



## ***TOWN OF LA CONNER PLANNING COMMISSION***

### **Meeting Notice**

January 21, 6PM

Upper Maple Center, La Conner WA, and Livestreamed  
Information is below and on the Town Website

Skagit County Washington  
Incorporated 1890  
[www.townoflaconner.org](http://www.townoflaconner.org)

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### **Agenda**

#### **I. Convene**

#### **II. Public Comments** (Topics not otherwise on the Agenda) – Time Limit 3 Minutes

#### **III. Minutes:** Approve Minutes from the January 7, 2024 meeting.

#### **IV. Old Business**

1. Status Report – Talmon Development
2. Status Report – Public Participation Program
3. Update: Youth Advisor

#### **V. New Business**

1. Draft Review: Economic Element – Chapter 4
2. Draft Review: Utilities Element – Chapter 8

#### **VI. Closing Comments:**

Live Streaming Info: <https://laconnerwa.portal.civicclerk.com/>

**TOWN OF LA CONNER  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
January 7, 2025**

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The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioners present: Sommer Holt, Bruce Bradburn, John Leaver, Cynthia Elliott, Carol Hedlin

Commissioners absent: None

Staff: Michael Davolio, Ajah Eills

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John Leaver started his one-year term as Commission Chair.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Linda Talman shared her hope that no part of the Comprehensive Plan update process would be expedited in any way, as mistakes could happen when people rush.

Kathy Shiner expressed concern about the potential impacts to public parking based on a public workshop she attended regarding the commercial-transition sub-area plan.

Debbie Aldrich said that she also attended the public workshop, and was shocked at the capacity information presented, and wanted to object to so many housing units. She shared a personal story of family being displaced due to development choices made in the area she grew up in. Aldrich further spoke regarding sustainable growth.

Commissioners and staff spoke regarding the sub-area plan, and emphasized that the consultant is providing only a recommendation, and that the recommendation would be edited by staff and presented for public comment. Staff spoke regarding development opportunities. There was brief discussion of the sub-area plan and associated zoning.

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Bradburn moved to approve the minutes with corrections from the December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Elliott. **Motion to approve the minutes with corrections carried unanimously.**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Applicants have submitted new plans in regards to the 306 Center Street building. Staff are reviewing these plans internally. The plans are available online for the public.

Staff is communicating with Principal Tripp regarding the youth advisor application and the best way to distribute it to the student population.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Staff presented the 6-month work plan for the remainder of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

After the meeting, Commissioners will fill out background checks to allow them to work with the youth advisor.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/STAFF COMMENTS:**

Leslie Smith asked about current developments around Town. Staff spoke regarding current developments around Town. Debbie Aldrich requested better audio in public meetings. Commissioner Leaver commented that the rebuild at 213 Calhoun Street looks good.

There was a brief discussion about the Limedock and other buildings around La Conner, as well as a brief discussion about parking.

With no further business Commissioner Elliott moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Hedlin. **Motion carried unanimously.**

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Chair

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Date

## MEMORANDUM

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TO: Planning Commission  
FROM: Planning Staff  
SUBJECT: Economic Element  
DATE: January 17, 2025

Please see attached the latest draft of Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan, the Economic Element. Proposed removals are indicated with a strikethrough, while additions have been highlighted. We are asking you to review this in preparation to give a recommendation for approval, or a recommendation for specific edits that you would like made. Of course, we will also answer any questions you may have about the element.

# CHAPTER 4

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

### **Introduction**

In accordance with RCW 36.70A.070(7), the Town of La Conner has added an Economic Development Element to the Comprehensive Plan. La Conner is a noted tourist attraction, drawing visitors from around the U.S. and Canada. The Town's unique waterfront environment, vibrant arts and cultural community, and historical authenticity are important attributes that make La Conner a destination for visitors throughout the year. The Port of Skagit County has also built a strong marine related industrial base.

### **GOALS AND POLICIES**

#### **GOAL A**

*Promote a stable and diversified economy offering a wide variety of services and employment opportunities to the citizens of La Conner.*

#### **Policies**

- 4A-1 Encourage business investments that provide economic and employment opportunities to meet the employment needs of La Conner residents and those residing in nearby areas.
- 4A-2 Accommodate home-based businesses that are consistent with the character of adjoining properties and neighborhoods.
- 4A-3 Promote a collaborative, interdependent local economy.
- 4A-4 Encourage diversity in the range of goods and services to meet local and regional needs, including those of the traveling public.
- 4A-5 Continue to coordinate with and seek economic development assistance from the Economic Development Association of Skagit County (EDASC), Washington State Department of Commerce (~~DOE~~ **COMM**), La Conner Chamber of Commerce and other entities in the economic development area.

- 4A-6 Give special attention and a clear preference to identifying and promoting economic activities that are based on our area's economic traditions, including maritime and water related, agriculture, outdoor recreation and art.

### **GOAL B**

*Achieve a balance between commercial and industrial interests to avoid over-concentration in one particular segment of the economy.*

### **Policies**

- 4B-1 Expand and recruit additional commercial services that primarily serve the needs of the residents of the Town and surrounding areas.
- 4B-2 Encourage light industrial uses within designated zones.
- 4B-3 Encourage a diversity of uses within the industrial zone, with an emphasis on emerging technology based enterprises, as well as traditional industrial uses that have always been associated with La Conner.
- 4B-4 Encourage adaptive reuse of existing structures.
- 4B-5 Identify development impacts and appropriate mitigation measures.

### **GOAL C**

*Encourage economic development that conserves natural resources and open space, protects environmental quality, and enhances our community's quality of life.*

### **Policies**

- 4C-1 Buffering by means of landscaping, or by maintaining recreation and open space corridors should be done between incompatible adjacent uses, including commercial and industrial uses.
- 4C-2 Provide a townwide strategy to address weather and climatic impacts that would adversely impact residents and businesses of the Town.
- 4C-3 Ensure that business physically located within 200 feet of the shoreline are providing adequate public access in accordance with La Conner's Shoreline Master Program.

- 4C-4     Develop incentives for new commercial buildings to incorporate open public green space, renewable energy measures, and other climate related measures.

#### **GOAL D**

*Promote economic activities that increase the number of living wage or family wage jobs in La Conner and help to diversify the economy.*

##### **Policies**

- 4D-1     Encourage diverse job options for persons interested in full-time and part-time employment.
- 4D-2     Encourage diverse entrepreneurial opportunities for persons desiring to own their own business.
- 4D-3     Facilitate the retention and expansion of existing local business and start-up of new businesses, particularly those providing family-wage job opportunities.
- 4D-4     Ensure that industrial and commercial zones are sufficient to ensure substantial diversity in local economic activity.
- 4D-5     Encourage office uses within industrial and commercial zones.
- 4D-6     Encourage economic development that creates a net positive fiscal impact for the local community through analysis of all direct and indirect costs and benefits to the community, including consideration of public capital investment.
- 4D-7     Work in collaboration with the ArtsWA, La Conner Chamber of Commerce, the La Conner Arts Commission, and other local groups to develop marketing techniques to enhance traffic to local businesses, including applying for state designations such as becoming a Creative District.

