



## KITTITAS COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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“Building Partnerships – Building Communities”

**TO: Kittitas County Planning Commission**

**FROM: Kittitas County Community Development Services**

**RE: Comprehensive Plan 2017-2037 Periodic Update**

### **HEARING**

**DATE: May 14, 2019 Public Hearing – 6pm**

### **I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

On December 1, 1990 Kittitas County became one of 11 counties that “Opted-In” to (plan fully) to the planning requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act RCW 36.70A (GMA). Every 8 years the 20- year Comprehensive plan is required to be updated. This Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update is for a 20 year planning period which is currently 2017 to 2037. . Our current update schedule was due by June 30, 2017, however pursuant to RCW 36.70A.130(6) Kittitas County was eligible for a two year extension to this deadline based on our total population being less than 50,000 people and our ten-year growth rate of no more than 17 percent as of June 30, 2017. The County has worked diligently on updating its Comprehensive Plan to maintain compliance with GMA and has utilized the Periodic Update Checklist for Counties provided by the Department of Commerce for guidance.

### **II. BACKGROUND ON UPDATE PROCESS**

Kittitas County’s 2006 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update was appealed in 2007 and was found to be noncompliant with GMA by the Eastern Washington Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB) on a number of issues and was considered out of compliance with GMA for several years. On May 15, 2014 Kittitas County adopted Ordinance 2014-005 regarding revisions to the Comprehensive Plan, amendments to Title 13 and Title 17 of County Code for the purpose of GMA compliance regarding the numerous GMHB cases against the County. On August 13, 2014 the GMHB found Kittitas County to be in compliance with GMA and closed the remaining cases.

In 2015, Kittitas County began the process of the 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update with the assistance of Van Ness Feldman who also worked with the county during the compliance efforts. The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) directed staff to only make changes necessary to maintain compliance with the Growth Management Act in light of the county becoming compliant as of August 2014. This relationship existed until early 2017.

Also in 2015, Kittitas County entered into a contract with BERK and Associates to provide an estimate of population project and land use capacity analysis for the year 2037. BERK presented their projections to Kittitas County Conference of Governments (COG) and the BOCC. Several meetings were held throughout 2016. The BOCC adopted population and employment projections for 2037 on April 4, 2017 through Resolution No. 2017-068.

In March 2017, the County entered into a contract with CREA Affiliates that allowed for commencement of consultant services effective February 27, 2017. The county terminated services effective June 2, 2017 with CREA Affiliates and re-evaluated the direction the update was headed based on the direction given by the BOCC in 2015 and re-affirmed in spring of 2017.

In June of 2017, Kittitas County entered into a contract with SCJ Alliance for consulting services related to the preparation and completion of the 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Since then, SCJ Alliance has worked with county staff to develop the draft documents as they exist for consideration by the planning commission and to provide technical assistance to ensure compliance with GMA.

### **III. STAFF REVIEW AND SUMMARY OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

The following is a summary of the proposed amendments for consideration.

#### **1. Proposed 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Amendments**

In March 2019, the First Public Review draft of the 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and associated maps were issued for public comment and review. This first draft was released as a “clean copy” with no redline changes from staff or the consultant team to honor the work that the advisory and work groups performed from 2016 through 2018. As required under the Growth Management Act (GMA), the Department of Commerce was notified of the County’s intent to adopt the Comprehensive Plan (i.e. 60-day notice). The 60-day notice period is still active and public comments are being accepted, reviewed, and responded to in a comment matrix that has been provided to the planning commission along with being made available on the county website. Thus far in the notice period comments have been received from the following: Schuck, two unnamed members of the public, CWHBA – Schroeter, Sharar, and WDFW – Torrey. These comments have all been provided to the planning commission, made available on the county website and are available upon request at Kittitas County Community Development Services office. A number of changes have been incorporated into the Planning Commission Public Hearing Draft May 2019 that was released on April 30, 2019 and described in more detail below.

As stated in the background section of this report, the direction from the BOCC was to only make changes to the document that are necessary to maintain compliance with GMA and the Periodic Update Checklist for Counties, provided by the Department of Commerce for guidance. As such, staff from the beginning of the process decided to reformat the layout of the document itself, so although there is not significant changes to the contents of the plan, it appears changed.

A Goals/Policies/Objectives (GPO) crosswalk was completed in order to provide transparency to the refinement process completed by the various advisory groups during 2016-2018 Comprehensive Plan Update. Each advisory group reviewed the GPOs, made suggestions on each and provided justification for the changes. In some cases GPOs were combined into a goal or a policy, in some they were separated into multiple goals or policies. The crosswalk document tracks the changes between the 2018 Comprehensive Plan and the 2019 proposed Comprehensive Plan. Green text indicates that the GPO from the 2018 version has been retained with minimal change in the 2019 draft. Orange text indicates that the intent of the GPO can be found in the 2019 draft. The red text indicates that the GPO has not been included in the 2019 draft. The placement of these GPOs within each element of the 2019 draft are a reflection of the work completed by the members of each advisory group. Where duplicate goals or

policies exist throughout the Plan, staff has removed the duplication.

