



COUPEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
Island County Annex Building - Commissioners Hearing Room
(1 NE 6th Street, Coupeville)
June 3, 2025
6:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Town of Coupeville is located on the homelands of the Lower Skagit People. For thousands of years, Coast Salish tribes have stewarded the lands, waterways, plants and animals in our region. We pay respect to the elders and their families, past, present, and emerging for they hold the memories, traditions and culture of their people. The Town of Coupeville is committed to respecting this long history as we honor and acknowledge the continued presence and rights of all Indigenous people. We will advocate for and partner with our Indigenous neighbors as we continue to work together as an inclusive community.

CHANGES AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- May 6, 2025 Meeting

PUBLIC HEARING

- None

PUBLIC INPUT

DISCUSSION

- CTC 16.28 – Sign Code
- Shoreline Master Program Amendments – Street Level Residential / Transient Accommodations
- Periodic Update
 - Draft Climate Element + Natural Systems Element

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

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**TOWN OF COUPEVILLE
PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2025
6:00pm**

PRESENT: Chair Michelle Cook, Commissioners Evan Henrich and Susan Upchurch

STAFF PRESENT: Community Planning Director Joshua Engelbrecht

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cook called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and read the land acknowledgement.

EXCUSE COMMISSIONER

Action: A motion was made by Commissioner Upchurch, seconded by Commissioner Henrich, to excuse Commissioners Armstrong and Summers from the May 6, 2025 regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Action: A motion was made by Commissioner Upchurch, seconded by Commissioner Henrich, to approve the agenda of the May 6, 2025 regular meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action: A motion was made by Commissioner Henrich, seconded by Commissioner Upchurch, to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2025 regular meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION

Capital Facilities and Utilities Elements

Community Planning Director Engelbrecht led the Commission in a presentation and discussion about the Capital Facilities and Utilities Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The presentation included goals, projected revenues, and funding sources.

Chair Cook recommended adding Life Flight as an emergency service. Commissioner Henrich recommended adding language to examine if a facility can generate revenue, directly or indirectly. Questions were asked about NPDES permit and timing, and whether the Town shift expectation of receiving grants.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Henrich would like to discuss workforce housing in July.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:29pm

DRAFT Planning Commission Minutes

Respectfully submitted

COMMUNITY PLANNING DIRECTOR

Deputy Clerk Chris Jolly

Joshua Engelbrecht

DRAFT



STAFF REPORT

DATE: June 3, 2025
TO: Coupeville Planning Commission
FROM: Joshua Engelbrecht, Community Planning Director
RE: Discussion – CTC 16.28 Sign Code

Planning Commission,

As requested, this staff report sets the stage for discussion on our regulations surrounding signage. This report includes discussion on the specific questions posed as part of the request to discuss the Town's sign regulations.

Background

Chapter 16.28 (Attachment 1) of Coupeville Town Code and Section 4.8 (Attachment 2) of the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Design Guidelines make up the rules the Town utilizes for signage. Section 4.8 of the Guidelines was created in 2011 and Chapter 16.28 was most recently updated in 2017 as supreme court decision *Reed v. Town of Gilbert, AZ* significantly changed how sign regulations must be constructed. As such, our regulations primarily determine appropriate location, material/type, and size of signage but have no bearing on the actual content of the sign. The end result of this amendment process was a code that is highly specific in its language and evenly applied across the different types of signs on the dichotomy of Permanent to Temporary and Residential to Non-residential with some very specific allowances for temporary signs within the public / quasi-public zone (e.g. Blood-drive A-frame at the Church), and exemptions from the sign code as it relates to governmental signs necessary for public health, safety and welfare.

Question: Could we look at regulation that have building or mall owners ensure that any stores not street facing have signage at the main entrance to the building or mall?

Signs are regulated in Chapter 16.28 and primarily regulates:

- The size of allowed signage by requiring Five (5%) percent of the largest building façade area on a parcel as the maximum amount of permanent signage allowed, and
- the location of the signage, either on a building (e.g. flush-mounted, projecting, window) or Freestanding as its own structure.

In the past we have seen free standing signs oriented close to road entrances as a "Directory sign (Fig. 1)" that consolidates the types of businesses that are grouped in an individual building or that share an entrance from the primary road. These signs are still required to be within our 5% sign area allowance.



Figure 1: Directory Sign at Entrance

Chapter 16.28 also regulates signage by its list of prohibited signs which include:

- A-frame signs (sandwich boards, portable signs)
- Signs that are animated, with some exceptions for Flags
- Murals
- Any other type or kind of sign that does not comply with the terms, conditions, provision, and intent contained in these regulations.

“Any other type or kind of sign that does not comply with the terms, conditions, provision, and intent contained in these regulations.” Is an important provision because it further reinforces the components of sign design section (CTC 16.28.100) and the Reserve’s Design Guidelines (Section 4.8) that specifically mentions appropriate materials and lighting.

Questions: 1) Could our regulations better address the unique needs of businesses located outside of the historic downtown and/or without street facing storefronts? 2) Can stores outside of the historic downtown have lit signs for open / closed so it's easier to view their status?

Section 4.8 of the Ebey’s Landing Design Guidelines is incorporated into the review of sign permits and provides guidelines on appropriate materials, prohibited signs, and appropriate lighting. While there are specific provisions for signage within the Historic Commercial core along NW Front St., Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve (Fig 2.) is much larger than Coupeville’s waterfront and appropriate signage within the rural historic landscape is especially important South of SR20 near the agricultural uses that make up the core of the Reserve.



Figure 2: Boundary of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve

Ultimately, The Design Guidelines function as Coupeville's vision for how historic uses, new construction, and commercial aspects of the town mesh together. The prohibition of internally lit open signs has consistently been perceived by residents and the public as a positive for the community is usually the driving factor of publicly made complaints.

CTC 16.28.120 does outline the process by which sign permits may vary from the established rules. While the variance process (throughout code, not just signs) is intentionally very strict in its application, it does exist as an opportunity for relief. Usually, flexibility can be found within the existing code or compromises can be made to achieve appropriate signage without needing this process.

Comment: Enforcement of the sign ordinance is not consistent in that some businesses seem to be allowed a sign and another with that same type of sign is told to remove their sign.

All signs, except for the specific types outlined in CTC 16.28.030 and 16.28.050, are required to obtain a sign permit from the Town with a permit cost of \$0. A few aspects that may cause the perception of inconsistency.

One component may be the legacy status of signs that were legally established prior to the sign code amendments. So long as those signs do not change, those signs are allowed to persist.

Another component may be our specific temporary sign allowances for public/quasi-public zoned buildings. Where banners and temporary A-frame signs are typically not allowed, some entities (Library, Fire Department, Churches) are provided the ability to display those temporary signs.

Finally, enforcement (in all its aspects) continues to be a challenge with a department of two that do not live in the Town. Often signage goes unnoticed by staff if it is not within our regularly travelled routes. As such, historic enforcement of the sign code has been complaint driven and has led to the cycle of minimal enforcement followed by a catch-up of enforcement work before the process slips back again as other priorities take up our time.

Staff has goals of being more proactive as signs and businesses change. Ideally, we would conduct regular enforcement outreach at least quarterly with immediate contact to businesses that install illegal signs. Time will tell if that is a realistic goal.

Owners of illegal signs are notified and are typically given 14 days to remove the illegal signage as outlined in CTC 16.28.110.D. Usually business owners are able to engage with staff within that timeline and find some solution that fits both their needs and adherence to the sign code. In the case of signs that would be allowed, but did not obtain a permit, enforcement is usually resolved through an after-the-fact sign permit with a permit cost of \$103. When positive contact doesn't happen, the next step would be for Town Staff to issue fines and remove the illegal signage.

Administrative Modifications to Our Process

- Staff has found that the direct deadline of 14 days is often the most effective in reaching property owners and spurring action, where in other circumstances there is lengthy back-and-forth before staff imposes the deadline anyway.
- Additionally, staff has found that notifying owners via certified mail only has led to frustration as certified mail often takes at minimum 7 days to leave the island and then return. As such and under most circumstances, Staff has been comfortable engaging with business owners face-to-face to deliver enforcement letters, explain our rules, and work to find solutions. Business owners seem to find this preferable and appreciate the ability to engage with staff.
- Within Chapter 16.13 (Ebey's Design Review Code) Signs are also outlined as a Level A COA, which has a permit cost of approximately \$107. Prior to my tenure, that process was consolidated into the \$0 sign permit to support businesses.

Attachments:

- CTC 16.28 - Signs
- Section 4.8 Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Design Guidelines.

Chapter 16.28 - SIGNS

*Footnotes:**--- (4) ---****Editor's note**— Ord. No. 736, § 1, adopted June 13, 2017, amended Ch. 16.28 in its entirety to read as set out herein.**Former Ch. 16.28, §§ 16.28.010—16.28.060, pertained to similar subject matter and derived from Dev. regs §§**10.60.010—16.60.060, adopted 1996; Ord. No. 692, § 20, adopted Oct. 3, 2011.*

16.28.010 - Regulatory purposes.

The intent of this chapter is to promote public health, safety, and welfare through a comprehensive system of effective, balanced, content-neutral, and nondiscriminatory sign standards and requirements that achieve the following purposes:

- A. To further the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan;
- B. To protect and enhance the historic and rural identity of the Town and the character of its various districts and corridors, and in so doing to preserve Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve;
- C. To promote economic vitality both by preserving the aesthetic qualities of the Town and by providing businesses and organizations reasonable means to inform, identify, and communicate with the public;
- D. To recognize free speech rights by regulating signs in a content-neutral manner;
- E. To foster public safety and the free flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic along public ways by ensuring that signs are in safe and appropriate locations and do not create visual distractions; and
- F. To provide consistency and predictability to applicants and the community and to minimize the need for administrative interpretations.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.020 - Applicability.

- A. This chapter applies to all signs, as defined in Section 16.28.130, within the Town that are visible from any public street, sidewalk, or public place, regardless of the type or nature.
- B. This chapter is not intended to, and shall not be interpreted to, restrict speech on the basis of its content, viewpoint, or message. Any classification of sign in this chapter that purports to permit speech by reason of the type of sign, identity of the sign user, or otherwise shall be interpreted to allow commercial or non-commercial speech on the sign. No part of this

chapter shall be construed to favor commercial speech over non-commercial speech. To the extent that any provision of this chapter is ambiguous, the term shall be interpreted not to regulate speech on the basis of the content of the message.

