

# AGENDA

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

### May 13, 2026

Hybrid Meeting In-person and via Zoom



Accessibility The City of Ellensburg strives to make our services, programs, and activities readily accessible.

- Closed Captioning is available to Zoom viewers. To enable closed captioning, you will need to click on the “CC” button at the bottom of your Zoom screen and then select either “Show Subtitle” or “View Full Transcript.”
- Members of the public who do not speak English or who have limited proficiency may request an interpreter if they wish to participate in public meetings.
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#### Rules for Public Comment:

Any person engaging in conduct that disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the meeting including but not limited to:

Unduly repetitive or irrelevant remarks;

Use of intimidating, threatening, or abusive language;

disobedience of an order to be seated or to discontinue further comments;

and/or engaging in violent behavior, will be deemed out of order and may be removed from the meeting and/or have his or her virtual microphone muted.

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**CITY OF ELLENSBURG  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AGENDA  
Council Conference Room  
501 North Anderson Street  
Ellensburg, WA 98926**

[Environmental Commission Regular Zoom Meeting Link](#)

**Wednesday, May 13, 2026**

**5:15 PM - Regular Meeting**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

1.A Commission Members: Nancy Lillquist, Jordan Spradlin, Christina Wollman, Brenda DeVore, Kamran Hermann, Raven Harlin  
\_\_\_OPEN\_\_\_: EHS Env. Club President (Ex-officio Member)

**2. Approval of Agenda (No Public Comment)**

2.A Approval of the Agenda for May 13, 2026

**3. Approval of Minutes**

3.A Approval of the Minutes from April 15, 2026

**4. Public Comment**

**5. New Business**

5.A 2026 Community Recycling Event - Recap and Debrief

5.B 2026 Water Conservation Campaign Framework

**6. Unfinished Business**

6.A Climate & Environmental Planning (CEP) Task Force - Recap & Discussion

6.B Bike Month Subcommittee Update

**7. Staff Update/Discussion Items**

7.A 13-Month Pumping Report

7.B Council Actions on Recently Discussed Items:  
KCCD ILA - May 4th **APPROVED**  
Stormwater Management Plan - May 4th **APPROVED**  
General Sewer Plan - May 4th **APPROVED**  
Water/Sewer Rate Study - Going to Council May 18th

**8. Adjournment**



For more information on the Environmental Commission, contact Rebecca Springer, Public Works Water Resources Manager, at 509-925-8653



**CITY OF ELLENSBURG**

**Date of Meeting**

**Time of Meeting**

**Place of Meeting**

**Minutes of Environmental Commission, Regular Meeting**

**April 15, 2026**

**4:00 PM**

**Council Conference Room  
501 North Anderson Street  
Ellensburg, WA 98926**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83993951704>

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

- 1.A Commission Members: Nancy Lillquist, Jordan Spradlin, Christina Wollman, Brenda DeVore, Kamran Hermann, Raven Harlin  
\_\_\_OPEN\_\_\_: EHS Env. Club President (Ex-officio Member)

Present: Nancy Lillquist, Jordan Spradlin, Christina Wollman, Brenda DeVore, Kamran Hermann, Raven Harlin.

Other Present: Rebecca Springer - Water Resources Manager, Heidi Behrends Cerniwey - City Manager, Ryan Lyyski - Public Works Director, Derek Mayo - City Engineer, Josh Mattson - Assistant City Engineer, Mike Helgeson - Assistant Public Works Director, Caroline Escobar - Finance Officer, Erin McGowan - Water/Storm Program Coordinator, Mackenzie Capaci - Kennedy Jenks, Jarod Fischer - Kennedy Jenks, Sergey Tarasov - FCS, Daniel Dye - Fehr & Peers.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

- 2.A Approval of Agenda for April 15, 2026

*Commissioner Lillquist moved to approve the agenda as proposed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner DeVore. Motion passed 6-0.*

**3. Approval of Minutes**

- 3.A Approval of Minutes from March 18, 2026

*Commissioner Spradlin moved to approve the Meeting Minutes from March 18, 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lillquist. Motion passed 6-0.*

#### **4. Public Comment**

*None.*

#### **5. New Business**

##### **5.A General Sewer Plan Presentation**

*Commissioner Spradlin made a motion to provide a favorable recommendation to City Council to approve the General Sewer Plan Update. The motion was seconded by Commissioner DeVore. Motion passed 6-0.*

##### **5.B Water / Sewer Rate Presentation**

*Commissioner Spradlin made a motion to provide a favorable recommendation to City Council for the three-year rate increase for water and sewer utilities, and to increase water and sewer PIFs to the maximum allowable charge over the next three years, and re-evaluate utility rates and PIFs after three years have passed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hermann. Motioned passed 6-0.*

##### **5.C Transportation Element - Comprehensive Plan Update**

*No formal action was taken on this agenda item.*

##### **5.D 2025/2026 Stormwater Management Plan Update**

*Commissioner Spradlin made a motion to provide a favorable recommendation to City Council to approve the 2025-2026 Stormwater Management Plan Update. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harlin. Motion passed 6-0.*

#### **6. Unfinished Business**

##### **6.A 2026 Recycle Event Update**

*No formal action was taken on this agenda item.*

##### **6.B 2026 Bike Month Subcommittee Update**

*No formal action was taken on this agenda item.*

#### **7. Staff Update/Discussion Items**

##### **7.A 2026 Ecology Statewide Drought Declaration**

*No formal action was taken on this agenda item.*

## **8. Adjournment**

*Commissioner Wollman adjourned the meeting at 7:23 pm.*

## **Recycle Event Recap and Feedback**

*The 2026 City Recycle Event, organized and hosted by Public Works and the City's Environmental Commission and sponsored in part by Waste Management under a provision of the existing solid waste contract, was held on Saturday, May 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in front of City Hall.*

*The event had a great turnout, with 15 volunteers, approximately 30-40 attendees, and a Coffee with Council station! At the event, single-stream recyclables, documents for shredding, professional clothing, small batteries, bicycles, and bike tubes were collected. The interactive Vermipost Bin and the Can Crushing Station were fun for the kids!*

*The event also included several Informational Booths which provided guidance on Kittitas County Solid Waste (Where do I take \_\_\_?), Safe Medication Disposal, Composting, Ellensburg Glass Recycling, Rodeo City Repair Cafe, E-Cycle Washington, and CWU's Professional Clothing Drive.*

*In total, 8 blue polycarts were filled with single-stream recyclables, 18 bikes were collected to be refurbished and given back to the community, 10 polycarts of documents were shredded, several professional garments were provided to CWU, and 12 coffee cans of batteries were collected and sent with KCSW!*

*A huge THANK YOU to the Environmental Commission and all the volunteers who helped make this year's event a success! We aim to achieve even greater success with a more diverse marketing campaign in the years to come!*

# ELLENSBURG 2026 SUMMER WATER CONSERVATION OUTREACH PLAN

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

**PROGRAM NAME:** Ellensburg 2026 Summer Water Conservation Outreach Plan

**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works – Water Resources

**PROGRAM LEAD:** Rebecca Springer

**DURATION:** (May 15 – October 30)

**PURPOSE:** Promote efficient water use during peak summer demand through education, incentives, and behavior change.

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## PRIMARY GOALS:

- Reduce peak seasonal water demand by 10 %
- Increase public awareness of conservation practices
- Drive participation in conservation programs
- Strengthen community engagement

## TARGET AUDIENCES

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### DEFINE AND PRIORITIZE:

#### RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS

- Homeowners (especially with irrigation systems)
- Renters (with Landlord permission)

#### MULTI-FAMILY COMPLEXES

- Apartments
- Condos
- Mobile Home Parks
- Rosewood

#### COMMERCIAL & INSTITUTIONAL

- Schools
- Restaurants, businesses

#### HIGH-USE SEGMENTS

- Large landscape properties
- Known high-consumption accounts

#### EQUITY PRIORITY GROUPS

- Underserved communities
- Non-English-speaking households

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### Keep messaging simple, actionable, and repeated across channels.

#### CORE THEMES:

- “Save Water, Save Money”
- “Water Wisely This Summer”
- Drought Tolerant Landscaping Initiative (Conservation Demonstration Garden)
- “Our Lawn is Going BLONDE!” – Interim Conservation Opportunities

#### BEHAVIORAL CALLS-TO-ACTION:

- Join the City’s Blonde Lawn Initiative
- Water lawns no more than 3 days/week
- Water before 9 AM or after 7 PM
- Fix leaks within 48 hours
- Install efficient fixtures

#### LOCALIZATION:

Align with:

- State/Local regulations (2026 Drought Emergency Declaration)
- Kittitas County and Yakima Basin Integrated Plan (YBIP) Municipal Subgroup Initiatives

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## OUTREACH STRATEGIES & TACTICS

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### DIGITAL CAMPAIGN – NICOLE TO LEAD

- Social media (+ boosting budget)
- Press Release / PSA
- Ellensburg Insider
- Radio (KXLE?)
- Website landing page (Water Conservation Page)

### CONTENT CALENDAR EXAMPLE:

#### *Water Conservation Wednesdays!*

- Week #1 – June 3rd: Outdoor Water Conservation Tips
- Week #2 – June 10th: Tune Up Your System
- Week #3 – June 17th: Design a Low-Water Yard
- Week #4 – June 24th: Water Smart

#### *Monthly themes*

- June – Save Water This Summer
- July – Priority Plants
- August – TBD
- September – Enjoying your savings? Transition to Indoor Conservation!

