

AGENDA

PLANNING COMMISSION

June 11, 2026

Hybrid Meeting In-person and via Zoom



Webinar Meeting Link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3nj2VWDPQDiYrrl5HazkEA

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2. Use of intimidating, threatening, or abusive language;
3. disobedience of an order to be seated or to discontinue further comments;
4. and/or engaging in violent behavior,

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

**CITY OF ELLENSBURG
PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA
Council Chambers
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926
And remotely via Zoom
Thursday, June 11, 2026
5:45 PM - Regular Meeting**

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call**
- 2. Approval of Agenda (No Public Comment)**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.A May 28, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
- 4. New Business**
 - 4.A Review of DRAFT Comprehensive Plan Element: Climate and Environment (Public Comment Opportunity)
- 5. Unfinished Business**
- 6. Public Comment**
- 7. Staff Update/Discussion Items**
 - 7.A Comp Plan General Discussion
- 8. Commission Representative Update**
- 9. Adjournment**



For more information on the Ellensburg Planning Commission, contact Planning Manager, Stacey Henderson, at 509-962-7232.

The Contents of this agenda have been photocopied on recycled paper.



CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Date of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Place of Meeting

Minutes of Planning Commission, Regular Meeting

May 28th, 2026

5:45 PM

Council Chambers

501 North Anderson Street

Ellensburg, WA 98926

And remotely via Zoom

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair O'Mahony called the meeting to order at 5:45 pm.

Present: Joe Sheeran, Skylar Bisom-Rapp, Geraldine O'Mahony, Ed Harrell, Michael Buehn, Matthew Stalder, George Bottcher

Others present: Stacey Henderson, Community Development Planning Manager; Lily Frey, Housing Program Manager; Mark Rudd, Associate Planner; Derek Mayo, Public Works City Engineer; Josh Mattson, Public Works Assistant City Engineer; and Denise Tlatelpa, Planning Technician.

2. Approval of Agenda

Councilmember Harrell moved to approve the agenda as presented; Councilmember Perrie seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.A. April 9, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Councilmember Bisom-Rapp moved to approve; Councilmember Bottcher seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

3.B. May 14, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Councilmember Stalder moved to approve; Councilmember Bottcher seconded the motion with the condition to amend and correct Councilmember Bottcher's name. Motion passed 7-0.

4. Public Comments

None.

5. New Business

5.A. Review and discussion of Transportation Element Draft Goals (Public Comment Opportunity)

Derek Mayo and Josh Mattson gave an introduction of the existing conditions of the transportation network, safety analyses, safety action plans that incorporated public feedback, the transit system, and freight & truck mobility/routes for safety. Mayo and Mattson further explained the levels of service provided and how these relate to traffic impact fees that fund traffic control improvements. They emphasized the importance of

collaboration with zoning decisions. The commissioners discussed various factors contributing to road accidents, the types of transportation analyzed, the public work resources available, and a possible exploration of analyzing animal-related accidents and railroad incidents. They wanted to learn more about the WinCo development and its impact on transportation studies.

Mayo and Mattson presented the stress levels and the impact of designated and provided facilities. They discussed the outcomes of their public outreach efforts, as well as current trends and opportunities, which include community support, the development of sidewalks and bike lanes, a focus on network connectivity, and safety. They explained how these findings led to their conclusion that certain roads are projected to exceed their capacity in the future. They propose goals aimed at enhancing safety, connection, sustainability, maintenance, equity/accessibility, and collaboration. Commissioners discussed additional transportation trends, the street type designated to each stress level, sidewalk development, the areas of priority and accessibility, exploring the possibility of developing sidewalks in mobile home parks, the ongoing issue of overgrown vegetation and its affect on traffic safety. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of coordinating with the county when defining the Urban Growth Area (UGA) boundary. Chair O'Mahony expressed her concerns regarding the sidewalk development in northern Ellensburg compared to that in central and southern Ellensburg.

5.B. Public Hearing to Consider June 2026 Development Regulations Amendments

Chair O'Mahony announced the public hearing at 7:40 PM. Mark Rudd presented the Amendment to the Recommended Motion along with the draft ordinance. He provided an overview of several amendments to the land development code, including the placement of manufactured homes, the addition of housing units within existing buildings, clarifications of verbiage, changes to the information requested in specific applications, allowing child care centers in additional zones, modifications to specific height and setback requirements, removal of permit fee procedures, elimination of inapplicable requirements, changes to SEPA exemptions, necessary maintenance updates to the code since its last revision and necessary changes to the building code. Mark also informed the commissioners about his communication with the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), which helped clarify the requirements for maintaining the structural integrity of historic materials.

