



Department of Commerce
Innovation is in our nature.

Keeping Your Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations Current

A Guide to the Periodic Update Process under the Growth Management Act

Prepared by the Washington State Department of Commerce
Local Government & Infrastructure Division
Growth Management Services
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Acronyms and terms used in this guide

CAO - Critical Areas Ordinance

CARL – Critical Areas and Resource Lands

Commerce – Washington State Department of Commerce (*previously named the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development or CTED prior to July 2009*)

Comprehensive plan - land use document that provides the framework and policy direction to manage where and how growth needs are met. Plan elements address land use, housing, capital facilities, utilities, rural/natural resources, transportation, economic development, environment, cultural resources, and other topics.

Development regulations - controls placed on development or land use activities by a county or city, such as codes for zoning, critical areas, planned unit developments, and subdivisions.

GMA – Growth Management Act, Chapter 36.70A, RCW

GMS – Growth Management Services, a unit in the Department of Commerce, Local Government Division that helps counties and cities implement the GMA.

OFM – Washington State Office of Financial Management

Periodic update – A regularly scheduled review and update of county and city comprehensive plans and development regulations. For most communities, the update takes place every eight years under a schedule established by the Legislature in the GMA.

RCW – Revised Code of Washington (laws adopted by the state Legislature)

SMA – Shoreline Management Act

SMP – Shoreline Master Program

UGA – Urban Growth Area

WAC – Washington Administrative Code (rules adopted by state agencies)

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I. Introduction

The comprehensive plan is the centerpiece of local planning in Washington State. Like business plans, comprehensive plans provide the framework for how our communities will grow. And like business plans, they must evolve over time to be effective.

Many communities amend their comprehensive plan annually and regularly adopt changes to the development regulations that implement them. In addition to these regular amendments, the state Growth Management Act (GMA) requires counties and cities to periodically conduct a thorough review of their plan and regulations to bring them up to date with any relevant changes in the GMA and to respond to changes in land use and population growth.¹ This mandatory “periodic update” takes place for most communities at least once every eight years, though smaller, slower-growing communities² may take longer.

This guide explains when and how to go through the necessary steps in the periodic update process. The level of effort and timing of the update steps will vary depending on how recently your community has comprehensively updated its plan, the size of your community, and other factors.

This guide is intended as a user-friendly supplement to the GMA statutes and administrative rules that describe procedures that must be followed and substantive issues that must be addressed.

This guide may not be able to answer all your questions about the periodic update - the Washington Department of Commerce, Growth Management Services program may be able to help. To speak with your technical assistance team, call (360) 725-3055 west of the Cascades; or 509-434-4491 east of the Cascades. [Appendix A](#) includes the Growth Management Services staff assignments by region.

Why we plan

“...all of us know that quality of life is not guaranteed. We maintain it through the hard work of our citizens, our businesses, and our state and local-elected officials who make the tough decisions every day to ensure that we have a healthy, natural environment, a strong, sustainable economy, competitive, high-performing schools, and safe and high-quality communities for all of us to enjoy.

All of this makes Washington competitive in the global economy. And if we eliminate even one of these regional values, we diminish ourselves and our communities.

Comprehensive plans give expression to the values and priorities of our communities. These plans provide a 20-to-50-year vision—a roadmap for how our communities want to look and to function. For rural towns, it may be to preserve and sustain their agricultural heritage, for another, prioritizing downtown redevelopment. It all adds up to a shared vision, tough decisions, and partnerships.”

- Governor Chris Gregoire, announcing Smart Communities Awards, 2007

¹ The GMA is codified under RCW 36.70A. The “periodic update” requirements are found in [RCW 36.70A.130](#)

² The criteria determining whether or not a city or county qualifies are described on page 5.

Who must complete the periodic update?

Every county and city in the state is required to conduct a periodic update, though the obligation varies depending on whether the jurisdiction is fully or partially planning³ (see sidebar).

Fully planning counties and cities must complete the periodic update for their entire comprehensive plan and development regulations.

Partially planning counties are required to periodically update their critical areas ordinance and resource lands provisions. Partially planning cities usually have no designated resource lands, so their periodic update is usually limited to their critical areas ordinance.

