

# Introduction

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Skykomish residents have indicated that they value the community's small town feel and the rural character of the surrounding area, and would like to preserve those features as the community changes in the future. The community is proud of its historic past and enjoys its natural setting in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains.

Yet within this context is the recognizable possibility of change – change that could affect the community in both positive and negative ways. The Comprehensive Plan seeks to balance change so that it can be influenced and accommodated without sacrificing the quality of life that makes Skykomish so unique.

The Comprehensive Plan is a reflection of the values and attitudes of the community that developed it. This Plan evolved from community efforts to shape the community's future. The impetus to begin this visioning was the adoption of the State Growth Management Act, coupled with the community's desire to stimulate the economic growth that would enhance the community's livability, and to preserve the natural and built environment.

Community leaders, elected officials and the public participated in Town planning efforts in the early 1990s. That process led to the development of a community vision that provided the basis for the Town's first comprehensive plan, adopted in 1993. This Plan builds upon that foundation, and updates the Comprehensive Plan to provide consistency with new state and local plans and regulations, as well as to provide a framework for local decision-making.

In order to be useful, a comprehensive plan must not only provide a vision for the future, it must also help with practical daily decisions. The Plan will help Skykomish be prepared for change, and enable it to bring about the change that it wants. Goals and policies identified in the Plan can guide efforts to address the economic development that could affect community prospects. As development moves up the Skykomish Valley, it is very likely that development pressures will reach Skykomish within the next several years. There will be an increasing number of questions posed to the community by both commercial and individual developers relating to zoning, land use, and development standards. This plan, which has been shaped by community input, provides the framework of goals and policies that the community supports to address those development-related questions. The Plan's goals and policies will guide elected and appointed officials and Town staff in applying the local development regulations in an equitable, consistent, and positive manner, and ensure that the community's vision is carried out.

## **Organization of this Comprehensive Plan**

The Skykomish Comprehensive Plan (the Plan) is composed of three basic parts:

1. Introduction
2. Comprehensive Plan Elements
3. Comprehensive Plan Appendices

The **Introduction** includes a description of the requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA) and the framework GMA established for planning in Washington State and King County. The introduction also includes a brief history and community profile of Skykomish.

The *Implementation and Amendments* section of the Introduction describes the process for implementing and amending policies and land use designations contained in the Comprehensive Plan. It also describes the requirements of the Regulatory Reform Act (ESHB 1724) as they relate to the Plan and provides some important GMA language regarding concurrency.

The Plan Elements are chapters on each of the following topics:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Utilities
- Capital Facilities

Each element begins with a discussion of the purpose served by the element, and a summary of the GMA requirements for that element. Following presentation of the GMA context is a listing of the element's goals, which were identified through the public involvement process and analysis of the existing conditions. The supporting policies follow the goals in each Element.

The Land Use Element provides the foundation for assumptions in all other elements. The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map (Figure 1) gives geographic form to the Comprehensive Plan's land use policies by designating appropriate land use categories for areas throughout the Town.

The **Plan Appendices** provide, for each element, an inventory of data, a needs assessment or analysis, conclusions, and as appropriate, references to the King County Countywide Planning Policies.

The 1993 Comprehensive Plan contained a range of background information about the Town. The 2002-2003 Comprehensive Plan Update process did not verify all of

the information contained in that plan; rather, it focused on providing the basic information required by the Growth Management Act and recommended by the state office overseeing implementation of the Act, the Office of Community Trade and Economic Development (CTED). In order to retain the community's access to the inventory information provided in the 1993 Plan, it has been provided as an appendix to the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. With the adoption of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan update, all portions of that plan including goals and policies have been superseded by the updated Comprehensive Plan.

## **What is a Comprehensive Plan?**

In 1990, the Washington State Legislature adopted the Growth Management Act (GMA) in response to mounting citizen demands for a long-term solution to the unprecedented population growth and suburban sprawl that Washington State experienced in the 1980s. GMA requires that any county in Washington with a population of 50,000 or more and a population increase of 10 percent or more over the past 10 years plan under GMA.

A comprehensive plan indicates how a community envisions its future, and sets forth strategies for achieving the desired vision.

