMIRDs, or small communities that might impinge on or detract from the viability of the forestry use
- B. Current parcel sizes, ownership, and use, to the degree known
- C. The overall size and shape of the potential area to be designated and the adjacent or surrounding geography or terrain

NR-7 In designating agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, avoid whenever possible:

- A. Designating very small areas
- B. Jagged or confusing boundaries
- C. Splitting parcels

NR-8 Areas with existing mining operations subject to Department of Natural Resources permits are designated as mineral resource lands of long-term commercial significance as shown on the County's Land Use Map. Designation of these sites is intended to ensure that they are protected from incompatible uses, and to raise public awareness of the potential for mineral activities in an area. Designation on the Land Use Map shall not be a precondition to mining.

NR-9 Mineral extraction is a historical land use in the County. Mineral locations with potential for metallic and industrial mineral resources are identified on the County's Land Use Map. Identification of these areas is not intended to exclude other rural areas from mineral resource use.

- NR-10 Mineral extraction is a unique use due to its inherent link to geology and the need to access the resource at its source. It is anticipated that once the materials have been extracted, the immediate area cannot be used again for that purpose. It is contemplated that expansion of existing sites or new sites will be utilized for mineral resource activities.
- NR-11 Ensure that the impacts from new or expanded mineral resource activities are adequately mitigated.

4.2.1 *General Water Resources Policies*

- NR-12 Support efforts to secure long-term, sustainable water supplies that are consistent with the County Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
- NR-13 Support additional water storage by increasing capacity in existing waterbodies, developing new water storage capacity, and developing storage capacity through aquifer storage and recovery, enhanced water recharge, and other groundwater management strategies.
- NR-14 Support the Water Conservancy Board in reviewing and facilitating the transfer of water rights and approving water rights change applications.
- NR-15 Support continued issuance of new water rights from groundwater sources where new water rights are available.
- NR-16 Provide for future water reservations, water banks, mitigation strategies, or other dedicated rural water supply sources consistent with watershed and other applicable plans necessary to support continued growth in unincorporated areas of the County.

4.2.2 *Rural Domestic Water*

- NR-17 Prior to development approval, verify that water is physically and legally available to provide for water needs to support the proposed use.
- NR-18 Support implementing mitigation strategies to offset impacts to existing water rights from new exempt wells that allow for continued growth and development.

4.2.3 *Water Quality*

- NR-19 Protect surface and groundwater quality as a resource essential to the public health, safety and welfare, economic growth, and prosperity of Stevens County.
- NR-20 Support installation of on-site sewage systems that protect surface and groundwater quality and human health.



5.0 Rural Element

The Rural Element supplements the Land Use Element and applies to lands that are not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest, or mineral resource uses.

Historically, rural land use was construed to be used for agriculture and other rural activities. With passage of the GMA, agricultural lands and land containing minerals were classified as natural resource lands. Rural lands became those areas that were not designated as long-term commercial significance for agricultural use or mineral extraction.

The GMA requires that counties plan for a variety of rural densities and uses. In addition, the Rural Element must provide direction and support for measures applying to rural development that will protect the rural character of the area. The definition of rural character is based on the local circumstances of each county.

Fundamentally, the Rural Element is focused on providing guidance that:

- Reduces the conversion of undeveloped land into inappropriate low-density development
- Focuses permitted development into appropriate rural places (such as existing rural communities and crossroad areas), and assures visual compatibility of rural development with the surrounding area
- Protects critical areas and surface and groundwater resources
- Protects against conflicts with uses of agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands

Most of these principles and priorities also draw on the Land Use (Chapter 3.0) and Natural Resource (Chapter 4.0) elements of the Plan. The Natural Resource Element should be consulted for specific information about the County's resources not found here, including soils, groundwater, and critical areas.

5.1 Rural Goal

The Rural Goal of Stevens County is to:

- *Protect and enhance the character and quality of rural areas in ways that promote traditional rural lifestyles and industries, by allowing for a diversity of uses, densities, and innovative development with appropriate controls and limitations necessary to maintain rural character*

5.2 Rural Policies

In furtherance of the Rural Goal and the overall goals of the GMA, the Rural Policies of Stevens County are:

5.2.1 *Rural Growth*

RU-1 Minimize the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development, and limit the proportion of Countywide growth occurring in the rural area.

