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Introduced by Bernice Stern

71-855

ORDINANCE
NO. 1096

AN ORDINANCE amending the Comprehensive Plan for King County by adopting an Open Space Element as an addendum thereto.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. "The Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan, Section I," attached hereto is hereby adopted as an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan for King County.

SECTION 2. As an amplification and augmentation of the Comprehensive Plan, the Open Space Element shall supplement Chapter E, Open Space Development Policies, and shall prevail where conflicts, if any, may occur.

PASSED by the Council at a regular meeting thereof on the 10th day of January, 1972.

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Bernice Stern
Chairman

ATTEST:

Lee Kraft
Administrator-Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 21st day of January, 1972.

[Signature]
King County Executive

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OPEN SPACE ELEMENT
AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

King County is one of the Nation's most desirable places to live and to visit due to the variety, quantity, and beauty of its open space. Thus, the County should be concerned about and responsible for ensuring the continued existence and maintenance of its precious open space by developing and carrying out proper planning processes.

The open space resources of King County include, but are not limited to:

1. 50,000 acres of farm land,
2. 926,592 acres of forest land,
3. more than 21,500 acres of flood plain,
4. 12,540 acres of bogs,
5. 42,213 acres of fresh water lakes and reservoirs,
6. 254,240 acres of watersheds,
7. potential for at least 51,340 acres of natural areas,
8. 75,000 acres of saltwater marinelands, and
9. over 9,000 acres of park facilities.

Terms used throughout this element of the Plan are defined as follows:

1. A preserve is an area maintained in its natural state.
2. A reserve is a tract of land set aside for a particular purpose.

3. Conservation is the management of resources for man's use.

4. Farm lands are land areas utilized for farming regardless of soil characteristics:

A. Soil Class

- 1) Class I soil is the best type of soil for cultivation and, to date, has not been recorded in King County.
- 2) Class II soil has limitations that reduce the choice of plants that can be grown there and may require conservation practices.
- 3) Class III soil has severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants that can be grown there, may require conservation practices, or both.
- 4) Class IV soil has very severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants that can be grown there, requires very careful management, or both.
- 5) Class V through VIII soils have such severe limitations that they are not suited for cultivation.

B. Wood lots are timbered acreage of more than 5 acres and less than 20 acres which are part of, or contiguous to, a farming enterprise.

5. Flood plains are those land areas adjoining a water course or other body of water which are subject to a one-per cent probability of recurring inundation.

6. Sanctuaries are places devoted to the health, well-being and safety of plants and animals that inhabit it.

7. Watersheds are catchment areas from which the waters of a stream system are drawn for municipal and industrial uses.

8. Nodes are a focal point of activity.
9. Habitat is the proper combination of food, water and cover.

GENERAL GOALS

1. To protect and conserve open space resources of the County;
2. To provide adequate open spaces which contribute to the social well-being of all King County residents;
3. To insure that the urban open space plan contributes to, and is consistent with, the design and structure of urban form;
4. To conserve the qualities of the Cascades and foothills as well as urban areas; and
5. To indicate benefits of a coordinated government and private agency effort in implementing open space planning.

GENERAL POLICIES

1. Open space should be distributed throughout the urban and rural areas to insure variety within the environment, to provide sufficient space for passive and active recreation, and to help curb the spread of urban blight and deterioration.
2. Open space resources should be combined, where possible, to form visual and physical separation between major sectors of urbanization, to discourage continuous urban sprawl, and to preserve the natural land features.

3. Areas or strips of open space should be retained between residential neighborhoods or communities and between residential and adjacent non-living areas to provide variety in the environment.
4. Multiple use of open space land should be encouraged only where the uses are compatible and where adequate area is provided for each function.
5. The County shall accept, when practical, fee or less-than-fee, interests arising from open space gifts.
6. The County shall solicit and organize public and private group resources in implementing the open space plan.
7. The use of R.C.W. 84.34 shall be employed, where possible, as an implementation tool for open space.
8. Organizations with private open space facilities whose membership is based on ethnic discrimination or conducts any unlawful use shall not be eligible for consideration for current use assessment.

