

# The GMA & Comprehensive Plans:

Getting your Periodic Update Started Right

SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

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GROWTH MANAGEMENT SERVICES



Washington State  
Department of  
**Commerce**

# We strengthen communities



HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS



INFRASTRUCTURE AND BROADBAND



SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE



ENERGY



PLANNING AND TECH ASSISTANCE



COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES



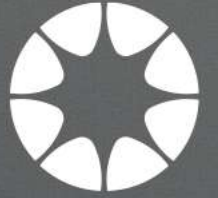
CRIME VICTIMS AND PUBLIC SAFETY



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Our Agenda:

- Why We Plan
- Growth Management Act (GMA)
- Comprehensive Plan
- 2025 Periodic Update & Process
- New Legislation
- Planning Resources
- Q & A



Washington State  
Department of  
**Commerce**

# Why do we Plan?

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- Land use decisions have long-term effects.
- Many individuals and groups must work together.
- Accomplishing your goals requires persistent effort.
- Infrastructure has long lead times and long payback periods.
- The public expects fairness and transparency.

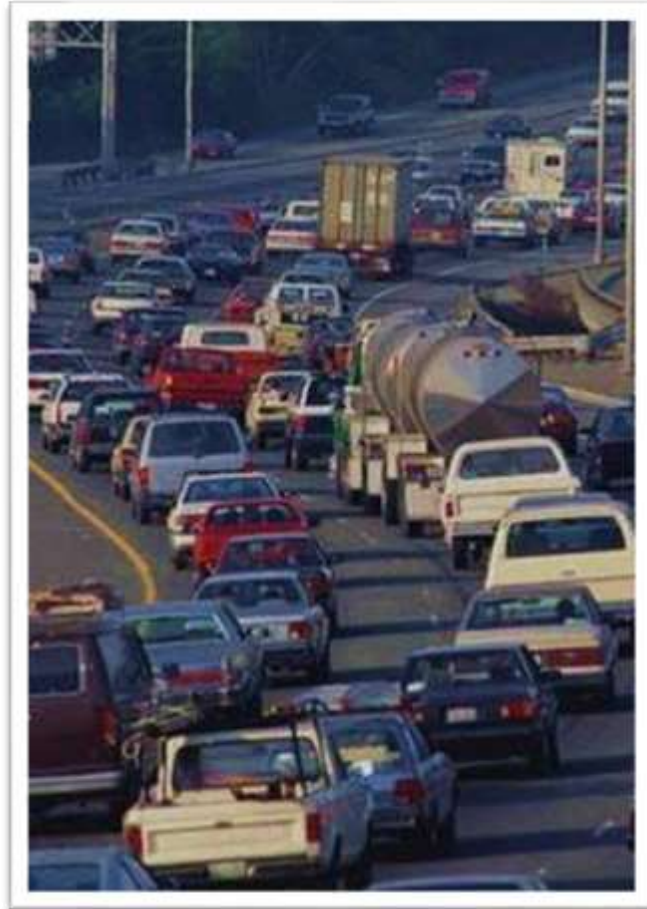
# The Growth Management Act

(a.k.a. The GMA)



# The GMA

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## Adopted in 1990 to:

- Address urban sprawl
  - Manage threats to quality of life in WA
  - Establish statewide planning framework
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See **RCW 36.70A** (state law) & **WAC 365-196** (advisory recommendations)

# GMA Planning Goals (RCW 36.70A.020)

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1. **Urban growth**
  2. **Reduce sprawl**
  3. **Transportation**
  4. **Housing**
  5. **Economic development**
  6. **Property rights**
  7. **Permits**
  8. **Natural resource industries**
  9. **Open space & recreation**
  10. **Environment**
  11. **Citizen participation**
  12. **Public facilities & services**
  13. **Historic preservation**
  14. **Climate change & resiliency**
  15. **Shorelines of the state**
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# Commerce's Role in Local Planning

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- Primary state agency contact for GMA-related issues
- Provide technical assistance
- Administer Grants
- Help ensure plans, policies, and regulations are GMA compliant
- Write comment letters
- Not a regulatory agency





# The Comprehensive Plan

(a.k.a. Comp Plan)



# What Makes a Good Plan?

## Disciplined Imagination

### Realistic:

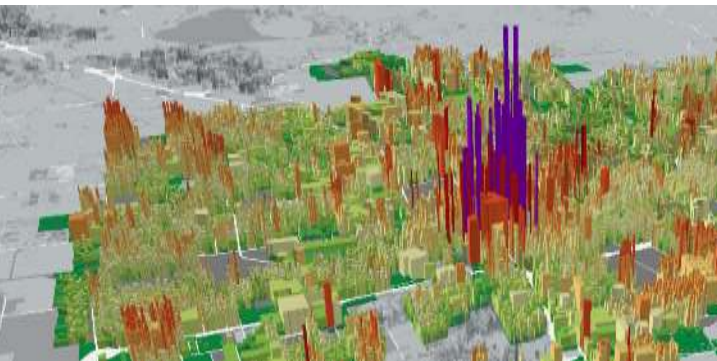
- Forecast
- Inventory
- Analysis

### Compelling:

- **Vision**
- Goals and policies

### Specific:

- Level of service
- Performance measures
- Implementation plan
- Projects



# Required Elements of a Comp Plan

**Land Use:** Land uses, stormwater planning, ground water, physical activity

**Housing:** Identifies the character of residential areas, inventories existing and projected housing needs and types, identifies sufficient land for all types of housing

