

# Planning Commission Workshop



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## STAFF REPORT

## Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

**Date:** September 15, 2023  
**Staff:** Mindy Brooks, Sr. Long Range Planner  
**RE:** **Overview of Periodic Update**

### INTRODUCTION

Lewis County is a fully planning county and is therefore required to have a Comprehensive Plan that meets the requirements of [RCW 36.70A, Growth Management Act](#) (GMA). All cities within Lewis County are also required to comply with GMA. Part of the requirements is to conduct a Periodic Update that addresses any changes to the RCWs since the previous update, which as in 2017, as well as changes in local conditions such as population increase (please see additional Staff Report re: Mandatory Updates). Jurisdictions are also allowed to make other non-mandatory changes to the Comprehensive Plan if those changes conform to GMA rules. Lewis County, and the cities in the county, are required to complete Periodic Update by June 30, 2025.

The Periodic Update will be completed in two phases. Phase 1 will be updating the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, completed by June 30, 2024. Phase 2 will be updating the development regulations, completed by June 30, 2025. Both phases will come before the Planning Commission for a public hearing and the Planning Commission will then make a recommendation to the BOCC who will ultimately adopt the updates.

### GOALS AND POLICIES

Phase 1 in Periodic Update is to review the existing goals and policies in the [Lewis County Comprehensive Plan](#) and make required and desired changes. Goals and policies are guidance that must be implemented through land use designations/zoning and development regulations.

Goals and policies are required to address the following elements RCW 36.70A.070

- Land Use
- Housing
- Capital Facilities
- Utilities
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Parks and Recreation
- Climate Change and Resiliency\*
- Rural (counties only)

The existing Lewis County Comprehensive Plan addresses all of the elements except Climate Change/Resiliency, which is a new requirement and discussed in a separate memo about mandatory updates.

Besides the mandatory updates, many of the changes to goals and policies will stem from an updated Existing Conditions Report, which is an early task in the work plan. A large portion of the Existing Conditions Report will be about capital facilities, which includes special districts (e.g., fire districts, schools). The Existing Conditions Report will describe local conditions, such as level of service, that will inform the wording of the goals and policies for the next 20 years.

Public engagement is an important part of updating goals and policies. While the priorities are set by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), with advice from the Planning Commission and staff, the public will be asked to weigh in on the priorities and the results of the public feedback will be provided to decision makers for consideration.

## **LAND USE AND ZONING**

Land use and zoning is a significant component of the Periodic Update. Two known changes to land use and zoning designations will come from the results of the Packwood and Onalaska subarea plans. Both of those plans will include changes to the Future Land Uses Designation map and then zoning will need to be updated to reflect those designations. Other changes can be made during periodic update, including urban growth area (UGA) boundary amendments, Rural Area Industrial zoning, or resource land designations. The BOCC and Planning Commission should consider other high priority zoning changes, keeping in mind that those changes must meet the RCWs and Lewis County Code 17.12 criteria for rezones. Staff have also identified a number of minor zoning corrections that are needed.

## **DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS**

After the goals and policies are updated and the land use and zoning designations are amended, the final step in Periodic Update is to amend the development regulations to further implement updated goals and policies. This will include mandatory updates. Again, BOCC and Planning Commission should consider other high priority changes to the development regulations, keeping in mind that those changes must meet the RCWs, as well as the Comprehensive Plan.

## **IMPORTANT NOTE**

All elements of Periodic Update (goals, policies, land use designations, zoning and development regulations) may be appealed. Therefore, one of the final products will be a “findings of fact” report, prepared by staff, that demonstrates how all of the relevant RCWs and WACs are addressed during Periodic Update.

## Attachment A: Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update DRAFT Schedule

The Periodic Update is a 2-year process that started on July 1, 2023 and must be completed by June 30, 2025. There is a lot of work that must be done and it is therefore very important to keep the scope tight and focus only on the mandatory updates and highest priority discretionary updates. Below is a draft schedule that will be updated once a consultant is hired.

