



YELM
WASHINGTON

2025-2045
CITY OF YELM
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



City of Yelm Comprehensive Plan 2025

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Introduction

The Yelm Comprehensive Plan (Plan) establishes the vision of the City of Yelm for the ongoing and future development of the community over the next 20 to 25 years. The Plan is a broad statement of goals and policies that direct the orderly and coordinated physical development of our city into the future.

The 2025 update includes new goals and policies based on comments and ideas from the public, local stakeholders, and City Boards and Commissions, along with applicable goals from the Sustainable Thurston Development Plan for the Thurston Region and the JBLM Joint Land Use Study.

The Plan is written in the context of the State Growth Management Act, which mandates issues that must be addressed in a comprehensive plan and County-wide planning policies, which identify how certain aspects of growth management planning are to be met in Thurston County.

The Plan is intended to apply within the Yelm City Limits. The plan which applies to the Yelm Urban Growth Area is the Yelm/Thurston County Joint Plan, which was jointly adopted by the Yelm City Council and the Thurston County Board of Commissioners in 2023.

The Plan is organized by subject matter, with each main topic having an objective, general goals, and policies. The maps, goals, and policies provide the basis for the adoption of regulations, programs, and services which implement the Plan.

The Plan is to be revisited not less than every eight years to review population progress, the effectiveness of the existing plan, and the need for change.

The Plan is designed to incorporate and coordinate many of the Yelm planning documents into a coordinated whole. For purposes of a complete picture, the "Yelm Comprehensive Plan" references and coordinates with the following documents:

- Yelm Transportation Plan
- Yelm Water System Plan
- Yelm General Sewer Plan
- Yelm Parks Plan
- Yelm Housing Action Plan



1 | GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT PLANNING PARAMETERS



Growth Management Act

Planning Parameters

Growth Management Act

The City of Yelm participates in comprehensive planning under the provisions of the Growth Management Act, Chapter 36.70A RCW. The purpose of the Act is to promote responsive, responsible local planning to accomplish 15 identified statewide goals.

The following State Growth Management Act goals are adopted to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations of those counties and cities that are required or choose to plan under RCW 36.70A.040. The following goals are not listed in order of priority and shall be used exclusively for the purpose of guiding the development of comprehensive plans and development regulations:

1. **Urban growth.** Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
2. **Reduce sprawl.** Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.
3. **Transportation.** Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.
4. **Housing.** Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.
5. **Economic development.** Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.
6. **Property rights.** Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.
7. **Permits.** Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.
8. **Natural resource industries.** Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.
9. **Open space and recreation.** Retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities.
10. **Environment.** Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.
11. **Citizen participation and coordination.** Encourage the involvement of citizens in the

planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.

12. Public facilities and services. Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.

13. Historic preservation. Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.

14. Climate change and resiliency. Ensure that comprehensive plans, development regulations, and regional policies, plans, and strategies under RCW [36.70A.210](#) and chapter [47.80](#) RCW adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate; support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled; prepare for climate impact scenarios; foster resiliency to climate impacts and natural hazards; protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety; and advance environmental justice.

15. Shorelines of the state. For shorelines of the state, the goals and policies of the shoreline management act as set forth in RCW [90.58.020](#) shall be considered an element of the county's or city's comprehensive plan.

County-Wide Planning Policies (CWPP)

Thurston County, with the advice of the Cities and Towns in Thurston County, adopted County-Wide Planning Policies (CWPP) to aid and focus the Growth Management planning activities in Thurston County. These County-Wide Planning Policies were specifically approved by the City of Yelm.

2 | GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principles

Goal 1: Plan and act toward zero waste in the region.

Policy 1.1: Support efforts to maintain a rate structure that will incentivize waste prevention, as well as implement policy and support waste reduction programs.

Goal 2: Ensure that residents have the resources to meet their daily needs.

Policy 2.1: Support a coordinated and streamlined approach to social service planning and funding in County.

Goal 3: Ensure that the region's water supply sustains people in perpetuity while protecting the environment.

Policy 3.1: Support regional efforts to find resources to create, maintain, and update a water systems plan that explores ways to manage water resources in the Thurston Region more holistically.

Goal 4: Move toward a carbon-neutral community.

Policy 4.1: Support regional efforts to find resources to create a balanced Thurston Region climate action plan.

Policy 4.2: Drawing on information obtained from the City's Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Greenhouse Gas Inventory, implement policies that result in the reduction of carbon emissions.

Policy 4.3: Promote alternative modes of transportation to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

Goal 5: Provide opportunities in the Thurston Region to learn about and practice sustainability.

Policy 5.1: Support regional efforts to find resources to ensure continued focus on sustainability actions, education, and coordination.

Goal 6: Make strategic decisions and investments to advance sustainability regionally.

Policy 6.1: Support regional efforts to develop a generic sustainability checklist for modification and use by local jurisdictions.

Policy 6.2: Incorporate a locally adopted sustainability checklist into the decision-making process for funding allocations, comprehensive plan amendments, and capital facilities investments.



Goal 7: Support public and private local food systems to increase community resilience, health, and economic prosperity.

Policy 7.1: Support regional efforts to find resources to create a local food systems plan.

Goal 8: Become a model for sustainability and livability. Identify resources, organizational structure, and educational opportunities to achieve regional sustainability goals.

Policy 8.1: Support regional efforts to identify and secure funding to implement actions to achieve Sustainable Thurston goals and vision.

Policy 8.2: Participate in regional efforts to monitor progress in achieving Sustainable Thurston goals and targets.

Policy 8.3: Support regional efforts to create a regional grant center to provide assistance in identifying and applying for grants.

Policy 8.4: Coordinate and collaborate with outreach and planning efforts that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Policy 8.5: Support regional efforts to find resources for demonstration projects which support innovative community ideas and projects that support Sustainable Thurston priority goals.

Goal 9: Create a safe and vibrant city that fosters entrepreneurship, active transportation, civic pride, and a sense of place.

Policy 9.1: Encourage commercial and cultural activities in Yelm.

Policy 9.2: Continue to support coordinated economic and community building activities among South County communities.

Policy 9.3: Identify opportunities to support existing and prospective entrepreneurs in Yelm.



Policy 9.4: Support workforce development training in southern Thurston County to promote new industries.

Policy 9.5: Improve marketing of potential development and business opportunities available in South County.

Policy 9.6: Support efforts to develop an infrastructure for tourism in South Thurston County.

Policy 9.7: Invest public money to attract private investment in the development of the South County centers.

Policy 9.8: Coordinate with Thurston County to ensure that future development that generates pass-through traffic within incorporated communities pays its fair share for necessary road improvements.

Policy 9.9: Promote telework in South County towns and cities to keep workers and their dollars local and reduce vehicle miles traveled.

Goal 10: Improve regulatory clarity and predictability to encourage urban infill and redevelopment.

Policy 10.1: Plan at the neighborhood level and involve the neighborhoods in the planning process.

Policy 10.2: Ensure that housing as envisioned in different areas is feasible to finance and build.

Policy 10.3: Offer financial and project development incentives for reducing environmental impacts.

Policy 10.4: Develop codes, policies and incentives to accommodate affordable housing in all residential areas.

Goal 11: Promote future development that protects public health, safety, and welfare by minimizing risk to life, property, and the well-being of Yelm residents from military training operations and maintaining compatibility with current and foreseeable missions at Joint Base Lewis - McChord (JBLM).

Policy 11.1: Continue to support the unique and vital mission capabilities of JBLM and the significant contribution of the installation, military personnel, families, and civilian workers to the economic base of the community and region.

Policy 11.2: Partner with JBLM and the South Sound Military and Communities Partnership to anticipate and meet community growth and service demands related to military mission change and to ensure that Yelm residents participate fully in economic opportunities and outreach activities associated with the installation.

Goal 12: Foster meaningful, ongoing communication among Yelm residents, JBLM, the South Sound Military and Communities Partnership and other regional partners to increase awareness of Department of Defense and other federal

and state missions and activities and to coordinate on ongoing compatibility planning and management activities.

Policy 12.1: Continue Yelm's participation in the implementation of the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) by appointing primary points of contact to facilitate the communication and coordination strategies recommended in the JLUS Report.

Policy 12.2: Work with JBLM to establish ongoing communication mechanisms for issues of mutual concern, including mission or operational changes that could affect the surrounding community or specific development and infrastructure projects that could affect compatibility with training operations.

Policy 12.3: Partner with JBLM to make information on the potential impacts of training operations available to residents.

Policy 12.4: Review community development and infrastructure proposals for interaction that could produce compatibility challenges with training operations, including: noise sensitive uses in areas of known exposure to aviation and range noise; physical infrastructure that could interfere with low-level flight operations; and sources of electrical emissions that could interfere with military communications or navigation systems.

Policy 12.5: Provide notice to JBLM for review and comment on Yelm's discretionary land use actions such as comprehensive plan amendments, rezones, development regulation changes, and land use permits.

Goal 13: Coordinate Planning Activities With Regional Partners

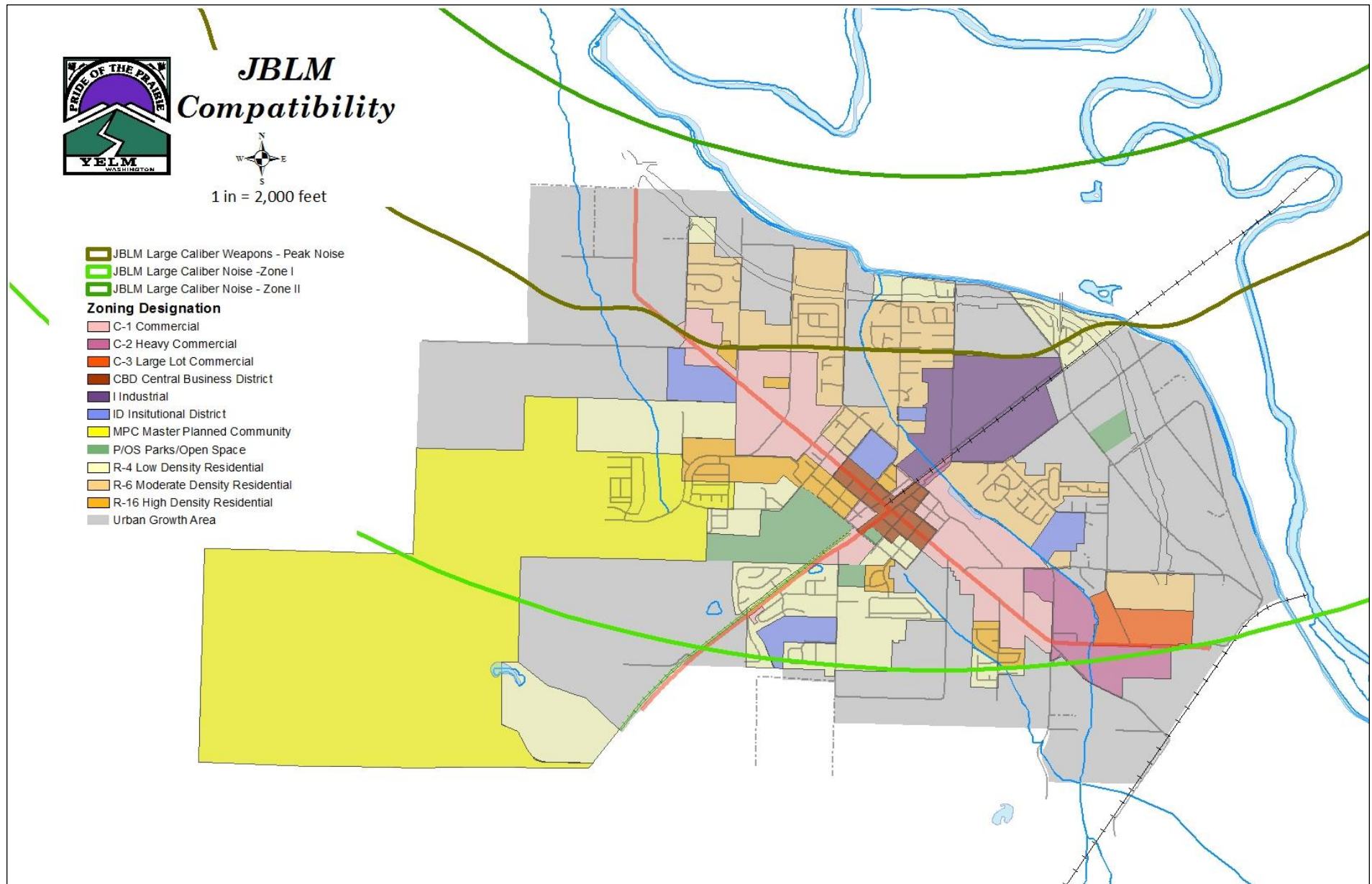
Policy 13.1: Cooperate with Thurston County in planning activities through notification when updating policies and plans and by reviewing and commenting on Thurston County policies and plans which may affect the residents of Yelm.

Policy 13.2: Notify the Nisqually Tribe during plan reviews and updates and encourage the tribe to participate in local planning activities.

Policy 13.3: Communicate with JBLM about long-range planning actions within the City.

Policy 13.4: Participate in regional planning activities to address natural disasters, including, but not limited to, earthquakes, flooding, and wildfires.

Figure 2-1: JBLM Compatibility



3 | LAND USE



Land Use

The City of Yelm is rapidly growing. In the span of merely 25 years, Yelm has grown from approximately 3,200 people in the year 2000, to a current population of just over 11,000 today. Over the next 20 years, Yelm is expecting to more than double, with a projected population of nearly 26,000 by 2045.

One of the reasons for this growth is that people find Yelm a nice place to live and raise their families. The small town feel of Yelm, combined with its convenient access to many regional treasures, such as Mount Rainier, make it an attractive choice for many.

While the convenient location of Yelm won't change, maintaining its small-town character is the City's challenge as it continues to grow rapidly. The transition from a small to a medium-sized community inevitably causes some growing pains. Some in the community have become concerned that their quality of life will diminish. Some may remember old pastures that are now being developed as an apartment complex or a convenience store.

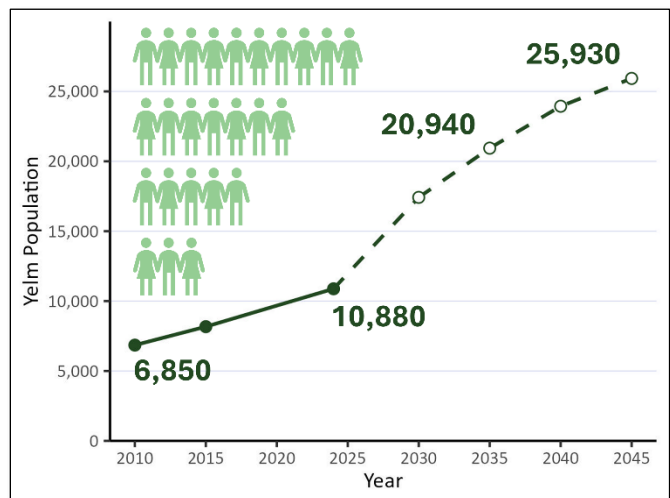
While growth will undoubtedly come with certain kinds of impacts, such as increased traffic, and a greater population density, forward-thinking land use policies can help shape growth to simultaneously lessen those impacts and maintain the community's vision of the kind of place it wants to be.

There are also benefits to the community stemming from growth. For example, commercial development offers the City's citizens more options for shopping in town, while at the same time contributing to the City's tax base. And, with an increased tax base, there are more resources to provide parks and recreation for the community as a whole.

The objective of the Land Use chapter is to establish Yelm as an urban center which provides for a wide variety of goods and services for Yelm's service area, jobs for its residents and the wider community, and a variety of housing types and styles for all of its residents in an efficient and sustainable fashion while preserving Yelm's history.

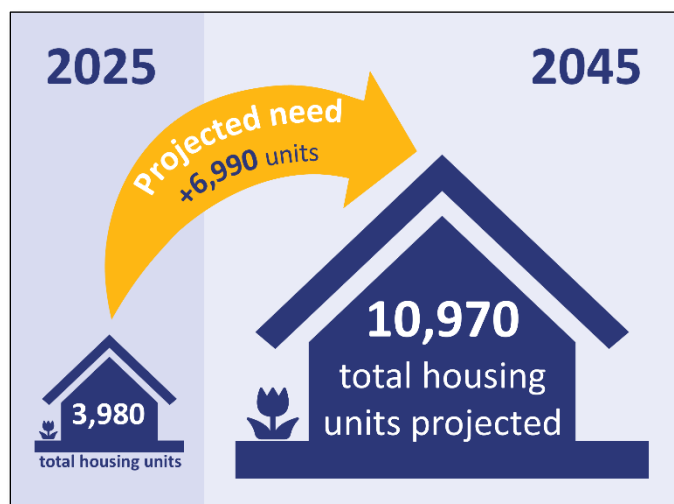
Figure 3-1 below shows Yelm's population growth increasing from 6,850 residents in 2010 to 25,930 projected for 2045. Figure 3-2 shows 3,980 current housing units with 10,970 unit need projected by 2045.

Figure 3-1 Population projections



Source: Population Estimates and Forecast, Thurston Regional Planning Council, 2025

Figure 3-2 Housing Units, projected for 2045.



Goal 1: Create a comprehensive plan with goals and policies which fosters balanced sustainable approaches to managing growth within Yelm.

Policy 1.1 Adopt comprehensive plan goals and policies that address the statewide Growth Management Act (GMA) goals within Yelm.

Policy 1.2 Adopt comprehensive plan goals and policies that implement the County Wide Planning Policies (CWPP) within Yelm.

Policy 1.3 Adopt comprehensive plan goals and policies that accommodate projected growth (legally required under the Washington State Growth Management Act) as well as economic forces which will shape the future of the community.

Policy 1.4 Adopt urban growth boundaries for Yelm which encourage urban development at urban densities with urban services.

Policy 1.5 Recognize the property rights of landowners in Yelm.

Policy 1.6 Respect property owners' legal rights when implementing this plan. Regulations should provide for compensation for the property owner of waivers from requirements if the implementation of the regulation would otherwise constitute a legally defined "taking."

Policy 1.7 Process comprehensive plan amendments no more than once per calendar year, except in cases of emergency.

Policy 1.8 Provide public notices, encourage public participation, and allow public input at all phases of the comprehensive plan review process.

Goal 2: Create a sustainable community.

Policy 2.1 Utilize the following definition of sustainable development within this comprehensive plan as a foundation for decision making: "Provide for current needs while not

compromising the availability of resources for future needs."

Policy 2.2 Adopt goals, policies, and development regulations designed to foster sustainable development through tools such as:

- Smart Growth;
- Low Impact Development; and
- Built Green/LEED standards.

Policy 2.3 Adopt policies and development regulations to implement smart growth principles that:

- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration (public participation);
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities;
- Provide a variety of transportation choices;
- Mix land uses in appropriate scale for the neighborhood. This may include apartments over retail and commercial space, or residential and commercial areas in close proximity;
- Preserve open space, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas;
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices;
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place;
- Create walkable neighborhoods;
- Take advantage of compact building design; and
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.

Policy 2.4 Adopt development regulations that implement low impact development (LID) stormwater provisions.

Policy 2.5 Adopt development regulation incentives that encourage sustainable development such as Green/LEED or Home Energy Rating System ratings in the construction of new or significantly remodeled structures.

Goal 3: Establish a variety of land uses and densities that supports a compact form and urban densities.

Policy 3.1 Adopt land use designations, a land use map, and development regulations that accommodate a variety of land use categories and densities.

Policy 3.2 Adopt two categories of residential single family land use to meet community needs:

- Single Family – Minimum and maximum of 4 units per acre; and
- Single Family – No less than 4, and up to 6 units per acre.

Policy 3.3 Adopt two categories of residential multifamily land use to meet community needs:

- Multifamily - Moderate Density — No less than 4, and up to 6 units per acre; and
- Multifamily - High Density — 16 units per acre.

Policy 3.4 Adopt a mixed use development category which allows both residential and commercial uses suitable for planned developments on larger parcels and which provides for a variety of land uses, more efficient use of open space, and more cost-effective public infrastructure.

Policy 3.5 Adopt a variety of commercial land use categories to meet community needs.

Policy 3.6 Adopt industrial land uses to meet community needs.

Policy 3.7 Adopt land use designations which reflect limited development potential. It may include:

- Publicly-owned lands;
- Lands permanently set aside as open space; or
- Lands with sensitive areas.

Policy 3.8 Consider the required level of public facilities and utilities when planning for various urban densities and types of land use.

Policy 3.9 Adopt provisions in the Yelm Municipal Code that will facilitate the development of pocket parks in new developments.

Policy 3.10 Allow parks in all zoning districts.

Policy 3.11 Evaluate zoning changes in residential districts to allow small scale commercial development as a special use when it will enhance the character and livability of individual neighborhoods by:

- Promoting walkability to conveniences
- Developing a sense of place within the neighborhood
- Reducing the need to drive and park at more remote commercial locations

Goal 4: Provide guidance for a cohesive city.

Policy 4.1 Adopt development regulations and subdivision standards that require new multi-lot subdivisions to provide a network of connected streets which are integrated into Yelm’s existing street system.

Policy 4.2 Adopt development regulations that require new development projects to address public transit, and where necessary to accommodate new and potential transit stops.

Policy 4.3 Adopt development regulations that allow parking to be shared by two or more businesses, and joint-use parking between non-competing uses (e.g. the same parking might be used for office workers during the week and by shoppers during the weekend).

Policy 4.4 Adopt development regulations that accommodate “live-work” structures (where citizens can live and work within the same structure).

Policy 4.5 Adopt sign regulations designed to support business establishments while protecting community character. The sign code may:

- Provide community wayfinding signage;
- Encourage pedestrian-oriented signs with a consistent character; and
- Allow for eccentric signs in some locations.

Policy 4.6 Adopt development regulations that allow permits to be processed in a timely and efficient manner.

Goal 5: Encourage diverse residential growth.

Policy 5.1 Encourage new residential subdivisions to incorporate alleys into their street network by providing increased density incentives.

Policy 5.2 Adopt development standards that allow duplexes, townhouses, and accessory dwelling units within residential areas. These are intended to increase the variety of housing in the community and aid in achieving an overall urban density.

Policy 5.3 Adopt development regulations that encourage mixed use subdivisions.

Policy 5.4 Adopt policies and development regulations that incentivize affordable housing, including, but not limited to, reduced system development charges, reduced impact fees, upzones in exchange for a percentage of the

increased housing being made permanently affordable.

Goal 6: Encourage commercial and industrial growth that serves the needs of the City.

Policy 6.1 Define the boundaries between the Central Business District and other commercially zoned areas along Yelm Avenue. This is roughly between Solberg Street NW/SW, Stevens Avenue NE/NW, 4th Street NE/SE and Mosman Avenue SW/SE.

Policy 6.2 Adopt development and design regulations for the Central Business District (CBD) which:

- a. Allows pedestrian-oriented businesses, such as open-air restaurants;
- b. Locates buildings or amenities related to the use of the building, such as a dining area directly adjacent to the street, and prohibits off-street parking in front of the structure;
- c. Retains pedestrian-oriented character with wide sidewalks, street landscaping, and pedestrian amenities along Yelm Avenue; and
- d. Retains on-street parking throughout the CBD.

Policy 6.3 Adopt development regulations limiting the location and design of fast-food restaurants.

Policy 6.4 Adopt development and design regulations that encourage compatibility and connectivity between commercial and residential land uses.

Policy 6.5 Locate industrial areas on major transportation routes, near existing utilities, and where they can be appropriately buffered from adjacent land uses.

Policy 6.6 Locate warehouse, assembly, and distribution land uses on the perimeter of the

industrial area, with manufacturing/industrial located toward the center of the industrial land use designation.

Goal 7: Participate in joint planning with Thurston County for Yelm’s urban growth area.

Policy 7.1 Support a joint planning process between the City of Yelm and Thurston County for lands which lie within the Yelm UGA and may incorporate into Yelm’s City limits.

Policy 7.2 Review Yelm’s UGA boundary no less frequently than once every two years.

Policy 7.3 Ensure that any change to Yelm’s UGA boundary is consistent with the County Wide Planning Policies.

Policy 7.4 Establish pre-annexation zoning for lands within the Yelm UGA boundary.

Policy 7.5 Evaluate properties which could be annexed by Yelm based upon the availability of utilities.

Policy 7.6 Defer annexing unincorporated lands shown on the Future Land Use Map until the property can be served by the City water and sewer systems.

Policy 7.7 Defer changing the land use categories adopted in a Joint Plan for a period of three (3) years without the written concurrence from the other jurisdiction.

Policy 7.8 Analyze and provide comment to Thurston County on any proposed development within the unincorporated lands shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Goal 8: Foster regional coordination.

Policy 8.1 Educate the public and local businesses regarding the planning process which can include comprehensive plan amendments, development regulation updates, and the adoption

of functional plans for parks, water, sewer, transportation, and capital facilities.

Policy 8.2 Coordinate and provide notification of proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan or development regulations to adjacent jurisdictions and governmental entities (e.g. Thurston County, Intercity Transit, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, and the Nisqually Tribe) providing them an opportunity to comment prior to final action.

Policy 8.3: Support the transfer of development rights (TDR) program to conserve important natural and/or cultural resources (e.g. long-term agricultural lands, historic properties, or significant wildlife habitat) within the rural portion of Thurston County.

Goal 9: Foster historic preservation.

Policy 9.1: Adopt development regulations that provide incentives to protect, preserve, and restore historic properties.

Goal 10: Create safe and vibrant neighborhoods with places that build community and encourage active transportation.

Policy 10.1 Plan at the neighborhood level to increase housing density and diversity while preserving neighborhood character and quality of life.

Policy 10.2 Plan for land use patterns that provide most neighborhood residents an array of basic services within a half mile or 20 minute walk from home.

Policy 10.3 Encourage appropriately-scaled home-based business and live/work opportunities in neighborhoods.

Policy 10.4 Support Intercity Transit efforts to expand transit routes and increase service frequency where the density, land uses, street design, and location of neighborhoods between

main activity center destinations will result in good service usage.

Policy 10.5 Identify opportunities for small urban centers with a mix of land uses and densities in Greenfield and Brownfield buildable lands.

Policy 10.6 Identify and build street and path connections within existing neighborhoods and design well-connected streets within new neighborhoods.

Policy 10.7 Increase opportunities for urban agriculture.

Policy 10.8 Encourage and, when possible, provide non-motorized options for travel, to reduce vehicle traffic and associated carbon emissions, while promoting healthy exercise.

Policy 10.9 Evaluate the potential for small-scale commercial development as a special use when it will enhance the character and livability of individual neighborhoods (See also Policy 3.11).

Goal 11: Maximize opportunity to redevelop land in priority areas by investing in infrastructure and environmental remediation.

Policy 11.1 Mitigate the additional cost of development in centers and corridors by making public infrastructure investment that adds value, safety and public enjoyment for the entire community and that result in appropriate public return on investment when adjacent properties are developed. Allow for latecomers and other methods of repayment for government outlay for infrastructure.

Policy 11.2 Identify additional funding sources to make building infrastructure as part of a priority infill housing project more financially viable.

Policy 11.3 Conduct soil and groundwater assessments and evaluate appropriate remediation options where contaminated soils and groundwater exist. Identify funds for assessment

and remediation. Apply for grants and loans to complete clean-up.

Policy 11.4 Encourage mechanisms to allow private development that constructs public road improvements (such as curb, gutter, sidewalks, or travel lanes) the opportunity for latecomers or other methods of repayment.

Goal 12: Support the local production, processing, and sale of local food products.

Policy 12.1 Provide for public and private food processing centers in development regulations.

Policy 12.2 Allow for the location of farmers markets, food cooperatives, and community gardens in development regulations.

Policy 12.3 Allow the use of commercial kitchens in churches, fraternal organizations, and schools for processing local food products and to support food trucks.