**Capital Facilities:** Inventory, assessment of current and future needs, coordination of planning affordability analysis of serving the land use plan

**RCW 36.70A.070 & WAC 365-196-400**



# Required Elements of a Comp Plan

**Utilities:** Inventory, assessment of current and future needs, coordination between providers and land development

**Rural (counties only):** Protect rural character with limited development and a variety of rural densities

**Transportation:** Inventory, assessment of current and future needs, bicycle and pedestrian component

**Climate Resilience:** Must enhance resiliency to and avoid the adverse impacts of climate change

**RCW 36.70A.070 & WAC 365-196-400**



# Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs)

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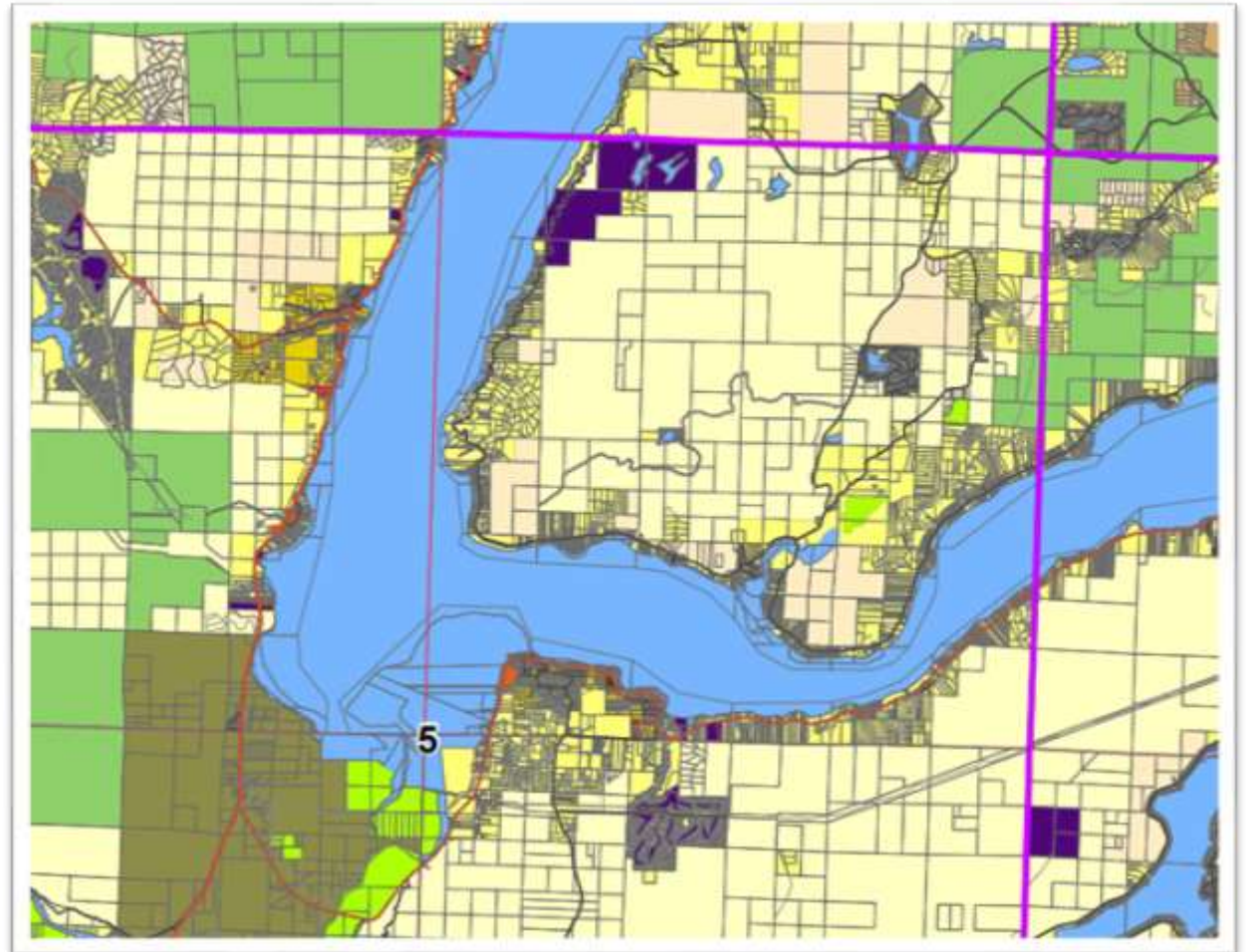
## Examples:

- Plan for future growth and address countywide population **and housing need** projections from the state.
- Designate and plan for UGAs and expansions to designated urban areas
- Plan for countywide facilities (e.g. highways or airports)
- Consider affordable housing needs
- Plan for countywide economic development

# Development regulations

- Traditional zoning**
- Critical area regulations**
- Subdivision regulations**
- Public works standards**
- Design standards**
- Other regulations**

