

Washington State Climate Planning

New Requirements

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Washington State
Department of
Commerce

We strengthen communities



HOUSING AND
HOMELESSNESS



INFRASTRUCTURE AND
BROADBAND



SMALL BUSINESS
ASSISTANCE



ENERGY



PLANNING AND TECH
ASSISTANCE



COMMUNITY
SERVICES AND FACILITIES



CRIME VICTIMS AND
PUBLIC SAFETY



ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

Outline

- Early Legislation and actions
- New climate law
- Resources and tools
- Funding Available



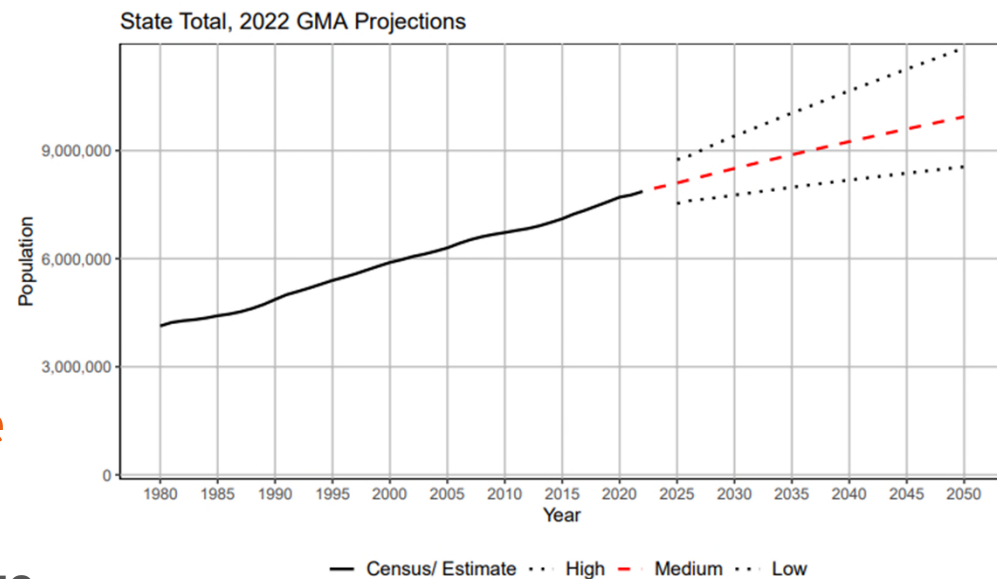
Why a Growth Management Act?

The GMA was adopted in 1990 as a statewide planning framework to:

- Address uncoordinated development and urban sprawl
- Manage threats to the quality of life in Washington
- Require local planning, guided by state law, and regionally enforced