Policy 12.4 Identify public spaces for community gardens and other food production.

Policy 12.5 Support regional efforts to create a local agricultural economy.

Goal 13: Enhance land use compatibility between JBLM and property in the surrounding area to protect public health and safety.

Policy 13.1 Consider the Military Influence Area as identified in the Joint Land Use Plan prepared by Joint Base Lewis-McChord and the surrounding communities when reviewing and updating plans and policies. Specifically consider compatible land uses based on noise from the Installation Operational Noise Management Plan.

Policy 13.2 Consider the use of open spaces adjacent to Joint Base Lewis-McChord as part of overall compatibility strategies.

Goal 14: Support proactive efforts to reduce the risk from natural disasters.

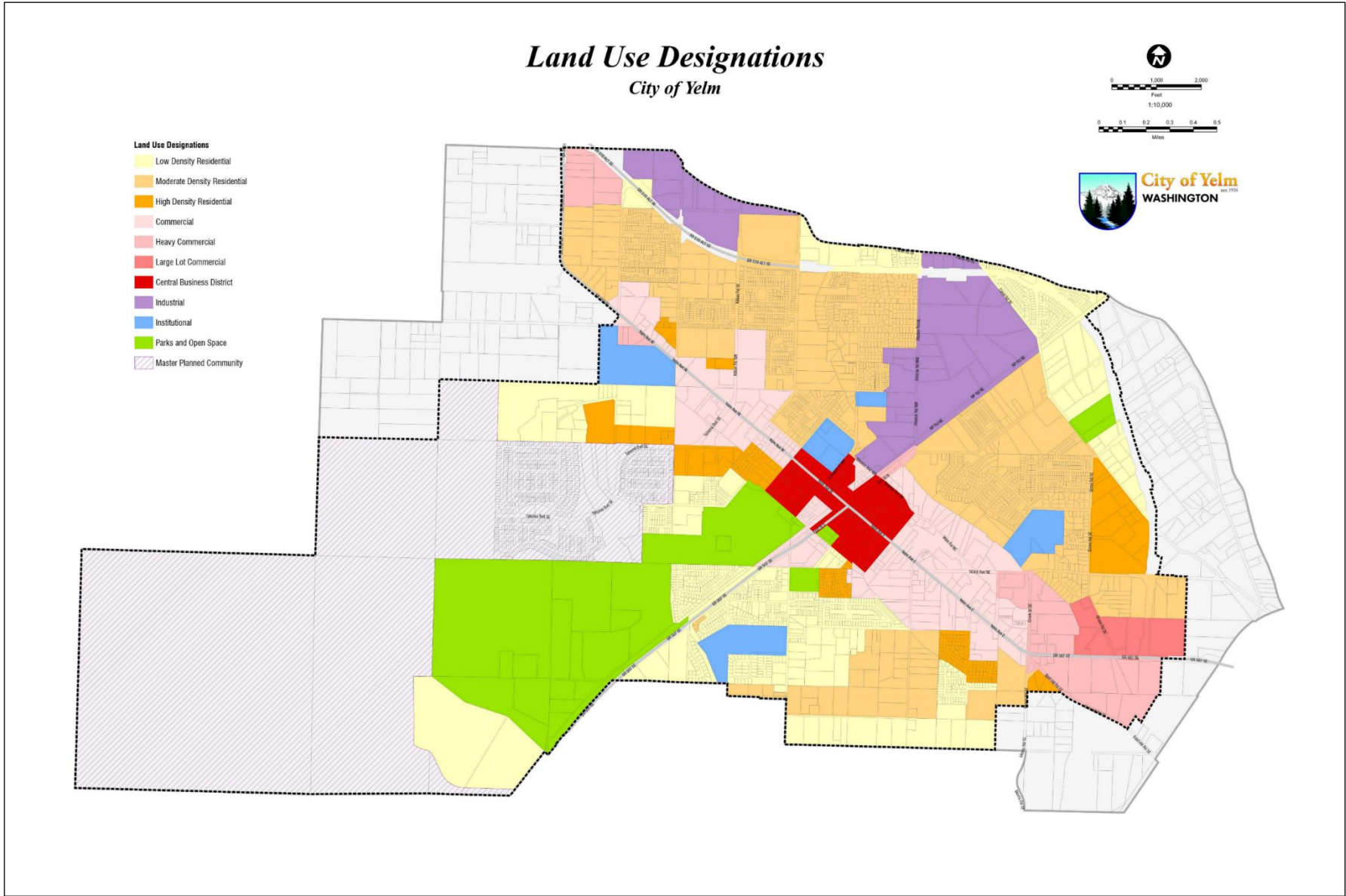
Policy 14.1 Continue to participate in the Thurston County Hazard Mitigation Planning Workgroup to develop regional strategies to address risks from earthquakes, floods, dam failure, severe weather, landslides, and wildfires.

Policy 14.2 Continue to participate in efforts to plan for wildfire risks, including the Thurston Conservation District's Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Policy 14.3 Consider adopting all or portions of the Wildland Urban Interface Code for those areas of Yelm which meet the criteria to be deemed a Wildland Urban Interface.

Policy 14.4 Make Yelm a "fire adapted community" by promoting programs such as Firewise USA.

Figure 3-3: Land Use Designations & Population Densities



Source: City of Yelm Community Development Department

Population Densities

The City of Yelm's Land Use Map Consists of eleven zones that establish the framework for different use categories and housing densities. In addition to the residential zones, The City of Yelm allows mixed use developments in all the commercial zoning districts.

- **R-4 Low Density Residential** – The R-4 zone provides land for single family dwellings at approximately four units per acre.
- **R-6 Moderate Density Residential** – The R-6 zone provides a mix of single-family dwellings and small-scale multifamily dwellings, such as townhomes and duplexes at approximately six units per acre.
- **R-16 High Density Residential** – The R-16 zone provides high density, multifamily dwellings, such as apartments, and townhomes between approximately eight to 16 units per acre.
- **C-1 Light Commercial** - The C-1 zone allows mixed-use developments that include high density of at least 16 units per acre.
- **C-2 Heavy Commercial** - The C-2 zone allows mixed-use developments that include high density of at least 16 units per acre.
- **C-3 Large Lot Commercial** - The C-3 zone allows mixed-use developments that include high density of at least 16 units per acre.

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Source: City of Yelm Community Development Department

4 | HOUSING



Housing

The Housing Element is the guiding document the City of Yelm will use to plan future housing needs. This plan evaluates the existing housing availability, predicts the housing needs through 2045, and establishes goals and policies to accommodate the upcoming housing demand.

In 2021, the Washington State Legislature added several new requirements to the Growth Management Act, adopted in House Bill 1220, that requires jurisdictions to “plan for and accommodate housing that is affordable to all economic segments of the population.”

Current Challenges

Yelm is a military-based community of just over 11,000 people with unique housing needs and challenges, which stem from its military personnel economy and demographics. Yelm faces an exponential growth projection, which indicates a need for higher density and additional housing units including an increase in available rental units to balance the supply and demand of housing stock as the city grows.

Housing costs in Yelm continue to rise and are not attainable for a steadily growing population. Strategies need to be created to address the temporary and permanent housing gaps in the city. Key findings from the Yelm Housing Needs Assessment are as follows:

- 1. *Growing population:*** The city’s population is expected to more than double within city limits by 2045, and 6,690 additional units are projected to be needed to accommodate the anticipated growth.
- 2. *Existing Housing Stock:*** The housing stock is comprised primarily of single-family detached homes. 77.5 percent of homes in Yelm are single-family detached. Apartment buildings with 20+ units are the next most prevalent, at 6.2%. The existing housing stock does not include enough rental units for renters with an annual income of less than \$75,000. The City has seen an increase of nearly 400 apartment units constructed since 2020 with approximately 400 more units that have been applied for in 2025.



3. Cost Burdened Households: Approximately 33 percent of households in Yelm are severely cost-burdened. Those residents fall in the lower end of the income spectrum, and they are typically renters, rather than homeowners. Cost-burdened residents can face difficult choices between prioritizing whether money is spent on housing and other household needs, or on food, clothing, transportation, and medical care, in addition to housing instability.

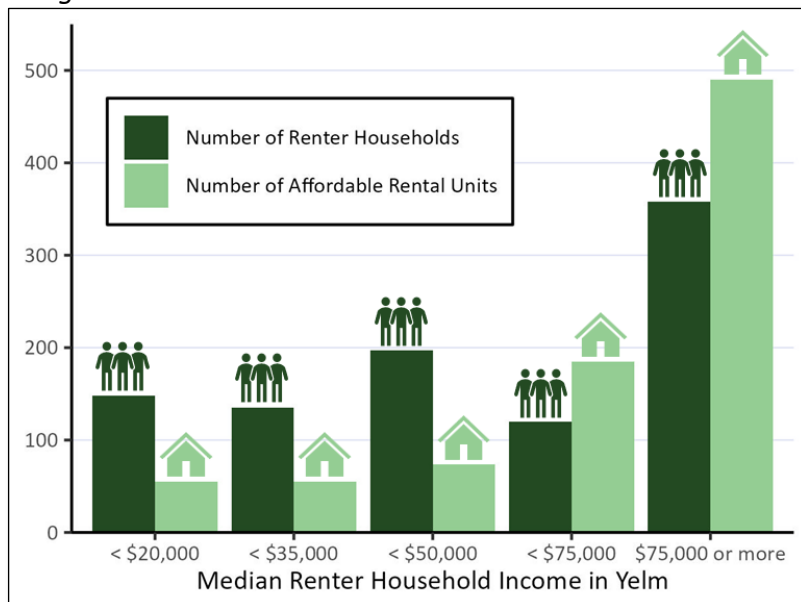
4. Affordability vs. Availability: Analysis of the housing prices, values, and supply indicate that Yelm's residents face an issue of housing availability, more than affordability. Based on Median Household Income data, there has been increased purchasing power in Yelm compared to the Thurston County region, which is likely influenced by the number of military servicemember households. Yelm is seeing an increase in project proposals that include apartments, townhomes, and other housing types that typically serve households at 0–80% of AMI. However, the city **does** face a shortage of units that are truly affordable to this segment of the population. While the City offers a 50% reduction in system development charges (SDCs) for ADUs and for units designated as affordable, it does not currently provide a tax-exemption program or similar incentive to encourage the development of below-market-rate housing.

5. Homeowner Income vs. Renter Income: According to the City of Yelm Housing Needs Assessment, conducted in 2021, the median household income for homeowners in Yelm was \$92,516 compared to just \$48,634 for renters. The rising cost of rent, with low vacancy rates, has created a larger demand than supply for renters making the average renter's household income.

6. Household Size: Yelm's household sizes are much larger when compared to the Thurston County region. In Yelm, 56% of households are comprised of three or more people, compared to 38% statewide. Conversely, only 17% of households in Yelm are one-person households. Given the data on non-family households and occupants per room discussed previously, the City's infrastructure needs if the share of school-aged residents continues to increase. Yelm has a larger percentage of very young families (families with one or more children under the age of 6). With more than double the County percentage of children under 6, young families typically face a burden of having a one-income household or high childcare costs in addition to housing expenses.

7. Long Commute Times: The workforce in Yelm faces long commute times and geographic challenges related to employment opportunities. A very small number of residents (10.1%) live and work inside the city; the remainder of the workforce commutes into or out of the city for work daily. The school district is the largest employer within city limits, and most of the faculty and staff live outside of the district due to housing issues.

Figure 4-1: Median Rental Household Income in Yelm



Source: City of Yelm, data from 2015-2019.

Total Households and Median Income

Thurston Regional Planning Council estimates there were 3,469 households in Yelm in 2023 with a median household income of \$88,279.

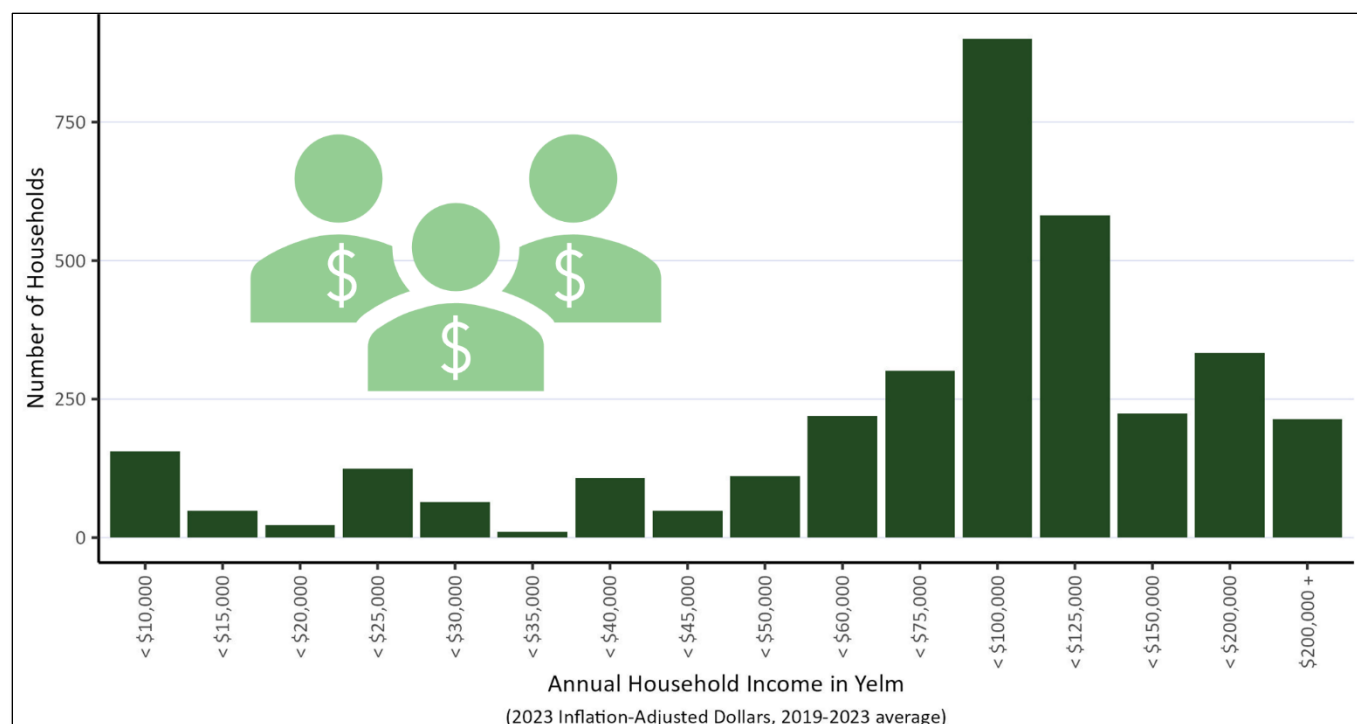
The Housing Element is required to provide adequate provisions for existing and projected housing needs for all economic segments of the community, including documenting barriers and actions needed to achieve housing availability (Goal 6).

Table 4-1: Housing Types Called out in HB 1220 and Thurston County Income Thresholds

Housing Type	Percent of Thurston Area Median Income*	Equivalent 2023 Household Income*
Extremely Low Income	Less than 30%	Less than \$30,750
Very Low Income	30 to 50%	\$30,750 to \$51,250
Low Income	50 to 80%	\$51,250 to \$82,000
Moderate Income	80 to 120%	\$82,000 to \$102,500
Permanent supportive housing	Subsidized, leased housing with no limit on length of stay that prioritizes people who need comprehensive support services to retain tenancy and utilizes admissions practices designed to use lower barriers to entry than would be typical for other subsidized or unsubsidized rental housing, especially related to rental history, criminal history, and personal behaviors.	
Emergency housing	Temporary indoor accommodations for individuals or families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless that is intended to address the basic health, food, clothing, and personal hygiene needs of individuals or families. Emergency housing may or may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement.	
Emergency shelter	Facilities that provide a temporary shelter for individuals or families who are currently homeless. Emergency shelter may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement. Emergency shelter facilities may include day and warming centers that do not provide overnight accommodations.	

*Note: Housing types are defined in [RCW 36.70A.030](#). * Income thresholds are based on HUD estimates for a family of four.*

Figure 4-2: Annual Household Income in Yelm



Current Housing Inventory and Projected Need

As required by new legislation, an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs was completed by the Thurston County Regional Planning Council (TRPC) in March 2025. TRPC estimates 3,980 current housing units exist in 2025 and another 6,990 units will be needed by 2045.

Yelm currently faces a shortage of housing units that are affordable to residents with an income of 80% or less of the area median income, according to the City of Yelm Housing Needs Assessment completed in 2023 but does have the land capacity to accommodate this type of housing. Table 4-2 demonstrates the current low-income housing supply and the future need.

Land Capacity Analysis and Housing Need Allocation by Income

The housing need allocation projects the number of units that are needed by 2045, including low, very low, and extremely low-income households; and emergency housing, emergency shelters, and permanent supportive housing.

It is required for all cities to identify the capacity of land for housing including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, group homes, foster care facilities, emergency housing, emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing.

Figure 4-3: Housing Units, projected for 2045.



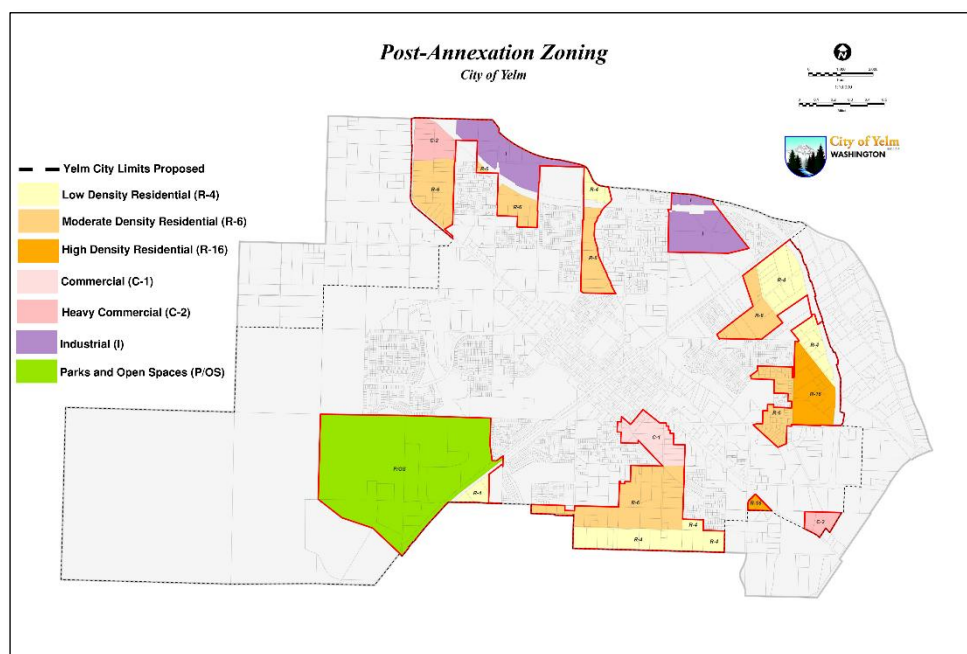
Table 4-2: Low-Income Supply vs. Future Low-Income Needs. Based on TRPC projected supply as of 2025.

Housing Units	
Current Low-Income Housing Supply	2,093
Future Low-Income Housing Needed	5,170

Table 4-3: Land Capacity for HB 1220 Housing Need Allocations

Income Level (AMI)	Zone Categories Serving These Needs	Housing Need	Aggregate Housing Need	Total Capacity	Surplus or Deficit
0-30% PSH	Low-rise Multifamily Mid-rise Multifamily ADUs	567	5,170	6,732	1,526
0-30% Other		1,398			
30-50%		1,120			
50-80%		2,085			
80-100%	Moderate Density	518	1,316	6,985	5,669
100-120%		798			
120% and Greater		1,163	1,163		
Total		7648	7648	9,130	1,481
Emergency Housing (Beds)		153	153	4,569	4,416

Figure 4-4: Post Annexation Zoning



The analysis conducted by TRPC found sufficient capacity to accommodate the number of housing units that are needed. TRPC's land capacity model assumes future housing constructed within the UGA, land that is currently zoned for one unit every five acres, will have an average density of about four units per acre. The City is proposing to annex and rezone approximately 1,200 acres of its urban growth area by the time this comprehensive plan is adopted. TRPC projects the annexation will increase Yelm's capacity by an additional 1,836 residential units.

Much of Yelm's capacity for multifamily developments is located within the commercial zoning districts, which can accommodate an estimated 2,226 units within mixed-use developments.

At the time of this comprehensive plan update, the land capacity analysis could not fully account for 1,250 acres designated as Master Planned Community. The Master Planned Community must consider land capacity for housing, including housing for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income housing.

Provisions to Address Affordable Funding Gaps

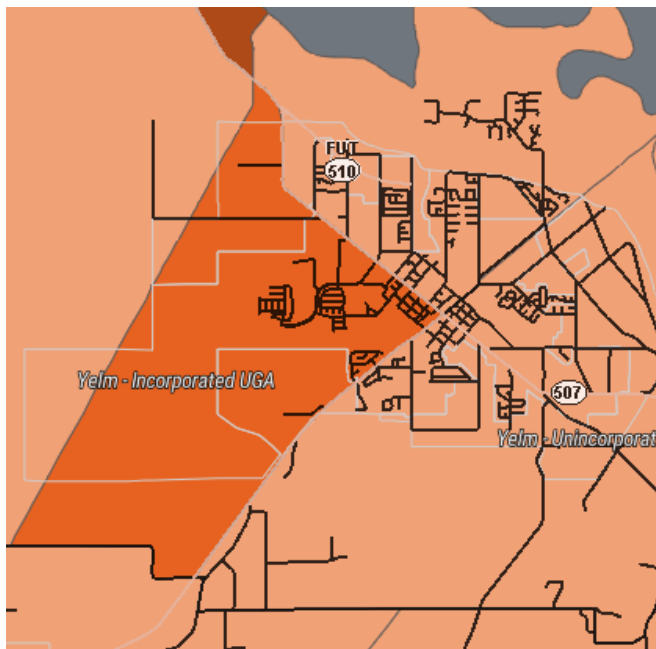
- **Fee Reduction:** The City of Yelm offers a 50% reduction on the traffic facilities charge for affordable housing projects.
- **Reduced System Development Charges:** The City offers a 50% reduction in water and sewer connections for ADUs and is exploring offering an SDC reduction for affordable housing projects.
- **Stock Plans for ADUs:** The City of Yelm is developing stock plans that will be available for free to support the construction of ADUs.
- **Multi-Family Tax Exemption:** The City is exploring the Multi-Tax Exemption Program and will continue to assess this program in collaboration with the Department of Commerce.

Racial Disparity and Anti-Displacement

The city was required to conduct a Housing Displacement Risk Analysis, which was prepared by Uncommon Bridges. The analysis did not find any policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing. The analysis did find the most prominent risk in Yelm to be physical displacement, which is the result of eviction, acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of property, or the expiration of covenants on rent, or income-restricted housing.

According to the Displacement Risk Map, provided by the Department of Commerce, there are not any areas of high displacement risk in Yelm or the UGA. There is a large area on the west side of SR 507 and the south side of 510 that is identified as moderate risk of displacement, identified as census tract 124.21.

Figure 4-5: Displacement Risk Map.



Along with physical displacement, the risk for economic displacement is also prevalent with 33% of households in Yelm being cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing related expenses, and 33% of households considered to be low, very low, or extremely low income. The analysis found a 0% vacancy rate for rental units that are affordable to low-income

residents. Yelm is experiencing significant growth in population diversity with a 196% growth rate between 2010 and 2023. As the City develops policy, it is important to evaluate the following criteria:

1. Does this policy encourage the preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing such as manufactured home parks and other existing affordable units?
2. Does this policy incentivize or reduce barriers to developing diverse housing types including smaller homes?
3. Does this policy incentivize and support the development of affordable and deeply affordable housing?

The analysis by Uncommon Bridges examined the policies of the comprehensive plan, and categorized them into three categories:

- **Supportive:** The policy is valid and supports meeting the identified housing needs. The policy is needed and addresses identified racially disparate impacts, displacement and exclusion in housing.
- **Approaching:** The policy can support meeting the identified housing needs but may be insufficient or does not address racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing.
- **Challenging:** The policy may challenge the jurisdiction's ability to meet the identified housing needs. The policy's benefits and burdens should be reviewed to optimize the ability to meet the policy's objectives while improving the equitable distribution of benefits and burdens imposed by the policy.

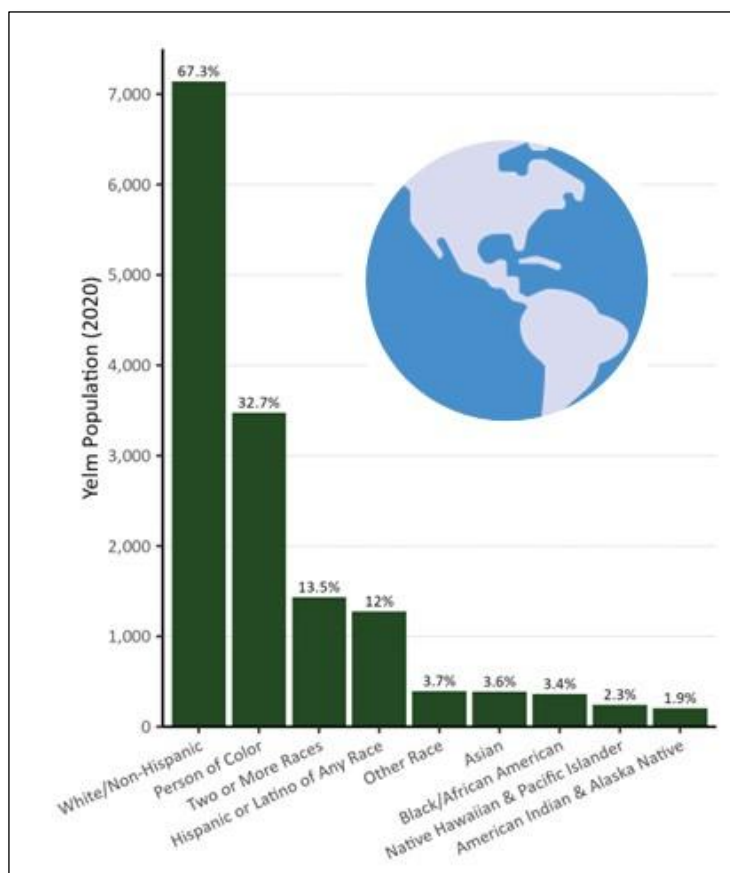
Goal 1: Plan for and accommodate a variety of housing types and densities to provide housing that is affordable to all income levels within Yelm

Policy 1.1 Allow a variety of housing types within the residential and mixed-use designations

Policy 1.2 Encourage opportunities for a range of housing costs to enable housing for all segments of the population, including low income, very low income, extremely low income and those in need of supportive housing or emergency shelters.

Policy 1.3 Encourage the provision of adequate affordable building sites through appropriate

Figure 4-6: Yelm's racial and ethnic make-up



zoning, infrastructure, and other development regulations.

Policy 1.4 Review development regulations to ensure that a range of housing types are available throughout Yelm.

Policy 1.5 Review development regulations to ensure residents can safely walk throughout Yelm.

Policy 1.6 Monitor the need for special needs housing and increase opportunities for such housing.

Policy 1.7 Offer density incentives to promote a variety of housing types, mixed uses, range of housing costs, affordability, and increased special needs housing

Policy 1.8 Increase density near employment locations.

Goal 2: Ensure affordable housing is available in Yelm.

Policy 2.1 Encourage a variety of housing types in the residential designations to assure choice, opportunity, and availability of a fair share of affordable housing in Yelm.

Policy 2.2 Participate with other jurisdictions and Thurston County in a regional process to monitor Fair Share Affordable Housing targets within the County.

