

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

After a long history as a small Skykomish Valley community, rich in heritage and proud of its rural culture, Sultan is emerging as a residential and commercial center along U.S. 2. It holds promise as a place where residents want to work and the region's workers want to live. On the edge of the Seattle-Everett metropolitan region, Sultan is defining its 21st Century role. Over the next twenty years Sultan will continue to grow, though perhaps at a slower rate than 2008 Comprehensive Plan projected. Nevertheless, Sultan will need to accommodate its allocated growth in a manner that meets level of service standards and the desires of the community.

The 2011 Sultan Comprehensive Plan provides a preferred vision for the future of Sultan. While this plan was developed within the context of the Growth Management Act (GMA) of Washington, Puget Sound Regional Council's (PRSC) *Vision 2040*, and Snohomish County's Countywide Planning Policies, it is at its heart a plan and policy framework is uniquely Sultan. The development of this plan used an extensive array of public outreach strategies and techniques including surveys, stakeholder interviews, listening posts, small group work sessions, public meetings and open houses, and Planning Board and City Council meetings and deliberations to respond to Sultan's unique circumstances. The community desires identified through the development of this plan are the backbone to this plan and represent a locally vetted and uniquely Sultan roadmap for managing future change.

1.1 Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

The primary responsibility of city government is to provide public services and facilities, to develop policies and adopt regulations to meet the current needs and future vision of Sultan's residents.

Sultan's comprehensive plan provides decision makers, city staff and residents with a holistic view of the community and establishes a framework for the development of the City's land uses, transportation system, and parks and recreation. The plan also allows the City to adequately address its capital improvement programming and budgeting that are necessary to manage Sultan's physical, social, and environmental character over the next twenty years. In brief, this plan acts as:

1. an internal guide, providing City staff with set goals, policies and programs leading actions and budgeting activities
2. a guide for elected and appointed leaders, providing direction on decision-making and in establishing regulations
3. an outline agreement between residents and leadership, articulating and establishing expectations regarding key issues and city characteristics

1.2 The Growth Management Act

The Washington State Legislature passed the Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1990. The adoption of GMA followed a period of rapid growth in Washington in which residents

experienced increased traffic congestion, inadequate public services, and the reduction of agriculture and forest lands. The legislature found that uncoordinated unplanned growth posed a threat to the high quality of life of Washington, so they adopted the GMA. This section summarizes the requirements of the GMA.

All counties and cities within the State classify, designate, and protect resource lands (forest, agricultural and mineral lands) and critical areas (wetlands, geologically hazardous areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas). Additionally, every seven years cities and counties must review their classification, designation, and protection measures to ensure they are consistent with any changes made in the GMA.

For some cities, like Sultan, and counties that meet certain population thresholds the GMA has additional requirements. Counties in combination with cities and towns within their boundaries are required to develop countywide planning policies that provide a regional framework for comprehensive plans including population projections and the designation of urban growth areas. The countywide planning policies for Snohomish County and the City of Sultan are have been used as a guide in developing this plan and are referenced throughout this plan. The countywide planning policies are included in their entirety as Appendix F of this plan.

The GMA also requires that Snohomish, King, and Pierce counties develop and adopt multi-county planning policies. In much the same way that countywide planning policies provide a framework for comprehensive plans, multi-county planning policies provide a regional framework for the development of countywide planning policies. The multi-county planning policies are a component of *Vision 2040* the policy and planning document for the Central Puget Sound region and are adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PRSC). *Vision 2040* and the multi-county planning policies have been used as a guide in developing this plan and are referenced throughout this plan. *Vision 2040* included in its entirety as Appendix G of this plan.

Snohomish, King, Pierce, Kitsap, and Thurston counties and their cities must also participate in the Buildable Lands Program. The purpose of the program is to determine if enough land is being provided for future urban growth. Snohomish County in cooperation with its cities develops and adopts a Buildable Lands Report (BLR) every five years to determine if urban densities are being achieved within urban growth areas. Snohomish County plans to amend and update it BLR in 2015.

Snohomish County, in consultation with the cities within the County, must designate Urban Growth Area (UGA) within which urban growth is encouraged. All cities are to be located within a UGA and may include unincorporated areas needed to accommodate the 20-year population forecast. Figure 1-A below shows, in blue, the unincorporated UGA associated with the City of Sultan. UGAs are required to be reevaluated every 10 years based on population projections from the Office of Financial Management and the most recent U.S. census figures. The next scheduled UGA update is scheduled for 2015 to coincide with the update to the buildable lands report. The City of Sultan plans to open discussions of UGA revision at that time.