The commissioners addressed several topics during their discussion, including changes to the envelope expansion regulations and the enforcement of setback requirements, the modifications to the permit fee procedures, and the benefits of clarifying certain terminology. They had concerns regarding the challenges of implementing housing regulations in existing buildings, particularly the storefront

regulations that hinder the development of downtown buildings. Finally, they discussed the support provided by staff for the Landmarks and Design Commission Review Process.

Chair O'Mahony closed the public hearing after receiving no public comments or further discussion. Councilmember Bisom-Rapp motioned to recommend the proposed amendments, as presented, including the amendment addressed by DAHP, with the suggestion that the storefront provisions be revisited at a later time. Councilmember Stalder second the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

6. Unfinished Business

6.A Land Use Comp Plan Element Follow Up – and Future Land Use (Public Comment Opportunity)

Henderson presented the timeline for the upcoming events in June and July and invited questions or comments. She will follow up via email to update the commission on the staff's progress regarding the June deadline for the Land Use Chapter. Additionally, Henderson will confirm attendance for the upcoming commission meetings in a separate email.

Henderson provided an update on the Land Use Comprehensive Plan Goals, informing everyone that the questions related to the parking survey has been addressed and will impact the intent of specific goals. The survey will exist as an independent source, separate from the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioners discussed the goal related to the Corridor Plans, which will be covered in another chapter and can be explored further as an action item for clarification.

Henderson concluded by discussing the modifications made by staff to the Future Land Use Table. These changes aim to reduce redundancy, combine certain zones, and improve clarity. The elimination/combination of zoning areas will lead to the reassignment of specific parcels. The new zoning assigned will be based on the current zoning, location, and practical considerations.

7. Staff Update/ Discussion Items

The Commissioner showed their appreciation for Commissioner Bottcher and his years of service on the planning commission.

8. Commission Representative Update

No Updates. Commissioner Bottcher gave a farewell speech for his final planning commission meeting.

9. Adjournment

Chair O'Mahony adjourned the meeting at 8:04 pm.

City of Ellensburg

Ellensburg 2046: Comprehensive Plan Update DRAFT

June 2026

 **SCJ ALLIANCE**
CONSULTING SERVICES

 **CASCADIA**
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ELLENSBURG 2046
Hometown Heart — Bright Future

 **LELAND**
CONSULTING
GROUP

FEHR & PEERS

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 ecosystems, 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. Surrounded by natural resources and recreational opportunities, Ellensburg offers a high quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors. Views of the Stuart Mountain range, the Yakima River, and access to nature are just some aspects of the surrounding environment that the Ellensburg community values.

However, the qualities that make Ellensburg a wonderful place to live, work, and play are not guaranteed in perpetuity. Environmental pressures, changing development patterns, and the impacts of climate change present challenges that must be addressed to preserve and enhance the community’s environmental, economic, and social well-being. Through thoughtful planning and coordinated action, Ellensburg can minimize adverse impacts associated with development, redevelopment, previous land-use practices, and climate change hazards such as drought or flooding.

The goals, policies, and programs in the Climate and Environment chapter of the Comprehensive Plan seek to increase Ellensburg’s resiliency to climate change impacts and support a healthy and thriving community and surrounding environment. Such coordinated actions can improve sustainability efforts and increase community resiliency 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

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. The following sections provide information on existing regional efforts that strengthen resilience across the landscape.

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 Plan¹

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

¹ 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.



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 under the GMA.

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 environmental and sustainability 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, resilience, and sustainability 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.
- **2020 City of Ellensburg Active Transportation Plan.** 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.
- **2023 Zero Emission Transition Plan.** Outlines Central Transit's fleet transition to zero emissions vehicles.
- **2024 Water System Plan.** Report that evaluates the city's existing water demand data, project future water demands, and identifies water system improvements in accordance with WAC 246-290-100.



- **2022-2025 Clean Energy Implementation Plan.** Outlines Ellensburg transition to 100% renewable energy production in line with RCW 19.405.060.
- **2023-2028 Strategic Vision.** Provides guiding pillars for Ellensburg that promote housing affordability, economic vitality, safe and inclusive community, energy and resource management, and sustainable infrastructure.
- **2024 Ellensburg Sustainable Energy Plan.** 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.
- **2026 (In progress) Urban Forest Management Plan.** A long-term strategy to protect, maintain, and grow Ellensburg’s tree canopy, focused on equity, climate adaptation, and community goals.