When is the update due?

Under the GMA, the Legislature established a schedule for when the periodic update is required to be complete.⁴ The map below reflects new deadlines adopted by the 2011 legislature.⁵ Except for certain small, slow-growing communities, each county and its cities must complete the periodic update by June 30 of the years shown in Figure 1, and every eight years after that.

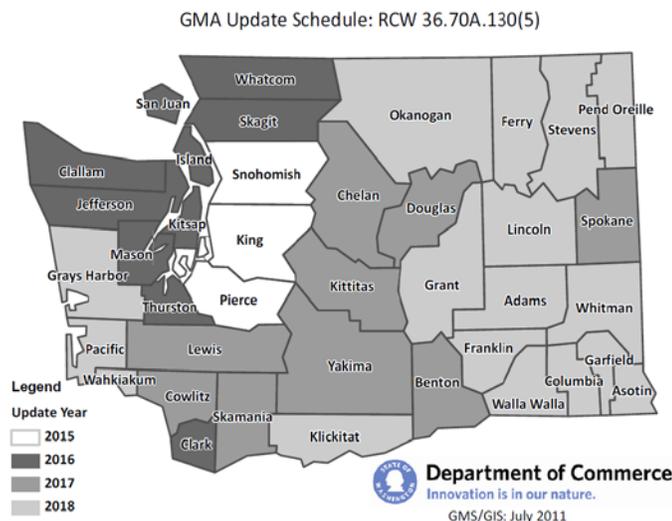


Figure 1: GMA Update Deadlines as amended in 2011 (see special cases below)

“Fully” or “partially” planning”

“Fully planning” means that a city or county must meet all GMA requirements, including adoption of a comprehensive plan and a complete set of development regulations implementing the plan. Only the state’s fastest growing counties and cities are required to plan fully, though a number of counties have “opted-in” by choice.

“Partially planning” jurisdictions are the counties - and the cities within their boundaries - that do not meet GMA population and growth rate thresholds and have not chosen to fully plan under the Act. Partially planning counties are required to designate and protect critical areas and designate resource lands (CARL). Partially planning cities must designate and protect critical areas, and may designate mineral resource lands. Currently there are ten partially planning counties: Adams, Asotin, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Skamania, Wahkiakum, and Whitman Counties.

³ Statute describing fully planning: [RCW 36.70A.040\(1\)](#); Statute describing “opting in”: [RCW 36.70A.040\(2\)](#)

⁴ [RCW 36.70A.130\(5\)](#)

⁵ See [ESHB 1478](#) and [RCW 36.70A.130\(5\)](#). **Note:** Jurisdictions should be aware of Section 4(6) of ESHB 1886, which was passed in 2011 and codified in RCW 36.70A.705 and 36.70A.710. This statute creates an additional periodic update of July 22, 2013, for Critical Areas Ordinances as they relate to agricultural activities for those counties that do not opt into the Voluntary Stewardship Program.

Smaller and slower growing cities and counties have an additional two years from the dates shown in Figure 1.

What is a small or slow-growing jurisdiction?

A **county** with a population of no more than 50,000 and a growth rate of less than 17% in the ten years preceding the deadline established in RCW 36.70A.130.

A **city** with a population of 5,000 or less and has had its population increase by the greater of either no more than one hundred persons or no more than seventeen percent in the ten years preceding the deadline established in RCW 36.70A.130.

Growth rates are measured using the ten-year period preceding the regular due date.

See RCW 36.70A.130 (6)(b) & (c)

Population is taken from the OFM annual population estimate, which is released on April 1 of each year. A county or city will not know for certain what their population is until three months before the statutory deadline. If a jurisdiction is close, or expects any large annexations close to the due date, the population information should be monitored closely.

May a jurisdiction complete the update early?

A jurisdiction may complete the periodic update process before its deadline.⁶ The deadline for its next periodic update would still remain eight years from the original deadline established in the GMA. For example, if a jurisdiction has an update deadline of June 30, 2015, but it completes its update in 2012, then it would not be subject to another required periodic update until 2023.