CATEGORIES OF THE OPEN SPACE PLAN

FARMLANDS

Farmlands must be included in the open space system because they provide products for consumption; serve as buffers between urbanizing areas; and provide beautiful and natural scenery. These land areas will be lost to industrial development, subdivision, and to highway development unless they are included in the system.

GOAL: To reserve certain farmlands in the open space system.

POLICIES:

1. Class II and III soils having agricultural potential and other classified or unclassified land presently being farmed shall be reserved for current and anticipated needs.
2. All farmlands, including woodlots, must be practicing a soil and water conservation program consistent with the Soil Conservation Service or Extension Service guidelines and requirements.
3. All farmlands and woodlots of any kind that are located in a flood*plain shall be eligible for consideration as open space.
4. All farmlands and woodlots that provide access for recreational and/or educational purposes

shall be eligible for consideration as open space.

5. All farmlands and woodlots that are zoned or used for agriculture shall be eligible for consideration as either farmland or open space.

FOREST LANDS

Forest lands in King County are abundant and are an essential part of the open space system because they produce timber and other forest products on a perpetual basis thus providing jobs, industry and all the many useful products coming from wood. In addition, they are a place for diversified recreational activities not available in more urbanized areas.

GOAL: To encourage the conservation and proper management of all remaining forest areas within the County.

POLICIES:

1. A reforestation management program shall be initiated for all cut-over areas in order to be classified as open space.
2. Forest areas having educational and recreational values need not be in commercial timber production to qualify as open space.

3. It is desirable that, wherever reasonable, forest areas be open to managed and/or restricted public use in order to be classified as open space.
4. Small forests, 20 acres or more, should be encouraged and managed for the growing of trees and other uses.

FLOOD PLAINS

Flood plains are of significant value in the open space system because they serve as a buffer between waterways and adjacent recreational space, as a place for farming activities, and as a wildlife habitat.

GOAL: To restrict development on flood plains for the preservation of life and property and for the retention of the natural watercourse.

MARSHES, BOGS, AND SWAMPS

Due to the significance of wildlife preservation and the importance of natural drainage and runoff, it is essential that these land areas be part of the open space system.

GOAL: Certain marshes, bogs, and swamps shall be preserved for water retention, for wildlife sanctuaries, and for general open space.

POLICIES:

1. Those areas that have a sufficient scientific or educational value due to their location or content shall be preserved.
2. The depletion of bogs for commercial value can be considered within the open space system provided it will be rehabilitated in a manner consistent with, and is an improvement to, these or other open space uses.

LAKES, RIVERS, STREAMS, PONDS, AND ADJACENT LANDS

Lakes, rivers, streams, ponds, and adjacent lands should be part of the open space system because they provide varied recreational activities (fishing, boating, swimming) and inherent drainage and recharge functions, in addition to their unique aesthetic characteristics. Efforts should also be made to acquire and incorporate adjacent land areas into the system because they are rapidly being used up for residential and commercial purposes.

GOAL: To preserve the aesthetic qualities of lakes, rivers, streams, ponds and adjacent lands; and to preserve their natural functions, including drainage and recharge.

It is desirable that lakes, rivers, streams, ponds and adjacent lands be open to public access along their banks.

POLICIES:

1. Compatible use adjacent to these surface waters should enhance their open space character.
2. Public access should be managed through development and regulatory policies so as to preserve the natural habitat and the rights of private owners.

WATERSHEDS

Watersheds have important open space value because they are a concentrated water source; may have a wildlife habitat; may have a forest area producing timber on a sustained-yield basis; and provide a study area of scientific and educational value.

GOAL: To preserve all watersheds for their unique open space assets.