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 of Ellensburg’s Water Use Efficiency Program has set a goal to keep distribution system leakage at or below 10% over the 2020–2040 planning period. The City is also working to reduce overall water use by 5% per equivalent residential unit over the next 10 years, and then maintain that level for the following 10 years.



- The City also supports an Annual Public Works Recycling Event, an Energy Audit and Weatherization Program, the Renewable Energy Park and Net Metering Policy, and participates in ongoing collaboration with local and county water resource managers and irrigation districts.

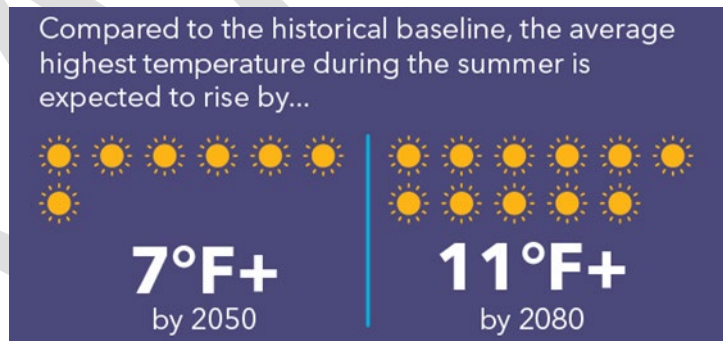
Climate Impacts and Hazards

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 current and long-term 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.



Drought and Snowpack

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.²

Wildfire and Smoke Hazards

Wildfires are a natural occurrence within the landscape around Ellensburg.

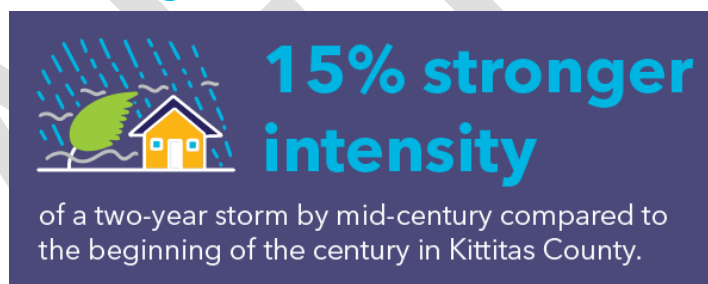
However, as the weather gets hotter and drier, fires are becoming more frequent. In the past 50 years, 74 fires burned more than 352,692 acres across Kittitas County³. Wildfires are expected

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.



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

Source: Saldanha, A. (2021, September 2021). *Dangerous Air: We Mapped The Rise In Wildfire Smoke Across America. Here's How We Did It*. Retrieved from Capital Public Radio: <https://www.capradio.org/articles/2021/09/28/dangerous-air-we-mapped-the-rise-in-wildfire-smoke-across-america-heres-how-we-did-it/>

In addition to 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.

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

³ 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>



City Resources and Assets

Ecosystems within and surrounding the city, social and economic systems, and city infrastructure are all interconnected, meaning impacts to one system may cause cascading or compounding effects across others. Impacts, such as climate change, can exacerbate risks across various sectors. For example, prolonged periods of drought dry out soil and reduce its ability to absorb and retain water. If extreme precipitation or rapid snowmelt occurs during or following drought conditions, the risk of surface runoff and localized flooding may increase while groundwater recharge is reduced, impacting drinking water supplies. Drought can also stress vegetation and agricultural lands, increase wildfire risk, and place additional demands on limited water supplies.

The following sections provide information on key systems within the city, including ecosystems, water resources, social and economic systems, and city infrastructure, and identify potential vulnerabilities and impacts affecting each.

Ecosystems and Water Resources

Ellensburg contains a variety of ecosystems, including unique stream corridors, wetlands, riparian areas, shrub-steppe habitat and other features that provide valuable ecological functions and contribute to community resilience. Although streams that flow through the city have been confined, channelized, and culverted over time, they continue to support fish and other naturally-occurring aquatic life. Maintaining water quality is important in sustaining the community's aquatic resources, and a great effort by the City has taken place to enforce stormwater regulations, build and maintain stormwater facilities, and provide public education programs.