*Clip of Mason County  
Development Areas Map*



# Mandatory Consistency & Coordination

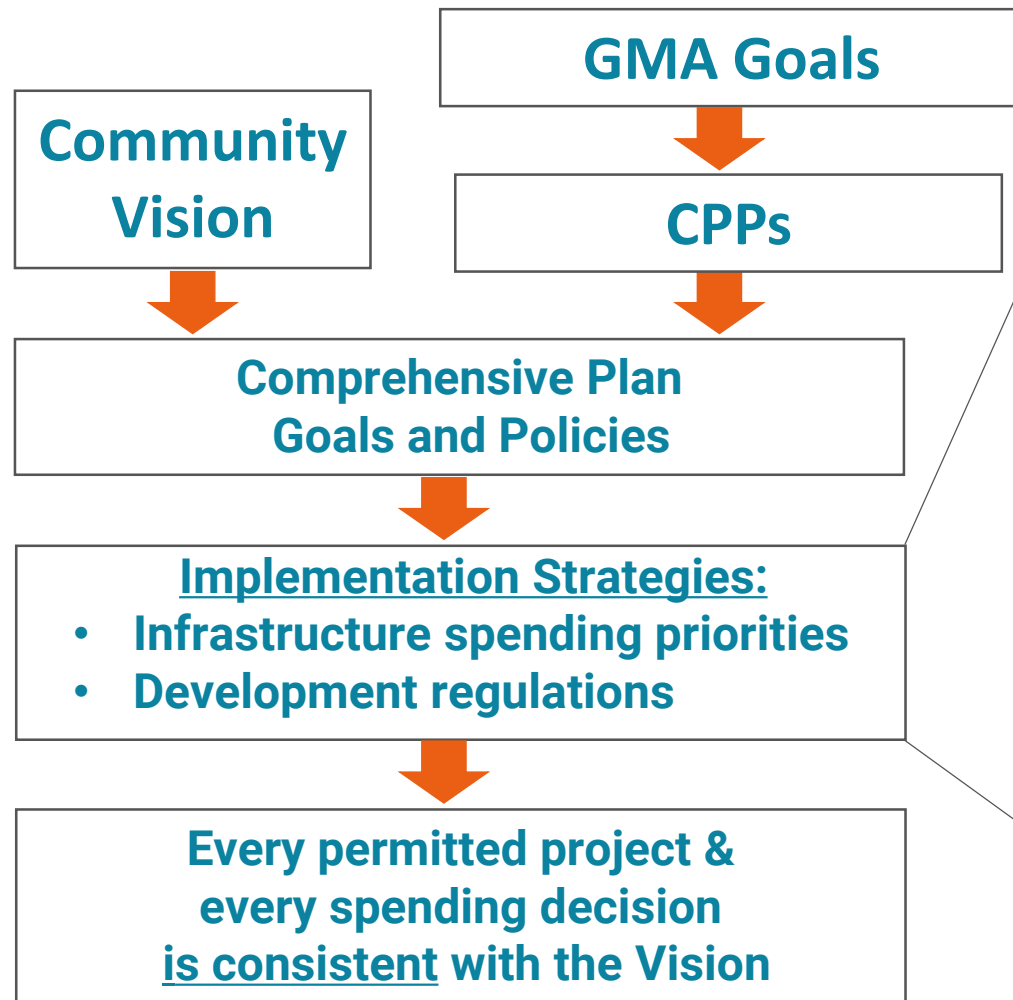
**Internal consistency** – differing parts of the plan must fit together

**Interjurisdictional (external) consistency** – consistent with and carry out CPPs

Comprehensive plans **must be consistent and coordinated** with other county and city plans.



# Implementing your Comprehensive Plan



**Capital Improvement Plans (CIP)** priorities for local infrastructure investments must be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

**Development regulations** must be consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan.



# Planning for Growth

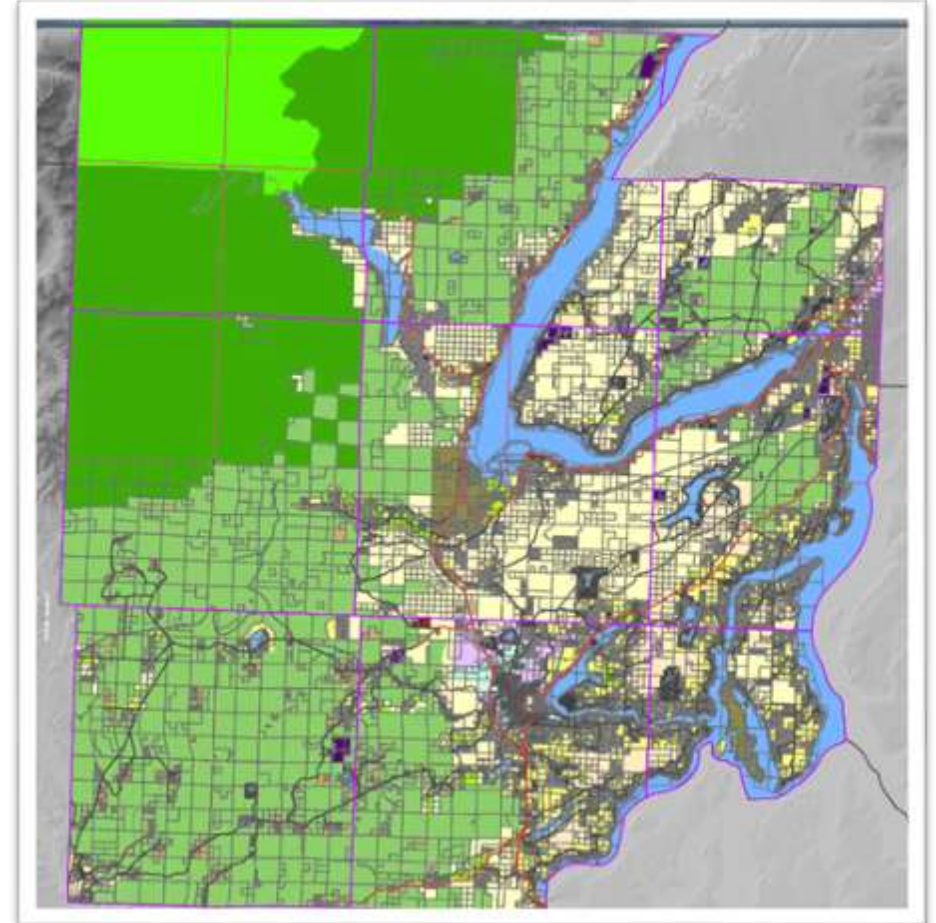
## Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) to contain most of new growth

