

LAND USE ELEMENT

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals

The Land Use Element is guided by six key goals, as follows. These goals are stated at a very broad level to indicate the desired end-result for key topics.

- GOAL LU-1.** Sense of place and connectedness
- GOAL LU-2.** Efficient land uses
- GOAL LU-3.** Variety of land uses
- GOAL LU-4.** Avoidance of hazards, nuisances, and environmental degradation
- GOAL LU-5.** High-quality infill projects and redevelopment
- GOAL LU-6.** Effective public services and facilities

Policies

The Comprehensive Plan policies that correspond with each land use goal are given below. The City of Mountlake Terrace shall implement the following policies.

**GOAL LU-1. Sense of place and connectedness**

- Policy LU-1.1 Provide for a pattern of land uses that will complement the community’s physical characteristics, encourage pedestrian activity, revitalize the Town Center and give people opportunities to interact with each other in positive ways.
- Policy LU-1.2 ~~Respect~~ Consider the ~~character~~ identities and needs of ~~established~~ existing residential neighborhoods and non-residential areas.
- Policy LU-1.3 Require development to achieve a high level of compatibility with pedestrian and transit use.
- Policy LU-1.4 Retain the natural topography and unique landscape inherent to each area, where feasible.
- Policy LU-1.5 ~~Retain or enhance scenic views, whenever possible.~~ Retain, enhance, and create scenic views, whenever possible.
- Policy LU-1.6 Encourage beautification efforts, including but not limited to landscaping and signage, at entrances to the City, key public facilities, and at freeway exit ramps.

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Policy LU-1.7 Continue to promote tree planting and preservation by (a) developing and implementing an urban forestry program and (b) providing community information about tree planting and preservation. (c) Maintain, update, and implement tree protection, preservation, and replacement regulations.

Policy LU-1.8 Encourage a mixture of land uses throughout the town center, including retail, office, residential and civic projects.

Policy LU-1.9 Promote design of open spaces, walkways and gathering spaces that facilitate community interaction for people of all ages and abilities within the town center.

Policy LU-1.10 Encourage active outdoor spaces, in the town center to include amenities such as water or art features, preferably in a publicly visible location.

Policy LU-1.11 Design the town center so that, generally, height and density increase approaching the core of the town center.

Policy LU-1.12 Locate the town center’s utilities underground.

Policy LU-1.13 Create sidewalks in the town center that are wide and encourage tree-lined, pedestrian-friendly shopping and gathering areas.

**GOAL LU-2. Efficient land uses**

Policy LU-2.1 Evaluate land use and capacity every five years, consistent with state law and with the Snohomish County Tomorrow process.

Policy LU-2.2 Take reasonable measures to provide land uses that will meet the city’s population target for 2035 and for subsequent planning periods.

Policy LU-2.3 Encourage innovative land use patterns and site development, where appropriate.

Policy LU-2.4 Implement and, as needed, update subarea plans and “planned actions” in special study areas, including, but not limited to:

- a. Melody Hill Subarea
- b. Town Center Subarea
- c. Gateway Area (Freeway/Tourist District).

Policy LU-2.5 Regulate subdivision of land to promote efficient land uses.

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Policy LU-2.6 Recognize that the City cannot take private property for public use without just compensation.

Policy LU-2.7 Increase efficiency by minimizing the need for actions that take extra time and resources.

Discussion: Examples of such actions include conditional use permits, variances, and rezones.

Policy LU-2.8 Encourage compatible public facilities to be located within or adjacent to the Civic Center.

Policy LU-2.9 Encourage private institutions and special districts to make their facilities regularly available for community use.

~~Policy LU 3.0 Provide opportunities for medical related services in proximity to the town center. [Moved to the Economic Vitality Element.]~~

Policy LU-2.10 Encourage, facilitate, and/or create incentives to support consolidation of lots in the Town Center.

**GOAL LU-3. Variety of land uses**

Policy LU-3.1 Use the official comprehensive plan map to indicate general classifications of land, corresponding with the primary land uses, for all land within the city and within intended annexation areas, as described by Table LU-6.