#### **GOAL E**

*Support La Conner as a visitor destination by preserving and enhancing the unique qualities of our community.*

##### **Policies**

- 4E-1     Preserve and enhance activities that rely on the area's traditional enterprises of maritime, agriculture, outdoor recreation and art.
- 4E-2     Support efforts to develop, refurbish, and maintain scenic open space.

- 4E-3 Support cultural and heritage resources that are attractive to both local residents and visitors.
- 4E-4 Support community and private efforts to improve visitor services.
- 4E-5 Encourage siting of visitor services at locations that can be served with the necessary public infrastructure and that are compatible with neighboring uses.

**GOAL F**

*Attract a diversified base of light industry consistent with local quality of life and environmental values.*

**Policies**

- 4F-1 Encourage value-added resource based products, particularly with agriculture, fisheries and marine activities.
- 4F-2 Encourage low cost, easily accessible, state-of-the-art telecommunications infrastructure in order to attract and maintain businesses relying on these facilities and to provide these services to residents.
- 4F-3 Encourage business recruitment and development of firms, which will diversify the local economy.
- 4F-4 Maintain sufficient industrial land to accommodate a mix of business, light industry that is consistent with market requirements, and other opportunities.



## **ECONOMIC TRENDS**

### **Commercial:**

This zone includes land used for retail and wholesale trade, offices, hotels, restaurants, service outlets, gas stations, and repair facilities. Morris Street and First Street are the Town's high-density commercial areas. The Skagit Port facilities have a medium level of commercial density. Maple Avenue has some existing non-conforming commercial uses in the residential area.

Total Commercial Use: 54 acres (21% of total 255 acre land area).

Heavy Commercial Use: The historic central business district on First Street consists of approximately 3.5 acres along the Swinomish Channel. This area contains mixed use residential as a conditional use, retail sales establishments, restaurants, art galleries, a museum, and a post office. Morris Street consists primarily of retail shops, a grocery store, and restaurants; mixed with residential use; and service businesses.

Neighborhood Commercial Use: Approximately 3.4 acres are used for businesses along Maple Avenue. This does not take into account home-based businesses.

Economic Trends: Sales and Use Receipts in 2024 totaled \$652,828. Sales and Use receipts increased sharply between 2013 and 2015 as the region came out of the economic downturn that impacted the entire country. From 2016 to 2020, Sales and Use experienced decline, and officials were unable to determine if this was a trend, or a correction. In 2020, the county went into lockdown due to COVID-19, which resulted in the lowest Sales and Use receipts in over a decade. However, Sales and Use tax receipts rose by over 43% in 2021, and has not experienced a significant decline since then, although between the years of 2021 and 2024, Sales and Use receipts varied slightly. tax have been in decline since then and it is unclear if this is a trend or simply a correction. Town Council is working with local merchants to determine the cause and come up with strategies to address it if necessary. While the Sale and Use receipts have been sluggish. Similarly, the Hotel Motel revenues experienced a dip in 2020, which is attributed to COVID-19, but has been increasing during the same period. Appendix 4-A includes tables showing historic revenues from both Sales and Use and Hotel Motel.

Market Area: The Town draws some retail business from local residents and small neighboring towns, but the majority of retail income is generated by visitors from larger metropolitan areas, such as Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. La Conner is a noted tourist attraction, drawing visitors from around the U.S. and Canada throughout the year.

Potential Future Port Commercial: La Conner is currently working with the Port of Skagit to develop "port commercial" zoning that will allow the Port of Skagit to

engage in more flexible economic activities, including developing live/work buildings, and workforce housing.

**Commercial-Transition Sub-Area Plan:** La Conner has developed a sub-area plan for the Commercial-Transition zone that abuts South First Street and serves as a transition space between residential and commercial space in La Conner. The sub-area plan is part of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Key elements include avoiding competition with the existing downtown nexus, creating additional community gathering, green, and open space, along with supporting affordable housing and incorporating climate change provisions.

### **Industrial/Port Industrial:**

This category includes land used for light manufacturing, processing, and warehousing, as well as port activities. There is no heavy industry in La Conner.

**Total Industrial Land Use:** In south La Conner, the industrial environment is that shoreline area bounded on the west by the OHWM of the channel, on the south by the Town's southern boundary, on the north by the south side of Sherman Avenue and on the east to a point 200 feet landward of the OHWM of the Swinomish Channel.

**Total Port Industrial Land Use:** In the north end of town, from the north side of South Pearle Jensen Way north to the northernmost town boundary, and between the OHWM of the Swinomish Channel (including the OHWM of the north and south basins of the Port of Skagit County) on the west and a line 200 feet landward.

**Economic Trends:** Over the past 20 years the number of businesses in the industrial sector has changed very little. Development has been slow and limited by the availability of land. Consistent with the adopted Shoreline Management Program the industrial areas are intended to:

- Provide for the reasonable accommodation of fishing and boating related industrial activities focused in areas that are removed from the retail, residential, and historic portions of the Town's shorelands.
- Ensure that development, redevelopment and operations of uses in the industrial environment employ best practices to avoid or mitigate any adverse impacts on the ecological functions and values of the Town's marine shoreline.

The Port Industrial zone was added in 2023 to better provide areas for marine manufacturing and maritime services that require facilities and/or waterfront access available to port properties, with the goal to support a strong maritime economy.

A major loss of industrial employment in the south end of town was experienced in 1992 with the closure of Moore-Clark, a fish food processing plant with approximately 33 employees.

The Skagit County Port facilities ~~have steadily increased occupancy and currently have 19~~ 15 businesses within the Port facilities ~~employing 280 full-time personnel.~~

Market Area: The market for industrial products is regional and worldwide, and is not dependent on the local population. Access to materials, transportation, markets, and suitable labor are the most important determinants of industrial location. La Conner is located 11 miles from the nearest interstate highway and four miles from a main arterial. The majority of the Industrial Zone lies within the La Conner Shoreline area. The Shoreline Management Act reduces the ability of the Town to attract non-marine industry to the area bordering the waterfront. New rules provided by WAC 173-16 offer prospects for water-enjoyment types of development.

Sales and Use Trends: ~~Sales and Use receipts increased sharply between 2013 and 2015 as the region came out of the economic downturn that impacted the entire country. They have been in decline since then and it is unclear if this is a trend or simply a correction. Town Council is working with local merchants to determine the cause and come up with strategies to address it if necessary.~~

## **Analysis of Economic Conditions**

### **Overall Economic Conditions**

**Employment Trends by Industry:** The Town has shifted away from a natural resource base (farming, fishing and forest products) economy towards retail, service industries, and light manufacturing.

