

Latah, Rockford, and Waverly

Shoreline Master Program

Shoreline Environmental Designations

June 19, 2013

2.1 Introduction – Environmental Designations

As described in WAC 173-26-191 (1)(d), shoreline master programs shall contain a system to classify shoreline areas into specific environmental designations. Shoreline Environmental Designations (SED) are analogous to zoning designations for areas within the shoreline jurisdiction. SEDs provide a uniform basis for applying policies and use regulations within each designation if allowed by underlying zoning requirements. SEDs are intended to encourage appropriate uses and activities while providing for protection and restoration of shoreline ecological functions.

SEDs are based on existing and proposed land use patterns, the biological and physical character of the shoreline as described in the Shoreline Inventory and Characterization Summary Report, URS, November 2012, and the goals and aspirations of the community expressed through the local comprehensive plan. The shoreline designations are illustrated on the Shorelines Designations Map which is an integral part of the Shoreline Master Program, and is available for public viewing at Town Hall.¹ Characteristics and general management policies for each of the designations are given in Section 3.0.

It is anticipated that reasonable standards, restrictions, and prohibitions on shoreline developments will be instituted as shoreline regulations. This is necessary so that shoreline development will reasonably protect existing uses and shoreline character so that the statewide goal for “No Net Loss” of shoreline ecological functions is achieved.

2.2 Environmental Designation Provisions (WAC 126-211(5))

The information provided for each SED generally follows the state classification guidelines (WAC 173-26-211 (4) and (5)). The state guidelines provide a recommended classification system. Local governments may establish a different designation system or may retain their current environment designations (WAC 173-26-211(5), 211(4)(c)(i)).

The new SEDs that reflect the findings of the 2010 shoreline inventory and of current shoreline uses as well as to allow for management of the shorelines under the new state guidelines. The proposed SED categories are Aquatic (AQ), Rural Conservancy (RC),

¹ In the event of a mapping error, the jurisdiction will rely upon common boundary descriptions and the criteria contained in RCW 90.58.030(2) and Chapter 173-22 WAC pertaining to determinations of shorelands, as amended, rather than the incorrect or outdated map.

Urban Conservancy (UC), Shoreline Residential (SR), and High Intensity (HI). These SEDs closely reflect the state standards but minor revisions to the state standard designation criteria and management policies have been incorporated.

The AQ designation is intended for work within and over the water. The RC designation allows continuation of agricultural uses within the municipal limits while the UC designation provides more emphasis on public access, vegetation conservation and restoration. The SR designation is used for residential areas. The HI designation recognizes the importance of the commercial areas to the community.

2.2.1 Aquatic Environment

2.2.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the “aquatic” environment is to protect, restore, and manage the unique characteristics and resources of the areas waterward of the ordinary high water mark.

2.2.1.2 Designation Criteria

Assign an "aquatic" environment designation to lands waterward of the ordinary high-water mark.

2.2.1.3 Management Policies

- a. Allow new over-water structures only for water-dependent uses, public access, or ecological restoration.
- b. The size of new over-water structures should be limited to the minimum necessary to support the structure's intended use.
- c. All developments and uses should be located and designed to minimize interference with surface navigation, to consider impacts to public views, and to allow for the safe, unobstructed passage of fish and wildlife.
- d. Shoreline uses and modifications should be designed and managed to prevent degradation of water quality and alteration of natural hydrographic conditions.
- e. Allow for maintenance and expansion of existing flood control facilities needed to protect the community. Maintenance activities include dredging and levee maintenance.
- f. Allow consideration of in-stream modifications to retain water for habitat, recreation, and aesthetics.
- g. Permitting for activities and structures within the aquatic environment shall comply with all state and federal laws, including coordination with applicable agencies.

2.2.2 Urban Conservancy Environment

2.2.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the "urban conservancy" environment is to protect and restore ecological functions of open space, floodplain and other sensitive lands where they exist in urban and developed settings, while allowing a variety of compatible uses.