*HEATWAVE ALERTS (CAN WE LINK A WIDGET ON THE WATER CONSERVATION PAGE?)*

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### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Booths at Farmers’ market (ask KCCD to participate or provide educational materials)
- KCCD Workshop for pledgers?
- Teaming/Partnerships with KC, KCCD, Roslyn?

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## DIRECT CUSTOMER OUTREACH

- Digital notification for online utility bill portal users

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## INCENTIVE & REBATE PROMOTION

- Blonde Lawn Pledge – Free KCCD Class and Yard Sign

### ENSURE:

- Simple sign-up process
- Clear eligibility requirements
  - Within City Limits (?)
  - Have Water Account
  - Property Owner OR Landowner Permission Affidavit
- Strong promotion

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## MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Press releases (campaign launch, drought updates)
- Announcement in City Newsletter

## IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

PHASE	TIMELINE	KEY ACTIVITIES
Planning	Apr-May	Strategy, budget, creative development
Pre-Launch	May-June	Partner coordination, soft messaging
Launch	June	Campaign kickoff, media push
Peak Season	June-Sept	High-frequency outreach, events
Wrap-Up	Oct-Nov	Reporting, evaluation

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

**PROGRAM LEAD:** Overall coordination

**COMMUNICATIONS TEAM:** Messaging, media, digital

**FIELD STAFF:** Events, outreach

**DATA/ANALYTICS:** Tracking metrics

**CUSTOMER SERVICE:** Respond to public inquiries

## METRICS & EVALUATION

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### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Water demand reduction (% change vs. baseline)
- Program participation (# of pledgers)
- Website traffic & engagement
- Social media reach & interactions
- Farmer's market / KCCD Workshop attendance
- Customer awareness (survey results)

#### DATA SOURCES:

- Billing data
- Pumping report

#### EQUITY & ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Translate materials into top languages (Spanish)
- Partner with trusted community organizations (KC, KCCD, Roslyn?, Master Gardeners? WSU Ext?)
- Provide low-cost or free conservation tools (No-Cost Pledge, Free KCCD Workshop for pledgers?)
- Ensure ADA-accessible materials and events

#### RISK MANAGEMENT & CONTINGENCY PLANNING

**DROUGHT ESCALATION PLAN:** Adjust messaging if restrictions tighten

**EXTREME WEATHER:** Rapid-response communications (Heatwaves)

**PUBLIC RESISTANCE:** Clear, transparent communication (Water conservation actually saves you \$)

**BUDGET CONSTRAINTS:** Prioritize highest-impact channels

#### DELIVERABLES CHECKLIST

- Campaign branding
- Messaging guide
- Social media content calendar
- Outreach materials (flyers, graphics)
- Website landing page

#### POST-SEASON REVIEW

- Compare water usage vs. previous years
- Identify most effective outreach channels
- Document lessons learned
- Recommend improvements for next summer

# SAVE WATER THIS SUMMER

## Simple Ways to Reduce Water Use



### EVERY DROP MATTERS



Small changes at home make a big difference!



### CUT BACK ON OUTDOOR WATER USE

- Let lawns go dormant — they may turn brown in summer and recover in cooler weather.
- Prevent overspray by adjusting sprinklers to avoid watering sidewalks and streets.
- Skip washing driveways or hard surfaces.



### DESIGN A LOW-WATER YARD

*A water-wise landscape saves time and money*

- Replace small lawns with low-water landscaping.
- Plant drought-tolerant species.
- Group plants with similar water needs together.
- Use rock or mulch instead of turf.



### TUNE UP YOUR SYSTEM

- Inspect irrigation systems, and fix leaks and broken or clogged sprinkler heads.
- Use efficient watering methods like drip irrigation and soaker hoses.
- Adjust sprinkler timers for seasonal conditions.



### WATER SMART

- Water in the early mornings or evening to beat daytime evaporation.
- Add mulch to planting beds to retain moisture.
- Check soil moisture before watering, and only water plants when they need it.



**REDUCE WASTE FIRST**—That's where the biggest savings are!

**LET YOUR LAWN**

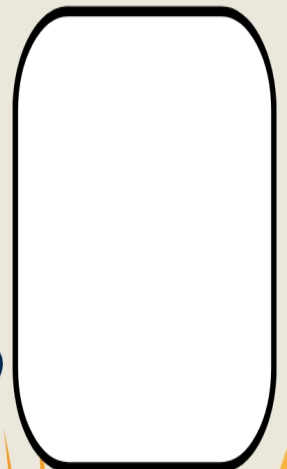
# GO BLONDE

**BLONDE = DORMANT NOT DEAD**



**SAVE WATER  
THIS SUMMER**

**SCAN TO  
LEARN HOW**



**WATER  SMART**

**LET YOUR LAWN GO BLONDE**  
**2026 Water Conservation Pledge**

I pledge to participate in the City of Ellensburg’s “Let your Lawn Go Blonde” program by reducing outdoor water use and allowing my lawn to go naturally dormant (“go blonde”) during the summer months.

By participating, I understand that:

- Dormant grass is not dead and will naturally green up again with cooler temperatures and seasonal moisture.
- Reducing lawn irrigation helps conserve water and supports community-wide water conservation efforts.
- Water-smart landscaping practices can make a meaningful difference citywide.

As part of this pledge, I agree to:

- ✓ Reduce or stop regular lawn irrigation during the program period (June – September).
- ✓ Allow my lawn to naturally turn blonde/dormant during hot summer conditions.
- ✓ Water only as needed to maintain lawn health.
- ✓ Practice water-smart lawn care habits and reduce water waste whenever possible.

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Participant Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email/Phone (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

- I am the property owner
- I am a renter and have written approval from the property owner/landlord

By signing below, I confirm that I am a City of Ellensburg water utility customer and would like to participate in the “Let Your Lawn Go Blonde” Program.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Participants will receive a free yard sign while supplies last.)

City of Ellensburg

# Climate & Environmental Planning (CEP) Task Force Meeting

April 3, 2026

# Agenda

Time (pm)	Agenda Topic
2:00 – 2:10	Welcome
2:10 – 2:20	Reminders and Updates
2:20 – 2:40	Work Session: Background Information and Instructions
2:40 – 3:40	Work Session Part 1
3:40-3:55	Break
3:55- 4:50	Work Session Part 2 (Prioritization and Discussion)
5:00	Adjourn

# Meeting Objectives

Review public feedback and existing resilience and GHG emissions reduction policy examples.

Generate ideas for goals, policies, and programs that improve climate resilience and support sustainable systems.

# Planning Process

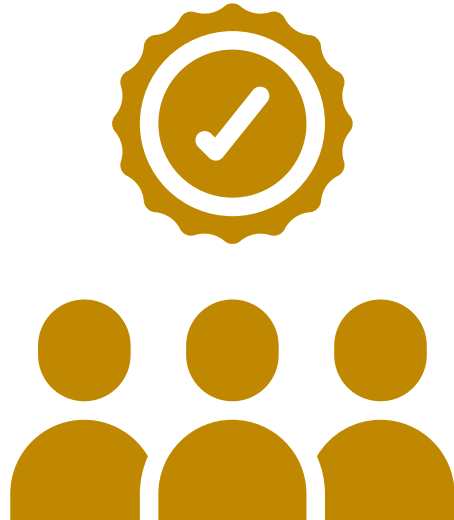


# CEP Task Force Timeline



# CEP Task Force Purpose

- Collaborate with a diverse group of community representatives to develop and refine policies for the **City's Climate and Environment Chapter**.
- Over four meetings, the Task Force will review climate impacts and existing policies, provide input on goals and priorities, and guide the development of draft Climate and Environment Chapter language.



During these meetings please:

- Be present
- Be prepared
- Be respectful
- Have fun!

# Introductions!

Round robin  
introductions.  
**Name, Affiliation.**





# Reminder and Updates

February Meeting & Follow-up Questions

# Reminders from February 19 CEP Task Force Meeting

- Had a discussion on priority hazards for the City of Ellensburg. Highlights from that discussion included:



- Drought was identified by many as a primary risk the community is facing.
- Increasing drought, declining snowpack, and major economic & planning impacts were noted as concerns.



- Ongoing impacts requiring floodplain planning and flood mitigation.
- Need for more proactive land use and infrastructure strategies.




- Growing risks to health, outdoor workers, and quality of life.



- Drought, flooding, heat, and smoke creating cascading impacts and risks.
- It was noted that it will be important to consider this as policies/programs are developed.