**Unemployment Rate:** The 2000 unemployment rate was 1.9% for the Town of La Conner. By 2010 the rate had increased to 2.8% and grew to a high of 6.2% in 2014 during the economic downturn. ~~By 2016 (the year for which we have the most current data) it had dropped to 3.6% and as the economy has continued to improve it is likely lower now.~~ The following chart shows the percentage unemployment rate as per the American Community Survey associated with that year for La Conner and Skagit County.

Year	La Conner Unemployment Rate - ACS	Skagit County Unemployment Rate - ACS
2016	3.6%	7.2%
2017	3.7%	6.4%
2018	2.0%	5.8%
2019	1.1%	5.5%
2020*	1.1%	5.1%
2021	0.6%	4.8%
2022	0.4%	5.1%
2023	0.7%	4.9%

**Regional Employment Conditions:** In 1999 Skagit County's unemployment rate fell to a historical low of 6.3% and remained relatively consistent rising to 6.4 by 2010. The economic downturn impacted Skagit County more significantly than the Town of La Conner with the County rate topping out at 9.8% in 2013. The 2016 rate for the County had fallen to 7.2%. Please see above for a comparison between La Conner and Skagit County unemployment. The county's economic base includes agriculture and food processing, marine-related industries such as fishing, fish processing, and boat building and repair, lumber and wood products, oil refining, and tourism. The county's location on Interstate 5 and proximity to the rapidly growing Seattle-Everett area should continue to be attractive to commuters and new development.

## **Economic Strengths and Weaknesses**

### **Strengths:**

1. Increasing hotel/motel receipts.
2. An attraction for visitors from throughout the Northwest, due to La Conner's unique waterfront environment, historical authenticity, and its variety of interesting shops and restaurants.
3. The many museums and galleries provide a rich cultural environment.
4. The smaller size and scale of the existing businesses and absence of Big Box stores and strip malls promotes a small town charm that visitors are expecting from the Town.
- ~~5. The Town's lack of traffic congestion makes it an attractive destination for tourists and neighboring towns.~~
5. The Town has promoted and encourages a pedestrian friendly orientation.
6. The Waterfront/Boardwalk is an important asset for the town.
7. The Town's designation on the National Register of Historic Places adds to its desirability as a tourist destination.
8. A wide range of educational opportunities are available that are both affordable and attuned to the needs of the area.

### **Weaknesses:**

1. Poor usage of the existing parking facilities and on-going controversy regarding quantity and availability of parking while available parking areas are underutilized.
2. Distance from major highway interchanges for shipping and transit inhibits attraction of more industrial businesses.
3. Town revenue dependence on tourism as the economic base for the Town.
4. Employees of La Conner businesses generally live outside of town limits.
5. Lack of infrastructure to host larger groups (corporate retreats) limits the Town's ability to fully realize its potential as a destination.
6. On line shopping is threatening brick and mortar businesses. The Town's reliance on small locally owned specialty shops is particularly vulnerable to this trend.
7. The Town's aging population makes it difficult to accommodate a robust workforce and tends to increase the cost of living for all residents.

### **Economic Activities Expected to Increase**

Commercial: Over the last 20 years La Conner has become a "destination town" known for its unique shops, waterfront ambience, and small town charm. The

Town's close proximity to the Swinomish Indian Reservation and the historic district also draw visitors from around the U.S. and Canada. Sales and Use Tax receipts along with Hotel/Motel tax receipts are expected to continue to increase, or remain the same in line with current trends, as the national economy improves.

Industrial/Port Industrial: The Port of Skagit County La Conner Marina has developed water-dependent light-industrial businesses in the north industrial area. As mentioned above, the Port has been successful in attracting several marine industries to La Conner, such as Pacific Mariner, TOMCO Marine Group, Maritime Fabrications, and sixteen other related or support industrial and commercial enterprises. While manufacturing has declined as a percentage of the total economy, there has been modest growth of industrial manufacturing capacity in Skagit County.

Public Sector: With the exception of La Conner School District employment, very little change is expected in employment opportunities in this sector over the next 20 years.

### **Economic Activities in Decline**

Industry: The Town experienced a decline in light industry and manufacturing in its south industrial area. One of the largest employers, Moore-Clark, shut down in 1992 resulting in the loss of medium to high wage jobs. This in turn generated a negative multiplier effect on local service industries, and resulted in a net loss of retail sales tax receipts to the Town from products that Moore-Clark formerly sold at retail. The south end industrial area has had difficulty attracting marine related industry. In the north end, the Skagit County Port properties have successfully attracted marine related industries in recent years, which have helped the Town recover from the Moore-Clark losses. The Town is off the main transportation corridor, 11 miles from the nearest freeway. In addition, more convenient and less expensive manufacturing facilities are available in areas closer to Interstate 5.

## APPENDIX 4-A

### DATA AND ANALYSIS

#### **Active La Conner Business License Data<sup>1</sup>**

Type	Number	Description
La Conner General Business	119	Business licenses for business within Town limits. This includes sales, professional businesses, food establishments, industrial activities, and all other mercantile activities excluding renting rooms for rent, within the Commercial and Industrial zones of La Conner.
La Conner Non-Resident	575	All business and individuals located outside of Town limits that engage in sales or services within the Town limits of La Conner.
La Conner Rental	11	Business or individuals that rent out rooms to other for sleeping or short-term rental purposes. This includes inns, hotels, motels, and B&Bs.
La Conner Home Occupation	13	Business or individuals that run a business out of a dwelling unit that they own, or rent but have obtained the owners permission to run the business, in a Residential area of La Conner, or within a dwelling unit that was previously zoned for residential use within the Commercial zone.
Total Active Business Licenses	718	

#### **Employment and Business License Data\***

Zone	# of	% of Total	Building Sq.
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<sup>1</sup> As of January 16, 2025

	Employees	Employment	Ft.
Commercial/HPD	315	41	137,176
Commercial	129	17	125,669
Industrial	302	40	220,100
Residential	17	2	23,334

Business Class**	Number of Employees	Building Sq. Ft.
1	491	288,700
2	258	207,252
3	20	8,202
Total	769	504,154

\*Business license applications 2018

\*\*Business Class Definitions:

- (1) Class 1 Taverns, restaurant/food purveyors serving liquor, grocery stores with over 2,000 square feet of sales area, manufacturing and other businesses employing 15 or more full time or part time employees, recreational vehicle parks, apartment houses/motels/hotels with five or more rental units.
- (2) Class 2 Professional businesses including banking, accounting, medical, dental, legal, travel, realty, advertising, publishing, architecture, counseling, retail, and food sales, lumber yards, petroleum sales, auto and boat repair, boat sales and charter services, commercial rental activities, and manufacturing with less than 15 full time or part time employees.
- (3) Class 3 All other businesses as defined, which are not indicated in Class 1 or Class 2. This includes businesses and individuals located outside the Town limits engaged in sales or services within the Town.