To help alleviate any confusion, Commerce recommends that the final legislative action taken upon completion of the periodic update process clearly note the early adoption and the due date of the next scheduled periodic update according to statute.

Special cases: 2013 deadline

There are a few smaller, slower-growing jurisdictions in areas represented on the map with a 2018 deadline that also have a periodic update deadline of December **2013**. This is because amendments to state law postponed their earlier 2007 periodic update deadline [See RCW 36.70A.130(6)(b-d)].

The 2006 Legislature passed an optional three-year time extension for small or slow-growing jurisdictions in those areas (SB 6427). The 2010 Legislature passed another optional three-year extension for those areas (SB 6611).

Contact Commerce if you have any questions about whether your jurisdiction is one of these special cases.

⁶ [RCW 36.70A.130\(6\)\(a\)](#)

II. The review and update process

There are four overall tasks counties and cities must take during the periodic update process. Tips for completing each of these tasks are included in the following sections.

1. Establish a public participation program	2. Review relevant plans and regulations	3. Take legislative action.	4. Submit notice to state
Develop a plan that includes a schedule for steps in the update process to ensure the public is aware of the process and knows how they can participate.	Evaluate whether there is a need to revise the urban growth area, comprehensive plan, or development regulations to ensure they are consistent with the GMA.	Adopt an ordinance or resolution finding that a review has occurred, and identifying revisions made or concluding that revisions were not needed.	Send formal notice of intent to adopt to the state at least 60 days prior to taking legislative action. Send a copy of the signed adopted ordinance or resolution 10 days after final action.

Before undertaking the update it is helpful for county or city staff to establish a **work program** that outlines the entire periodic update process. See sample work program in Appendix B.

1. Establish a public participation program

Counties and cities are required to establish a program that identifies procedures and schedules for the public to participate in the periodic update.⁷ The program must provide for **early and continuous public participation**.⁸ The program should clearly identify the scope of the review and identify when legislative action on the review and update component are proposed to occur. Counties and cities must ensure that **notice** of the update process is broadly and effectively disseminated.⁹ See Appendix C for examples of public participation programs.

The best way for a county or city to complete this requirement is to publish a complete public participation program or schedule at the beginning of the update process. However, it is not required that a county or city establish the entire schedule at the beginning of the process, as long as a program is established and effective notice is provided for all update steps.

Local jurisdictions may want to formally adopt the public participation program by resolution or ordinance to formalize the update process and help to meet the GMA requirements for early and continuous public involvement. See sample ordinances in Appendix C.

⁷ [RCW 36.70A.130\(2\)\(a\)](#)

⁸ [RCW 36.70A.140](#)

⁹ [RCW 36.70A.035](#)

A public participation plan can be adjusted over time if needed. The GMA provides that “errors in exact compliance with the established program and procedures shall not render the comprehensive land use plan or development regulations invalid if the spirit of the program and procedures is observed.”¹⁰

2. Review and revise comprehensive plans and development regulations

The Department of Commerce periodic update **checklists** should be the foundation of your review. These checklists (one for cities, one for counties) provide a concise summary of the GMA requirements. See Appendix D.

Filling out the checklists will help compare your local plan and regulations against the latest requirements, determine what needs to be reviewed in greater detail, and what may need to be added, deleted, and amended in plans and codes to maintain compliance with the act.¹¹

Commerce **strongly recommends** use of the checklists in designing your work program to complete the periodic update.

Counties and cities may elect to adopt an ordinance or resolution after reviewing and analyzing what will be updated and determining the scope of changes needed. This is a formal way to let the public know early “what is on the table” as part of the update. It also may help to limit appeals. If there are no challenges to the scope of revisions within 60 days after the legislative action, challenges to the jurisdiction’s final ordinance will be limited to the subjects defined in the ordinance. See sample legislative actions establishing the scope of an update in Appendix C.

The statute does not exempt any portion of a comprehensive plan or any development regulations from being subject to review and evaluation. However, local governments may use common-sense factors in determining the *level* of review, taking into account when the plan and regulations were adopted and whether and how the GMA has been amended in the intervening time.