Climate change and other environmental pressures pose increasing risks to local ecosystems and water resources. Extreme heat and rising annual temperatures, combined with drought conditions, increase thermal stress on cold-water aquatic life, negatively impacting local waterways and the species therein, such as salmon or steelhead populations. 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. 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 while fostering resiliency to potential impacts.

Water Conservation

Water availability and quality are high priority concerns for Ellensburg and the greater Kittitas County area. Increasing drought frequency, altered snowpack and streamflows, and increased water demand are leading to increased impacts to agricultural productivity, aquatic species and habitats, hydropower generation, outdoor recreation and tourism, and more. At the same time, water quality degradation is at an increased risk due to more intense precipitation events and flooding that can increase erosion, transport pollutants into waterways, and elevate the risk of water resource contamination.

To address these challenges, Ellensburg continues to implement best management practices such as those found in the state's Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington. The Washington State Department of Ecology continues to revise the list of best management practices to improve their



effectiveness in protecting water quality in order to meet state standards with recent emphasis on low impact development.

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 City also participates in the Ground Water Storage Subcommittee and the Municipal Water Supply Subgroup, supporting aquifer storage and recovery projects and collaboration efforts with local, regional, and state groups on water conservation efforts. Ellensburg also will be developing a Water Resources Strategic Plan, which will further water resource management initiatives and support implementation of water conservation policy.

Low Impact Development

Low impact development is a stormwater management strategy that emphasizes the use of existing natural features integrated with small-scale stormwater controls to more closely mimic natural hydrologic patterns with a focus on infiltration. Low impact development techniques include preserving native vegetation, designing development to fit site characteristics, minimizing impervious surfaces, and infiltrating stormwater on site.

Critical Areas

Ellensburg's critical areas provide a variety of functions and values that are important to Ellensburg's quality of life through the use of critical areas regulations which establish a regulatory framework for critical areas and their buffers. Ellensburg's critical areas regulations extend protection to the following critical areas: wetlands, frequently flooded areas, fish and habitat conservation areas, critical aquifer recharge areas, and geologic hazard areas.

Ellensburg's critical areas provide valuable habitat, protect and enhance water quality, facilitate stormwater conveyance, enhance local aesthetics, and offer recreation, cultural resources, and education opportunities. Ellensburg recognizes the importance of preserving and protecting the functions and values of various environmental features, and recognizes that once destroyed such functions are difficult to replicate or replace. Critical areas that are within shoreline jurisdiction are regulated by the Shoreline Master Program; those that are not in shoreline jurisdiction are regulated by the City's critical areas regulations. These regulations are periodically reviewed and updated in accordance with state mandates.

- **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.

- **Frequently flooded areas:** *Frequently Flooded Areas* are discussed in the *Built Environment* section of this chapter.

- **Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas:**

The management of land for maintaining species in suitable habitats within their natural geographic distribution so that isolated subpopulations are not created. Habitat resources identified in Ellensburg include the Yakima River floodplain, streams and riparian habitats, lakes and ponds, agricultural areas, shrub-steppe habitat, and critical habitat for steelhead and bull trout. A habitat inventory conducted in 2005 indicated the greatest impacts on areas of wildlife habitat in and around the City have been from agricultural practices and urban development. The majority of the remaining native habitat is generally limited to streams, wetlands, and steep slopes. Seasonal flooding of wetlands in agricultural areas provide temporal habitat for some species such as water fowl. Remnant patches of shrub-steppe habitat are present on steep slopes.

The only river frontage within the City and the largest contiguous tract of native habitat in Ellensburg is found along the Yakima River in Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park. This property is planned to remain undeveloped, park property. The Yakima River floodplain provides significant habitat linkage with other riparian habitats beyond Ellensburg and its UGA.

- **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

➤ 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.

➤ 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.



or contribute significantly to the replenishment of ground water. The overall groundwater flow patterns of the aquifer system underlying Ellensburg are generally well established. 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.

- **Geologically hazardous areas:** The Growth Management Act defines geologically hazardous areas as land that is not suited for commercial, residential, or industrial development because the lands are susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquakes, or other geologic events. Geologic hazard areas are regulated mostly to protect public safety and properties. The City of Ellensburg is located on gently sloping topography with very few slopes that qualify as steep slope hazards or landslide hazards under the GMA guidelines. Exceptions to this include slopes immediately west of Brick Road, the slope immediately south of the Kittitas County Fairgrounds extending around the base of the city water tower, and the slope immediately south of the intersection of 10th Avenue and Cora Street.