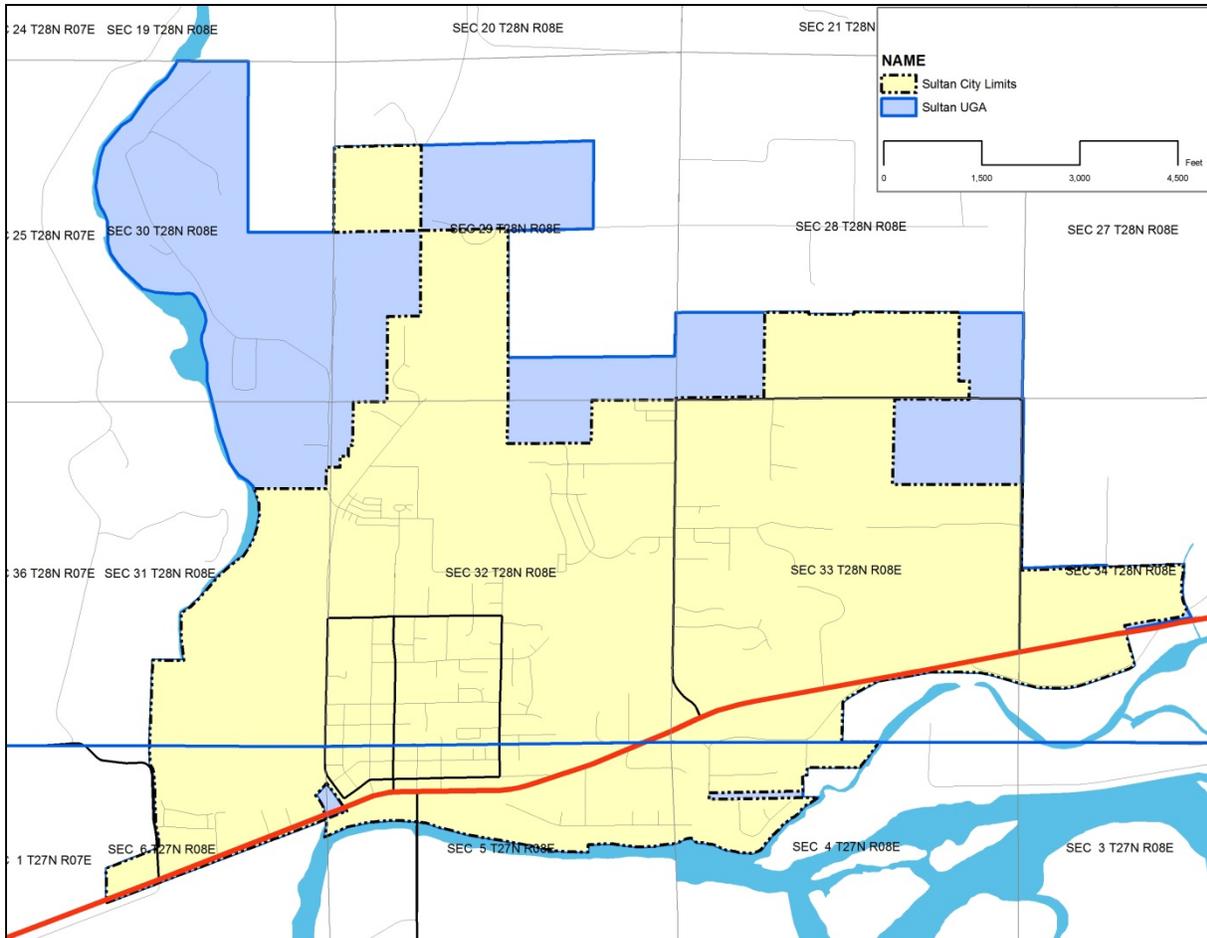


Figure 1-A: Sultan City Limits and UGA

Perhaps one of the best known requirements of the GMA is the requirement to develop and adopt a comprehensive plan that addresses how to accommodate projected growth. While comprehensive planning was not new to many communities in Washington before the passage of the GMA, the GMA did require comprehensive plans contain, at a minimum, elements for land use, housing, transportation, capital facilities, utilities, parks and recreation, and economic development. Every seven years each jurisdiction that is required to adopt a comprehensive plan must review, and if needed, revise its comprehensive plan to ensure consistency with the GMA, this update of the Sultan comprehensive plan meets the seven year update requirement for the City of Sultan.