- C. No person shall erect, alter, or relocate any sign requiring a permit under this chapter without first submitting a sign permit application and receiving approval of the sign permit from the Town. Signs may also be subject to regulations in other sections of this Code including, but not limited to, Construction within Town Right-of-Way ([Chapter 12.12](#) CTC), Construction Codes ([Chapter 15.04](#) CTC), and Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Design Review and Community Design Standards ([Chapter 16.13](#) CTC). Signs for which building permits are not required shall comply with all applicable Code provisions.

(Ord. No. [736](#), § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.030 - Exemptions.

This chapter does not apply to the following exempt signs and activities relating to signs. Except as stated in this section, exempt sign types are not subject to limitations on the number and area of signs permitted for any site or use. All exemptions within this section shall be narrowly construed to further the regulatory intent of this chapter.

- A. Repair or maintenance of conforming or nonconforming signs, as defined in this chapter, that does not change the approved dimensions, design, materials, orientation, or location. The change of text on a reader board shall not be construed as a change to the sign.
- B. Address and building identification numbers as required by [Title 12](#) CTC so that public safety agencies can easily identify the address from the public street. Except where a taller minimum character size is required by law, numerals and/or letters comprising an address shall not exceed twelve (12) inches in height.
- C. Governmental signs installed by or required to be installed by the Town or County or a Federal or State governmental agency for the protection of the public health, safety, and general welfare, including, but not limited to, the following:
1. Emergency and warning signs necessary for public safety or civil defense;
 2. Traffic signs and devices, signs showing the location of public facilities, and wayfinding signs erected and maintained within public rights-of-way or on publicly owned land by the Town, Island County, or an agency of the State or Federal governments;
 3. Signs required to be displayed by law; and
 - 4.

Any sign, posting, notice, or similar sign placed by or required by a governmental agency in carrying out its responsibility to protect the public health, safety and general welfare.

- D. A flag that has been adopted by a governmental entity and displayed as provided under applicable law.
- E. A sign or display designed and located to be viewed exclusively by patrons of or visitors to such site, use, or uses and not visible from any public right-of-way or other off-site location.
- F. A sign painted, mounted, or located on an operational, legally licensed, and legally parked motor vehicle or on a trailer connected to an operational and legally licensed motor vehicle.
- G. A sign on a permanently affixed outdoor bench or table when the total sign area on the fixture is no greater than 1.5 square feet.
- H. Privately maintained traffic and parking control signs on private roads or in parking lots with a sign face less than two square feet.
- I. Signs of public utility companies indicating danger or which serve as an aid to public safety or which show the location of underground facilities or of public telephones.
- J. "No trespassing," "no dumping," "no parking," "private," signs identifying essential public needs such as restrooms, entrance, exit, etc., and other informational warning signs that do not exceed two square feet.
- K. Structures or improvements intended for a separate use, such as phone booths, donation containers, and recycling boxes.
- L. Point of purchase advertising displays such as product dispensers, provided that no portion of the display is internally illuminated.
- M. Temporary decorative displays that do not identify any place, subject, person, firm, business, product, article, merchandise or point of sale or other characteristics that would represent signage. Within rights-of-way, a right-of-way permit is required. Decorative displays subject to this exemption are limited to thirty-day durations.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.040 - Prohibited signs.

Signs are prohibited in all zoning districts and in all Town rights-of-way unless authorized under this code and constructed or installed pursuant to a valid permit, where required. The following types of signs are specifically prohibited.

- A. Any sign that emits smoke, visible particles, odors, or sounds.

- B. Except traffic control devices compliant with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, exempt displays allowed under CTC 16.28.030M, and temporary signs allowed under CTC 16.28.050F, any sign that is internally illuminated or contains bare bulb, neon, light emitting diode, or electronic changing message component(s), an intermittent or flashing light source, the illusion of an intermittent or flashing light by means of animation, or an externally mounted intermittent lights source.
- C. Any sign that is dangerous or confusing to motorists on the public right-of-way, including any sign that, by its color, wording, location, or illumination, resembles or conflicts with any official traffic control device or that otherwise impedes the safe and efficient flow of traffic.
- D. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, any sign within the right-of-way except signs required by law and governmental signs intended to foster public safety and the free flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic along public ways.
- E. Signs with a slick white or light-colored finish intended to be written on with non-permanent markers.
- F. Except as specifically allowed in this chapter, any rotating or revolving sign, or sign where all or a portion of the sign moves or appears to move in some manner. This includes any sign animated by any means, including fixed aerial displays, balloons, pennants, spinners, propellers, whirling, or similar devices designed to flutter, rotate or display other movement under the influence of the wind, streamers, tubes, sails, or other devices affected by the movement of air or other atmospheric or mechanical means. This does not include historic signs and historic replica signs where the applicant is able to demonstrate, through documentation or other evidence, that the original historic sign produced the same motion/movement and is proposed in the same location.
- G. Except as specifically allowed in this chapter, portable signs including, but not limited to, A-frame signs.
- H. Signs located on or over a pitched roof or above a flat roof, except that a sign may be located on a false front or below the top of a parapet.
- I. Murals.
- J. Any other type or kind of sign that does not comply with the terms, conditions, provisions and intent contained in these regulations.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.050 - Temporary signs.

Signs allowed under this section do not require a sign permit and are not limited by sign area

allocations.

- A. In a residential zone, one temporary sign with a sign face no larger than two square feet may be displayed on the property at any time.
- B. In a residential zone, a property owner may display flags without limitation to number, provided the presence of the flag or its mounting does not create an obstacle or safety hazard for pedestrians or motorists.
- C. In a non-residential zone, in addition to any exempt flag(s), one flag may be displayed per building on a pole extending from a building facade where the presence of the flag or its pole does not create an obstacle or safety hazard for pedestrians or motorists.
- D. In the public/quasi-public zone, banners not larger than thirty (30) square feet in area may be displayed for up to fourteen (14) consecutive days, and one A-frame sign not exceeding six square feet per sign face may be displayed outside a public right-of-way for each principal building on a site for up to three consecutive days. Banners and A-frame signs shall not be displayed without the written approval of the property owner.
- E. One temporary sign with a maximum sign area of ten (10) square feet may be located on a property when the owner consents and that property is being offered for sale or lease. Such signs shall be removed within fifteen (15) days following the date on which the contract of sale or lease has been executed by the person purchasing the property.
- F. From November 15 to January 15, a property owner may place an unlimited number and dimension of temporary signs on the property and may use lights and other displays to decorate the property even if the lights are arranged to form a sign and if the lights and other displays flash or produce noise.
- G. Temporary directional and traffic control signs allowed within public rights-of-way under a special event permit.
- H. Temporary window signs.
- I. Any other temporary signs that must be allowed under the State or Federal Constitution.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.060 - Dimensional calculations.

- A. Sign Area Measurements. Sign area for all sign types is measured as follows:
 - 1. Background Panel or Surface. Sign copy mounted, affixed, or painted on a background panel or surface distinctively painted, textured, or constructed as a background for the sign copy is measured as that area contained within the smallest rectangle that will enclose the sign copy and the background.

2. Individual Wall-Mounted Letters or Graphics. Sign copy mounted as individual letters or graphics against a wall, fascia, or other vertical surface of a building that has not been painted, textured or otherwise altered to provide a distinctive background for the sign copy is measured as the sum of the smallest rectangle that will enclose all portions of the text and copy.
 3. The sign area for signs with multiple faces shall be the cumulative total of all sign faces.
 4. For freestanding signs, a structural or architectural framework distinguishable from the sign face and extending past the sign face no farther than twenty (20) percent of the width of the sign face is not be included in the sign area calculation.
- B. Sign Height Measurements. A freestanding sign within five feet of a public path or sidewalk shall be measured from the elevation of the adjacent path or sidewalk to the highest point on any sign face. Freestanding signs not within five feet of a public sidewalk or path shall be measured from the average of the highest and lowest finished grades within three feet of any portion of the sign base to the highest point on any sign face.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.070 - Permanent signs—Commercial and public zones.

The regulations in this section apply to the Town Commercial (TC), General Commercial (GC), Historic/Limited Commercial (HLC), and Public/Quasi-Public (P) zones and to Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Area E.

- A. Sign Area Allowance. The cumulative permanent sign area for any lot or parcel shall not exceed five percent of the area of the largest building facade, provided that sign area on one facade shall not exceed five percent of the area of that facade. Sign area shall be calculated according to Section 16.28.060.
- B. Maximum Sign Face Area. In no case shall the area of any individual sign face exceed sixty (60) square feet.
- C. Building Signs. Permitted building signs include flush-mounted, awning, projecting, and window signs.
 1. Subject to the sign area allowance and compliance with the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Design Guidelines, there is no limitation on the number of building signs or the number of building facades upon which signs may be placed.
 - 2.

Signs shall be designed to fit within flat wall areas and shall not cover or obscure important architectural details of a building, such as stair railings, windows, doors, relief features or similar elements intended to be decorative features of a building's design. Signs should appear to be a secondary feature of the building facade.

3. Projecting signs attached to a facade shall not extend more than four feet from the facade and shall have a maximum of five square feet per face. Projecting signs attached to a canopy or awning shall not exceed three square feet and shall not extend past the perimeter of the canopy or awning from which it is hung. The lowest point on any projecting sign or its frame or bracket shall be a minimum of eight feet above surrounding grade. All projecting signs shall be adequately secured to prevent noise generation. One projecting sign is permitted per ground-floor tenant space. Subject to a right-of-way permit under Chapter 12.12 CTC, a projecting sign may extend above pedestrian facilities within a public right-of-way.
 4. Awning Signs. Signs may be painted on or applied to the vertical faces of fabric awnings only on the vertical sides or skirt. Awning signs shall not be back lit.
 5. Window Signs. No more than one permanent window sign may be placed in a single window. Permanent window signs are limited to individual painted or vinyl cut-out letter and graphics. Window signs shall not be bright white, fluorescent colors, or high-gloss paint or other material and shall be consistent with historic use of such signs. Permanent window signs are limited to twenty-five (25) percent of the area of a single window.
 6. Rotating Content Signs. Each building or, for multi-tenant buildings, each tenant space is allowed one rotating content sign for signs intended to change on a regular basis, such as menus and similar non-permanent messages. Rotating content signs shall be flush-mounted and shall consist of an architectural frame identifying the limits of the sign face with or without a clear cover to enclose the message area. After sign permit approval of the frame and cover, if applicable, changes to the content enclosed within the frame shall be subject to the regulations in this chapter but shall not require a new sign application. The area of a rotating content sign within the frame shall not comprise more than ten (10) percent of a building's sign area allowance. Containers for dispensing printed materials shall not be considered rotating content signs.
- D. Freestanding Signs.
1. One freestanding sign in excess of two square feet is permitted per street frontage for any lot or parcel. Where two freestanding signs are permitted on a lot or parcel, such signs shall be separated by a minimum of sixty (60) feet. In the case of adjacent parcels under common ownership with shared parking and/or common access, the lots or

parcels shall be considered as one parcel for the purposes of determining the number of freestanding signs.

