

**2011 Comprehensive Plan Update  
Small Work Group Meeting- HOUSING  
December 8, 2009**

**Goal**

Update the comprehensive plan goals and policies to be consistent with the multi-county planning policies (MPP) and Snohomish County planning policies (CPP).

**Guiding Principals**

- Provide city staff with policy direction to amend goals and policies for review by small groups.
- Keep goal and policy language simple and easy to understand. Use “plain” language. Mean what you say.
- Split long phrases and sentences into separate single sentence statements for easier reading.
- Eliminate unnecessary phrases in the goals and policies that belong in the city’s development regulations (e.g. “disallow or disapprove proposals that violate the original use intent...”)
- Update goals and policies to reflect multi-county planning policies (MPP) and Vision 2040
- Update goals and policies to reflect county-wide planning policies (CPP)
- Update goals and policies to reflect citizen input and feedback.

**December 8, 2009 Small Work Group Agenda**

1. Review draft mission statement and suggest changes, additions, deletions.
2. Review responses to the transportation policies discussed on November 24, 2009
3. Discuss the following questions for the housing element. Your responses will be translated into the goals and policies that will guide the types of housing Sultan residents have over the next 10-20 years.

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**Draft Mission Statement**

We are a community of people dedicated to working together to:

- Streamline, and simplify ~~and reduce~~ regulations to support economic growth
- Preserve, promote and protect our natural resources
- ~~Provide~~ Promote quality housing ~~for people of all walks of life to meet the community's needs~~
- Enhance how we move about the community and the region
- Create quality parks, open spaces, and ~~gathering public~~ places for everyone to enjoy
- Wisely ~~invest our tax dollars~~ use public funds to care for our public places and meet our future needs and enhance quality of life
- Attract businesses to create family wage jobs ~~to the private sector~~

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**Transportation Policy Questions Discussed on November 24, 2009**

This is a summary of the comments received at the third of the four scheduled initial topic group meetings.

At the November 24th meeting, the **Transportation Element** policy questions were reviewed by the whole group.

The group spent the discussion time answering the first question. City staff recommend revisiting the transportation element in January/February 2010. Draft changes to the transportation element based on the limited feedback will be provided for future discussion.

**1. What are the transportation challenges, opportunities and/or threats facing Sultan?**

- US 2 is a blessing and a curse
- Bridges at both ends of town must be widened to accommodate future traffic levels. Expensive projects with state in the lead role.
- Develop pedestrian access across US 2 especially between the business areas east of the historic downtown region.
- Limited job opportunities force residents to drive to work for employment.
- US 2 is both a state highway and local access street for residents to get from one part of town to another.
- A future challenge may include possible tolling on US 2. May be opportunity if it encourages residents to shop in Sultan. Threat may include further isolation and economic growth opportunities.
- Connecting walking and biking trails can attract outside visitors.

2. There is a strong connection between land use and transportation. The transportation system must serve the designated land use – big box retail requires a larger transportation system than small mom and pop stores. How should the city balance the need for roadway connections to serve future development with the need to fund transportation improvements?

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3. Should new development be required to provide sidewalks, trails and bike lanes to connect neighborhoods to each other and to retail and cultural centers even if it increases the cost of new development?
4. How should the city protect the taxpayer's investment in the existing roadway system to maintain and preserve the system that is already in place?
5. Since tax dollars don't support developing new roadways, how should the city protect the transportation system against disaster and ensure residents can safely evacuate the city when necessary?
6. What role should the city play in regional transportation planning (e.g. US 2 Safety Coalition) – active leadership, active support, passive support, no role?
7. How should our transportation system serve the young, elderly and disabled?

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## **HOUSING ELEMENT**

### **Regional Context**

The regional plan, Vision 2040, contains an “overarching goal” for housing that calls for the region to

*“preserve, improve, and expand its housing stock to provide a range of affordable, healthy, and safe housing choices for every resident. The region will continue to promote fair and equal access to housing for all people.”*

Vision 2040 places significant emphasis on the location of housing in proximity to growth and employment centers and promotes fair and equal access to housing. Increasing housing choices and opportunities in growth and employment centers is also a primary goal that strives to improve the efficiency of our transportation system and strengthen the region’s economy.

### **Growth Management Requirements**

Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.070(2) A housing element ensuring the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods identifies:

- Sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to,
  - government-assisted housing
  - housing for low-income families
  - manufactured housing
  - multifamily housing
  - group homes and foster care facilities
- Makes adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community.

### **Snohomish County Fair Share Housing Policy**

The purpose of the Fair Share Housing Policy is to ensure an equitable distribution of low-income households across the county. The goal is to prevent further concentration of low-income households in only a few areas.

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Based on Sultan's population allocation of 11,119 by 2025, the city's allocation of affordable housing units is 825 or 33% of the total anticipated 2500 housing units (6500 new residents/2.6 people per household in 2025 = 2500 housing units).

**Policy Questions**

1. How can the city balance the growth management act requirements to have a minimum 4 housing units per acre and preserve critical areas with the communities stated desire to have larger lot sizes?
  
2. The city is required to provide "affordable" housing. When housing costs exceeds 30% of a total household's income; the housing is no longer considered affordable. With a median income in Sultan of \$47,600 (2007) this allows for the purchase of an approximately \$180,000 home. **How can the city encourage quality affordable housing? For example, should we preserve and maintain existing affordable housing, lower permit costs for affordable housing or take other approaches?**
  
3. Should the city adopt a property maintenance code for rental housing to preserve and maintain affordable housing?
  
4. Should the city adopt a property maintenance code for owner occupied housing? How should the city pay for enforcing a maintenance code?
  
5. Should the city participate with other Snohomish County cities in forming a housing coalition to locate affordable housing throughout the county even if the city has to pay an annual fee based on population to participate?
  
6. Should the city allow accessory dwelling units in single-family housing or on single-family lots subject to specific development, design and occupancy standards?

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7. Should the city require common, convenient, and usable open space in residential developments such as on site tot-lots and trails?
8. A builder must pay approximately \$26,000 in impact and connection fees for each house at the time of building permit application. **Should growth pay for growth or should current residents pay higher taxes to underwrite the cost of mitigating the impacts of new development by lowering impact fees and connection fees?**
9. When should the city collect impact fees for parks and roads (e.g. before the building permit is due, when the building permit is issued, at the time of occupancy)?
10. Should the city encourage in-fill development on existing lots before allowing the subdivision of large parcels?
11. Should the city encourage mixed use (commercial/residential) developments in "centers"?
12. Should housing be located within walking and biking distance to Sultan's job centers?
13. How can the city mitigate conflicts between residential and commercial uses located close together?