Finally, jurisdictions are required to decide what kind of facilities and services, for example, water, sewer, roads, that they are going to provide to support the growth and achieve the vision identified in the comprehensive plan. Additionally, jurisdictions are required to identify how they will finance the facilities and services they decided to provide.

1.3 PRSC Vision 2040 – Statement of Conformity

Vision 2040 calls for Sultan’s local comprehensive plan to include a brief statement of how the plan addresses *Vision 2040*’s multicounty policies and conformity to relevant planning

requirements contained within the GMA. While each of Sultan's comprehensive plan elements provide specific reference to *Vision 2040's* multi-county planning goals and policies (MMP), this section includes the required elements presented in the PRSC's guidelines. Sultan's Vision 2040 Statement addresses the following:

A sustainable approach to planning

Aligning with the regional growth strategy

Consistency with the overall policy direction and goals in the MPP

Implementation actions to advance the actions and tasks included in Vision 2040

1.3.1 Vision 2040 Statement of Conformity

As a partner in the Puget Sound region's growth and development, the City of Sultan has taken directives from the PSRC and *Vision 2040* very seriously. In order to clearly demonstrate consistency with policies identified in *Vision 2040*, countywide planning policies, and the GMA, each element of this plan reference these components at the beginning of each chapter, and further, the goals and policies of the plan are cross-referenced to the MPPs included in Vision 2040 and county-wide planning policies (CPPs) addressed in Snohomish County Tomorrow.

The Sultan comprehensive plan addresses vision 2040's multi-county planning policies and conforms with relevant planning requirement in the GMA

Vision 2040 Statement

Sultan's Comprehensive Plan provides guidance to decision makers, staff, and residents of Sultan regarding a sustainable approach to growth and future development of the City of Sultan as the plan and its goals and policies have incorporated a local approach to planning and decision-making that addresses protection of the natural, social, and economic environments.

The plan confirms Sultan's commitment to the preservation and protection of Sultan's unique, interdependent relationship between Sultan's water, land, and cultural heritage. Incorporated through several elements of the plan are goals and policies relating to the protection of ecosystems, conservation of habitat and resource lands, and the preservation and enhancement of Sultan's water-related resources.

The plan includes goals, policies, and implementation strategies that create local employment, shopping and other urban service centers that will reduce Sultan's dependence upon and local resident travel requirements outside the area. Sultan will address reduction in greenhouse gas emissions through land use and transportation-related development techniques that encourage a healthier community and region by promoting a more balanced, multi-modal transportation system and more dense mixed use development in the downtown and in identified activity centers.

The plan includes provisions that ensure that a healthy environment remains

available for future generations as the plan includes goals and policies related to land management that allows innovation and flexibility to ensure that the environment is not degraded and that urban uses don't create public hazards or nuisances - instead of restricting various development types the City will employ development tools that will ensure appropriate development of all lands within Sultan's jurisdiction including protection of sensitive lands.

Regional Growth Strategy Alignment

This Comprehensive Plan has been updated based on residential and employment targets that align with Vision 2040 as well as with buildable lands targets. While the City looks forward to working with Snohomish County to revise population targets that address slower than expected growth over the past several years, this Plan includes projected housing and job-related calculations based on currently adopted growth assumptions.

Based upon projected population growth and the community's economic profile, the City has identified additional housing demand for the City through the year 2030. Sultan has also established policies relating to the preservation, improvement, and variety of Sultan's housing stock in order that Sultan continues to promote equal access to housing that is affordable, health and safe for all residents.

The plan also addresses economic or employment-related goals presented in Vision 2040: The Plan's goals specifically address the development of a sound fiscal base and increase local economic opportunities through an emphasis on small business opportunities, reservation of lands capable of supporting employment related development and marking Sultan's outdoor recreation opportunities.

Vision 2040 Policy Consistency

The comprehensive plan addresses each of the policy areas in Vision 2040. As identified above, MPPs are addressed at the beginning of each element and in the goals and policies matrix.

Sultan's first environmental goal is to respect the natural environment: Among other things this Plan calls for improvement and/or enhancement of habitat, resource lands, and local water resources (streams, ponds, springs, marshes, swamps, etc) including the improvement and enhancement of buffers along Sultan's important water-related resources. The Plan calls for the protection of soils not suitable for development, conservation of natural resources and activities by protecting the shoreline, agricultural and timber production activities that have been an important part of Sultan's historic development and continue to provide social, economic, natural, and visual value to the community today. Additionally the Plan advances environmentally friendly and flexible development techniques for the future development and redevelopment of Sultan.

