



Department of Commerce

Addressing Climate Change in Local Growth Management Act (GMA) Comprehensive Plans A Climate Change Guidebook

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Climate Change Policy

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We strengthen communities

The Department of Commerce touches every aspect of community and economic development. We work with local governments, businesses and civic leaders to strengthen communities so all residents may thrive and prosper.



Planning



Infrastructure



Community
Facilities



Housing



Safety /
Crime Victims



Business
Assistance



Policy basis for this climate change work in Washington

RCW 70.235.020 (2008) Greenhouse Gas Emissions must be reduced:

- ✓ by January 1, 2020 to 1990 levels;
- ✓ by January 1, 2035 to 25 percent below 1990 levels;
- ✓ by January 1, 2050, to 50 percent below 1990 levels.

Governors Executive Order 14-04

- Commerce to work with WSDOT, Ecology, RTPOs, counties, and cities to develop programs of financial and technical assistance to **help local governments implement measures to improve transportation efficiency, update comprehensive plans, to produce travel and land use patterns that maximize efficiency of movement of goods and people and reduce costs and greenhouse gas emissions.**
- Agencies will work with Washington's local governments to maximize coordination and effectiveness of local and state climate initiatives.



New climate change guidebook from Commerce



What will local governments gain from the guidebook?

1. A basis for counties and cities in Washington State to plan for and protect themselves from the negative impacts of climate change via GMA comprehensive plans. (adaptation/resilience)
2. Assistance in decision making and integrating goals, objectives and policies related to climate change in GMA comprehensive plans.