<b>Table LU-6 Land Use Classifications</b>	
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Primary Land Use</b>
Residential Urban Low Urban Low-Medium Urban Medium Mobile Home Park	Single-family residential Low density multifamily residential Medium density multifamily residential Mobile or manufactured housing
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Primary Land Use</b>
Commercial Community Business General Commercial Freeway/Tourist	Retail and commercial services Commercial business Freeway/tourist- oriented commercial business

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Classification	Primary Land Use
Town Center	Commercial or Mixed-use*
Light Industrial/Office	Light industry and/or commercial offices
Special Development District	Residential and/or Commercial, arranged to maximize special features
Parks and Open Space	Parks, open-space, recreation, and greenbelt
Public Facilities	Civic Buildings and Other Public Facilities
Study Site	To be determined pursuant to further study
* Mixed Use typically includes commercial and residential.	

Policy LU-3.2 Ensure that development regulations implement the classifications and land uses listed in Policy LU-3.1 and that they include additional details.

Discussion: While the Growth Management Act requires development regulations, including zoning maps, to be consistent with the comprehensive plan, regulations are typically more specific and detailed than the plan. For example, the city’s comprehensive plan will show general land uses and the adopted zoning map may have sub-classifications that further specify the allowable level of activity.

Policy LU-3.3 Encourage development to express variety and reflect the area’s unique characteristics.

Discussion: This policy is aimed at avoiding visual monotony in the development of land uses. It is also aimed at helping development fit within the context of its surroundings.

Policy LU-3.4 Provide for land uses that respect the diversity of people, social groups, and lifestyles.

Policy LU-3.5 Ensure buildable land capacity is available to accommodate projected employment and population growth.

~~Policy LU-3.6 Promote businesses in the town center that offer goods and services targeted to current and future Mountlake Terrace residents. [Move this policy to the Economic Vitality Element.]~~

Policy LU-3.76 Create housing choices in the town center attractive to people from all walks of life.

Policy LU-3.87 Encourage a mix of different sizes and types of businesses in the town center.

~~Policy LU-3.9 Provide incentives for local businesses in the town center, as opposed to retail chains. [Move to a variety of the Economic Vitality Element.]~~

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Policy LU-~~4.0~~3.8 Attract additional, quality jobs to Mountlake Terrace’s town center.

**GOAL LU-4. Avoidance of hazards, nuisances, and environmental degradation**

Policy LU-4.1 Implement a hazard mitigation plan.

Discussion: A hazard mitigation plan is intended to help prevent hazards and natural disasters, whenever possible, and otherwise minimize impacts to life and property. A federal law, the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, requires such plans. The regional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan was originally approved by the Washington State Emergency Management Division and FEMA and adopted by the City in 2004 and approved by FEMA in 2005, and was last updated in 2009-2010. The plan is to be updated in 2015. The City of Mountlake Terrace will continue to participate, as appropriate, in future updates of a Hazard Mitigation Plan pursuant to federal law.

Policy LU-4.2 Coordinate with other jurisdictions and with the Emergency Services Coordinating Agency on issues related to emergencies, hazards, and disasters.

Discussion: The Emergency Services Coordinating Agency (ESCA) is the agency that provides coordination, information, and technical assistance to local governments in south Snohomish County. This includes the Hazard Mitigation Plan and a Disaster Recovery Plan.

Policy LU-4.3 Require best practices for safety and environmental protection as sites are developed or improved.

Discussion: The Environmental Element contains more specific information and policies about this topic.

Policy LU-4.4 Allow sexually-oriented adult businesses only in areas where the potential for secondary impacts is minimal and most controllable.

Discussion: Court rulings have indicated that local governments are constitutionally required to allow the location of sexually-oriented adult businesses. However, such businesses can be regulated and their location limited.

Policy LU-4.5 Require trash receptacles to be appropriately located and adequately sized and screened.