# Reminders from February 19 CEP Task Force Meeting



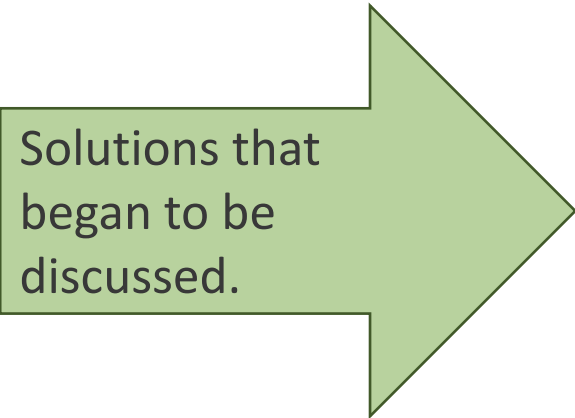
Additional impacts of concern discussed.

## Equity Impacts

- Disproportionate effects on low-income communities & outdoor workers

## Ecosystem Impacts

- Threats to shrubsteppe habitat and wildfire risk
- Potential conflicts with renewable energy development



Solutions that began to be discussed.

## Behavioral Shifts

- Need for conservation mindset shift and public education

## Opportunities & Partnerships

- Education and technical assistance (e.g., extension services, conservation districts)
- Community programs and demonstration projects

# Updates and Pause for Clarifications

- The StoryMap for the *Climate Impacts and Hazards Assessment* is complete and will be shared soon!

Before we proceed, any follow-up questions from CEP Task Force members?





# Work Session

**Background Information and Instructions**

## Objective

Generate ideas for goals, policies, and programs that improve climate resilience and support sustainable systems.

**Activity Format:** Task Force members will go to different stations, each focused on a priority climate hazard or GHG emissions reduction/sustainability strategy.

# Community Feedback

## Protect and Restore Nature



33  
Votes

Protect and restore natural areas, green spaces, and parks. Preserve local tree canopy, especially in areas with fewer trees.

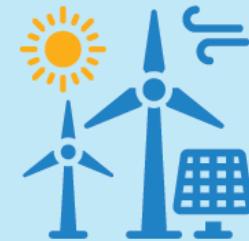
## Water Protection and Conservation



27  
Votes

Safeguard clean water and encourage conservation to prepare for challenges like drought.

## Clean Energy and Building Efficiency



22  
Votes

Support new sources of clean energy like solar, wind, and battery storage. Make it easier for homeowners and businesses to insulate and upgrade their buildings so they stay comfortable and efficient in extreme weather.

# Community Feedback

## Address Rising Costs



21  
Votes

Ensure all residents have access to basic needs like healthy food and affordable heating and cooling.

## Community Engagement and Education



18  
Votes

Provide everyone opportunities to learn how to prepare for and respond to extreme weather and natural hazards. Ensure the public is involved in shaping actions that make our community stronger.

## Support Local Food Systems and Reduce Waste



16  
Votes

Strengthen community gardens and food businesses, improve access to farmers' markets, and reduce food waste through composting programs.

# Community Feedback

## Accessible Transportation



13  
Votes

Improve transportation options and make it easier to walk, bike, or take other car-free options by adding sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes.

## Emergency Preparedness and Response



12  
Votes

Help residents and local businesses prepare for and stay safe during extreme weather events and other hazards that are expected to become more severe and frequent (e.g., wildfires, flooding, extreme heat).

## Stronger Infrastructure



9  
Votes

Make sure important infrastructure, like roads and public buildings, can handle extreme weather, including heatwaves and flooding.

## Goal Priorities



# Policy Example References

The following resources include existing resilience policies that can be adapted, expanded, or strengthened for Ellensburg:

- WA Dept. of Commerce – Climate Policy Explorer
- Ellensburg Environment Chapter
  
- Kittitas County Draft Climate & Resilience Elements
- Climate Hazards & Impacts – Resilience Policy Section

Have examples from Commerce and the Environment Chapter goals, policies, and programs at each station!

Have print outs of these documents at each station.

# Flip Chart Stations

## 4 Stations: Resilience to Climate Impacts

Station 1: Drought  
and Snowpack

Station 2: Extreme  
Heat

Station 4: Wildfire  
and Wildfire  
Smoke

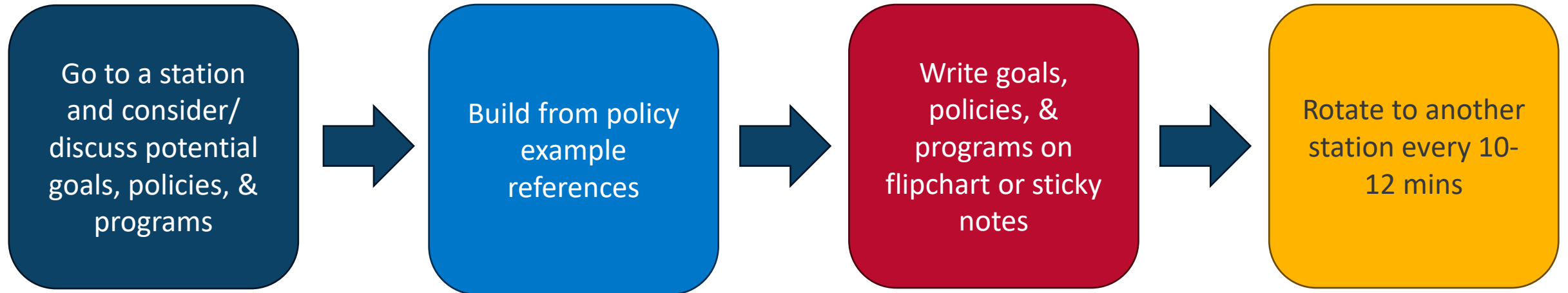
Station 3: Extreme  
Precipitation and  
Flooding

## 2 Stations: GHG Emissions Reduction and Sustainability

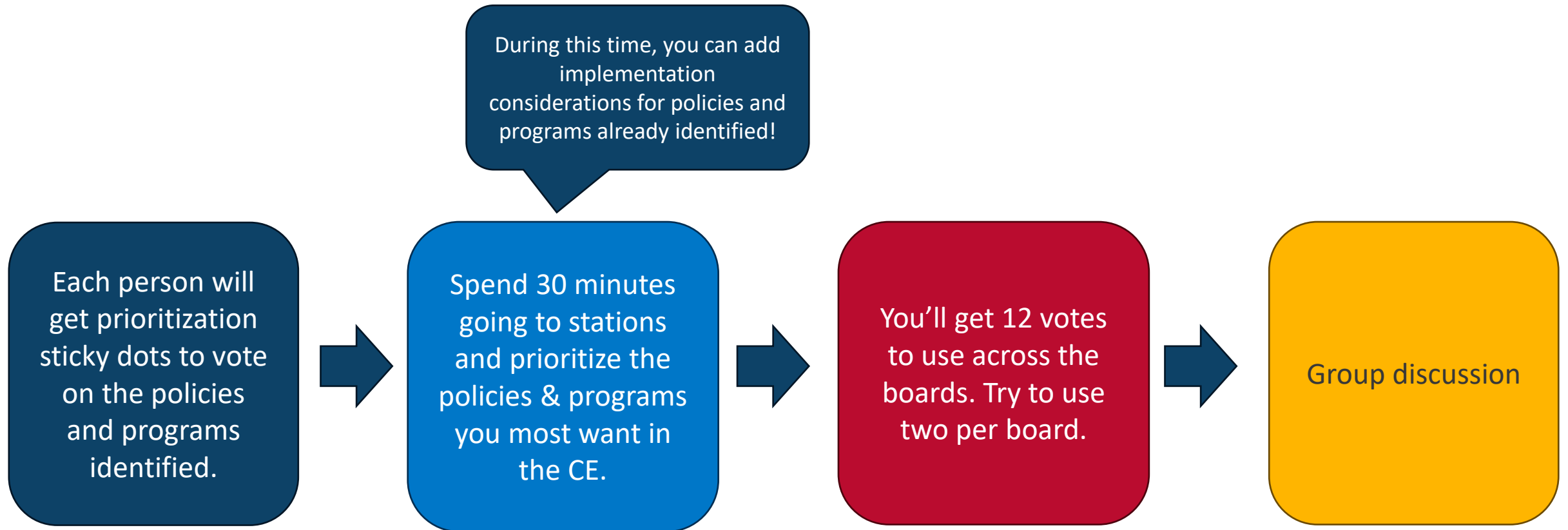
Station 5:  
Transportation  
and Land Use

Station 6:  
Buildings and  
Energy

# Instructions Part 1



# Instructions Part 2



# Flipchart Example

Title	
<b>Goals</b>	
1	
2	
...	
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Programs</b>
A	A Programs
B	B Programs
C	C Programs

# Goals, Policies, and Programs

From the Comprehensive Plan: The goals, policies, and programs included in this Plan provide a basis for the City's regulations and guide future decision-making.

## Goals

- Broad statement meant to capture the related policies and programs under it.
- Defines the “what” and provides the broadest organizational structure.
- Will be important to make sure that each broad goal has several (or at least one) related policies.

## Policies

- More action oriented, may relate to a specific action or target.
- Will be important to make sure that each policy has several (or at least one) related programs.

## Programs

- The mechanisms that translate goals and policies into concrete actions.
- The most specific, can be thought of as an implementation step to the related policy.

Maintain City leadership in energy conservation and renewable energy production.