RU-2 Encourage rural land use activities and development intensities that:

- A. Are consistent with and build upon the existing character of the rural areas, and do not result in rural sprawl
- B. Avoid interference with resource land uses
- C. Provide appropriate protections for critical areas
- D. Strengthen the long-term viability of small communities and rural economic activities
- E. Are contained and limited within appropriate areas
- F. Do not require or lead to extension of urban services or facilities, except as may be permitted by the Comprehensive Plan

5.2.2 *Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development*

RU-3 Recognize existing rural communities and areas of development and allow them to develop, infill, and/or redevelop consistent with GMA criteria for LAMIRDs and the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Development within such areas shall be limited, contained and consistent with rural character.

RU-4 Classify LAMIRDs into three types: The Comprehensive Plan recognizes or designates three types of LAMIRDs, as follows:

- A. Type I LAMIRDs which include villages, hamlets, crossroads, rural activity centers, or shoreline development, which were in existence as of September 1993. These existing areas may include areas characterized by residential, commercial, and/or industrial activities (or a mix of such uses), and public services and facilities serving them. Such areas must be contained by a logical outer boundary, as described in Policy RU-5.

1. Existing Rural Communities: Arden, Loon Lake, West Kettle Falls

2. Crossroads Development: Blue Creek, Cedonia, Daisy, Evans, Ford, Fruitland, Gifford, Marble, Onion Creek, Rice, Summit Valley and Tum Tum
- B. Type II LAMIRDs, which may include the intensification or new development of small-scale recreational or tourist uses that are formally recognized in the Comprehensive Plan such as small resorts, and which may include commercial uses to serve them, but which exclude new residential uses.
1. Type II LAMIRDs in Stevens County include the small-scale recreation and tourist uses/resorts: Willow Bay, Granite Point, Shore Acres Resort, Deer Lake Resort, West Bay Resort, Zak’s Shacks, Sunrise Point, Waitts Lake Resort, Silver Beach Resort, Winona Beach Resort, Jump Off Joe Resort, and Beaver Lodge.
 2. The appropriate size of new or expanded small resorts, and the range of uses that are appropriate within them, should be defined in development regulations. Those portions of small resorts that are intensively developed with buildings and impervious surfaces should be limited in area; recreational facilities, such as linear trail networks, may be more extensive in area.
- C. Type III LAMIRDs, which may include the intensification, expansion, or new development of isolated non-residential development, including new development of cottage industries and small-scale businesses that provide job opportunities for rural residents. Type III LAMIRDs are not required to be designated on the Land Use Map.
- D. Recognize that Stevens County contains numerous existing Type III LAMIRDs that are an important part of the Stevens County economy.
- E. Additional Type I and II LAMIRDs may be recognized through an amendment of the Land Use Map and/or zoning map, whichever is appropriate. The County may also use a sub-area planning process to define appropriate boundaries and activities.

RU-5 Limit the size of, and uses within, LAMIRDs.

- A. The range and intensity of permitted land uses within each type of LAMIRD shall be consistent with these policies, the type and density of existing land uses within each LAMIRD, and with adopted development regulations. LAMIRDs that are currently developed at greater densities than otherwise permitted by applicable rural zoning classifications, may infill, and redevelop consistent with current densities.
- B. The logical outer boundary of Type I LAMIRDs (existing villages or communities and crossroads developments) shall be established and designated on the Land Use Map. Development shall be limited and contained within the logical outer boundary, based on the following:
 1. Features of the built environment
 2. The presence and character of existing neighborhoods

3. Physical boundaries such as topography, streets, and waterbodies
4. Prevention of irregular boundaries
5. The ability to provide services and facilities without permitting sprawl

- RU-6 Encourage tourism and recreation-oriented uses, small rural businesses, and other traditional rural development activities. These activities should be designed in order to preserve or enhance existing conditions and with sensitivity to rural character.
- RU-7 Recognize existing crossroads communities and the essential businesses and services these communities or areas provide. Crossroad community businesses shall have the ability to continue in operation and expand (though to a limited degree, and over time) to serve the County’s growing population and tourism industries.
- RU-8 Protect and enhance the economic viability and vitality of existing rural industrial or heavy commercial areas by allowing a range of new industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, and heavy commercial uses. This includes such uses that support or derive from the main uses. Nonetheless, all these uses and functions shall be consistent with the criteria for development within LAMIRDs.

5.2.3 *Rural Character Defined*

- RU-9 Maintain the County’s “rural character.” Rural character in Stevens County conjures the image of landscape that is rural in nature, characterized by dispersed but individually confined crossroad areas and rural communities that offer a limited range of businesses serving their surrounding areas, together with many outlying and remote areas, and is underscored by the tradition and necessity for self-sufficiency. Rural character may evolve as the County develops in the future. Rural character also includes the definitions as included in RCW 36.70A.030(16).