3. Technical resources for communicating on, planning for and dealing with climate change issues.
4. Technical resources to assist in reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. (mitigation)
5. Example policies and regulations.



Ten steps necessary for success in integrating climate change policies in your GMA comprehensive plan

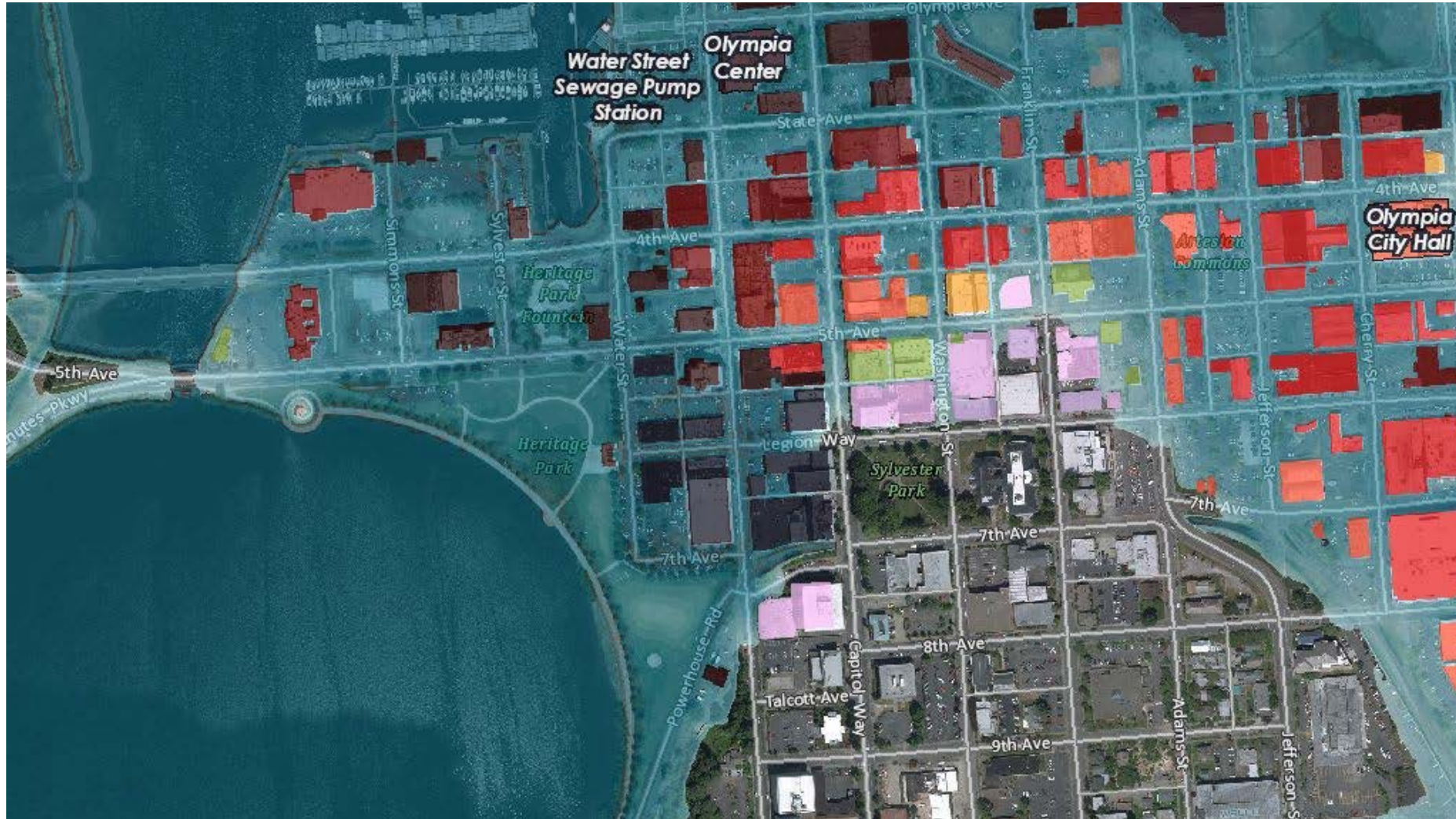
1. Understand climate change in the context of Washington State and the Pacific Northwest.
2. Understand the value of addressing climate change in the context of GMA comprehensive plans.
3. Communicate with elected officials/managers and public constituents about the importance and urgency of addressing climate change through GMA comprehensive plans.
4. Policy decision: Do you want to include/integrate climate change policies in your jurisdictions' GMA comprehensive plan?
5. Policy decision: Do you want to plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions or adaptation to climate change in the future or both?
6.
 - (a) If you want to address the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; your jurisdiction should invest in a greenhouse gas emissions inventory.
 - (b) If you want to address adaptation to climate change, your jurisdiction should invest in a "climate change vulnerability assessment".
 - (c) You should invest in both 6a and 6b if you have the resources.
7. Use the information from Step 6 to develop climate change strategies, goals, objectives and policies.
8. Integrate your mitigation and/or adaptation strategies in appropriate comprehensive plan chapters.
9. Adopt your GMA comprehensive plan (including implementation plans through your legislative process.
10. Implement and move toward your planning and climate change goals.



