



Briefing – Planning Commission

Issue Title: Department of Community Development: 2024 Comprehensive Plan Remand and Certification

Meeting Date: January 6, 2026

Time Required: 10 Minutes

Attendees: Keri Sallee, Senior Planner, DCD

Action Requested At This Meeting: No action necessary – briefing to update on status of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Remand/Certification issues and next steps.

Background:

On August 8, 2025, the Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB) issued a Final Decision and Order finding that the County's 2024 Comprehensive Plan was noncompliant with the Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW 36.70A, in several respects. The GMHB identified the following deficiencies:

- Housing. The residential land capacity analysis (LCA) for the Housing element overstated redevelopment capacity, excluded most residential potential in mixed-use zones, and failed to demonstrate sufficient housing unit capacity for all income groups, particularly extremely low to moderate housing (0-80% AMI).
- Wildfire Risk and Planning. The Land Use element did not adequately address wildfire risk and emergency evacuation. The Plan did not adopt recognized wildfire planning frameworks, such as the International Wildland Urban Interface code (IWUIC) or Firewise USA standards, or equivalent alternatives.

On August 28, 2025, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) issued its Certification Report on the 2024 Comprehensive Plan (Attachment 7). The PSRC identified the following deficiencies:

- Housing. The PSRC concurred with the GMHB's finding that the Comprehensive Plan showed a housing deficit for all income groups, particularly below 80% AMI.
- Employment Capacity. The Land Use element showed a countywide employment capacity deficit, particularly in the Silverdale regional center and other unincorporated UGAs.

- Air Quality. The Transportation element lacked a required policy ensuring compliance with federal and state air quality standards and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

The GMHB's original Order required the identified comp plan deficiencies to be resolved and adopted by ordinance no later than February 4, 2026. However, in November 2025, the County requested and received an extension of the deadline, to June 30, 2026. Both the GMHB appeal issues and the PSRC certification issues must be addressed by this date.

Current Status of County Response: A draft of proposed text amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and proposed LCA revisions was released for public review on November 10, 2025. A SEPA Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) and environmental checklist were also issued on November 10. The Planning Commission reviewed the draft amendments at a work-study meeting on November 18, and provided recommendations to DCD staff. Additional refinements to the LCA methodology and calculations will be made in early 2026. Additional measures for compliance with allocated housing and/or employment targets may also be considered as needed.

Next Steps:

- January-February 2026: Additional staff analysis and proposed revisions to the comprehensive plan and the LCA methodology.
- March 2026: Release of draft amendments to the comprehensive plan and LCA for public review and comment.