GMA periodic update:

Fully planning:

*“Each comprehensive land use plan and development regulations shall be subject to **continuing review and evaluation** by the county or city that adopted them. [A] county or city shall take legislative action to **review and, if needed, revise** its comprehensive land use plan and development regulations **to ensure the plan and regulations comply** with [GMA] requirements.”*

Partially planning:

*[A] county or city not [fully-planning under GMA] shall take action to **review and, if needed, revise** its policies and development regulations regarding **critical areas and natural resource lands ... to ensure these policies and regulations comply** with [GMA] requirements”*

- RCW 36.70A.130(1)(a & b)

¹⁰ [RCW 36.70A.140](#)

¹¹ Commerce encourages local governments to complete a checklist as part of the application to receive periodic update funds from GMS (*funds are not currently available*). The checklist can also be used at the very end of the update process to document what changes are proposed for adoption.

Mandatory items to review and revise (if needed)

The GMA calls out a number of specific items that **must** be reviewed as part of the periodic update.

Amendments to the GMA

The primary purpose of the periodic update is to ensure local plans and regulations comply with all current requirements. Although the basic structure of the GMA has remained intact over the years, the state legislature has amended it frequently. The checklists highlight all requirements and indicate when the changes were adopted. In addition to the checklists, Commerce has prepared a summary of these amendments by year to help you zero in on what needs to be amended, based on when your plans and regulations were last amended. See Appendix E.

Partially planning jurisdictions only need to review and evaluate their policies and development regulations governing critical areas and natural resource lands. Fully planning jurisdictions will need to conduct a review and evaluation of all comprehensive plan provisions and development regulations. Jurisdictions often combine the annual comprehensive plan docket (annual amendments) with the periodic update review when both are considered in the same year. When doing so, it is crucial to emphasize that the amendment includes periodic update review in the public participation plan, in notices for public hearings and in the legislative action(s). Hearings Board cases have faulted jurisdictions for not informing the public about what actions are related specifically to the periodic update.

UGAs and population projections

Urban growth areas (UGAs), which by definition include all cities, must allow development densities sufficient to accommodate the next twenty years of projected population and employment growth. If zoning regulations don't authorize the densities to accommodate this growth, jurisdictions need to increase allowed densities, expand the size of the UGA, or both.

All fully planning counties, in conjunction with cities, must review UGAs as part of the periodic update.¹²

The GMA requires that jurisdictions use twenty-year population projections from the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM). These projections are developed every five years.¹³ The previous twenty-year population forecast from OFM was issued in 2007;¹⁴ the most recent was issued in May 2012.

Multi-County Planning Policies in Central Puget Sound

The [Puget Sound Regional Council \(PSRC\)](#) adopted new multi-county planning policies (MPPs) in 2008 as part of Vision 2040. These policies apply to King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties and the cities within them.

To implement the MPPs, these counties are amending their county-wide planning policies (CWPPs) by December 2010. Jurisdictions in those counties must ensure their comprehensive plans are consistent with both the MPPs and CWPPs.

¹² [RCW 36.70A.130\(3\)\(a\)](#)

¹³ [RCW 43.62.035](#)

¹⁴ <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/pop/gma/default.asp>

Jurisdictions in Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish and Thurston counties will also need to review the results of the Buildable Lands report. This report is due one year prior to the due date of the periodic review.¹⁵

Any changes to UGAs must be consistent with adopted “County-Wide Planning Policies.” The policies, adopted by counties, set the general framework for coordinated land use planning between the county and its cities to ensure respective comprehensive plans are consistent with each other. Although it is not required, counties and cities may want to review these policies as part of their periodic update.

Critical areas ordinances

One of the initial requirements of the GMA was to designate and protect critical areas. The GMA requires all counties and cities to review and evaluate these critical areas ordinances during the periodic update.¹⁶ The GMA requires that “best available science” (BAS) be included in developing regulations to protect critical area functions and values. Meeting the BAS requirement was challenging for many jurisdictions in the initial round of periodic updates. The Department of Commerce and other state agencies, including the departments of Ecology and Fish and Wildlife, have published guidance for local communities on how to identify what constitutes BAS for critical areas protection and how local governments can include science in their policies and development regulations. These include model ordinances and lists of recommended habitats and species for protection. Counties and cities should consult these state agency recommendations for possible changes since their last periodic update. See Appendix F. In addition, they should include any other scientific information that may apply directly to their jurisdiction.