This plan calls for development of lands that are capable, suitable, and

serviceable. The plan addresses the regional desire for more compact urban development and promotes the development of mixed-use and multi-modal, transit-friendly development particularly in Sultan's downtown and identified activity centers outside the floodplain. There are directives to prioritize funding and investments to Sultan's center.

The housing element promotes expanding housing choices to support residents of all income levels to meet the diverse needs of Sultan's current and future resident population.

The economic development element supports Sultan's context as an urban island separated from the larger contiguous urban growth areas to Sultan's west; the plan supports local job creation, investment in all of Sultan's citizens, the creation of a healthy, vibrant community, and the maintenance of those qualities that make Sultan unique and provide for a high quality of life for all residents.

The transportation element advances a sustainable modal balance that will enhance mobility for all residents and visitors to Sultan. Strategies and programs that promote alternatives to driving alone have also been incorporated.

Finally, much effort has been taken in expressing Sultan's commitment to strengthening and forming new partnerships in an effort to provide public services in an economically sustainable manner responsive to fiscal realities of the time.

Local Implementation Actions

The comprehensive plan addresses local implementation actions by, including strategies to determine site efficiencies that help land owners make the most of underutilized lands – with an emphasis on the development capacity of sites with the potential to serve as employment centers. There are policies for greater mode-balance and public education programs regarding alternatives to single occupancy vehicular transportation, policies for development of locally identified activity centers appropriate for more density and intensity of uses, and housing targets. The plan also places an emphasis on property revitalization that directs planning efforts toward the reuse of older buildings, redevelopment of vacant properties and revitalization of the existing downtown and business district. The City will promote innovative land use developments as a means to promote flexibility in development.

1.4 Public Participation Process

Under Washington's GMA counties and cities are required to establish a program that identifies procedures and schedules for the public to participate in the periodic update. The program must provide for early and continuous public participation. The process to update the 2008 comprehensive plan included numerous means of public engagement, designed to acquire meaningful public influence on the plan, including a series of open houses, community workshops, stakeholder interviews, a project website, topical questionnaires, information booth

and joint Planning Board and City Council meetings to contribute to the scope, nature and focus of the this update. A summary of the survey and community interviews are provided below; additionally, each element includes a summary of public input relevant to that specific element. Appendix D provides a detailed account of the public participation process implemented in this Plan update.

This plan was developed around a goal, policy and program course intended to empower Sultan to achieve its desired future. It is based on the issues and priorities Sultan residents and leadership brought to the process, establishing goals and policies the community will support as the City implements the plan. It offers a platform for reinforcing the positive aspects of the City while striving to overcome barriers to success, balancing the need to encourage growth and investment with the need to foster a quality living environment cherished by Sultan residents.

1.4.1 Survey

Gathering facts and public opinion was a very important part of the 2011 Comprehensive Plan Update. Early on, in 2009, the city council approved conducting Sultan's first statistically valid telephone survey to assess what Sultan residents think about the community and future improvements. Seattle, WA.-based consultant EMC Research conducted the statistically valid telephone survey in October and November of 2009. The survey sought the opinions of 300 randomly selected residents to get their views on city services, future growth, parks facilities and economic development. A copy of the survey is available in Appendix D.

The city council and planning board have regularly returned to the survey findings in developing new goals and policies for 2011 Comprehensive Plan Update:

- Despite a slightly negative overall outlook, residents in Sultan are very satisfied with their quality of life.
- An open ended question about the most important problem in Sultan reveals crime, drugs, and economic development to be the biggest overall concerns among residents.
- Residents give Sultan city government passing job performance ratings
- Residents want to see future development policies that focus on economic and commercial growth rather than growing the population.
- There is a small majority opposed to the city investing tax dollars in developing a town center away from the historic business district, though this may have more to do with how much they think it might cost as they also indicate economic growth is important.
- A majority of residents favor a new sports park proposal even when presented with the cost (\$40/Yr), a sign that residents are willing to invest in Sultan.

1.4.2 Community Interviews

In early May 2010, Studio Cascade conducted a series of interviews of city staff, planning board members, city council members and community residents and business owners as part of its initial work to assess current conditions in Sultan. The material helped shape the process' initial public workshops, presenting issues and framing questions to solicit community response on its

overall vision and thoughts on the issues the community faces.