- UGA size based on 20-year countywide population projections from OFM
- Greater housing/job densities
- Efficient use of facilities/public dollars

## Rural areas to maintain rural character

- Low-density development
- Rural service levels
- Agriculture/forestry

**Must consider “reasonable measures” before expanding an urban growth area**



# Adopting the Comprehensive Plan

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## Plan Adoption Process

- Public outreach - early and often
- Review by Planning Commission
- Complete SEPA environmental review
- 60-days notice to Commerce before adopting
- City or county council must adopt the comprehensive plan
- Transportation element to be certified by regional transportation organization

## Plan Updates and Appeals

- Can be amended only once per year
- Must be updated every 10 years
- Appealable within 60 days to a regional Growth Management Hearings Board

[www.gmhb.wa.gov](http://www.gmhb.wa.gov)

# Periodic Updates

to the Comprehensive Plan



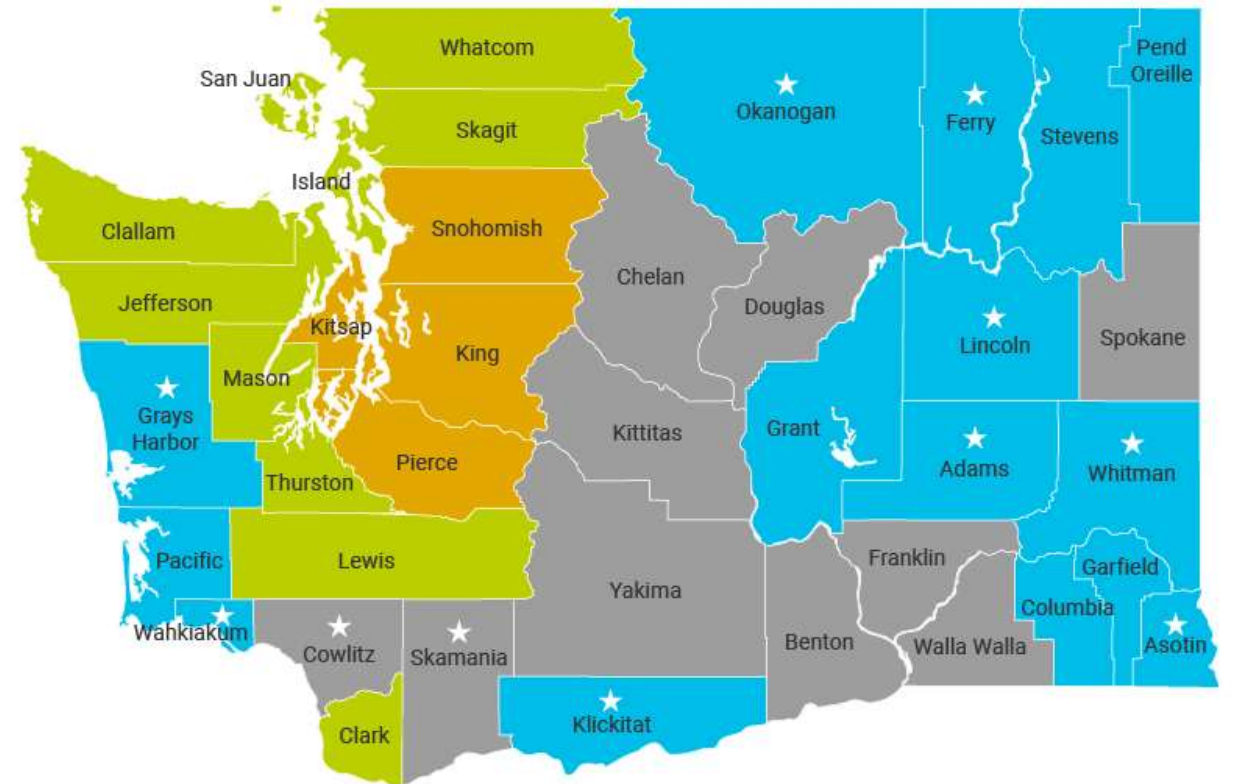
# Periodic Update – Due June 30, 2025

## What to Review?

- Comprehensive Plan
- Development Regulations

## What to Review it for?

- New Housing Targets
- Capital Facilities and Transportation Update
- Critical Areas Ordinance for New Science or Management Recommendations
- New Legislative Requirements



2024 Due December 31<sup>st</sup> 2025 Due June 30<sup>th</sup> 2026 Due June 30<sup>th</sup> 2027 Due June 30<sup>th</sup>

★ Starred counties are partially planning under the Growth Management Act

# Periodic Update Process Overview



# Critical Areas Update

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- Cities and counties must adopt development regulations that protect [critical areas](#) (critical areas ordinance)
- Review required during the periodic update
- Best available science (BAS) must be applied
- Resources :
  - [Commerce Critical Areas Checklist](#)
  - [Commerce Critical Areas Handbook](#)
  - Agency checklists
  - **Reach out to state agency staff early in process**