Sales and Use Tax Revenues

<b>Sales &amp; Use Tax Revenues</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Delta</b>
1995	\$303,660	
1996	\$317,912	4.7%
1997	\$317,977	0.0%
1998	\$352,904	11.0%
1999	\$375,191	6.3%
2000	\$371,959	-0.9%
2001	\$326,839	-12.1%
2002	\$347,563	6.3%
2003	\$357,497	2.9%
2004	\$379,173	6.1%
2005	\$429,177	13.2%
2006	\$445,588	3.8%
2007	\$424,421	-4.8%
2008	\$421,146	-0.8%
2009	\$368,054	-12.6%
2010	\$353,893	-3.8%
2011	\$359,267	1.5%
2012	\$371,322	3.4%
2013	\$411,348	10.8%
2014	\$478,017	16.2%
2015	\$557,170	16.6%
2016	\$480,461	-13.8%
2017	\$460,868	-4.1%
2018	\$496,882	7.8%
2019	\$486,559	-2.1%
2020*	\$439,566	-9.7%
2021	\$630,832	43.5%
2022	\$677,922	7.5%
2023	\$630,453	-7.0%
2024	\$652,828	3.5%

\*Indicates the year COVID-19 caused a local and nation-wide shut down.

<b>Hotel &amp; Motel Tax Revenues</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Delta</b>
1995	\$47,640	
1996	\$50,111	5.2%
1997	\$95,189	90.0%
1998	\$105,334	10.7%
1999	\$100,571	-4.5%
2000	\$118,016	17.3%
2001	\$102,031	-13.5%
2002	\$96,643	-5.3%
2003	\$93,797	-2.9%
2004	\$116,993	24.7%
2005	\$118,950	1.7%
2006	\$122,054	2.6%
2007	\$128,551	5.3%
2008	\$133,692	4.0%
2009	\$108,284	-19.0%
2010	\$145,758	34.6%
2011	\$144,536	-0.8%
2012	\$122,787	-15.0%
2013	\$136,002	10.8%
2014	\$126,351	-7.1%
2015	\$130,025	2.9%
2016	\$139,215	7.1%
2017	\$150,416	8.0%
2018	\$151,519	0.7%
2019	\$149,561	-1.3%
2020*	\$102,779	-31.3%
2021	\$175,000	70.0%
2022	\$196,404	12.0%
2023	\$195,784	-0.3%
2024	\$200,676	2.0%

\*Indicates the year COVID-19 caused a local and nation-wide shut down.

## MEMORANDUM

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TO: Planning Commission  
FROM: Planning Staff  
SUBJECT: Economic Element  
DATE: January 17, 2025

Please see attached the latest draft of Chapter 8 of the Comprehensive Plan, the Utilities Element. Please note that proposed removals are indicated with a strikethrough, while proposed additions are highlighted.

Note: staff received new computers over the new year, and the program needed to update some data in the element was accidentally removed. Staff is in the process of getting access to that program again, at which point additional data within the element will be updated. Data to be updated has a red call-out before it in the element.

Please come prepared to give a recommendation, this could be approval, denial or specific edits. Note that the recommendation for approval could remain conditional on the updated data.

Thank you.

# CHAPTER 8

## UTILITIES ELEMENT

### Introduction

The Utilities Element describes, "the general location, proposed location, and capacity of all existing and proposed utilities, including, but not limited to, electrical lines, telecommunication lines, and natural gas lines". The goals and policies in this element deal primarily with the utility services provided by the Town of La Conner; sewer, water, and drainage. Private providers of natural gas, electricity, cable TV, telephone, and trash pick-up are also discussed. The planning horizon ends in 2045.

### Reference documents:

- Skagit County Coordinated Water System Plan dated July 2000. This sets the capacities for each water purveyor in Skagit County through the year 2050. It sets the standards for cross-connection, backflow prevention, and fire flow.
- Town of La Conner Comprehensive Water System Plan dated 2009. This includes maps showing the locations and sizes of water lines, hydrants, pumps and the storage tank. It contains the rudiments of a water conservation plan and provides capital planning and cash flow analysis. In 2022, La Conner contracted with David Evans and Associates to the firm to complete 2023 Comprehensive Water System Plan with a 20-year planning period from 2024-2044. The update is anticipated to be approved by the Washington State Department of Health. The update is ongoing, through the year 2028. The water system plan is currently being updated and it is anticipated that it will be completed by mid-2019.
- Town of La Conner Wastewater Treatment Comprehensive Plan dated August, 1996. This document provides information on the existing wastewater treatment facility at that time and includes management procedures along with criteria for plant expansion. As-built drawings are available at the treatment plant.
- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit no. WA-002244-6, issued February 1, 2023 (it is due for renewal February 1, 2028). This document sets the water quality standard for treatment plant effluent, the loading on the plant, and the monitoring/reporting requirements. It contains criteria for Significant Industrial Users (SIU) that are external to the system.

- Contract for Wastewater Treatment and Disposal between the Town of La Conner and the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, dated December 28, 1997. This Document contains all of the agreements under which the Town serves the Swinomish Indian Reservation as a bulk customer. It runs until December 31, 2096.
- Town of La Conner Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan, 2017. 2007.

This chapter is based on RCW 36.70A.020(12): “ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.” This statute is also reflected in the following Countywide Planning Policies:

- Development shall be allowed only when and where all public facilities are adequate, and only when and where such development can be adequately served by regional public services without reducing levels of service elsewhere (CWPP12.6)
- Public facilities and services needed to support development shall be available concurrent with the impacts of development (CWPP 12.7)

The Town of La Conner is committed to implementing the following goals and policies:

### **GOALS AND POLICIES**

#### **GOAL A**

*Establish objective procedures for assessing the readiness of the Town's utility systems to meet the impacts of a proposed development without degrading existing levels of service.*

#### **Policies**

- 8A-1** Considering the requirements set forth in the Comprehensive Water, Sewer, and Drainage Plans, the Directors of Planning, Wastewater Treatment Plant, and Public Works will recommend to the Town Council, for their adoption, appropriate levels of service for each utility. These levels of service should differentiate between residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural users.
- 8A-2** Assess the capacities of each utility annually and initiate utility plan revisions when projected demand approaches 85% of capacity.

- 8A-3** Document the demand placed on a given utility by a proposed development in a manner prescribed by the Town.
- 8A-4** The Finance Director and the Town Administrator should annually review general facility charges and hook-up fees to ensure that these charges/fees achieve cost recovery.

### **GOAL B**

*Integrate capital facility plans with projected capacity needs out to the year 2045.*

### **Policies**

- 8B-1** Conduct planning for utilities on a regional basis; detail planning and coordination with Skagit County, other governmental agencies and providers, and private providers.
- 8B-2** Review for revision the comprehensive utility plans of the various providers in the La Conner service area to define potential impacts on Town utilities and estimate capacity needs for the current planning horizon.
- 8B-3** Work directly with franchise holders to encourage planning and investment to meet capacity needs for the Town and the surrounding area.
- 8B-4** Maintain consistency between Comprehensive Plan land use and comprehensive utility/capital facility plans.