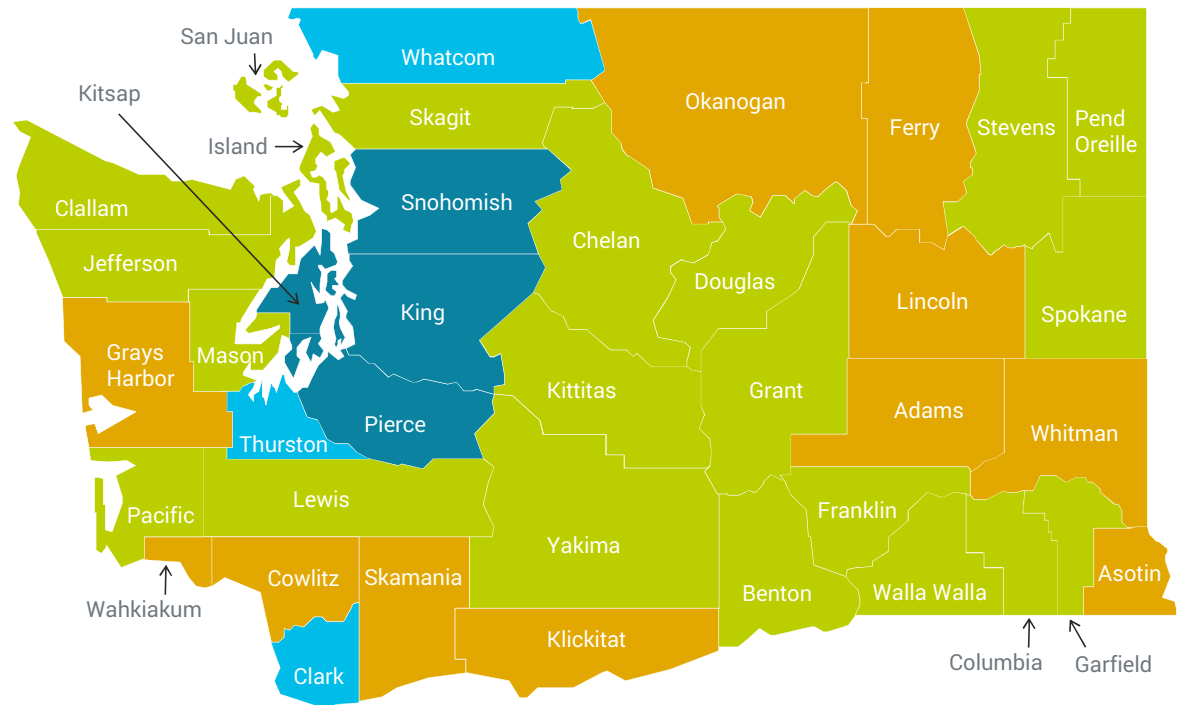
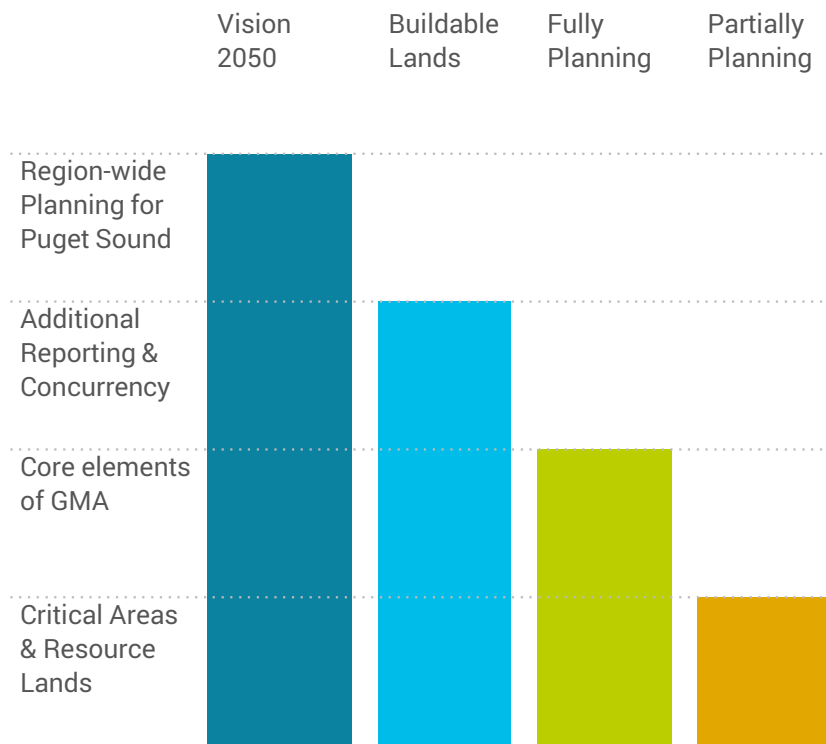
State law: **RCW 36.70**

Advisory recommendations: **WAC 365-196**



OFM Forecasting & Research Division | December 2022

Regional Variation in the GMA



15 GMA Planning Goals

1. Encourage compact urban growth
2. Reduce sprawl
3. Encourage coordinated, multimodal transportation
4. Plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments
5. Encourage economic development
6. Protect property rights
7. Predictable permitting
8. Maintain natural resource industries
9. Retain open space, enhance recreation
10. Protect the environment
11. Encourage citizen participation
12. Ensure availability of public facilities and services
13. Encourage historic preservation
14. (New) Ensure comprehensive plans adapt & mitigate effects of a changing climate
15. Manage shoreline development

Early Legislative Context



Early Legislative Actions

2020: Updated GHG targets (RCW 70A.45.020)

By 2030, 45%
below 1990 levels

By 2040, 70%
below 1990 levels

By 2050, 95%
below 1990 levels

2021-2022: Voluntary Climate Program

- Model climate element & guidance
 - Voluntary planning guidance to reduce GHG emissions and build climate resilience (adaptation, etc.)
- State agency collaboration
- \$2.5m grant program to cities

New Climate Law (2023)

Growth Management Act adds Climate Element

RCW 36.70A



Climate planning is a new goal of the Growth Management Act

New Climate Element

([Chapter 228, 2023 Laws](#))

Adds mandatory sub-elements:

- **Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction** mandatory for 11 counties and their cities over 6,000 pop.
- **Resilience** mandatory for all fully planning jurisdictions.

