Existing Code	Key Updates
General	
General Provisions. None.	**General Provisions:** Improve and streamline the permitting process for low-impact projects such as small expansions to a single-family home or some types of small businesses. Ideas including developing exemptions for small residential expansions, a fee-in-lieu or standardized planting requirements for small riparian impacts/mitigations. ***Effect of Change:*** Improved/streamlined City permitting process.
Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCAs)	
Definition: "Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas" include habitat for endangered, threatened and sensitive species; priority habitats and areas associated with priority species, riparian management areas, habitats of local importance, and water bodies. (VMC 20.150.040B)	**Definition:** Update definition of FWHCAs to be consistent with State's definition by including forage fish spawning areas, naturally occurring ponds under 20 acres, waters of the state, natural area preserves, natural resource conservation areas, and state wildlife areas. ***Effect of Change:*** Potentially increased habitat areas protected as FWHCAs.
Designation & Management Recommendations: FHWCAs designations include for federally and state listed species including state or federally designated endangered, threatened, or sensitive, priority habitats/species, water bodies, habitats of local importance (none designated), riparian management areas and buffers. (VMC 20.740.110{A]).	**Designation & Management Recommendations**: Update language to address and include changes in species listings and management recommendations for listed species as changes occur in the future. ***Effect of Change:*** Adding flexibility to the code to accommodate frequent updates to species listings and species protections recommendations.
Development Standards (Anadromous Fish): FHWCAs have performance standards for: regulating development or clearing activities; ensuring no net loss of FHWCA function; and specific measures for riparian buffers (VMC 20.740.110[C]).	**Development Standards (Anadromous Fish):** Add specific measures to preserve or enhance anadromous fish for riparian areas and aquatic habitats based on State recommendations. For example, measures could be added for habitat protection measures such as stream flow, water quality and temperature, spawning substrates, migratory access, and/or maintenance of salmon prey species. ***Effect of Change:*** Improved habitat functions and conditions for anadromous fish, like salmon.
Development Standards (Buffers): Established riparian buffer widths are determined by type of stream (fish bearing vs non fish bearing and perennial vs annual) and the intensity of the adjacent land use. Total habitat areas range from 25 feet for small, disconnected Type N streams to 175 feet (Type S, F, large N streams) to VMC 20.740.110.	**Development Standards (Buffers):** Adjust riparian buffers to address BAS and focus on preservation of high-functioning areas and incentivizing restoration. Establish a three-tiered review system: (1) accept code-specified buffer widths (2) use State-recommended buffer widths if different than the code or (3) conduct a site-specific habitat study to establish a customized buffer width where existing conditions dictate. Buffer width options include: (1) keeping existing habitat widths (2) using SPTH recommended habitat widths or (3) average habitat widths along streams for consistency or (3) develop hybrid buffers that consider BAS but deviate for specific circumstances. Option 2-3 likely to result in larger buffers of 200-250 feet, but with functional isolation provision to recognize existing development. ***Effect of Change:*** Change of riparian buffer widths resulting in a change of riparian areas protected; likely increased widths.
Frequently Flooded Areas	
Definitions: "Frequently flooded areas" are areas of special flood hazards. VMC 20.150.040B.	**Definitions:** Updating definitions for floodplain/special flood hazard areas per Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations. ***Effect of Change****:* Updated regulations to remain FEMA compliant.
Administration: Floodplain administrator designated to administer, implement, and enforce floodplains and includes a list of duties and responsibility of the floodplain administrator. VMC 20.150.040(H).	**Administration:** Updated development review procedures for variance to allow historic structures in the floodplain. ***Effect of Change:*** Increased allowance for historic structures in floodplains.
Development Standards: Additional critical area report requirements, which includes base flood elevations; location of the channel migration zone; description of strategies to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts; and certification, documentation, and demonstration by a qualified professional to support "no rise" (VMC 20.740.120[I]).	**Development Standards:** Require or encourage consideration of future conditions (climate change) for base flood elevations and reference available guidance for these future conditions. ***Effect of Change:*** Account and plan for increased flooding events caused by climate change. Where data is available, increased flood hazard areas.