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**GOAL LU-5. High-quality infill projects and redevelopment**

- Policy LU-5.1 Encourage high-quality infill and redevelopment projects to revitalize the community.
- Policy LU-5.2 Require commercial, industrial, civic, and institutional development to be designed in ways that minimize conflicts with adjacent homes and neighborhoods.
- Policy LU-5.3 Use design guidelines and standards to ensure that development is at an appropriate scale for the neighborhood, has landscaping, and that the facade shows variations in materials and in architectural features.
- Policy LU-5.4 Encourage co-location of development and mixed uses to enhance the community’s image and convenience within or near public Park-and-Ride sites.
- Policy LU-5.5 Promote revitalization of the Town Center and new ways to serve community needs through attractive redevelopment. Designate strategic locations in the Town Center as “Priority Development Focus Areas” where a combination of public and private investments serve to complete and integrate planned redevelopment projects thus creating vibrant and active pedestrian places.
- Policy LU-5.6 Encourage development to be pedestrian- and bicycle- friendly and convenient for transit.  
  
Discussion: This should include appropriate connections for residential, employment and community service locations.
- Policy LU-5.7 Encourage “Transfer of Development Right” opportunities in order to protect farms and forests as well as support the development of vibrant centers.
- Policy LU-5.8 Support the regional land use and transportation plans by realizing the vision for the Mountlake Terrace Subregional Growth Center and the North Melody Hill Activity Hub as vibrant centers with jobs, transit access, walkability, and prominence as cultural and economic destinations.
- Policy LU-5.9 Concentrate major transportation funding in the Mountlake Terrace Subregional Growth Center and the North Melody Hill Activity Hub.

**GOAL LU-6. Effective public services and facilities**

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Policy LU-6.1 Maintain adequate public facilities, consistent with adopted level of service standards.

Policy LU-6.2 Ensure that new development will be able to sustain an urban level of service, consistent with the capital facilities plan.

Policy LU-6.3 Provide for public facilities to be located or expanded, where appropriate, as a permitted or conditional use.

Policy LU-6.4 Encourage recycling and the reduction of waste entering landfill sites.

Policy LU-6.5 Participate in the Snohomish County Tomorrow process, as needed, to address essential public facilities of a statewide or regional nature.

Discussion: The City does this through its permitting system. All essential public facilities are eligible to be sited, either through an outright or conditional use permit.

Policy LU-6.6 Site essential public facilities, consistent with state laws, countywide planning policies, interlocal agreements, and the City’s development regulations.

Policy LU-6.7 In reviewing specific proposals for essential public facilities through the permitted or conditional use processes, take into account local needs, environmental factors, land use, neighborhood compatibility, transportation, safety, and urban design.

Policy LU-6.8 Allow secure community transition facilities only in an industrial zone, subject to a conditional use permit which has included a special process for considering safety risks to the neighborhood. Explicit requirements for maintaining strict and continued security shall be a condition of any permit for this type of facility.

Policy LU-6.9 Use the following criteria in considering whether property should be acquired for open space:  
a. Ability to reduce repeat flooding of habitable structures;  
b. Ability to preserve critical habitat or otherwise improve environmental functions and values;  
c. Cost-effectiveness of the acquisition to address community needs for open space; and  
d. Availability of financial resources.

[Policy LU-6.10 Create a multi-modal town center that provides gathering and mobility for pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, and public transportation](#)

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Policy LU-6.11 Improve town center accessibility while planning for traffic growth and making traffic flow more smoothly

Policy LU-6.12 Seek opportunities to implement the Landscape Conservation and Local Infrastructure Program (LCLIP) or other programs to provide funding for infrastructure in strategic locations.

Policy LU-6.13 Ensure that park-and ride facilities, whether temporary or permanent, are within a five- to ten-minute walk from the transit station they serve.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Measuring performance or progress is an important way to assess whether expectations are being met. In this Comprehensive Plan, one performance measure has been selected for each major topic. Annually, the City will make a good faith effort to meet or exceed its performance measures, check the data, with respect to each of the performance measures, and report the results.

Measures for major topics have been selected with the following criteria in mind:

- Relevance to goals
- Meaningfulness to the public
- Availability of data.

### Performance Measures

For the Land Use Element, the City of Mountlake Terrace has the following performance measure and will annually report on their progress.

