



Kitsap County Shoreline Master Program Task Force Goals and Principles Final Draft: August 4, 2010

The primary mission of Kitsap County's Shoreline Master Program Task Force is to review, discuss, and make recommendations regarding the policies that should be included in the Shoreline Master Program. These policies, in turn, will serve as the platform for future regulations and/or shoreline management programs implemented by Kitsap County. As it works throughout 2010 and 2011, the Task Force will adhere to the following goals and principles.

Health of the Shoreline Ecosystem

- 1) Central to the work of the Task Force is the health and protection of the shoreline. The Task Force will develop policy recommendations that are designed to ensure no net loss of currently existing ecological function, with the recognition that the waters of Puget Sound and Kitsap County are and ***will be subject to forces of human action that may make it difficult to return them to the natural state.***
- 2) Consistent with WAC 26-176 that identifies "the shorelines and the waters they encompass among the most valuable and fragile of the state's natural resources," the Task Force will craft policy recommendations that allow for the protection and restoration of key shoreline areas. The Task Force will operate within the WAC guidelines that call "for the accommodation of all reasonable and appropriate uses consistent with protecting against adverse effects to the public health, the land and its vegetation and wildlife, and the waters of the state and their aquatic life."
- 3) A growing population in Kitsap County will continue to put pressure on the shoreline environment. The Task Force will develop recommendations aimed at preserving shoreline areas where there is still the opportunity to do so, in order that future generations can also enjoy and benefit from the shoreline experience.
- 4) Consistent with WAC 173-26-201(3)(g), in the absence of guiding scientific evidence, the Task Force will craft policy recommendations that reasonably assure that existing shoreline ecological resources are protected in a manner to avoid unanticipated impacts.
- 5) The Task Force will make recommendations aimed at improving and enhancing the particularly critical areas of the shoreline environment, including wetlands and estuaries. The Task Force will also be inclusive in its deliberations, making sure to pay attention to lakes and streams, as well as the saltwater shoreline.
- 6) The Task Force recognizes the importance of the shellfish industry, and will develop recommendations aimed at protecting water quality and other components of the shellfish environment. Where there are questions about the environmental impacts or benefits of shellfish harvesting (geoducks, for example), the Task Force will refer to the principles of Goal #5 and carefully weigh the pros and cons of those harvesting methods before making its recommendations.

Use of Good Science

Throughout its deliberations, the Task Force will base its recommendations on good science. ***The use of scientific and technical information is defined in WAC 173-26-201(2)(a) and further clarified in Ecology's Frequently Asked Questions publication on Ecology's website. Kitsap County's "Shoreline Inventory and Characterization" serves as the base of information for the Shoreline Master program.***

Shoreline Economics and Development

- 1) The Task Force will seek to develop recommendations aimed at positive incentives rather than new penalties or regulatory requirements. Task Force members recognize that shoreline preservation will be easier to implement if it is also economically viable for private property owners. Possible tools to use in this regard include tax incentives, expedited permitting, and reductions or waivers of permit fees.
- 2) Possible areas for the use of these incentives include the permitting and construction of docks and other water-related facilities. Where possible, the Task Force will develop recommendations that foster the use of financial and other incentive programs that encourage property owners to voluntarily select construction methods that also help to protect the shoreline. The Task Force will also seek to develop recommendations that encourage property owners to share such facilities, combine resources and/or use Low Impact Development when planning applicable shoreline modifications. Likewise, in areas with existing facilities the Task Force may recommend upgrades to those facilities rather than all-new construction.
- 3) Although the Task Force will recommend positive incentives wherever possible, members also believe there should be clear and serious consequences for those who do not adhere to the regulations of the Shoreline Master Program. The Task Force will seek to recommend alternatives that both educate and provide property owners with assistance with compliance options before mandatory or other regulatory penalties are put into effect.
- 4) The Task Force will develop policy recommendations that encourage the long-term viability of water dependent businesses, including methods and guidance that encourage these businesses to operate in an environmentally sensitive and sustainable way.
- 5) The Task Force recognizes that there are economic development possibilities associated with shoreline protection and restoration. Just as voluntary Low Impact Development practices have been incorporated into Kitsap County regulations, the Task Force will seek to develop recommendations that encourage and promote shoreline restoration practices and business.

Inclusion of Tribal Interests

Throughout its deliberations, the Task Force will encourage an ongoing and open conversation with tribal interests throughout Kitsap County, seeking to preserve both tribal rights and tribal water-dependent industries, as well as encouraging tribal cooperation with County SMP policies.

Private Property Rights

Just as the Shoreline Management Act recognizes the rights of private property owners, the Task Force will recognize and respect these rights, which are delineated in WAC 173-26. Furthermore, the Task Force will adhere to EHB 1653, which was crafted with broad support from Kitsap County, state agencies, businesses and environmental groups, and was enacted by the 2010 Washington State Legislature. The legislation says that, on an interim basis, “a use or structure legally located within shorelines of the state that was established or vested on or before the effective date of the local government’s development regulations to protect critical areas may continue as a conforming use or may be redeveloped or modified if (A) The development or modification is consistent with the local government’s master program; and (B) the local government determines that the proposed redevelopment or modification will result in no net loss of ecological functions. The local government may waive this requirement if the redevelopment or modification is consistent with the master program and the local government’s development regulations to protect critical areas.”

Linkage to the Community's Values

The Task Force acknowledges Kitsap County's community values related to the shoreline, which were identified through a community visioning survey conducted in Spring 2010. The Task Force will consider these community values, which include, but are not limited to, visual appeal, protection of the shoreline, and public access, as it develops its policy recommendations.

Education

The Task Force will seek opportunities for policy recommendations to educate both property owners and the general public on ways to preserve and protect the shoreline, encouraging citizen volunteers, for example, to become active in promoting the health of Kitsap county's shorelines. The Task Force seeks to foster a strong sense of stewardship and responsibility toward the County's shorelines among the general public.

Coordination and Collaboration

- 1) The Task Force will develop policy recommendations that are in line with other documents that have been developed and adopted by Kitsap County. For example, Task Force recommendations will consider the growth management policies set forth in the Vision 2040 Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and other relevant planning documents produced by Kitsap County.
- 2) Likewise, the Task Force will recommend areas in which collaboration with state and federal agencies may be required in order to address particular issues that are beyond the purview of the Shoreline Master Program. One example of this is the beach erosion caused by large cargo vessels, which would require local coordination with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Clear Definitions

- 1) The Task Force recognizes that clear definitions are essential to the success of the Shoreline Master Program. Throughout its deliberations, the Task Force will seek to understand and clearly describe each of the elements of the Program, adhering to the definitions outlined in the SMP guidelines written and administered by the Washington State Department of Ecology.
- 2) Two SMP elements in particular need of clarification in Kitsap County include zoning and public access. Current upland zoning is not always clear or compatible with SMP shoreline designations, e.g. rural shoreline with urban zoning densities. Likewise, it is not always clear where public access is allowed on the shoreline.
- 3) The Task Force will seek to be as detailed as possible in its recommendations, with the goal of avoiding ambiguity and language "loopholes" that could damage the integrity and effectiveness of the SMP over the long run.

Creativity and Concrete Actions

- 1) Throughout its deliberations, the Task Force will seek to "think outside of the box," recognizing that creativity and innovation are necessary to the long-term sustainability and success of the Shoreline Master Program.
- 2) The Task Force seeks to craft policy recommendations that are as specific and concrete as possible, recognizing the value of providing detailed solutions for the protection of Kitsap County's shorelines.