2. The maximum height of a freestanding sign, including any frame or support structure, shall be the lower of ten (10) feet or the height to the peak of the associated building.
3. The maximum width of a freestanding sign shall be five feet.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.080 - Permanent signs—Residential zones.

The regulations in this section apply to the Residential Reserve (RR), Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (RM 9600), and High Density Residential (RH) zones and to MOA Areas A, B, C, D, F, and G.

- A. Sign Area Allowance. A maximum sign area of four square feet per building containing at least one dwelling unit is permitted.
- B. Building Signs. Building signs shall be flush-mounted.
- C. Freestanding. One permanent freestanding sign is allowed for lots, parcels, or subdivisions in excess of one acre subject to the sign area allocation for the site. The permanent sign area allowance for individual buildings on one parcel or in one subdivision may be aggregated on one freestanding sign. In no case shall freestanding signs exceed sixteen (16) square feet cumulatively for all sign faces or exceed forty-two (42) inches in height.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.090 - Nonconforming signs.

Except A-frame signs, any sign that was legally installed prior to the effective date of these regulations that does not meet the requirements of these regulations shall be allowed to continue to exist. All signage shall be brought into compliance with this chapter at such time as the sign is changed in any way except for maintenance or repair. The change of text on a reader board shall not be construed as a change to the sign. The burden of establishing a sign to be legally nonconforming under this section rests upon the person or persons, firm, or corporation claiming legal status for a sign.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.100 - Sign design.

Signs should be designed and constructed to further and enhance the historic and rural character and identity of the Town.

- A. Materials. Permanent signs shall be constructed of wood or products designed to closely simulate wood. Sign faces may be constructed of metal for durability. Except signs installed for traffic or other public safety purposes, sign finishes shall be matte and non-reflective. Signs that appear to be synthetic shall not be permitted.
- B. Lighting. If illuminated, light sources shall be separated from the sign surface. The light source shall not be concealed within or behind a translucent surface. Except as provided for flags, all lighting shall be downward directed and shall not spill past the boundaries of the property on which the sign is located. Upward illumination of flags is permitted only where required by State or Federal law. Halo signs, as defined in this chapter, are prohibited.
- C. Color. Colors from a historic palette are encouraged. Use of bright white and bright primary colors are discouraged. Use of fluorescent colors is prohibited.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.110 - Administration.

A. Application and Review.

1. An application for a sign permit shall be filed with the Town Planner on forms furnished by the Town together with a fee as set forth in the fee schedule adopted by the town council. The applicant shall provide sufficient information to determine if the proposed sign is allowed under this code and other applicable laws, regulations, and ordinances. Where applications propose more than one sign, a permit may be issued for only that portion of the application determined to comply with the standards. Where modifications are necessary to establish compliance with applicable standards, approval of a permit may be subject to conditions. If an application is denied in whole or in part, the town planner shall provide a justification for the denial in writing.
2. For sites or buildings housing multiple tenants, the town planner may require an master sign plan to allocate sign area by tenant space and for common sign elements.
3. Sign permit applications shall be reviewed by the town planner or designee for consistency with the standards in this chapter, according to the sign type and other applicable regulations. A sign permit shall not be issued unless the town planner makes written findings and conclusions that the criteria applicable to each sign type, as well as the general standards in this chapter are satisfied. Building permit applications associated with signs shall be reviewed by the building official for consistency with the building code. For signs using electrical wiring and connections, a licensed electrician shall submit a copy of the electrical permit application to the Town with the original submitted for approval to

the State of Washington.

4. If a sign is not installed within one year following the issuance of a sign permit, the permit shall be void. The Town may revoke a sign permit under any of the following circumstances:
 - a. The Town determines that information in the application was materially false or misleading;
 - b. The sign as installed does not conform to the sign permit application;
 - c. The sign violates this code, the zoning ordinance, building code, or other applicable law, regulation, or ordinance, or
 - d. The town planner or designee determines the sign is not being maintained or has been abandoned. A sign may be determined abandoned if it has been removed or destroyed and has not been replaced within one year of such removal or destruction, or if the building on the site has not had a current certificate of occupancy for one year.
- B. Inspection Authority. The town planner or designee is empowered to enter or inspect any building, structure, or premises in the Town upon which, or in connection with which, a sign, as defined by this code, is located, for the purpose of inspection of the sign, its structural and electrical connections and to ensure compliance with the provisions of this chapter. Such inspections shall be carried out during business hours, unless an emergency exists.
- C. Violations. Except as provided in this chapter, it is unlawful for any person to erect, construct, enlarge, or move any sign in the Town or cause the same to be done without first obtaining a permit for each sign, as required by these regulations.
- D. Enforcement. The town planner shall enforce this ordinance in accordance with the pertinent sections of these regulations. The following procedure shall be used in enforcing the provisions of this chapter.
 1. Signs in the Town right-of-way or constituting a public safety hazard. Except as permitted by this chapter, signs installed in the town right-of-way may be removed by the town planner or designee without notice.
 2. Other Violations. Notification of violations of this chapter shall be made by certified mail to the owner of the sign, or of the building, structure, or premises on which such sign is located. Notice shall be mailed to an address in Town records or Island County Assessor's records for the owner of the sign and/or the property. Notice shall cite the violated code provision(s) and provide information on the availability of the adopted regulations. The owner shall remove the sign within fourteen (14) days or the sign will be removed and a fine may be assessed.

3. Removal. Unauthorized, illegal, or abandoned signs not removed by the owner within fourteen (14) days after mailing of notification by certified mail may be removed by the town planner or designee. Removed signs or devices shall be stored at the Town shop building for a period not less than thirty (30) days. The owner may redeem such sign or device by payment to the town clerk-treasurer of one hundred dollars (\$100.00). After thirty (30) days has elapsed, the sign shall be destroyed or otherwise disposed. Neither the Town nor any of its agents shall be liable for any damage to a sign impounded or destroyed under this section.
 4. Penalty. Any person violating a provision of this chapter may be fined if compliance is not achieved within fourteen (14) days of mailing of the notification as described in this section. The fine shall be fifty dollars (\$50.00) plus the costs incurred by the Town in the removal and destruction or disposal of the sign in violation of this chapter. Each day such violation continues shall be considered a separate offense.
- E. Appeals. Any party aggrieved of a decision based on these regulations shall have the right to appeal a determination by the town planner. Appeals must be filed in accordance with Section 16.06.060 of this title.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.120 - Sign variances.

- A. Purpose. It is the purpose of this section to provide a variance procedure that is efficient and expeditious while ensuring sufficient public review. Variances are not intended to provide a means to circumvent inconvenient standards or to provide favor or benefit to an applicant that would not be available to another applicant under similar circumstances. Variances shall be content-neutral in all cases. The town planner shall have the authority to grant a variance from the requirements of this chapter.
- B. Procedure. The procedure for considering applications for a sign variance is governed by CTC 16.06.050. This is summarized below:
 1. Applications shall be submitted on forms provided by the Town accompanied by a fee in accordance with the adopted fee schedule.
 2. Within twenty-one (21) days of receipt of a complete application, the town planner shall make a decision to grant preliminary administrative approval with or without conditions or to deny the application for variance. Written notice of preliminary decision to approve or approve with conditions shall be made to the applicant and to the public in accordance with CTC 16.06.050C.
 3. A decision of denial shall be mailed to the applicant within five days of the date of decision.

In this decision, the town planner shall state which of the criteria under subsection C of this section cannot be met by the application.

4. Appeals of administrative decisions shall be in accordance with CTC 16.06.050F and CTC 16.060.060A.
- C. Criteria. In making the determination, the town planner must find that the following conditions exist in order to approve the request for variance.
1. The literal interpretation and strict application of the provisions and requirements of this chapter would cause undue hardship because of unique or unusual physical circumstances pertaining to the subject property;
 2. The unique or unusual conditions do not result from actions of the applicant or owner of the subject property;
 3. Granting the variance would not confer a special privilege that is denied to other similarly situated properties;
 4. Granting the variance would not be materially detrimental to the property owners in the vicinity or to the general public;
 5. Granting the variance would not be contrary to the regulatory purposes of this chapter; and
 6. Granting the variance would be in harmony with the purpose and intent of this chapter and would not establish a precedent for subsequent variance requests which could diminish the effect of this chapter.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.130 - Definitions.

"Building facade" means the total area represented by one building elevation measured from the ground to the roof ridge line and including all door and window areas.

"Flag" means a piece of cloth, attached to a staff extending from a structure or a pole permanently mounted in the ground, with distinctive colors, patterns or symbols. Flags are rectangular with the short dimension at least one-half the long dimension.

"Flush-mounted sign" means a sign which is attached parallel to or painted on a building wall, parapet or canopy fascia.

"Freestanding sign" means a sign and its support pole or base standing directly on the ground that is not attached to or abutting any building or other structure.

"Halo sign" means a sign with a light source placed behind totally opaque letter or symbol so that the

light reflects off the wall or background to which the letters or symbols are mounted rather than emanating through the letters or symbols, creating a halo effect that leaves the letters or symbols viewable in silhouette form only.

"Mural" means a work of graphic art painted or applied to a wall of a building or other structure and that contains no advertising or logos.

"Nonconforming sign" means any sign that does not conform to the requirements of this chapter, whether legally established or not.