Issues discussed in those interviews were subdivided into three broad categories:

Issues and Opportunities

- Sultan sits at the confluence of the Sultan and Skykomish Rivers. Sultan's historic location was ideal for logging and other resource-based economic activities that powered the local economy for 75 years, from its founding in 1905 until the mid-1980's.
- Today, this location provides a unique outdoor setting and world-class fishing. It also presents challenges during the rainy winter months when the Sky Valley receives more than 65" of rain. Rising waters in the Skykomish River repeatedly cause the Sultan River to overtop its bank and flood areas adjacent to the historic business district.
- Residents acknowledge new retail centers, outside of the floodplain and historic business district, are needed for Sultan to prosper economically in the future.
- For the last 25 years, development was driven by relatively low land and housing prices which attracted businesses and residents looking for a more affordable life-style away from crowded urban centers.
- The industrial and manufacturing sector is surprisingly robust in Sultan, with new, smaller industry locating in Sultan because of lower land values, convenient access to transportation and availability of power and other utilities.
- Over the last five years, increasing impact and connection fees (to ensure growth pays for growth); commuting costs (gas, tolls, and time); and lower priced homes closer to employment centers have made land and housing less attractive in Sultan.
- The city will need to carefully leverage tax dollars and consider investments in public infrastructure to support future economic development. Allowing mixed-use development and increased densities at key intersections of US 2 and Old Owen Road; US 2 and 5th Street; and US 2 at Rice Road may create opportunities for future economic development.
- US 2 provides a stream of traffic traveling from Western Washington to points east of the Cascade Mountains. During holiday weekends, most Friday afternoons, and Sunday evenings US 2 experiences bumper to bumper traffic. U.S. 2 is the secondary east-west route, after I-90, connecting Puget Sound to the rest of the United States. The challenge is to entice drivers' intent on reaching their destinations as quickly as possible to stop and spend their money in Sultan.
- US 2 also bifurcates Sultan. There are no roadways connecting Sultan's downtown to residential neighborhoods between Sultan Basin Road and Rice Road east of downtown. Local residents are forced to join the line of cars on US 2 in order to access local services.
- The city's historic business and residential core offers a vision and template for Sultan's future. Residential neighborhoods are linked by sidewalks. Parks are within walking distance. Children of all ages can walk or bike safely to the elementary,

middle school and high school. Retail and professional services front on Main Street and can be reached by residents of all ages without a car. Community transit offers regular bus service through-out the city. Bus service links Sultan to urban areas along the I-5 corridor.

- The city can retain its small town character by duplicating this historic pattern of development by creating new residential and retail centers located outside the floodplain created by the confluence of the Sultan and Skykomish Rivers.

Lessons Learned

- Sultan residents value the community's "small town character"
- Maintaining Sultan's unique sense of community will be a challenge as the community grows and welcomes new residents from outside the Sky Valley.
- Offering positive activities and opportunities for Sultan's young-people is paramount for the community's long-term success. Stronger partnerships with the Boys and Girls Club, Volunteers of America, and the Sultan School District are needed. These connections are growing stronger through joint programming efforts including Safe Stop, Teen Court, City Council Student Representative, and School Resource Officer.
- Government transparency, public participation, and community-based activities such as Community Awards Night, the annual Lip-Sync contest, Sultan Shin Dig, and Winter Fest must be maintained and fostered for Sultan to maintain its small town character into the 21st Century.
- Government regulations must be carefully crafted to ensure compliance with state and federal laws while not deterring economic development with unnecessary bureaucracy.
- Government must be "right-sized". The city should provide core services and meet mandatory state requirements. The city's volunteer program provides a way for citizens and business owners to maintain tax-payer owned assets such as parks, streets, sidewalks, trails, and buildings without raising taxes.

Landmarks

- Mountains – The Cascade Range surrounding the Skykomish Valley are some of the state's most dramatic, rising steeply from the valley floor. They are powerful landmarks, establishing a prominent visual enclosure for the valley and Sultan.
- Skykomish River - The Skykomish River generally establishes Sultan's southern boundary. It flows into the Snoqualmie River and, with that river, drains a watershed of more than 700 square miles. At this point in its course, the Skykomish has a wide and shallow channel along the valley floor. It offers some of Washington's best fishing, supporting wild populations of Coho, Chinook, Chum and Pink Salmon, as well as Steelhead, Cutthroat and Rainbow Trout.
- Sultan's location at the confluence of the Skykomish and Sultan Rivers; its proximity to the Cascade Mountains on US 2; and short distance to I-5 corridor offer an opportunity to attract tourists seeking outdoor activities.