Policy 2.3 Increase housing choices to support all ranges of lifestyles, household incomes, abilities, and ages. Encourage a range of housing types and costs that are commensurate with the employment base and income levels of jurisdictions' populations, particularly for low, moderate and fixed-income families.

Policy 2.4 Accommodate low and moderate-income housing throughout Yelm.



Goal 3: Conserve, protect, and improve the existing housing stock and neighborhoods.

Policy 3.1 Maintain up-to-date development regulations for building, housing, mechanical, and other design standards.

Policy 3.2 Require owners of unsafe dwelling units to correct significant problems and encourage the maintenance of existing structures consistent with the city's code and consider funding assistance for low-income owners or incentive programs to reduce displacement risks.

Policy 3.3 Support rehabilitation efforts for substandard housing and develop assistance programs to reduce displacement risks.

Policy 3.4 Encourage and facilitate economic development to provide increased economic opportunity for existing residents, so more people can work near their home.

Policy 3.5 Encourage and provide funding for local community groups, churches, and businesses to provide voluntary assistance with maintaining existing housing for the elderly, low-income households, and those with special housing needs.

Policy 3.6 Preserve and protect the existing manufactured home community.

Policy 3.7 Support private ownership of manufactured communities and private rental units by local, family-owned operations with on-site management.

Goal 4: Promote energy-efficient housing to reduce the overall costs of home ownership.

Policy 4.1: Support programs that make existing structures more energy efficient.

Policy 4.2 Periodically review the energy efficiency development regulations to ensure that they are up-to-date.

Policy 4.3 Promote residential subdivision designs that maximize solar heating opportunities.

Goal 5: Provide sufficient housing for low- and moderate-income households

Policy 5.1 Add other innovative housing types (such as cottage style) to the permitted uses where appropriate

Policy 5.2 Incentivize developers to set aside a percentage of multifamily housing units for low- and moderate-income buyers and renters.

Policy 5.3 Support efforts to provide funding for shared-equity policies — via community land trust or down-payment assistance models — to make buying housing of all types affordable.

Policy 5.4 Develop policy that limits long-term housing being used for transient rentals.

Policy 5.5 Develop policy that focuses on transient lodging quarters for low-to-moderate income individuals and service members

Policy 5.6 Expedite permitting low- and moderate-income housing units to incentivize developers

Policy 5.7 Reduce transportation impact fees for multifamily developments near frequent transit service routes.

Policy 5.8 Offer developers density and/or height incentives for desired unit types.

Policy 5.9: Identify barriers and policies that can increase access to housing for formerly incarcerated individuals.

Policy 5.10: Monitor the need for special housing and increase opportunities for such housing.

Policy 5.11: Permit longer-term (30 days to 6-months) transient lodging in residential districts.

Goal 6: Establish or support programs focused on affordable housing

Policy 6.1 Embrace Community Development Block Grants, Section 108 loans, and other federal resources for affordable housing.

Policy 6.2 Partner with local organizations where possible, to incentivize and assist manufactured park owners with improving their properties and support upgraded utilities and infrastructure for these properties.

Policy 6.3 Support the private ownership of manufactured home communities and private rentals by local, family-owned operations with on-site management, and disincentivize corporate owners from buying homes in the community.

Policy 6.4 Partner with local organizations to provide a program to assist residents with applications and explain housing benefits and other housing assistance programs.

Policy 6.5 Provide tenants and landlords with information about housing rights and responsibilities.

Policy 6.6 Encourage local community groups, churches, and businesses to provide voluntary assistance with maintaining existing structures for the elderly, low-income, and those with special needs.

Policy 6.7 Work with the Thurston County Regional Housing Council to consider funding sources for a regional response to homelessness and affordable housing, and coordinate with existing funding programs.

Policy 6.8 Develop partnerships with low-income housing developers, Housing Authority of Thurston County, and other organizations that provide support for low-income, workforce, senior housing, and other populations with unique housing needs.

Policy 6.9 Conduct education and outreach around city programs that support affordable housing.

Policy 6.10 Encourage the Housing Authority of Thurston County to take greater advantage of state and federal housing grants and tax incentives.

Goal 7: Provide sufficient service-enriched housing for homeless and high-risk populations.

Policy 7.1 Allow shelters, group homes, transitional housing, and permanent housing with social services in development regulations in locations where these facilities have access to transit, parks, and other amenities.

Policy 7.2 Allow emergency housing in all zones.

Goal 8: Encourage housing density and diversity in neighborhoods to add vibrancy and increase equitable access to opportunity.

Policy 8.1 Review and amend residential development regulations to provide opportunities for the mix and density of housing needed to meet the needs of changing demographics, provide affordable housing, use land wisely, and support nearby transit and businesses.
Recommendation from Displacement Analysis

Policy 8.2 Allow densification by providing for accessory dwelling units, small houses on small lots, attached housing types or appropriately-scaled multifamily buildings, cottage housing, and village cohousing developments in development regulations.

Goal 9: Encourage the construction, weatherization and operation of homes to boost energy efficiency.

Policy 9.1 Prioritize home weatherization funds to preserve affordable housing.

Policy 9.2: Support regional efforts to engage landlords and property managers in energy efficiency efforts.

Policy 9.3: Support the efforts of local financial institutions to facilitate affordable financing of energy upgrades.

Policy 9.4: Support regional efforts to conduct energy audits of large power consumers to identify efficiency improvements, such as RESNET's Home Energy Rating System.

Goal 10: Increase housing affordable to all income brackets in urban corridors and centers to meet the needs of a changing population.

Policy 10.1 Review regulations that stymie or prevent housing development near or within urban corridors and centers.

Policy 10.2 Remove barriers or "right-size" regulations to achieve goals.

Policy 10.3 Identify vacant or underdeveloped lots for housing development, prioritizing affordable housing and ensure existing households are not displaced.

Policy 10.4 Examine ways to encourage smaller, affordable housing units through the fee structure, especially in centers, corridors or adjacent to neighborhood service hubs.

Policy 10.5 Use tax exemptions, such as Special Valuation, or other financing tools to make projects financially feasible.

Policy 10.6 Identify opportunities to aggregate properties where housing density is needed to achieve community goals and make multifamily projects feasible to build and finance.

Policy 10.7 Permit live-work structures throughout the commercial zones, remove the requirement for Mixed-Use Development for live-work structures, and reduce or eliminate density requirements in existing structures.

Policy 10.8 Allow more housing types in commercial zones.

Goal 11: Encourage the construction of ADUs as a more affordable option to traditional housing

Policy 11.1 Allow up to two accessory dwelling units per lot in all residential land use categories subject to standard development standards and design criteria.

Policy 11.2 Create and promote an educational program, partnering with local organizations where possible, to explain the long-term investment opportunity of ADUs and the financial plan required to pursue building an ADU.

Policy 11.3 Permit accessory dwelling units on existing nonconforming residential lots within the commercial zones.

Policy 11.4 Reduce impact fees and system development charges to no more than 50% of the principal unit.

Table 4-5: Accessory Dwellings

Jurisdiction		Accessory Dwellings		Potential ADU Lots
		Adopted Forecast	For Land Capacity Analysis	
Yelm	City	9	100	185
	UGA	0	20	2

Goal 12: Minimize displacement and ensure that low- and moderate-income residents and special housing residents are not displaced by new development

Policy 12.1 Ensure housing options remain affordable among new developments by requiring multifamily developments in certain overlay areas or zones to provide a certain percentage of affordable and market rate housing units.

Policy 12.2 Support aging-in-place services and goals that encourage development patterns that provide suitably-scaled, daily needs services within walking distance of residential areas, allowing a measure of independence for those

who cannot or choose not to drive. Connect homeowners with resources to adapt their homes to their needs as they age such as the USDA's Single Family Housing Repair Loans & Grants program, and Rebuilding Together.

Policy 12.3 Support education programs on homeownership and partner with NeighborWorks Center for Homeownership Education and Counseling, and the Washington State Home Advantage Program to make this statewide resource more accessible at the local level.

Policy 12.4 Explore grant programs to support the effort to reduce homelessness. Programs such as the Washington State Department of Commerce's Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG) provide resources to fund homeless crisis response systems to support communities in ending homelessness.

Policy 12.5 Adopt local tenant protections that require an increase to the notice time to 90-180 days before the effective date and place a cap on rent payment late fees.

Goal 13: Support and encourage affordable housing in Yelm

Policy 13.1 Reduce system development charges and impact fees for affordable housing

Policy 13.2 Review fees/regulations to identify housing cost reductions.

Policy 13.3 Permit mixed-use developments in all commercial zones.

Policy 13.4 Offer density bonuses for income-restricted housing.

Policy 13.5 Establish a multifamily tax exemption program

Goal 14: Increase the availability of permanent supportive housing.

Policy 14.1 Identify barriers and policies that can increase access to housing for formerly incarcerated individuals.

Policy 14.2 Monitor the need for special housing and increase opportunities for such housing.

Policy 14.3 Allow permanent supportive housing in all zones where multi-family housing is permitted.

Policy 14.4 Reduce system development charges and impact fees for permanent supportive housing projects

Goal 15: Increase accessibility throughout transit corridors

Policy 15.1 Reduce parking requirements for residential uses, including for multifamily developments near frequent transit routes.

Policy 15.2 Develop partnership with InterCity Transit to expand bus routes to additional areas of the city.

Policy 15.3 Lower transportation impact fees for multifamily developments near frequent transit service routes.

Policy 15.4 Expand the multifamily tax exemption to make it available in all transit corridors.

5 | CAPITAL FACILITIES



Capital Facilities

The objective of the capital facilities chapter is to plan for and fund those improvements necessary to provide appropriate levels of service in a manner that is cost effective for existing citizens and ensures that growth pays for growth.

Goal 1: Maintain a Capital Facilities Plan which supports the infrastructure needs of Yelm and its Urban Growth Area.

Policy 1.1 Adopt capital facilities plans that promote orderly compact urban growth, maximizes the use and protects the investments of existing facilities, and provides needed public facilities and services to implement the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan.

Policy 1.2 Adopt and integrate Yelm’s capital facilities plans (parks and recreation plan, water system plan, general sewer plan, and the transportation plan) into the comprehensive plan as appendices.

Policy 1.3 Undertake a consistency review prior to local adoption of capital facilities plans to ensure that the plan’s proposed facilities, budget, the level of service standards, and internal guidance are consistent with the adopted goals and policies of the comprehensive plan.

Policy 1.4 Ensure that the Capital Facilities Plan:

- Is adopted after a periodic review by the Planning Commission and City Council or Board of County Commissioners, as appropriate;
- Is consistent with the comprehensive plan;
- Includes the scope and location of capital projects or equipment;
- Includes the project’s needs and its links to established levels of service, comprehensive plan goals and policies, facility plans, and other capital facilities projects;

- Specifies the construction costs, timing, funding sources, and projected operations and maintenance impacts;
- Establishes priorities for capital project development;
- Provides a twenty-year forecast of future capital facility needs, and an inventory of existing capital facilities; and
- Is coordinated with Thurston County, school districts, Intercity Transit, telecommunications carriers, and private utility providers.

Policy 1.5 Adopt by reference the Capital Facilities Plans of Thurston County, Yelm Community Schools District #2, and SE Thurston Regional Fire Authority, as they apply to Yelm and its Urban Growth Area.

Policy 1.6 Encourage the public to participate throughout the development and adoption phases of capital facilities plans.





Goal 2: Create a list of capital facility projects that addresses deficiencies in existing systems, replaces obsolete facilities, and will meet the future infrastructure needs of Yelm and its Urban Growth Area.

Policy 2.1 When developing a list of capital facility projects give priority consideration to projects based upon the following:

- Mandated by law and those by State and Federal agencies;
- Public facility projects needed to meet projected population growth and demand;
- Already initiated and to be completed in subsequent phases;
- Renovate existing facilities to reduce maintenance and operating costs;
- Remove existing capital facilities deficiencies, encourage full use of existing facilities, or replace worn-out or obsolete facilities;
- Meet concurrency requirements for growth management; or

- Promote the conservation, preservation, or revitalization of commercial, industrial, and residential areas.

Policy 2.2 Evaluate and prioritize proposed capital facility projects based upon the following criteria:

- Needed to correct existing deficiencies, replace needed facilities, or provide facilities needed for future growth;
- Eliminates a public hazard;
- Eliminates a capacity deficit;
- Is financially feasible;
- Phasing and priorities as established in the comprehensive plan;
- Site needs based on projected growth;
- Serves new development and redevelopment;
- Compatible with plans of state agencies; and
- An acceptable impact on the local operating budget.

Policy 2.3 Use the type, location, and phasing of public facilities and utilities to direct urban expansion where it is desired.

Policy 2.4 Ensure that some of Yelm's key public facilities are located in the Central Business District.

Policy 2.5 Initiate streetscape improvements along Yelm Avenue in the Central Business District to support pedestrian activity and promote transportation choices:

- Minimize traffic-oriented improvements to the minimum necessary to move traffic efficiently;
- Implement safety improvements along the corridor;
- Improve pedestrian and trail crossings;

- Begin to plan for a trail crossing for bikes and pedestrians over Yelm Avenue; and
- Undertake transit improvements to provide an alternative to the automobile.

Policy 2.6 Support capital facility projects which would improve public transit service to Yelm.

Policy 2.7 Adopt a concurrency management system for all public facilities which evaluates the available capacity of public infrastructure. This management system may reserve capacity for approved development commitments and permits until they are constructed, or those approvals or permits expire.

Policy 2.8 Level of Service (LOS) standards for concurrency standards are found in the Yelm Transportation Plan.



Goal 3: Provide adequate funding for capital facilities in Yelm and its Urban Growth Area to ensure that the community's visions and goals can be implemented.

Policy 3.1 Manage Yelm's fiscal resources to support a balanced approach to allocating financial resources among the following:

- Maintaining existing facilities;
- Practice sound asset management principles;
- Eliminating existing capital facility deficiencies; and
- Providing new or expanded facilities to serve growth.

Policy 3.2 Integrate all of the community's capital project resources regardless of funding source (e.g., grants, bonds, city funds, donations, impact fees, and any other available funding) into the Capital Facilities Plan.

Policy 3.3 Require new development projects to finance their fair share of public facilities and utilities which may include the following:

- Collection of impact fees,
- Allocation of sewer and water connection fees primarily to capital Improvements related to urban expansion, and
- Development and implementation of other appropriate funding mechanisms to ensure new development's fair share contribution to other public facilities (recreation, drainage, solid waste, and congestion management services and facilities car/van pool matching, transit shelters, bike racks, street trees, and sidewalks).

Policy 3.4 Administer impact fees on behalf of the school district and the fire authority, to ensure that new growth pays appropriately for the cost of providing necessary new services.

Policy 3.5 Allow latecomer agreements for development projects which install infrastructure with excess capacity.

Policy 3.6 Evaluate the operations and maintenance (O&M) costs associated with a new capital project and consider adjusting the capital budget should the O&M costs be determined to be an unacceptable burden on Yelm's operations budget.

Policy 3.7 Promote joint use facilities through the use of interlocal agreements on publicly owned lands; and long-term leases, or conservation easements for privately owned lands.

Policy 3.8 Investigate potential new funding strategies for capital facilities which may include the following:

- Growth-induced tax revenues;
- Additional voter-approved financing;
- Regional tax base sharing;
- Regional cost sharing for urban infrastructure;
- Voter-approved real estate excise transfer tax; and
- County-wide bond issues.

Policy 3.9 Explore regional funding strategies to support needed capital facilities.

Policy 3.10 Consider contingency strategies for capital facility funding shortfalls which may include the following:

- Reassess the land use element of the Comprehensive Plan;

- Increase revenues;
- Decrease level of service standards;
- Incorporate newer efficient, cost-saving technologies;
- Decrease the cost of the facility;
- More efficient use existing facilities;
- Decrease the demand for the public service or facility; or
- Other fiscal management options.

Policy 3.11 Seek grants or low-interest loans to finance capital facility projects.

Policy 3.12 Maintain or improve Yelm’s bond rating through prudent fiscal management.

Policy 3.13 Implement a joint public/private parking management strategy in the Central Business District.

Policy 3.14 Support the development of a financial assistance or loan program to repair or upgrade older buildings within the Central Business District.

Goal 4: Ensure the Capital Facilities Plan is responsive to the community’s vision and goals through periodic updates.

Policy 4.1 Monitor the implementation of the Capital Facilities Plan on an ongoing basis. This review should include completion of major maintenance projects, expansion of existing facilities, and addition of new facilities.

Policy 4.2 Periodically review, update, and amend the Capital Facilities Plan and ensure that the various plan elements are internally consistent.

Policy 4.3 When updating the Capital Facilities Plan consider possible changes to the rate of growth, development trends, changing priorities, and budget and financial considerations.

Policy 4.4 Acknowledge that the implementation of projects in the Capital Facilities Plan may vary from the schedule and budget due to unanticipated conditions, such as:

- Revenues become available but have conditions about when they may be used; or
- The construction of a facility to serve new development occurs in an earlier or later year than predicted.

Goal 5: Conserve and protect drinking water to meet the region’s daily and long-term needs.

Policy 5.1 Include wellhead protection areas and standards for aquifer recharge protection areas in development regulations.

Policy 5.2 Continue water-conservation measures that stretch existing drinking water supplies.

Policy 5.3 Prohibit individual exempt wells within the Yelm water service area where the City can provide service.

Table 5-1: Relationships of Various Plans

	Type of Plan	Time Frame	Degree of Action	Financial Implications	Affected Area
Community Vision, Goals, and Policies	Comprehensive Plan	20+	Broad Policy	None	City and Urban Growth Area (UGA)
Facilities Goals and Policies Level of Service standards	Water System Plan General Sewer Plan Stormwater Management Plan Parks & Recreation Plan Transportation Plan ADA Transition Plan Local Road Safety Plan	20+	Specific Policy	Forecast of needs	City, UGA, and Regional Drainage basins
Strategic	Capital Facilities Plan (CFP)	6	Prioritize Projects	Construction Estimates Revenue Estimates	Target areas and specific sites
Implementation	Annual Budget	1	Construction Funding	Obligated Funds	Project site or equipment specific
Operations	Annual Budget	1	Operations Funding	Obligated Funds	Completed facility or equipment

Figure 5-2: Ten Year Transportation Revenue Sources

	Funding Source
Current Revenues	General Fund Contributions (Including Interest) Municipal Building Fund Sewer Rates Water Rates Stormwater Rates Water and Sewer System Development Charges Impact Fees (Parks, School, Fire, Transportation) Real Estate Excise Tax
Bonds	Councilmatic (No Public Vote) General Obligation (Public Vote Required) Revenue (Paid by Utility Rates or other revenue source)
Federal Grants	Federal Aid to Urban Streets Fund Community Development Block Grant (HUD) Federal Highway Safety Funds Federal Highway Administration (STBG, TA) Land and Water Conservation Fund USFWS
State Grants and Loans	Transportation Improvement Board Hazardous Bridge Replacement Stormwater Management Grants Department of Commerce Department of Ecology Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account Public Works Trust Fund (PWTF) Loans Clean Water Fund
Other	Developer Contributions Private Donations Local Improvement Districts

Figure 5-1: Capital Facilities Plan Funding Sources



Table 5-3: 10 Year Capital Facilities Plan Summary

Park Projects	Funding Source	2025-2035
Connection between Prairie Line Trail SR 510 Yelm Loop	WSDOT	\$50,000
Connection between Longmire Park and SR 510 Yelm Loop	WSDOT	\$50,000
55 acres of additional land for parks	Grants/Local Match	\$4,400,000
Yelm Prairie Line Trail Phase 2B (Nisqually River Bridge)	Grants/Local Match	\$1,600,000
Cochrane Park Multi-Use Path, Dock, Picnic Shelter	Local Funds	\$350,000
Longmire Park Upgrades	Grants/Local Match	\$2,500,000
Veterans Memorial	Grants/Local Match	\$2,500,000
City Park Swing	Grants/Local Match	\$100,000
Buildings/Facilities Projects	Funding Source	2024-2034
Public Services Expansion	Local	\$300,000
City Hall	Bonds/Grants	\$15,000,000
Fleet Expansion		
Recreation Center		
Transportation Projects	Funding Source	2024-2034
SR 510 Yelm Loop Phase 2	WSDOT	\$58,500,000
SR 507 / Bald Hill Rd SE / Morris Rd SE Roundabouts (design / ROW)	WSDOT	\$4,500,000
Bald Hill Rd / Morris Rd SE Roundabout (construction)	WSDOT/Grant/Local	\$3,500,000
Extend SR 510 Yelm Loop to Bald Hill Road SE (Phase 3)	TFCs/Grants	\$4,000,000
Rhoton Rd SE Reconstruction – Railway Rd SE to Yelm Loop Phase 2	Grants	\$5,940,000
Central Business District (CBD) Activated Alley	TFCs/Grants	\$600,000
Solberg St SW Sidewalk	Local	\$60,000
CBD Sidewalks – Various locations	TFCs/Grants	\$400,000
CBD Street Reconstruction – Second St SE, Third St SE, Fourth St SE	TFCs/Grants	\$3,400,000
Longmire St SW / SR 510 Intersection Improvements	TFCs/Grants	\$1,630,000
Mill Rd SE at SR 507 Intersection Realignment	TFCs/Grants	\$2,200,000
Crystal Springs Rd/Coates Ave NW Intersection Improvements	TFCs/Grants	\$1,700,000

Burnett Rd / 93rd Ave SE Intersection Improvements	TFCs/Grants	\$3,500,000
Mosman Ave Phase 3 – Second St to Fourth St SE	TFCs/Grants	\$3,800,000
Washington Ave /McKenzie Ave SE One-Way Couplets	TFCs/Grants	\$3,500,000

Water Projects	Funding Source	2025-2035
Storage Reservoir #5	Grants/Water Rates	\$9,000,000
Distribution System Upgrades	Water Rates	\$4,500,000
Well #7	Grants/Water Rates	\$12,500,00
Sewer/Reclaimed Water Projects	Funding Source	2024-2034
Collection System Upgrades	Rates/SDCs	\$1,230,000
Expand Cochrane Park RIBs	Local Funds/SDCs	\$2,000,000
WRF Phase II Upgrade MRB Conversion and Solids Processing	Grants/Loans	\$38,000,000
WRF Phase III – Additional Denitrification	Local Funds/SDCs	\$500,000
Stormwater Projects	Funding Source	2024-2034
Bald Hill Rd SE Drainage Study - City Limit to SR 507	Grants/Local Match	\$500,000
SR 507 at 1208 Yelm Ave Infiltration gallery	Grants/Local Match	\$200,000
SR 507/Clark/103rd Infiltration galleries	Grants/Local Match	\$350,000
Yelm Ave W Infiltration Gallery - Edwards to Longmire	Grants/Local Match	\$200,000
McKenzie SW Infiltration Gallery - Longmire to Solberg	Grants/Local Match	\$150,000

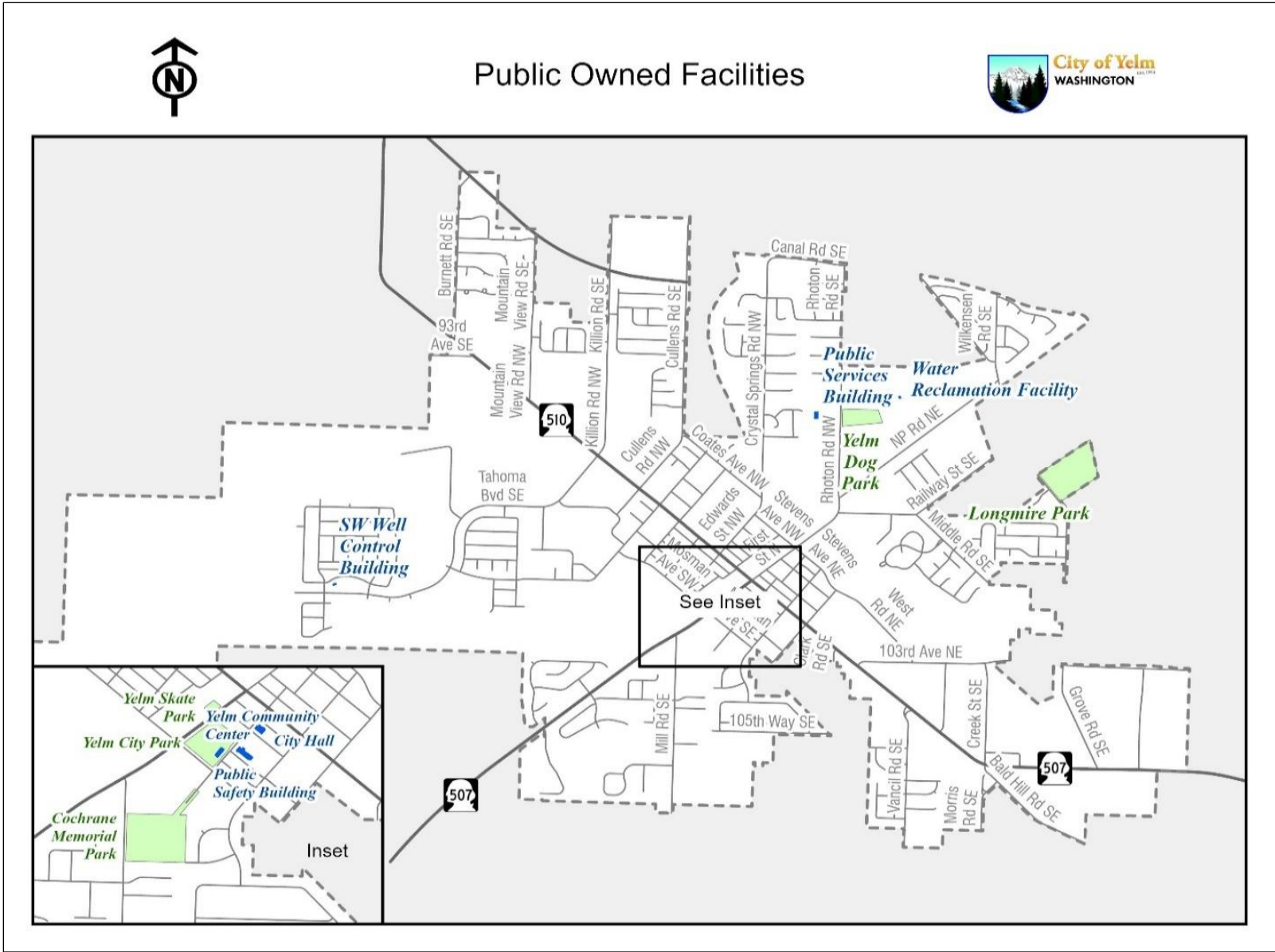
Table 5-4: Long Term Capital Facilities Needs

Park Projects	2035-2045
48 acres of additional land for parks	\$4,400,000
Prairie Line Trail – Yelm Ave W Overpass	\$3,100,000
Transportation Projects	2035-2045
Yelm Ave W Boulevard Improvements – Burnett Rd SE to First St	\$7,500,000
Yelm Ave W CBD Improvements – sidewalks, parking and access control	\$2,200,000
Yelm Ave E Reconstruction/Intersection Improvements – Plaza Dr to Creek St SE	\$1,300,000
Yelm Ave E Reconstruction – Creek St SE to Yelm Loop (SR 510)	\$3,500,000
Vancil Rd to Morris Rd SE Connection	\$1,950,000
103rd Ave SE Bridge Replacement	\$2,900,000
Extend 105 th Ave – Yelm Terra St to Mill Rd SE	\$2,250,000
Bald Hill Rd SE Reconstruction & Drainage Improvements	\$6,850,000
Extend 105 th Ave - Clark Rd to Vancil Rd SE	\$4,500,000
NP Rd SE/Wilkensen Rd SE Reconstruction – Rhoton Rd NW to Yelm Loop Ph 2	\$6,750,000
Extend Parkview Dr SE – Parkview Loop to Mill Rd SE	\$1,350,000
Tahoma Blvd Extension – Tahoma Terra to SR 507 (2.5 miles-4 lane)	\$25,000,000
Tahoma Blvd Extension North - Tahoma Blvd to 93 rd (1.3 miles-2 lane)	\$4,800,000
Extend Coates Rd SE – Cullens Rd to Killion Rd SE	\$1,400,000
Mill Road SE Reconstruction – 107 th Ave SE to 104 th Ave SE	\$1,750,000
Railway Rd SE Sidewalk – Rhoton Rd NW to Middle Rd SE	\$950,000
Cullens Rd SW Reconstruction – Yelm Ave E to Van Trump SW	\$1,400,000
Railway St SW Reconstruction – First St N to Middle Rd SE	\$1,950,000
Jefferson Ave NW & NE Improvements	\$2,350,000
Water Projects	2034-2044
Distribution System Upgrades	\$6,000,000
Additional Well (#7)	\$2,700,000
Sewer/Reclaimed Water Projects	2034-2044
Collection System Upgrades	\$2,000,000

Table 5-5: Inventory of Major City Assets

Parks	Location
Cochrane Memorial Park	Mill Rd SE
Longmire Community Park	Canal Rd SE
Yelm City Park	First St S/Mosman Ave SE
Yelm Skate Park	First St S
Dog Park	Rhoton Rd NW
Transportation	Location
Sidewalks (~225,000 LF)	Various
Yelm Prairie Line Trail (~13,800 LF)	Yelm Ave W to Nisqually River
Arterial Streets (~2.7 CL miles)	Various
Collectors Streets (~11.1 CL miles)	Various
Local Access Streets (~24.5 CL miles)	Various
Water	Location
Water Distribution Main (~335,000 LF)	Various
Well #1	Second Ave SE
Well #1A	Second Ave SE
Well #3 (not in service)	100th St SE
SW Well	Tahoma Blvd SE
Historic Water Reservoir (not in service)	Second Ave SE
Baker Hill Reservoir	105 th Way SE
Public Services Reservoir	Rhoton Rd NW
SW Reservoir	Tahoma Blvd SE
SE Reservoir (under construction)	103 rd Ave SE
Sewer/Reclaimed Water	Location
Sanitary Force Main Sewer (~233,000 LF)	Various
Sanitary STEP Tanks (~2,900)	Various
Reclaimed Water Distribution Main (~42,000 LF)	Various
Reclaimed Water Outfall Pipeline (~8,500 LF)	NP Rd SE – WRF to Nisqually River
Rapid Infiltration Basins	Cochrane Park - Mill Rd SE
Government Buildings/Facilities	Location
Boys & Girls Club	Yelm Ave W
Yelm City Hall	Second St SE
Yelm Public Services Facility	Rhoton Rd NW
Water Reclamation Facility	NP Rd SE
Public Safety Building	McKenzie St SE
Yelm Community Center	Second St SE

Figure 5-2: Public Owned Facilities



6 | UTILITIES



Utilities

The objective of the utilities chapter is to provide city operated utility services in an efficient and cost effective manner and to coordinate with private utilities, both to ensure that urban growth demands can be met with maintaining appropriate levels of service.