"Permanent sign" means a sign constructed of weather resistant material and intended for permanent use and that does not otherwise meet the definitions of "temporary sign" or "portable sign". Rotating content signs shall be considered permanent signage and subject to all standards of this chapter.

"Point of purchase advertising display" means a closed container on the exterior of the building that is designed for dispensing product where the advertising is integral to the device and primarily intended to identify the product contained therein. Examples include newspaper boxes, beverage dispensers, fuel kiosks, and freezers for bagged ice.

"Portable sign" means a freestanding sign that is readily moveable and not permanently affixed to the ground, including A-frame or sandwich board signs, sign trailers not licensed for travel on public streets, pole signs mounted on weighted bases, and similar signs that are used on more than a temporary basis.

"Projecting sign" means a sign attached to a building with the face not parallel to the vertical surface of the building. Projecting signs include signs projecting directly from walls and signs suspended from canopies or similar horizontal elements.

"Sign" means letters, figures, symbols, trademarks, or logos, with or without illumination, intended to identify any place, subject, person, firm, business, product, article, merchandise or point of sale. The term also includes balloons attached to sign structures, products, streamers, spinners, pennants, flags, inflatables or similar devices intended to attract attention to a site or business, as well as murals, architectural or structural forms, illuminated panels, spandrels, awnings and other structural or architectural features not common to classic vernacular or non-corporate regional architecture and that are intended to convey a brand, message or otherwise advertise a location or product, whether or not such features include text or graphics and whether or not they serve other practical purposes such as lighting, covering or enclosure of persons or products. A sign includes any device which streams, televises or otherwise conveys electronic visual messages, pictures, videos or images, with or without sound or odors.

"Sign area allocation" means the maximum cumulative permanent sign area that may be permitted on a site based on the calculation of allowed sign area in this chapter.

"Site" means a unit of land, together with all improvements thereon, determined as follows:

- 1) A unit of land that may be conveyed separately from any and all adjacent land without the requirement of approval of a boundary line adjustment or subdivision; or
- 2) Two or more buildings or business activities that are or will be related to each other physically or architecturally, such as by sharing off-street parking facilities, so as to form an integrated development, such as a shopping center or office complex.

"Temporary sign" means any sign that is used temporarily and is not permanently mounted, painted or otherwise affixed, including any poster, banner, placard, stake sign or sign not placed in the ground with concrete or other means to provide permanent support, stability and rot prevention.

"Temporary window sign" means a sign printed on paper or similar material, impermanent paint, or decals painted on, affixed to, or hanging against a window pane. To qualify as a temporary window sign, decals shall not exceed twenty (20) square inches and shall not be a component of a larger sign.

"Window sign" means a sign that is attached to or is intended to be seen in, on or through a window of a building and is visible from the exterior of the window.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

16.28.140 - Severability.

- A. If any section, sentence, clause, phrase, word, portion, or provision of this chapter is held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect, impair, or invalidate any other section, sentence, clause, phrase, word, portion, or provision of this chapter which can be given effect without the invalid provision.
- B. The invalidation of the application of any section, sentence, clause, phrase, word, portion, or provision of this chapter to a particular property or structure, or any particular properties or structures, by any court of competent jurisdiction shall not affect the application of such section, sentence, clause, phrase, word, portion or provision to any other property or structure not specifically included in said invalidation.

(Ord. No. 736, § 1, 6-13-2017)

CHAPTER 4.8 - SIGNS

Guiding Principles: *Signs should be compatible in size, color, and materials with the rural historic character of the Reserve. They should not hide features of historic buildings or overwhelm either the building or the surroundings.*

In the Limited Historic Downtown Area, signs should be directed at and scaled to the pedestrian. Don't assume that the largest sign is the best. Pay particular attention to how your sign relates to your building. Look for logical signage locations on your facade usually simple is better.

Design Guidelines

1. A good sign is simple and direct, with a letter style and graphic treatment that is easy to read with minimal clutter. Coordinate sign colors with the colors of the building if consistent with guidelines.
 2. Make signs appropriate in scale so as not to overwhelm the building or its features.
 3. Wood, or a material that looks like wood, is preferred for signs, but other traditional materials such as metal can be used. Signs should be painted and may be lighted with concealed spotlights. Lighted signs should be limited to businesses open at night.
 4. Prohibited signs include:
 - a. Neon signs (and similar lighted signs) on building exteriors or interiors;
 - b. Flashing (not including seasonal, holiday lights) or lighted signs or moving message signs of any type;
 - c. Internally-lit signs or awnings, or internally-lit letters;
 - d. Billboards and other tall freestanding signs.
- Refer to the Town and County codes for specific regulations on sign types, size, and locations.
5. Place signs for historic commercial buildings in locations originally intended for signage, such as above the windows. Do not cover windows, doors, or other architectural features with a sign or with light fixtures.
 6. In pedestrian-oriented commercial areas, use signs of a size, shape, and height to be visible primarily to pedestrians rather than people in vehicles.
 7. Install signs so that they are unobtrusive. Do not install them so that they project above the building cornice. Mount signs and light fixtures so they do not damage the building.
 8. All sign lighting shall be indirect downward with full cut-off shields required on all lamps. Use low-profile light fixtures with minimal projection from the building facade in a style appropriate to the building's period. Concealed light fixtures are encouraged.
 9. Signs along roads, in front of buildings, and in scenic vistas should be in keeping with the rural setting of the Reserve.

- Signs adjacent to historic structures should be architecturally sensitive and designed to fit the setting.

4.8.1 Signs within the Limited Historic Downtown Area

Design Guidelines

- Continuous flat wall areas above display windows, or above upper story windows, are typically good choices. Do not cover windows, doors, or architectural ornaments.
- Wood, or a material that looks like wood, is preferred for signs but other materials such as metal can be used if compatible with the setting.
- If evidence exists that a sign was painted on a building exterior historically, this will be permitted.

4.8.2 Sign Lighting

Design Guidelines

- Sign lighting fixtures should be simple in design or concealed.
- All sign lighting shall be indirect downward, with full cut-off shields required on all lamps.
- Concealed light fixtures or fixtures appropriate to the building's period and style are encouraged.
- Light fixtures should be low profile and have minimal projection from building face.
- Lighting should not hide any architectural features.

- The light source should not be visible from the public right-of-way.
- Incandescent illumination is the most appropriate light source for historic commercial signage.

CHAPTER 4.9 - LIGHTING

Guiding Principle: *Provide adequate lighting for public safety and security without detracting from the historic small-town and rural character of the Reserve.*

4.9.1 Lighting

Design Guidelines

- Screen light fixtures so that the light source is not visible off-site.
- Reduce horizontal light glare and vertical light trespass from a development site onto adjacent parcels.
- Lighting directed upwards above the horizontal plane (up-lighting) is prohibited, with the following exceptions:
 - Up-lighting for government flags. Government flags used for advertisement are discouraged.
 - Low wattage holiday and special occasion accent lights. Flashing lights are prohibited.
- Back-lit panels and awnings illuminated from behind, including gas pricing signs and service station canopies, are prohibited.
- The use of lighting for advertising purposes is discouraged.
- Pedestrian-scaled lighting is encouraged in areas of pedestrian activity.



Staff Report

DATE: June 3, 2025
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Joshua Engelbrecht, Community Planning Director
RE: Shoreline Master Program Amendment – Street Level Residential

Planning Commission,

Several times at the end of 2024 and into 2025 members of the public have made comments at the Town Council meetings related to the regulations in our zoning code and shoreline master program that prohibits residential uses or transient accommodation within the street level portions of our commercial buildings along NW Front St.

This restriction was put into place with the development of our shoreline master program citing the historic use (business on ground floor, residences above and sometimes below) of those buildings.

At the May 27, 2025 Town Council meeting Staff held a discussion to receive direction on if the property owner requests should be initiated as projects to amend our development regulations.

At this point, Staff has received public input from:

- The overwater building owner who made this request. Who is advocating for this rule change based on their sense that the rear portions of commercial buildings, especially those overwater and those with rear spaces are not conducive to retail or other active uses and would see better utilization as vacation rentals.
- One building owner along the landward side of NW Front St. stating that the ability to have ground floor residential uses aimed at supporting business owners in a live-work environment would be conducive for supporting artists and studios within the Coupeville Creative District and we should take a larger look at where we allow residential uses within the Historic Commercial zone beyond the rear of overwater buildings.
- Two other Front St. building / business owners have made comments in opposition of a change that would allow street level vacation uses.

Ultimately, Town Council was interested in receiving additional feedback from members of the public at large, and from building and business owners who would be affected by a potential rule change. As such, the Town Council has directed Staff and the Planning Commission to gather public feedback to inform the potential next steps of this project.

This discussion item is primarily intended to broadly inform the planning commission of this request and to relay the proposed schedule for soliciting input.

At the May 27, 2025 council meeting, Staff laid the following pathways to consider:

1. **No Action:** Street Level residential or vacation uses are not appropriate in the Historic Commercial Center Zone.
 - No additional work on this topic at this time.
2. **Narrow revisions:** Street level vacation uses are only appropriate for the **rear portions of overwater buildings** due to their unique position within Penn Cove.
 - Revisions would allow short-term rental or residential use of portions of the street level with restrictions + requirements focused on exterior access locations, required amount of “Active Frontage” space within those buildings, and other best practices researched by staff.
3. **Wider revisions:** Street level residential or vacation uses are appropriate in the **rear portions of any lot** within the historic commercial zone.
 - Revisions would allow short-term rental or residential use of portions of the street level with restrictions + requirements focused on exterior access locations, required amount of “Active Frontage” space within those buildings, and other best practices researched by staff.
 - Could potentially also consider allowing accessory dwelling units, either attached, detached, or both within the commercial zone (not previously pursued under Middle Housing Code).

Throughout the month of June, Staff is expecting to advertise the July 1, 2025 Planning Commission meeting as an opportunity for folks to provide input on this item. While everyone is always invited to our regular meetings, Staff is expecting to reserve the Rec Hall and post additional invitation to encourage folks to join us. Staff expects we would have a brief presentation outlining the request, history, and questions we want input on before opening the floor for audience input. Then after we’ve received input, we would continue along with our regular meeting agenda discussion on the Comprehensive plan.

After the July 1, 2025 meeting, staff expects to take any input generated through the month of June, any public comments at the Planning Commission meeting, and any specific thoughts / opinions the Planning Commission has back to the Town Council at their July 22, 2025 meeting.