Until counties and cities have completed a comprehensive shoreline master program (SMP) update, uses or structures legally located within shoreline areas that were established or vested before the effective date of the CAO may continue as conforming uses. Cities and counties may authorize redevelopment or modification of these existing uses or structures provided they are consistent with the local SMP and will achieve no net loss of ecological functions.¹⁷

Mineral resource lands designations and development regulations

Another significant requirement of the initial GMA was for all counties and cities to designate mineral lands that are not already characterized by urban growth and that have long-term significance for the extraction of minerals. Fully planning jurisdictions were also required to adopt regulations that conserve these lands.¹⁸ The GMA requires that all jurisdictions review these mineral resource lands designations and requires fully planning jurisdictions to review their regulations. Counties and cities “shall take into consideration: (1) New information made

¹⁵ [RCW 36.70A.215](#)

¹⁶ [RCW 36.70A.130\(1\)\(c\)](#) , [RCW 36.70A.172\(1\)](#)

¹⁷ [RCW 36.70A.480\(3\)\(c\)](#), as amended by the 2010 legislature. Under [RCW 90.58.030](#), a “comprehensive SMP update” is defined as one that fully achieves requirements of Ecology’s SMP guidelines (WAC 173-26).

¹⁸ [RCW 36.70A.170](#); [RCW 36.70A.040](#) and [36.70A.060](#)

available since the adoption or last review of its designations or development regulations, including data available from the Department of Natural Resources relating to mineral resource deposits; and (2) New or modified model development regulations for mineral resource lands prepared by the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Commerce, or the Washington State Association of Counties.”¹⁹ See Appendix G.

Recommended items to review and revise (if needed)

Counties and cities should consider addressing the following in their periodic update. If any changes to a UGA are required, each of the following items should be reviewed and amended to reflect new population and urban area changes.

Land use element

The Land Use Element describes the “big picture” of how a community chooses to balance the goals of the GMA. Key components of the land use plan are maps showing the future shape of the community and how its essential components will be distributed. Resource lands, critical areas, open space corridors, mixed use areas, residential, commercial, industrial, and major public and private facilities should all be addressed. Because the Land Use Element is tied to other elements in the comprehensive plan, many periodic updates include amendments to the Land Use Element. Recent amendments to the GMA now require communities to consider urban planning approaches that promote physical activity as part of the land use element wherever possible.²⁰ Examples of policies to promote physical activity can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

Capital facilities and transportation elements

When a community is planning for population increases, this usually triggers the need for more or larger infrastructure, such as roads, utilities, and sewer and water facilities. Changes in anticipated circumstances and needs may be addressed by updating the Transportation Element, Utilities Element, and Capital Facilities Element.²¹ This task requires that planning departments collaborate closely with public works staff or other service providers. Note that if as part of your evaluation you determine that funds will fall short for needed capital facilities, your community may need to consider changes to the Land Use Element.

Internal and external consistency

Whenever a plan is being amended it is important to verify that it is “internally consistent” (e.g., that the Land Use and Transportation elements support each other) and that the development regulations are consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan.²² Also verify that the comprehensive plan is “externally consistent,” as changes to comprehensive plans and development regulations in adjacent jurisdictions, special purpose districts, or state plans may

¹⁹ [RCW 36.70A.131](#)

²⁰ [RCW 36.70A.070\(1\)](#)

²¹ [RCW 36.70A.070\(3\)](#)

²² The GMA requires this consistency in RCWs [36.70A.040\(4\)](#) and [36.70A.070](#)

create an inconsistency with the county or city's comprehensive plan or development regulations.