Goal 1. Ensure that utilities and public facilities are sized appropriately to accommodate the growth that is anticipated to occur within Yelm and its Urban Growth Area.

Policy 1.1. Rely upon the utility purveyor to determine the sequence of lines and facilities to adequately serve the community.

Goal 2. Ensure that utilities and public facilities are environmentally sensitive, safe, provide reliable service, are available at a reasonable economic cost to the consumer and are compatible with the surrounding land uses.

Policy 2.1. Promote the co-location of new public and private utility distribution facilities in shared trenches.

Policy 2.2. Provide timely notice to utilities of City sponsored construction and road maintenance projects to encourage coordination of public and private utility trenching activities.

Policy 2.3. Promote the joint use of transportation rights of way and utility corridors.

Policy 2.4. Adopt development regulations that require new electrical distribution and communication lines be placed underground.

Policy 2.5. Encourage utilities to underground existing electrical distribution and communication lines.



Policy 2.6. Adopt development regulations that require new above ground facilities to be appropriately landscaped and/or architecturally compatible with adjacent land uses.

Policy 2.7. Encourage the directional pruning of trees and phased replacement of improperly located vegetation planted in public rights-of-ways.

Policy 2.8. Facilitate environmental stewardship by encouraging energy conservation retrofits and the use of alternative energy sources.

Goal 3. Process permits for public facilities and utilities in a timely and predictable manner.

Policy 3.1. Allow the extension of utilities beyond the City limits or the Urban Growth Area boundary only when there is a declared public health emergency by the Thurston County Board of Health; and the action will not impose a financial burden on Yelm.

Policy 3.2. Encourage the cooperation with other jurisdictions in the planning and implementation of multi-jurisdictional public facility and utility additions and improvements.

Policy 3.3. Make decisions regarding utility facilities in a manner that is consistent with and complementary to regional demand and resources.

Policy 3.4. Review applications for public facility and utility permits simultaneously when feasible.

Policy 3.5. Jointly undertake a periodic review of comprehensive plan utility chapters and regional utility plans with adjacent jurisdictions. Identify procedures for making specific land use decisions to achieve consistency of timing and substantive requirements.

Policy 3.6. Coordinate with utility providers to periodically obtain up-to date plans of their proposed facilities. Recognize that the scale of these plans may be such that the proposed location of new facilities may not be site specific.

Goal 4. Provide efficient and effective drinking water infrastructure.

Policy 4.1. Continue to advance hydrogeological modeling to better quantify the region's available groundwater resources.

Policy 4.2. Support regional efforts to develop a water system plan that includes an exploration of ways to manage water resources within the region more holistically and in collaboration among state and local governments.

Goal 5. Manage wastewater in a cost-effective and environmentally sound way.

Policy 5.1. Support regional efforts to develop a regional sewerage plan.

Policy 5.2. Build governmental capacity to address septic system conversions.

Policy 5.3. Continue conversions from onsite septic systems to sanitary sewers where septic systems are impacting water resources.

Policy 5.4. Where sewers are available, require new developments within 200 feet of existing sewer infrastructure to connect.

Policy 5.5. Develop criteria for requiring connection to city sewer systems for properties near sewer infrastructure.

Goal 6. Manage stormwater in a cost-effective and environmentally sound way.

Policy 6.1. Explore new technology to sweep streets to prevent stormwater pollution at the source.

Policy 6.2. Support applied research in Western Washington on cost-effective stormwater management technologies, routine maintenance, and low-impact development (LID) practices.

Policy 6.3. Coordinate with Thurston County to meet stormwater goals by watershed.

Policy 6.4. Encourage innovative and creative solutions for addressing stormwater runoff.

Policy 6.5. Establish a mechanism to retrofit existing developments with stormwater infrastructure that meets current standards.

Policy 6.6. Conduct comprehensive stream restoration plans for Yelm and Thompson creeks that include plans for in-stream improvements, stormwater retrofits, riparian and wetland restoration.

Policy 6.7. Encourage the use of low impact development standards for the treatment and disposal of stormwater.



Goal 7. Expand the use of reclaimed water for non-potable uses.

Policy 7.1. Continue to expand the role of reclaimed water to benefit the region.



Goal 8. Increase energy generation from renewable resources to reduce the region's carbon footprint.

Policy 8.1. Explore incentives for the installation of distributed generation equipment, such as rooftop solar panels.

Policy 8.2. Investigate large-scale renewable energy projects.

Policy 8.3. Adopt uniform building codes and permitting practices in jurisdictions to make the installation of solar panels, or other distributed generation technologies, easier and faster.

Goal 9. Enhance the region's electricity distribution, monitoring and storage infrastructure to support adoption of cleaner technologies and practices.

Policy 9.1. Support energy suppliers' equipment upgrades, new programs, and service offerings related to adding information technology to the system or grid.

Policy 9.2. Support voluntary programs for adding vehicle chargers to homes, businesses, and public parking infrastructure.

Policy 9.3. Allow for electric vehicle charging stations in locations where they are needed.

Policy 9.4. Increase the City's use of electric vehicles.

Goal 10. Increase energy efficiency and conservation to reduce the region's carbon footprint.

Policy 10.1. Develop new incentives for green buildings, both commercial and residential.

Policy 10.2. Encourage new public buildings to be constructed to green building standards.

Policy 10.3. Support regional efforts to adopt uniform energy-efficiency building standards.

Goal 11. Plan and take action to reduce, reuse and recycle as much waste as possible and meet the needs of current and future populations.

Policy 11.1. Support regional efforts to maintain and expand recycling efforts through participation on the Solid Waste Advisory Committee.

Policy 11.2. Develop standards for multifamily, commercial and mixed use projects which accommodate easy and convenient recycling for occupants to divert waste and for haulers to collect recyclables and garbage.

Goal 12. Continue to plan for, educate, assist and offer access to safely and efficiently manage disposal and reduce hazardous waste.

Policy 12.1. Support regional efforts to maintain and expand the collection and safe disposal of hazardous waste through participation on the Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Utilities: Supplemental Information

The active utility lines for City of Yelm water, sewer, and reclaimed water are presented in the service maps below.

Figure 6-1: City Water Utility

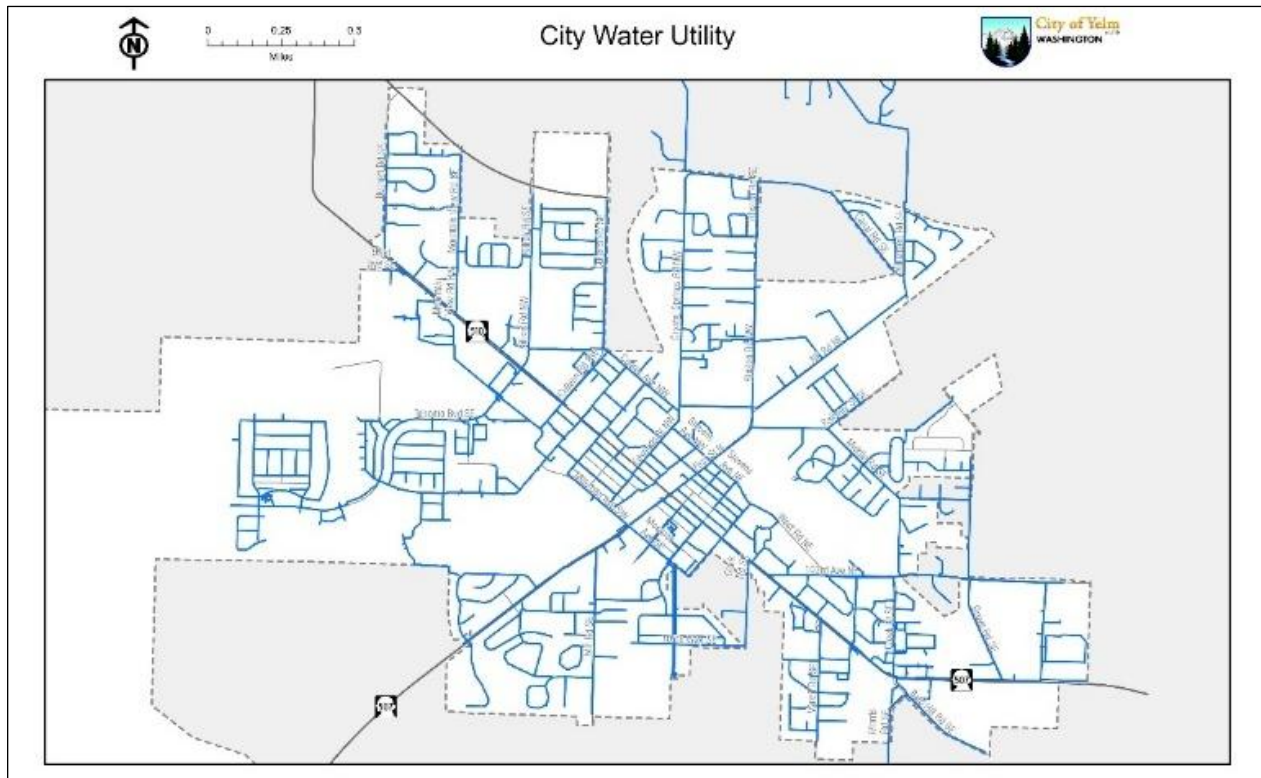


Figure 6-2: City Water Utility

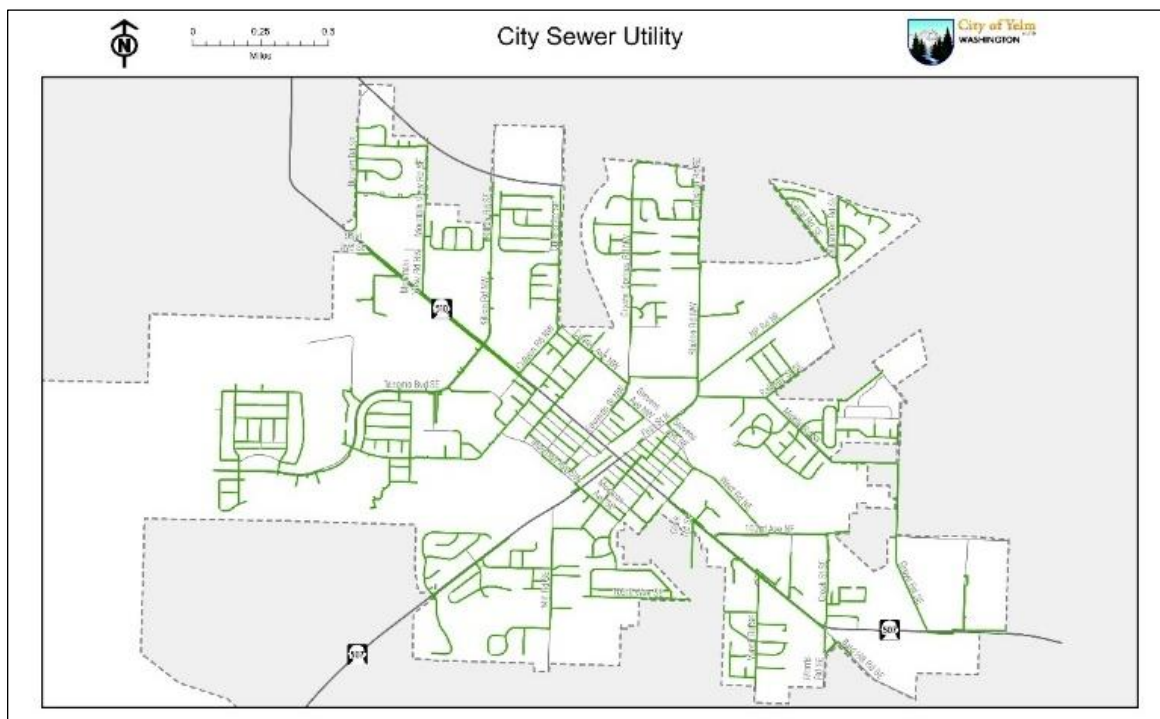
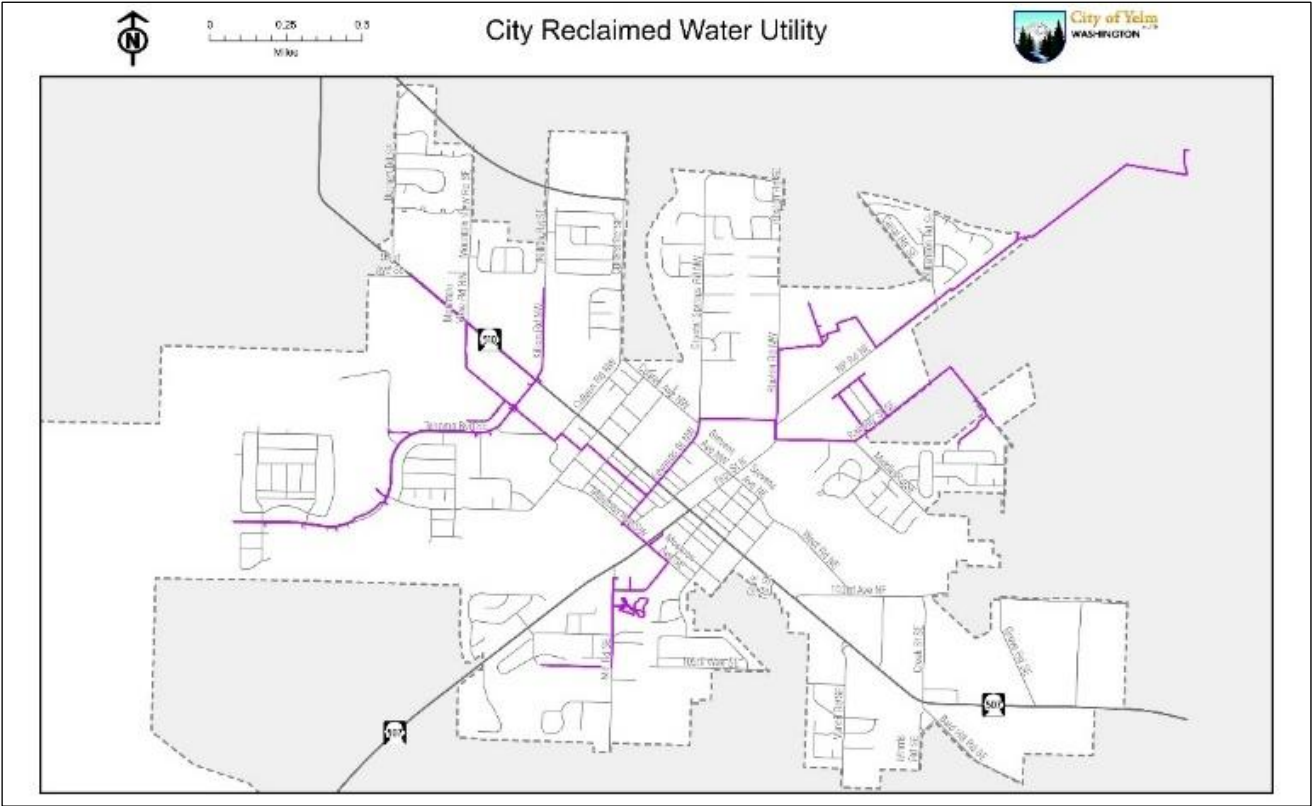


Figure 6-3: City Reclaimed Water Utility



The Growth Management Act requires cities to identify other entities that own utility systems and include relevant information from those entities in the Utilities Chapter. Within the City of Yelm, Puget Sound Energy is a major utility service provider, providing electrical and natural gas services to residents. See below for more information about Puget Sound Energy, including service areas and planned utility projects.

For a map of planned PSE system improvements, click [here](#)

For a map of the PSE service area, click [here](#)

For more information about PSE’s Clean Energy Plan, click [here](#)

7 | TRANSPORTATION



Transportation

Introduction: What is the Transportation Element?

The Transportation Element is part of the City of Yelm's Comprehensive Plan that oversees transportation planning for the community within a 20-year horizon. The Element establishes a transportation vision for the community and offers policy guidance to successfully manage and grow the multimodal system. The Transportation Element identifies areas of concern in the existing transportation system, as well as potential future issues as the community grows. The Element identifies projects that will address these concerns and maps out a strategic approach to funding and implementing the necessary improvements.

The Transportation Element supports ongoing local interests like reduced congestion in the core area, enhanced bike and walkability, and support for on-going urban development within the community, and, in conjunction with county and regional plans, improved access to local and regional jobs, all while supporting overall citywide objectives spelled out throughout various elements of the Comprehensive Plan. It is a powerful tool for ensuring consistency between day-to-day decisions and long-range policies and objectives.

The updated Yelm Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan builds on previous plans conducted in the city including, but not limited to:

- 2022 Yelm Transportation Plan
- 2009 Yelm Transportation Plan
- 2023 City of Yelm and Thurston County Joint Plan
- 2023 Yelm Local Road Safety Plan/Safety Action Plan
- 2023 Americans with Disabilities Plan for Yelm
- 2021 Supplemental Environmental Assessment for Yelm Loop Project, Phase 2
- 2019 Yelm Downtown Transportation Strategy
- 2045 Thurston County Transportation Plan
- 2050 Thurston Regional Transportation Plan

Transportation Plan

In addition to the Transportation Element of this Comprehensive Plan, the City also maintains a separate Transportation Plan, which was last updated in 2022. The technical material created to support this new Transportation Element provides updates to much of the material included in a typical transportation plan and may, in the future, be referenced to update the City's Transportation Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan, and this Transportation Element specifically, will adopt by reference future updates to the City's Transportation Plan as they occur.

Goal 1: Create a transportation system that is compatible with neighboring cities, Thurston County, Washington State, and other transportation providers.

Policy 1.1 Encourage the public to participate in transportation-related decisions.

Policy 1.2 Coordinate the planning, construction, and operations of transportation facilities and programs.

Policy 1.3 Coordinate with local partners including the Nisqually Indian Tribe, Intercity Transit, Yelm School District, and the Washington State Department of Transportation to address local transportation issues.

Policy 1.4 Cooperate with the City of Yelm and neighboring jurisdictions, Pierce County, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, TRPC, and the Washington State Department of Transportation to address regional transportation issues.

Policy 1.5 Support and participate in the Thurston Regional Planning Council 2045 Regional Transportation Plan.

Policy 1.6 Coordinate the planning and operation of Yelm’s transportation system to provide efficient and varied means of transportation.

Policy 1.7 Support the creation of a community transfer site and support the expansion of transit service within Yelm, its UGA, and to surrounding communities and employment centers.

Policy 1.8 Support the development of a regional park-and-ride lot system.

Policy 1.9 Preserve the existing railroad rights-of-way within Yelm’s Urban Growth Area and connections to the national rail network.

Policy 1.10 Coordinate with service providers on the location of major utility and transportation corridors and the construction of roadway improvements.

Policy 1.11 For planning purposes, adopt the Washington State Department of Transportation Urban LOS D standard or better within the urban growth boundary. Refer to the County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 8, “Transportation”, for more information.

Goal 2: Create a well-maintained transportation system that provides safe and cost-effective movement of goods, services, and people.

Policy 2.1 Disperse traffic throughout the community rather than concentrating it through the urban core, by providing an interconnected network of streets and trails that offer a variety of travel choices and different ways to get around the community.

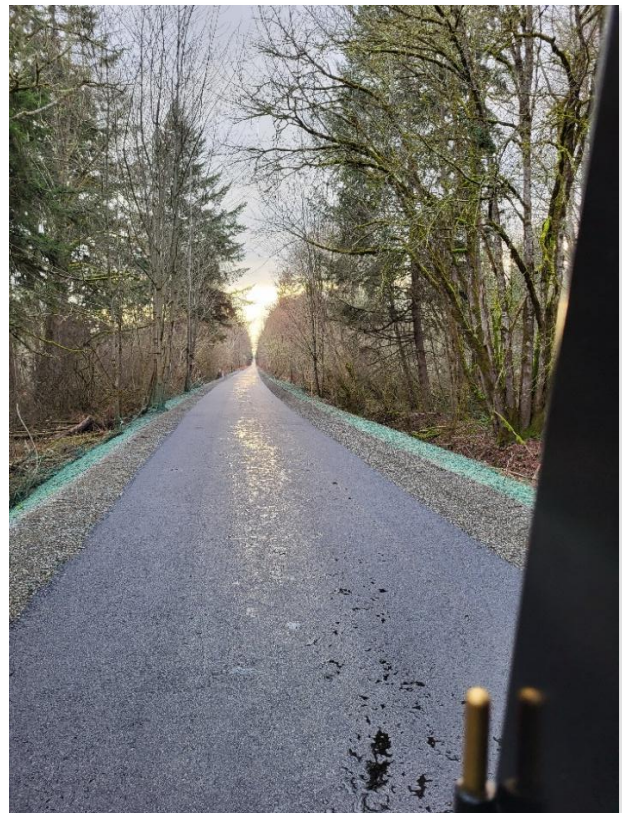
Policy 2.2 Classify Yelm’s streets according to federal, state, regional, and local guidelines.

Policy 2.3 Ensure adequate and safe access to property through a system of public and private roads.

Policy 2.4 Apply design standards, guidelines, and endorsed criteria that result in attractive and functional transportation facilities.

Policy 2.5 Utilize transportation system management strategies to efficiently operate transportation facilities. These could include:

- Signal interconnection systems, signal coordination and synchronization, and other signal systems to ease traffic flow;
- Roundabouts. If a signal intersection is considered, an analysis must be performed to confirm that it outperforms a roundabout for safety and mobility operations;
- Turn lanes and pockets to allow turning vehicles to move out of through traffic lanes;
- Access control for arterials and major collectors to minimize disruptions in traffic flow; and
- Non-motorized infrastructure



Policy 2.6 Ensure mobility for all residents, including the elderly and persons with disabilities by providing an accessible and affordable transportation system within Yelm and its Urban Growth Area. Evaluate and prioritize ADA compliance on the multimodal transportation system.

Policy 2.7 Maintain the transportation system at a level that is comparable with the design standards applied to new facilities.

Policy 2.8 Limit and provide access to the street network in a manner consistent with the function and purpose of each roadway.

Policy 2.9 Permit construction of private roads to assist with access to private properties.

Policy 2.10 Manage the demand for transportation systems through strategies mandated by state law.

Policy 2.11 Include emergency service providers in review of roadway designs to ensure safe emergency vehicle passage. Build in system redundancy through a well-connected street grid to support emergency response and reduce community disruption during natural or man-made disasters.

Policy 2.12 Incorporate the needs of emerging technology, such as increasing electric vehicle use, as reasonable and feasible.

Goal 3: Develop a transportation system with minimal environmental impact and energy consumption that provides for a high quality of life to be enjoyed by the citizens.

Policy 3.1 Design transportation facilities that minimize adverse environmental impacts resulting from their construction and operation.

Policy 3.2 Design a transportation network that is compatible with the economic and development goals of Yelm and its UGA.

Policy 3.3 Ensure that transportation system improvements are compatible with adjacent land uses and minimize potential conflicts.

Policy 3.4 Allow major land use changes only when those proposals accompany specific documentation or proposed plans showing how the transportation system can adequately support the needs of existing and proposed development.

Policy 3.5 Retain existing public rights-of-way.

Policy 3.6 Support the Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emission reduction goals set forth in the Climate chapter.

Goal 4: Responsibly fund needed transportation system improvements with public and private sector participation.

Policy 4.1 Implement transportation planning and development in the Urban Growth Area as a joint exercise of responsibility between Yelm, the County and the State.

Policy 4.2 Use a standardized, well documented, and objective process to establish clear priorities for transportation expenditures within Yelm and its Urban Growth Area, such as development of the six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP).



Policy 4.3 Ensure that any transportation improvements or strategies that are required to mitigate impacts are constructed or financed concurrent with a development project.

Policy 4.4 Share the responsibility of mitigating transportation development impacts between the public and private sector.

Policy 4.5 Cooperate with private investors to provide for the recovery of facility improvement costs which are attributable to other development projects.

Policy 4.6 Identify opportunities for developer funding of streets, sidewalks and bicycle lanes to mitigate multimodal transportation impacts where specified and required.

Goal 5: Encourage safe and active school transportation to improve community health, economic, and environmental outcomes.

Policy 5.1 Continue to support and act on the Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action Plan and other programs that are working to build a generation of healthy and safe walkers, bicycle, and bus riders.

Policy 5.2 In new neighborhoods, site and design schools that maximize opportunity for neighborhoods and the community, and encourage travel to schools on foot, by bike or by bus.

Policy 5.3 Participate in public/private partnerships to maximize and leverage revenue for schools and other facilities, including surrounding safe walk/bike routes.

Policy 5.4 Support Yelm Community Schools efforts on funding support for safety education and infrastructure improvements around schools.

Policy 5.5 Support sidewalk and safety improvements around schools — especially those with walk and bike safety education and encouragement programs.

Goal 6: Improve infrastructure around schools that results in safe multimodal

transportation including vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and bus transit access.

