Planning and the Growth Management Act
The Growth Management Act

- Rapid growth began to change perceived quality of life in late 1980s.
- The GMA was adopted in 1990 and 1991.
- Several other states have growth management acts but Washington is unique: Local governments statewide determine how to meet their community needs rather than a top-down approach used elsewhere.
The Growth Management - The Big Picture

- Urban areas to contain most of new growth
  - Availability and efficiency of Utilities/Facilities/Services

- Rural Areas to develop as rural
  - Agriculture/Forestry/Mining “working lands”

- Environmentally Sensitive Areas (critical areas)
Goals of the Growth Management Act

Local jurisdictions must determine how to achieve a balance in satisfying Growth Management Act’s statewide goals.
The 14 Goals of the GMA – All Equally Important

- **Citizen Participation** – encourage citizen involvement.
- **Economic Development** – consistency with comp plans, promote opportunities for all citizens.
- **Environment** – protect and enhance air & water quality and availability of water.
- **Historic Preservation** – identify and encourage.
- **Housing** – affordable housing for all, variety of densities and housing types and preserve existing housing.
- **Natural Resource Industries** – maintain and enhance.
- **Open Space and Recreation** – retain open space,
The 14 Goals of the GMA (continued)

- **Permits** – issue permits in timely and fair manner.
- **Property Rights** – protect private property rights from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.
- **Public Facilities and Services** – ensure adequacy and availability at time of development.
- **Reduce Sprawl** - conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.
- **Shoreline Management** – goals & policies part of comprehensive plan and development regulations.
- **Transportation** – efficient multimodal transportation systems.
- **Urban Growth** - urban areas served with adequate public facilities.
The GMA applies to all cities and counties in the state.
Classification, designation and protection/conservation of

**Critical Areas:**
- wetlands
- fish & wildlife habitat conservation areas
- aquifer recharge areas
- frequently flooded areas
- geologically hazardous areas

**Natural Resource Lands:**
- forest lands
- agricultural lands
- mineral resource lands
Agricultural Lands of Long-Term Commercial Significance
Growth Management Act Requirements for fully planning communities

- County-wide planning policies
- Comprehensive plan
- Development regulations
- Project review
Inter-jurisdictional Cooperation: Countywide Planning Policies

Policy framework for local plans to:

♦ Designate urban growth areas
♦ Site county-wide or state-wide facilities
♦ Consider need for affordable housing
♦ Jointly plan within urban growth areas
♦ Plan for economic development
Designation of Urban Growth Areas (UGAs)

- Population allocation
- Land capacity analysis
- Provision for adequate public facilities and services
Steps Involved in Developing a Comprehensive Plan

- Visioning Process
  - Overall community vision translated into GOALS
- Inventory – Assess Assets and Deficits
  - Land Capacity Analysis
  - Critical Areas Identification
  - Capital Facilities Assessment
- Population projections
- Develop policies, objectives
- Identify action steps – strategies
- Monitor and Revise
Elements that MUST be Included in Comprehensive Plans

- Land Use
- Housing
- Capital Facilities
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Shoreline Master Program (policies)
- Rural (counties only)
Required and Optional Elements

Required *(When state funds available)*:
- Economic Development
- Parks and Recreation

Optional Element Examples:
- Alternative Energy
- Social Services
- Community Design
- Sub-area Plans
- Cultural Diversity
Development Regulations
Implement the Plan

- zoning
- plats and subdivisions
- Development standards
- critical areas
- siting of essential public facilities
- shoreline master program (regulations)
- Impact fees
- Procedural requirements
Consistency

♦ Plan externally consistent

♦ Plan internally consistent:
  • Elements of plan consistent
  • Development regulations consistent with the plan
  • Activities and capital budget decisions
  • Projects consistent with the plan and regulations
Concurrency / Level of Service (LOS)
Public Facilities and Services

- Transportation
- Sewer
- Water
- Utilities
- Parks
- Fire
- Police
Flexible Alternatives

- Master Planned Resorts
- Major Industrial Developments
- New Fully Contained Communities
- Limited Areas of More Intense Development (LAMIRDS – Raids)
- New and Innovative Zoning Techniques
Early and Continuous Public Participation

Public participation program:
- Notice requirements
- Public meetings
- Workshops
- Citizen advisory committees
- Public hearings
- Opportunities for written comment
Growth Management Hearings Board

• Panels hear cases in three regions
• Review plans and regulations, including Shoreline Master Plans
• Plans and regulations presumed valid
Keeping Plans Current

- Annual Amendments
- Periodic Review:
  - Review and revise as necessary every 8 years

- Keep up with new legislation
- Best Available Science
- Local Circumstances
- New OFM population projections
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