A plan has three characteristics. First, it is **comprehensive**: The plan encompasses all the geographic and functional elements that have a bearing on the community's physical development. Second, it is **general**: The plan summarizes the major policies and proposals of a town, but does not usually indicate specific locations or establish detailed regulations. Third, it is **long range**: The plan looks beyond the current pressing issues confronting the community, to the community's future. Although the planning time frame for a comprehensive plan is twenty years, many of its policies and actions will affect the community well into the future.

## **Why is a Comprehensive Plan Needed?**

Many of the regular decisions made by officials have a significant impact on how the community develops and functions. A comprehensive plan coordinates and guides individual decisions in a manner that moves the community towards its overall goals.

It is important to consider the goals of the Growth Management Act (GMA). RCW 36.70A.020 outlines the goals with which this Plan must comply. They are as follows:

1. Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
2. Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.
3. Encourage efficient multi-modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and Town comprehensive plans.

4. Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.
5. Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.
6. Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.
7. Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.
8. Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.
9. Retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities.
10. Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.
11. Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.
12. Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time of occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.
13. Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.

### **Functions of a Comprehensive Plan**

A comprehensive plan serves many functions, including policy determination, policy implementation, and communication/education.

- ***Policy Determination***

First, it encourages government officials to look at the big picture, to step away from current pressing needs to develop overriding policy goals for their community. Second, it allows the elected officials to explicitly state the policies that are guiding their decisions so that those policies may be viewed critically and subjected to open and democratic review.

The plan serves to focus, direct, and coordinate the efforts of local government by providing a general comprehensive statement of the community's goals and policies.

- ***Policy Implementation***

A community can move more effectively toward its goals and implement its policies after they have been agreed to and formalized through the adoption of a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is a basic source of reference for officials as they consider the enactment of ordinances or regulations affecting the community's physical development (e.g., a zoning ordinance or a particular rezone), and when they make decisions pertaining to public facility investments (e.g., capital improvement programming or construction of a specific public facility). This ensures that the community's overall goals and policies are furthered, or implemented, by those decisions.

A plan also provides a practical guide to officials as they administer ordinances and programs. This ensures that the day-to-day decisions of Town staff are consistent with the overall policy direction established by the elected representatives.

- ***Communication and Education***

A comprehensive plan communicates to the public and to Town staff the policy direction of the Council. This allows the staff, the public, private developers, business people, financial institutions, and other interested parties to understand local policy on any particular issue. As such, a plan provides predictability. Everyone is better able to plan individual activities knowing the probable response to their proposals and to protect investments made on the basis of policy.

In addition, a comprehensive plan educates the public, the business community, the staff, and the elected official on the workings, conditions, and issues within their community. This can stimulate interest in the community affairs and increase the citizen participation in government.

## **Visioning and Public Process**

Skykomish's Comprehensive Plan responds to several layers of background data, policies, and plans. While the Growth Management Act and the King Countywide Planning Policies provide an overall framework for the Plan, the foundation of the Plan exists in the hopes and visions of the people whom it will directly affect.

This Comprehensive Plan builds on the 1993 Town of Skykomish Comprehensive Plan that established goals and policies for the Town. In response to the adoption of the Growth Management Act by the state, the Town conducted an extensive public process and developed goals and policies to guide development of the Town.

Prior to the formation of the Skykomish Planning Commission, the Town Council received periodic reports on requirements for Comprehensive Plan updates from the Town's Planning Consultant. The Town received a small grant from the state Office of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED), and began focused work on updating the Comprehensive Plan in 2002. In 2002, the Skykomish Town Council established the Town's first Planning Commission. Over the following year, the Planning Commission, Town staff, consultants, and community members updated the data upon which the 1993 plan was based, and incorporated new buildable lands, and growth projection data that became available. Data contained in the existing Plan elements was updated and augmented, and an additional Plan element addressing economic development was developed. The Planning Commission reviewed the revised policies in all elements for consistency with current laws and the community vision, as articulated by members of the community who provided input into the process.

The Planning Commission distributed a survey on community issues to Town residents and visitors during Tunnel Days in July 2002. A total of 31 surveys were returned to Town Hall over the following weeks. In addition, comments on community issues received at Planning Commission meetings, the Planning Commission booth at Tunnel Days, and the survey were presented and made available to the Planning Commission and Town Council, and provided guidance for drafting many of the policy updates contained in this Plan. In addition, communication from the state Office of Community, Trade and Economic Development provided direction for updating the Plan to better comply with the expected content of a comprehensive plan. The Commission also sought comment by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) on the Transportation Element to ensure that it was consistent with the PSRC requirements for certification, in order to ensure that the Town's Transportation Element would be certified and therefore the Town would be eligible to apply for transportation-related grant monies.