In addition to critical areas, Ellensburg has long maintained its Tree City USA designation.

- **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.

Shorelines of the state

In Ellensburg, the City of Ellensburg Shoreline Master Program (SMP) regulates shoreline jurisdiction. The Ellensburg Shoreline Master Program contains goals, policies, and regulations that operate as a comprehensive plan as well as regulatory document for shorelines in Ellensburg. Ellensburg contains only two water bodies that are considered shorelines of the state: Yakima River and Lake Mattoon. Critical areas that are in the shoreline jurisdiction of these areas are also regulated by Ellensburg's SMP.

The purpose and intent of the Ellensburg SMP is to:

- Promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community by providing long range, comprehensive policies and effective, reasonable regulations for development and use of shorelines within Ellensburg;
- Manage shorelines in a positive, effective, and equitable manner;
- Assume and carry out the City's responsibilities established by the Shoreline Management Act; and

Shoreline Jurisdiction

In Ellensburg, shoreline jurisdiction includes all shorelines of the state, upland areas within 200 feet of the ordinary high water mark of those waters; associated wetlands and river deltas; and floodways and contiguous floodplain areas landward 200 feet from such floodways.



- Implement the Shoreline Management Act for shorelines of the state in the City of Ellensburg.

The goals and objectives in the most current adopted Ellensburg Shoreline Master Program are hereby adopted by reference in this Comprehensive Plan.

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 environmental and climate impacts such as extreme heat, drought, flooding, water quality degradation, poor air quality, 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 and environmental impacts may disproportionately effect 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 demographics of vulnerable populations in the City of Ellensburg.

Vulnerable Populations	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, 2025 Point-in-Time (PIT) identified 26 individuals experience homelessness.

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

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. Outside fine particles come from vehicle emissions, burning of fuels, and natural sources such as forest or grass fires.

Built Environment

The built environment encompasses physical systems that support daily life in Ellensburg, including buildings, energy systems, transportation networks, parks, 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.