## 5 Critical Areas:

Wetlands

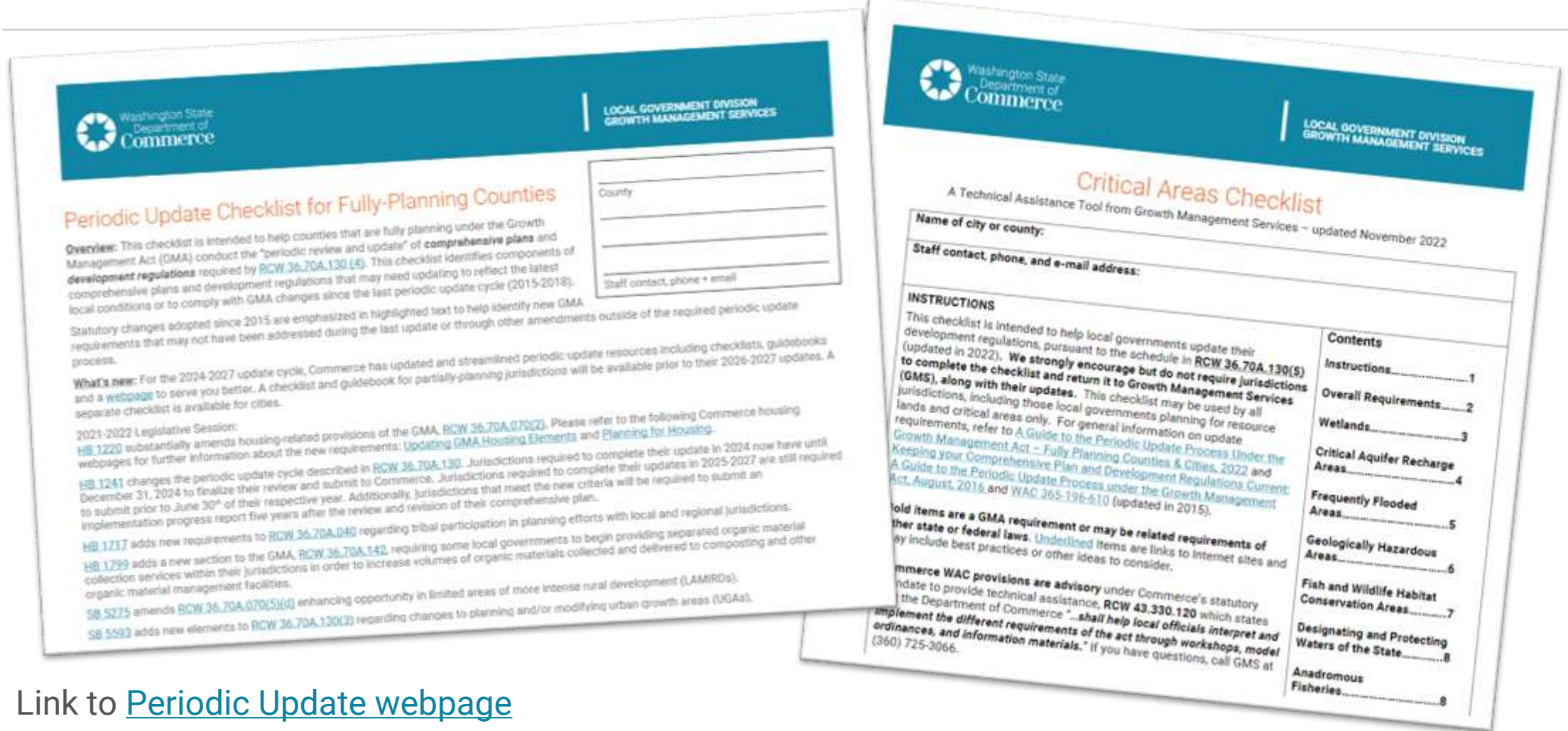
Critical aquifer recharge areas

Frequently flooded areas

Geologically hazardous areas

Fish and wildlife conservation areas

# Checklists



Link to [Periodic Update webpage](#)

# Checklists – cont’d

## Section I: Comprehensive Plan Elements

### Land Use Element

Consistent with countywide planning policies (CWPPs) and RCW 36.70A.070(1)

	In Current Plan? Yes/No If yes, cite section	Changes needed to meet current statute? Yes/No	Notes
<p>New 2021-2022 legislation <a href="#">ESSB 5593</a>: changes to <a href="#">RCW 36.70A.130</a> regarding UGA size, patterns of development, suitability and infrastructure. Coordinate these efforts with your county</p>			
<p>a. The element integrates relevant county-wide planning policies into the local planning process, and ensures local goals and policies are consistent. For jurisdictions in the central Puget Sound region, the plan is consistent with applicable multicounty planning policies. <a href="#">RCW 36.70A.210</a> <a href="#">WAC 365-196-305</a> Coordinate these efforts with your county</p>			



# Sample Periodic Update Timeline

Time period	Work plan items
Spring 2023	Scope the update, go through the checklist, address population and housing projections. Start update to countywide planning policies.
July 1, 2023	Get grant from commerce (example scopes of work provided) work through potential comprehensive plan changes, rezones needed, capital facility needs, transportation updates, critical areas regulation review
Jan – Dec 2024	Finalize housing targets, zoning changes, affordable housing incentives, other regulatory changes, finalize packet.
Jan- June 2025	Notify commerce, go through adoption process, council hearings, etc. (comprehensive plan and regulations together or separately)
June 2025	Adopt periodic update

