



## MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 26, 2024  
TO: Project file #CPA-2024-0001  
FROM: Ann Siegenthaler, Senior Planner  
RE: 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update – **Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

### BACKGROUND / WHY THE AMENDMENTS ARE BEING PROPOSED

The State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires cities to periodically update their Comprehensive Plans. The State also requires that cities complete a “10-year periodic update,” which requires this update to occur by the end of 2024. This 10-year update will involve extensive revisions to the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) and regulations to reflect new State laws and changes that have occurred over the last decade.

Although the Comp Plan update was open to private proposals for amendments (deadline January 25, 2023), no applications from the public were received, no rezones are proposed. City staff has been working with BERK Consulting and other subject matter experts to update the Comp Plan and Zoning Code to address new State requirements related to housing, environment, and climate, among other areas.

The process for amending the City Comprehensive Plan is specified in the Sumner Municipal Code section 18.56.147 and in the state Growth Management Act (GMA) (RCW 36.70A).

### DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

The 2024 amendments include changes to all chapters of the Comprehensive Plan and various changes to the Zoning Code development regulations. Many of the proposed changes consist of minor “clean up” of existing policies and regulations; some will be significant changes that are driven by new State and County requirements for new/revised policies. As proposals are reviewed and evaluated during the amendment process, additional changes may be needed (e.g. a regulation change to implement a new policy). Below is a general summary of the 2024 Comp Plan amendments being considered.

#### 1. **Comprehensive Plan Text Amendments**

Sumner’s Comprehensive Plan must be consistent with the requirements of the State Growth Management Act (GMA), Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) and Puget Sound Regional Council’s multi-county policies in the Vision 2050 regional plan. While most Comp Plan chapters are mandatory under the GMA, some are optional (such as Community Character). The Chapters/Elements to be updated are listed below, including some new topics required by GMA and/or CPPs.

##### A. **Community Values**

##### B. **Community Vision**

##### C. **Plan Monitoring and Amendment**

- Provides a framework for monitoring and amending the Comprehensive Plan to meet State requirements.

#### **D. Governance and Permitting**

- Updates to address tribal participation, equity and inclusion requirements (CPPs).

#### **D. Community Character**

- Policies that support/promote quality design, historic downtown and Town Center, employment and business, walkable neighborhoods, protecting cultural and environmental resources.

#### **E. Family and Human Services**

- Policies related to services and community well-being.

#### **F. Economic Development and Employment**

- Updates to align with employment targets, transit goals, economic development goals.

#### **G. Land Use**

- Contains land use designations and density ranges (determines zoning)
- Must accommodate Sumner's assigned housing and employment targets (GMA)
- Updates relative to goals for "healthy communities" (CPPs)
- Updates to address racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion (GMA)
- Updates to allow more housing density and more housing types.

#### **H. Essential Public Facilities**

- Addresses how to site difficult regional facilities such as transfer stations, correctional facilities.
- Policies updated to reflect new State requirements for definitions and siting criteria, updates to add more specific criteria.
- Code changes are being developed in a separate process outside of the Comp Plan update.

#### **I. Historic and Cultural Resources**

- Policies for protecting historic/cultural resources, supporting cultural events.
- Updates policies regarding coordination with tribes, consideration of culturally significant sites and prehistory, requirements to consult with State preservation office, working with historical societies, and promoting culturally diverse events.
- Proposed code updates would: Require DAHP consultation for demolition of a building & larger new construction on sites in Town Center with structures more than 45 years old (State guideline); add requirement for "inadvertent finds" to permits.

#### **J. Environment and Climate Change**

- Updates policies related to protecting the natural environment.
- Updates policies relative to greenhouse gas reduction, energy efficiency and climate resiliency (GMA, CPPs).
- Proposed code includes updates to critical areas regulations, exemptions, and increased stream buffers for certain streams to reflect new "Best Available Science."

#### **K. Housing**

- Updates as needed to reflect housing needs and to meet required growth targets.
- Develop housing allocation strategies to provide for all economic segments of the community (GMA)
- Updates as needed relative to racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion (GMA).
- Proposed code updates include increases in densities in residential zones to reflect State directives for housing, updates to Multifamily Tax Exemption program, updated requirements for ADUs, potential displacement provisions, and allowing low-rise apartments in medium-density residential zones.

#### **L. Transportation**

- Updates to align w/new population and employment targets.
- Updates Level of Service as needed and demand-management strategies.
- Updates relative to racially disparate impacts and goals for healthy communities
- Updates Transportation Plan to reflect changes in community and list of projects.
- Includes potential increase in Traffic Impact Fees.

**M. Capital Facilities and Public Services**

- Updates Level of Service as needed.
- Updates relative to racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion (GMA)
- Updates Capital Facilities Plan.

**N. Utilities**

- Update capacity and level of service relative to housing and employment targets.

**O. Parks and Open Space**

- This is based on the current 2018 Parks & Trails Plan. A 2024 Parks Plan is being developed through a separate approval process.

**P. Shoreline Master Program**

- Minor text changes to Introduction; no policy changes.
- This is a separate plan document with separate approval process, but is incorporated into the Comp Plan.

**2. Update Development Regulations**

- As noted above, various sections of the Zoning Code would be updated as needed, and other regulations may be updated to be consistent with the Comp Plan and State guidelines.

**3. Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement**

- The Comp Plan update includes an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This is required by State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) for major projects.
- The EIS consists of an evaluation of the potential impacts of proposed policy and regulation changes.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC & AGENCY COMMENTS**

A public hearing with the Planning Commission will be scheduled, tentatively for March-April 2024. The City Council will also hold a public hearing.

**EXHIBITS**

The proposed changes to the Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan and related development regulations are being developed and are under review by the Planning Commission. Draft policies and codes are subject to change during Commission review; however current proposals are available for review on the City’s website at: <https://connects.sumnerwa.gov/planning-summers-future>.