

August 9, 2023. TLCC Comp Plan 101-1

What is a comprehensive plan?

- A comprehensive plan represents a community's or jurisdiction's vision for the future.
- A Comprehensive Plan considers not only the immediate needs and concerns of the community, but also development in the future, typically in 20 years.
- A comprehensive plan provides a basis for developing the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and other development codes, all of which are used to implement planning policies and recommendations.

What planning regulations apply?

The *Planning Enabling Act* (PEA) was approved by the State Legislature in 1959. The purpose of the Act is to "...provide the authority for, and the procedures to be followed in, guiding and regulating the physical development of a county or region through correlating both public and private projects and coordinating their execution with respect to all subject matters utilized in developing and servicing land, all to the end assuring the highest standards of environment for living, and the operation of commerce, industry, agriculture, and recreation, and assuring maximum economies and conserving the highest degree of public health, safety, morals and welfare." (RCW 36.70.010).

The *Planning Enabling Act* also defined and established specific requirements for a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is defined (a) as a beginning step in planning for the physical development of the county; (b) as the means for coordinating county programs and services; (c) as a source of reference to aid in developing, correlating, and coordinating official regulations and controls; and (d) as a means for promoting the general welfare. A comprehensive plan is a policy guide for the subsequent public and private development and official controls so as to present all proposed developments in a balanced and orderly relationship to existing physical features and governmental functions (RCW 36.70.020(6)).

In 1990, the Washington Legislature enacted the *Growth Management Act* (GMA, RCW 36.70A) to guide planning for growth and development. The GMA establishes land-use designation and environmental protection requirements. Local governments with a population of over 50,000 and/or a rate of growth exceeding the state guidelines are required to plan under GMA. Klickitat County did not opt in to become a "fully planning" county. As a "partially planning" jurisdiction, Klickitat County is not obligated to satisfy all planning requirements of the GMA, and is only required to designate and protect critical areas and designate resource lands under the GMA.

Purpose of Sub-Area Plans

- Sub-Area plans or community plans allow the policies and implementation strategies to be much more focused on localized areas and are more conducive to "hands-on" work with community stakeholders.
- Typically, subarea plans consist of descriptions of the community, statements of concerns relating to immediate and future growth, and goal/policy statements.

Content of a Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive plan is the centerpiece of local planning and articulates a series of goals, objectives, policies, actions, and standards that are intended to guide day-to-day decisions. The comprehensive plan is implemented through locally adopted development regulations.