Policy 6.1 Work to increase the safety of the transportation system with appropriate design and, in the long term, consistently update and maintain the city's Safety Action Plan.

Policy 6.2 Support the state's "Target Zero" plan goal of zero deaths and disabling injuries.

Policy 6.3 Encourage travel by means other than the automobile and provide for the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists throughout Yelm and its Urban Growth Area.

Policy 6.4 Design transportation infrastructure to encourage safe user behavior.

Goal 7: Reduce transportation congestion and environmental impacts.

Policy 7.1 Encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation.

Policy 7.2 Provide for park-and-pool facilities that increase vanpool and carpool options in development regulations.

Policy 7.3 Connect urban and rural bicycle and pedestrian pathways with parks and open spaces to encourage more active transportation and use of natural areas.

Goal 8: Consider freight mobility needs in local and regional planning.

Policy 8.1 Ensure that transportation plans and funding strategies explicitly consider the need to move goods and services within and between local communities, and between the Thurston Region and other markets.

Goal 9: Integrate transportation considerations into land use decisions, and vice versa.

Policy 9.1 Provide for increased densities in urban neighborhoods and activity centers near

transportation corridors in development regulations.

Policy 9.2 Development regulations should allow for more compact forms of development to ensure that future land-use patterns will be efficient to serve with transit, freight or other transportation infrastructure.

Policy 9.3 As new annexation and/or development occurs on the east side of the city near Canal and Grove Streets, consider reclassification of Grove Street between Flume Road and 103rd Avenue as a Major Collector facility.

Policy 9.4 Development review should evaluate the connectivity of subdivisions to existing, proposed or planned bicycle facilities.

Goal 10: Work toward an integrated, multimodal transportation system that supports adopted land use plans, reduces overall need to drive and increases travel choices.

Policy 10.1 Pursue adoption of a Complete Streets Policy to help provide quality choices appropriate to existing and future land uses including walking, bicycling, transit and motor vehicles including freight.

Policy 10.2 Ensure that development of activity center, employment centers, schools and parks accommodate multiple modes of travel and safe, efficient connections among those modes of travel.

Policy 10.3 Promote public awareness on the rights and responsibilities of drivers, bicyclists, and walkers and ways these modes can travel together safely and efficiently.

Policy 10.4 Promote and enhance public awareness on the relationship between transportation and land use and how they influence each other.

Policy 10.5 Further refine multi-modal Level of Service (LOS) standards to define desired, acceptable and unacceptable performance for the transportation system:

- Vehicular LOS – Maintain LOS C or LOS D, based on current code. Consider exception areas based on multimodal transportation system improvement needs and financial resources.
- Pedestrian LOS – provide a minimum of Level of Stress 2 for the pedestrian system consistent with the Pedestrian Plan.
- Bicycle LOS – provide a minimum of Level of Stress 2 for the bicycle network consistent with the Bicycle Plan.
- Transit LOS – partner with local and regional agencies to provide a minimum of LOS Acceptable.

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM INVENTORY

This chapter documents existing transportation facilities and services within the City of Yelm. The Transportation Element focuses on active transportation, public transportation, and vehicle performance. The information in this chapter was used to determine short-term project needs and a long-term multimodal improvement strategy for the city. A complete description of the existing transportation network is available in the Transportation Technical Report, which is included in Appendix A.



Active Transportation

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities form the basis of what is commonly called the “active” or human-powered transportation system. In its entirety, active transportation includes walking, traveling with a mobility aid such as a wheelchair, bicycling, or using another wheeled device such as a skateboard or scooter. Full or partially-human powered vehicles, commonly referred to as micromobility devices, may also use the pedestrian and bicycle network where permitted. These devices can include electric bicycles (i.e. e-bikes) and electric scooters and can be either individually owned or rented through a mobile app or kiosk to be picked up and dropped off in the public right of way. These vehicles are meant for short distance trips as a viable alternative to using a personal vehicle.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities primarily serve short trips to activity centers or essential destinations such as schools, parks, and other amenities located in the downtown business area and commercial corridors. The City of Yelm supports walking and bicycling through maintaining

a connected network of sidewalks, bicycle routes, and trails. The city has invested in constructing bike lanes and multi-use paths and the pedestrian and bicycle network is growing.

Pedestrian Facilities

The pedestrian system in Yelm consists of sidewalks, multi-use paths, marked and unmarked, signalized and unsignalized pedestrian crossings. These facilities provide residents with the ability to access local retail/commercial centers, recreational areas, and other land uses by foot. Figure 7-1 illustrates the locations of existing pedestrian facilities within the city.

To assess the existing performance of the pedestrian network a level of stress (LTS) analysis was performed. This analysis identified a level of stress for each facility, on a scale of LTS 1 through LTS 4. The results are provided in Figure 7-2.

For additional information on the performance of the existing pedestrian network, see the Transportation Technical Report.

Bicycle Facilities

The bicycle system in Yelm consists of striped bicycle lanes, wide roadway shoulders, shared-lane roadways (vehicles and bikes share the same travel way), and multi-use trails. Figure 7-3 illustrates the locations of the existing bicycle and multi-use path facilities within the city.

To assess the existing performance of the bicycle network a level of stress (LTS) analysis was performed. This analysis identified a level of stress for each facility, on a scale of LTS 1 through LTS 4. The results are provided in Figure 7-4.

Figure 7-1: Yelm Pedestrian and Trail System

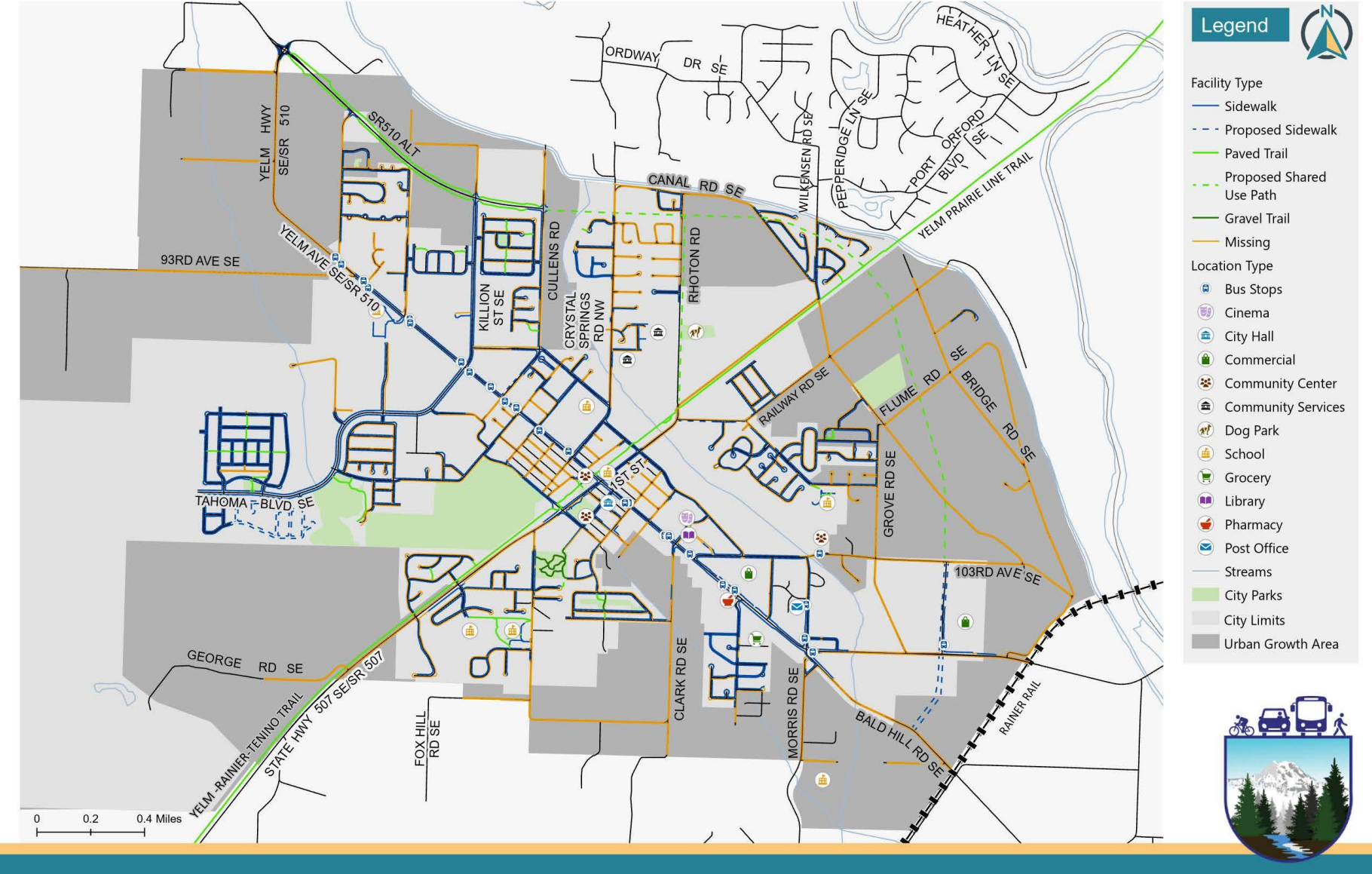


Figure 7-2: Yelm Pedestrian Level of Stress Analysis

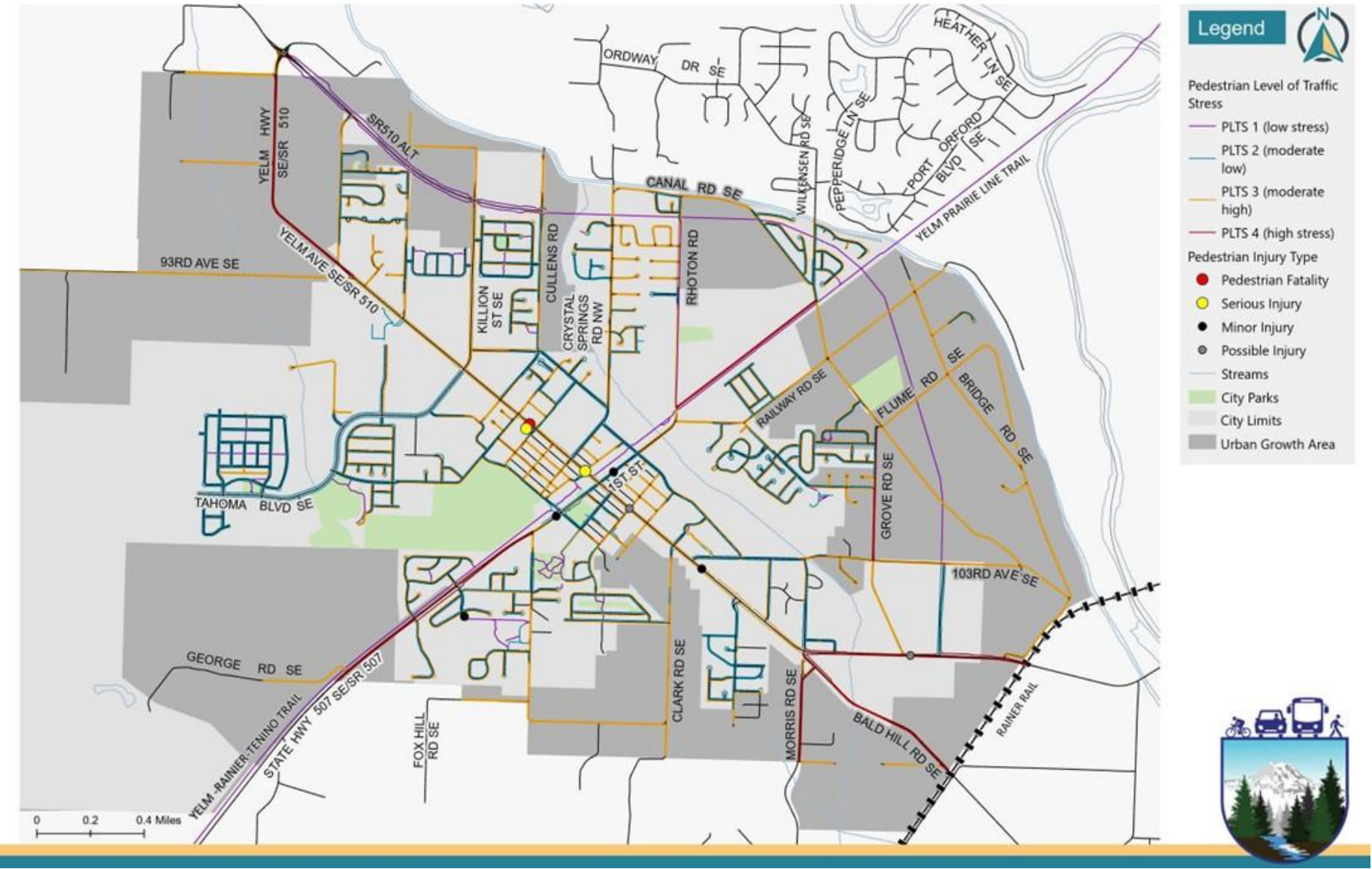


Figure 7-3: Yelm Bicycle and Multi-Use Trail System

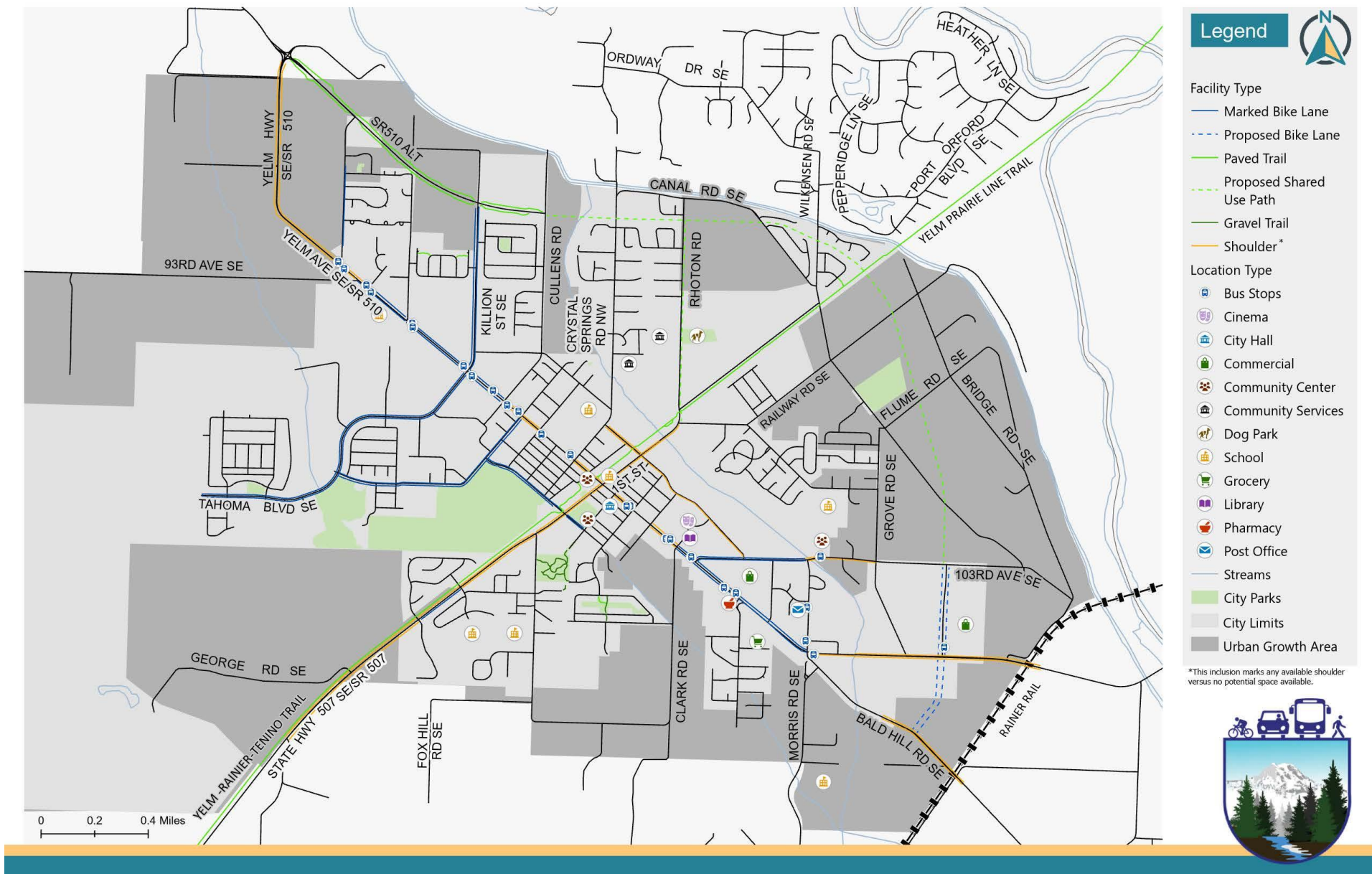
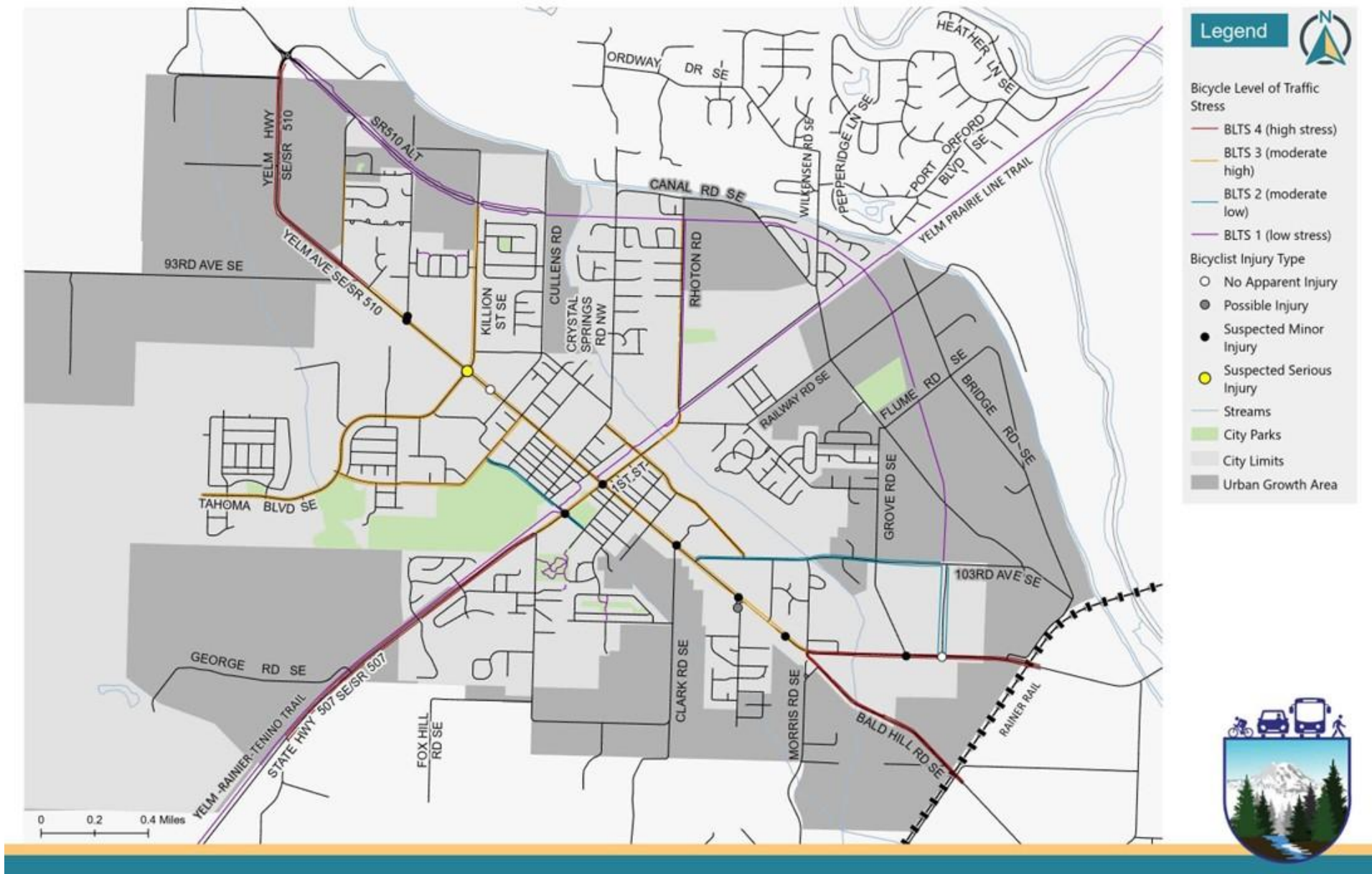


Figure 7-4: Yelm Bicycle Level of Stress Analysis



A key component of this system is the existing Yelm-Rainier-Tenino Trail that connects the city to communities in southern Thurston County, and the Prairie Line Trail. As shown below, as it comes into the city the Yelm to Tenino Trail follows the west side of SR 507 and ends at the intersection with Yelm Avenue in the heart of the city.



YELM-RAINIER-TENINO TRAIL ADJACENT TO SR 507 IN YELM

The Prairie Line Trail (image below) currently exists from Yelm Avenue to the Nisqually River. The city purchased the trail alignment in 2000 from the Burlington Northern Railroad with a Federal

Surface Transportation Program grant. The grant enabled acquisition of the railroad right of way from SR 510 to the Town of Roy in Pierce County.

The City of Yelm won a Recreation and Conservation (RCO) grant to convert the railroad to a shared use path from the Centralia Power Canal north to and across the Nisqually River Bridge trestle. Construction has been completed on this segment. The segment between the Nisqually River bridge and the Town of Roy is not yet in place.

Public input gathered during the creation of the 2019 *Downtown Transportation Strategy* revealed that bicycle activity is low on Yelm Avenue, the city's main thoroughfare. Improving bicycling infrastructure, including adding bike lanes, is an important goal. For additional information on the performance of the existing bicycle network, see the Transportation Technical Report.



PRAIRIE LINE TRAIL NORTH OF YELM AVENUE

Public Transit System

Fixed Route Bus Service

Intercity Transit (IT) Intercity Transit (IT) provides free-fare transit service for the citizens of the City of Yelm. Service in Yelm is limited to a single route of the Intercity regional transit system that connects the city to Olympia. Intercity route 94 travels the length of Yelm Avenue (SR 510/SR 507) and in a loop along Walmart Boulevard, 103rd Avenue SE, and Creek Street SE in the southeast corner of the city providing residents the ability to travel, from, and through the city center to access local services but that is the extent of its fixed route transit service.

Route 94 runs seven days per week with service every 30 minutes. Table 1 provides a summary of ridership on Route 94 by year and day of the week. Data presented includes total boarding, total alighting, and route total in Yelm for the years 2019 through 2024.

Table 7-1: Route 94 Ridership Counts (2019-2024)

Year	Boarding/Alighting	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	Totals
2019	Boarding	25,186	2,705	2,165	30,056
	Alighting	<u>22,830</u>	<u>2,607</u>	<u>2,100</u>	<u>27,537</u>
	<i>Total</i>	48,016	5,312	4,265	57,593
2020	Boarding	17,105	2,388	2,114	21,607
	Alighting	<u>16,632</u>	<u>2,475</u>	<u>2,123</u>	<u>21,230</u>
	<i>Total</i>	33,737	4,863	4,237	42,837
2021	Boarding	19,609	3,070	2,863	25,542
	Alighting	<u>19,480</u>	<u>3,059</u>	<u>2,881</u>	<u>25,420</u>
	<i>Total</i>	39,089	6,129	5,744	50,962
2022	Boarding	27,671	4,179	3,531	35,381
	Alighting	<u>26,131</u>	<u>4,171</u>	<u>3,594</u>	<u>33,896</u>
	<i>Total</i>	53,802	8,350	7,125	69,277
2023	Boarding	42,475	5,743	5,473	53,691
	Alighting	<u>40,767</u>	<u>5,607</u>	<u>5,451</u>	<u>51,825</u>
	<i>Total</i>	83,242	11,350	10,924	105,516
2024	Boarding	48,900	7,129	6,009	62,038
	Alighting	<u>47,465</u>	<u>7,076</u>	<u>5,966</u>	<u>60,507</u>
	<i>Total</i>	96,365	14,205	11,975	122,545

Existing Traffic Operations

Operations Analysis

The table below shows the level of Service Criteria for stop controlled intersections and signalized intersections.

Table 7-2: Level of Service Criteria for intersections

Level of Service	Signalized/Roundabout Intersection Average Control Delay (seconds/vehicle)	Stop-Controlled Intersection Average Control Delay (seconds/vehicle)
A	≤ 10	≤ 10
B	> 10-20	> 10-15
C	> 20-35	> 15-25
D	> 35-55	> 25-35
E	> 55-80	> 35-50
F	> 80	> 50

In its 2021 *Transportation Plan*, the city of Yelm adopted minimum levels of service for road facilities under its jurisdiction as follows:

- In all residential zones, LOS C
- In all commercial and light industrial zones, LOS D
- In the urban core on Yelm Avenue between 4th Street and Solberg Street, LOS F is recognized as a minimum level of service where mitigation to create traffic diversions, bypasses, and alternate routes and modes of transportation are authorized and being planned, funded, implemented, and can result in improved LOS.

By adopting minimum LOS standards for the City's roadways, Yelm has committed to transportation system performance target that must be maintained as new development occurs. As new developments are proposed and impacts assessed, developers and/or the city must mitigate

transportation impacts to ensure that LOS does not fall below the standard. As set forth in the GMA, Yelm has incorporated these LOS standards into its Unified Development Code (Section 18.16.030) for purposes of Concurrency Management.

It should also be noted that SR 510/Yelm Avenue/SR 507 is recognized as a regional strategy corridor within the City of Yelm and adding vehicle capacity should be avoided where possible.

WSDOT has adopted LOS D as the standard for urban portions of SR 507 and SR 510.

2024 Existing Conditions Analysis Results

An operations analysis was conducted for 22 intersections throughout the City and Urban Growth Area. In this analysis, the following three intersections currently operate below City of Yelm or WSDOT standards during the PM peak hour:

- Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at 103rd Avenue SE – operates at LOS F for side street traffic
- Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Plaza Drive NE – operates at LOS F for side street
- Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Mountain View Road SE/High School Driveway – operates at LOS E for side street

All other intersections in the study area currently operate at LOS D or better. Figure 7-3 and Table 7-3 summarize the results of existing intersection LOS within the Yelm UGA. The operational analysis worksheets are provided in Appendix C.

Level of Service Criteria for Intersections 2024 Existing Conditions Analysis Results

An operations analysis¹ was conducted for 22 intersections throughout the City and Urban Growth Area. In this analysis, the following three intersections currently operate below City of Yelm or WSDOT standards during the PM peak hour:

¹ The LOS analysis was conducted for the study intersections using the software program SIDRA for roundabout controlled

intersections (WSDOT intersections use HCM Delay formula) and Synchro (Version 12) for all other intersections in the study area.

- Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at 103rd Avenue SE – operates at LOS F for side street traffic
- Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Plaza Drive NE – operates at LOS F for side street
- Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Mountain View Road SE/High School Driveway – operates at LOS E for side street

All other intersections in the study area currently operate at LOS D or better. Figure 7-3 and Table 7-3 summarize the results of existing intersection LOS within the Yelm UGA. The operational analysis worksheets are provided in Appendix C.