Promote and invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy resources and technology as an alternative to non-renewable resources.



Create incentives to encourage the use of sustainable building methods and materials (such as those specified under certification systems like LEED and Built Green) that may reduce impacts on the built and natural environment.

A wide-angle photograph of a farm scene. In the foreground, a herd of cows of various colors (black, brown, white) is grazing in a lush green field. In the middle ground, there is a large red brick barn on the left and a smaller blue metal barn on the right. The background features rolling green hills under a clear, bright blue sky. A white banner with a dark blue shadow is overlaid across the center of the image, containing the text 'Work Session Part One'.

# Work Session Part One

# Work Session

**We have until 3:40 to add Goals, Policies, and Programs then we'll break and move to prioritization.**

## **Key Questions:**

- 1. What policies could reduce risks from this hazard?**
- 2. What land use or development changes could improve resilience?**
- 3. What infrastructure or natural systems solutions should be considered?**
- 4. Are there equity considerations or vulnerable populations to prioritize?**

An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood during autumn. A large white cylindrical water tower is prominent on the left. The area is filled with houses, many surrounded by trees showing vibrant fall colors in shades of yellow, orange, and red. A paved road with a white car is visible in the lower center. The background shows a wide valley with more houses and distant mountains under a clear sky.

# Work Session Part Two

# Prioritization – Things to Consider

## Key Questions:

1. Which ideas feel most actionable
2. Which may require additional study or research to further develop
3. Opportunities for co-benefits (improve air quality, builds community knowledge, promotes equity and justice, etc.)

# Discussion

## Key Questions:

1. What ideas received the most support? Does this align with your priorities?
2. Are there any important gaps in the brainstormed policies?
3. Which strategies feel most important for the Ellensburg Climate Element?



# Next Steps & Adjourn

# Next Steps and Action Items

- **May 14 Meeting** - Review draft Environment and Climate Element goals and policies.
- Other?

# Thank you!



City of Ellensburg

# Ellensburg 2046: Comprehensive Plan Update DRAFT

April 2026



**ELLENSBURG 2046**  
Hometown Heart — Bright Future





# Chapter 7 Climate and Environment

## Overview

### WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER

- Information about how climate change is impacting the health and function of Ellensburg's natural environment, community, and infrastructure.
- Policies and programs that seek to protect and restore natural resources, enhance community resiliency to climate change impacts, and support environmental justice outcomes.
- Policies that provide a framework for greenhouse gas emissions reductions by reducing vehicle dependency, promoting green building practices, and reducing waste.

Ellensburg is a vibrant community in central Washington, serving as the center of commerce and government for Kittitas County while boasting natural resources and recreational opportunities that make Ellensburg a special place to live, work, and play. Views of the Stuart Mountain range, the Yakima River, and healthy air and water are just some aspects of the surrounding environment that the Ellensburg community values. As a community, we are increasingly aware that climate change is a current and continuing threat to our population, environment, and economy. The widespread use of fossil fuels has resulted in a substantial rise in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, global temperature increases, and climate change impacts, including, increased risk of heat domes, drought, wildfires and wildfire smoke, extreme precipitation, and flooding. At a global scale, governments like ours are engaged in efforts to reduce GHG emissions and are preparing their communities, infrastructure, and environments to be more resilient to climate impacts, while accommodating human needs such as housing, energy reliability, and jobs.

The goals, policies, and programs in the Climate and Environment chapter of the Comprehensive Plan seek to increase Ellensburg's resilience to climate change impacts and support a healthy and thriving community and surrounding environment. Such coordinated actions can improve sustainability efforts and increase community resilience to adverse climate impacts and hazards. As growth and development occurs, Ellensburg is preparing for a healthier, greener, and more viable future for generations to come.

## Background & Context

### Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Act (GMA) was amended in 2023 under House Bill 1181, requiring cities and counties to integrate climate goals and policies into their comprehensive plan updates. Under RCW 36.70A.070, Ellensburg is required to include a Resiliency Sub-element. The GMA sets the following requirements for jurisdictions developing their Climate Elements:

Resiliency Sub-element (RCW36.70A.070(9)(e):

- Identify, protect, and enhance natural areas to foster resiliency to climate impacts, as well as areas of vital habitat for safe passage and species migration.
- Identify, protect, and enhance community resiliency to climate change impacts, including social, economic, and built environment factors, that support adaptation to climate impacts consistent with environmental justice.
- Address natural hazards created or aggravated by climate change, including sea level rise, landslides, flooding, drought, heat, smoke, wildfire, and other effects of changes to temperature and precipitation patterns.

## Regional Efforts

Climate change impacts will take coordinated efforts to implement policies that address widespread impacts such as drought and wildfire risks. Ellensburg's Climate and Environmental chapter emphasizes the need for collaboration and alignment with countywide, regional, and statewide efforts as a critical need to bolster the city's resilience to climate exacerbated impacts and sustainability efforts.

## Kittitas County Climate and Resiliency Element

Kittitas County developed its first Climate and Resiliency Element in 2026. It includes goals and policies to build resilience to drought, heat, precipitation, flooding, and wildfire impacts. The element identifies statewide, regional, and countywide planning efforts related to maintaining resilient working landscapes throughout the county. As the State, County, and key partners such as the Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD) continue to implement these initiatives, Ellensburg will seek alignment and participation when appropriate. Initiatives include:

- The Washington State Climate Resilience Strategy
- Climate Resilience Plan for Washington Agriculture
- Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan (WAHCAP)
- Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan
- Yakima Nation Climate Action Plan (CAP)
- Kittitas County Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)
- Yakama Tributary Access & Habitat Program (YTAHP)
- Wildland Fire/Fuels Reduction Programs
- Kittitas County Community Wildfire Protection Plan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Kittitas County Community Wildfire Protection Plan was not identified in the County's Climate Element but is a key document for building resilience to wildfire risk.



The County's Climate and Resiliency Element also identified Ellensburg as an overburdened community in the county, noting that this determination came from the Washington Department of Ecology due to higher exposure to air pollution and other pollutants in areas of the city. The County's element further notes that Ellensburg will be a key collaborator to achieve environmental justice outcomes—a requirement for Climate Elements.

## Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)

The development of the Climate and Environment Element included review of the 2025 Kittitas County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) and the City's Annex chapter to understand identified or in-progress mitigation efforts supporting the resilience to climate exacerbated hazards. Key strategies included in the HMP that are consistent with this Climate and Environment chapter include:

- Development of the Ellensburg community fieldhouse project with features that would allow it to serve as an indoor air quality shelter.
- Development measures that minimize impact to natural resources and encourage hazard mitigation.
- Use of the best available science to understand the location and potential impact of natural hazards.
- Assessment and potential relocation of critical city assets out of high hazard zones.
- Enhancement of outreach and education around preparedness in the community.

## Connection to Existing City Work

Ellensburg has long embraced and maintained progressive environmental policies, such as promoting and accommodating a variety of transportation methods, clean industries and development, innovative stormwater and building practices that promote low impact development, land uses that encourage commercial development and provide jobs and services to neighborhoods, and protecting and retaining natural systems. The Climate and Environment Chapter builds from existing city plans and programs to shape Ellensburg's future environmental policy.

### City Plans

- **2012 Energy Efficiency & Conservation Strategy.** Guides City projects and initiatives to utilize renewable energy. The strategy earned Ellensburg the Governor's 2012 Smart Communities Award.
- **City of Ellensburg Active Transportation Plan 2020.** Guides bicycle and pedestrian project implementation in Ellensburg, prioritizing community safety.
- **2021 Comprehensive Plan.** Includes various goals, policies, and programs that promote resilience and sustainability in Ellensburg.
- **Clean Energy Implementation Plan 2022-2025.** Outlines Ellensburg transition to 100% renewable energy production in line with RCW 19.405.060.
- **2023 Zero Emission Transition Plan.** Outlines Central Transit's fleet transition to zero emissions vehicles.



- **Strategic Vision 2023-2028.** Provides guiding pillars for Ellensburg that promote housing affordability, economic vitality, safe and inclusive community, energy and resource management, and sustainable infrastructure.
- **Ellensburg Sustainable Energy Plan 2024.** Provides strategic framework to guide City greenhouse gas emissions reductions through actions in alignment with state and federal climate regulations.
- **2026 Parks & Recreation System Comprehensive Plan Update.** Provides guidance on the management and development of Ellensburg’s recreation and open spaces.

## City Programs

- Maintaining a Tree City USA designation since 1983. Ellensburg was the first community in Washington to become a Tree City and now has over 5,600 street trees.
- Promoting robust community solar projects. The city has supported solar energy projects since 2000. In 2006, Ellensburg installed a 36-kilowatt (kW) community solar system—the first of its kind in the United States.
- Adopting outdoor lighting regulations that reduce light pollution as part of the 2013 Land Development Code.
- Designating Ellensburg as a Silver-Level Bicycle Friendly Community. The League of American Bicyclists (LAB) designation is a result of an extensive bike lane system, covering 47% of arterial streets. The city set a goal of becoming a Gold-Level Bicycle Friendly Community through bicycling infrastructure and programs like community events, improved wayfinding systems and proactive street-level hazard mitigation.
- Fully sourcing Ellensburg’s electricity from zero-emission energy. Through the Sustainable Energy Plan and the Clean Energy Implementation Plan, Ellensburg’s electric utility is moving toward 100% zero-emission electricity in line with state mandates.
- Offering density bonus incentives and promoting green building practices. The city provides density bonuses for energy efficient construction that achieves LEED, Built Green, or other similar environmental certifications.
- Zero Emission Transition Plan to meet state and federal requirements, as well as advance the City’s environmental goals. Central Transit plans to electrify its bus fleet by 2032.
- The City also supports an Annual Public Works Recycling Event, an Energy Audit and Weatherization Program, and the Renewable Energy Park and Net Metering Policy.