2.2.2.2 Designation Criteria

Assign an "urban conservancy" environment designation to shoreline areas appropriate and planned for development that is compatible with maintaining or restoring of the ecological functions of the area, that are not generally suitable for water-dependent uses and that lie in incorporated municipalities, urban growth areas, or commercial or industrial "rural areas of more intense development" if any of the following characteristics apply:

- a. They are suitable for water-related or water-enjoyment uses.
- b. They are open space, flood plain or other sensitive areas that should not be more intensively developed.
- c. They have potential for ecological restoration.
- d. They retain important ecological functions, even though partially developed; or
- e. They have the potential for development that is compatible with ecological restoration.

2.2.2.3 Management Policies

- a. Uses that preserve the natural character of the area or promote preservation of open space, floodplain or sensitive lands either directly or over the long term should be the primary allowed uses. Uses that result in restoration of ecological functions should be allowed if the use is otherwise compatible with the purpose of the environment and the setting.
- b. Allow continuation of existing low intensity agricultural uses
- c. Standards should be established for shoreline stabilization measures, vegetation conservation, water quality, and shoreline modifications within the "urban conservancy" designation. These standards shall ensure that new development does not result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions or further degrade other shoreline values.
- d. Public access and public recreation objectives should be implemented whenever feasible and significant ecological impacts can be mitigated.
- e. Water-oriented uses should be given priority over non-water oriented uses.

2.2.3 Shoreline Residential Environment

2.2.3.1 Purpose

The purpose of the "shoreline residential" environment is to accommodate residential development and appurtenant structures that are consistent with this chapter. An additional purpose is to provide appropriate public access and recreational uses.

2.2.3.2 Designation Criteria

Assign a "shoreline residential" environment designation to shoreline areas if they are predominantly single-family or multifamily residential development or are planned and platted for residential development.

2.2.3.3 Management Policies

- a. Standards for density or minimum frontage width, setbacks, lot coverage limitations, buffers, shoreline stabilization, vegetation conservation, critical area protection, and water quality shall be set to assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions, taking into account the environmental limitations and sensitivity of the shoreline area, the level of infrastructure and services available, and other comprehensive planning considerations.
- b. Multifamily and multi-lot residential and recreational developments should provide public access and joint use for community recreational facilities.
- c. Access, utilities, and public services should be available and adequate to serve existing needs and/or planned future development.

2.2.4 Shoreline Mixed Use Environment

2.2.4.1 Purpose

The purpose of the "shoreline mixed use" environment is to accommodate mixed use development including residential, commercial, institutional, utility and industrial development that is consistent with the shoreline management act, creates a unique urban waterfront environment, enhances aesthetic appeal, provides public access, and allows compatible uses. This proposed environment is intended to provide an environment similar to the Residential Environment but allowing for non-residential uses.

2.2.4.2 Designation Criteria

Assign a "shoreline mixed use" environment designation to shoreline areas that are predominately non-residential in nature. Areas that are predominately non-residential commercial but not developed or have been developed in the past but not currently in productive use should be considered for this designation.

2.2.4.3 Management Policies

- a. Standards should be established for shoreline stabilization measures, vegetation conservation, water quality, and shoreline modifications within the "shoreline mixed use" designation. These standards shall ensure that new development does not result

in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions or further degrade other shoreline values.

- b. Public access and public recreation objectives should be implemented whenever feasible and significant ecological impacts can be mitigated.
- c. Water-oriented uses should be given priority over non-water oriented uses. For shoreline areas adjacent to commercially navigable waters, water-dependent uses should be given highest priority.
- d. Policies and regulations shall assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions as a result of new development. Where applicable, new development shall include environmental cleanup and restoration of the shoreline to comply with any relevant state and federal law.
- e. Where feasible, visual and physical public access should be required as provided for in WAC 173-26-221(4)(d).
- f. Aesthetic objectives should be implemented by means such as sign control regulations, appropriate development siting, screening and architectural standards, and maintenance of natural vegetative buffers.
- g. Access, utilities, and public services should be available and adequate to serve existing needs and/or planned future development.