An open house on the draft plan was held in conjunction with Skykomish Tunnel Days, Saturday, August 9th, 2003. The Planning Commission provided a booth at Tunnel Days and provided information and took comment about the draft plan.

On October 20, 2003, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing, and made a recommendation to the Town Council. A second public hearing was held before the Town Council on [REDACTED], 2003, prior to adoption.

### **The Skykomish Vision**

The primary vision of the Town of Skykomish is to retain its small town character and the rural character of the surrounding area. The community envisions a town that remains relatively small, simple, and intimate, with a minimum of regulation and taxation.

Skykomish was once home to businesses related to timber processing, but the last of these businesses has closed. In addition, the railroad played a significant role in shaping the town. As the opportunity to reestablish a resource-based economy has diminished, Skykomish has reshaped its vision to include revitalizing the local economic base by encouraging both businesses that serve the local community and commercial services that support and take advantage of outdoor recreation and tourism. The community envisions expanding its commercial options to include a range of businesses, including a bakery, general store, small medical facility, small shops, museum, and home based businesses. Businesses that support outdoor recreation and tourism may include retail recreation equipment, bed and breakfasts, small inns, restaurants, and tourist oriented retail. These businesses could benefit from area visitors drawn to the hiking and camping options surrounding Skykomish, the Stevens Pass ski area and other regional attractions, as well as from the motorists who pass through Skykomish as they travel the SR2 corridor.

Skykomish has the advantage of an extraordinary setting. The community also enjoys a rich history – the Town’s centennial will be celebrated in 2009. The community highly values the environmental, historical, and scenic attributes of the Town and surrounding area. The vision for Skykomish includes protecting and enhancing these assets, and working to expand the local economy by attracting visitors to share in Skykomish’s assets and potentially increase the number of jobs in the Town.

## **Community Profile and History**

### **Physical Setting**

The Town of Skykomish is located in King County, approximately 50 miles east of the Everett, on State Route 2, and 13 miles west of Stevens Pass. State Route 2 (SR2) provides the only transportation access to the community.

Skykomish is one of several communities in the Skykomish Valley. While the Town includes Maloney Creek, the Skykomish River shapes the physical landscape of the region forming the east-west valley that leads to the Cascades. Some portions of the Town are subject to flooding related to these watercourses.

The Town is framed on the north and south by rugged foothills that are largely undeveloped. Wilderness lands, State Forest Recreation Areas, and regional trails bring visitors to the valley for recreational pursuits. Due to steep slopes and

geological conditions, future development is limited in the areas to the north and south.

**Figure LU-2** illustrates Skykomish's municipal boundaries. The Washington State Growth Management Act and the King County Countywide Planning Policies require that counties and jurisdictions identify their potential annexation areas for the 20-year planning period. Potential annexation areas are designated by GMA as “urban growth areas” or UGA. Because of the limited population growth forecasted for the Town, and the ability of the Town to accommodate additional development, the boundaries of the Skykomish UGA are contiguous with the Town boundaries.

## History

The name “Skykomish” is said to be derived from the Native American words, skaikh and mish, meaning inland people. The first recorded settlement in the area was during the location of the Pacific Extension of the Great Northern Railway in 1892 by John F. Stevens, Chief Locating Engineer for the railway company. The Town was originally known as Maloney’s Siding. In 1893, when a post office was established, the town’s official name became Skykomish.

John Maloney Sr., a member of the survey party, laid out a homestead in the area. He opened a general store and post office, and served as the first postmaster. In 1899, Mr. Maloney began platting the townsite, and later that year incorporated the Skykomish Timber Company, along with partners John F. Stevens, George Farr, and Peter Larsen.

In 1894, the first depot, a roundhouse, a coalshute and a water tank were built. Between 1894 and 1922, the division point of the railroad shifted several times between Goldbar and Skykomish. In 1922, the division point was moved back to Skykomish.