Geologic Hazard Areas	
Definitions: "Geologic hazard areas" include landslide, seismic, and erosion hazard areas as designated (VMC 20.150.040B). "Landslide hazard areas" are potential landslide areas that are identified as slopes greater than 25% and/or areas of historic or active landslides, potential instability, or older landslide debris (VMC 20.740.130[A][1]). "Seismic hazard areas" include liquefaction or dynamic settlement, ground shaking amplification, and fault rupture hazard areas (VMC 20.740.130[A][1]).	**Definitions:** Update definitions of "geologically hazardous areas", "landslide hazards", "erosion hazard", and "seismic hazard" consistent with State definitions. Update "geologically hazardous areas" definition to include areas that are susceptible to other geological events and are not suited for the siting of commercial, residential, or industrial development consistent with public health and safety concerns.

"Erosion hazard areas" include soil erosion and bank erosion hazard areas. VMC 20.150.040B and VMC 20.740.130(A)(1-3).	Update definition of "landslide hazards" to include areas delineated by various federal and state agencies, includes areas of slopes greater than 15 percent, and other historical and current site indicators. Update definition of "seismic hazard" to include areas that are a severe risk of damage from ground shaking by an earthquake, slope failure, settle or subsidence, surface faulting, or tsunamis. This also includes areas with a historical record of earthquake damage. Update definition of "erosion hazard" to include areas that are likely to become unstable, such as steep slopes, bluffs, and areas with unstable soils. ***Effect of Change(s):*** Likely no effect since geotechnical reports assess the risk of geologic hazard.
Development Standards: None.	**Development Standards:** Include provisions to restrict development of critical facilities in hazard zones. Example facilities include wastewater treatment plants and emergency services. ***Effect of Change*:** Reducing public risks and hazards by prohibiting essential facilities in hazard areas.
Development Standards: Performance standards listed for development in landslide, soil erosion, and bank erosion hazard areas. VMC 20.740.130(C)	**Development Standards:** Include Best Management Practices (BMPs) for landslide hazard areas and erosion hazard areas. If applicants apply these, they can avoid filing a critical areas report. BMPs for areas *only* mapped with erosion hazard areas (cannot also contain mapped landslide hazards) are to implement the BMPs for example: • Erosion prevention (surface roughening, vegetation, mulch, and erosion blankets); • Perimeter control (silt fences, bio-filter bags and fiber rolls, undisturbed vegetative buffers, storm drain inlet protection, and inlet inserts); and • Stormwater control (dikes and swales, check dams, pipe slope drain, stormwater barriers, and sediment traps and ponds). ***Effect of Change*:** Improving/streamlining the permitting process and standardizing development requirements and practices in these hazard areas.
Development Standards: Performance measures include requirements such as plans for revegetation and landscape maintenance; clearing, grading, uprooting, other soil impairment actions; drainage; and bank stabilization. VMC 20.740.130(C)	**Development Standards:** Add language to require erosion mitigation work to be performed by a certified erosion and sediment control lead in accordance with Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) requirements. ***Effect of Change*:** Increasing confidence that erosion mitigation work is to State standards.
Development Standards: Special performance measures are provided for seismic hazard areas such as complying with the building and construction requirements of VMC Title 17 and fault rupture hazard area requirements. VMC 20.740.130(C)(2).	**Development Standards:** Update seismic hazard areas to implement soft-story seismic retrofit ordinance (a type of earthquake retrofitting) to address potential risks and mitigate earthquake-related structural damage. ***Effect of Change*:** Allow/encourage retrofitting to reduce earthquake-related structural impacts.
Designations: Not addressed in existing code.	**Designations:** Seismic shaking hazards designations should be updated to include areas of moderate to high risk and above. Designate erosion hazard areas as "severe" and "very severe" erosion hazards as mapped by NRCS. ***Effect of Change*:** Decreased areas protected as geologically hazardous areas.
