



WHATCOM COUNTY

WASHINGTON

Planning & Development Services

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January 28, 2026

TO: The Honorable Whatcom County Council
FROM: Matt Aamot, Senior Planner
THROUGH: Mark Personius, Director

RE: Comp Plan Update – Final Planning Commission Recommendations

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires Whatcom County to review and revise its Comprehensive Plan ([RCW 36.70A.130](#)). The updated Comprehensive Plan will contain the following chapters (along with a number of appendices¹):

1. Introduction and Growth Projections
2. Land Use
3. Housing
4. Capital Facilities
5. Utilities
6. Transportation
7. Economic Development
8. Resource Lands
9. Parks and Recreation
10. Environment
11. Shorelines²
12. Climate (new Chapter)

The County Planning & Development Services Department brought each individual Comprehensive Plan chapter to the Planning Commission to conduct public hearings and hold work sessions in 2025. On January 22, 2026, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and issued final recommendations on the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan and several amendments to the Foothills Subarea Plan. The Planning Commission's final recommendations are hereby transmitted to the Council for review.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. We look forward to discussing it with you.

¹ Appendix C (Countywide Planning Policies) and Appendix F (Seven-Year Capital Improvement Program) will not be revised in the Comprehensive Plan update. The Countywide Planning Policies were amended in October 2025 (Ordinance 2025-049). The Capital Improvement Program will be amended in November 2026 with the County budget.

² The Shorelines Chapter will not be revised in the Comprehensive Plan update. The Shorelines Chapter was approved by the State Department of Ecology in 2025 after previous Planning Commission review and County Council approval.