5.2.4 *Managing Rural Development*

- RU-10 Encourage cluster development, density transfer, design guidelines, conservation easements, and other innovative techniques as a means of preserving rural character and open spaces, protecting critical areas and resource lands, and preventing large lot, low-density sprawl. Any incentives associated with clustering should not result in inappropriate densities.
- RU-11 Establish development regulations within designated rural lands with a variety of densities not to exceed one dwelling unit per 5 acres. Densities shall recognize geographical, topographical, hydrological, transportation, and other development-related factors that dictate actual density, in order to provide for a variety of lot sizes.
- RU-12 Recognize and protect agricultural and grazing lands that do not meet the criteria in NR-3.
- RU-13 Consider using average density rather than minimum lot size to regulate rural activities and to encourage open space preservation. Density shall be subject to the density limitation of the applicable zoning classification. Ensure that the use of this and other flexible tools is consistent with goals and policies for rural areas.

- RU-14 Review proposed subdivisions and short plats for the ability for future development to protect people and property from wildfires and other emergency situations. Providing more than one route “out” of an area is an example of a way to ensure safety and mitigate against potential threats.
- RU-15 Encourage the use of “Firewise” principles and advise property owners on steps they can take to protect life and property from wildfire threat.



6.0 Housing Element

The purpose of the Housing Element is to encourage jurisdictions to work proactively on issues such as affordable housing and the preservation of existing housing stock and ensuring that the Land Use Plan provides sufficient land and support for a wide range of housing types and densities.

6.1 Housing Goal

The Housing Goal of Stevens County is to:

- *Support the preservation, improvement, and development of a wide variety of housing types and densities at all levels of affordability, consistent with the Land Use Map for Stevens County.*

6.2 Housing Policies

In furtherance of the Housing Goal and the overall goals of the GMA, the Housing Policies of Stevens County are:

- HO-1 Ensure that the Land Use Map and related development regulations and transportation and capital facilities plans provide sufficient lands, infrastructure, and densities to meet or exceed expected housing demand.
- HO-2 Address the affordable housing needs of County residents by supporting development of new housing in a range of types and densities, and preservation of existing units. Implement this policy by:
- A. Allowing accessory dwelling units
 - B. Allowing high-density residential housing within UGAs
 - C. Allowing and regulating manufactured housing in the same manner as site-built homes
- HO-3 Allow housing that accommodates the elderly and disabled.

- HO-4 Encourage innovative regulatory strategies that include incentives for developers to provide affordable housing to low- and moderate-income households.
- HO-5 Provide for rural residential development while preserving agricultural lands and maintaining the rural lifestyles of the County.



7.0 Parks and Recreation Element

The Parks and Recreation Element includes the long-range policy and planning goals for County parks and recreation facilities, and for interjurisdictional or interagency coordination opportunities, to provide regional approaches for meeting park and recreational demand, as required under the GMA. Although the County operates and manages a limited number of parks facilities, parks and recreation activities are important to Stevens County and contribute to the rural character and landscape. The proximity of large acreages of public lands that provide many parks and recreational facilities and opportunities is a unique asset of the County. Activities such as hunting, fishing, camping, skiing, snowmobiling, hiking, and boating draw people to Stevens County, which helps support the economy. Both residents and tourists benefit from the natural amenities and recreational opportunities that lie within the County.

7.1 Parks and Recreation Goal

The Parks and Recreation Goal of Stevens County is to:

- *Support the retention, enhancement, and development of recreation areas and activities and parks and open space within Stevens County.*

7.2 Parks and Recreation Policies

In furtherance of the Parks and Recreation Goal and the overall goals of the GMA, the Parks and Recreation Policies of Stevens County are:

- PR-1 Encourage coordination and cooperation between local, state, and federal jurisdictions in an effort to enhance recreational and economic opportunities.
- PR-2 Plan for and allow a wide range of private recreational facilities throughout the County.