Town of Coupeville

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STAFF REPORT

DATE: June 3, 2025
TO: Coupeville Planning Commission
FROM: Joshua Engelbrecht, Community Planning Director
RE: Discussion – Natural Systems Element + *New* Climate Element

Planning Commission,

This is our Seventh meeting to review our existing elements of the Comprehensive Plan. This time around, we are looking at our last existing element, our Natural Systems Element. Then, this process is going to switch gears and we will have our first opportunity to discuss a draft of one of our new elements, the Climate Element.

As part of this discussion and upcoming discussions, Staff will pose the following questions to the Commission about each goal and its associated policies:

1. What is missing from this goal and its policies?
2. Is there anything that should be removed?
3. What do you think this goal does well?
4. What do you think this goal doesn't do well?
5. Are these changes something that the Town should be directly involved in? or is partnership necessary?

We will start our discussion with these overarching prompts and then we can dive into more specific thoughts and recommendations.

The Natural Systems Element is where our information about Coupeville's natural environment and goals on protecting those habitats and environments are housed. While our Parks, Recreation, and Open Space does have some policies related to protection of open spaces, the majority of the PROS element is focused on how we can leverage habitat and the Town's natural resources to provide services to the Community. The goals of the natural systems element are much more interested in protecting unique or critical environments for their intrinsic value, even if those areas are not intended to provide recreation opportunities for the community.

The Natural systems element is also not necessarily focused on climate change or adaptation to changing conditions. While those themes certainly influence the Natural Systems element, the goals outlined as part of this element would see Coupeville become more "Biophilic" regardless of changing conditions that our Climate Element expects.

The Climate Element is our first element that available as part of the 2025 periodic update. State Legislation recently mandated the creation of Climate Elements for all jurisdictions, with the smaller communities focusing on resilience / adaptation and larger communities taking a further look at greenhouse gas emissions reductions and more proactive ways to combat climate change. This legislation was in the works and recently passed when our work on the 2023 Comprehensive Plan was occurring. As such, throughout our conversations on policies, you have seen a little leaf icon that has denoted a policy relates generally to Climate Change and sustainability. In creating the Climate Element,  the “policy theme” that was overarching has been rebranded as policies that indicate co-benefits between the climate element and the other elements. The concept of Co-benefits frames the goals of the Climate Element as useful in achieving other priorities of the Town and pointing out where there are commonalities between our other goals and policies.

The Climate Element begins with the identification of Coupeville relevant climate related hazards that are expected to worsen as we look towards the future. Our goals and policies are designed to mitigate and adapt to those hazards and help focus our attention on resilience and adaptation, knowing that Coupeville as a community is a drop in the bucket compared to global trends in climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.

As we move forward with this project, Staff expects our July 1 meeting to include all / most of our draft 2025 elements as a high level presentation to orient our next step of the work. While we certainly can follow the same process of individual meetings tackling one or two of the draft elements, Staff believes a smoother process will be to take our July meeting to note particular points of interest we would like to devote larger chunks of time to. Since we have already highlighted Workforce Housing as a topic to spend time on, we will have some specific time at our July meeting to discuss that component. Additionally, at our July meeting Staff would like to determine if meeting twice a month during the later portions of 2025 would be acceptable to the Commission. Finally (as will be discussed in other portions of our meeting), Staff also expects the July 1 meeting to be at the Rec Hall to help facilitate some community input, about the Comprehensive Plan draft among other things.

Attachments:

1. Coupeville 2023 Comprehensive Plan Natural Systems Element
2. Natural Systems Appendix
3. *Draft* Coupeville 2025 Comprehensive Plan Climate Element



Natural Systems Element

Introduction

Coupeville is situated in a spectacular natural setting. In addition to providing aesthetic beauty, the area's natural systems also provide important ecological functions and values. This Natural Systems Element aims to protect Coupeville's natural systems. Further, this element aims to protect people and property from natural hazards.

Penn Cove is an integral component of Coupeville's natural systems. However, Penn Cove and its adjacent shorelands within Town limits are primarily managed by the Town's Shoreline Master Program. Therefore, the Town's Shoreline Master Program—not this Natural Systems Element—sets forth the goals and policies that apply specifically to the Town's shoreline areas.



Figure 42 – The central Coupeville waterfront and bluff

Existing Conditions Summary

Coupeville is situated on and around three hills: one in the northeast end of Town and two in the central portion of Town. In some areas, uplands slope gently to the shoreline. In other areas, uplands meet Penn Cove with a steep slope. South of State Route 20, the south side of Coupeville blends into the surrounding prairie.



Figure 43 – Coupeville area topography, with contour lines every 20 feet (credit: USGS)

Coupeville has a generally mild marine climate. Skies are partly cloudy or cloudy more than 300 days of the year. Southwesterly winds predominate. Coupeville lies in the “rain shadow” of the Olympic Mountains and receives an average of slightly less than 18 inches of precipitation annually, with ranges between approximately 11 and 26 inches. Over 70 percent of the precipitation falls between October and April. Groundwater is the only source of freshwater supply.

Coupeville is classified as “Western Hemlock Vegetative Zone” but logging and burning over the past 150 years have enabled Douglas Fir to replace Western Hemlock as the climax species. Migratory and resident shorebirds and waterfowl are found on and near the shoreline in large numbers. Coupeville also has a diversity of other bird species, including songbirds, raptors, corvids and others. The waters of Penn Cove feature an abundance of aquatic life, including a diverse and large shellfish population.

Goals and Policies



Goal NS-1: Natural Systems Protection.

Manage development to minimize disruption of natural systems, retain the natural aesthetics of the community, and reduce the risks of damage to life and property.



NS-1.1 Consider the potential impacts of climate change in all decisions related to natural systems.

NS-1.2 Protect and enhance the natural systems of Coupeville by working collaboratively with other governments, organizations, and community members.

NS-1.3 Encourage the reduction in use of pesticides harmful to the environment.

NS-1.4 Continue encouraging water conservation to protect sole source ground water aquifer supplies.



NS-1.5 Continue implementing low impact development standards and promoting sustainable development within the Town and Reserve to protect and enhance the water

The **Olympic Rain Shadow** is an area to the northeast of the Olympic Mountains that experiences significantly drier weather than surrounding locations. Storm systems typically arrive on the Washington coast from the southwest. As the moist air in these systems meets the mountains, it rises, and the moisture gets wrung out. When the air gets to the other side of the mountains it is much drier, resulting in the rain shadow.



Figure 44 – Penn Cove beach (photo credit: John Feit)



Figure 45 - Whidbey Island shoreline (photo credit: Mary MacPherson)

quality of Penn Cove, protect tree cover and encourage carbon sequestration.

- NS-1.6 Implement lighting designs, practices, and standards that protect the night sky and reduce the negative impacts of light pollution, such as sky glow, disruption of ecosystems, and energy waste.
- NS-1.7 In collaboration with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, consider measures to minimize conflicts between humans and wildlife, particularly deer.



Figure 46 - Deer in Coupeville
(photo credit: Mary MacPherson)

Goal NS-2: Green Community. Maintain and enhance Coupeville’s status as a green community, one with abundant nature and natural systems that are visible and accessible.

- NS-2.1 Consider biophilic community planning approaches in town planning and design.
- NS-2.2 Seek to provide nature in the places where people live, learn, work, and play to positively affect health and well-being.
-  NS-2.3 Invest in nature-based infrastructure as cost-effective, sustainable, long-term solutions to a changing climate and other environmental and social challenges, such as heat waves, water quality and quantity, and stormwater management.
- NS-2.4 Provide wildlife open space corridors, particularly those connected to protected lands and water bodies outside of Coupeville.
-  NS-2.5 Consider the potential to use vegetated open space corridors as part of an integrated system to absorb and treat stormwater.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s **Habitat at Home** program helps people learn how they can support wildlife in their own outdoor spaces. You can even get certified and receive a yard sign highlighting your achievement! To get started, visit:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/living/habitat-at-home>

A **biophilic community** connects the science of *biophilia*—humans’ innate love of nature—and the practice of planning. (definition adapted from *Planning for Biophilic Cities*, American Planning Association)



Goal NS-3: Trees and Vegetation. Protect and enhance trees and vegetation to provide natural systems and other benefits.

- NS-3.1 Promote the installation and management of native trees and vegetation on publicly owned land, such as parks, to provide habitat and green infrastructure benefits.
- NS-3.2 Encourage retention of existing trees and native vegetation in proposed developments.
- NS-3.3 Encourage the planting of native trees and shrubs and the minimization of lawn areas.
- NS-3.4 Periodically review and update the Town’s tree protection ordinance to ensure tree protection goals are being met.
- NS-3.5 Support efforts to control and, where feasible, eradicate invasive plant species.



Figure 47 - Trees in a residential neighborhood



Goal NS-4: Critical Areas. Protect critical areas designated under the Growth Management Act, and other important ecological systems, to preserve the functions and values of the natural environment and to safeguard the public from hazards to health and safety.

- NS-4.1 Use the best available science in developing policies and development regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas and other important ecological systems.
- NS-4.2 Give special consideration to conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance fish habitat.
- NS-4.3 Protect groundwater and surface water resources.
- NS-4.4 When considering amendments to the comprehensive plan, avoid directing new growth to areas with a high probability of conflicts between new development and protecting critical areas.



As defined by the Growth Management Act, **critical areas** include wetland, critical aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, and geographically hazardous areas.

Coupeville’s **drinking water** comes entirely from local groundwater sources. Once groundwater is contaminated it is difficult, costly, and sometimes impossible to clean up. Preventing contamination is necessary to avoid exorbitant costs, hardships, and potential physical harm to people and ecosystems.

- NS-4.5 Continue to ensure that development regulations do not allow a new loss of critical area functions and values.
- NS-4.6 The Town should designate critical areas and important habitat and natural areas using performance standards and maps. Update maps of critical areas as necessary and feasible to provide the most current, accurate, and complete information regarding the locations of critical areas.

Goal NS-5: Shorelines. Provide management of Penn Cove and its adjacent shorelands consistent with the Washington State Shoreline Management Act.

- NS-5.1 Use the Town’s Shoreline Master Program to provide management of areas of Penn Cove and adjacent shorelands within Town limits.