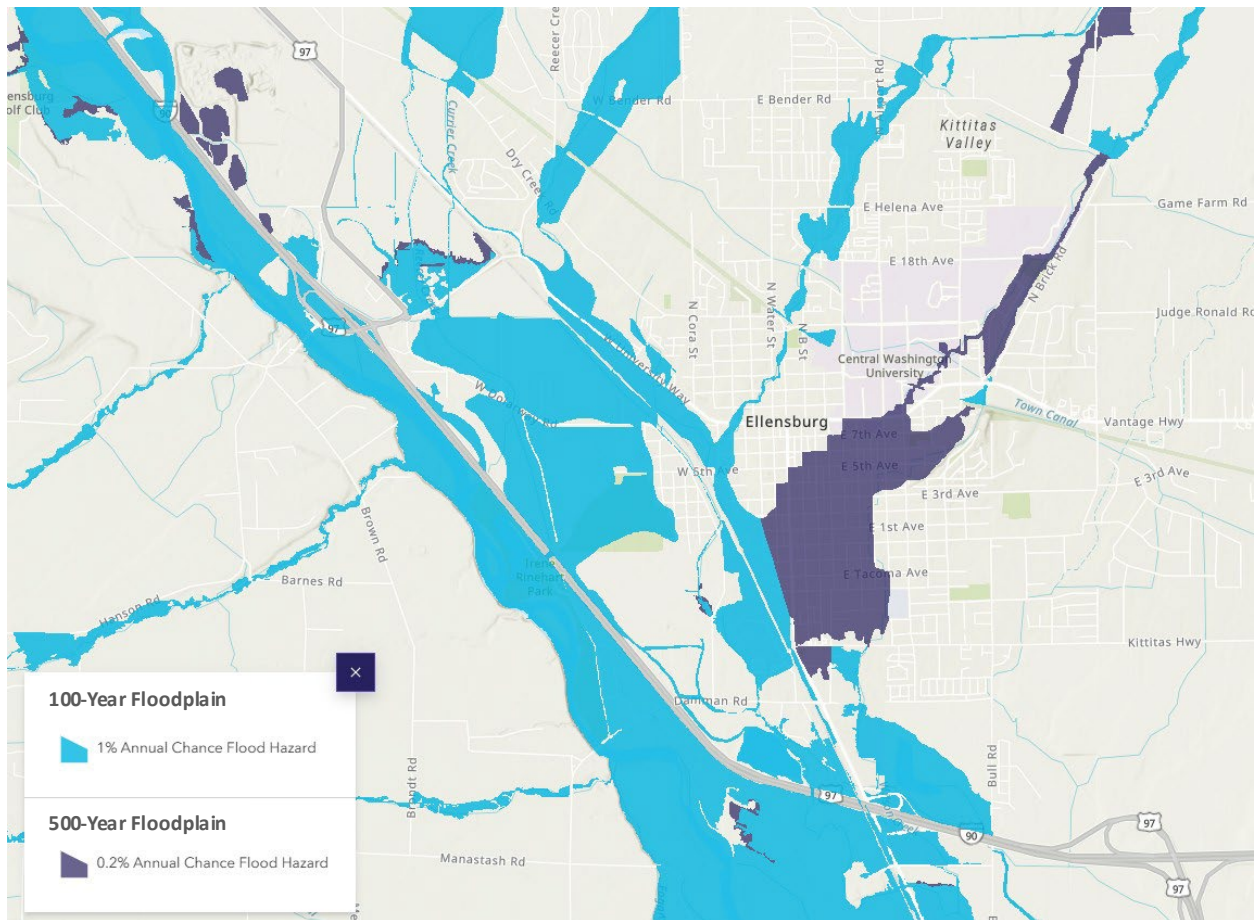
100- and 500-Year Floodplain

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.

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.



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.⁴ In these areas, there is a greater exposure to wildfire risk, and mitigation actions can prevent damage or loss on property.

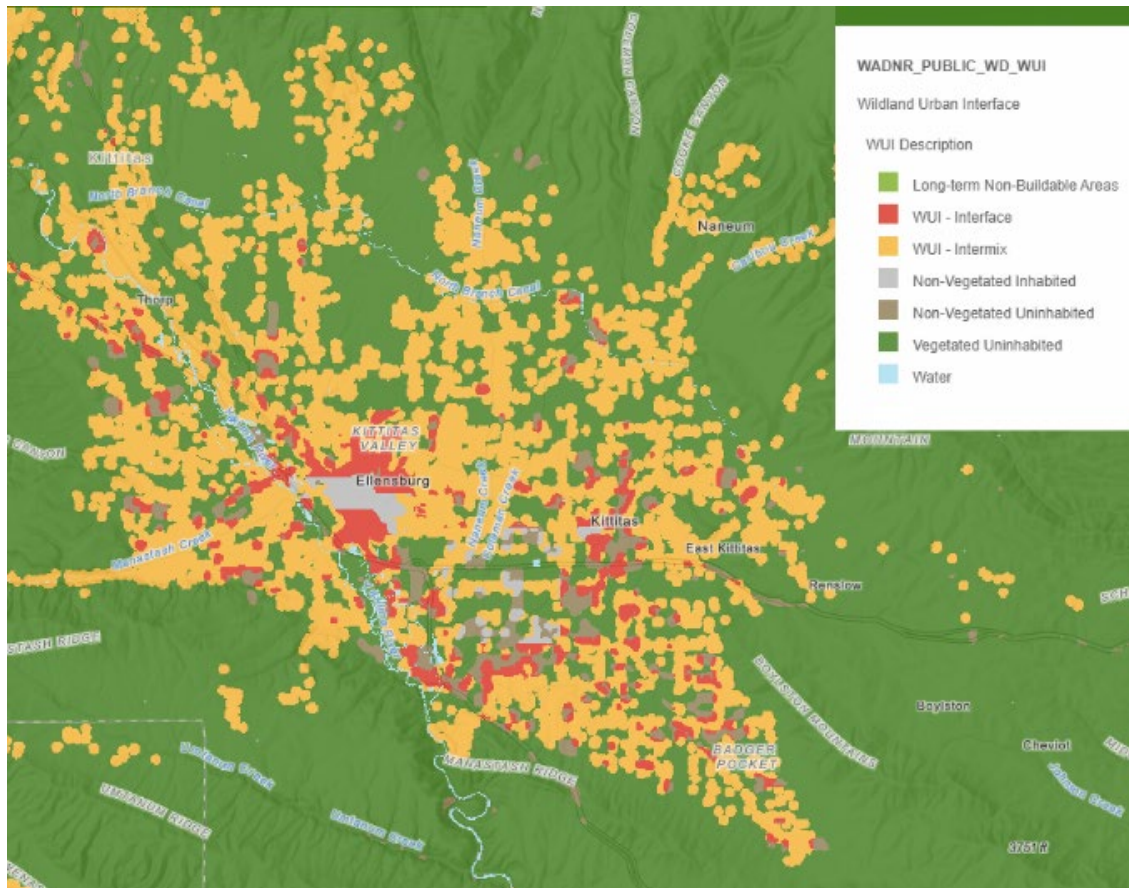
Wildland-urban interface

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.