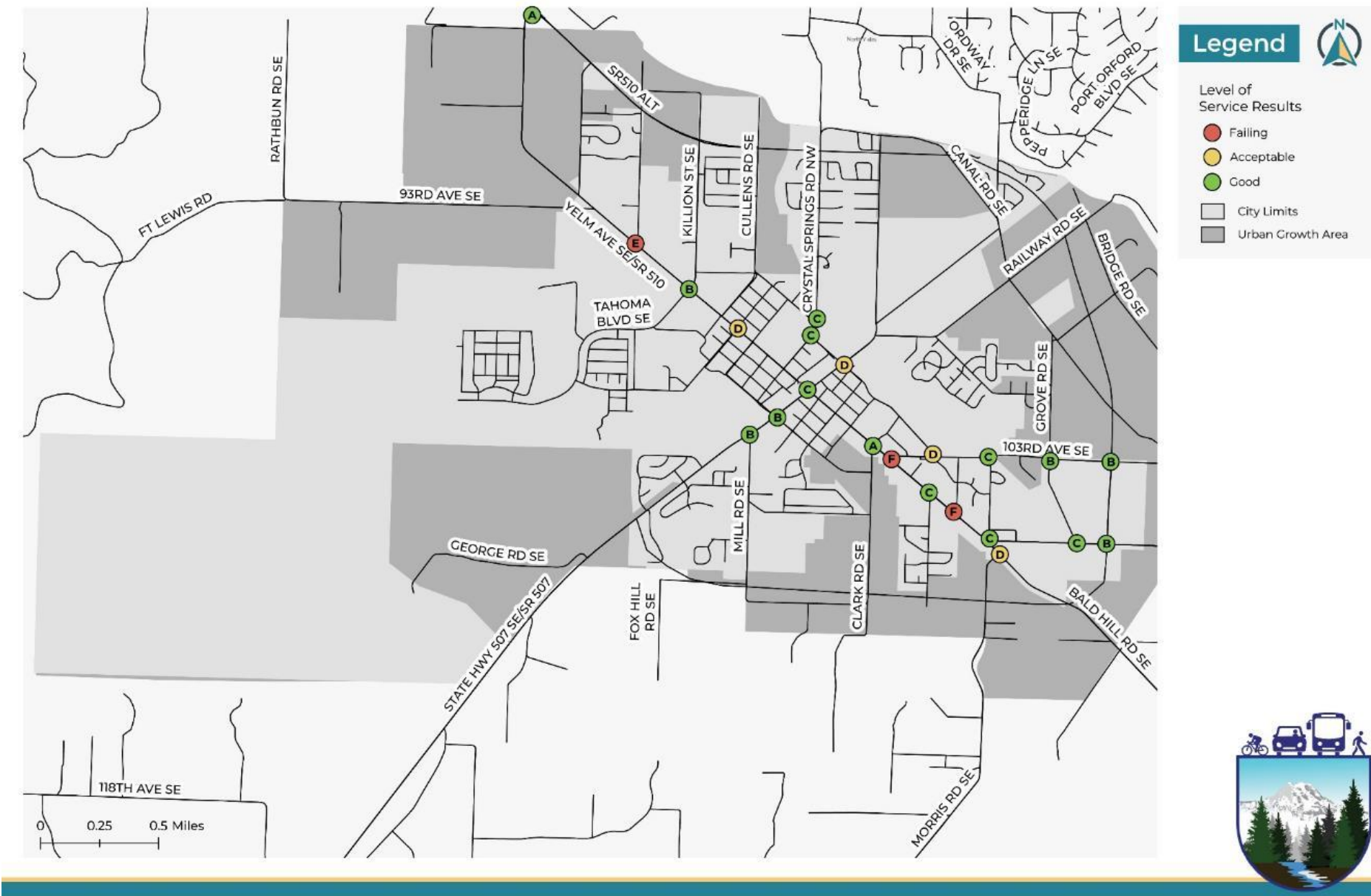
Table 7-3: Existing PM Peak Hour Level of Service Summary

#	Intersection	Traffic Control	2024 Existing Conditions PM Peak Hour	
			LOS	Delay (Sec)
1	Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Yelm Loop (SR 510 Alt)	Roundabout	A	6.0
2	Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Mountain View Road SE/High School Driveway	TWSC ¹	E	40.1
3	Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Killion Road SE/Tahoma Blvd SE	Signalized	B	16.2
4	Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Longmire Street	TWSC ¹	D	26.4
5	Yelm Avenue (SR 510/SR 507) at First Street (SR 507)	Signalized	C	31.8
6	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Clark Road SE	Signalized	A	8.3
7	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at 103 rd Avenue SE	TWSC ¹	F	51.9
8	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Vancil Road SE	Signalized	C	28.6
9	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Plaza Drive NE	TWSC ¹	F	80.9
10	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Creek Street SE/Bald Hill Road SE	Signalized	C	34.4
11	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Grove Road SE	TWSC ¹	C	19.0
12	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Walmart Boulevard	Signalized	B	13.3
13	First Street (SR 507) at Mill Road SE	TWSC ¹	B	14.3
14	First Street (SR 507) at Mosman Avenue	Signalized	B	16.6
15	First Street at Stevens Street	AWSC ¹	C	20.0
16	103 rd Avenue SE at West Road NE	TWSC ¹	D	31.9
17	103 rd Avenue SE at Creek Street SE	TWSC ¹	C	18.6
18	Coates Avenue NW at Crystal Springs Street NW	TWSC ¹	C	15.2
19	Stevens Street NW at Edwards Street NW	TWSC ¹	C	22.4
20	Bald Hill Road SE at Morris Road SE	TWSC ¹	D	27.9
21	103 rd Avenue SE at Grove Road SE	AWSC ¹	B	12.0
22	103 rd Avenue SE at Walmart Boulevard	TWSC ¹	B	11.9

Note 1: The average delay for all vehicles is reported for signalized intersections. The delay of the worst stop-controlled approach is reported for unsignalized intersections. TWSC means Two-Way Stop Control AWSC means All Way Stop Control.

Note 2: Cells highlighted in **grey/bold** exceed the City's LOS standards. The intersection LOS standard is D, except for Intersection #3, which is LOS E.

Figure 7-3: Existing Intersection Performance



FUTURE CONDITIONS

This chapter documents the effect of community growth on the transportation system and identifies the need for future multimodal facilities and services within the city. Included is this Transportation Element is a discussion of street, intersection and highway improvement needs and recommended active transportation system enhancements.

For a complete description of the long term volume forecasting and additional information on the performance of the street network, see the Transportation Technical Report.

Future Traffic Analysis

2050 Baseline Conditions Analysis Results

An operations analysis² was conducted for 22 intersections throughout the City and Urban Growth Area. In this analysis, the following eight intersections currently operate below City of Yelm or WSDOT standards during the 2050 PM peak hour:

- Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Mountain View Road SE/High School Driveway
- Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Longmire Street
- Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at 103rd Avenue SE
- Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Plaza Drive NE
- Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Grove Road SE
- First Street N at Stevens Street NW
- 103rd Avenue SE at West Road NE
- 103rd Avenue SE at Creek Street SE

All of these intersections currently operate under stop sign control, with several being low volume side streets along Yelm Avenue. Three of these intersections are located along the parallel route

that currently acts as the eastern portion of the Yelm Loop.

2050 With Improvements Analysis Results

- The City of Yelm has an active list of roadway and intersection improvements that it maintains, based on previous long-range planning and recent analysis work. This list of projects is documented and described in the Capital Facilities chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and have been added to the 2050 intersection analysis as appropriate. Two additional improvements that are expected to be constructed through developer activity have also been included:
- Yelm Avenue at Longmire Road. This location is currently going through an Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) effort to identify the appropriate control improvements. Traffic signal control and roundabout control are being evaluated. This improvement is currently being funded through developer mitigation fees
- Yelm Avenue at Grove Road SE. This intersection was included in the evaluation documented in the 2013 EIS for the vacant properties in the vicinity of Walmart. The EIS identified roundabout control as a required mitigation improvement and is expected to be funded and constructed to support the land use growth assumed in the traffic volume forecasts. This location was also identified in the City's safety plan as a priority location, with roundabout control the recommended countermeasure.

² The LOS analysis was conducted for the study intersections using the software program SIDRA for roundabout controlled

intersections (WSDOT intersections use HCM Delay formula) and Synchro (Version 12) for all other intersections in the study area.

These improvements directly address two of the eight locations projected to operate below the level of service standard. The remaining six intersections from that list do not have an identified improvement at this time. All six locations will be significantly impacted by the completion of the Yelm Loop project. This improvement is accounted for in the traffic volume forecasts but the exact impact is difficult to predict.

Therefore, it is recommended that these six locations be reevaluated after completion of the Yelm Loop project, to confirm the volume impact and identify, as needed, appropriate improvements. The city is currently pursuing grant funds to conduct a corridor study of Yelm Avenue between 1st Street and 170th Street SE, which would include an evaluation of five of these six locations.

Table 7-4 and Figure 7-4 summarize the LOS results in the 2050 PM peak hour with improvements.

Pedestrian Plan

Figure 7- 5 presents the recommended pedestrian plan for the City of Yelm. This plan was built on the deficiencies identified in the pedestrian system inventory including:

- Filling system gaps to provide for a safer, more comfortable and continuous trip
- Addressing areas with poor Levels of Traffic Stress
- Providing improved access to many of the key destinations within the city including schools, parks, shopping areas, and community facilities such as government office, the library, the post office, and others as identified in the figure.

Another key consideration in the development of the plan has been to facilitate connections between street-adjacent pedestrian walkways and the growing trail system in Yelm. Continuous and improved sidewalk connections provide access to the existing Yelm-Tenino Trail, the Prairie Loop Trail

and the portions of the Yelm Loop Trail that have been constructed. Additional connections would also be provided to the Phase 2 trail portion of this highway project at planned intersection connections including Rhoton Road and Wilkensen Road.

The pedestrian plan includes the following facilities:

- New sidewalks built as identified, consistent with the city's design standards for the classification of the street
- New paved multi-use trails that will be shared with bicycle traffic
- Planned and funded paved multi-use trails.

Table: 7-4: 2050 With Improvements PM Peak Hour Level of Service Summary

#	Intersection	Traffic Control	2050 Baseline Conditions PM Peak Hour		2050 PM Peak Hour with Improvements		
			LOS	Delay (Sec)	Improvement	LOS	Delay (Sec)
1	Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Yelm Loop (SR 510 Alt)	Roundabout	A	6.6	None needed	A	6.6
2	Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Mountain View Road SE/High School Driveway	TWSC ¹	F	300+	Re-analyze intersection during the five-year implementation report process after Yelm Loop opening	--	--
3	Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Killion Road SE/Tahoma Blvd SE	Signalized	C	24.2	None needed	C	24.2
4	Yelm Avenue (SR 510) at Longmire Street	TWSC ¹	F	59.2	Pending results of ICE ⁴	A	6.6
5	Yelm Avenue (SR 510/SR 507) at First Street (SR 507)	Signalized	D	54.6	None needed	D	54.6
6	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Clark Road SE	Signalized	B	12.9	None needed	B	12.9
7	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at 103 rd Avenue SE	TWSC ¹	F	138.9	Re-analyze intersection during the five-year implementation report process after Yelm Loop opening	--	--
8	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Vancil Road SE	Signalized	D	43.2	None needed	D	43.2
9	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at NE Plaza Drive NE	TWSC ¹	F	239.1	Re-analyze intersection during the five-year implementation report process after Yelm Loop opening	--	--
10	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Creek Street SE/Bald Hill Road SE	Roundabout	B	12.6	None needed	B	12.6
11	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Grove Road SE	TWSC ¹	F	66.8	Build roundabout	A	4.8

#	Intersection	Traffic Control	2050 Baseline Conditions PM Peak Hour		2050 PM Peak Hour with Improvements		
			LOS	Delay (Sec)	Improvement	LOS	Delay (Sec)
12	Yelm Avenue (SR 507) at Walmart Boulevard	Roundabout	B	14.9	None needed	B	14.9
13	First Street (SR 507) at Mill Road SE	TWSC ¹	C	24.6	None needed	C	24.6
14	First Street (SR 507) at SE Mosman Avenue	Signalized	C	25.5	None needed	C	25.5
15	First Street at Stevens Street	AWSC ¹	E	41.6	Re-analyze intersection during the five-year implementation report process after Yelm Loop opening	--	--
16	103 rd Avenue SE at West Road SE	TWSC ¹	F	210.8	Re-analyze intersection during the five-year implementation report process after Yelm Loop opening	--	--
17	103 rd Avenue SE at Creek Street SE	TWSC ¹	F	85.6	Re-analyze intersection during the five-year implementation report process after Yelm Loop opening	--	--
18	Coates Avenue NW at Crystal Springs Street NW	TWSC ¹	B	13.7	None needed	B	13.7
19	Stevens Street NW at Edwards Street NW	TWSC ¹	C	15.3	None needed	C	15.3
20	Bald Hill Road at Morris Road SE ⁵	TWSC ¹	D	34.3	Roundabout	A	6.4
21	103 rd Avenue SE at Grove Road SE	AWSC ¹	C	22.0	None needed	C	22.0
22	103 rd Avenue SE at Walmart Boulevard	Roundabout	A	6.2	None needed	A	6.2

Note 1: The average delay for all vehicles is reported for signalized and AWSC intersections. The delay of the worst stop-controlled approach is reported for TWSC intersections. TWSC means Two-Way Stop Control AWSC means All Way Stop Control.

Note 2: Cells highlighted in **grey/bold** exceed the City's LOS standards. The intersection LOS standard is D, except for Intersection #3, which is LOS E.

Note 3: City is pursuing supplemental grant funding to conduct a corridor study in this area based on recommendations from the Safety Action Plan. The SAP identified a recommendation to install a roundabout at Plaza Drive and implement access management along Yelm Avenue between this intersection and the proposed new roundabout at Bald Hill Road.

Note 4: For purposes of this table the result of roundabout analysis is shown as documented in the Intersection Control Report (ICE).

Note 5: Future intersection would operate better than it does currently due to traffic diversion via new road extension on alignment of 170th Street south of Ylem Avenue.

Figure 7-4: 2050 With Improvements Intersection Performance

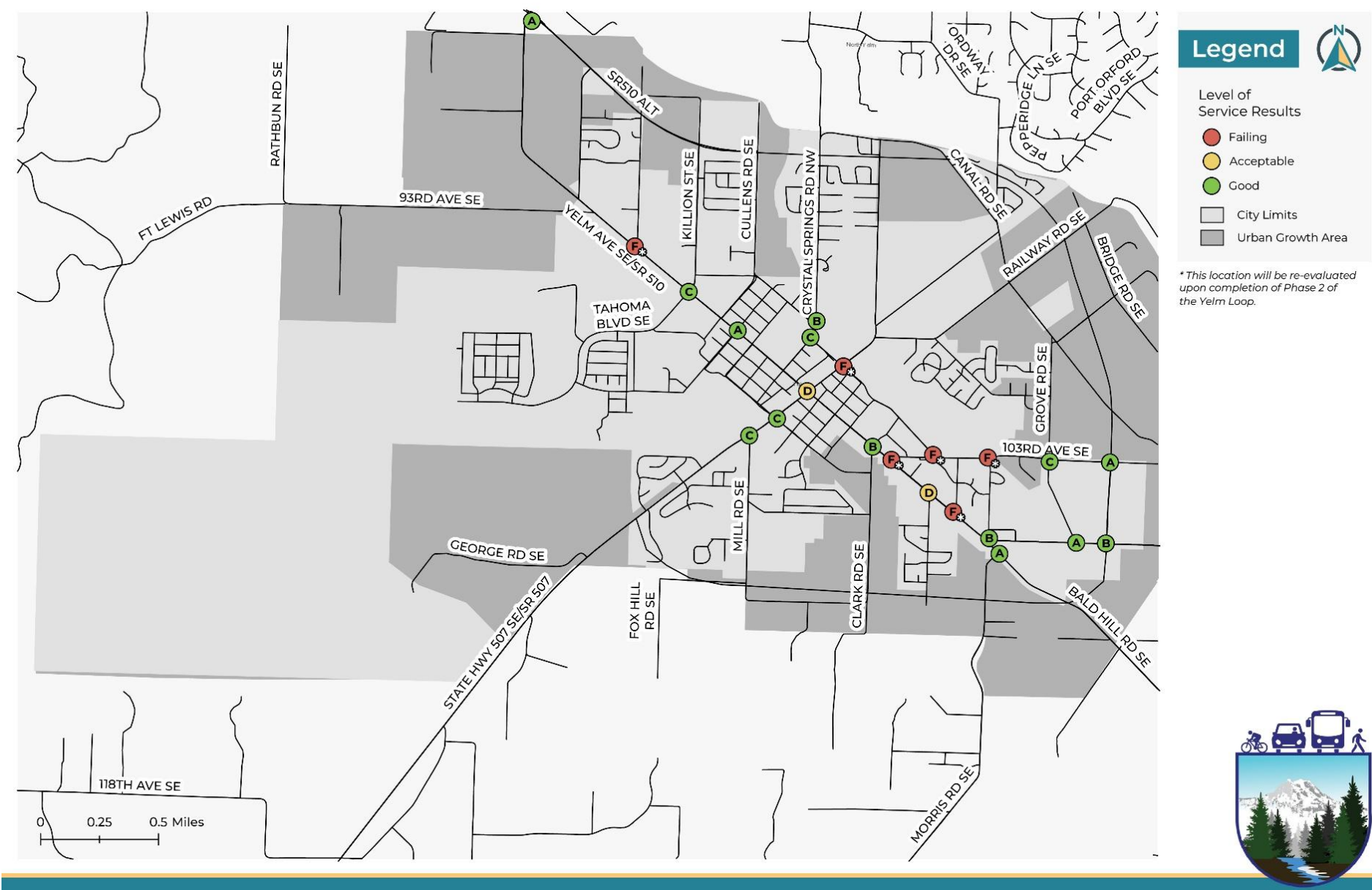
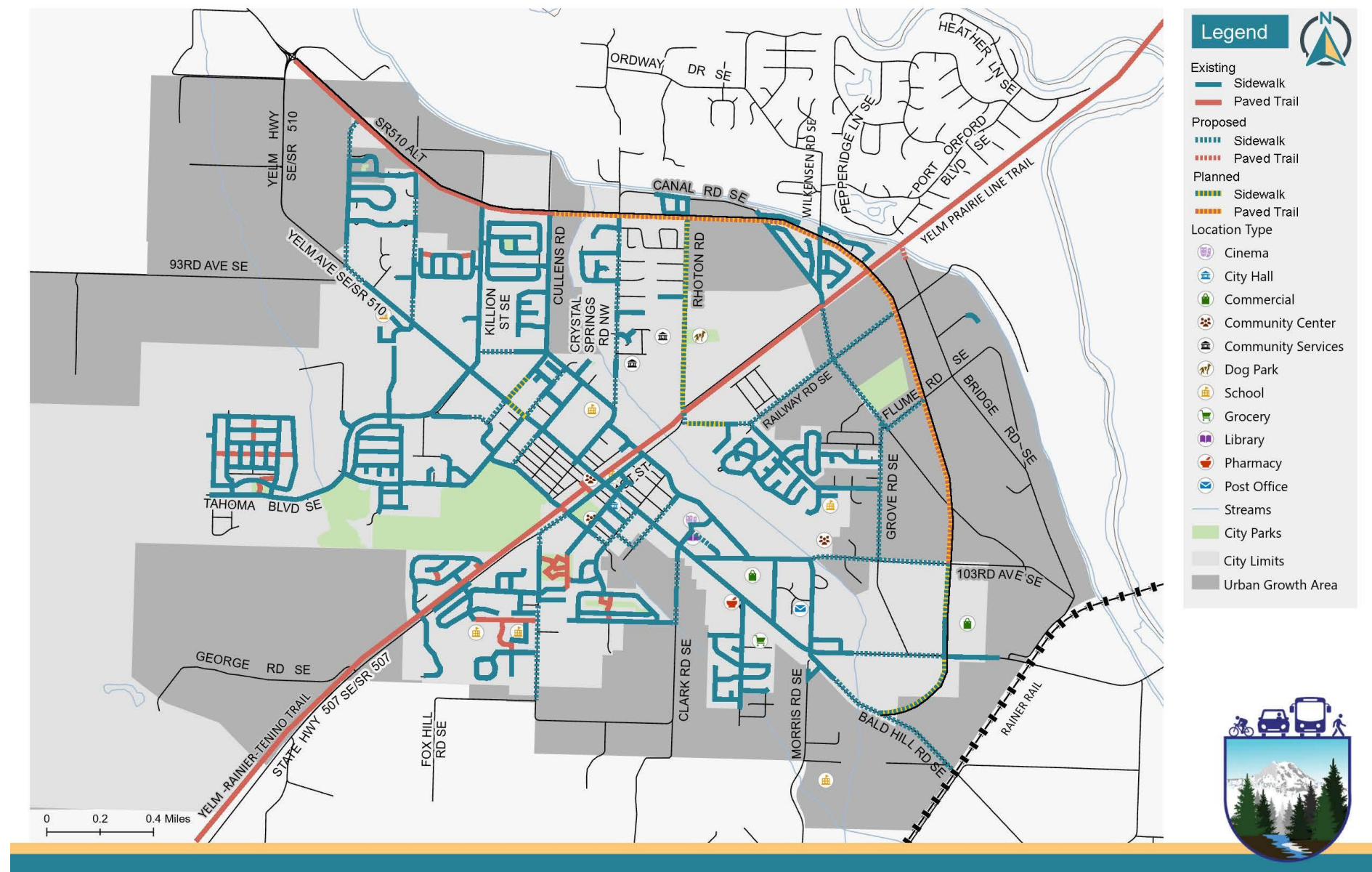


Figure 7-5: Recommended Pedestrian Plan



Another key consideration in the development of the plan has been to facilitate connections between street-adjacent pedestrian walkways and the growing trail system in Yelm. Continuous and improved sidewalk connections provide access to the existing Yelm-Tenino Trail, the Prairie Loop Trail and the portions of the Yelm Loop Trail that have been constructed. Additional connections would also be provided to the Phase 2 trail portion of this highway project at planned intersection connections including Rhoton Road and Wilkensen Road.

The pedestrian plan includes the following facilities:

- New sidewalks built as identified, consistent with the city's design standards for the classification of the street
- New paved multi-use trails that will be shared with bicycle traffic
- Planned and funded paved multi-use trails

The pedestrian plan does not address specific deficiencies in relation to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Consistent with Policy 2.6, the City's current ADA Transition Plan identifies a process for determining and prioritizing ADA improvements to the sidewalk system which includes the pavement condition and slope of the sidewalk, the presence and condition of curb ramps, and crossing protection. The Plan commits the city to gradually bringing the pedestrian system into compliance with ADA through a regular and on-going improvement program. The choice of improvements should consider and coordinate with the recommendations of the Pedestrian Plan as both new and improved sidewalks facilities are constructed.

Bicycle Plan

Figure 7- 6 presents the recommended bicycle plan for the City of Yelm. This plan also builds on the

deficiencies identified in the bicycle system's existing conditions analysis focusing primarily on:

- Filling system gaps to provide for a continuous trip
- Offering opportunities for looped trips by providing alternative bicycle-focused routes
- Addressing areas with poor Levels of Traffic Stress
- Serving key destinations within the community including schools and parks

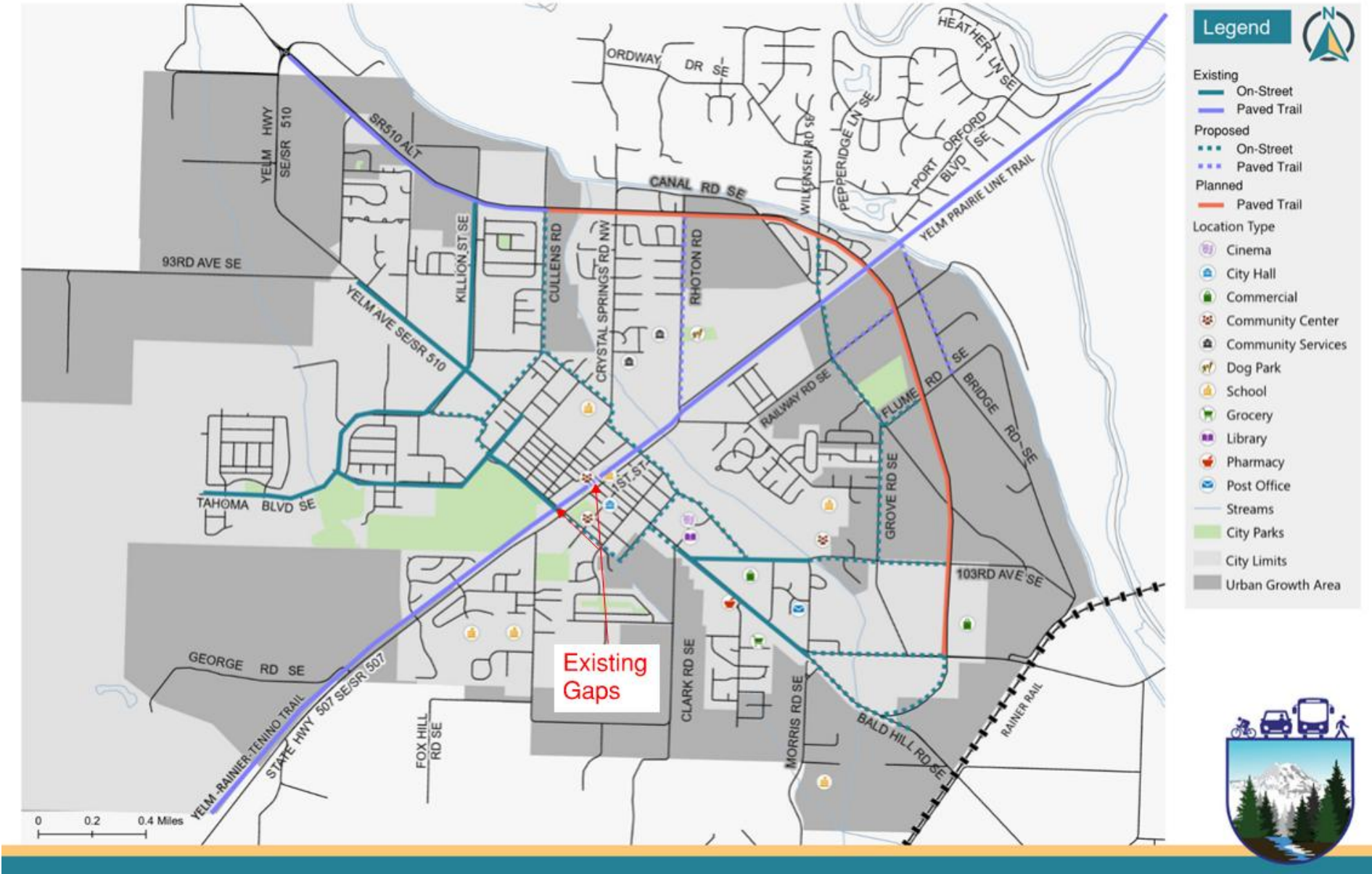
Another key consideration in the development of the plan has been to take maximum advantage of the substantial trail system that exists or is pending construction within the city, including the Yelm-Tenino Trail, the Prairie Loop Trail and the new SR 510 Yelm Loop. Opportunities to connect with the loop have been identified at each of the key intersections that are planned to be constructed with the project including Rhoton Road and Wilkensen Road, in addition to the existing intersection at Cullens Road.

The bicycle plan consists of a variety of facilities including:

- Existing and proposed on-street bicycle lanes
- Existing and proposed paved multi-use trails
- Planned and funded paved multi-use trails

The bicycle plan also recommends that consideration be given to the designation of shared use streets where appropriate and to the development of on-street bicycle facilities in conjunction with new development for major new arterial and collector roads consistent with the City's Development Guide.

Figure 7-6: Recommended Bicycle Plan



IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

A full list of the planned roadway improvements is provided and described in the Capital Facilities chapter of this comprehensive plan. The Capital Facilities chapter also discussed the financial cost and funding strategies for constructing the project list.

Appendix A

Transportation Technical Report

8 | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

The objective of the economic development chapter is to encourage the location of jobs, goods, and services for the residents of Yelm and Yelm's service area as an urban center serving southeast Thurston and south Pierce counties.