Figure 48 – Coupeville waterfront
(photo credit: John Feit)

As stipulated by the Growth Management Act, the goals and policies of the Town’s **Shoreline Master Program** represent an element of this comprehensive plan.

Sea level rise is a significant consequence of climate change, and the Town is taking steps to prepare. An important early step is a sea level rise vulnerability assessment to evaluate what areas and assets are most at risk. Findings from the assessment can be reviewed here:

<https://townofcoupeville.org/comprehensive-plan-update/sea-level-rise-vulnerability-assessment/>

Appendix F - Natural Systems

Existing Conditions

Topography

The Town is situated on and around three hills: one in the northeast end of Town and two in the central portion of Town. Elevations in Coupeville range from sea level along the Penn Cove shoreline to approximately 200 feet above sea level in hilltop areas.

In some areas, uplands slope gently to the shoreline. In other areas, uplands meet Penn Cove with a steep slope. South of State Route 20, the south side of Coupeville blends into the surrounding prairie.

Soils

Glacial drift is the primary parent material of the soils throughout Coupeville. Soils are found in a relatively thin layer on Whidbey Island and are classified by topographic relief, climate and time, biological activity and the parent material. The U.S. Soil Conservation Service according to terrain groups soils:

- Glacial Uplands - These soils are very shallow and have a cemented gravel material subsurface called glacial till. Surface drainage is good, but the subsurface is relatively impermeable. This is the predominant type of soil found in Coupeville. These soils may not be suitable for intensive development.
- Terraces - These soils are found on the prairies at the south end of Town. These soils have high agricultural productivity. Certain characteristics, such as a high water table and corrosivity, may limit their potential for development. Drainage is usually moderate.
- Depressions - This class refers to soils found in the glacial depressions of uplands and terraces. These areas receive much seepage and runoff from lands around them. They are usually impermeable, cemented till of glacial/marine sediments and clays. During the wet season, they hold large quantities of water. This soil type is found between Clapp and Perkins Streets from the shoreline to the Town limits.
- Rough Broken Terrain - This type of soil occurs in a few places along the shoreline.

Water

Coupeville lies in the "rain shadow" of the Olympic Mountains and receives an average of slightly less than 18 inches of precipitation annually, with ranges between approximately 11 and 26 inches. Over 70 percent of the precipitation falls between October and April. Snowfall accumulations are rare.

Because precipitation is relatively low and stormwater absorption is high, the area has few surface water channels. Groundwater is the only source of freshwater supply. Recognizing this, the United States Environmental Protection Agency designated Island County a Sole Source Aquifer Area in 1983. There are two distinct groundwater types on Whidbey Island: dilute and very hard water. Hard water is the most prevalent type throughout most of Coupeville. Because of its high mineral content, it is more difficult to utilize and less desirable than other water types. Groundwater quality in this area is influenced by seawater encroachment. Proximity to the shoreline increases the chance of seawater intrusion, especially in deep wells. In some shore area wells, high chloride concentrations indicate the presence of seawater.

Climate

Coupeville has a generally mild marine climate, with average temperatures ranging between 41 and 58 degrees Fahrenheit. At the extremes, temperatures have ranged from a high of 98 degrees to a low of 3 degrees Fahrenheit. Skies are partly cloudy or cloudy more than 300 days of the year. Wind patterns are usually mild, averaging eight miles per hour. Southwesterly winds predominate; however, westerly winds storming across Penn Cove are sometimes severe.

Plants & Animals

Coupeville is classified as “Western Hemlock Vegetative Zone” but logging and burning over the past 150 years have enabled Douglas Fir to replace Western Hemlock as the climax species. There is a wide diversity in the plant community, providing a varied habitat.

The Town’s forested and agricultural areas, and the interface between them, supply food and shelter for the major wildlife populations. Black-tailed deer and cottontail rabbits are the most abundant species of mammal found in Coupeville. These areas also support significant populations of ring-necked pheasants and California quail.

Migratory and resident waterfowl are found on and near the shoreline in large numbers. The variety of available habitats and the mild climate accounts for the many types found during various seasons of the year.

Finally, the waters of Penn Cove feature an abundance of aquatic life, such as eelgrass, shellfish, salmon, and occasionally whales.

Shoreline

Summary

The Town of Coupeville has a 2.4 mile long shoreline along Penn Cove, which forms the Town’s north boundary. Historically, much of Coupeville’s growth and development has been linked to and influenced by its waterfront. In addition to attracting residential and commercial development, the views and recreational opportunities provided by the shoreline act as an attraction for visitors and the tourism industry.

The historic shoreline area along Front Street in the Town’s commercial core is a major focal point for the Town. The older buildings that line this street were once the center of commerce for the Town. Now many of these buildings house businesses that serve

tourism, while many of the businesses that serve Town residents have moved to Main Street, closer to SR 20.

Outside of the historic business district, Coupeville's shoreline is primarily residential, mixed with a few scattered farms. Near the center of Town, the lots are small and the homes are older. Further to the east and west, the homes are more dispersed and the shoreline takes on a rural appearance. Unlike other shoreline towns where the waterfront acts as a magnet for all development activity, Coupeville's shore is not densely developed and many residences are centered around the Main Street business area and across Highway 20 in Prairie Center, rather than oriented toward the water. The location of the Town Park and the boat launch at either end of the downtown contribute to the open character of the shoreline, as do the narrow, undeveloped bluff edges next to the road along much of the shore.

Shoreline Plans and Studies

1982 Coupeville Waterfront Study - This study was prepared with funding by the Federal Coastal Zone Management Program. It developed an overview of existing conditions along the Coupeville waterfront and provided an analysis of issues and recommendations on eight topics. These included: shoreline erosion and bluff instability; Front Street slippage; boat launch and sewage treatment plant; Town Park; Town dock; Town entry and Main Street; link to Ebey's Landing and the Keystone Ferry; and Town and historical commercial center. Among the key recommendations were to encourage beach houses to help stabilize the bank, to encourage businesses in the downtown and to enhance the Main Street entrance into Town.

1980 Comprehensive Plan of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve - The Historical Reserve encompasses the entire Town of Coupeville as well as a large portion of central Whidbey Island (see Figure 1). The concept of the Reserve is to protect, preserve and interpret the historical and cultural assets of the area through an intergovernmental partnership of national, state, county and town agencies and citizen groups. This plan contains objectives for public use/development, historic and natural preservation, and private use subject to appropriate local ordinances.

1989 South Main Street Study - The South Main Street Study was prepared by a subcommittee of the Coupeville Planning Commission. The study area was South Main Street between SR 20 and Terry Road. This study was commissioned in response to changes in traffic volume, road condition and land use patterns that were being experienced in the study area. The study establishes four major goals for the South Main Street area: retain a small-town atmosphere; enhance the overall appearance of South Main Street; improve traffic circulation; and establish well-designed and clearly defined residential and commercial areas. Policies relate to street design, circulation and land use. The study is intended to be a subarea plan based on the general guidelines and policies of the Coupeville Comprehensive Plan.

2023 Coupeville Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment - This project was funded by a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology. The objective of this project was to couple recently developed localized sea level rise projections, high resolution land elevation data from Island County, and other publicly available regional data in GIS to perform a quantitative assessment of sea level rise vulnerability for the Town's

shores. The analysis was applied to critical assets within the Town, which include buildings, roads, utilities, and parks and community assets. The sensitivity of each asset, or the degree to which an asset is susceptible to impacts due to coastal flooding or a combination of flooding and recession, was qualitatively assessed. The assessment evaluated the most exposed assets and factored in their sensitivity to sea level rise impacts to assess their overall vulnerability. The most vulnerable assets were then identified and the basis for the highest vulnerability assets described.¹

County-wide Planning Policies for Island County - As required by the Growth Management Act, Island County and all municipalities within the County have jointly prepared and adopted County-wide Planning Policies (Appendix B). This document is organized into major policy areas, each with more specific implementing policies. The major policy areas are:

1. Policies to implement RCW 36.70A.110, Urban Growth Areas.
2. Policies for siting essential public facilities of a County or State-wide significance.
3. Policies for joint County/Municipality planning.
4. Policies for County-wide economic development and employment.
5. Policies for promoting contiguous and orderly development and providing urban services to such development.
6. Policies for County-wide transportation facilities and strategies.
7. Policies on affordable housing, for all of the population.
8. Policies for parks, recreation, open space and natural lands.
9. Policies for projecting population growth and employment.

These policies were adopted by Board of Commissioners, Island County and by the Mayors of Oak Harbor, Coupeville and Langley on June 22, 1992, and revised several times several times since.

Natural Open Space Areas

There are several natural open space areas in the Town of Coupeville which are not formal parks but provide natural areas for wildlife and other natural systems.

NE Front Street Tidelands & Bluff

- Location: Between N Main St & NW Alexander St
- Size: 0.52 acres

Natural open space area with various trails through the woods.

NPS Properties

The National Parks System owns three undeveloped open space areas in Coupeville totaling 10.93 acres. These properties are not open to the public but provide natural systems benefits.

- **NPS Property—Hwy 20:** 9.78-acres north of SR 20 and south of Lauren Street

¹ 2023 Coupeville Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment: <https://townofcoupeville.org/comprehensive-plan-update/sea-level-rise-vulnerability-assessment/>

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- **NPS Property—Tidelands:** 0.22-acres east of N Main Street
 - **NPS Property—S Main St:** 0.93-acres east of S Main Street and south of 301 S Main Street

Coupeville Climate Element

This element incorporates climate action planning to build community resilience and implement goals and policies to address the adverse impacts of climate change in Coupeville. It identifies areas and assets at risk, as well as relevant hazards, to advance strategies for adaptation, mitigation, and response/recovery. The Climate Element aligns functions of other elements such as Transportation and Land Use, with science-based goals and policies to support long-term social and environmental climate resilience.

Climate Element

Introduction

The Climate Element responds to current and future impacts of climate change on the built, natural, and social environment of the Town of Coupeville. Priorities of the Town that are linked to climate change include protection of coastal resources as well as sustainable economic opportunities and maintaining the historic character of the Town. Effects of climate change have been realized locally on Town resources and are projected to intensify, persist over longer durations, and become more frequent. This element emphasizes climate resiliency in local planning to reduce disruptions to climate-reliant industries (tourism, agriculture, etc.), incorporating public health strategies alongside physical and structural improvements. RCW [70A.65.010](#) defines climate resilience as:

Figure

"Climate resilience" is the ongoing process of anticipating, preparing for, and adapting to changes in climate and minimizing negative impacts to our natural systems, infrastructure, and communities.

