

Goal 5 Open Spaces, Scenic & Historic Areas & Natural Resources

□ Section 5, Sensitive Lands

BACKGROUND

Statewide Planning Goal 5: Open Spaces, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Natural Resources

“To conserve open space and protect natural and scenic resources.”

Statewide Planning Goal 5 requires communities to provide programs that will 1) ensure open space; 2) protect scenic and historic areas and natural resources for future generations; and 3) promote healthy and visually attractive environments in harmony with the natural landscape character. Goal 5 requires communities to inventory these natural resources. The inventory is required to include a description of the location, quality and quantity of these resources, and an identification of conflicting uses. Where no conflicting uses have been identified, resources must be managed so as to preserve their original character. Where conflicting uses have been identified, the economic, social, environmental and energy (ESEE)* consequences shall be determined and programs developed to achieve the goal. [ZC 1-95-1204 Revised; 5/20/97]

The Comprehensive Plan originally identified 85 Distinctive Natural Areas*. DNA's included a broad range of resource types from tree groves and streams to individual trees and plant specimens.

Distinctive Natural areas were originally identified in the 1975 Lake Oswego Physical Resources Inventory (LOPRI). All of the LOPRI-nominated sites were designated as Distinctive Natural Areas on the resulting DNA Comprehensive Plan map. The inventory was part of a broader effort to adopt the City's first Comprehensive Plan under Goal 5 of the Statewide Land Use Goals. [ZC 1-95-1204 Revised; 5/20/97]

In the years following 1976, the LOPRI data was used to create policies and development standards to protect open spaces and natural resources. The inventory was also used to identify initial priority sites for public acquisition as open space. Five DNA sites identified for public acquisition in the Comprehensive Plan have been purchased by the City or otherwise protected, including land on Iron Mountain, the “Frog Pond” at Village on the Lake (private) the Hallinan Woods, the South Shore Natural Area, and a large section of Kruse Oaks in the Westlake area. [ZC 1-95-1204 Revised; 5/20/97]

Under Goal 5, local jurisdictions are required to inventory and provide protection programs for a variety of natural resources, including:

- Land needed or desirable for open space;
- Fish and wildlife areas and habitats;
- Ecologically and scientifically significant natural areas;

Goal 5 Open Spaces, Scenic & Historic Areas & Natural Resources

□ Section 5, Sensitive Lands

- Outstanding scenic views and sites; and,
- Water areas, wetlands, watersheds and groundwater resources.

All of the above-listed resources must be evaluated and mapped on a site-specific basis through the Goal 5 Environmental, Social, Energy and Economic (ESEE) analysis and a conflicting use analysis. If no conflicting uses are identified, the resource must be managed to preserve its original character. If conflicting uses are found, programs must be developed to resolve the conflicts and one of three alternatives applied:

- a. Preserve the resource site;
- b. Fully allow the conflicting use [the use(s) allowed by the zone]; or,
- c. Specifically limit the conflicting use [the use(s) allowed by the zone].

The ESEE and conflicting use analysis was begun in 1991/92 by an environmental consulting firm with an inventory update of wetlands, stream corridors and tree groves. The ESEE analysis of the sites that were inventoried was begun by a planning consultant in 1994. The results were used to assist the City in determining the boundaries and relative values of DNA sites inventoried in 1975 and to develop appropriate regulations and protection programs for listed DNA's and new significant resources discovered through the inventory.

In 1996 and 1997, this new information was used to develop a new "sensitive lands program". This new program replaces the Distinctive Natural Area/Protection Open Space protection program with a more clear and objective protection program, to better identify, describe and rank significant natural areas, and to more clearly resolve the conflicts between preservation and development on a site containing significant natural resources. It is designed to improve protection for wetlands, stream corridors and tree groves, by designating such resources with Resource Protection (RP) District and Resource Conservation (RC) District overlay zones. [ZC 1-95-1204 Revised; 5/20/97]

Summary of Major Issues

The following are some of the issues, changed circumstances and conditions which were considered in the update of this element of the Comprehensive Plan:

- Statewide land use Goal 5 requires site specific mapping and an ESEE analysis for distinctive natural areas. The Goal 5 process must be used to protect new sites as additional distinctive features are brought to the City's attention and as endangered species are identified. [ZC 1-95-1204 Revised; 5/20/97]

Goal 5 Open Spaces, Scenic & Historic Areas & Natural Resources

□ Section 5, Sensitive Lands

- The Endangered Species Act requires protection of sensitive, threatened and endangered species. Some species of plants and animals in the USB may fall within these categories.
- Under Goal 5, the highest valued natural resources within Lake Oswego's USB, such as wetlands and stream corridors, may merit full preservation when there are no conflicting uses identified. Other natural areas such as tree groves may merit a more limited level of protection. [ZC 1-95-1204 Revised; 5/20/97]