# Resources



[Website: Growth Management Periodic Updates - Washington State Department of Commerce](#)



# Periodic Update Grant (a.k.a. PUG)

## Fully Planning

- Counties with 100,000 population and over: \$700,000
- Counties under 100,000 population: \$350,000
- Cities with 100,000 population and over: \$325,000
- Cities with 50,000 to 99,999 population: \$175,000
- Cities with 3,000 to 49,999 population: \$125,000
- Cities under 3,000 population: \$100,000

- Your checklist is the first deliverable
- Funding is available beginning July 1, 2023
- Half in first year, half in second year

See [Commerce's Growth Management Grants webpage](#)

# New Legislation

What's new to the GMA from 2021 – 2023



# 2021-2022 GMA Legislation

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**HB 1220**: Emergency and affordable housing

**HB 1241**: Changes the Periodic update and SMP cycles from 8 to 10 years. Requires a 5-year implementation progress report and an annual work program for select jurisdictions

**HB 1717**: Tribal participation in planning

**HB 2001**: Expands the ability to build tiny houses

**SB 5042**: Changes the initial effective date of certain actions under the GMA and addresses premature vesting

**SB 5118**: Supports successful reentry for juveniles, amending the definition of “essential public facilities”

**SB 5235**: Increasing housing unit inventory by removing arbitrary limits on housing

**SB 5275**: Enhances opportunity in LAMIRDs

**SB 5368**: Encourages rural economic development

**SB 5593**: Allows a county to make revisions to a UGA boundary to accommodate patterns of development

**SB 5818**: Promotes housing construction in cities through amendments to and limiting appeals under SEPA and GMA

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# New Housing Element Requirements

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**New GMA housing goal:** “Plan for and accommodate ~~encourage the availability of affordable housing~~ affordable to all economic segments.”

- 1) Conduct an **inventory and analysis of all housing needs by income**, PSH and emergency housing (#s from Commerce)
- 2) **Identify sufficient capacity of land** for identified housing needs
- 3) Include policies to **support middle housing** and other laws
- 4) Make adequate provisions for all housing needs, including “**document barriers to housing availability such as gaps in local funding, development regulations, etc.**”
- 5) Address **racially disparate impacts, displacement, exclusion and displacement risk** in housing through policies and regulations

# Process: Housing Element Update

**Use Commerce projected housing needs & allocate to jurisdictions**

Book 1: Establishing Housing Targets for Your Community & Housing for All Planning Tool

**Show sufficient land capacity for each income level and housing type**

**Identify barriers to housing needed & document programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability**

Book 2: Updating your Housing Element with HB 1220 (Ch. 3 & 4)

**Review, identify, and address racially disparate impacts, displacement and exclusion, and areas at high risk of displacement**

Book 3: Guidance to Address Racially Disparate Impacts

**Update policies and regulations**

Books 2 & 3, plus HAP Guidance

# Housing Needs – Mason County

**Table 1: OFM GMA Population Projections, 2045**  
Mason County Projected Population, 2045

	Low	Medium	High
Projected Population (2045)	66,796	82,932	92,187

**HAPT =**  
**Housing for All**  
**Planning Tool**

**Table 2: Projected Countywide Housing Needs Based on User Inputs**  
Mason County

Population Target = 82,932	Affordability Level (% of Area Median Income)								Emergency Housing/Shelter Beds
	Total	0-30%		30-50%	50-80%	80-100%	100-120%	120%+	
		Non-PSH	PSH						
Total Future Housing Needed (2045)	34,967	2,024	1,049	5,092	8,483	4,250	3,596	10,473	308
Estimated Housing Supply (2020)*	26,877	990	2	3,566	7,451	3,788	3,023	8,057	217
Net New Housing Needed (2020-2045)	8,090	1,034	1,047	1,526	1,032	462	573	2,416	91

\* Note: Supply of PSH in 2020 is beds. However, projections of Net New Housing Needed (2020-2045) are in housing units. See Overview tab for details.



# Resources: Housing Element Update

## Book 1: Establishing Housing Targets for your Community

- [April 6 recorded webinar](#)
- [Housing for All Planning Tool](#) for allocation

## Book 2: Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element

- Land capacity guidance (step by step process)
- Checklists to document barriers to affordable housing
- [May 4 recorded webinar](#)