Goal 1: Create a healthy economic base for the community by supporting clean industry, tourism, higher education, vocational education, and retail services.

Policy 1.1 Support the development of retail and commercial services to meet the needs of the community.

Policy 1.2 Support clean industry by providing large parcels suitable for development and supporting infrastructure.

Policy 1.3 Support actions to preserve the charm and improve the character of Yelm's historic Central Business District.

Policy 1.4 Encourage new commercial services to locate in existing commercially zoned areas.

Policy 1.5 Encourage the location of higher education and vocational education institutions in Yelm, focused on the areas of interest in Yelm, such as:

- Agriculture
- Horticulture
- Forestry

Policy 1.6 Market Yelm's attractions to tourists: such as its agricultural setting, views of Mount Rainier, location at the head of the proposed regional railway right-of-way trail, fishing, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, and day-trip proximity to Mount Rainier, ocean, and theme parks.

Policy 1.7 Support the development of a survey of the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy and develop strategies to address the results.

Policy 1.8 Support the development of a summary of the state of the local economy.

Policy 1.9 Join with the Thurston Economic Development Council to identify potential businesses to locate in Yelm's industrial areas.

Policy 1.10 Join with the Thurston Economic Development Council to promote cottage industries within the community.

Policy 1.11 Coordinate with State run Universities and Community Colleges to promote Yelm as a satellite location for a State education center.



Goal 2: Coordinate economic development efforts to attract and retain businesses and jobs.

Policy 2.1 Support efforts by the Thurston Economic Development Council and Yelm Chamber of Commerce to develop an intergovernmental collaboration and coordination panel focused on sustainability and aligned with economic development organizations.

Policy 2.2 Support regional efforts to establish and update a matrix of development processes and publish a white paper as the guidepost for comprehensive plan updates and local land use issues.

Policy 2.3 Coordinate with other permitting jurisdictions to advocate for permitting vision, clarity, and predictability.

Policy 2.4 Support regional efforts to create a community-wide vision and action plan for coordinated and efficient governance that enlists multiple organizations in the implementation of defined community priorities and goals.

Policy 2.5 Encourage the creation of a City economic development effort to include marketing to attract new businesses that are consistent with the community's vision, to support retaining existing businesses, and to support small businesses.

Policy 2.6 Explore opportunities to defer or delay system development charges to encourage new business and facilitate revitalization in the City.

Policy 2.7 Explore incentive opportunities to encourage infill development within the City.

Goal 3: Foster industry clusters to create jobs and increase revenue circulation locally.

Policy 3.1 Support efforts to create local opportunities for educational funding.

Policy 3.2 Support efforts to encourage the Washington State Legislature to create business tax incentives/credits.

Goal 4: Create an innovation culture to encourage entrepreneurship.

Policy 4.1 Support regional efforts to explore public-private partnerships for creation of a community artist's center as a place for arts to exist and interact.

Policy 4.2 Support efforts to evaluate the potential for dedicating a public building within the Central Business District for use as a South County telework center, perhaps co-located with a small business incubator, library, or other appropriate use.

Policy 4.3 Support private efforts to recruit artists and entertainers to create vital urban places that make the community an exciting place to live and attract young innovators.

Policy 4.4 Evaluate zoning changes in residential districts to allow small scale commercial development as a special use when it will enhance the character and livability of individual neighborhoods by:

- Promoting walkability to conveniences
- Developing a sense of place within the neighborhood
- Reducing the need to drive and park at more remote commercial locations

Goal 5: Provide robust infrastructure to support economic development.

Policy 5.1 Support/preserve long-term investment in multimodal transportation.

Policy 5.2 Build capacity in telecommunications and fiber networks for commercial & industrial properties/business parks and employment centers.

Policy 5.3 Identify telecom/infrastructure gaps in the network, and place conduit during public works construction projects.

Policy 5.4 Consider “last mile” freight delivery needs when developing site design and ingress/egress requirements, street standards, and neighborhood – commercial circulation.

Policy 5.5 Advocate for sustainable funding mechanisms.

Goal 6. Ensure adequate supply of shovel-ready land along primary transportation corridors and invest in commercial and industrial redevelopment.

Policy 6.1 Assess buildable land availability/readiness.

Policy 6.2 Support regional efforts to protect employment-bearing lands and ensure an adequate supply to match target industries (medical, manufacturing, food, chemical).

Policy 6.3 Support brownfield clean-up strategies/planned actions for development and redevelopment.

Goal 7. Create a robust economy through sustainable practices.

Policy 7.1 Support the Economic Development Council’s efforts to implement the Sustainable Economy action plan.

9 | PARKS AND RECREATION



Parks and Recreation

The objective of the parks and recreation chapter is to ensure that adequate active and passive recreational and community facilities and programming are provided to serve all residents.

Policy 1.2 Design parks to include play areas and picnic areas, community gathering areas and nature walk spaces.

Policy 1.3 Design a trail network to be accessible,



This chapter complements the City of Yelm Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which is hereby adopted by reference.

Goal 1: Create a network of park and open space lands that serve the residents of Yelm regardless of their age.

Policy 1.1 Construct a system of parks, a network of trails, and community recreation facilities that are available in all areas of the city that equally support all residents

expandable, and effectively connect sidewalks with on and off-street bicycle facilities. Regularly review the design and implementation of the trail network.

Policy 1.4 Design sports and community recreation facilities to provide opportunities for learning new skills, exercise and activities for all ages, and respond to the interests of as many citizens as possible. Regularly review the design and implementation of the sports and recreation facilities.

Policy 1.5 Enhance the existing park and recreation network by:

- Adding opportunities for all neighborhoods to have a public gathering or play space across the city, including mini parks, walking resting places, gathering spaces, and green spaces within a half mile of neighborhoods.
- Providing linkages via sidewalks and paths that encourage bicycling and walking that eliminate the need for parking lots;
- Meeting the demands of a more diverse population, increasingly aware of the importance of exercise and activity for the mental and physical wellbeing of young and old;
- Continuing to support youth and adult sport activity needs, building new facilities in cooperation with schools and other public and private partners; and
- Accommodating community needs for gathering spaces that also provide capacity for events that bring in attendees from other areas of the region - as much as possible - regional and state user needs for special events in park and recreation facilities.

Policy 1.6. Continue efforts toward developing, maintaining and improving current park areas, facilities and programs according to their current master plans including:

- Cochrane Memorial Park;
- Longmire Community Park;
- Yelm City Park;
- Yelm Dog Park;
- Yelm Skate Park;
- Yelm Sidewalk and Bikeways Program; and
- Thurston Regional Trails Plan.

Policy 1.7 Create a unified system of open space lands for public use and enjoyment which



integrates critical area, habitat buffers, wastewater reuse or recycling areas, habitat restoration or enhancement areas, and public lands.

Policy 1.8 Prioritize available funds for parks and open space lands to:

- Maintain existing park and trail areas;
- Add land to existing and identify new park or open space areas;
- Construct identified facilities within existing park areas;
- Acquire additional parks land to create green space parks which provide new parks, paths and trails, supporting outdoor family activities and recreation with covered space for gathering; and
- Explore opportunity of a Yelm gateway, such as a trail overpass over Yelm Avenue, or another opportunity that will connect the Prairie Line Trail, and create a more walkable downtown and attract visitors to the Central Business District to enhance economic development.

Policy 1.9 Include park features that promote arts, culture, and education.



Goal 2: Acquire and develop additional park and open space lands to meet the needs of the community.

Policy 2.1. Acquire land and develop new park, trail, and recreation facilities which may include the following community priorities:

- a. Land for athletic fields and play areas;
- b. Community recreation facilities that can accommodate facilities such as a swimming pool, gym, meeting areas, and multiuse spaces;
- c. Neighborhood parks and a special use park; and
- d. Additional mini parks, such as playgrounds, green space throughout the city with the addition of benches along sidewalks and paths.

Policy 2.2 Give preference to new recreational facilities which are located near residential populations or adjacent to schools.

Policy 2.3 Require park, trails, and community recreation facilities to:

- a. Accommodate the physically handicapped and the elderly;
- b. Provide adequate parking at each facility;
- c. Considers the long-term maintenance of the facility;
- d. Design landscaping and amenities that allows easy surveillance from street edges and surrounding properties, and
- e. Provide incentives for developments that provide additional parks, trails, or improvements to existing facilities.

Policy 2.4 Create parks and recreational facilities in areas that are safe.

Goal 3: Plan and develop a trail network that serves all parts of the community.

Policy 3.1 Continue to implement the *Thurston Regional Trails Plan* which identifies a trail system that connects neighborhoods, cities, and neighboring counties.

Policy 3.2 Acquire and protect land from encroachment that would block trail development along existing or potential corridors, such as railroad rights-of-way and power line easements.

Policy 3.3 Collaborate with adjacent jurisdictions, tribes, and transportation providers on the planning, financing, and development of regional trail facilities.

Policy 3.4 Connect the trail network to major destinations and activity centers including parks, schools, business districts, other public facilities or sites, and park and ride lots.

Policy 3.5 Establish additional connections to the Prairie Line Trail and the Yelm Loop trail to encourage use of trails for recreation and create multimodal transportation corridors that connect trails to the commercial districts.



Goal 4: Encourage public and private efforts to provide parks, recreation facilities, and recreation programs to the community.

Policy 4.1 Enhance Yelm's existing park and recreation network by making efficient use of existing facilities.

Policy 4.2 Support partnerships with private organizations to raise funds to develop park and recreation areas.

Policy 4.3 Support a partnership with the Yelm School District to provide, coordinate, and maintain park and recreation facilities.

Policy 4.4 Support new recreational programs on public properties located near residential populations or adjacent to schools.

Policy 4.5 Seek support from various local groups, and advisory committees, to participate in providing needed improvements to local parks.



Goal 5: Conserve open space corridors to provide definition between natural areas and urban land uses.

Policy 5.1 Identify natural areas, railroad rights-of-way, and planned trail routes as open space corridors.

Policy 5.2 Coordinate and cooperate with other public and private landowners to set aside land and resources necessary to provide high quality open space before the most suitable sites are developed.

Policy 5.3 Protect unique environmental features from development and allow public access if it will not degrade the site.

Goal 6: Enhance and support community and City hosted events

Policy 6.1 Encourage diverse recreational programming for free or at low cost for the enjoyment of Yelm residents.

Policy 6.2 Continue to host long-standing traditions, including Prairie Days and Christmas in the Park, and support the inception of new events

Policy 6.3 Provide space for the Yelm Farmers Market.

Policy 6.4 Activate the Yelm Centennial Stage as a venue for live entertainment.

Policy 6.5 Implement science, technology, Engineering, and mathematics programming through events that promote education through interactive play.



10| ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES



Essential Public Facilities

The objective of the essential public facilities chapter is to identify and allow facilities necessary to accommodate urban growth.

Goal 1: Provide for the siting of essential public facilities.

Policy 1.1 Cooperatively establish a fair share process for locating essential public facilities identified by Yelm, county, and state which are needed for the community and the region.

Policy 1.2 Consider permitting Essential Public Facilities as a Special Use in all zones.

Policy 1.3 During periodic updates to Yelm Municipal Code or any of the adopted plans of the City of Yelm, ensure that nothing within the Comprehensive Plan, the Land Use Element, the zoning code, or the development regulations would preclude the siting of essential public facilities.

Policy 1.4 Locate City of Yelm essential public facilities based upon the following criteria:

Allow all essential public facilities in all land use categories with appropriate safeguards, excluding public safety facilities (e.g. central police, court, and detention facilities) from residential land uses; and

Policy 1.5. Locate county-wide and state-wide essential public facilities based upon the following criteria:

- Prohibit facilities that would have a probable significant adverse impact on critical areas or resource lands; and
- Prohibit major public facilities which generate substantial traffic unless they are sited near major transportation corridors.

Policy 1.6 Locate existing and proposed essential public facilities (such as well sites, reservoirs, wastewater treatment plants, parks and other

publicly owned lands) on the Public Owned Facilities map within the Capital Facilities Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 1.7 Encourage the public to participate in all stages of identifying and permitting essential public facilities within Yelm and its Urban Growth Area.





Goal 2: Provide emergency services in a dependable and efficient manner to meet the dynamic needs of a diverse society.

Policy 2.1 Cooperate with regional efforts to provide emergency services and to create emergency response plans

Policy 2.2 Develop and maintain an emergency plan.

Goal 3: Create a resilient region by improving disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, as well as by expanding public safety education.

Policy 3.1 Support regional efforts to fund an update to the region's Federal Emergency Management Agency-approved Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan every five years.

Policy 3.2 Identify cost-effective mitigation actions that provide all sectors of the community protection from disaster events.

Policy 3.3 Consider emergency facilities in community planning and permitting.

Policy 3.4 Participate in regional emergency exercises and recovery planning processes.

Policy 3.5 Support regional efforts to expand the eligibility of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mitigation grant programs to allow replacement of aging structures.



Goal 4: Promote good health for city residents.

Policy 4.1 Support awareness of the Washington Health Plan Finder (Health Care Exchange) and local navigator assistance for users of the program.

Policy 4.2 Support efforts by health care providers to improve health care availability and services for all within the Yelm area.

Policy 4.3 Identify the health and human services in the Yelm area for:

- Young women
- Low income
- Special needs and behavioral health needs
- Clinics and family practices
- Fitness and gym facilities

Goal 5: Improve community coordination to create schools that use land, tax dollars, and other resources efficiently.

Policy 5.1 Participate in meetings with Yelm Community Schools to share information and discuss issues related to long- and short-term planning for schools, parks, bike/pedestrian/bus network or other facilities.

Policy 5.2. Support efforts by Yelm Community Schools to explore innovative strategies, such as public-to-public land swap opportunities, to create suitably sized parcels for new schools close to existing neighborhoods or where there is convenient access to good transit service.

Policy 5.3. Identify joint use and cost-sharing opportunities when co-locating facilities or making infrastructure investments.

Policy 5.4. Allow schools to locate within walking distance of large student populations or near available transit routes through development regulations.



11 | ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CRITICAL AREAS



Environmental Protection and Critical Areas

The objective of the environmental protection and critical areas chapter is to protect and enhance the natural environment while accommodating urban growth.

Goal 1: Protect Yelm's natural environment by regulating development within critical areas.

Policy 1.1 Work with adjacent jurisdictions, state, federal, and regional agencies to protect and conserve Yelm's critical areas.

Policy 1.2 Protect and restore environmental quality through land use plans, surface water management plans and programs, comprehensive park plans, and development regulations.

Policy 1.3 Adopt development regulations and land use categories that concentrate higher densities and intensities in suitable areas.

Policy 1.4 Encourage new development located in or adjacent to critical areas to utilize clustering, low impact development (LID), and planned unit development (PUD) techniques.

Policy 1.5 Protect groundwater and encourage wise management of this valuable resource.

Policy 1.6 Adopt development regulations for wellhead protection areas based upon the best available science and hydrologic modeling.

Policy 1.7 Require all development within the urban area to be on sewers which after treatment can provide reclaimed water to enhance aquifer recharge and hydrologically connected surface streams.

Policy 1.8 Require treatment of stormwater on site using swales, ponds, biofiltration, detention and other conveyance facilities prior to discharge to either ground or surface waters.



Policy 1.9 Implement the policies and programs of the sewer and water comprehensive plans.

Policy 1.10 Take action in cooperation with the Washington Department of Ecology to improve areas with degraded ground or surface water.

Policy 1.11 Explore contingency plans for drinking water supplies should an existing water source become unusable.

Policy 1.12 Protect Yelm's aquatic resources, and where possible restore or enhance their natural functions.

Policy 1.13 Adopt stormwater development regulations that prevent turbidity and siltation from construction sites and restrict stormwater runoff to predevelopment levels through the use of low impact development (LID) management techniques.

Policy 1.14 Adopt development regulations for wetlands, streams, and their associated buffers that are based upon best available science.

Policy 1.15 Manage wetlands, rivers, streams, ponds, and lakes as hydrologically interconnected natural systems and not as isolated units.

Policy 1.16 Provide mechanisms within development regulations to allow buffer averaging, enhancement, and other mitigation measures that do not degrade or further impact sensitive areas in order to achieve maximum allowed densities.

Goal 2: Prevent the loss of life and property in frequently flooded areas.

Policy 2.1 Adopt the Federal Flood Insurance Program and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps for any developments located within a frequently flooded area.

Policy 2.2 Adopt development regulations for frequently flooded areas that prohibits development within a floodway and discourages the filling of floodplains unless necessary to meet a public purpose.

Policy 2.3 Allocate frequently flooded areas to low intensity land uses for which they are best suited.

Goal 3: Prevent the loss of life and property in areas subject to erosion, landslides, or other geologic hazards.

Policy 3.1 Adopt development regulations areas subject to erosion, landslides, or other geologic hazards based upon best available science.

Policy 3.2 Continue to gather and review seismic data to assess the community's risk to earthquake hazards.

Policy 3.3 Preserve, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

Policy 3.4 Preserve native vegetation in riparian areas and enhance this habitat wherever possible.

Policy 3.5 Manage publicly owned aquatic and riparian habitats in a way that enhances its ability to sustain fish and wildlife.

Policy 3.6 Encourage residents and businesses to use native plants in residential and commercial landscaping.

Goal 4: Protect air quality.

Policy 4.1 Support state and federal air quality standards which regulate activities that emit pollutants into the air.

Policy 4.2 Encourage commute trip reduction efforts and the use of transportation demand management techniques to reduce energy consumption and air pollution.

Goal 5: Control excessive noise that diminishes the use, value, and enjoyment of property within Yelm.

Policy 5.1 Rely upon the state noise standards to ensure that excessive noise does not impair permitted land use activities.

Goal 6: Reduce air pollution that endangers human health.

Policy 6.1 Reduce the region’s vehicle miles traveled by focusing more job and housing density in Yelm.

Policy 6.2 Continue to support regional efforts to monitor air quality and take actions to reduce air pollution.



Goal 7 Protect, preserve and restore streams, wetlands, and shorelines to protect water quality.

Policy 7.1 Enforce existing environmental-protection regulations.

Policy 7.2 Allow the use of low-impact development (LID) practices where feasible in development regulations.

Policy 7.3 Continue to support local efforts to identify and restore degraded streams and shorelines of Puget Sound.

Goal 8: Preserve environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands, prairies, and rural lands through the development of compact urban areas.

Goal 9: Protect and improve water quality, including groundwater, rivers, streams, lakes, and the Puget Sound.

Policy 9.1 Support Thurston County’s efforts to preserve stream basins that still have the opportunity to function properly.

Policy 9.2 Participate with Thurston County in any watershed-based land-use planning activities in Yelm or the Yelm urban growth area.

Goal 10: Maintain air quality standards.

Policy 10.1 Support regional efforts to continue to focus on reducing vehicle miles traveled and improving the efficient movement of people and goods on the transportation network.

Goal 11: Invasive Species

Policy 11.1 Discourage the use of any invasive species in any landscaping within the City limits and the Urban Growth Area.



Critical Areas: Oak Habitat High Groundwater

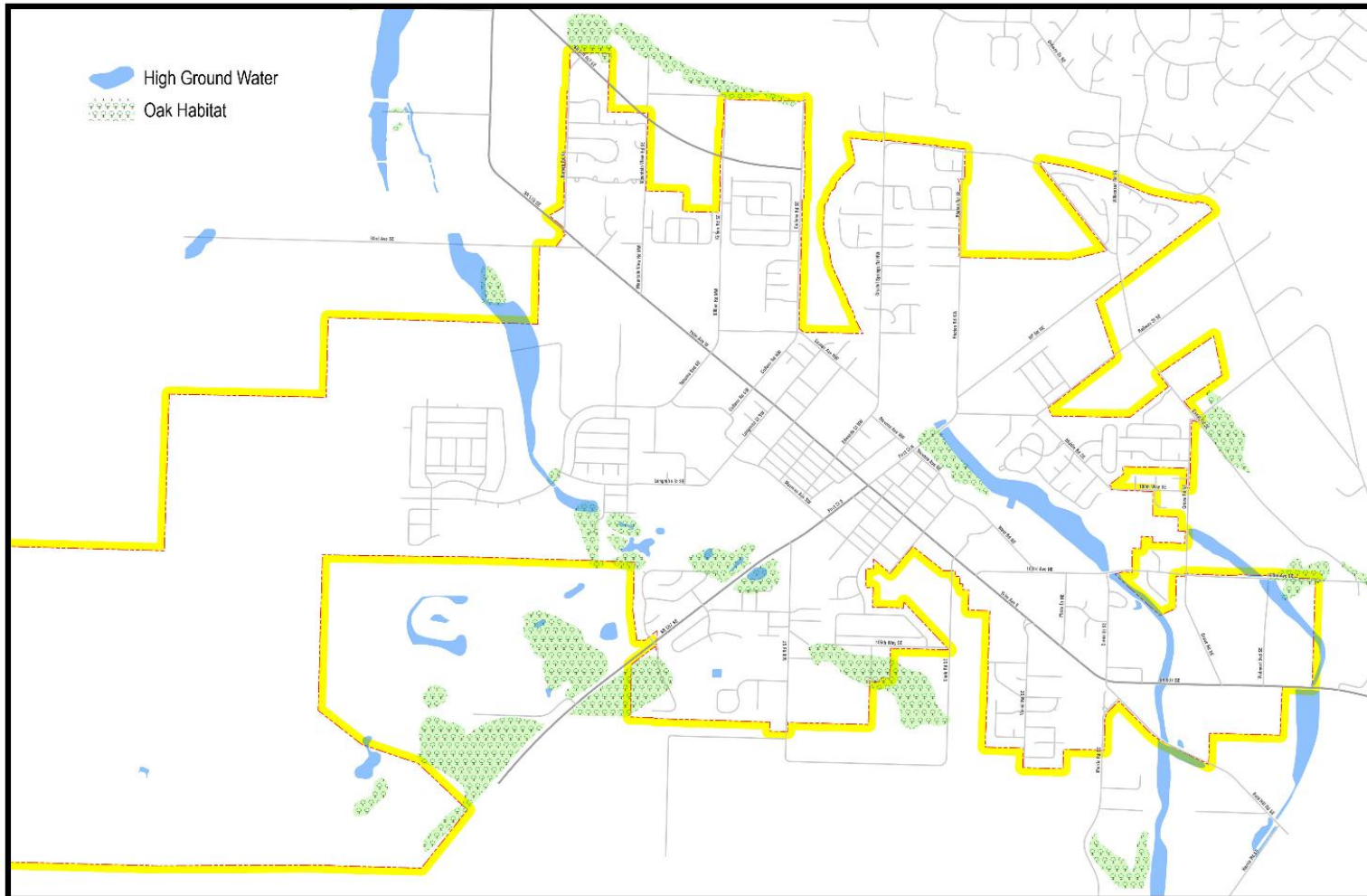


Figure 11-1: Critical Areas: Oak Habitat High Groundwater



Critical Areas: Wetlands and SFHA

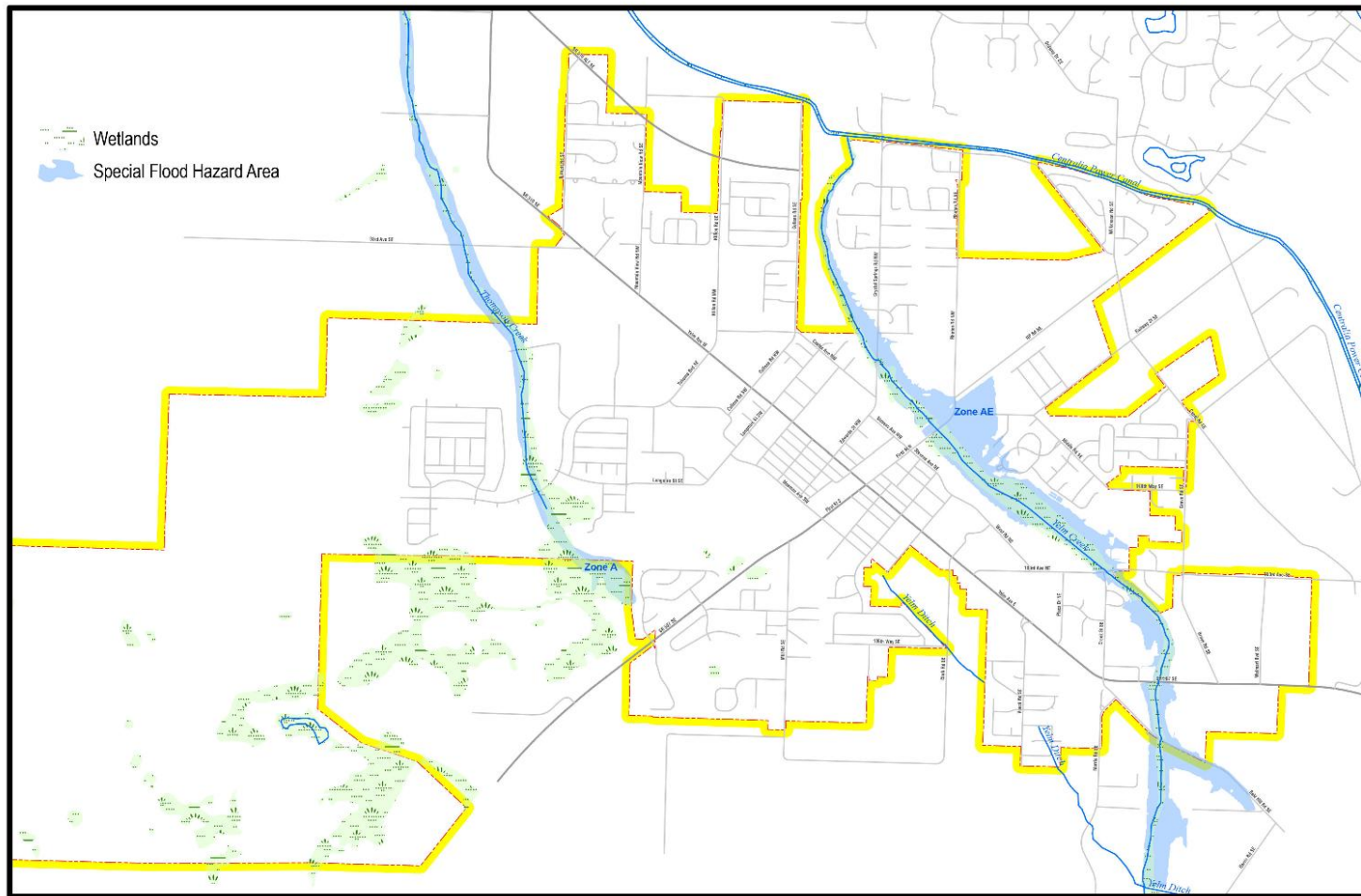


Figure 11-2: Critical Areas: Wetlands and SFHA

12 | CLIMATE PLANNING



CLIMATE PLANNING

Introduction

This chapter describes Yelm’s plan to increase their climate resiliency and reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in compliance with state law (HB 1181). This law requires selected communities to equitably enhance their climate resiliency using the best available science while prioritizing actions that benefit overburdened¹ communities.

Human-caused climate change is already shifting temperature and precipitation baselines and will

cause more dramatic shifts in the future. In the next few decades, Yelm can expect increased flooding, more severe winter storms, more frequent wildfires, more instances of extreme heat, more frequent and longer droughts, and unprecedented changes in stormwater and streamflow (Figure 12-1). These changes will have profound impacts on local plants and animals, human health, and how cities function. Thoughtful city planning is required to reduce GHG emissions and build citywide climate resilience.