Inventories

Counties and cities should review existing inventories and analyze new inventory data that supports the comprehensive plan. The GMA specifically requires the following:

Housing: Inventory and analyze existing and projected housing needs, identifying the number of housing units necessary to serve projected growth.²³

Capital Facilities: Inventory existing capital facilities owned by public entities, showing the locations and capacities of the capital facilities, and forecast future needs and proposed locations and capacities of expanded or new facilities.²⁴

Transportation: An inventory of air, water and ground transportation facilities and services, including transit alignments and general aviation airport facilities, to define existing capital facilities and travel levels and a basis for future planning. This inventory must include state-owned transportation facilities within the city or county boundaries.²⁵

Jurisdictions should also review basic assumptions underlying key calculations and conclusions in the existing comprehensive plan. If recent data demonstrates that existing assumptions are no longer appropriate for the remainder of the twenty-year plan, counties and cities should consider updating them as part of the periodic update. Counties and cities required to establish a review and evaluation program under the “buildable lands program” should use that information in the periodic update.²⁶ The GMA now requires Transportation Elements to include a pedestrian and bicycle component. Jurisdictions may also consider including multimodal transportation strategies concurrent with development. See Appendix I.

3. Take legislative action

“Legislative action” under the GMA means adoption of a resolution or ordinance by elected officials (city or county council/commission) indicating that the community has reviewed and evaluated the comprehensive plan and regulations and identifying the revisions made. Counties and cities must provide adequate notice and hold a public hearing before taking action.

A county or city may combine the periodic update with their regular (*e.g., annual*) program for amendments to their plan, since the GMA generally prohibits comprehensive plan amendments more frequently than once per year.²⁷

²³ [RCW 36.70A.070\(2\)](#)

²⁴ [RCW 36.70A.070\(3\)](#)

²⁵ [RCW 36.70A.070\(6\)](#)

²⁶ [RCW 36.70A.215](#)

²⁷ [RCW 36.70A.130\(2\)\(a\)](#)

The final legislative action will be to adopt any revisions to the comprehensive plan and/or development regulations, and conclude that the periodic update is complete. The ordinance or resolution must be explicitly approved by the local government’s legislative body as having been completed in accordance with GMA update requirements (citing specifically to RCW 36.70A.130), both to comply with the statute and to set time and subject matter limits for possible challenges. The resolution or ordinance should include findings that refer to any previous legislative actions that were part of the periodic update (e.g., resolutions adopting a public participation plan), and a finding that the jurisdiction has completed its periodic update requirement under the GMA.

If a city or county finds that it completely meets all GMA requirements and no amendments to the comprehensive plan or development regulations are needed, it must still take legislative action adopting findings to that effect. See sample final legislative actions in Appendix C.

Phasing legislative action

If a jurisdiction has significant amendments to their plans and regulations, it may be necessary to complete the amendments in several phases, perhaps over more than one year. In some cases, each of these amendments will be adopted through a separate ordinance or resolution by the jurisdiction’s legislative body. If this process is used, a public hearing should be conducted on each ordinance or resolution. It should be clearly identified in the public hearing notice and in the findings of each ordinance or resolution that the amendments are part of the periodic update process.

Commerce recommends that the final legislative action taken upon completion of the entire periodic update process clearly reference all previously adopted amendments, and includes a finding that, taken all together, these actions fulfill the requirements of the periodic update. For an example please see the Town of Yacolt resolution included in Appendix H.

4. Submit notice to state agencies

Send Notice of Intent to Adopt (*at least 60 days before adoption*)

Under the GMA, cities and counties must notify Commerce of its “intent to adopt” plan or regulations at least sixty (60) days prior to final adoption.²⁸ This step is often referred to as “60-day notice.”²⁹ Commerce adds all submitted notices and materials to a database that all reviewing state agencies can access. Agencies may provide comments to the city or county on the proposed changes during the public review process prior to adoption.

Send final plans and development regulations (*10 days after adoption*)

Cities and counties must submit a complete and accurate copy of its comprehensive plan or development regulations adopted under the GMA to Commerce within ten days after final

²⁸ [RCW 36.70A.106\(1\)](#)

²⁹ Some cities and counties combine this notice with their notice of determination required under the [State Environmental Policy Act](#)

adoption.³⁰ A copy of the signed adopting resolution or ordinance should be included, as well as indication of when the notice of adoption was published.