The period between 1922 and 1923 was a period of change in Skykomish. During that period, the original depot, which had been built on the south side of the tracks, was moved to the north side of the tracks where it sits today. In addition, a Mr. Hatley built the hotel now known as the Cascadia. The hotel replaced what was originally Martin’s Boarding House. Many of the shack-like buildings located along the on the south side of the street by the tracks were removed and the area was cleaned up. Later, a small park maintained by the Great Northern Railroad was built to the west of the depot. Today, the park is maintained by the Skykomish Lion’s Club. Many of the changes that occurred in this period were likely made in anticipation of the electrification of the railway and the eventual construction in 1929 of the present Cascade Tunnel.

On March 5, 1927, electric engines began operation from Skykomish to the east, using the original three-mile-long tunnel. In 1929, the electric engines began to use the new eight-mile-long Cascade Tunnel. In 1956, a ventilation system was installed in the Cascade Tunnel to permit the operation of diesel engines through the tunnel. On July 31, 1956, the last electric engine left Skykomish. This event represented the beginning of the end of the railroad-based economy in Skykomish. Helper engines

were added and taken off for a few more years. But, eventually, even these were eliminated to a large extent.

The Town was incorporated on June 5, 1909. At that time, the population was 500 people, having grown from only 150 in 1903. The economy of the Town was tied to the railroad and several sawmills, a shingle mill, and the logging operations surrounding the Town. Early photos of the area show several grocery stores, saloons, and a hotel. A hotel built during the late 1890s burned in 1904. A new hotel built on the same site is still operating. The original business establishments between the hotel and the Whistling Post Tavern were burned in 1970 and have not been rebuilt.

The original highway was built in the late 1920s and was located on the south side of Town, south of the railroad tracks. Several businesses were established along this route. In 1939, the highway was relocated to the north side of the Skykomish River, and a bridge was built connecting the Town with the new highway. The businesses along the original Cascade Highway folded and new businesses developed along the new highway.

The population and economy has steadily declined since the railroad eliminated the electric engines and the helper engines, the sawmills closed and the timber harvest declined. The major employers in Skykomish today are the U.S. Forest Service, the Skykomish School District, and several service establishments catering to the travelers and tourists.

## **Implementation and Amendment of the Comprehensive Plan**

### **Purpose and Relationship to GMA**

A comprehensive plan is implemented through the goals and policies it identifies to guide and coordinate local decision making. The plan's policies shape the course of action taken by the community as it begins to implement the plan. The Growth Management Act encourages innovative implementation methods that are both regulatory and nonregulatory. Regulatory actions may include the adoption of a zoning ordinance or other land use regulations, while nonregulatory actions include such methods as the adoption of a capital facilities plan. Some actions may involve a complicated series of related steps, which themselves may need to be carefully planned (for example, planning for major utility system). This section will describe these actions, plans, and measures necessary to implement this Comprehensive Plan.

### **Regulatory Measures**

The Growth Management Act requires that local governments enact land development regulations that are consistent with and implement the Comprehensive Plan. In order to accomplish this, the existing development regulations should be reviewed for their consistency with the comprehensive plan in order to identify where regulations must be amended or removed, or where new regulations should be drafted.

- **Zoning**

The zoning ordinance and zoning map must be consistent with the future land use map and policies established in the plan. The future land use map and land use policies in the Comprehensive Plan establish the use, density, and intensity of future development within the Town. The Town may either maintain a separate future land use and zoning map, or it may adopt the single map to indicate that the future land use provides the basis for the Town's regulations.

As part of the update of the land use regulations, Skykomish is also obligated by ESHB 1724 adopted by the 1995 Legislature to combine project permitting and environmental reviews, consolidate appeals processes, and clarify the timing of the development of the review process.

### **Concurrency Management**

The Comprehensive Plan policies also provide for the GMA requirement for concurrency by establishing level of service (LOS) standards for capital and transportation facilities. "Concurrency" means that the public facilities and services need to maintain the level of service standards adopted in the Plan are available simultaneous to or within a reasonable period of time after development approval or construction.

A concurrency management system is a regulatory scheme that sets forth the procedures and processes to be used to determine whether public facilities have adequate capacity to accommodate a proposed development. A concurrency management system also identifies the responses to be made by the Town when it is determined that the proposal will exceed the level of service established and, therefore, exceed the defined capacity, and that is, fail to maintain concurrency. The process also includes establishing the criteria by which the Town determines whether individual development proposals are served by adequate public facilities, and establishing monitoring procedures to enable periodic updates of public facilities and services capacities.