- Sultan’s community parks – Sultan has over 150 acres of parks and open space. This is an amazing park system for a community of 4500 people. Sultan parks attract visitors from far and wide. Osprey Park hosts over 500 children each fall who come from all over Snohomish County to view spanning salmon on the banks of the Sultan River. Sultan should continue to develop a regionally attract parks system as a part of its overall economic development strategy.
- Sultan must work with community members and other public agencies to preserve long-term access to the natural resources offered in the Sky Valley.
- The formation of the Sky Valley Recreation and Conservation Partnership in response to the closure of the Reiter Foothills ORV Park in 2009 has spurred a level of regional cooperation between federal, state, and local agencies unheard of until now. Since its formation, the Sky Valley Partnership has been the catalyst for Snohomish County’s on-going land acquisitions adjacent to the Skykomish River for the future Fishermen’s Park; acquisition of an access parking lot adjacent to Reiter Foothills ORV Park; and land re-conveyance from the Department of Natural Resources to Snohomish County for a future shoot range.

1.4.3 Small Work Group

In addition to the survey and community interviews, the City of Sultan formed Small Work Group, which acted as a focus group to work on the detailed wording and structure of the goals and policies. The Small Work Group met to discuss Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Economic Development, Environment, and Housing; while the details of the Small Work Group’s efforts is provided in each of the elements listed above, the Plan’s guiding principals, drawn from the City’s Mission Statement, provided a guide for reviewing and revising the goals and policies identified throughout this plan update. The mission statement and guiding principals are identified below.

1.4.4 Mission Statement

The city worked with community members – starting with the first small group meeting in September 2009 – to develop a mission statement that would guide the work to update the goals and policies of the 2008 Revisions to the 2004 comprehensive plan. The mission statement was discussed and refined during the small group meetings between October 2009 and April 2010. Sultan used this mission statement as the framework for the Plan’s guiding principles.

2011 Plan Update – Mission Statement

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

- Streamline and simplify regulations to support economic growth
- Preserve, promote and protect our natural resources
- Promote quality housing to meet the community’s needs
- Enhance how we move about the community and the region
- Create and encourage quality parks, open spaces, and public places for everyone to enjoy

- Wisely use public funds to care for our public places, meet our future needs, and enhance quality of life
- Attract businesses to create family wage jobs.

1.4.5 2011 Comprehensive Plan Update - Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are overarching statements that express the core concepts on which this comprehensive plan is based. Together with the policies in the individual chapters, the guiding principles set the direction for how the plan should be implemented - the difference is that the policies in the various chapters of the plan are more detailed, specifically describing potential methods of accomplishing the vision.

Adopting a set of guiding principles or “framework” policies is not a requirement of the Growth Management Act; rather, the guiding principles identified in the plan must be translated into policies and actions. The guiding principals used throughout this 2011 plan update process are presented here:

Guiding Principals

- Consider the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution and laws of the state of Washington before making policy decisions.
- Wisely use public funds to care for the city’s public places and meet the city’s future needs and enhance quality of life.
- Attract businesses to create employment opportunities.
- Preserve, promote and protect our natural resources.
- Promote quality housing to meet the community’s needs.
- Enhance how citizens, business and visitors move about the community and the region.
- Create quality parks, open spaces, and public places for everyone to enjoy.
- Streamline and simplify regulations to support economic growth.
- Reinforce transparency and accountability in civic decision making.

1.5 Comprehensive Plan Elements: 2011 Plan Update

The City of Sultan’s comprehensive plan guides growth and change over the next twenty years. As noted above, while the GMA requires certain elements to address this growth and change it also allows optional elements to help guide growth and changes. Below is a brief summary of Sultan’s comprehensive plan elements separated into chapters. The summaries only provide a brief overview the chapters and should not be substituted for their respective chapter. It is also important to note, that all the chapters below work in concert with each other and in separate chapters strictly for the sake of organization.

Chapter 2: Community Design

This community design chapter presents Sultan’s long-range vision and describes how that vision translates into planning goals and policy. This chapter clarifies how the vision relates to

the plan's goals and policies, explaining those unique components of Sultan that the community wishes to preserve, enhance or change as it strives for its envisioned future. This element also includes details regarding the City's historic context.

Chapter 3: Land Use

The Land Use chapter of the Sultan Comprehensive Plan establishes the framework for the City's future physical development. The Land Use chapter describes which uses will occur, where they will occur, and their density, intensity, and character. The land use chapter also includes demographic information like population figures and projections as well as information on the city's ability to absorb additional growth. Because the Land Use chapter deals so directly with how citizens are able to use their land, this chapter is one of the most important chapters of the comprehensive plan.