## Climate Impacts and Hazards

Ellensburg is shaped by its location in the Kittitas Valley, surrounded by open landscapes, river systems, and foothills rising to the Cascade Mountains in the west. The adjacent Yakima River supports local recreation, agriculture, and wildlife, creating a strong connection between the community and natural systems. Ellensburg’s environment is changing, and weather patterns are becoming more extreme.



These changes are amplifying risks to the places and resources most important to the community's health, prosperity, and quality of life.

In Ellensburg, these changes affect daily life and local resources in tangible ways. The city is experiencing reduced water availability, declining fish habitat and stream health, worsening air quality that impacts community health, stress on forests and natural ecosystems, and increased wear on roads, utilities, and other infrastructure. *To learn more, view the detailed [Climate Impacts and Hazards Assessment](#) report for Ellensburg, or explore the City's interactive [Ellensburg Climate Impacts Summary Story Map](#) for an overview of the findings.*

## Extreme Heat

Yearly average temperatures will continue to rise in the city, and summers will become longer and hotter, with more frequent—and hotter—heat waves. Ellensburg's communities, animals, plants, and infrastructure will experience more heat-related impacts as temperatures increase due to climate change.

Compared to the historical baseline, the average highest temperature during the summer is expected to rise by...



Source: Raymond, C., & Rogers, M. (2022). Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington. Retrieved from <https://cig.uw.edu/resources/analysis-tools/climate-mapping-for-a-resilient-washington/>

## Drought and Snowpack

By the end of the century...



**30% chance**

any given summer will get less than 75% of normal rainfall in the region



**45% less**

snowpack on April 1<sup>st</sup> compared to the current average

Source: Raymond, C., & Rogers, M. (2022). Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington. Retrieved from <https://cig.uw.edu/resources/analysis-tools/climate-mapping-for-a-resilient-washington/>

In the last century, the region has experienced more frequent and intense drought conditions due to lower snowpack, faster snowmelt, and warmer summers. In the Cascade Mountains, snowpack levels have been shrinking as winter and spring rains become more common than snow. This is a concern because Ellensburg relies on melting snowpack from the Cascades for both the city's summer water supply and its streams and wildlife habitat. Ellensburg has been under a drought declaration for four out of the past five years, and climate projections anticipate that seven out of every

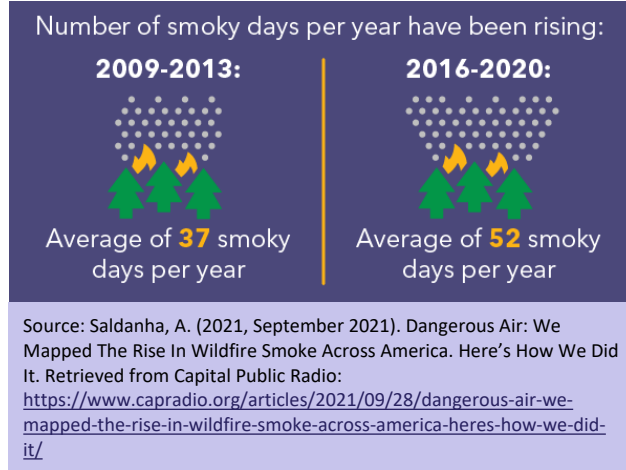
10 years will see snow droughts, on average.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Department of Ecology. (2026). Drought Response. (Retrieved from: <https://ecology.wa.gov/water-shorelines/water-supply/water-availability/statewide-conditions/drought-response>)

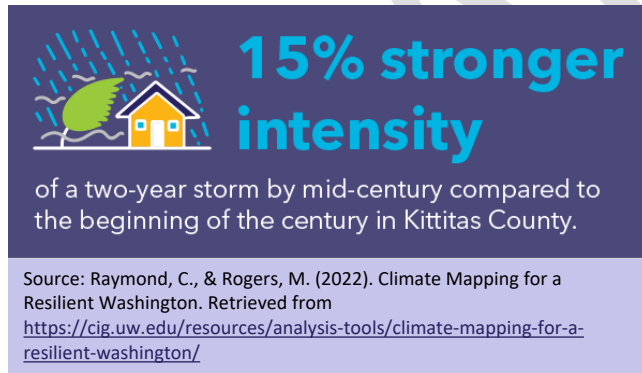


## Wildfire and Smoke Hazards

Wildfires are a natural occurrence within the landscape around Ellensburg. However, as the weather gets hotter and drier, fires are becoming more frequent. In the past 50 years, 74 fires burned more than 352,692 acres across Kittitas County<sup>3</sup>. Wildfires are expected to begin earlier in the year and continue later into the year as a result of declining snowpack, reduced rainfall, and hotter summers. Poor air quality days caused by smoke from regional fires have already become more frequent.



## Extreme Precipitation and Flooding



Extreme precipitation events, including rain on snow events, are becoming more common and more intense in Kittitas County. The city has also experienced flooding events in recent decades, such as the 2011 floods when rapid snowmelt from warm temperatures and heavy rain led to submerged roads and homes, a declaration of a state of emergency, and overflow of

the Yakima River. Goals, policies, and programs included in this chapter will support efforts to reduce flood risk to communities and properties.

*In addition to these priority climate hazards, Ellensburg also experiences regional weather hazards, like wind and severe storms, that can add to the intensity of climate impacts. Ellensburg's unique geography, topography, and proximity to the Cascade Mountains and Yakima River Canyon lead to strong winds all year. Wind and precipitation can also combine to form severe weather storms during the winter.*

<sup>3</sup> Washington State Department of Natural Resources. (2018). Washington Large Fires 1973 – 2023. Retrieved from <https://geo.wa.gov/datasets/wadnr::washington-large-fires-1973-2023/about>



# Impacted City Resources and Assets

City social systems, infrastructure, and ecosystems are all interconnected, meaning damage to one system—from drought or wildfires, for example—may cause cascading or compounding effects across others. Climate change can exacerbate these risks. For example, prolonged periods of drought dry out soil and reduce its ability to absorb water, which can contribute to flooding and declined groundwater replenishment. This comprehensive planning process offers the opportunity to take a coordinated, long-term approach to planning that incorporates the best available science to address future risks to city resources and assets while ensuring policies are resulting in equitable benefits throughout the community and support environmental justice outcomes.

## Built Environment

The built environment encompasses physical systems that support daily life in Ellensburg, including buildings, energy systems, transportation networks, and essential public utilities such as water and wastewater facilities. Much of this infrastructure was designed and constructed without accounting for the long-term impacts of climate change. As a result, many assets are increasingly vulnerable to hazards such as more frequent and severe flooding and heightened wildfire risk.

## Frequently Flooded Areas

An increased intensity and frequency of flooding events may sustain damage to homes and infrastructure in the city. Flooding is caused by excess surface water runoff and is exacerbated when eroded soil from cleared land or unstable slopes reduces the waterway’s natural capacity to carry water. Construction and development activity within the floodplain reduces floodplain storage capacity. Flooding can cause significant public safety problems, extensive property damage, and potential habitat destruction.

The Growth Management Act states that frequently flooded areas should include at a minimum 100-year floodplain designation from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and National Flood Insurance Program. The primary floodplain areas with defined base flood elevations are along Wilson Creek and the Yakima River, while other creeks, canals, and irrigation ditch areas are characterized by shallow flooding or have undefined flood depths. Figure 1 shows the City of Ellensburg’s flood zones and where the 100-year and 500-year floodplain are located in the city.