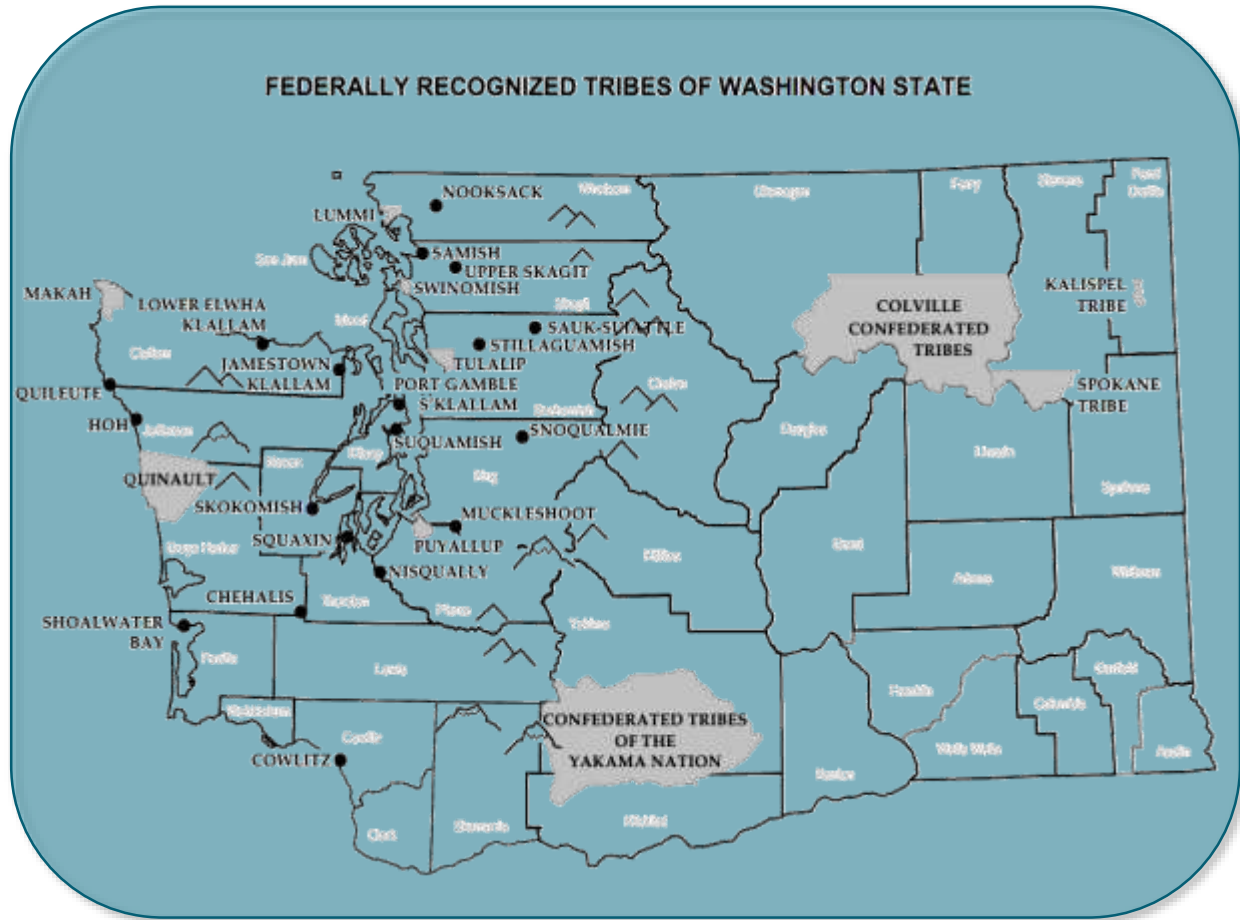
## Book 3: Racially Disparate Impacts (RDI) Guidance

- [Dec 2022 recorded webinar](#)
- RDI data and mapping for each jurisdiction (forthcoming)
- [May 24 Talking Race for Planners recorded webinar](#)



Click on image above to visit the dedicated website for a comprehensive list of resources.

# Tribal Participation in Planning



## HB 1717 (2022)

- A federally recognized Indian tribe may voluntarily choose to participate in the local and regional planning processes.
- Local governments must provide opportunity for tribes to participate
- Mediation for agreement disputes offered through Commerce GMS

**New GMS Tribal Liaison: Bridget Ray**  
[bridget.ray@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:bridget.ray@commerce.wa.gov)

# 2023 Legislation

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[HB 1110](#): Middle housing

[HB 1337](#): ADUs

[HB 1293](#): Project and design review standards

[HB 1042](#): Building conversion and density

[HB 1181](#): Climate change and environmental justice

[HB 1170](#): Ecology's climate resilience strategy

[SB 5412](#): SEPA categorical exemptions for housing

[SB 1758](#): SMA fish hatchery permitting

[SB 5104](#): Baseline survey of Puget Sound shorelines

[HB 1216](#): Clean energy project siting

[SB 5457](#): Adopting CAOs by reference

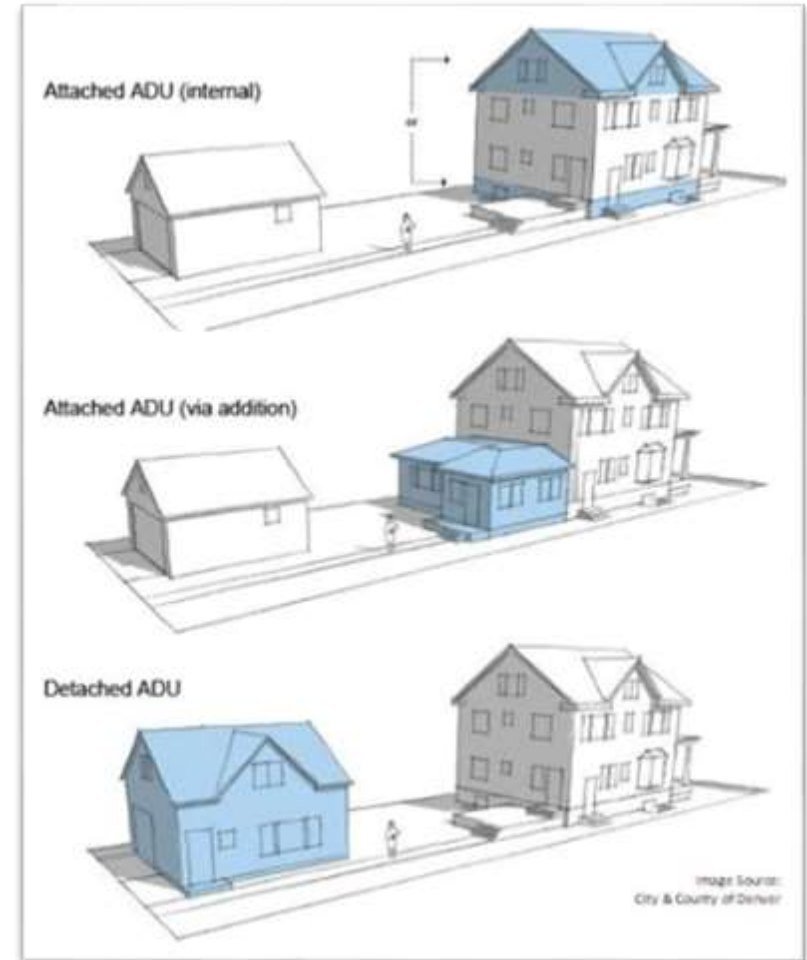
## Links to Additional Resources:

