Utilities Element

Water

The City of Edmonds has for many years acquired all of its potable water under a long-term wholesale purchase agreement with the Alderwood Water and Wastewater District. The District, in turn, purchases its water from the City of Everett's regional water system. Everett's water source is the upper Sultan River and the water from that basin is collected in Spada Lake, approximately 30 miles east of downtown Everett. It flows from there to Chaplain Reservoir where it is treated and placed into one of four large transmission main lines that move it westward to the urbanized areas of Snohomish County. The City of Edmonds distributes this water on a retail basis to local customers and bills them for this service. Edmonds provides for operation, maintenance, capital improvements, and replacement of the "end-user" system that provides storage to cover peak usage periods and that further provides required fire protection volumes, and maintains the required the minimum and maximum allowable pressures.

Goals, policies, and design criteria for operating the water system are developed as part of the City's Comprehensive Water System Plan (2017). The Water System Plan has detailed information that helps establish priorities for the utility's operation and maintenance budgets as well as its six-year and 20-year Capital Improvement Plans.

Edmonds' current Utility system rate structure was designed to fund a long-range program of replacing the community's aging network of water mains and sewer mains from current rate revenues rather than debt financing. The first three years of this program were approved by City Council on November 19th, 2013 with the first rate increase taking place on 1/1/2014, the second one on 1/1/2015 and the third annual adjustment is set for 1/1/2016. The financial results for this program will be reviewed during budget discussions in 2016 and a decision will be made regarding continuance of the program and the rate structure necessary to support it.

Water System Goals and Policies

Goals, policies, and design criteria for the City's water utility are found in Chapter 5 of the 2017 Comprehensive Water System Plan. The City's financial plan is described in Chapter 10 of the same Comprehensive Water System Pla.

Sanitary Sewer

The City provides sanitary sewer service to area customers. Its operations include a wastewater treatment plant. The system is described in the City's Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan of 2013.

The Plan evaluates existing and future capacity, material types of the various pieces of infrastructure, pipe inspection assessments of the sewer system, anticipated future wastewater flow rates, and the structural condition of the sewer collection system. Future wastewater flow rates are estimated from existing flow data using population growth projected within the sewer service area. This growth rate is expected to continue to be modest at an average of 0.5 percent per year.

An implementation plan is provided as part of the adopted Sanitary Sewer Comprehensive Plan. This includes an estimated timeline for constructing selected projects that are in need of maintenance or upsizing. The financial analysis includes asset management of the system along with a utility rate structure to support the policies and goals set forth in the Sanitary Sewer Comprehensive Plan.

Similar to the Water Utility, the Sewer Utility includes a program to convert from debt-financing pipe replacements to one where the program can be funded directly from rate revenues.

Sanitary Sewer System Goals and Policies

The City's policy for sewer service recognizes its function is not to determine allowable land uses within its service area but to respond to the capacity and service levels needs necessary to support the land uses approved in the City's land use planning processes. Development of the City's Comprehensive sewer plan has been guided by policies adopted by the City Council and coordinated with the sewer plans from adjacent agencies.

The adopted Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan provides guidance to the City for management and operation of its sewer system and sets the timing for expansions and upgrades to sewer infrastructure over the next twenty years. The City's adopted Plan serves as a guide for policy development and decision making for the City. It also provides other agencies and the public with information regarding the City's plans for sewer system extensions within its service area. This approach allows the City to maintain its goal of providing high quality service to its customers while protecting environmental quality, primarily the water quality of both Puget Sound and the coastal streams located in Edmonds.

Chapter 2.5 of the Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Plan (2013) includes specific policies for managing the system.

Storm and Surface Water Management

The City owns and operates an extensive system of drainage pipes and ditches to convey stormwater runoff to streams, lakes, and Puget Sound in a manner designed to prevent and minimize damage to private property, streets, and other infrastructure. A more detailed description of this system is contained in the adopted Storm & Surface Water Management Comprehensive Plan (2010).

Due to extensive alteration of the natural landscape in most areas of the City, the amount of stormwater that runs off the land in larger storm events is substantial, and runoff in all storm events carries a variety of pollutants that wash off of their source areas into receiving waters. The City is faced with the challenge of conveying stormwater runoff safely and cost-effectively while preventing or minimizing adverse high flow impacts (erosion, flooding, and sediment deposition), water quality degradation in lakes and streams receiving runoff, and degradation of aquatic habitat caused by high flows and water quality degradation.

Local governments manage their stormwater under a permit issued by the state Department of Ecology that stems from the Federal Clean Water Act. For many cities in Western Washington, such as Edmonds, the permit is the *Western Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit*. This Permit "permits" the City to discharge its collected stormwater into streams, lakes, and Puget Sound if a series of programs and activities are implemented to help improve water quality. This Permit has and will continue to have a significant impact on the workload and operational budget of the Public

Works Department. Approximately 2/3 or more of the total stormwater operational budget is spent on permit-related compliance programs.

Storm & Surface Water System Goals & Policies

Goal and policies for the system are contained in the Storm & Surface Water Management Comprehensive Plan (2010). The goals are summarized below.

Each key goal in this element (or section) is identified by an alphabet letter (for example, "D"). Goals are typically followed by associated policies and these are identified by the letter of the goal and a sequential number (for example, "D.2")

Storm and Surface Water Management Goal A. Manage the storm and surface water system by combining preservation of natural systems and engineered solutions to:

- Provide for public safety;
- Minimize property damage;
- Preserve and enhance[v] critical areas;
- Promote sustainability;
- Comply with applicable local, state, and Federal regulations.

