



Kittitas County Community Development Services

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WHAT A COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE IS AND IS NOT

The initial County Comprehensive Plan and all updates, under the State of Washington Growth Management Act (GMA), are generalized coordinated land use policy statements of the governing body of a county that is adopted pursuant to RCW 36.70A. The legislature adopted the Growth Management Act to address the effects of uncoordinated and unplanned growth.

A County Comprehensive Plan and all updates are based on statutory goals addressing urban growth, reduction of sprawl, transportation, housing, economic development, property rights, permitting, natural resource based industries, open space and recreation, environment, citizen participation and coordination, public facilities and services, and historic preservation. The Comprehensive Plan and all updates consist of mandatory and optional elements and supporting maps. Mandatory elements include a land use element, housing element, capital facilities plan, a utilities element, a rural element, and a transportation element. Optional elements include conservation, solar energy and recreation. Sub area plans are also optional.

County Comprehensive Plans and all updates are to be coordinated with those of the incorporated towns and cities within the county. County development regulations such as zoning and subdivision codes must comply with the County Comprehensive Plan. Each county is required to provide a full comprehensive plan to the State of Washington, Dept. of Community Trade and Economic Development (DCTED), every 10 years after the adoption of the original document under the GMA. Individual counties adopt scheduled annual update by ordinance.

A Comprehensive Plan Update is:

A checkpoint to evaluate the effectiveness of the current plan.

A reflection of the core values of the County as approved by the County Commissioners.

A statement of goals to reflect those core values approved by the County Commissioners.

An internally consistent document to which development regulations and countywide planning policies must be consistent.

A reflection of the policies of the County Commissioners with citizen input through a public participation process.

Direction for land use policy decisions based on a projection of 20 years into the future.

An opportunity to reflect changes over the preceding years since the last update that reflect changes to the character of the county.

A Comprehensive Plan Update is not:

An opportunity to start from scratch (in other words an update builds upon previous work and reflects changes that have occurred over time).

An opportunity to make radical core value changes.

A document that reflects a singular philosophy (i.e. it is based on broad public opinion through public participation which is the source for input for change or no change to parts of the current plan).

A document that reflects only unincorporated county land use policies without consideration of city and town policies reflected in their Comprehensive Plan updates.