Climate change: a global phenomenon with significant local impacts



Climate change: a global phenomenon with significant local impacts



Sea level rise projections, City of Olympia



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Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA)



Between 1990 and 2010, our state's population grew from 4.1 to 6.7 million people. We are expected to reach 9 million by 2040. (OFM)

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

RCW 36.70A



14 GMA Goals

RCW 36.70A.020



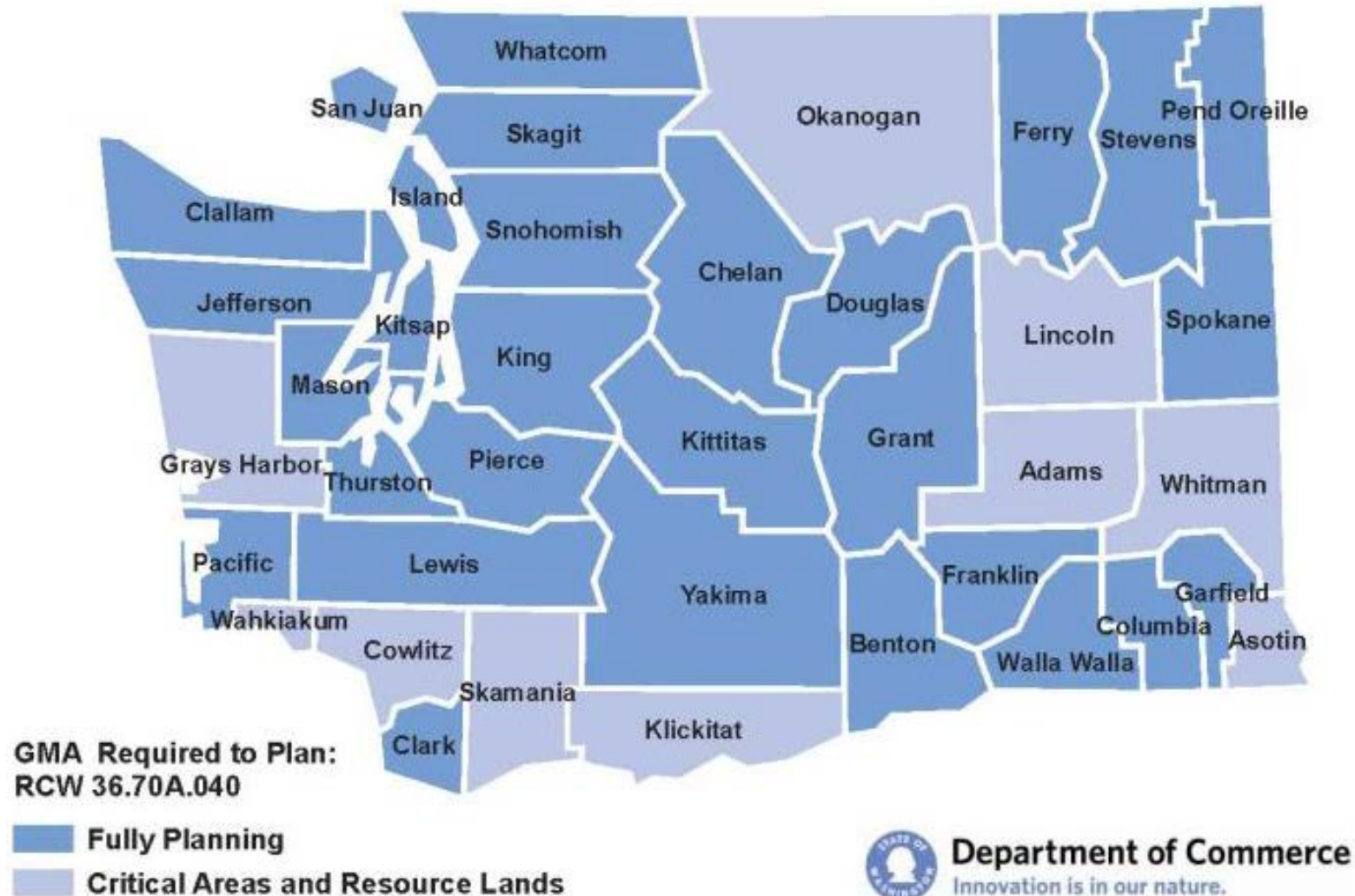
- Encourage compact urban growth
- Reduce sprawl
- Encourage coordinated, multimodal transportation
- Encourage affordable housing
- Encourage economic development
- Protect property rights
- Predictable permitting
- Maintain natural resource industries
- Retain open space, enhance recreation
- Protect the environment
- Encourage citizen participation
- Ensure availability of public facilities and services
- Encourage historic preservation
- Manage shoreline development



Faster growing counties must fully plan



Growth Management Act Mandate to Plan



Required Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

RCW 36.70A.070 and WAC 365-196, Optional Elements RCW 36.70A.080



- **Land Use:** Land use designations, population densities, stormwater planning, ground water, **physical activity**
- **Transportation:** Inventory, assessment of current and future needs, concurrency, levels of service, **bicycle and pedestrian component.**
- **Housing:** Identifies the character of residential areas, Inventories existing and projected housing needs and types, including affordable housing. Identifies sufficient land for all types of housing.
- **Utilities:** Inventory, assessment of current and future needs, coordination between providers and land development.
- **Capital Facilities:** Inventory, assessment of current and future needs, coordination of planning affordability analysis of serving the land use plan.
- **Rural (counties only):** Define and protect rural character.



Countywide planning policies (RCW 36.70A.210)



Regional framework to:

- Plan for future growth and address countywide population projections from the State Office of Financial Management.
- Designate and plan for urban growth areas and expansions to designated urban areas
- Multicounty planning policies assembled in Vision 2040 – Puget Sound Regional Council.

Additional issues can be added (binding)