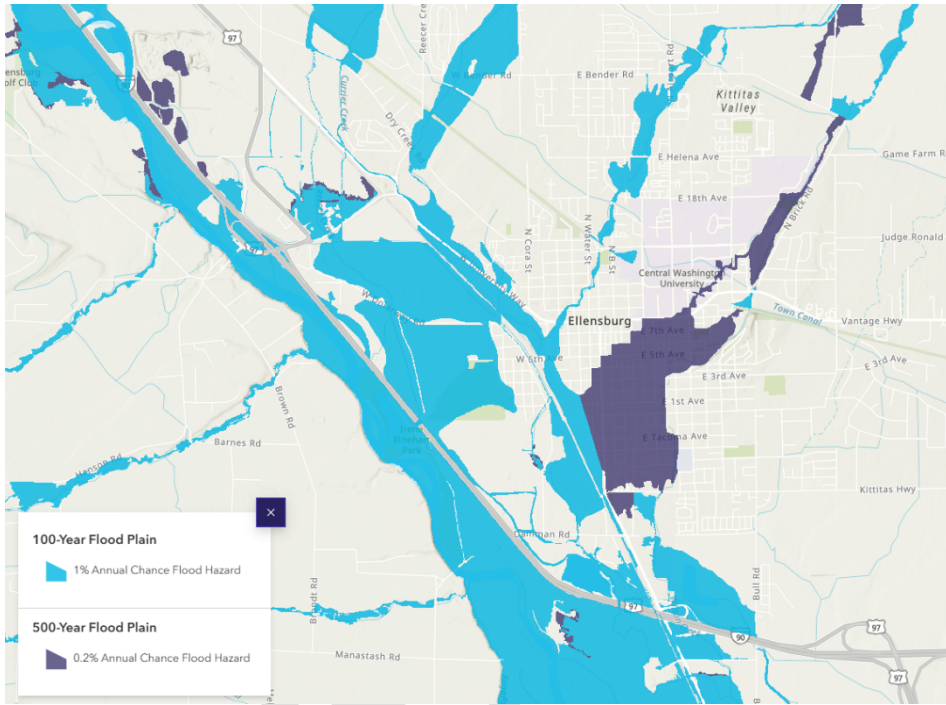
The flat topography of the city’s floodplains can make accurate prediction of flood hazards a challenge, and the floodplain can also be sensitive to relatively small changes resulting from development activities.

### 100- and 500-Year Floodplain

A 100- and 500-year floodplain is a flood event that has a 1% or 0.2% probability of occurring in any given year, respectively.



Figure 1. City of Ellensburg special flood hazard areas.



## Wildfire Risk

The wildland urban interface (WUI) is the area where homes are built near or on lands prone to wildland fire. In Ellensburg, WUI interface and intermix zones are a significant part of the developed land (Figure 2), meaning that structures and other development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels.<sup>4</sup> In these areas, there is a greater exposure to wildfire risk, and mitigation actions can prevent damage or loss on property.

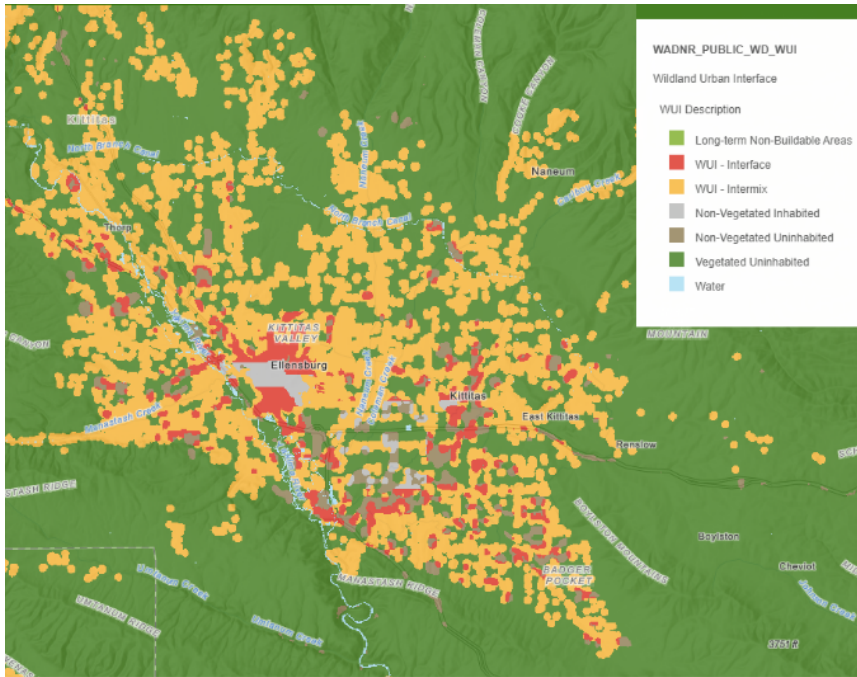
### Wildland-urban interface

The line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels. Describes an area within or adjacent to private and public property where mitigation actions can prevent damage or loss from wildland fire.

<sup>4</sup> Washington Department of Natural Resources. (2019). Washington State Wildland Fire Protection 10-Year Strategic Plan. (Accessed: [https://dnr.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/rp\\_wildfire\\_strategic\\_plan.pdf](https://dnr.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/rp_wildfire_strategic_plan.pdf)).



Figure 2. City of Ellensburg Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), where wildlands with significant burnable vegetation intersect with developed areas.



## Social and Economic Systems

Social and economic systems include community members as well as the institutions and services that support them, such as schools, healthcare facilities, local businesses, and city operations and programs. Ellensburg residents face growing risks to their overall wellbeing from increasing climate impacts and hazards such as extreme heat, drought, flooding, wildfire, and wildfire smoke. These risks may be compounded as the city's network of critical facilities, community services, and local employers face service disruptions and increased demand for services during climate events. For example, extreme heat and wildfire smoke disrupt student life, outdoor work, and recreation, while wildfire, and heat emergencies increase strain on the county's sole hospital, Kittitas Valley Healthcare.

### Overburdened Communities

Climate impacts and hazards do not affect residents equally, with some populations experiencing greater health, safety, and financial impacts than others. Climate impacts may disproportionately impact those that are already vulnerable due to existing health conditions, age, income, and housing status. Vulnerable populations identified in Ellensburg are provided in Table 1, below.



Table 1. Key demographic populations in the City of Ellensburg.

Demographics	Population Estimates
Low-Income Families & Rent-Burdened Households	21% poverty rate; among the highest rent-burdened rates in Washington, more than double the state rate: 10.3%
Students (Central Washington University)	Large share of population; majority of those in poverty are ages 18–24.
Older Adults (65+)	14.6% of population vs. 16.2% statewide
People with Disabilities	14.4% of population vs. 13.4% statewide
Unhoused Residents	Exact estimate for the city not available; Kittitas County, 2024 Point-in-Time (PIT) identified over 45 individuals experience homelessness per night.

Source: American Community Survey, 2023; City of Ellensburg, 2023; City of Ellensburg, 2024.

**Commented [NG1]:** Please note - the City flagged that these numbers can be updated to include the 2025 or 2026 PIT count. We do plan to update.

Policies and programs can protect community wellbeing by reducing disproportionate impacts and supporting equitable access to resources, services, and safe environments.

Additionally, the Department of Ecology has identified Ellensburg as an overburdened community highly impacted by air pollution, with fine particulate matter 2.5 (PM2.5) being the most frequently elevated criteria air pollutant. Wildfires are the dominant source of PM2.5 emissions statewide, with impacts to ambient PM2.5 concentrations varying year-to-year based on wildfire season outcomes. Between 2022-2024, Ellensburg experienced an annual average of 3 days with unhealthy air. In comparison, between 2020-2022, the annual average was 5.7 days. Wildfire smoke was the predominant cause of these exceedances, and as wildfire probability increases due to changes in climate, Ellensburg can expect increased wildfire smoke impacts and PM2.5 concentrations.

### FINE PARTICULATE MATTER (PM2.5)

PM2.5 are tiny particles in the air that reduce visibility and are a concern for people’s health when levels in the air are high. Outdoor PM2.5 levels are most likely to be elevated on days with little or no wind or air mixing.

## Ecosystems

Ellensburg contains a variety of ecosystems, including unique stream corridors, wetlands, riparian areas and other features that face increasing risks from climate impacts and hazards. Extreme heat and rising annual temperatures will place greater heat stress on cold-water aquatic life, negatively impacting local waterways and the species therein, such as salmon or steelhead populations. Increased prevalence and prolonged drought may decrease water availability for agriculture, stress vegetation, diminish habitat quality and increase vulnerability to wildfire by increasing potential fuel loads. Riparian areas and urban greenspaces including shorelines along the Yakima River, Carey Lake, Mattoon Lake, Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park, and Reecer Creek, may be particularly at risk.



## Fostering Resiliency to Climate Impacts

As development pressures and natural hazards continue to put strain on Ellensburg's natural resources, it is increasingly important to seek opportunities to protect and enhance natural areas to foster resiliency to climate impacts.

Water availability and quality is identified as a high priority hazard for Ellensburg and the greater Kittitas County area. Ellensburg, and Washington as a whole, are experiencing increased instances of snow drought, conditions by warmer winters which results in more winter rain than snow contributing to a decreased snowpack. Decreased water availability and drought conditions have impacts across the region, such as reduced water availability for agriculture, diminished water levels in rivers and streams impacting hydropower generation, outdoor tourism impacts, and more.

Ellensburg and surrounding partners are committed to promoting water security amid changing conditions and are actively working towards this goal. The Yakima Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan serves as a regional guide for water security and ecosystem health in the region, with efforts to make operational changes, structural improvements, and conservation measures to account for climate variability. The Climate and Environment Chapter builds from these existing regional efforts to promote water security and quality goals, policies, and programs.