- Evaluate population and the required growth targets.
- Monitor and report on the Town Center and Freeway Tourist Planned Action Thresholds.
- Track new dwelling units by type and monitor the residential mix.
- ~~Have achieved, by the date indicated, the stated actions in the “Actions to Take” section of this chapter.~~

## ACTIONS TO TAKE

To help carry out this chapter, the following action steps are needed in the time frame described. Other actions may be undertaken in succeeding years.

- ~~Annually, evaluate and propose housekeeping updates to development regulations.~~
- ~~Monitor the population target numbers for 2035 as adopted by the Snohomish County Council and adjust all the numbers accordingly.~~
- ~~By 2015, begin to update the Subdivision regulations.~~
- ~~By 2016, evaluate and consider the Town Center Subarea Plan Map for potential changes, especially to the transition edges and any other “Priority Development Focus Areas.”~~

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- ~~• By 2016, discuss, with the county and adjacent cities, ways to provide compatible standards and levels of service.~~
- ~~• Consider development of subarea plans for other areas in the City.~~
- ~~• Pursue transportation funding options for the Subregional Growth Center and North Melody Hill Activity Hub.~~
- By the end of 2019, cConduct a city walkability study to inform options for and consider policy or development regulations amendments to improve walkability between more intense residential areas and commercial/retail and transit locations.
- By end of 2018, develop standards to allow heights that exceed underlying height limits as a means to implement anticipated LCLIP development intensities.
- By end of 2019, delineate a Local Project Improvement Area (LIPA) to identify where infrastructure improvements funded by LCLIP revenue will occur.

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**Proposed Amendments**

2017 **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2015**

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**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

**City Zoning**

Zoning is an official land use control for Mountlake Terrace. It is one means for providing adequate land area for each type of development. It allows the control of development density in each area so that property can be adequately serviced by public facilities such as sanitary sewer, potable water, stormwater drainage, streets, school, recreation, and other utilities.

Ideally, zoning should help direct growth into appropriate areas, protect existing areas, and preserve property values. However, zoning that is too rigid can limit opportunities for creative approaches. Zoning that only allows large lots and exclusive uses can increase sprawl and costs.

Today, the great majority of land use in the City is devoted solely to residential purposes (5770% of the total land base). The next largest category of land use is recreation and parks (nearly 15% of the land base). Land for commercial and industrial purposes takes slightly less (614%), while the remainder of land (22% < 1%) is for public facilities. (Note: This data reflects the city’s land use zoning in 2014-2017; it does not include acreage for street rights-of-way.)

The 2014-2017 Mountlake Terrace Zoning Map contains 14-15 categories currently in use. The following table shows actual zoned uses of land within the City. It should be noted that a few districts are comprised of subdistricts.

**Table LU-1  
Inventory of Land Use Districts Shown on Zoning Map**

<b>Land Uses</b>	<b>Area in Acreage</b>
Community Business (BC)	19.8
Community Business – Downtown (BC/D)	68.61
General Commercial (CG)	31.34
Freeway/Tourist (FT)	32.9
Light Industrial/Office Park (LI/OP)	131.36
Mobile Home Parks (MHP)	11.9
Public Facilities and Services (PFS)	2315.72

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Recreation and Park District (REC)	<u>311303.63</u>
Low Density Multi-Household (RML)	<u>102104.61</u>
Medium Density Multi-Household (RMM)	<u>148145.4</u>
<u>Single Household Residential – 4800 (RS 4800)</u>	<u>207.8</u>
Single Household Residential – 7200 (RS 7200)	<u>8692644.2</u>
Single Household Residential – 8400 (RS 8400)	<u>2778271.2</u>
Special Development District C/R (SDD C/R)	<u>13.410.9</u>
Special Development District Residential (SDD/R)	<u>41.541.2</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>2,083.62,039.1</u>

Source: City of Mountlake Terrace, Planning Department (2011-2017 GIS data)

It should be noted that the total acreage does not include acreage for street rights-of-way, which make up an estimated 15-20% of the total. Additional, actual usable acreage in the REC zone is less than the figure shown due to inundation of Lake Ballinger.