Chapter 4: Housing

The Housing chapter summarizes the regional housing policy context and then provides detail on Sultan's housing environment. While the plan's policies focus on what Sultan can do as a local jurisdiction to influence the provision of housing, the issue of housing is of regional significance. Coordination with neighboring jurisdictions and with regional partners will help address housing issues and meet community demand. There is only so much that Sultan can do on its own, and the plan ensures that the City does what it can.

Chapter 5: Natural Environment

The purpose of this chapter is to identify those natural features, especially those classified as critical areas, as these natural features impact an area of town traditionally devoted to residential uses. As Sultan accommodates projected population increases within the existing City limits and UGA, it will face the complex challenge of increasing the number of housing units, maintaining neighborhood character, and protecting the natural environment's functions and values.

The Natural Environment element addresses these issues and the caring for the natural environment through its policy framework. It identifies through a series of maps, the complex tapestry of wetlands, floodplains, geologically hazardous areas, and aquifer vulnerability areas and provides strategies to balance the mandate of protecting these critical areas with the desire for growth and development. This chapter suggests a variety of strategies, from the adoption of conservation policies to the designation of land uses and open spaces, as appropriate, to accomplish that balance. Finally, the Natural Environment Chapter suggests a need for collaboration with Snohomish County in the 2015 planning update to evaluate future policy related to population allocation.

Chapter 6: Economic Development

When planning for economic development, the goal is to create and maintain a strong, vibrant local economy. Because it is essential that economic development programs need supporting land use, transportation, and capital facility initiatives you will find that this element relates to other chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

The 2011 Comprehensive Plan, Economic Development element includes information on those aspects of Sultan that influence local economic development: population, employment, payroll,

sectors, businesses, sales, and other information as appropriate; the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy sectors and supporting factors such as land use, transportation, utilities, education, workforce, housing, and natural/cultural resources; and identification of policies, programs, and projects to foster economic growth and development and to address Sultan's future needs.

Chapter 7: Park and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation chapter provides the context for the City's Park and Recreation Open Space Plan (PROS), which was adopted in 2010 as a standalone document meeting the requirements of the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). The purpose of this chapter is to strengthen and emphasize the connection between the PROS plan and this comprehensive plan. In this way, the Park and Recreation chapter acts as a general overview for the City's PROS.

Chapter 8: Transportation

This element describes Sultan's existing transportation environment, the transportation issues the community faces, and likely changes in demand that are forecast through 2030. It proposes a series of transportation improvements, both in facilities and in policy, to help Sultan address current and expected issues while maintaining an effective and acceptable transportation system. When implemented, these proposed transportation system improvements should help Sultan stimulate its economic development, provide for increased safety and retain the community character residents cherish.

Chapter 9: Capital Facilities

This Plan element addresses Sultan's need to provide timely and adequate public services and facilities. Each individual capital facility – including water, sewer, and stormwater – is discussed in detail and includes projected needs, costs, and potential funding sources. This plan also identifies other public utilities such as police, fire, and administrative facilities like City Hall and libraries. Finally, this element includes the City's six-year financial plan to finance Sultan's public facilities.

Chapter 10: Utilities

The Utilities chapter, a required element under GMA, provides a brief description of the different utility purveyors that operate in Sultan. Because Chapter 9, Capital Facilities, includes information on publicly owned facilities – including utilities such as water and wastewater – that are solely owned and operated by the City of Sultan, the Utilities chapter provides information on utilities that are provided in tandem with City provided services – recycling for instance – as well as those utilities that are strictly provided by the private sector – provisions for natural gas and electricity offer two such examples.

1.6 Summary of changes from 2008 Plan

Unlike the 2008 revisions to the comprehensive plan which were intended to address specific topics to come into compliance the GMA, this 2011 update is intended to provide local context, make policy adjustments, and generally make the document more accessible. This edition of the comprehensive plan amends the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, and has been completed in

compliance with GMA, *Vision 2040*, Snohomish Countywide planning policies, and other local and statewide laws. The revisions address local context, policy consistency, policy adjustments, and to provide preparation for the upcoming 10-year urban growth area review and 5-year buildable lands report. Below is a brief summary the changes this plan made to the 2008 Comprehensive Plan.

1.6.1 Policy Framework

The goals, policies and programs have been renumbered and moved into a table format improving readability and clearly illustrating the relationship between a goal, its policies, and implementing programs. The policy framework also includes cross-references to both the Snohomish Countywide Planning Policies and the Multi-county Planning Polices in *Vision 2040* clearly demonstrating the policy link from regional to the local level.