Applicable counties and their cities	2025	2026	2029
○ Benton		X	
○ Clark	X		
○ Franklin		X	
○ King			X
○ Kitsap			X
○ Pierce			X
○ Skagit	X		
○ Snohomish			X
○ Spokane		X	
○ Thurston	X		
○ Whatcom	X		



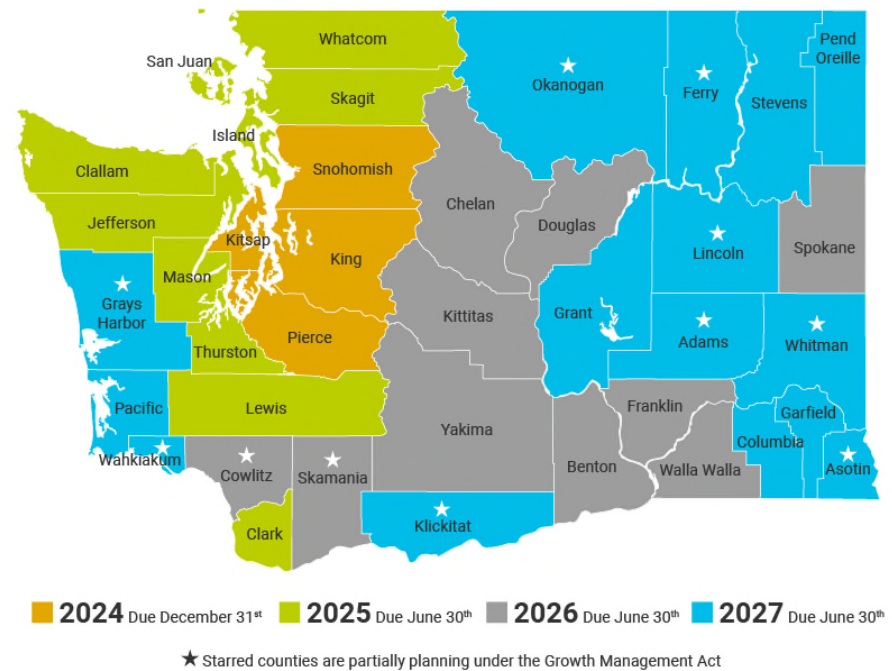
Environmental justice (EJ)

- Climate Element must:
 - Prioritize EJ
- Land Use Element must avoid worsening environmental health disparities.
- Transportation Element must create multimodal levels to achieve EJ goals
- Grants for community-based organizations to advance participation of overburdened communities in planning process

New roles for Commerce

City/County may submit climate GHG emissions reduction sub-element for approval

- Applicable to cities/counties required to include sub-element
- Effective date would be **when approved** by Commerce
- Appeals to the Growth Management Hearings Board would be limited to non-compliance with guidance.
- GHG reduction element not subject to administrative or judicial appeal



Resources & Funding



Climate planning guidance

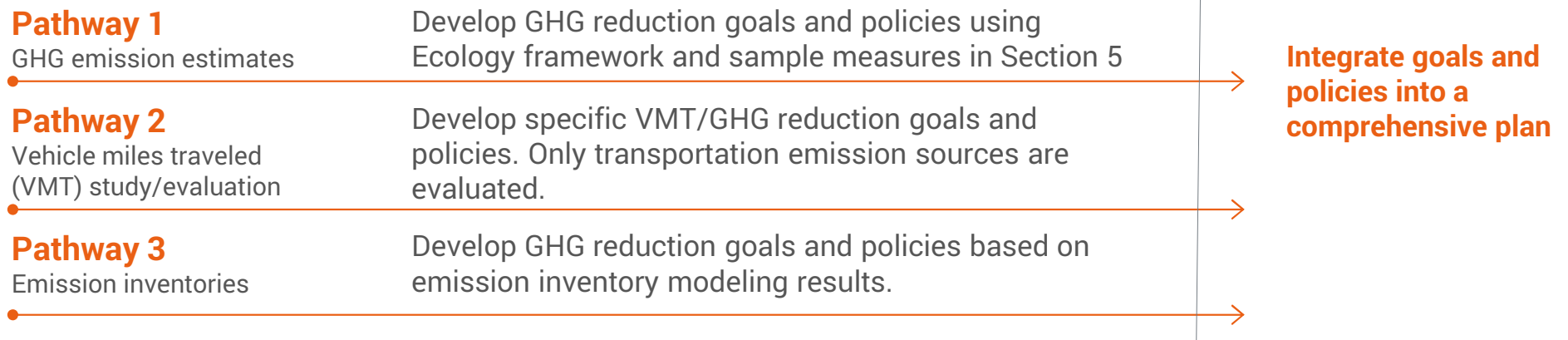
- Climate element planning guidance is available [online](#)
- Focused on voluntary compliance
- Update due 12/31 based on new law (HB 1181)



Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction sub-element

How to achieve GHG emission reductions?