NATURAL AREAS

It is necessary to preserve the County's remote natural area as open space because it is a "living laboratory" where evolution, life, and death take place without mans disturbance. There is also a need for smaller, more accessible natural areas closer to urban regions.

GOAL: To support the acquisition and/or retention of distinctive biotic communities for their scientific, recreational, and aesthetic characteristics.

POLICIES:

1. Retention of natural areas shall be encouraged whenever it is demonstrated that their alteration would result in a significant public loss.
2. When it is shown that access to a natural area may be destructive, it may be necessary to regulate or restrict access.

WILDLIFE HABITATS

Wildlife habitats are important in the open space system because they allow for the propagation of wildlife, the maintenance of a balance of nature, the opportunity for scientific study, and the interaction of animals with people who visit the habitats.

GOAL: To include animal habitats as a significant consideration in planning.

POLICIES:

1. The County shall explore the feasibility of establishing wildlife sanctuaries on private and public lands through cooperative efforts and funding with the appropriate private, state, and federal groups and agencies.
2. The County shall initiate a program of wildlife habitat improvement, in cooperation with the appropriate private, state, and federal agencies and groups.

3. The County should seek ways and means, including possible new legislation, to enlarge the role of private lands in providing wildlife habitats.

SALTWATER MARINELANDS, SHORELANDS,
BEACHES AND RELATED UPLANDS

The open space value of these areas is comparable to that of fresh water areas, with the added ecological value derived by the unique mammals and fish which are contained in the salt water areas.

GOAL: To conserve marinelands, shorelands, beaches, and related uplands; protect them from adverse development; and encourage retention for open space.

POLICIES:

1. The County shall encourage establishment and conservation of shoreland and tideland reserves by those persons having private ownerships of marine habitat areas.
2. Activities on or near shoreland areas may be coordinated and/or restricted by the County when a sensitive and important marine habitat exists.

STEEP SLOPES

Steep slopes of King County should be included in the open space system because they serve as buffers between urbanized areas; as linear locations for trail park facilities; and as limited wildlife sanctuaries for smaller birds and mammals.

GOAL: To retain as many slopes and ravines as possible within the open space system as well as areas susceptible to sliding. The greater the degree of slope, the greater the need to retain the slope in the open space system.

LINEAR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The addition and preservation of linear recreational facilities such as trails to serve urban areas, non-motorized access routes to scenic areas, and scenic highways is important in the open space system.

GOAL: To establish a network of scenic corridors and travel facilities along existing or proposed transportation routes.

POLICIES:

1. Lands that provide corridors or nodes compatible with the establishment of a coordinated

system of trails shall be eligible for consideration.

2. The County shall preserve and enhance scenic corridors and ensure that their width is adequate for open space needs.
3. In planning scenic routes, sufficient area to provide viewpoints, rest areas, or picnic areas in appropriate locations shall be included.

GEOLOGY, ARCHAEOLOGY, AND CULTURAL HISTORY

These sites have open space value because they depict numerous historical events, and they preserve rare, outstanding geological areas, which have historical as well as aesthetic appeal.

GOAL: To preserve geologic formations that are rare or outstanding, archaeological sites containing significant evidence of use by aboriginal people; and sites, buildings, or structures of exceptional value for commemorating or illustrating the history of King County, the State of Washington, and the Nation.

ACTIVE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

King County has some of the best recreational areas in the Nation. Some recreational areas have open space value

because they are a convenient source for recreation of urban dwellers as well as a pleasant open space environment for people. These areas include, but are not limited to, public and private parks, picnic and playground areas, golf courses and campgrounds

GOAL: To develop a County program for local and regional parks and other active recreational facilities, including private operations, that will meet logical recreational facility standards and be beneficial to all County residents.

POLICIES:

1. A higher priority should be given to developing and preserving those active recreational facilities close to urban areas.
2. A development of public and private large-scale regional park and recreational facilities should be closely coordinated with the plans of all levels of government.

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