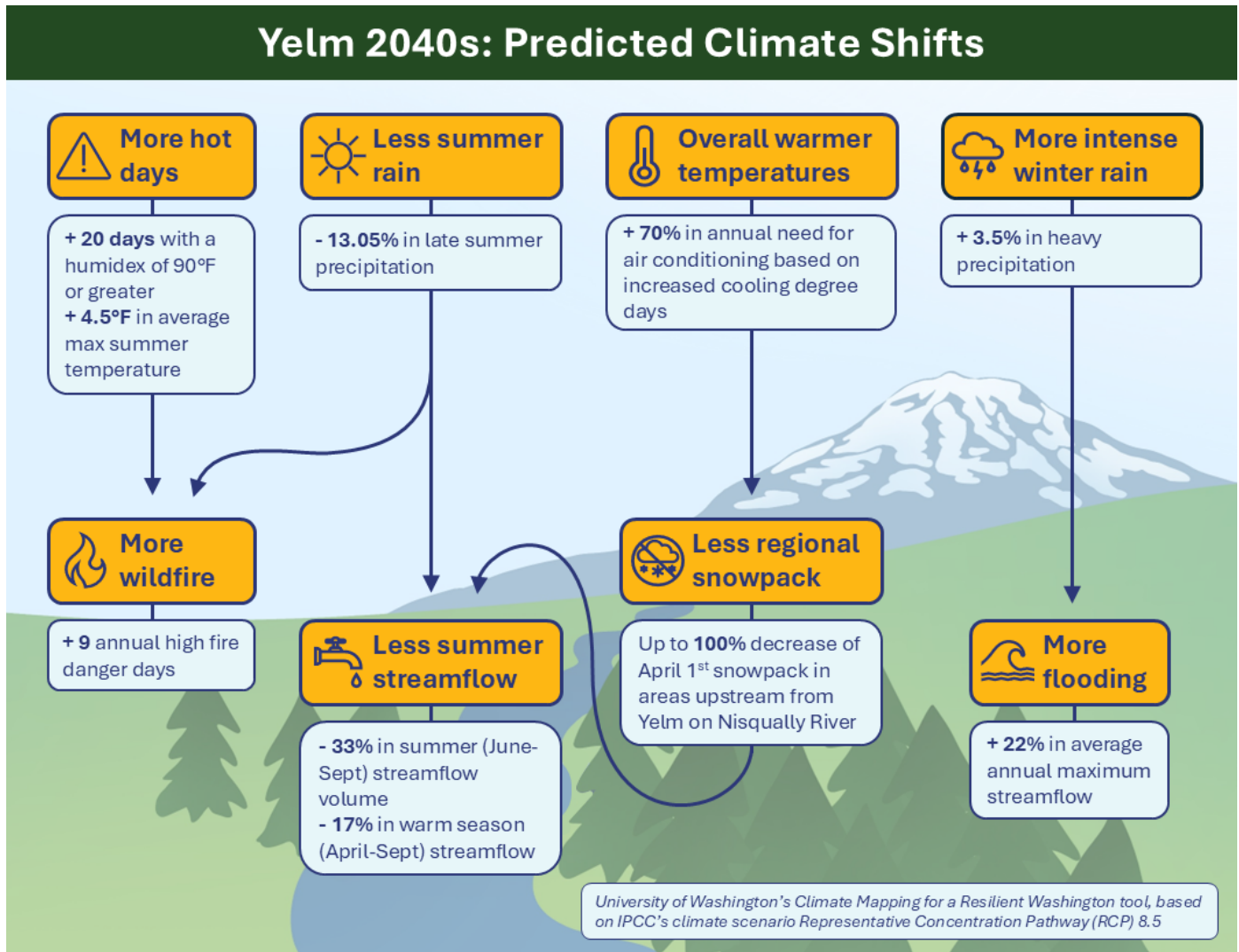


Figure 12-1: Climate Predictions for Yelm in the 2040s²

Statewide climate planning

In 2023 the State Legislature passed House Bill 1181 which requires select communities to:

- reduce their GHG emissions, specifically those generated by transportation and land use,
- reduce their per capita vehicle miles traveled,
- enhance natural areas,
- identify, protect, and enhance community resiliency to climate change impacts,
- address natural hazards created or worsened by climate change, and
- prioritize GHG reductions and climate resiliency efforts that help overburdened communities.

In 2024, the City of Yelm conducted a GHG inventory³ and a climate vulnerability assessment⁴

to help city planners understand baseline conditions and assess progress over the next planning cycle. They found that, overall, Yelm produced approximately 125,035 metric tons of GHG in carbon dioxide equivalents. By sector (Figure 12-2), the largest sources of Yelm's emissions in 2022⁵ were from the residential energy sector (54%), the transportation sector (23%), and the commercial energy sector (18%). The remaining 5% were from industrial energy, solid waste, water, wastewater, and fugitive emissions.

For comparison, transportation and energy were also some of the largest contributors to emissions in Thurston County's and Washington state's 2022 GHG inventories, and similar to Yelm, sectors like water and solid waste also had far lower emissions.⁶

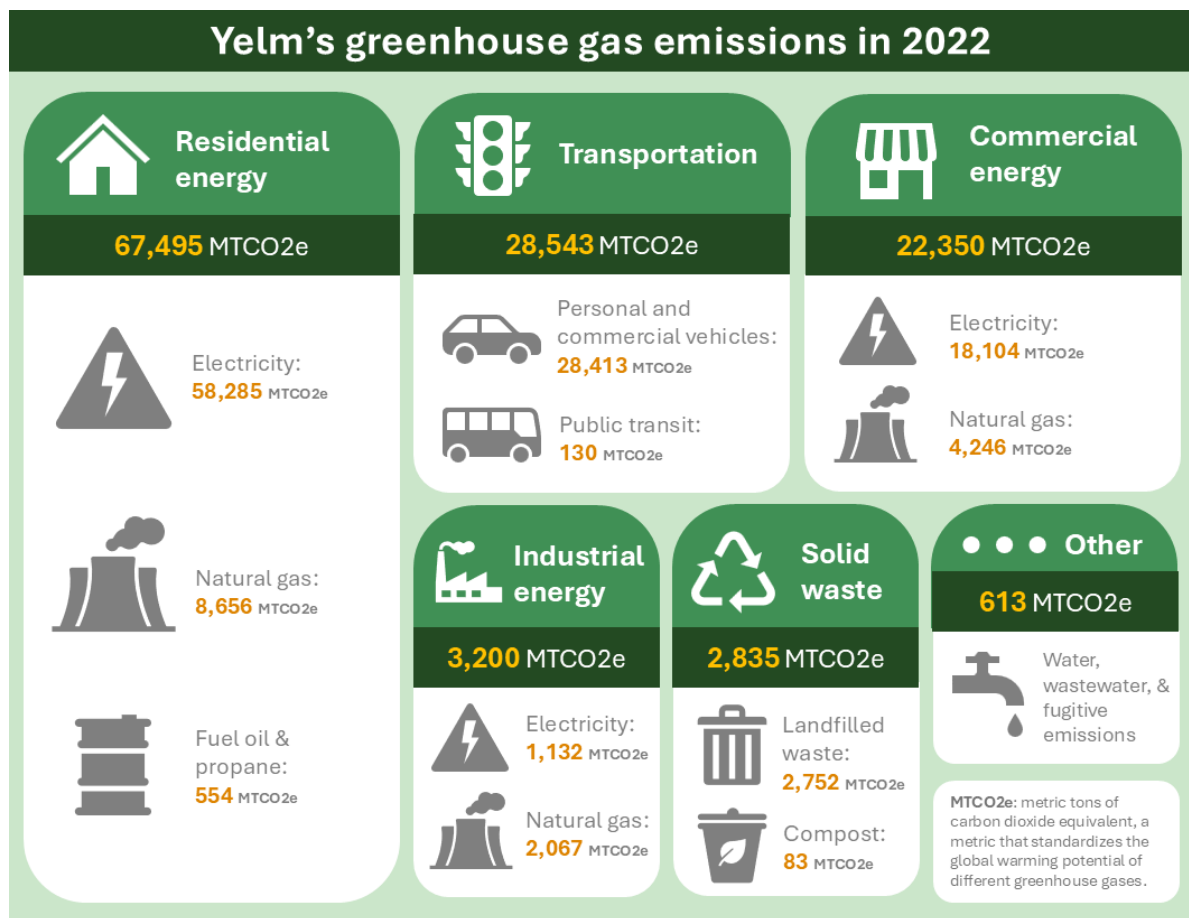


Figure 12-2: Yelm Greenhouse gas emissions in 2022

When comparing emissions per capita (Table 12-1), Yelm produced about 12.0 metric tons per person, lower than Washington state’s 2019 per capita emissions of about 13 metric tons^{7,8} and the 2022 national average of about 19 metric tons^{9, 10}, yet higher than Thurston County’s emissions of 9.8 metric tons¹¹ in 2021 (Table 13-1).

Table 12-1: Comparing greenhouse gas emission

Comparing greenhouse gas emissions	
Area	Per capita CO2e (metric tons)
Yelm	12
Thuston County	9.8
Washington state	13
National average	19

In 2025, Yelm conducted a climate vulnerability assessment to determine the vulnerability of its municipal infrastructure and assets to potential

climate change impacts, including their vulnerability to changes in air temperature and extreme heat; precipitation and flooding; drought and water availability change, and wildfire and wildfire smoke (Figure 12-1). Climate vulnerability was determined by considering potential climate change impacts together with the community’s ability to effectively respond to and mitigate those impacts, i.e., their adaptive capacity.

As Figure 12-3 shows, the climate vulnerability assessment found that ecosystems, parks, and critical areas have relatively high climate vulnerability; cultural resources and practices have moderate-high climate vulnerability; development and land use have moderate climate vulnerability; utilities, water resources, and energy have moderate climate vulnerability; and buildings and transportation have low climate vulnerability.

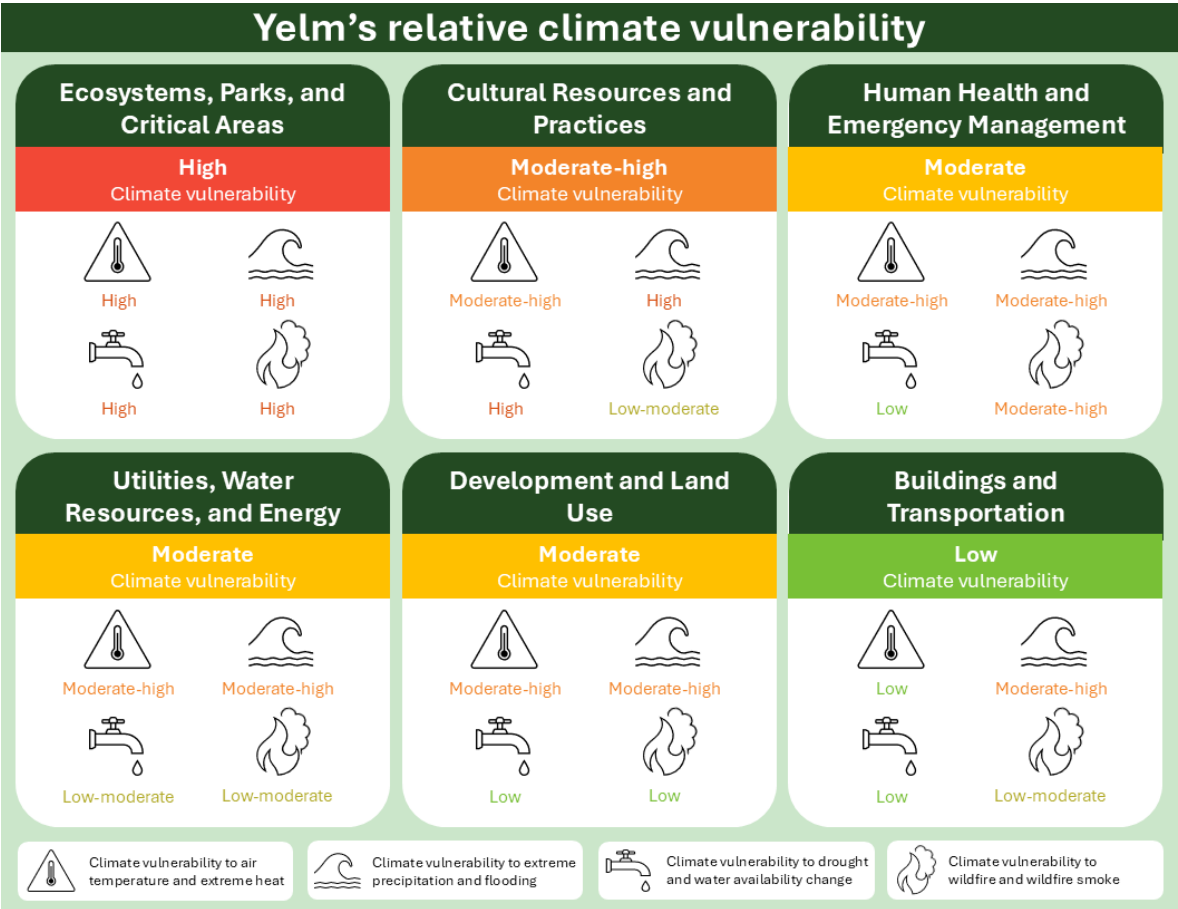


Figure 12-3: Yelm’s relative Climate Vulnerability

Goals and policies:

While the climate resilience and GHG emission reduction sections in this chapter are organized separately, there are multidisciplinary co-benefits in their goals and policies. The following icons indicate whether a goal and its supporting policies are relevant to the requirements for climate resiliency, GHG reduction, and/or the prioritization of overburdened communities.

Goal is relevant to...



climate resiliency



GHG emission reduction



benefitting overburdened communities

Climate resilience

Goal 1 Protect community health and well-being from the impacts of climate-exacerbated hazards and ensure that the most vulnerable residents do not bear disproportionate health impacts.

Policy 1.1 Assess potential climate change-induced population migration within, and to, the Thurston Region and evaluate response strategies, especially for those most vulnerable to temporary or permanent displacement.

Goal 2 Ensure city planning increases community resiliency to the impacts of climate change.

Policy 2.1 Align land use, hazard mitigation, transportation, capital improvement, and other plans so that they consider climate change and work toward the same goals.

Goal 3 Provide all residents with an equitable opportunity to learn about climate impacts, influence policy decisions, and take actions to enhance community resilience.

Policy 3.1 Create a webpage on the City of Yelm website that details health risks exacerbated by

climate change and provides information that helps residents prepare for and respond to drought, poor air quality, extreme heat, disease vectors, and other threats.

Goal 4 Protect and preserve water quality and quantity from drought, extreme heat, and other hazards exacerbated by climate change and increase community resilience to drought.

Policy 4.1 Conduct benefit-cost analyses of adaptation actions that conserve water resources.

Policy 4.2 Plant drought- and pest-resistant trees, shrubs, and grass in parks, landscaping strips, and other urban areas.

Policy 4.3 Increase reuse of reclaimed water for irrigating plants, supplementing low streamflow, and other purposes.

Policy 4.4 Increase incentives for water conservation during dry months.

Goal 5 Enhance emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts to mitigate risks and impacts associated with extreme weather and other hazards worsened by climate change.

Policy 5.1 Incorporate the most up-to-date flooding information into the designation of regulatory hazard areas.

Policy 5.2 Encourage residents to create a household preparedness plan and to store food, water, and other supplies (lanterns, bicycles, etc.) to use in case a flood, wildfire, landslide, extreme temperatures or other hazard cuts off access to goods, services, and emergency responders.

Policy 5.3 Encourage residents to organize or participate in regular emergency preparedness, response, and recovery planning and training events.

Goal 6 Ensure that development and**redevelopment projects and community health and well-being are resilient to****the impacts of wildfire, ensuring that the most vulnerable residents do not bear disproportionate health impacts.**

Policy 6.1 Create and maintain a map of the region's high-risk Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) communities and locations of wildfires.

Policy 6.2 Require new developments in high-risk wildfire areas to submit a fire protection plan during site plan review.

Policy 6.3 Provide private forestland owners and residents living in Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas information about fire prevention/[Firewise](#) practices, and encourage application of such practices.

Policy 6.4 Adopt wildfire hazard overlay districts with development regulations (for new structures) based on factors such as slope, structure, and fuel hazards.

Policy 6.5 Develop and implement notification alerts within the community to reduce the risk of exposure to wildfire smoke and particulate matter.

Goal 7 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.**

Policy 7.1 Provide training opportunities for staff members to prepare for and respond to climate change impacts.

GHG reduction goals and policies

Goal 1 Foster urban infill and higher-intensity land uses in urban centers and corridors in urban growth areas, prioritizing overburdened communities.



Policy 1.1 Increase incentives to make urban infill and redevelopment projects more viable financially.

Policy 1.2 Increase housing diversity and supply within urban growth areas to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Measure may include rezoning newly annexed land to High-Density Residential along transportation corridors.

Goal 2 Reduce vehicle miles traveled to achieve**greenhouse gas reduction goals and ensure that the local transportation****system can withstand and recover quickly from the impacts of extreme weather events and other hazards exacerbated by climate change.**

Policy 2.1 Implement multimodal transportation plans to reduce single-occupancy vehicle dependence and greenhouse gas emissions.

Policy 2.2 Improve street connectivity and walkability, including sidewalks and street crossings, to serve as potential evacuation routes, enhancing community resilience to wildfires and other hazards that may necessitate evacuations and encouraging emission-free, active transportation during non-emergencies.

Other climate-related goals and policies

Several chapters outside of the climate chapter have goals and policies that contribute to the requirements of HB 1181 for climate resilience and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction. They are listed by their respective chapters below and are current as of October 13, 2025. The icons to the right indicate whether a goal and its supporting policies are relevant to the requirements for climate resiliency, GHG reduction, and/or the prioritization of overburdened communities.

Goal is relevant to...



climate resiliency



GHG emission reduction



benefitting overburdened communities

Climate-related goals/policies outside of the climate chapter	Relevant to...
Guiding Principles	
Goal 1: Plan and act toward zero waste in the region. (Policy 1.1)	GHG
Goal 3: Ensure that the region's water supply sustains people in perpetuity while protecting the environment. (Policy 3.1)	CR
Goal 4: Move toward a carbon-neutral community. (Policy 4.1)	GHG
Goal 9: Create safe and vibrant South County city and town centers that foster entrepreneurship, active transportation, civic pride, and a sense of place. (Policy 9.9)	GHG
Goal 10: Improve regulatory clarity and predictability to encourage urban infill and redevelopment. (Policies 10.3 - 10.4)	GHG OC
Goal 13: Coordinate Planning Activities with Regional Partners (Policy 13.4)	CR
Land Use	
Goal 2: Create a sustainable community (Policies 2.2 - 2.5)	CR GHG
Goal 3: Establish a variety of land uses and densities that supports a compact form and urban densities. (Policies 3.4, 3.11)	CR GHG
Goal 4: Provide guidance for a cohesive city. (Policies 4.2, 4.4)	GHG
Goal 5: Encourage diverse residential growth. (Policies 5.2 – 5.4)	GHG OC
Goal 8: Foster regional coordination. (Policy 8.3)	CR
Goal 10: Create safe and vibrant neighborhoods with places that build community and encourage active transportation. (Policies 10.1, 10.2, 10.4, 10.8)	GHG OC
Goal 11: Maximize opportunity to redevelop land in priority areas by investing in infrastructure and environmental remediation. (Policy 11.2)	CR GHG

Climate-related goals/policies outside of the climate chapter (cont'd)	Relevant to...
Goal 12: Support the local production, processing, and sale of local food products. (Policies 12.2, 12.4, 12.5)	GHG 
Goal 14: Support proactive efforts to reduce the risk from natural disasters. (Policies 14.1 – 14.4)	CR 
Housing	
Goal 1: Plan for and accommodate a variety of housing types and densities to provide housing that is affordable to all income levels within Yelm (Policies 1.2, 1.3, 1.7, 1.8)	CR  OC  GHG 
Goal 2: Ensure affordable housing is available in Yelm. (Policies 2.1 – 2.4)	CR  OC 
Goal 3: Conserve and improve the existing housing stock and neighborhoods. (Policies 3.2 – 3.5)	CR  OC  GHG 
Goal 4: Promote energy efficient housing to reduce the overall costs of home ownership. (Policies 4.1 – 4.3)	GHG 
Goal 5: Provide sufficient housing for low- and moderate-income households (Policies 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.7)	CR  OC  GHG 
Goal 6: Establish or support programs focused on affordable housing (Policies 6.1, 6.2, 6.6 – 6.8)	CR  OC  GHG 
Goal 7: Provide sufficient service-enriched housing for homeless and high-risk populations. (Policies 7.1, 7.2)	CR  OC 
Goal 8: Encourage housing density and diversity in neighborhoods to add vibrancy and increase equitable access to opportunity. (Policies 8.1, 8.2)	CR  OC  GHG 
Goal 9: Encourage the construction, weatherization and operation of homes to boost energy efficiency. (Policies 9.1 – 9.4)	CR  OC  GHG 
Goal 10: Increase housing affordable to all income brackets in urban corridors and centers to meet the needs of a changing population. (Recommendation from Housing Displacement Analysis) (Policies 10.3, 10.4, 10.6)	OC  GHG 
Goal 11: Encourage the construction of ADUs as a more affordable option to traditional housing (Policy 11.1)	OC 

Climate-related goals/policies outside of the climate chapter (cont'd)	Relevant to...
Goal 12: Minimize displacement and ensure that low- and moderate-income residents and special housing residents are not displaced by new development (Policies 12.1, 12.2, 12.4)	OC 
Capital Facilities	
Goal 2: Create a list of capital facility projects that addresses deficiencies in existing systems, replaces obsolete facilities, and will meet the future infrastructure needs of Yelm and its Urban Growth Area. (Policies 2.1, 2.5, 2.6)	CR  GHG 
Goal 5: Conserve and protect drinking water to meet the region's daily and long-term needs. (Policies 5.1, 5.2)	CR 
Utilities	
Goal 2. Ensure that utilities and public facilities are environmentally sensitive, safe, provide reliable service, are available at a reasonable economic cost to the consumer and are compatible with the surrounding land uses. (Policy 2.8)	GHG 
Goal 4. Provide efficient and effective drinking water infrastructure. (Policies 4.1, 4.2)	CR 
Goal 6. Manage stormwater in a cost-effective and environmentally sound way. (Policy 6.6)	CR 
Goal 7. Expand the use of reclaimed water for non-potable uses. (Policy 7.1)	CR 
Goal 8. Increase energy generation from renewable resources to reduce the region's carbon footprint. (Policies 8.1 – 8.3)	GHG 
Goal 9. Enhance the region's electricity distribution, monitoring and storage infrastructure to support adoption of cleaner technologies and practices. (Policies 9.1 – 9.4)	GHG 
Goal 10. Increase energy efficiency and conservation to reduce the region's carbon footprint. (Policies 10.1 – 10.3)	GHG 
Transportation	
Goal 2: Create a well-maintained transportation system that provides safe and cost-effective movement of goods, services, and people. (Policies 2.6, 2.12)	GHG  OC 
Goal 5: Encourage safe and active school transportation to improve community health, economic, and environmental outcomes. (Policies 5.1 – 5.3, 5.5)	GHG 
Goal 6: Improve infrastructure around schools that results in safe multimodal transportation including vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and bus transit access. (Policy 6.3)	GHG 
Goal 7: Reduce transportation congestion and environmental impacts. (Policy 7.1)	GHG 

Climate-related goals/policies outside of the climate chapter (cont'd)	Relevant to...
Goal 9: Integrate transportation considerations into land use decisions, and vice versa. (Policy 9.1)	GHG 
Economic Development	
Goal 4: Create an innovation culture to encourage entrepreneurship. (Policy 4.4)	GHG 
Parks and Recreation	
Goal 1: Create a network of park and open space lands that serve the residents of Yelm regardless of their age. (Policies 1.3, 1.5)	GHG 
Goal 3: Plan and develop a trail network that serves all parts of the community. (Policies 3.4, 3.5)	GHG 
Goal 5: Conserve open space corridors to provide definition between natural areas and urban land uses. (Policies 5.1 – 5.3)	CR 
Environmental Protection and Critical Areas	
Goal 1: Protect Yelm's natural environment by regulating development within critical areas. (Policies 1.1, 1.2, 1.4 – 1.8, 1.10 – 1.12, 1.14)	CR 
Goal 2: Prevent the loss of life and property in frequently flooded areas. (Policies 2.1 – 2.3)	CR 
Goal 3: Prevent the loss of life and property in areas subject to erosion, landslides, or other geologic hazards. (Policies 3.1, 3.3 – 3.6)	CR 
Goal 4: Protect air quality (Policies 4.1, 4.2)	CR  GHG 
Goal 6: Reduce air pollution that endangers human health. (Policies 6.1, 6.2)	CR  GHG 
Goal 7: Protect, preserve and restore streams, wetlands, and shorelines to protect water quality. (Policies 7.1, 7.3)	CR 
Goal 8: Preserve environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands, prairies, and rural lands through the development of compact urban areas.	CR 
Goal 9: Protect and improve water quality, including groundwater, rivers, streams, lakes, and the Puget Sound. (Policies 9.1, 9.2)	CR 
Goal 10: Maintain air quality standards. (Policies 10.1)	GHG 
Goal 11: Invasive Species (Policies 11.1)	CR 

Climate-related goals/policies outside of the climate chapter (cont'd)	Relevant to...
Essential Public Facilities	
Goal 1: Provide for the siting of essential public facilities. (Policy 1.5)	CR 
Goal 2: Provide emergency services in a dependable and efficient manner to meet the dynamic needs of a diverse society. (Policies 2.1 – 2.2)	CR 
Goal 3: Create a resilient region by improving disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, as well as by expanding public safety education. (Policies 3.1 – 3.5)	CR  GHG 
Goal 4: Promote good health for city residents. (Policy 4.3)	OC 
Goal 5: Improve community coordination to create schools that use land, tax dollars, and other resources efficiently. (Policies 5.1, 5.4)	GHG 

END NOTES

¹ Washington State Department of Commerce's climate guidance defines overburdened communities as, "a geographic area where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts, and includes, but is not limited to, highly impacted communities as defined in RCW 19.405.020.

² The University of Washington's Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington tool, based on IPCC's climate scenario Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) 8.5.)

³ Confluence (Confluence Environmental Company). 2024. City of Yelm comprehensive plan climate action update: Greenhouse gas inventory summary. Prepared for the City of Yelm, Washington, by Confluence, Seattle, Washington.

⁴ 2025, Confluence (Confluence Environmental Company). 2025. City of Yelm comprehensive plan climate action update: Community climate vulnerability assessment, revised. Prepared for the City of Yelm, Yelm, Washington, by Confluence, Seattle, Washington.

⁵ For the greenhouse gas inventory, climate planning guidance from the Washington State Department of Commerce instructed jurisdictions to use 2022 as their emissions baseline year and to set incremental targets to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

⁶ Thurston County. 2022. 2021 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for Thurston County [online report]. Thurston Regional Planning Council, Olympia, WA. Available at: <https://trpc.org/DocumentCenter/View/11400/2021-Thurston-GHG-Inventory-TRPC-2023-01-06pdf?bidId=>.

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau. 2020. Total Population in Washington: 2020 Decennial Census. Available at: <https://data.census.gov/profile/Washington?g=040XX00US53>

⁸ Waterman-Hoey, Stacey. 2022. Washington State Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory: 1990-2019 [online report]. Washington State Department of Ecology, Air Quality Program, Olympia, Washington. Available at: <https://ecology.wa.gov/Air-Climate/Reducing-Greenhouse-Gas-Emissions/Tracking-greenhouse-gases/GHG-inventories#inventory>.

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau. 2024. National Population Totals and Components of Change: 2020-2023. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2020s-national-total.html>.

¹⁰ EPA. 2025. Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Overviews and Factsheets. Available at: <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions> (accessed October 3, 2025).

¹¹ Thurston County. 2022. 2021 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for Thurston County [online report]. Thurston Regional Planning Council, Olympia, WA. Available at: <https://trpc.org/DocumentCenter/View/11400/2021-Thurston-GHG-Inventory-TRPC-2023-01-06pdf?bidId=>.