This is an important step as it not only finalizes the periodic update, but it also allows Commerce to update our database to signify that a specific jurisdiction has completed the periodic update. Commerce relies on this database when asked to verify that a jurisdiction is in compliance with the GMA.

How to submit plans and regulations

Submitting GMA materials to the state is as easy as sending one e-mail with a cover sheet and relevant documents to reviewteam@commerce.wa.gov. Directions are on the [Commerce Website](#). While electronic submittal is preferred, you may send materials by mail, either on a flash drive, compact disc, or paper, addressed to the Washington State Department of Commerce, Growth Management Services Review Team, PO Box 42525, 1011 Plum Street SE, Olympia, WA 98504-2525.

III. Missed deadlines and appeals

Missing the periodic update deadline has immediate financial consequences. A county or city that has not completed the basic actions described above by the deadline set in the GMA will be ineligible to receive funds from the Public Works Trust Fund³¹ or the Centennial Clean Water account³² or to receive preference for other state grants and loans.³³

A jurisdiction that has missed an update deadline is also vulnerable to a “failure to act” petition for review to a Growth Management Hearings Board (or for partially-planning jurisdictions, to Superior Court).

If a local government has made significant progress on its update, but hasn’t finished all needed revisions by their periodic update deadline, it would be prudent to take steps to demonstrate good faith and progress. Local jurisdictions may adopt a resolution that documents progress already made and sets a schedule for completing the update. See Appendix C for an example. While this will not relieve a local government of its update requirements, or make a local government eligible for state grants and loans, it may prevent a “failure-to-act” challenge, provided the update is completed under the new schedule.

Appeals of an adopted update ordinance or resolution

Any person or organization with legal standing can appeal a resolution or ordinance adopted during the periodic update process. Challenges to actions taken by fully-planning jurisdictions must be filed with the Growth Management Hearings Boards within sixty days of publication of

³⁰ [RCW 36.70A.106\(2\)](#)

³¹ [RCW 43.155.070](#)

³² [RCW 70.146.070](#)

³³ [RCW 36.70A.130\(7\)](#)

final adoption. Challenges to actions taken by partially-planning jurisdictions are filed in Superior Court.

A legal challenge could potentially be filed on any legislative action taken to complete the update. However, a jurisdiction can reduce its risk of appeal by completing each of the basic actions described above and taking legislative action that clearly documents the process followed for each action, as well as the findings and conclusions of each action.

IV. Grants for periodic updates

The Department of Commerce administers a grant program for counties and cities with upcoming periodic update deadlines. The grant can be used to cover many activities related to updating comprehensive plans and development regulations, such as staff time, consultant contracts, and the cost of providing public notice, printing, and copying.

A set grant amount is typically reserved for each jurisdiction, when state funding allows, based on population and the level of required GMA responsibilities. If funding is approved by the Legislature, grants generally become available 18-24 months prior to each jurisdiction's periodic update deadline.

V. Appendices*

A. GMS Planner Map with assignments

B. Update “Work Program”

C. Example Resolutions/Ordinances

Public Participation

Scope of Periodic Update Work Program

Final “legislative action” adoption completing update

Update work not complete, set schedule for completion

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Periodic Update Checklist for Cities

Periodic Update Checklist for Counties

E. Changes to GMA

Amendments to the GMA from 1995-2009

Amendments to GMA from 2003 – 2010

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Critical Areas Checklist Questions Explained

Critical Areas Review for Best Available Science (BAS)

State Agency Resources for Local Governments Updating Critical Areas Ordinances

G. Resource Lands

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Good examples of comprehensive plans and development regulations

I. Other Planning Guidance and Resources

Department of Commerce GMS [Publications](#) List by Topics

WSDOT Minimum Requirements and Resources

Municipal Research Services Center planning [website](#)

* These appendices are available on the Commerce GMS website at:

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/Services/localgovernment/GrowthManagement/Growth-Management-Planning-Topics/Pages/GMA-Periodic-Update.aspx>

15 | Keeping Your Comprehensive Plan & Development Regulations Current: A Guide to the Periodic Update Process

Laws, rules, legal decisions

[The Growth Management Act and related statutes](#)

[Growth Management Act rules](#)

[Growth Management Hearings Boards](#)