⁴ 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).



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



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

The current comprehensive planning process offers the opportunity to take a coordinated, long-term approach to planning that incorporates the best available science to address current and future climate and environmental hazards to city resources and assets, while ensuring policies result in equitable benefits throughout the community and support environmental justice. 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 the County, municipalities, local and regional irrigation districts, water providers, and agricultural stakeholders to align programs for



better consistency across cities and counties and 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 Drought Response Program, in the city UGA.

Goal CE-2. Protect and restore streams, riparian zones, wetlands, urban forests, and floodplains to prevent cumulative adverse environmental impacts to water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

Policy CE-2-A. Restore, expand, and manage critical areas and green space areas to maximize and protect the environmental climate resilience benefits they provide.

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

Program CE-2-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, reduce flood risk, and promote safe wildlife passage and species migration.

Program CE-2-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.

Policy CE-2-B. Implement the Urban Forest Master Plan and implementing ordinances to maintain and expand tree canopy cover, improve tree and watershed health and build climate resilience.

Program CE-2-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-2-B.2. Implement a phased maintenance and replacement program to maintain climate appropriate tree canopy.



- Program CE-2-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-2-B.4. Support public education for tree maintenance and tree health on private property.

Goal CE-3. 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-3-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-3-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-3-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-3-A.3. Examine and incorporate future conditions flood maps and land use tables into long-range planning and development regulations.
- Program CE-3-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-3-A.5. Incorporate green design in surface parking lots such as tree canopy coverage, permeable pavement, xeriscaping, and vegetated strips.
- Program CE-3-A.6. Adopt fire-resilience standards for new and redeveloped sites and support reducing residential development pressure in the wildland-urban interface to decrease wildfire risk and damage.
- Program CE-3-A.7. Update landscaping codes to promote development with drought resilient vegetation and reduce high water-use landscaping.
- Program CE-3-A.8. Encourage gray water systems in new development.
- Program CE-3-A.9. 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-3-A.10. Direct activities not dependent on critical areas resources to less ecologically sensitive sites and mitigate unavoidable impacts to critical areas by regulating alterations in and adjacent to critical areas.



Program CE-3-A.11. Maintain and update a critical areas ordinance that incorporates climate change considerations.

Policy CE-3-B. Develop a comprehensive drought resilience strategy that factors in projected climate impacts and sets action levels for different drought stages.

Program CE-3-B.1. Adopt a water usage ordinance to have a system ready to implement during different drought stages, as needed.

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

Goal CE-4. Comply with the Eastern Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit managed by the Washington State Department of Ecology and EPA.

Policy CE-4-A. Operate, maintain, and enhance the stormwater system to protect water quality, help preserve and enhance critical areas, and help reduce flooding by maintaining the storm drainage system.

Program CE-4-A.1. Conduct stormwater plan review and construction inspection for redevelopment and new development projects.

Program CE-4-A.2. Continue to invest and seek funding opportunities for capital improvement projects.

Program CE-4-A.3. Monitor and assess the storm drainage system and operation and maintenance programs to ensure compliance with the municipal stormwater permit.

Goal CE-5. Create a more resilient community through enhanced emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts to mitigate climate risks and impacts.

Policy CE-5-A. Strengthen community resilience to climate-related hazards, including wildfire, wildfire smoke, flooding, extreme heat, and severe weather, through coordinated planning, emergency preparedness, education, and partnerships with local residents, emergency management officials, regional agencies, and other stakeholders.

Program CE-5-A.1. Participate in updates of the Kittitas County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) through involvement in the CWPP Subcommittee.