Wetlands	
Development Regulations: Wetland ratings per Ecology's wetland rating system, Washington State Wetland Rating System for Western Washington – 2014 update [VMC 20.740.140[A][2]. Wetland buffers are established by wetland rating and adjacent intensity of land use using outdated Ecology guidance. VMC 20.740.140(C)(1)(b). Compensatory mitigation methods for impacts to wetlands are listed including creation, reestablishment, rehabilitation, and enhancement; type and location of mitigation; mitigation ratios; and mitigation banks. VMC 20.740.140(C)(2).	**Development regulations:** Updates to wetland buffers and wetland mitigation methods per new Ecology guidance. Wetland buffer options are: (1) regulate by category and quality, and habitat score. and adjacent land use with required minimization techniques and a habitat corridor (2) regulate by category and habitat score (3) regulate by category only. Update to include a mitigation priority sequence. ***Effect of Change*:** Change in the width of wetland buffers and priority of mitigation methods to emphasize banks.

General: Wetland regulations include:
• Definition and designation of wetlands
• Wetland regulations do not address climate change,
• Habitat corridor requirements for buffer width reductions,
• Example minimization measures (Table 20.740.140-7),
• No exemption guidance for small wetlands. VMC 20.740.140.
	General: Include additional provisions per the updated Ecology guidance such as:
	• Amended definition and designation of "wetlands"
	  • Wetlands are subject to a local government's regulatory authority if they meet the definition of wetlands in RCW 36-70A030(31). This includes non-federally regulated wetlands (sometimes referred to as isolated wetlands). The GMA requires local governments to designate and protect wetlands and grants them the authority to do so—regardless of federal jurisdiction.
	• Role of wetland functions in mitigating climate change,
	  • Wetlands and their buffers are important in sequestering carbon and help to mitigate climate change

	• Clarified habitat corridor requirements,
	  • Corridor should have a minimum width of 100' and connect wetlands that score 6 or more habitat points to other important protected areas.
	• Updated and expanded minimization measures,
	  • Including minimizing disturbances from lights, noise, toxic runoff, stormwater runoff, pets and human disturbances, and dust during construction.
	• Clarified geographic scope of exemption guidance for small wetlands.
	***Effect of Change(s)*:** Updated definitions for State compliance, establishing wetlands as a means of combatting climate change, adding clarity to habitat corridor requirements and minimization measures when developing next to a wetland and wetland buffer, and exempting certain small wetlands from permitting.

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas	
Designations: CARAs are designated as areas within the boundary of the City of Vancouver and includes special protection areas (properties within 1,900 feet of any municipal wellhead). VMC 14.26.115(B).	**Designations:** Use standard CARA designations including wellhead protection areas (Group A and Group B), sole source aquifers, susceptible groundwater management areas, special protection areas, moderately or highly vulnerable/susceptible aquifer recharge areas. ***Effect of Change*:** More specifically including Group B wells and vulnerable and susceptible areas protected as CARAs.
Mapping: See above.	**Mapping:** CARA designations should be updated to include mapping provided by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) for Group A wells and Clark County for Group B wells. ***Effect of Change:*** Updated mapping to protect wellheads.
Critical Areas Report Requirement: None.	**Critical Areas Report Requirement:** CARAs regulations shall include critical areas report requirements which would require CARA hydrogeological assessments in circumstances where necessary. Level 1 hydrogeological assessments required when proposing non-exempt development that would comply with BMP requirements. Hazardous materials and non-standard BMPs require a Level 2 report. ***Effect of Change(s)*:** Adding requirements to adequately assess impacts to CARAs from a proposed use and also streamlining activities that comply with BMPs.
Exemptions: Special exemptions to the requirements of the code chapter are listed, which include stormwater permit procedural requirements and city processes. VMC 14.26.155.	**Exemptions:** Include adequate exemptions for certain uses and activities occurring within CARAs, such as existing development, single-family residential building permits, single and multifamily development connected to public sewers, developments for which a prior hydrogeological assessment was completed. ***Effect of Change*:** Streamlining the review process for low-impact development.
Administration: Current code chapter for CARAs regulations. VMC Chapter 14.26.	**Administration:** Relocate CARA regulations to VMC Chapter 20.740 (Critical Areas Protection). Responsible administrator changes from Water and Sewer Department (Engineering) to Planning Official. ***Effect of Change*:** Better integration with land use review procedures.