### **GOAL C**

*Promote joint use of transportation right-of-ways and utility corridors with private utility providers.*

### **Policies**

- 8C-1** Develop agreements with private utility providers and public agencies as required facilitating joint use of utility corridors and public right-of-ways.<sup>1</sup>
- 8C-2** Review applications and permit processes to ensure that all utilities affected by a proposal are reviewed in a single process.
- 8C-3** Locate utilities within public right-of-way whenever possible.
- 8C-4** Establish appropriate easements and agreements on private property as part of the permitting process.

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<sup>1</sup> These agreements will set forth standards for locating utilities in public rights of way, and they will, to the maximum extent feasible, locate utility lines so as not to adversely affect future expansion or upgrades of the right of way.

- 8C-5** Place antennas on existing towers, buildings, or other structures, where possible.

**GOAL D**

*Locate utility facilities in an environmentally sensitive manner.*

**Policies**

- 8D-1** Ensure utility providers avoid placing facilities in areas defined as environmentally sensitive or critical areas unless there are no feasible alternatives and only after a site assessment and mitigation plan has been approved under the provisions of the critical areas ordinance.
- 8D-2** Ensure utility providers use construction and design standards that are environmentally sensitive, safe, cost-effective, and consistent with best management practices.

**GOAL E**

*Install underground utilities where possible.*

**Policies**

- 8E-1** Encourage utility providers to install utility lines underground.
- 8E-2** Use “local improvement districts” as a means to finance the undergrounding of utilities, if undergrounding of the existing overhead utilities is desired and is technically feasible.
- 8E-3** Include provisions to install emergency shut-offs for underground utilities in the event of disasters.

**GOAL F**

*Encourage conservation of water and energy.*

**Policies**

- 8F-1** Conduct a public education program to promote conservation of water and energy in conjunction with the required annual consumer confidence report.
- 8F-2** Maintain an aggressive water leak detection program, utilizing outside technical assistance where necessary.
- 8F-3** Consider pricing structures that encourage conservation and usage reduction.

- 8F-4** Support electric and natural gas utility providers that conduct energy conservation programs for customers.
- 8F-5** Be a leader by example to the public by making every effort to reduce water and energy consumption in government facilities.
- 8F-6** Adopt development codes that are receptive to new ideas and technologies for reducing water and energy consumption.
- 8F-7** Adopt water conservation goals in accordance with Washington State's 2007 Water Use Efficiency Rule.

## **Water**

### **GOAL G**

*Deliver a safe and reliable supply of potable water to all customers within the service area.*

### **Policies**

- 8G-1** Maintain a close working relationship with the Anacortes Public Works Department in order to ensure high water quality and adequate supply.
- 8G-2** Inspect the Town's water tank on a regular basis for structural integrity and cleanliness.
- 8G-3** Maintain a system for users to report problems with the water system and to document action taken.

### **GOAL H**

*Reduce unaccounted-for water to less than American Water Works Association (AWWA) standards.*

### **Policies**

- 8H-1** Conduct a public relations program to remind customers to report inordinately high water bills and obvious leaks.
- 8H-2** Conduct monthly reconciliation between water purchased and water billed.
- 8H-3** Obtain professional assistance, when deemed necessary, to trace and repair water system leaks.

### **GOAL I**



*Plan for capital improvements that will ensure that the urban level of service standards for water, as outlined in the Skagit County Coordinated Water System Plan, are met.*

### **Policies**

- 8I-1** Implement the list of capital improvements shown in the Water Comprehensive Plan.
- 8I-2** Update the Capital Facilities Plan per the 6-year plan cycle to include those items listed in the Water Comprehensive Plan.
- 8I-3** Assess the funding necessary to meet the capital improvements and conduct a trade-off analysis of borrowing vs. rate-based financing annually.
- 8I-4** Work with entities within the service area but outside the corporate limits, such as the Skagit Beach Homeowners' Association, to improve fire flow in that area.
- 8I-5** Assess rate parity among categories of water users in conjunction with updating of the Comprehensive Water System Plan.

### **GOAL J**

*Ensure that fire flow capacities are met throughout the town.*

### **Policies**

- 8J-1** Complete the list of fire flow improvements outlined in the Water Comprehensive Plan.
- 8J-2** Establish a program for periodic testing of fire hydrants.
- 8J-3** Coordinate with Public Works to ensure that out-of-date fire hydrants are replaced when funds are available, and that adaptors for all fire hydrants are available.

### **GOAL K**

*Investigate the feasibility of an alternate source of potable water.*

### **Policies**

- 8K-1** Investigate with Skagit County Public Utility District the costs and legalities involved in installing an intertie from the Fire Station east along Chilberg Road to Hulbert Road.

**8K-2** Coordinate with other purveyors of water and participate in wheeling of water when necessary.

### **Sewer**

#### **GOAL L**

*Update the wastewater treatment plant with the latest technology and equipment.*

#### **Policies**

**8L-1** Implement the list of improvements scheduled in the Wastewater Comprehensive Plan.

**8L-2** Plan for financing capital improvements to the year 2045.

**8L-3** Participate in Association of Washington Cities (AWC), Washington Cities Insurance Authority (WCIA), and American Water Works Association (AWWA) programs to stay abreast of new industry standards and new technologies in wastewater treatment, as well as litigation affecting wastewater services.

#### **GOAL M**

*Eliminate inflow and infiltration (I&I) as much as possible.*

#### **Policies**

**8M-1** Evaluate water usage vs wastewater treatment for in-town usages to estimate I&I.

**8M-2** Analyze current video inspections and conduct new video inspections of sewer mains and major collectors to determine the appropriate I & I program approach.

**8M-3** Budget sufficient resources for replacement or repair of leaking collection system components.

#### **GOAL N**

*Implement the provisions of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) for controlling the effluent volume and strengths from external industrial users.*

### **Stormwater Drainage**

**GOAL O**

*Implement the provisions of the ~~2017~~ 2007 Stormwater Management Plan.*

**Policies**

- 8O-1** Update regularly the engineering and financial planning required to achieve the improvements identified within the ~~2017~~ 2007 plan that are applicable during the ~~2045~~ 36 planning horizon.
- 8O-2** Seek financial assistance through Skagit County and through the Public Works Trust Fund.
- 8O-3** Incorporate provisions of the ~~2017~~ 2007 Stormwater Management Plan as necessary in the annual update of the Capital Facilities Plan.

**GOAL P**

*Seek non-structural solutions to drainage problems.*

**Policies**

- 8P-1** Encourage new development to reduce impervious surfaces to a minimum.
- 8P-2** Recognizing the limitations on those properties within the 100-year floodplain, encourage all property owners to install on-site retention systems where feasible.
- 8P-3** Do not allow adverse impacts of new development storm water runoff to neighboring properties.