Storm and Surface Water Management Goal B. To preserve, protect, and (where feasible) restore surface water resources to provide beneficial uses to humans, fish, and wildlife.

Storm and Surface Water Management Goal C. Use public education to increase understanding of sustainability and other environmental values to help protect surface water resources.

Storm and Surface Water Management Goal D. Provide adequate funding through an equitable stormwater utility rate structure and outside funding sources to support necessary programs (including an asset management-based replacement program) that meet goals A, B, and C.

To accomplish these goals, the City developed guiding policies for the flood protection, water quality, aquatic habitat, and stormwater utility funding program areas. More detailed language for goals and polices are in the current adopted version of the Storm and Surface Water Comprehensive Management Plan.

[v] The enhancement of critical areas typically occurs through the planting of native vegetation, the daylighting of creeks, restoration of habitat, and/or other methods found to improve the critical area's functions and values.

Solid Waste

Solid waste collection and disposal is a sophisticated system that continues to evolve in using the most efficient and economical methods. Waste prevention and recycling have risen to become an elemental part of solid waste management planning. Curbside recycling, along with yard and food waste collection service, has become the norm as everyday activities for most residences, businesses, and schools. Engagement in these beneficial behaviors conserves resources, reduces litter, saves energy and contributes to greenhouse gas reduction efforts.

The City is a signatory on the Snohomish County Solid Waste Management Comprehensive Plan and an active participant on the County's Solid Waste Advisory Committee. The County Plan provides a blueprint for which the City is able to provide education and outreach to all sectors in regards to proper disposal and recycling, and opportunities for collection and proper handling of several common unwanted materials.

Solid Waste Goals & Policies

Each key goal in this element (or section) is identified by an alphabet letter (for example, "D"). Goals are typically followed by associated policies and these are identified by the letter of the goal and a sequential number (for example, "D.2")

Solid Waste Goal A. Continue to support and follow the directives outlined in the Snohomish County Solid Waste Management Comprehensive Plan, including:

A.1 Work directly with County Solid Waste staff to implement recommendations that strengthen recycling, organics diversion, waste prevention, and product stewardship programs.

A.2 Support the County's initiatives to work with the certified solid waste haulers to harmonize services and communication formats, and to expand their educational efforts, especially classroom workshops and presentations in the schools.

Solid Waste Goal B. Strengthen local controls over collection of solid waste in accordance to the following policies:

B.1 Investigate the requirement for city-wide mandatory garbage collection, combined with recycling services.

B.2 Update and revise the original Recycling Ordinance to reflect current and alternative collection methods and service scenarios.

Solid Waste Goal C. Continue to support and provide education and incentives for recycling and other waste diversion practices:

C.1 Continue a program to provide outreach and education to the community in all aspects of best solid waste management practices.

C.2 Provide support for the establishment and expansion of public recycling opportunities, on an ongoing basis, and at all public events.

C.3 Support programs that establish collection and recycling infrastructure for materials that are toxic, hazardous, hard-to-handle or under-recycled.

C.4 Establish a policy that can assist in the reuse, recycling, and proper disposal of construction and demolition debris that is generated by development in the City.

Solid Waste Goal D. Continue to investigate policies for a Zero Waste Strategy.

D.1 Pursue and implement strategies to eliminate or reduce waste and pollution in the production and lifecycle of materials.

D.2 Consider action plans and measures that encourage residents, businesses, and agencies to use, reuse, and recycle materials judiciously.

D.3 Eliminate or reduce use of hazardous materials in City operations.

D.4 Take a leadership role in reducing waste for City operations and events.

Other Utilities

New utility systems and technologies are constantly developing or evolving. Rather than being reactive, the City should seek to plan for these new services as they develop.

Each key goal in this element (or section) is identified by an alphabet letter (for example, "D"). Goals are typically followed by associated policies and these are identified by the letter of the goal and a sequential number (for example, "D.2")

Other Utilities Goal A. Provide for public needs while protecting the character of the community and assuring consistency with other plan goals.

A.1. New technologies should be planned and carefully researched prior to developing new regulations or reviewing siting proposals.

Other Utilities Goal B. Public and private utility plans should be encouraged that identify long-range system needs and that are coordinated with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

B.1. All utility projects should be coordinated to provide opportunities for projects to address more than one system improvement or maintenance need.

Other Utilities Goal C. Utility structures should be located whenever possible with similar types of structures to minimize impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.

C.1. When such locations are not available, utility structures should be located or sited so that they are as unobtrusive as possible and are integrated with the design of their site and surrounding area.

C.2. Free-standing structures should be discouraged when other siting opportunities are available.

Performance Measures

The Comprehensive Plan contains a small number performance measures (no more than one per element) that can be used to monitor and annually report on the implementation and effectiveness of the Comprehensive Plan. Performance measures, as identified in the Comprehensive Plan, are specific, meaningful, and easily obtainable items that relate to sustainability and can be reported on an annual basis. They are intended to help assess progress toward achieving the goals and policy direction of each major Comprehensive Plan element. {Note: The measure identified below is specifically called out as matching the above criteria and being important to utilities goals and will be reported annually, along with performance measures for other Comprehensive Plan elements. It is not intended to be the only measure that the City may use for utilities purposes.

Performance Measure: Lineal feet of old water, sewer, and stormwater mains replaced or rehabilitated.