1.6.2 Policy Changes

The policy framework also includes new and updated policies particularly in Land Use, Housing and Transportation. The majority of these changes are a result of new policy topics from *Vision 2040*, and some policies from the 2008 comprehensive plan have been changed or removed based on public input. There are three main policy topics that changed from the 2008 comprehensive plan, each of these topics are described below

Retail Before Rooftops

The growth strategy to require retail development before building more housing was reevaluated during the 2011 comprehensive plan update. Old policies did not account for environmental constraints of commercially available areas or the limitations of land available for mixed-use type development. The 2011 Comprehensive Plan policies strive to create a better balance between housing and retail development by recognizing the environmental constraints in downtown and allowing for a mix of uses in the Highway Oriented Development zone.

Concentric Circle Growth Pattern

The 2011 comprehensive plan update encourages but does not require in-fill development before extending services to outlying areas by requiring that new development be adequately served without reducing levels of service below established minimum standards. The 2011 comprehensive plan also establishes a better link between Capital Facilities, Land Use, Transportation, and Housing.

No Annexations Before Buildout

The 2011 comprehensive plan discourages annexations into the city until buildable land is unavailable within the city. The 2011 plan provides clearer direction and requirements, such as requiring a feasibility plan to meet adopted level of service standards for all facilities for development prior to annexation.

1.6.3 Plan Restructuring

The 2011 comprehensive plan was entirely restructured modeling itself after the GMA and best practices. The chapters in this plan, with the exception of the Community Design chapter, match the elements listed in the GMA. This plan has also been restructured to reflect the unique character and “flavor” of Sultan with each chapter providing the local context and the issues, identified through the public participation process, which drove policy development.

1.6.4 Improving Inventory of Capital Facilities and Utilities

The 2011 comprehensive plan updates the inventory for capital facilities and utilities. This plan used the inventory and project lists that were completed as part General Sewer and Water Plan updates. The inventory for these plans was completed in early 2011 and represent a more detailed and accurate inventory than previous comprehensive plans.

1.7 How to use the Plan

Few, if any of the goals, policies or programs in this or any plan should be considered isolated from the larger whole. Decisions which on the surface seem exclusively transportation-related, for example, may well have deep implications related to housing, commerce, land value, or even to social issues in Sultan. Therefore, it's important to understand that although this plan attempts to order itself by chapter and subject for the sake of accessibility, it does not imply that these orderings present a complete or even best representation of the plan's comprehensive objectives. Some, such as City services staff, may wish to review individual chapters to assess project budgeting or compliance with plan objectives. Others may value individual chapters as a more immediate, accessible way of understanding topical objectives. But for those wishing to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the plan, it should be taken in its entirety.

1.8 Plan Amendments and Implementation

1.8.1 Amending the Comprehensive Plan

The GMA specifies that amendment requests to the comprehensive plan shall be not considered more frequently than once per year. Some exceptions to this rule exist, such as amending the capital facilities element concurrently with the city budget or amendments to the shoreline master program or initial adoption of a sub-area plan. The purpose for this restriction is two-fold: it provides stability over time by avoiding spontaneous changes in response to development pressures and it allows amendments to be considered concurrently so that their cumulative effects may be evaluated.

As mentioned above, there are two other GMA amendment types: the 7-year update, which requires GMA planning communities to review, and if necessary revise, their comprehensive plan to ensure compliance with the GMA, and the 10-year update which allows GMA planning communities to review of UGAs to ensure that the densities permitted within each UGA, and the nature of development that has occurred. UGAs can accommodate the urban growth projected for the succeeding twenty-year period. This plan meets the required 7-year update and the City will begin working with Snohomish County in 2012 to review and possibly revise its UGA.

1.8.2 Implementation – Carrying Out the Plan

Sultan's Comprehensive plan, as a community-wide plan, will be carried out, or implemented, by the combined efforts of many: individuals, businesses, neighborhoods, civic groups and the local government.

Two main implementation activities are managing development through the use of land use regulations and by spending public funds on physical improvements. The relationship between these activities and the Comprehensive plan are identified in the GMA: The GMA states that regulations shall be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and capital budgeting and spending

shall be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

1.8.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

This plan update only provides a starting point: The City must begin implementing steps designed to carry Sultan's long-term vision forward. Steps may include developing more specific departmental and area or topic-specific plans; adopting appropriate regulations; budgeting and initiating directed investments and beginning programs. The City has identified a number of suggested implementation programs in its policy framework found in each of the elements.