**GOAL Q**

*Eliminate the discharge of untreated stormwater not exempted from the Stormwater Management sections of the Uniform Development Code (UDC) into the Swinomish Channel.*

**Policies**

- 8Q-2** Require oil separators on discharges that cannot be connected to the Phase I system.
- 8Q-3** Enlarge and improve the biofiltration system installed at the Sullivan Slough site in order to accommodate all of the flows from the Town.
- 8Q-4** Monitor and enforce stormwater treatment standards and system maintenance for independent systems (i.e. Port of Skagit County and La Conner School District).

- 8Q-5** Pursue grants and low-interest funding through Federal, State and county programs for salmon recovery, clean water act, and county sales tax rebates.

### **Private Utilities**

#### **GOAL R**

*Coordinate with all private utility providers to ensure that service capacities will accommodate growth to the year 2045<sup>36</sup> and that these capacities will be in place at time of occupancy.*

#### **Policies**

- 8R-1** Involve private utility providers in the updates of the Comprehensive Plan by requesting their comments before adoption by the Town Council.
- 8R-2** Participate in regional planning programs sponsored by the major utility providers and by Skagit County.
- 8R-3** Invite utility providers to participate in pre-construction meetings.
- 8R-4** Keep utility providers up to date on the Town's Capital Facilities Plan and describe the impacts that will be felt by these utilities.
- 8R-5** Ensure, through a checklist, that all utility services are on site and available for use prior to approving the certificate of authorization.

#### **GOAL S**

*Work with private utility providers to deliver economical and environmentally sensitive services to the people and businesses of La Conner.*

#### **Policies**

- 8S-1** Grant franchises that reflect the market rate for use of town right-of-ways or public properties.

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## APPENDIX 8A

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### INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

#### Water

**Overview:** The La Conner water system is connected to the City of Anacortes' transmission main in a vault located immediately west of the intersection of La Conner-Whitney Road and Young Road (approximately four miles north of town). The City of Anacortes has historically been the sole purveyor of water to the Town, commencing in the 1920's. The Town of La Conner has no ground water used for public water supplies. Under the Skagit County Coordinated Water System Plan, the City of Anacortes is a senior water rights holder for Skagit River water withdrawal. The Town's most recent contract amendment with Anacortes was signed in 2017 and provides for annual updates of water allocation, fixed, variable, debt service and capital charges. The Town has regularly participated in the system review and cost allocation sponsored by the City of Anacortes, normally every three years. The Anacortes water is fluoridated. However, the Town of La Conner's water is chlorinated, not fluoridated.

The La Conner water system extends from the Farmhouse Inn at SR 20, along La Conner-Whitney Rd. to La Conner, and provides water to the Skagit Beach community as well as wholesale water to Shelter Bay community. Our system has 20.9 miles of piping ranging from 1½-inches to 16 inches in diameter. We have a 1.5-million-gallon reservoir which provides fire protection, pressure balancing and up to 3 days of water supply under normal conditions in the event of a disruption of water from Anacortes.

**Service area:** The Skagit County Coordinated Water System Plan designated the Town of La Conner as water purveyor for the Town proper, Shelter Bay (bulk customer), and the rural area between the Swinomish Channel and La Conner-Whitney Road, north to the Farmhouse Inn and the Shell convenience store at Highway 20. This includes:

- The Skagit Beach plats, but does not include the Telegraph Slough area. On the east side of La Conner-Whitney Road the service area includes the West one half of Sections 8, 17, and 20 in Township 35 N, Range 3 E, W.M.
- The McGlynn Island area south of town is not in the service area. Of the total 621 customers, 501 are in town and 119 are in the rural area, four of which are agricultural users with seasonal hydrant permits.
- The Shelter Bay Community, Inc. is counted as one customer; however they currently have approximately 900 hookups. Shelter Bay's population currently ranges from 1,800 to 2,000. They have an additional 56 lots to develop.

**Contractual agreements:** The contract with the City of Anacortes is amended with new fixed and variable rates on April 1 of each year. The current contract includes fixed operating costs of \$10,057.10 per month and Capital Costs/Regional System of \$12,588.87 per month.. The contract may be terminated with one-year notice. The contract with the Shelter Bay Community provides for annual rate setting, meter calibration, and also requires one-year notice to terminate. There is no contract with the Skagit Beach Homeowners' Association.

**Capacities:** The Town has a 20 year agreement with the City of Anacortes (2017-2036) for potable water supply of up to 162.0 million gallons per year. The Town has a Wholesale Agreement with the Shelter Bay Community for up to 75 million gallons per year. The Town storage tank is located on the north side of Pioneer Park and has a capacity of 1.5 million gallons and is adequate to provide the required 2 days of emergency supply. The reservoir provides fire-suppression and pressure balancing for the Town only. It was overhauled in 2001. The distribution lines are primarily trancite (asbestos cement), with ductile iron and C-900 being installed as replacements are needed. The high pressure transmission mains consist of one 8 inch and one 14 inch line coming from the Anacortes transmission vault at Young Road. The Skagit County Coordinated Water System Plan assigned the La Conner system ID no. 433500 under the State Department of Health, with unlimited Equivalent Residential Units (ERU's).

In 2018 the Town experienced significant breakages in the transmission mains in the section of pipes between Young Road and McClean/Downey Road. As a result, immediate repairs were necessary. The Town secured a loan to allow for the replacement of 7600 linear feet of the two transmission lines (14" and 8") with a 16" water main between Young Road and Mclean/Downey Road. This is the first phase of a planned three phase approach to replace the entire length of the distribution line. **Construction on this project is complete as of 2024.** ~~Construction is anticipated to be completed by December 2018.~~

**Debt:** In August of 2018 the Town financed a one million dollar loan for Phase One of the water line replacement project. The loan is for 20 years with payoff scheduled for June of 2038.