Program CE-5-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-5-A.3. 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 HVAC and weatherization for the most vulnerable residents.
- Program CE-5-A.4. Ensure the Ellensburg Fieldhouse recreation center can serve as smoke refuge, providing a space for the community to recreate on poor air quality days.
- Program CE-5-A.5. Prioritize education, outreach, resources, and assistance for vulnerable populations to reduce disproportionate impacts from wildfire smoke, flooding, extreme heat, and other environmental hazards before, during, and after hazard events.
- Program CE-5-A.6. Develop and implement notification alerts within the community to the reduce risk exposure to climate and natural hazards. wildfire smoke and particulate matter.
- Program CE-5-A.7. Create evacuation plans and outreach materials to help residents plan and practice actions that make evacuation quicker and safer.

Policy CE-5-B. Promote energy resilience, energy conservation, and renewable energy production.

- Program CE-5-B.1. Work with energy utilities to improve the safety and reliability of infrastructure vulnerable to climate change.
- Program CE-5-B.2. Collaborate with county energy production for new and existing projects
- Program CE-5-B.3. Streamline current city energy, utility programs, and incentives.

Policy CE-5-C. Work with partners to promote community responsibility and engagement through public education and involvement programs that raise awareness about environmental issues.

- Program CE-5-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-5-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-5-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-6. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by prioritizing the adaptive reuse of buildings, using sustainable materials, and promoting energy efficiency.



Policy CE-6-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-6-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-6-A.2. Prioritize the preservation and weatherization of existing housing in higher-density neighborhoods, particularly housing serving low-income households, older adults, and other vulnerable populations, to reduce emissions and increase resilience.

Program CE-6-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-6-A.4. Include informational handouts and tips for energy efficient practices with utility bills.

Program CE-6-A.5. Promote the use of solar and other renewable energy technology within the community through educational materials, outreach, and code updates.

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

Policy CE-6-B. Encourage residential and city buildings and facilities to use sustainable building methods and materials.

Program CE-6-B.1. Incentivize recycling of construction and demolition debris.

Program CE-6-B.2. Consider incentivizing purchase of low carbon and recyclable material for building construction.

Program CE-6-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-7. 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-7-A. Create a safe, well-connected, and attractive bicycle and pedestrian transportation network to encourage active transportation.

Program CE-7-A.1. Expand open spaces and parks to support connectivity and non-motorized travel between residential areas, schools, and businesses across the community.



- Program CE-7-A.2. Prioritize, develop, and maintain mobility hubs in transportation-efficient locations, especially in overburdened communities experiencing a scarcity of alternative transportation.
- Program CE-7-A.3. Conduct equity mapping for transportation projects and improvements to ensure benefits in overburdened communities.

Goal CE-8. 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-8-A. Promote higher density commercial, mixed-use and residential development within commercial nodes along transportation corridors, consistent with Transit Oriented Development guidance.

- Program CE-8-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-8-A.2. Prioritize high density, mixed use, walkable neighborhoods, prioritizing new buildings on old footprints instead of breaking ground causing urban sprawl.
- Program CE-8-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-8-A.4. Reduce parking requirements where there are multimodal options available.
- Program CE-8-A.5. Create a financial program to assist developers make building up most cost effective.
- Program CE-8-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.

Action Items

In development. Action items identified in the previous Environment Chapter are below.

Coordination and collaboration

Work with state and local agencies and organizations to provide educational materials on wood burning stoves, burn restrictions, and other air quality programs.

Critical areas regulations

Review and update critical areas regulations in compliance with RCW 36.70A.172, best available science, and most recent state guidance.



Educational materials

Provide educational materials on energy efficient practices with utility bills. Provide education to support the implementation of low impact development practice and green building practices.

Incentives for sustainable building methods

Create an incentive program to encourage the use of sustainable building methods and materials that may reduce impacts on the built and natural environment.

Land development code review

Review land development code to ensure zoning and land development code regulations provide for and encourage compact growth, infill development, and mixing of residential and commercial uses.

Policy Connections

***In development.** Policy connections identified in the previous Environment Chapter are below.*

The **Environment** chapter sets goals and policies to ensure that the natural beauty and environmental resources of Ellensburg are preserved for future generations. Other chapters of the Comprehensive Plan include goals, policies, and programs that address energy conservation, efficient land use, and active transportation.

Policies that address energy efficiency and conservation, reduction of household waste, and environmental considerations for the development of capital facilities can be found in the **Capital Facilities and Utilities** Element.

The **Transportation** element contains a set of policies on active modes of transportation, public transportation, and environmental considerations for the development of transportation facilities.

Policies about the stewardship of city-managed open spaces are in the **Parks, Recreation and Open Space** Element.

The **Land Use** and **Housing** Elements address compact growth, infill development, and managing growth.