## 2. Commission Public Hearing Draft – May 2019 of the 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

After the completion of the two work study sessions with the planning commission in March and April of 2019, staff and the consultant team made changes to the First Public Review draft of the 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update document. This revised document has been titled “Comprehensive Plan – Planning Commission Public Hearing Draft May 2019 (April 30, 2019). This draft indicates in track changes (strike-through and underline text) the edits made in response to planning commission feedback, public comment, and recommended staff changes. Staff and the consultant team have made edits to improve readability and formatting, including some minor reorganization to the subarea elements at Chapters 7 and 9, but have not otherwise restructured the Goals and Policies derived from the Comp Plan advisory groups.

## 3. Draft Mapping

The following maps are part of this update process:

- Draft Zoning and Future Land Use Map – April 2019
- Draft Transportation Network Map – April 2019
- Draft Resource Land Uses Map – April 2019
- Draft Land Use Designations Map – April 2019
- Draft Environmental Assets Map – April 2019

These maps will be utilized in conjunction with the draft regulations and incorporated into the County Mapping System (COMPAS) for interactive use once adopted. These draft maps have been provided to the Planning Commission and are available upon request at Kittitas County Community Development Services office or on the county website.

## **V. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

SEPA environmental review has been completed for this proposal. A SEPA checklist was completed on April 3, 2019, and a Determination of Non-significance was issued the same day. All notices for SEPA action were provided as set forth in KCC Title 15 and pursuant to WAC 197-11. Timely comments have been received during the SEPA notice period which ran concurrently with start of the 60-day notice of intent to adopt with the Department of Commerce. No comments were received during the SEPA notice comment specific to SEPA concerns; therefore the Determination of Non-significance was retained.

## **VI. AGENCY AND PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Applicable agencies, interested parties, and the public at large have been given the opportunity to review this proposal. Numerous public and agency comments have been received throughout the update process since it started in 2015. Comments written in letter or email format have been included within the record and are available upon request. Comments specifically related to the 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update submitted (to date) during the 60-day and SEPA comment periods

are included in a comment matrix with staff responses and have been provided to the Planning Commission.

## **VII. 2017-2037 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE - SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

### ***Public Participation Plan (PPP)***

Washington State law requires counties to establish public participation plans identifying procedures and providing for early and continuous public participation in the development and amendment of comprehensive plans pursuant to RCW 36.70A.140. Kittitas County adopted a PPP by Resolution (No. 2015-109) on July 21, 2015.

### ***Visioning Workshops***

The project kick-off with the public included visioning workshops across the county in February 2016: Vantage, Ellensburg, Cle Elum, and Snoqualmie Pass. The visioning workshops included a staff presentation on the Comprehensive Plan Update process and then included a number of exercises for community input. These exercises included a vision wall, visioning questions, and breakout groups which ended with small group report backs. These exercises helped form the revised County Vision Statement found at the beginning of the draft 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, people were able to volunteer to be members of advisory group(s), which was the next stage in the public outreach and input work. Report back meetings from the visioning workshops were held in March 2016 in Cle Elum and Ellensburg.

### ***Advisory Committees***

Various advisory committees made up of stakeholders and the public throughout the county were formed to review the various chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. In total there were six advisory committees that made up the Economic Development committee, Housing committee, Land Use committee (which included land use, rural lands, capital facilities and utilities), Recreation and Natural Environment committee, Resource Lands committee, and Transportation committee. Each advisory committee was responsible for auditing portions of the existing Comprehensive Plan and help with the reformatting of the plan to switch for GPOs (goals, policies, & objectives) statements to determining which GPOs should be considered a goal and which should be considered a policy. These groups met July through October 2016. As this work ended, two members from each committee were selected to become the working group, which was the next stage of the public input process.

### ***Working Group Meetings***

The Working Group was comprised of twelve individuals that participated in at least one of the above referenced advisory committees. This group met ten times from March 2017 through April 2018. At each of the meetings a chapter and/or section of the Comprehensive Plan was discussed along with the audits of the GPOs that were completed by the advisory committees. Staff reported back with changes at the following meetings. The public was invited to attend was provided an opportunity to provide comment at the end of each meeting.

## *Open Houses*

In March of 2019, two Open Houses were held in Ellensburg and Cle Elum where the first complete public draft of the 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update document was released along with several maps. Staff was available to answer questions. A crosswalk document was also available to help describe how the comprehensive plan had been reformatted and transitioned from GPOs to Goals and Policies.

## *Maps*

Mapping has been addressed in Section Three of this staff report and the draft maps have been provided to the Planning Commission. They are also available upon request at Kittitas County Community Development Services office and on the county website.

## **IX. RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the proposed 2017-2037 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and associated maps as presented to the Board of County Commissioners.**

### *Staff Conclusions:*

1. Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.172, Kittitas County is required to update its Comprehensive Plan every eight years to ensure compliance GMA.
2. Kittitas County has developed the required documents and data required to support the Comprehensive Plan Periodic update.
3. The proposed amendments are consistent with the Washington State Growth Management Act and its associate rules.
4. Kittitas County has involved citizens, land owners, and stakeholders throughout the County through visioning workshops, advisory committees, working group meetings, open houses, and public meetings. Public comments have been accepted regarding the comprehensive plan, and incorporated many of the comments into revisions to the proposed plan.