**Service Meter Record Annual Data Summary – Note: this data is outdated. Will be updated when staff regains access to the server drive.**

Location	Item Days/Year	Year Average 2014	Year Average 2015	Year Average 2016	3- Year Average 2014-2016
<b>Residential Town</b>	% of Total	12.4%	10.5%	11.2%	11.3%
	# of Accounts	324	324	328	325
	Total Use (CF/year)	1,956,631	2,005,339	1,918,494	1,960,155
	Average Day Use (gpd)	40,098	41,096	39,209	40,170
	Average Use (gpd/conn)	124	127	120	123
<b>Commercial Town</b>	Estimated ERU's	304	311	297	304
	% of Total	14.0%	11.2%	11.0%	12.0%
	# of Accounts	154	154	154	154
	Total Use (CF/year)	2,216,692	2,145,561	1,897,984	2,086,746
	Average Day Use (gpd)	45,427	43,969	38,789	42,764
<b>Irrigation Town</b>	Average Use (gpd/conn)	295	286	252	278
	Estimated ERU's	344	333	294	324
	% of Total	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
	# of Accounts	12	12	12	12
	Total Use (CF/year)	71,770	76,529	68,710	72,336
<b>Public Town</b>	Average Day Use (gpd)	1,471	1,568	1,404	1,482
	Average Use (gpd/conn)	123	131	117	124
	Estimated ERU's	11	12	11	11
	% of Total	2.8%	8.9%	1.6%	4.6%
	# of Accounts	23	22	24	23
<b>Residential County</b>	Total Use (CF/year)	448,078	1,697,724	279,417	808,406
	Average Day Use (gpd)	9,183	34,792	5,710	16,567
	Average Use (gpd/conn)	399	1,581	238	720
	Estimated ERU's	70	264	43	126
	% of Total	8.6%	7.7%	8.4%	8.2%
<b>Commercial County</b>	# of Accounts	118	118	119	118
	Total Use (CF/year)	1,355,622	1,481,233	1,442,081	1,426,312
	Average Day Use (gpd)	27,781	30,355	29,472	29,230
	Average Use (gpd/conn)	235	257	248	247
	Estimated ERU's	210	230	223	221
<b>Residential - Multi Town</b>	% of Total	6.9%	6.3%	6.9%	6.7%
	# of Accounts	9	9	9	9
	Total Use (CF/year)	108,765	120,654	119,364	116,261
	Average Day Use (gpd)	2,228	2,472	2,439	2,382
	Average Use (gpd/conn)	247	274	271	264
<b>Wholesale – Shelter Bay County</b>	Estimated ERU's	169	187	185	180
	% of Total	2.8%	2.5%	2.8%	2.7%
	# of Accounts	41	40	40	40
	Total Use (CF/year)	438,362	474,004	482,398	464,921
	Average Day Use (gpd)	8,983	9,714	9,859	9,528
<b>Agriculture County</b>	Average Use (gpd/conn)	219	243	246	236
	Estimated ERU's	68	74	75	72
	% of Total	44.9%	40.2%	46.1%	43.6%
	# of Accounts	1	1	1	1
	Total Use (CF/year)	709,247	770,312	793,242	757,600
<b>TOTALS</b>	Average Day Use (gpd)	145,347	157,861	162,116	155,256
	Average Use (gpd/conn)	145,347	157,861	162,116	155,256
	Estimated ERU's	1,101	1,196	1,228	1,176
	% of Total	7.1%	12.4%	11.5%	10.5%
	# of Accounts	7	8	8	8
<b>TOTALS</b>	Total Use (CF/year)	11,280,366	23,804,900	19,804,750	18,296,667
	Average Day Use (gpd)	23,117	48,784	40,475	37,496
	Average Use (gpd/conn)	3,302	6,098	5,059	4,891
	Estimated ERU's	175	370	307	284
	% of Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>TOTALS</b>	# of Accounts	689	688	695	691
	Total Use (CF/year)	15,795,320	19,170,546	17,195,625	17,387,164
	Average Day Use (gal)	323,696	392,865	351,430	356,318
	Estimated ERU's	2,452	2,976	2,662	2,699



CF = Cubic Feet, gpd = gallons per day ERU =132 ADD-gpd
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### **Sewer**

**Overview:** The La Conner wastewater treatment plant is a regional plant. The plant is owned and operated by the Town of La Conner, but the Town is obligated under a contract with the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community that confers certain rights to the Tribe. It may serve a future role in development near the Town, i.e. areas such as Pleasant Ridge and Landing Road. The Town will continue coordination with the Skagit County Planning Department with regard to these areas.

The plant sits on a 9.5-acre tract east of the Town limits on land leased long-term from the Port of Skagit County. Co-location of the treatment plant with the fire plus the installation of a biofiltration swale for stormwater treatment, limit the amount of space available for future growth of the treatment plant.

**History:** Prior to 1976 the residents and businesses of La Conner utilized septic systems and, in some cases, discharged raw sewage into the Swinomish Channel. Using a federal grant for the treatment plant and a bond issue for the collector and interceptor systems, the town built a plant with a capacity of 225,600 gallons per day, with BOD at 574 pounds per day, and TSS at 470 pounds per day. The Indian Health Service contributed \$20,490 for the right to deliver wastewater from the Swinomish Village. In 1984, the Town and the Tribe signed an agreement, which documented the Tribe's allocation at 38,352 gpd and prescribed a "fair share formula" for pricing along with a procedure for arbitrating disputes. In 1993, the Town and the Tribe signed an agreement to expand the plant, and by December 1995, the Tribe had paid \$300,000 to purchase an additional 31,700 gpd, making their total 70,052 gpd. Skagit County Sewer District #1 contributed \$144,500 of the Tribe's share in order to hook-up the Shorewood, Snee-Oosh, Sunnyslope and Reef Point Lane plats. In May 1996 a Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and the Tribe awarded the Tribe an additional 32,300 gpd at no cost, making the Tribe's allocation 102,352 gpd. On December 28, 1997, the Town and the Tribe signed an agreement that superseded the 1993 agreement. This agreement provided for a major expansion of the treatment plant capacity and revised allocations as shown below:

### **Capacities:**

	<b>Plant*</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Tribe</b>
Capacity gpd MMADF	520,000	345,000	175,000
Capacity gpd AADF	409,800	272,000	137,800
BOD pounds/day at MMADF	1,300	860	440
TSS pounds/day at MMADF	1,100	730	370

\* The MMADF, BOD and TSS limits were approved by the Department of Ecology in its NPDES dated February 1, 2023. It is due to be renewed February 1, 2028.



**Service area:** In 1976, the service area was defined as the corporate limits of the Town of La Conner plus the Swinomish Village. Prior to that time the Shelter Bay developer was granted permission to build his own treatment facility, which has never been part of the regional system. Under the 1997 agreement with the Tribe, the Town is obligated to provide wastewater treatment services for the entire Swinomish Indian Reservation. In January 2005, however, the Town supported the Tribe's application for a grant to build a separate wastewater treatment plant near the northern boundary of the reservation. Any service area expansion to the north or east of Town will be subject to the planning criteria and development regulations adopted by Skagit County. Any allocation or sale of excess capacity in these areas will be subject to a first right of refusal by the Swinomish Tribe, as set forth in the 1997 agreement.

**Usage Data (metered flow to wastewater treatment):** Note: this data is outdated. Will be updated when staff regains access to the server drive.

	2007	2010	2015	2016	2017
Total flow (gal.)	93,900,146	107,770,259	127,450,846	129,301,549	116,921,254
Average gpd	257,261	295,261	349,180	354,251	320,332
Tribe (gal)	27,066,837	28,409,371	22,257,146	31,199,651	27,546,783
Town (gal)	66,833,309	79,360,888	105,193,700	106,101,898	89,374,471
Outside waste (gal)	3,672,025	6,425,258	7,342,619	8,262,833	7,791,817
BOD load (lbs)	243,552	190,545	348,642	274,982	224,275
O&M cost	\$397,196	\$431,517	\$563,789	\$314,431	\$355,337

**Customer Classifications (Billed Sewer Usage):** (2017 data) Note: this data is outdated. Will be updated when staff regains access to the server drive.