Within Ellensburg, there are key areas that will be particularly important to foster resilience to *drought and water-related impacts*:

- **Critical aquifer recharge areas:** Areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water. Critical aquifer recharge areas have prevailing geographic conditions associated with infiltration rates that create a high potential for contamination of ground water resources or contribute significantly to the replenishment of ground water. The overall groundwater flow patterns of the aquifer system underlying Ellensburg are generally well established because of the simple hydrogeological framework. This framework consists of groundwater recharge in the uplands around the edge of the Kittitas Valley, deep groundwater flows, and paths that discharge to the Yakima River. While this system is regionally important, there are no naturally occurring aquifer recharge areas identified in Ellensburg that provide water to municipal supply wells.
- **Wetlands:** Wetland systems are integral to Ellensburg's urban landscape and the local hydrologic cycle. They reduce floods, contribute to stream flows, and improve water quality. Each wetland provides various beneficial functions, but not all wetlands perform all functions, nor do they perform all functions equally well. Large wetlands and wetlands hydrologically associated with lakes and streams, have a relatively more important function in the watershed than small, isolated wetlands. Urbanization in the watershed diminishes the function of individual wetlands by increasing stormwater volume, reducing runoff quality, isolating wetlands from other habitats, and decreasing vegetation. Undeveloped land adjacent to a wetland provides a buffer to help minimize the impacts of urbanization. The long-term success and function of the wetland is dependent on land development strategies that protect and restore wetland buffers. Science indicates that an undeveloped vegetated buffer is equally important as the wetland itself as it contributes to the function of the wetland by providing



wildlife habitat, retaining stormwater, filtering sediment and pollution, and moderating water temperature. Most of the wetlands in Ellensburg are privately owned and regulated by the city's critical areas regulations or shoreline master program.

- **Floodplains and Riparian Habitats:** Floodplains and riparian corridors play a critical role in reducing flood risk, supporting groundwater recharge, and maintaining habitat along the Yakima River and its tributaries. When connected and functioning properly, these systems can absorb and slow floodwaters, improving overall watershed resilience. Development and channel modification can limit these functions. Protecting and restoring floodplain connectivity and riparian vegetation can reduce flood hazards while enhancing ecological health and water quality.

In addition to protecting and enhancing aquatic and water-related systems, Ellensburg is home to unique shrub-steppe habitat and has long maintained its Tree City USA designation. Protecting and expanding these features will be important to foster resilience to *extreme heat and wildfire impacts*:

- **Shrub-Steppe Habitat:** Shrub-steppe ecosystems are a defining feature of the Ellensburg landscape and are well adapted to arid conditions, making them critical for long-term climate resilience. These habitats support native biodiversity, stabilize soils, and reduce erosion. However, they are increasingly threatened by development, habitat fragmentation, invasive species, and altered wildfire regimes. Protecting and restoring shrub-steppe areas can help maintain ecological function, reduce wildfire risk, and preserve ecosystem services under a changing climate.
- **Urban Tree Canopy:** Urban tree canopy helps reduce extreme heat, attenuate extreme precipitation impacts, and improve air quality. Tree canopy management efforts should be strategically targeted to both preserve existing high-canopy areas and expand coverage where it is most needed. Priority for expansion should focus on overburdened areas, including neighborhoods with lower incomes and those located near major roadways, where residents may face greater exposure to heat and air pollution.

## Sustainability and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Ellensburg is not required to develop a Greenhouse Gas Emissions reductions subelement under the GMA. However, reducing greenhouse gas emissions is critical in safeguarding the community against future climate impacts and the Climate and Environment Chapter builds from existing sustainability and GHG emissions reduction work, including from the Sustainability and Energy Plan (2024).

The SEP establishes a framework for the city to continue expanding renewable energy efforts and decarbonizing both municipal assets and operations as well as community-wide infrastructure and activities. In developing the SEP, Ellensburg conducted a GHG emissions inventory for both municipal emissions, covering emissions generated from municipal assets, operations, and activities, and a community-wide inventory, covering emissions from residential, commercial, and industrial buildings and activities. The largest GHG emissions contributors include mobile combustion (fuel use), stationary combustion (natural gas use), and procured electricity.



Ellensburg is committed to further strengthening its commitments to climate and the environment and reducing its GHG emissions that exacerbate the impacts of climate change. Reducing GHG emissions in Ellensburg not only protects environmental systems and resources but can improve residential quality of life and safeguard community members against adverse impacts such as air pollution.

The Climate and Environment Chapter expands existing sustainability goals by promoting policies and programs that place greater emphasis on multimodal transportation options, reducing community reliance on single-occupancy vehicles, green building practices that promote renewable energy, and increasing community resiliency to poor air quality.

## Goals, Policies, and Programs

These climate and environment goals, policies, and programs help the city to protect and restore natural resources, enhance community resiliency to climate change impacts, promote clean air and community wellbeing, and support environmental justice outcomes.

### **Goal CE-1. Participate in regional resilience planning efforts with jurisdictions, state agencies, Tribal nations, businesses, and local organizations to encourage coordination, data sharing, and strategic investments.**

#### **Policy CE-1-A. Participate in regional planning efforts related to drought, flooding, wildfire, and extreme heat to ensure consistency in preparedness and response.**

- Program CE-1-A.1. Pursue joint funding opportunities for resilience projects, including infrastructure, habitat restoration, and community programs.
- Program CE-1-A.2. Strengthen and expand City staffing, resources, and funding to effectively participate in regional and local implementation of climate action and resilience measures.
- Program CE-1-A.3. Support data sharing and the use of best available science across jurisdictions to inform climate-related planning, including hazard mapping and infrastructure design.
- Program CE-1-A.4. Support regional education and outreach efforts that improve public understanding of climate risks, including water availability, wildfire smoke, and extreme heat.
- Program CE-1-A.5. Participate in regional efforts, such as Resource Conservation and Development community resilience programs.

#### **Policy CE-1-B. Collaborate with local and regional irrigation districts, water providers, and agricultural stakeholders to support water conservation and drought resilience.**

- Program CE-1-B.1. Work with irrigation districts and water providers to explore programs for water conservation and reuse.



Program CE-1-B.2. Coordinate with the Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD) to support the continued implementation of initiatives and programs such as the Irrigation Efficiencies Grant Program and the Voluntary Stewardship Program in the city UGA.

**Goal CE-2. Protect members of the public and public resources and facilities from injury, loss of life, or property damage due to flooding, wildfires, drought, extreme heat, and other climate-driven hazards.**

**Policy CE-2-A. Regularly update and strengthen development regulations, building codes, and design standards using best available science to enhance resilience to climate-driven hazards.**

- Program CE-2-A.1. Incentivize low impact development techniques in new development and redevelopment projects to reduce runoff from streets, parking lots, and other impervious surfaces and improve water quality.
- Program CE-2-A.2. Update floodplain development standards in the city to reduce risk, such as requiring higher building standards, establishing elevation requirements, or limiting development in flood-prone areas.
- Program CE-2-A.3. Examine and incorporate future conditions flood maps and land use tables into long-range planning and development regulations.
- Program CE-2-A.4. Evaluate heat resilience urban design and greening strategies for inclusion in development standards. This could include cool roofs, incorporation of tree canopy and shading structures, or using heat-reducing building materials.
- Program CE-2-A.5. Update rental codes to include upper temperature thresholds to reduce the risk of heat illness for renters.
- Program CE-2-A.6. Incorporate green design in surface parking lots such as tree canopy coverage, permeable pavement, xeriscaping, and vegetated strips.
- Program CE-2-A.7. Adopt fire-resilience standards for new and redeveloped sites in high-risk wildfire areas, reducing residential development pressure in the wildland-urban interface to decrease wildfire risk and damage.
- Program CE-2-A.8. Update landscaping codes to promote development with drought resilient vegetation and reduce high water-use landscaping.
- Program CE-2-A.9. Encourage gray water systems in new development.
- Program CE-2-A.10. Incorporate hydrologic climate impacts into the design of water-crossing structures, such as climate-smart culverts and bridges, for fish passage and habitat quality.



Program CE-2-A.11. Maintain and update a critical areas ordinance that incorporates climate change considerations.

**Policy CE-2-B. Develop a comprehensive drought resilience strategy that factors in projected climate impacts and sets action levels for different drought stages.**

Program CE-2-B.1. Adopt a water usage ordinance to have a system ready to implement before curtailment.

Program CE-2-B.2. Manage water resources sustainably in the face of climate change through plant selection, landscape management, use of low-flow water fixtures, and wastewater or reclaimed water reuse systems.

Program CE-2-B.3. Evaluate restrictions on outdoor water usage in existing and new development.

**Goal CE-3. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by prioritizing the adaptive reuse of buildings, using sustainable materials, and promoting energy efficiency.**

**Policy CE-3-A. Promote and invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy resources and technology as an alternative to non-renewable resources in new development and retrofits.**

Program CE-3-A.1. Work with partners, such as HopeSource, to assist residents with upgrading energy efficiency in homes and businesses through weatherization and improvements to mechanical and lighting systems.

Program CE-3-A.2. Prioritize the preservation and weatherization of housing in overburdened communities, particularly at higher densities, to reduce emissions and increase resilience.

Program CE-3-A.3. Develop and maintain a program to distribute cooling units and install heat pumps, prioritizing households with residents most vulnerable to extreme temperature events.