Evaluations, inventories and goals & policies



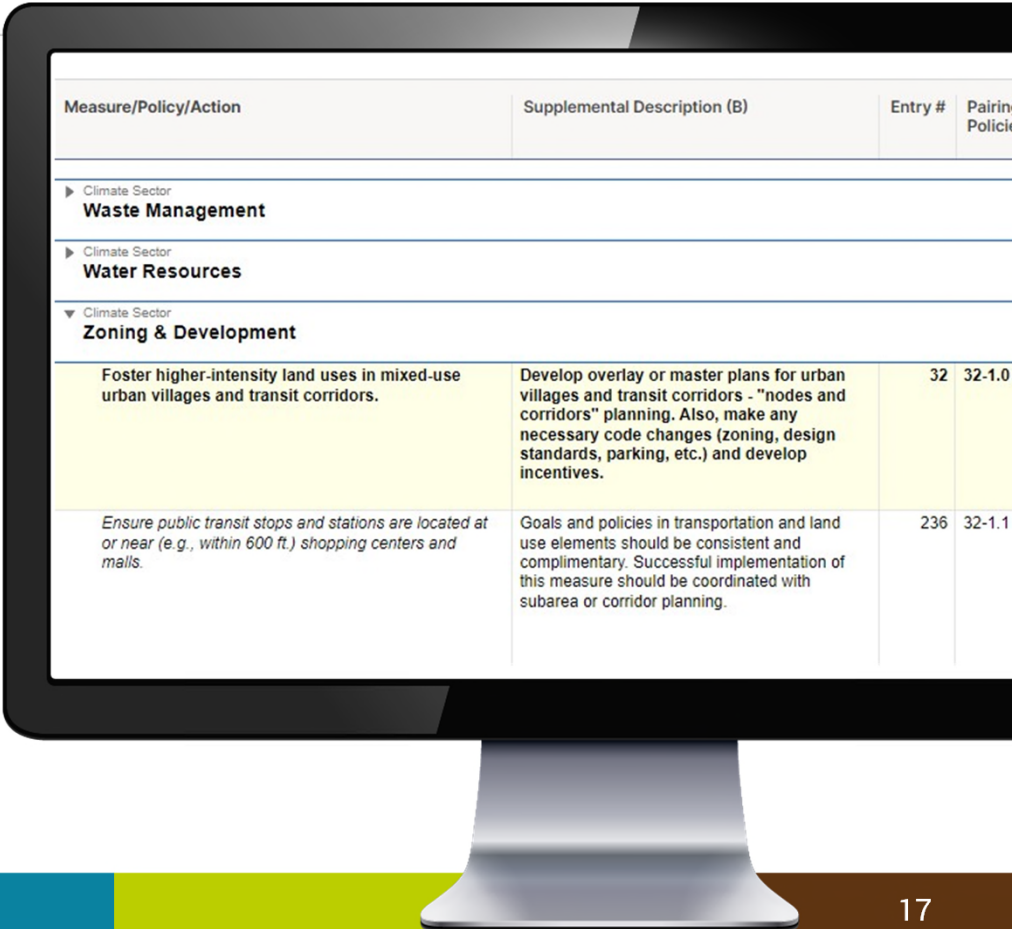
Resilience sub-element



Climate Measures

Searchable Attributes:

- Measures (goals and policies)
- Type (Resilience or Mitigation)
- Supplemental information
- Climate Sector
- Comprehensive Plan Element
- Grouping/pairing
- Implementation tools
- Progress tracking



Measure/Policy/Action	Supplemental Description (B)	Entry #	Pairing Policy
► Climate Sector Waste Management			
► Climate Sector Water Resources			
▼ Climate Sector Zoning & Development			
Foster higher-intensity land uses in mixed-use urban villages and transit corridors.	Develop overlay or master plans for urban villages and transit corridors - "nodes and corridors" planning. Also, make any necessary code changes (zoning, design standards, parking, etc.) and develop incentives.	32	32-1.0
Ensure public transit stops and stations are located at or near (e.g., within 600 ft.) shopping centers and malls.	Goals and policies in transportation and land use elements should be consistent and complimentary. Successful implementation of this measure should be coordinated with subarea or corridor planning.	236	32-1.1

Prioritization of Measures

Legislative Directive:

“Prioritize actions that benefit overburdened communities that will disproportionately suffer from compounding environmental impacts...”