Classification	Number	Volume (cf)	% of Total
Residential	365	2,042,550	24.9%
Commercial	129	1,687,289	20.6%
Schools	7	61,109	0.7%
Town Facilities	10	110,878	1.4%
Port	14	343,200	4.2%
Tribe	1 (420)	3,964,085	48.2%
Total		8,209,111	

**Inflow and Infiltration<sup>2</sup> (I&I):** Using the two tables above, the amount of unbilled wastewater can be estimated. It can be assumed that the majority of this wastewater is likely from “inflow and infiltration”.

The above Customer Classification table for 2017 shows that total billed volume at the treatment plant was 8,209,111 cubic feet. The Tribe's volume was 3,964,085 cubic feet, therefore the volume from Town was 4,245,026 cubic feet.

<sup>2</sup> **Inflow** is wastewater from other than sanitary sewer sources, such as roof drains hooked into the sewer lines. **Infiltration** is ground water from cracks in the interceptors, collectors, or sewer mains.

By multiplying the Town billed water usage by 7.48 (gallons per cubic foot), the amount of wastewater generated from known Town sources is 31,752,794 gallons.

The Usage Data chart shows that in 2017 the total wastewater flow from the Town was 89,374,471 gallons. The metered water usage from the Town minus the waste flow attributed to the Town should indicate an I&I estimate for the Town. The difference is 57,621,677 gallons. This equals 64% of Town flow.

I&I has been an issue for the Town and continues to be a growing issue. Excessive I&I has several negative results; the ratio for cost sharing with the Tribe is affected; energy and treatment resources are used unnecessarily, and O&M costs are higher. This problem should be reviewed and analyzed further by Town administration and sewer plant management to identify the sources of the unbilled wastewater.

**Debt:** None

**Composting:** In 1996, after touring a number of municipal wastewater treatment plants, the Town began investing in a composting program as an alternative to commercial sludge disposal and land application. The demand for septage processing has increased over the years, and the Town has found this to be an excellent source of revenue, while eliminating the sludge disposal problem. Combined with this program is the sale of compost punch cards for individuals who wish to dispose of green waste and obtain finished compost product. The Town also sells compost product directly to soils retailers and commercial landscapers. This enterprise is separate from the 1997 agreement with the Swinomish Tribe.

### **Stormwater Drainage**

**History:** Cedar box drains were used in the past to provide a rudimentary drainage system in certain portions of the Town. These systems have now failed. Community surveys have indicated that the highest priority for the citizens is to solve the drainage problems. In 1991 the Town obtained an FCAAP grant for a study to determine the best way to approach stormwater management. Public hearings were held, and the Town Council decided on a 25-year flood event as the basis for planning. Sturdy Engineers, Inc. was retained to do the study, and they produced a three phase plan that would provide in Phase I drainage for Morris Street and the north end. Phase II would provide drainage in the areas east of the hill and along Maple Avenue. Phase III would provide drainage to the south end and eliminate the pump station that currently pumps stormwater into the Swinomish Channel.

**Current Status:** Phase I was implemented with the Morris Street improvement project in 2003 and **was** will be completed with lateral extensions north of Center Street in summer 2005. This involved the construction of a large subterranean pump station at Sixth and Morris to collect all of the stormwater on Morris and Center Streets, and convey it approximately 0.7 mile east to settling and

infiltration ponds located south of the Public Works compound at Sullivan Slough. Stormwater from the north end of town no longer discharges into the Swinomish Channel. Another component of Phase I of this system consists of two ponds. One pond serves as a settling pond for incoming stormwater, and the second pond is an infiltration/evaporation pond. Phase II entails constructing a 4.8 acre wetland and outfall to Sullivan Slough.

### **Capacities:**

Sixth & Morris pump vault 3,500 gallons per hour/pump

This storm water pump station has 2 pumps that pump at 3,500 GPM each. Normal operating capacity is 3,500 GPM with one pump, but has the capacity of 7,000 GPM with both pumps running.

Second and Caledonia pump station 1,320 gallons per hour Capacity varies

The Caledonia Pump Station has four pumps. Two of these are High Flow pumps with one pump capacity of 2,400 GPM and the other pump capacity at 1,600 GPM. The total High Flow total capacity is 4,000 GPM. The other two Water Quality pumps have a capacity of 900 GPM each, for 1,800 GPM total. The total capacity with all four pumps is 5,800 GPM.

### **Future Needs:**

1. Funding to complete projects identified in the 2017 2007 plan within the planning horizon.
2. Coordination with the Port of Skagit County to better control parking lot and maintenance yard run off.
3. Improved public relations programs to keep the ratepayers abreast of progress and enhance their support of the fees required to finance these improvements in the future.

**Debt:** In 2018 the Town made its final payment on its Public Works Trust Fund loan.

### **Private Utility Providers**

**Natural Gas:** Cascade Natural Gas in 2024 is the natural gas service provider in the Town of La Conner. The company has adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of the Town over the next 20 years, and it does not envision any major expansion of service in the areas around La Conner. In 2003, Cascade Natural Gas extended service across the Swinomish Channel by directional bore drilling beneath the channel following the old Morris Street bridge right-of-way.

**Electric Power:** Puget Sound Energy in 2024 is the electrical service provider in the Town of La Conner. PSE engineers have upgraded the reliability of the substation at the corner of La Conner-Whitney Road and McLean Rd., as well as improving the stability of the lines along McLean Rd. into Mount Vernon so that

power failures in the Town have been greatly reduced. PSE has the capacity to serve the projected needs of La Conner for the next 20 years.

Telecommunications:

- a. Telephone: Historically people's telephone service has been primarily land lines to their homes. With the advent of cell phones and more recently smart phones more and more people are served with wireless phone service only. A 2017 survey by the Center for Health Statistics indicates that nationwide almost 54% of households are served only by wireless telephone service. This goes up to 57% in the western US and to 70% for people between 23 and 34 years of age.

Individuals have numerous choices when it comes to service providers for wireless telephones and internet.

- b. Fiber Optic: The Port of Skagit in conjunction with other County entities is working to provide fiber optic connections from Anacortes to Concrete.
- c. Cable TV: WAVE Broadband Telecommunications holds a franchise with the Town of La Conner and delivers a wide range of telecommunications services, including wireless support. The company sees no problems in meeting the needs of the people and businesses of La Conner for telecommunications services over the next 20 years.

Trash Disposal: Waste Management, Inc. provides weekly trash pick-up throughout the Town. This firm has indicated no problems, which would detract from their service over the next 20 years.