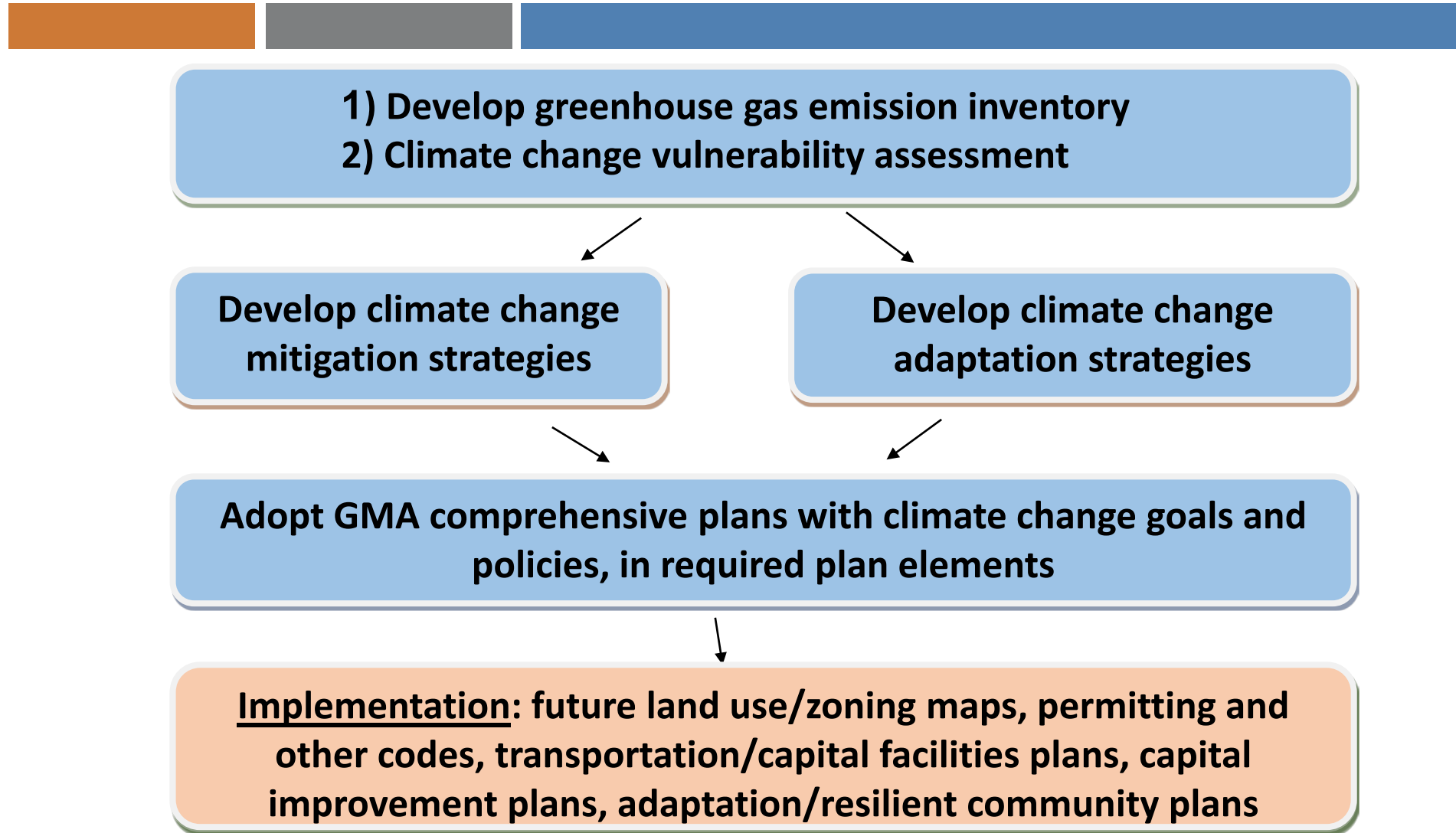
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How to present/discuss or promote climate change issues with elected officials and public constituents?

- How has the weather been treating you in the last few years?
- The economics of climate change \$\$\$
 - ❖ What infrastructure and assets does a jurisdiction have?
 - ❖ What will it cost to prepare for climate change related events?
 - ❖ What will it cost to rebuild if the worst happens?
 - ❖ Can you afford to do nothing?
- What does your insurance carrier say?



Process to address climate change in local plans



Local solutions to climate change: many in the planning realm

Managing Flooding:

- Protecting wetlands
- Flood prevention ordinances

Drought:

- Low impact development ordinances
- Landscaping ordinances
- Water supply planning

Energy Management:

- Transit oriented development
- Building efficiency
- Solar/wind power generation



How to address climate change issues into a GMA comprehensive plan?

Integrate climate change goals, policies, and objectives into required elements:

- Land use
- Transportation
- Housing
- Capital facilities/utilities
- Rural (Counties only)
- Shoreline master program

Consolidate climate change policies into new comprehensive plan elements, or in climate change action plans, hazard mitigation plans, resilience/adaptation plans, or safeguarding communities.

(Both) Integrate climate change goals and policies into required elements *and* develop separate chapters.



Adopting the Comprehensive Plan



Plan Adoption Process

- Public outreach early and often
- Review by Planning Commission
- Complete SEPA environmental review
- 60-days notice to state before adopting (state does not approve plan)
- City or County Council must adopt the comprehensive plan
- Document that your plan and process is complete in a summary finding or separate resolution:
 - Comprehensive plan and policies are complete
 - Development Regulations have been updated
 - Critical Areas Regulations have been updated/completed.