Program CE-3-A.4. Include informational handouts and tips for energy efficient practices with utility bills.

Program CE-3-A.5. Promote the use of solar and other renewable energy technology within the community through educational materials and outreach.

Program CE-3-A.6. Require all new city owned buildings to be solar-ready and/or install photovoltaic solar panels.

**Policy CE-3-B. Encourage residential and city buildings and facilities to use sustainable building methods and materials.**

Program CE-3-B.1. Incentivize recycling of construction and demolition debris.



- Program CE-3-B.2. Consider incentivizing purchase of low carbon and recyclable material for building construction.
- Program CE-3-B.3. Create incentives to encourage the use of sustainable building methods and materials (such as those specified under certification systems like LEED and Built Green) that may reduce impacts on the built and natural environment.

**Goal CE-4. Increase the number of residents who choose to walk, bicycle, or ride the bus in lieu of driving to reduce auto demand on local and arterial streets, promote air quality, and increase overall community health.**

- Policy CE-4-A. Create a safe, well-connected, and attractive bicycle and pedestrian transportation network to encourage active transportation.**
- Program CE-4-A.1. Expand opens spaces and parks to support connectivity and non-motorized travel between residential areas, schools, and businesses across the community.
- Program CE-4-A.2. Prioritize, develop, and maintain mobility hubs in transportation-efficient locations, especially in overburdened communities experiencing a scarcity of alternative transportation.
- Program CE-4-A.3. Conduct equity mapping for transportation projects and improvements to ensure benefits in overburdened communities.

**Goal CE-5. Foster higher-intensity land uses in mixed-use urban villages and transit corridors. Maintain compact UGA to limit sprawl impacts on working/natural lands.**

- Policy CE-5-A. Promote higher density commercial, mixed-use and residential development within commercial nodes along transportation corridors, consistent with Transit Oriented Development guidance.**
- Program CE-5-A.1. Promote compact growth and infill development in areas that are already developed in order to preserve open space and ecological functions and encourage residential access to services.
- Program CE-5-A.2. Prioritize high density, mixed use, walkable neighborhoods, prioritizing new buildings on old footprints instead of breaking ground causing urban sprawl.
- Program CE-5-A.3. Ensure public transit stops and stations are located at or near (such as within 600 ft.) dense residential, commercial, and employment areas. Consider distribution in different community hubs and commercial nodes.
- Program CE-5-A.4. Reduce parking requirements where there are multimodal options available.
- Program CE-5-A.5. Create a financial program to assist developers make building up most cost effective.



Program CE-5-A.6. Assess the capacity for transfer of development rights (TDR) and open space or agricultural land preservation programs in the context increasing residential density.

**Goal CE-6. Create a more resilient community through enhanced emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts to mitigate risks and impacts associated with extreme weather and other hazards worsened by climate change.**

**Policy CE-6-A. Support implementation of the Kittitas County Community Wildfire Protection Plan and support wildfire smoke resilience strategies in partnership with local residents, emergency management officials, regional clean air agency officials, and other stakeholders.**

Program CE-6-A.1. Participate in future updates of the Kittitas County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) through involvement in the CWPP Subcommittee.

Program CE-6-A.2. Participate in the Kittitas Fire Adapted Communities Coalition, whose mission is to increase community resiliency to wildfire by providing education, planning and technical assistance for implementing activities with the people that live, work and recreate in Kittitas County.

Program CE-6-A.3. Develop and implement notification alerts within the community to the reduce risk exposure to wildfire smoke and particulate matter.

Program CE-6-A.4. Create evacuation plans and outreach materials to help residents plan and practice actions that make evacuation quicker and safer.

Program CE-6-A.5. Prioritize at-risk community members for actions that mitigate wildfire smoke, including providing personal protective equipment, filter fans, and information on where to recreate on smokey days.

Program CE-6-A.6. Incentivize infrastructure updates (e.g., HVAC updates and MERV 13 filters for air intake) for facilities that serve high-risk populations. Support and promote programs that install cool, HVAC, and weatherization for the most vulnerable residents.

Program CE-6-A.7. Ensure the Ellensburg Fieldhouse recreation center can serve as a smoke refuge, providing a space for the community to recreate on poor air quality days.

**Policy CE-6-B. Promote energy resilience, energy conservation, and renewable energy production.**

Program CE-6-B.1. Work with energy utilities to improve the safety and reliability of infrastructure vulnerable to climate change.

Program CE-6-B.2. Collaborate with county energy production for new and existing projects



Program CE-6-B.3. Streamline current city energy, utility programs, and incentives.

**Policy CE-6-C. Work with partners to promote community responsibility and engagement through public education and involvement programs that raise awareness about environmental issues.**

Program CE-6-C.1. Provide education to support the implementation of low impact development practices, integrated site planning, and green building practices, focusing on early consideration of these in the site development process.

Program CE-6-C.2. Develop outreach programs for residents and businesses that promote sustainable practices related to land use, water conservation, energy use, and landscaping.

Program CE-6-C.3. Improve public understanding of local land use policies, climate impacts, and resilience strategies through accessible educational materials, workshops, and community partnerships.

**Goal CE-7. Ensure the protection and restoration of streams, riparian zones, wetlands, urban forests, and floodplains to prevent cumulative adverse environmental impacts to water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.**

**Policy CE-7-A. Restore, expand, and manage critical areas and green space areas to maximize and protect the climate resilience benefits they provide.**

Program CE-6-A.1. Ensure no net loss of ecosystem composition, structure, and functions, especially in Priority Habitats and Critical Areas, and strive for net ecological gain to enhance climate resilience. Mitigation should avoid gross loss, recognizing offsets can be limited and ecosystems are not fully replaceable.

Program CE-6-A.2. Protect and restore riparian vegetation to reduce erosion, provide shade, and support other functions that improve the climate resilience of streams.

Program CE-6-A.3. Integrate climate change, including extreme precipitation, increased winter streamflow, and other impacts, in floodplain management planning. Where feasible, restore floodplains and connectivity to improve the resilience of streams and rivers and reduce flood risk.

Program CE-6-A.4. Increase aquatic habitat resilience to low summer flows by increasing water residence time, storing water on the landscape, managing aquifer recharge programs, conserving water, protecting groundwater, keeping waters cool, and protecting water quality.

Program CE-6-A.5. Operate, maintain, and enhance the stormwater systems to protect water quality, help preserve and enhance critical areas, and help reduce flooding by maintaining the storm drainage system while considering increasing storm intensity impacts.



**Policy CE-7-B. Develop a forest master plan and implementing ordinances to maintain and expand tree canopy cover, improve tree and watershed health and build climate resilience.**

Program CE-7-B.1. Maintain Tree City USA status and minimize the loss of tree canopy and natural areas due to transportation and infrastructure projects and mitigate for losses where impacts are unavoidable.

Program CE-7-B.2. Develop a phased replacement program to install climate appropriate tree canopy.

Program CE-7-B.3. Ensure the urban forestry management plan includes climate-smart forestry strategies to increase the resilience of forests and carbon storage of forests.

Program CE-7-B.4. Support tree maintenance and tree health on private property.

Program CE-7-B.5. Reduce loss of private forestland through forest stewardship education and identify opportunities to expand incentives for forest landowners to increase the climate resilience of forests and streams on their lands.

## Action Items

*In development until Climate and Environment goals, policies, and programs are finalized.*

## Policy Connections

*In development until goals, policies, and programs are finalized in all Comprehensive Plan chapters.*



## Meeting Objectives

- Review the draft Climate and Environment Chapter.
- Provide feedback and edits on goals, policies, and programs you would like to see in the next iteration.

## Hybrid Meeting Instructions

**In-person location:** Community Development Conference (Conf Room 2, City Hall)

**Teams link:** <https://teams.microsoft.com/join/239109216417672?p=VGMKfyqkxAmQmdKfBG>

*Please note that this meeting will not be recorded.*

# Meeting Agenda

Time (pm)	Agenda Topic	References
	<b>Welcome</b>	✓ Agenda
3:00 – 3:10	<p>Stacey &amp; Nicole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review meeting objectives and agenda</li> </ul>	
	<b>Reminders and Updates</b>	
	Nicole	
3:10 – 3:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a reminder of what was covered at the April CEP work session and an overview on action items identified.</li> <li>• Opportunity for follow-up questions from CEP Task Force members.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Review Climate and Environment Chapter</b>	✓ Draft Climate and Environment Chapter <i>(To be sent via email)</i>
	Nicole, CEP Task Force members	
3:20 – 4:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nicole to present an overview of the draft chapter and the goals, policies, and programs.</li> <li>• Discuss and gather feedback on the draft Chapter.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Is there information you would like to see added or changed in the Chapter’s narrative?</i></li> <li>• <i>Do the goals, policies, and programs touch on actions you want to see prioritized? Anything missing or in need of reframing?</i></li> <li>• <i>What are key pieces of feedback to bring forward to the Environmental and Planning Commissions over the next month?</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
	<b>Adjourn</b>	
	Nicole	
4:50 – 5:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review next steps and action items.</li> <li>• June meeting.</li> </ul>	

### 13 Month Pumping Report (Apr 25 - Apr 26)