- PR-3 Support MPRs as one means of enhancing recreational activities in the County, consistent with surrounding rural character and environmental impacts are appropriately mitigated.
- PR-4 Continue to support the Northeast Washington Fair and/or related uses at the Northeast Washington Fairgrounds, and also support other local fairs and community events in other locations.
- PR-5 Support existing and encourage small-scale tourist uses and facilities in rural areas when the development of such uses is consistent with surrounding rural character and environmental impacts are appropriately mitigated.
- PR-6 Maintain and improve parks and open spaces managed under the Lake Spokane Parks and Recreational District, and other districts.
- PR-7 Continue to coordinate with cities regarding provision of park and recreational opportunities, with particular focus in UGAs.
- PR-8 Coordinate with public lands management agencies in managing their properties to enhance recreational opportunities, including wildlife activities, hunting, fishing, camping, skiing, snowmobiling, hiking and boating, viewing, and other recreational activities.
- PR-9 Collaborate with public lands management agencies in managing their properties to provide sufficient wildlife populations to meet PR-8.
- PR-10 Coordinate with public lands management agencies to improve shoreline public access opportunities consistent with the Shoreline Public Access Plan.

7.3 Shoreline Master Program

The County has adopted an updated SMP, including the Shoreline Public Access Plan, pursuant to the Shoreline Management Act. The goals and policies of the SMP are considered a part of the Comprehensive Plan’s goals and policies. The Shoreline Public Access Plan provides a comprehensive inventory of parks and recreational opportunities along the County’s shoreline jurisdiction, and identifies public access needs, opportunities, and improvements. SMP regulations and administrative procedures were included in Stevens County Code Title 12.



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8.0 Transportation Element

Transportation networks within Stevens County tie the community together and connect it to surrounding areas. The purpose of the Transportation Element is to provide a framework to ensure future transportation needs are met and that the transportation system evolves concurrently with the demand generated by new growth. The transportation network accommodates several different transportation modes, including those serving personal and commercial vehicles, public transit, rail and air transport, and pedestrian and bicycle use. State and County road systems, along with rail systems, provide important links to surrounding communities, which boost the economic vitality of the County. The Transportation Element of the Plan includes the County's Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan. Collectively, these items help functionally integrate the transportation network with the Land Use Map (see Volume II, Appendix D, Figure 3).

8.1 Transportation Goal

The Transportation Goal of Stevens County is to:

- *Provide an efficient, functional, and environmentally responsible transportation network throughout Stevens County by utilizing and maintaining existing infrastructure, integrating transportation planning with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, and coordinating with other federal, state, tribal, and local agencies. The goals and policies of the Transportation Element have been guided by Countywide Planning Policy No. 4*

8.2 Transportation Policies

In furtherance of this Transportation Goal and the overall goals of the GMA, the Transportation Policies of Stevens County are:

- TR-1 Encourage the strengthening and growth of the local economy by facilitating the flow of people, products, goods, and services through Stevens County.
- TR-2 Encourage development of transportation facilities that are in agreement with the Land Use Plan.
- TR-3 Give high priority to preservation and maintenance of existing facilities to avoid costly replacements of those facilities.
- TR-4 Address potential traffic impacts from proposed developments as part of the development review process, and in that process:
 - A. Require traffic studies from projects that will generate high volumes of new daily vehicle trips
 - B. Require development projects to mitigate their impacts on the road system and to participate in County road improvements at a level proportionate to their impacts
 - C. Work cooperatively with the cities to ensure that appropriate road/street standards are applied to proposed developments inside a city's UGA
- TR-5 Maintain a Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program that:
 - A. Provides for concurrent financing and development of needed transportation facilities consistent with the Land Use Element of this Plan
 - B. Addresses substandard levels of service for existing roads and substandard conditions for bridges by identifying funding sources and mechanisms and prioritizing projects
 - C. Focuses improvements to existing facilities and extension of new facilities to areas in or near UGAs, areas where improvements will be of a benefit to Stevens County, or to areas or facilities that provide essential links between existing communities and between city streets, County roads, and state highways
 - D. Uses the Federal Functional Classification System to classify County roads
- TR-6 Maintain and upgrade County roads (and work with Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT] on state highways) to ensure safe and functional travel.
 - A. Establish a roadway minimum level of service of D for all County roads. Levels of service for state highways are established in the WSDOT Highway System Plan.
 - B. Adopt development regulations that prohibit approval of development proposals that would cause the level of service to fall below adopted standards, unless transportation improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts of development are made concurrent with development.