GOALS, POLICIES, AND RECOMMENDED ACTION MEASURES

GOAL

The City shall protect, enhance and maintain the wooded character and natural features of Lake Oswego that are prized by residents. [ZC 1-95-1204 Revised; 5/20/97]

POLICIES

1. Protect, enhance, maintain and restore the functions and values* of existing and future wetlands, stream corridors, tree groves and other sensitive nature areas, such as:
 - a. Water and air quality enhancement;
 - b. Fish and wildlife habitat;
 - c. Community identity benefits*;
 - d. Open space, passive recreation, and visual enjoyment; and,
 - e. Public protection from natural hazards, such as areas subject to flooding, geological instability, or high erosion potential.
2. Designate the specific locations of significant Goal 5 resources through development of a Sensitive Lands Atlas and special overlay zone designations.
3. Supplement the Sensitive Lands Atlas, pursuant to Statewide Planning Goal 5, as additional distinctive features are brought to the City's attention and as sensitive, threatened or endangered species are identified.

Goal 5 Open Spaces, Scenic & Historic Areas & Natural Resources

□ Section 5, Sensitive Lands

4. The City shall emphasize protection rather than mitigation of the functions and values of sensitive lands areas.
5. Enact and maintain regulations and standards which require:
 - a. Preservation of the functions and values of sensitive lands;
 - b. No net loss* in the quantity or volume of wetland or stream corridor functions or values when development is allowed within such resource, buffer or edge. Such development shall only be allowed after an alternatives analysis and a finding that a development cannot practicably be placed entirely outside of the resource and its buffer and edge areas;
 - c. Preservation of the most significant resources (i.e. no loss of area, functions, or values);
 - d. Protection of sensitive lands designated as RC or RP;
 - e. Establishment and maintenance of buffer and edge areas; and,
 - f. Establishment of wider buffer areas around the most significant sensitive lands.
6. Allow development density on parcels containing sensitive lands overlay zones to be transferred to other portions of the development site.
7. Allow innovative site and building design, including the clustering of buildings to preserve sensitive lands.
8. Require activities within sensitive lands overlay zones to be compatible with the preservation of resource functions and values. These activities include uses such as public and private development, public and private recreation, surface water management and flood control.
9. Require all development proposed within or adjacent to sensitive lands to:
 - a. Incorporate and maintain sensitive lands resource features, functions and values in the project design;
 - b. Preserve vegetation and provide and maintain buffer areas;
 - c. Prevent the placement of contaminants or discharge of water pollutants or sediments into sensitive lands and their buffer areas; and,
 - d. Restore and enhance disturbed sensitive lands with restoration landscaping to match the plant community of the resource.

Goal 5 Open Spaces, Scenic & Historic Areas & Natural Resources

□ Section 5, Sensitive Lands

RECOMMENDED ACTION MEASURES

- i. Identify and protect sensitive lands through imposition of overlay zones designed to protect the functions and values of such lands. Provide a process for protecting new or newly discovered sensitive lands.
- ii. Preserve sensitive lands that are found to have the highest levels of significance through a variety of means, including: fee simple acquisition, gifts, long-term leases, life estates, purchase of development rights, scenic or conservation easements and other similar methods.
- iii. Create development standards that provide specific protection measures for sensitive lands. Such standards should allow appropriate variances, density transfers and/or clustering of structures to protect valued features.
- iv. Provide information to the general public and developers regarding the importance of sensitive lands to the community and ways in which they can be protected and restored.
- v. Make public the location of sensitive lands in order to call attention to the need for public stewardship and protection.
- vi. Support the efforts of community groups to enhance and maintain public and private sensitive lands, and to encourage volunteer participation and stewardship of such lands within the USB.
- vii. Use a natural resources advisory body* to prioritize sensitive lands sites, and to assist Council in protecting such lands by acquisition, easements and management.
- viii. Coordinate with the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation and other responsible jurisdictions, agencies and groups to preserve and enhance sensitive lands which benefit Lake Oswego citizens, such as Tryon Creek State Park and the Willamette Greenway.
- ix. Utilize the methodology established in the April 4, 1997, Resource Areas Report and ESEE Analysis for determining the significance of particular sensitive lands.

Goal 5 Open Spaces, Scenic & Historic Areas & Natural Resources

Section 5, Sensitive Lands

- Notes -