Initial criteria

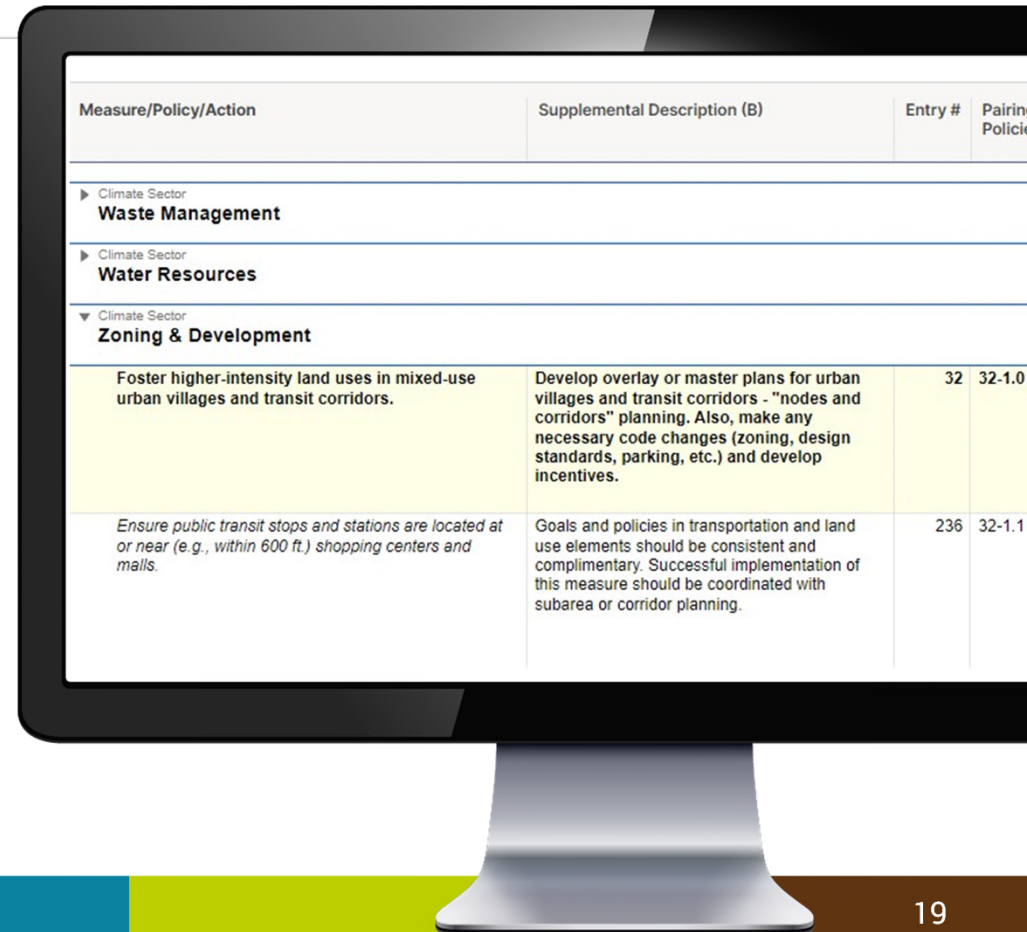
- Effectiveness
- Longevity
- Multiple co-benefits

Local criteria

- Equity lens
- Unintended consequences
- Feasibility
- Cost
- Political or public support
- Authority

Planning Resources

- Over 200 climate measures (goals & policies)
- Climate scholarly resources (websites, videos)
- Available online via Smart Sheets dashboard
- Could download as an excel file
- Searchable by multiple attributes



The image shows a computer monitor displaying a table of climate measures. The table has four columns: Measure/Policy/Action, Supplemental Description (B), Entry #, and Pairing Policy. The table is organized into sections by climate sector: Climate Sector, Waste Management, Climate Sector, Water Resources, and Climate Sector, Zoning & Development. The Zoning & Development section contains two rows of data.

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Planning Grants

- Awarding ~\$30M this biennium (2023-2025) as formula grants
- Fully planning cities and counties are eligible
- Priority for 2025 and 2026 update jurisdictions
- Funding available through 2029, with an annual application period

Thank you!

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Department of
Commerce

Visit these webpages:

- **Commerce's Climate Program webpage.** While there, subscribe for climate updates!
- **MRSC's Climate Change webpage.** Also, MRSC has quarterly Climate Peer Network meetings. Contact Lisa Pool, AICP for more information: **lpool@mrsc.org**