- [WA State Legislature – Bill Information](#)
- [Growth Management Act Amendments 1995-2023](#)
- [Planners' Newsletter on legislative changes in 2023](#)

# HB 1337 (2023) - ADUs

Local governments must, by **6 months after the periodic update due date:**

- Allow **two ADUs per lot in all UGAs**
- **May not:**
  - Require owner occupancy on property
  - Prohibit sale as independent units
  - Charge more than 50% of impact fees charged for the principal unit
- **Must:**
  - Allow ADU of at least 1,000 sq. ft.
  - Adjust zoning to be consistent with HB 1337
  - Set consistent parking requirements based on distance from transit and lot size



# Growth Management Housing Resources

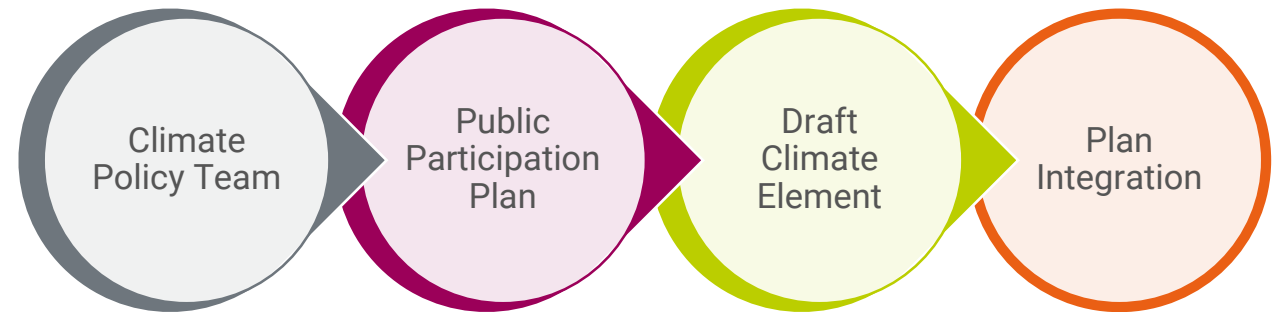
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- [WCRER Housing Data](#)
- [MFTE Guidance](#)
- [HB 1220 guidance](#) and [HAP Guidance](#)
- [Fall 2022 Housing Survey](#)
- [Middle Housing Tools](#)
- [ADU Draft Guidance](#)
- [New tools for Equitable Transit Oriented Development](#)

# HB 1181 & Climate Element Guidance

- **New goal of GMA**
- **Mason County required to address:**
  - Climate Resilience &
  - Land Use Requirements of HB 1181
- **Climate Planning Grant**
  - Eligible for \$300,000
  - Submit application materials by October 31, 2023



## Links to Additional Resources:

- [Climate Law & Guidance: FAQ](#)
- [Climate Element Planning Guidance & Appendix B – Climate Element Workbook](#)
- [Climate Workshops 1 \(September 21\) and 2 \(October 19\) – Register online!](#)

# Environmental Justice

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- **Climate Element** must **prioritize climate resilience** in communities that will disproportionately suffer from compounding environmental impacts
- **Land Use Element** will **avoid worsening** environmental health disparities.
- **Transportation Element** will **ensure** multimodal levels achieve **EJ goals**.

## *What is Environmental Justice?*

*The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, rules, and policies.*

*environmental laws, rules, and policies;  
implementation, and enforcement of  
environmental laws, rules, and policies.*

# Short Course on Local Planning

Full short course scheduled monthly on Zoom - [Short Course Video Study Guide](#)

Read the Guidebook - [A Short Course on Local Planning: Resource Guide \(295 pages, 2017\)](#)

Watch the Videos:

[Introduction to the Short Course](#). 5 minutes

[Comprehensive Planning Basics](#). 11 minutes

[Implementing Your Plan](#). 10 minutes

[Updating Your Plan](#). 10 minutes

[Washington's Legal Framework for Land Use Planning](#). 7 minutes

[Constitutional Issues and Other Protections](#). 8 minutes

[Roles and Responsibilities in Planning](#). 7 minutes

[Public Participation and Effective Meetings](#). 7 minutes

[Open Public Meetings Act](#). 27 minutes - [OPMA Certificate](#)

[Appearance of Fairness Doctrine](#). 17 minutes



Click on image above  
to visit the Short Course webpage.



# More Planning Resources

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★ [2025 Periodic Update Workshop Series](#)

★ [Municipal Research and Services Center](#)

[Planning Association of Washington](#)

[Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association](#)

[Regional Planners' Forums](#)

# Thank you!

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