"This element" or "The Climate Element" includes climate resilience goals and policies to address mitigation, adaptation, and response/recovery as informed by science. Mitigation includes minimization and avoidance measures. Adaptation includes modification or changes to existing community assets to better withstand changing conditions. Recovery and response measures ensure that Coupeville can recover in a timely manner following a hazard event, whether restoring community services, economic stability, or physical infrastructure

Growth Management Act (GMA) Requirements

In July 2023, the Washington State Legislature signed into law [House Bill \(HB\) 1181](#). The Growth Management Act (GMA) adopts planning goals for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction, climate change, and resiliency. Planning jurisdictions under RCW [36.70A.040](#) are required to integrate a climate element into their comprehensive plans to identify and prepare for natural hazards exacerbated by climate change.

The Town of Coupeville selected to develop a standalone Climate Element rather than integrating it into an existing element, which is also an option under the GMA. The Climate Element includes a resilience sub-element:

- A resilience sub-element, per HB 1181’s minimum requirements, must (RCW [36.70A.070\(9\)\(e\)\(i\)](#)):
 1. *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;*
 2. *Identify, protect, and enhance natural areas to foster climate resilience, as well as areas of vital habitat for safe species migration;*
 3. *Identify, protect, and enhance community resilience to climate impacts, including social, economic, and built-environment factors, which support adaptation to climate impacts consistent with environmental justice.*

A GHG emissions reduction sub-element is not mandatory for the Town of Coupeville based on its size; however, the Town has voluntarily incorporated actions to reduce overall emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

The goals and policies of this element are intended to protect the Town’s assets most at risk of damage or loss from climate-influenced hazards. A Vulnerability and Risk Assessment of the Town’s assets from impacts of climate-related hazards was conducted to prioritize where action should be taken or accepted over this 20-year planning horizon. The technical memorandum, “Climate Mitigation Challenges and Opportunities Analysis,” outlines the findings and community engagement efforts that led to the development of the Town of Coupeville’s climate resilience goals and policies based on the extent of risk posed to each asset from climate-influenced hazards, see *Appendix XX*.

Priorities for the Town of Coupeville

‘Climate Change and Sustainability’ was previously designated as a Policy Theme in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. Using this guiding initiative, community feedback, and technical studies, including the University of Washington Climate Impact Group’s Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington tool, the following climate-exacerbated hazards were identified as relevant to the Town of Coupeville:

- **Drought**
- **Extreme Heat**
- **Severe Weather Events**
- **Sea Level Rise**

Though not the focus of this analysis, the following hazards are considered throughout the Climate Element through discussion and determination of measures, as they often occur as secondary effects of the hazards bulleted above: ocean acidification, increasing ocean temperatures, and harmful algae blooms; landslide; extreme flood events; degraded air quality from adjacent wildfires; and freezing temperatures.

Drought:

Extreme Heat:

Severe Weather Events:

Sea Level Rise:

Commented [RH1]: Metrics to track - are there public spaces in Town where interactive signs could be put up to inform the public about each of these/how they can see change over time? I.e., area of coastal erosion, storm outlet height, etc; and then this section could reference each location.

Commented [DK2R1]: Yes. Good idea. We can discuss with the Town.

A proactive, community-based approach is required to prevent disproportionate exposure and impact on vulnerable or overburdened populations. Goals and policies aimed at eliminating disparity are included in the Climate Element and are marked by this symbol:



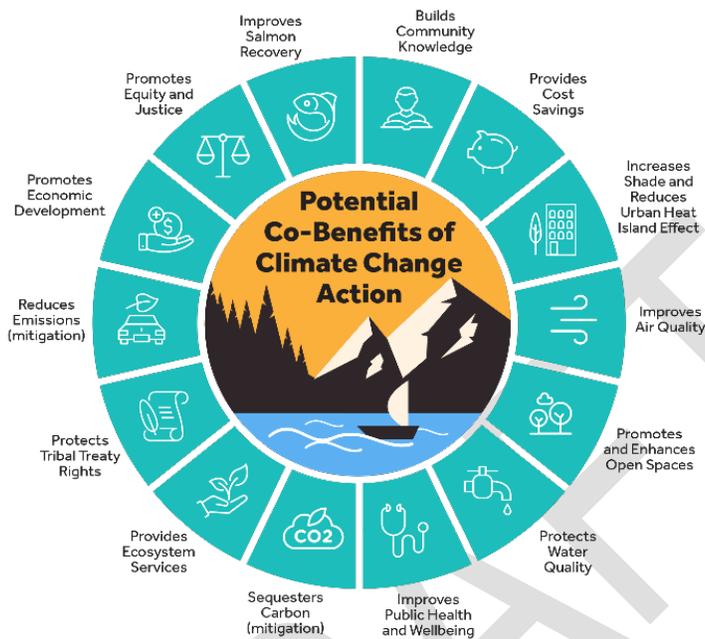
The Town of Coupeville has two (2) miles of shoreline, putting the character of the Town and its economic viability at risk. Therefore, specific studies and actions related to coastal adaptation have been developed. Coastal adaptation strategies will be marked by the following wave symbol:



To support GHG emission reductions, the Town of Coupeville has developed goals and policies marked by the following symbol:



Similar to the Natural Systems Element, the Climate Element aims to protect people and property from natural hazards. Many human actions are drivers of climate change, so proactive approaches to prevent further disruption of natural processes, such as green stormwater infrastructure and low impact development, reducing VMT, and promoting active transportation, are persistent goals of the Climate Element. This element focuses climate change actions on several areas where many co-benefits can be achieved, while acknowledging and addressing the contribution of human activities to global warming. By aligning goals and policies with these co-benefits, the Town aims to clearly reflect community desires in its codes and regulations.



Climate Change Information

“The magnitude and rate of climate change and associated risks depend strongly on near-term mitigation and adaptation actions” (IPCC 2023¹). Coupeville is expected to experience drier, hotter summers, more extreme storm events, and increasingly significant impacts from sea level rise. These changes could lead to increased cooling days for buildings, flooding from extreme storm events and precipitation, and increased erosion risk to local habitats, town residents, and infrastructure. The Town of Coupeville has already demonstrated its commitment to addressing these climate-related hazards and exploring effective adaptation and mitigation strategies. In addition, the Town has taken steps toward effective recovery and response strategies to ensure recurring events are less and less disruptive.

Coastal Adaptation

In 2023, the Town of Coupeville conducted a Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment, followed by a Coastal Adaptation Strategy in 2025. These studies identified flooding and shoreline recession as climate change impacts affecting Coupeville’s coastal areas. Roads, historic

By 2050...
Average summer maximum temperatures may increase by approximately 3.9 degrees Fahrenheit

Total precipitation of the 25-year storm may increase by 7%

There is a 50% chance the town will experience 0.83 feet of relative sea level rise locally

¹ https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_FullVolume.pdf

waterfront buildings, and sewer lines emerged as the three most vulnerable asset classes within the Town. The Coastal Adaptation Strategy outlined potential actions the Town could take, guided by its established priorities and principles:

- Passive management techniques,
- Shore protection,
- Accommodation in place,
- Retreat and relocation, and
- Development restrictions.

Values reflected in the Strategy include preserving the historic character of Coupeville's waterfront district, maintaining existing beach access, and protecting critical infrastructure such as structures threatened by bluff recession. The Coastal Adaptation Strategy is an example of the Town's efforts to understand the impacts of climate change and shift priorities accordingly.

Water Resource Protection

The Town has received a grant to conduct a reclaimed water feasibility study. According to the Washington State Department of Ecology, reclaimed water can be used for:

- Wetland restoration
- Replenishing groundwater supplies
- Increasing the volume of water in rivers and streams
- Dust control and construction activities

In 2023, Coupeville prepared a Nitrogen Optimization Plan. Implementation of this plan will support food security, pollution prevention, soil health, and overall reductions in nitrogen emissions.

Emergency Response

The Town of Coupeville was annexed into the 2020 Island County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan. Earthquakes, severe weather, and coastal erosion were the top three hazards identified in this plan.

Overarching Goals and Policies

The climate resilience goals and policies for this element were developed with an understanding that the Town of Coupeville is a unique location already experiencing impacts of a changing climate and that continued efforts to prepare for these impacts are required. The following guiding goals and policies provide an overarching framework for the Town to address climate change.

Guiding Goal: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) and ameliorate the effects of climate change (adaptation) to foster the community's environmental, economic, and social resilience in the face of shifting conditions, such as sea level rise, more extreme weather events, and human responses to climate change.

Guiding Policy 1: **Mitigation.** Participate with state, regional and local partners to reduce greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the 1990 benchmark and future year targets set forth in state law. Educate the public about climate change and incentivize activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Guiding Policy 2: **Adaptation.** Minimize or ameliorate the impacts of climate change on our community and its ecosystems through climate-informed policies, programs and regulations.

Guiding Policy 3: **Implementation.** Create goals and policies that increase community resilience to climate change by evaluating the implications of climate change on all element areas and developing actions that incorporate those realities to achieve robust long-term outcomes. Goals and policies should result in regulations and work plans for application in all areas of local government oversight, by requiring the evaluation of the implications of climate change in all local decisions.

This climate resilience planning process has established strategies to build community resilience, enhance natural areas, and reduce VMT. Overarching themes articulated in the goals and policies sections below, include:

- Partner with neighboring jurisdictions and community-based groups
- Protect community health by optimizing open space and urban tree cover
- Continue to improve studies and mapping
- Maintain the Town's self-sufficiency through reliable water resources and local food security
- Restore and enhance coastal resources, providing public access while protecting nearshore habitats and upland areas for species reliant on nearshore zones
- Align strategies with land use and building standards to support future growth, ensuring relocation opportunities are available and consistent with development needs—excluding areas that need to be acquired for ecological restoration rather than economic development.
- Strengthen emergency response and preparedness through a variety of strategies including strategic planning, community shelters, and public awareness

Resilience Goals and Policies (Sub Element)

To meet HB 1181's minimum requirements, the Town of Coupeville must include at least one climate resilience goal and supportive policy for each climate-exacerbated hazard relevant to the Town. Commerce encourages jurisdictions to address all 11 comprehensive planning sectors, see *Appendix XX*.