- C. The local roadway network should be extended, as necessary, in conjunction with new development to provide a means of safe and efficient circulation.
 - D. Support projects that will enhance safety, reduce congestion, support economic development, and provide reasonable, safe, and efficient business access.
- TR-7 Access from new development sites should be provided through local access roadways that connect to arterials and collectors when available.
- TR-8 Encourage location of commercial and industrial businesses adjacent to the airport (within UGAs) that do not conflict with airport operations. Discourage structures that could intrude into protected airspace.
- TR-9 Discourage high-density residential development within airport safety areas where potentially significant impacts and safety hazards exist or are likely to exist in the future.
- TR-10 Protect existing rail facilities, to the degree feasible, from abandonment.
- TR-11 Provide for pedestrian and bicycle facilities or capacity in public rights-of-way, particularly in UGAs and other higher intensity development areas, and areas with high potential for tourism or recreation use, as feasible.
- TR-12 Comply with the County's Critical Areas Ordinance and SMP when designing and constructing transportation facilities to protect water quality and other protected elements of the natural environment.
- TR-13 Encourage preservation and maintenance of the ferry system.
- TR-14 Maintain military training routes present in the County from incompatible land use and development that would impact or hinder the military training route's function and viability.



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9.0 Utilities Element

The GMA requires the County to include a Utilities Element, consisting of the general location, proposed location, and capacity of existing and proposed utilities, including but not limited to electric lines, telecommunication lines, natural gas lines, and sewer and water utilities.

9.1 Utilities Goals

The Utilities Goals of Stevens County are to:

- *Encourage the orderly expansion and improvement of public utilities and services in areas designated for growth and development in this Comprehensive Plan*
- *Promote extending telecommunications and fiber services in the County to improve connectivity and access, utilizing both proven and emerging technologies*

9.2 Utilities Policies

In furtherance of the Utilities Goals and the overall GMA goals, the Utilities Policies of Stevens County are:

- UT-1 Encourage coordinated planning efforts between Stevens County and utility service providers through exchange of plans, maps, and other pertinent information that may help utility providers and the County anticipate and respond to current or forecast growth.
- UT-2 Support improved communication networks, including cable, fiberoptic, cellular, and wireless networking and associated emerging technologies, while also ensuring that communication and telecommunication facilities are located and designed to blend in with the surroundings.

- UT-3 Support the development of and expansion of sewage treatment plants, septage receiving facilities, and public water systems to sustain planned growth in UGAs and other areas served by these services.
- UT-4 Work with utility providers to support public water services, when necessary, to protect basic public health and safety and the environment, and when such services are financially supportable at rural densities and will not result in new urban development that is not compatible with the Comprehensive Plan.
- UT-5 Coordinate and plan with cities regarding utility extension policies and phased extension of utility service to unincorporated UGAs in a manner that supports accomplishment of County, city, and state GMA goals.



10.0 Capital Facilities Plan Element

The Capital Facilities Element is a requirement of the GMA that helps ensure the coordination of the County's physical capital facilities planning with sound fiscal planning. The element also incorporates the approaches to coordination identified in Countywide Planning Policy No. 2.

10.1 Capital Facilities Plan Goal

The Capital Facilities Plan Goal of Stevens County is to:

- *Ensure that adequate capital facilities and services are planned for, located, designed, and maintained in an economical, efficient, and equitable manner—according to the future development plans of the County—as shown on the Land Use Map and in the other elements of this Comprehensive Plan*

10.2 Capital Facilities Plan Policies

In furtherance of the Capital Facilities Plan Goal and the overall GMA goals, the Capital Facilities Plan Policies of Stevens County are:

- CFP-1 Regularly update the six-year financing program for capital facilities that meets the requirements of the GMA, achieves the County's objectives for level of service, and is within the County's financial capabilities to carry out.
- CFP-2 Ensure that sufficient land is identified to accommodate projected capital facility needs. Periodically update capital facility background information used for the Comprehensive Plan and maintain this information as an inventory of facilities and service providers that can be used to estimate future needs. Ensure that planned capital facilities will be available concurrently with the demand or need for such facilities.
- CFP-3 Plan for capital improvements and facilities based on demand, on the County's projected growth and development as reflected in this Comprehensive Plan, and on a realistic assessment of the financial capacity of the County to pay for the improvements.

- CFP-4 Coordinate capital facility planning among all County and non-County facility providers, including cities, fire districts, school districts, sewer and water districts, parks and recreation districts, and public and private utilities, with the goal of supporting future land use patterns as promoted in this Comprehensive Plan and Countywide planning policies.
- CFP-5 If probable funding for the Capital Facilities Plan falls short of meeting existing needs, reassess the Land Use Element and other appropriate parts of this Comprehensive Plan to ensure consistency.
- CFP-6 Ensure, through the SEPA and other applicable County codes, that public facilities and services are available, or that financial commitments are in place, to provide a consistent acceptable level of service at the time of development approval.