GMA plan implementation



Development regulations help implement comprehensive plans.



- **Zoning** considers *maximum* densities and *minimum* lot sizes for efficient land use.
- **Climate Action Certification** - EcoAdapt
- **Critical area regulations** set buffers and restrictions in critical areas.
- **Other regulations** such as for solar and wind power infrastructure, electric vehicle infrastructure, and green building incentives can influence the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

“Urban planning approaches that promote physical activity” [RCW 36.70A.070(1)]



Consider in existing and newly developing areas:

- Higher intensity residential or mixed-use land use designations
- Transit-oriented districts /corridors
- Collocating public facilities such as schools, parks, libraries
- Multimodal approaches to concurrency
- Remove regulatory or policy barriers to promoting physical activity for new or existing development.

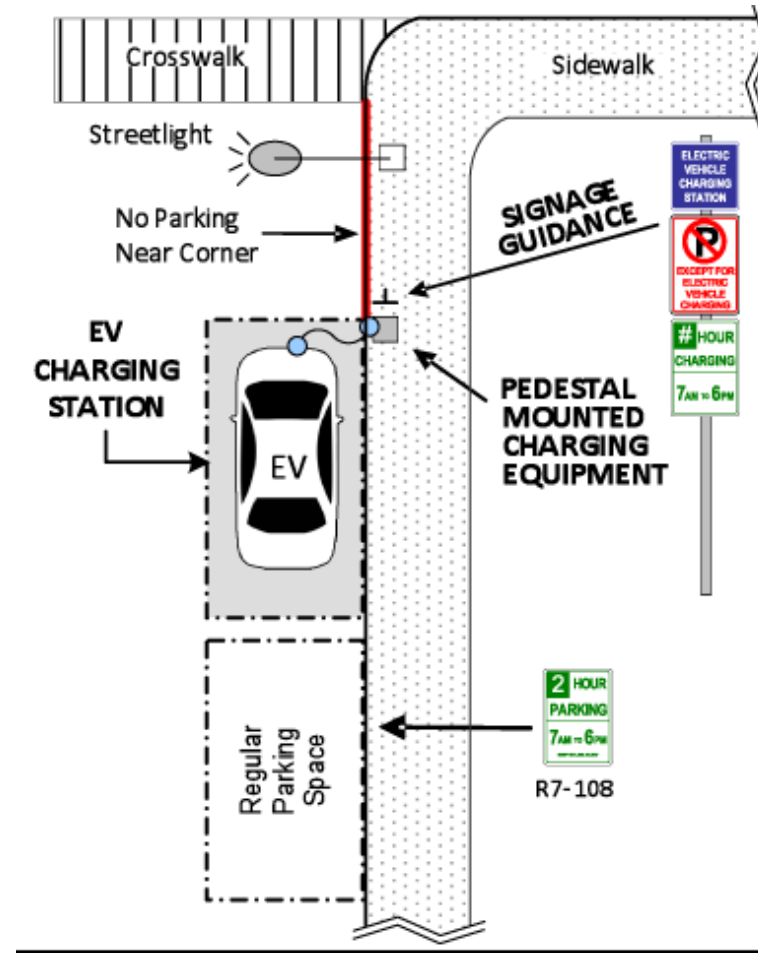
Reductions in vehicle miles traveled = reductions in greenhouse gas emissions!



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Electric vehicle infrastructure (RCW 36.70A.695)

- Certain counties must allow charging stations, (and battery exchange stations).



Climate Change Guidebook Content

- Ten steps necessary for success in integrating climate change policies in your GMA comprehensive plan
- Climate change in the Washington State and the Pacific Northwest
- Why should communities address climate change in their GMA Comprehensive plans?
- Why are GMA comprehensive plans good venues to plan for climate change?
- How to present/discuss or promote climate change issues with elected officials and public constituents?
- How to address climate change issues in a GMA comprehensive plan?
- Where do climate change policies fit in a GMA comprehensive plan?
 - Examples: climate change goals, objectives and policies
- GMA comprehensive plan development, implementation, climate change action plans and elements.



Climate Change Guidebook Content

Appendices:

- **Climate change 101**
- **The economics of climate change**
- **Social equality and equity related to climate change.**
- **Implementation plans/actions**
- **Links to comprehensive plans where climate change is addressed / integrated. / Links to climate change action plans**
- **Resources, climate change programs initiated at Commerce**
- **Directory of WA State expertise**
- **Funding resources: Where to apply for funding for climate change projects (grants & loans).**





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