Goal CR-1: Buildings & Energy. Ensure that buildings are designed and built sustainably to reduce environmental impacts and remain resilient to extreme weather and other hazards worsened by climate change.

CR-1.1 Require the design and construction and redevelopment of commercial and residential buildings and their surrounding sites to reduce and treat stormwater

runoff and pollution. Low impact development and green stormwater infrastructure techniques should be incentivized or encouraged, where possible.

- CR-1.2 Reduce stormwater impacts from transportation and development through watershed planning, redevelopment and retrofit projects, and low-impact development.
- CR-1.3 Prioritize the preservation of the historic character of Front Street while actively implementing measures to enhance resilience to rising sea levels. Encourage adaptive strategies for flood protection, infrastructure upgrades, and sustainable urban planning, while ensuring that any development or restoration efforts respect the area's historical significance.
- CR-1.4 Analyze how the municipal water system maintains adequate pressure during a major wildfire event (e.g., multiple structures burning) and how it will look under current and projected drought conditions.
- CR-1.5 Identify mitigation measures to protect structures from wind impacts originating from severe weather events.
-  CR-1.6 Plan and build facilities, utilities, and infrastructure projects to avoid or withstand flooding from rising sea levels and associated climate impacts (e.g., changing flood plains).

Goal CR-2: Agriculture & Food Systems. Encourage the local agricultural economy, including food and materials producers, distributors, and sellers, to be resilient to the impacts of extreme weather and other natural hazards worsened by climate change.

- CR-2.1 Expand local food security and the food-related economy to address climate impacts and increase access to healthy, affordable, and climate-friendly foods.
-  CR-2.2 Support local farmers and the local agricultural economy by providing venues to sell and distribute local food products, such as farmers markets, farm and produce stands, adequate commercial space and other means, such as CSA's.
- CR-2.3 Where feasible, support local agricultural efforts to adapt to changing climate conditions.

Goal CR-3: Cultural Resources & Practices. Enhance resiliency of cultural resources and practices, including significant historic sites, to the impacts of extreme weather and other natural hazards worsened by climate change.

-  CR-3.1 Protect significant historic sites and buildings prone to floods or other hazards worsened by climate change. Where appropriate, incorporate coastal adaptation strategies during preservation, restoration or rehabilitation of historic structures or cultural resources to increase resiliency to rising sea levels.



- CR-3.2 Establish stronger ties and maintain government-to-government relations with Native American tribes for the preservation of archaeological sites and traditional cultural properties that are vulnerable to climate impacts.

Goal CR-4: Emergency Management. Enhance emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts to mitigate risks and impacts associated with extreme weather and other hazards worsened by climate change.

- CR-4.1 Coordinate with Island County to identify and implement strategies for reducing residential development pressure in the wildland-urban interface.
- CR-4.2 Integrate climate impacts risk assessment and policies into the Island County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- CR-4.3 Factor climate impacts into the planning of operations and coordination of preparedness, response, and recovery activities among first responders and partners, including public health, law enforcement, fire, school, and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel.
- CR-4.4 Incorporate sea-level rise information, along with tsunami hazard mapping, into critical area delineation for siting critical infrastructure, land-use planning, and emergency management.

Goal CR-5: Emergency Management. Develop and maintain local government staff members' technical expertise and skills related to climate change and environmental justice to improve communitywide policy implementation, equity, and resilience.

- CR-5.1 Support the Neighborhood Emergency Team's (NET) ability to run drills and provide training and educational materials to residents about local hazards and effective mitigation opportunities.
- CR-5.2 Work with Island County, Washington Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network, and other local jurisdictions to develop recovery planning efforts.
- CR-5.3 Develop and implement a strategy to expedite the management of debris (e.g., downed tree limbs and buildings blocking roads and streams) after a disaster to reduce the risks of subsequent fire, flood, injury, and disease.



Goal CR-6: Health & Well-Being. Protect community health and well-being from the impacts of climate-exacerbated hazards, prioritize focus on overburdened communities in Coupeville, and ensure that the most vulnerable residents do not bear disproportionate health impacts.



- CR-6.1 Protect the health and well-being of outdoor workers exposed to extreme heat and other climate-exacerbated hazards.



- CR-6.2 In coordination with Island County, Coupeville School District, and WhidbeyHealth, develop a year-round resilience hub - a community-serving facility that is designed to support residents, coordinate communication, distribute resources, and reduce carbon pollution while enhancing quality of life.

Goal CR-7: Urban Tree Canopy Cover. Protect and enhance the climate resilience of forested areas in Coupeville by implementing climate-smart forest management.

- CR-7.1 Prioritize native drought- and pest-resistant trees, shrubs, and grasses in restoration efforts and mitigation plans to support climate resilience.
- CR-7.2 Manage tree canopy and forests (including parks, greenbelts and urban forests) to decrease climate-exacerbated risks from severe wildfires, protect residents, and improve ecosystem health and habitat.
- CR- 7.3 Improve and expand urban forest management to maximize or conserve carbon storage.

Goal CR-8: Water Resources. Coordinate with Island County to protect and preserve groundwater aquifers and recharge areas from the impacts of drought, extreme heat, and other hazards exacerbated by climate change.

- CR-8.1 Utilize water conservation methods and technologies in development of irrigation infrastructure within parks and recreation areas to foster climate resilience.
- CR 8.2 Encourage the use of green infrastructure and low-impact development to manage increased storm intensities and stormwater runoff.

Goal CR-9: Zoning and Development. Establish land use patterns that increase the resilience of the built environment, ecosystems, and communities to climate change.

- CR-9.1 Review land use maps to identify opportunities and barriers to respond to rapid population growth or decline, rebuilding housing and services after disasters, and other extreme climate impact scenarios.



- CR-9.2 Consider climate change, including sea-level rise, extreme precipitation, increased winter streamflow, and other impacts, in floodplain management planning.



- CR-9.3 Establish regulations that require the location of new lots and structures outside of sea-level rise hazard areas.



- CR-9.4 Address rising sea water by siting and planning for relocation of hazardous industries and essential public services away from the 500-year floodplain or the projected sea level rise for 2100, whichever is greater.



- CR-9.5 Develop regulations for elevating or setting back new and substantially improved structures to reduce the risk of damage caused by sea level rise.



CR-9.6 During the periodic update cycles of the Shoreline Master Program or Critical Areas Ordinance, review required buffers and setbacks for steep slopes and shorelines vulnerable to erosion exacerbated by climate change, and establish new minimums, if necessary, so that improvements are not required to protect structures during their expected life.



CR-9.7 Develop, implement, and periodically update a plan to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts to the coastline.



CR-9.8 In areas with significant vulnerability to climate hazards, facilitate and support long-term community visioning including consideration of managed retreat.

CR-9.9 Educate residents and consult with qualified professionals regarding the benefits of prescribed burn activities, where appropriate.

Goal CR-10: Transportation. Assess the local transportation system along State Route 20 and on county and town roadways, including infrastructure, routes, and travel modes, to evaluate whether the system can withstand the impacts of extreme weather events and other hazards exacerbated by climate change.



CR-10.1 Map transportation infrastructure that is vulnerable to repeated floods, landslides, and other natural hazards, and designate alternative travel routes for critical transportation corridors when roads must be closed.



CR-10.2 Consider planning for relocation of infrastructure that may be at high risk of flooding, sea level rise, landslides, and other natural hazards.

CR-10.3 Prioritize resiliency measures for areas of the local transportation system that serve as emergency access routes for communities.

Goal CR-11: Transportation. Encourage land conservation to protect ecological functions for properties at risk of climate-related hazards.



CR-11.1 Prioritize acquiring properties or easements identified in the Coastal Adaptation Strategy that may be necessary for public health and safety in the future.



CR 11.2 Design and site new and expanded roads to have the least possible adverse effect on the shoreline, account for sea-level rise projections, not result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions, or adversely impact existing or planned water-oriented uses, public access, and habitat restoration and enhancement projects.



Goal CR-12: Vehicle Miles Travelled Reduction. Reduce vehicle miles traveled to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals.



CR-12.1 Partner with the school district to promote safe, walkable routes.



CR-12.2 Create a safe, well-connected, and attractive bicycle and pedestrian transportation network to encourage active transportation.



CR-12.3 Integrate "Complete Streets" principles into the roadway designs of residential developments.



CR-12.4 Continue supporting Island Transit's endeavors to improve transit speed, frequency, coverage, and reliability in Coupeville and Island County.



CR-12.5 Prioritize and promote public transit and active transportation expansion and use through coordination of land use and transportation planning.

Goal CR-13: Waste Management. Protect and adapt critical infrastructure, including water and sewer facilities, to ensure resiliency from a changing climate.

CR-13.1 Evaluate the long-term adequacy of water delivery infrastructure to ensure that changes in hydrological patterns can be anticipated and managed effectively.



CR-13.2 Evaluate potential increases in future flow projections for the Town's wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) to increase resiliency and capacity over time.



CR-13.3 Encourage planning for the production of reclaimed water for reuse or aquifer recharge, including an investigation into a new wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) to treat portion of flows on the south side of the Town.



Goal CR-14: Economic Development: Promote purchasing from local businesses to support economic development and reduce emissions associated with the transportation, production, and distribution of goods.

CF-14.1 Support local businesses' efforts to bolster climate preparedness and continuity of operations.



CF 14.2 Encourage commercial development and allowable small-scale industrial uses to support a circular economy that increases demand for reused and recycled materials and reduces demand for new raw materials and their embodied carbon emissions.

Goal CR-15: Ecosystems. Protect and restore coastal ecosystems to increase the resilience of species, habitats, and communities to climate change.

CR-15.1 Identify, protect, and restore submerged aquatic vegetation (eelgrass, kelp, etc.) that provides aquatic habitat, "blue" carbon storage, and other ecosystem services, particularly for surf smelt and hard-shell clam habitats.



CR-15.2 Consider sea-level rise in coastal and nearshore habitat restoration projects.



CR-15.3 Require that proposals for shoreline stabilization demonstrate a need and require the use of soft shore stabilization methods to the extent practicable to protect sites from wave-driven erosion or flooding exacerbated by sea level rise.

DRAFT

