

# HOOD RIVER COUNTY Policy Document

Adopted July 30, 1991

Amended:

January 15, 1996, Ord. #201 (Goal 3)  
September 21, 2001, Ord. #236 (Goal 4)  
August 22, 2003, Ord. #249 (Goal 12)  
February 17, 2004, Ord. #253 (Goal 5)  
July 7, 2005, Ord. #267 (Goal 2)  
September 18, 2006, Ord. #272 (Goal 2)  
October 20, 2008, Ord. #292 (Goal 14)  
June 26, 2009, Ord. #295 (Goal 3 & Goal 12)  
March 31, 2010, Ord. #299 (Goal 12)  
November 21, 2011 Ord. #306 (Goal 12)

# COUNTY POLICY DOCUMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The Hood River County Comprehensive Land Use Plan is the basic instrument used for county land use planning. It is law and is utilized to control and direct the use and development of land use activities on private lands within the county. A comprehensive plan means a generalized coordinated land use map and policy statement of the county. Such a plan is an expression of public policy in the form of a policy document, generalized plan map, zoning map, implementing ordinances and supportive background reports.

Overall, Hood River County's comprehensive plan consists of the following elements:

- A. County Goal, Policy, Strategy, and Land Use Designation Document: (In short, County Policy Document.) This is a statement of public policy; as such it is one of the major documents to be used for land-use decisions.
- B. Comprehensive Plan Map: Implements the County Policy Document through general delineations of land-use designations on a plan map. The plan map graphically shows where land use activities (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, forestry, etc.) will occur within the planning period (year 2000).
- C. Zoning Map, and Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances: The zoning maps and ordinances implement in detail, the comprehensive plan map. The zoning map is more graphically specific in determining land use activities and the zoning and subdivision ordinances provide standards and criteria that control development of land use activities.
- D. Background Reports: These reports contain inventories, detailed information, analysis, etc., concerning each Statewide Goal. This information provides the basis in development of the Policy Document, the plan and zoning delineations and justification for the zoning and subdivision ordinance text.
- E. Exceptions Document: Presents background data analyzing and justifying why specific areas are either built out and committed to residential, commercial and industrial use or why there is a need to accommodate additional development (residential, commercial or industrial) in specific areas.
- F. Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (NSA): See the following section. This document is the County Policy Document. Copies of the other above Comprehensive Plan elements are available at the Hood River County Planning Department, Hood River County Courthouse, Hood River, OR 97031
- G. Transportation System Plan (TSP): Implements the County's TSP, the City of Hood River's TSP; and the City of Cascade Locks' TSP to comply with state-wide Planning Goal #12, OAR 660-012 and Periodic Review, OAR 660-025. The Plan was adopted as HRC Ordinance #249 on July 21, 2003.

## \*DEFINITIONS

- A. COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE NATIONAL SCENIC AREA (NSA): Please consult the county adopted Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area plan for policies and planning processes for land uses, existing or proposed, in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.
- B. GOALS: Goals are intended to define what is to be the ideal situation; what is to be sought for. A Goal is also a desired condition or circumstance toward which the planning effort is directed; a “destination” which is by nature generalized; used to give direction and indicate intention.
- C. PERIODIC REVIEW AND PLAN AMENDMENT PROJECTS: When other plan amendments are adopted by the county, the policy document will be amended.
- D. POLICIES: Policies are intended to be broad statements providing direction for public decisions concerning the goal. They are a means of moving toward a goal without limiting the method or approach to a single course of action.
- E. STRATEGIES: Strategies are intended to set forth the means for implementing the plan, i.e., adoption of regulations, special studies etc.
- F. LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND STANDARDS: Land Use Designations and Standards are intended to define the extent of development and provide broad standards for such development in a given area.

When goals, policies, strategies, land use designations and standards or other County directives are used to implement a specific Statewide Goal requirement, mandatory language (“shall” and “will”) is used. When mandatory statements are used they become legally binding to land use decisions.

Discretionary language (“should” and “ought”) does not provide a legal basis for implementing Goal requirements. An example is the following policy: “Agricultural land should be maintained for agricultural uses.”

When policies, strategies, etc.; are used as in the latter, discretionary language will not legally implement the Goal but will allow subversion of the Goal.

Some goals, policies, strategies, and land use designations and standards are broad statements and do not directly relate to Goal implementations, consequently discretionary terms (“should” and “ought”) are used.

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\*The Goals, Policies, Strategies, and Land Use Designations and Standards developed by the County are not binding on the management of the National Forest Service lands within Hood River County.