Under GMA, concurrency management must be established for transportation and capital facilities; however, jurisdictions may establish concurrency for any public facilities for which they have established level of service standards in their comprehensive plan. Level of service standards may be established for fire and emergency facilities, police, schools, sewer and water, transportation, and parks and recreational facilities and services.

### **Capital Improvement Plan**

Another implementation tool of the Plan is the planning for capital improvements. The 20-year Capital Improvements Plan, or CIP, sets out the capital projects that the Town must undertake in order to implement the Plan. A six-year CIP, a list of those projects to be completed in the near-term, should be updated annually, with the first year of the schedule acting as the capital budget for the fiscal year. During the annual updating of the six-year schedule, the cost estimates and funding sources listed should be updated and revised to reflect any additional information that the Town has

received. The CIP schedule should also be revised to include any additional capital projects that are needed to maintain the Town's adopted level of service standards.

### **Administrative Actions**

The Comprehensive Plan includes a number of policies that should be carried out through administrative actions, such as interlocal agreements, revised development and review procedures, and public involvement programs. Development and review procedures must be revised to implement concurrency and to ensure that new development complies with the performance standards established. The Comprehensive Plan also calls for the Town to publicize county and state initiatives, such as affordable housing programs, so that Skykomish residents are able to take advantage of them. The Town should establish a work program that prioritizes each of the Comprehensive Plan policies that must be implemented through administrative actions.

### **Public Involvement**

In order for the Plan to continue to provide guidance to the community, the citizens must monitor, and remain informed about, its implementation. As the plan is tested by development, there will be the need for ongoing amendments to respond to changing conditions. As the community matures, the vision of the future will change and new needs and priorities will emerge. The Town is obligated to coordinate many aspects of the plan with adjacent jurisdictions, which will also generate changes. Continued public involvement and communication is crucial to keeping the public engaged in the implementation and updating of the Comprehensive Plan and so that the Plan remains the guiding document of the community.

## **Amending the Comprehensive Plan**

For the Comprehensive Plan to function as an effective decision making document, it must be flexible enough to accommodate changes in public attitudes, developmental technologies, economic forces and legislative policy, yet focused enough to insure consistent application of development principals. The Growth Management Act requires that the Town establish a public participation program that identifies the procedures and schedules to be used to update or amend the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Types of Amendments**

King County and the Town of Skykomish are required to review their comprehensive plans and development regulations at a minimum interval of every seven years. In addition, GMA establishes that a governing body is generally not permitted to amend the Comprehensive Plan any more frequently than once a calendar year, except in cases of emergency. Proposed amendments must be consistent with GMA and King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPP). In addition, proposed amendments must be reviewed relative to the plans of adjacent jurisdictions, and all proposed amendments proposed in any one year must be considered concurrently so that the cumulative effect of the various proposals can be determined. Under certain circumstances, amendments may be considered more frequently than once per year, such as:

- The initial adoption of a subarea plan.
- The adoption or amendment of a shoreline master program.
- The amendment of the capital facilities element of the plan that occurs concurrently with the adoption or amendment of the Town budget.
- To resolve an appeal of a comprehensive plan filed with a Growth Management Hearings Board or with the court.

The Town of Skykomish permits consideration of two types of plan amendments:

- ***Comprehensive Plan Review and Amendment***

Review of the Comprehensive Plan is conducted no less frequently than every seven years in response to the GMA requirement, and to respond to King County's review of designated urban growth areas, and the densities permitted within both the incorporated and unincorporated portions of each urban growth area. The seven-year review will examine the entire Comprehensive Plan, including a reevaluation of goals, population projections and land densities, and a review of land use, transportation, environmental, parks, and community facility policies and proposals.

- ***Annual Plan Review and Amendment***

The second type of plan review and amendment relates to site-specific requests and minor policy changes. In some cases, amendments to the Plan may be necessitated by amendments to the Growth Management Act or Countywide Planning Policies or changes in federal or state legislation. These types of Plan amendments or development regulations may be undertaken once a year, and may be recommended by the Town Council, Planning Commission, Town staff, or any citizen.

The Town requests that Plan amendment proponents provide the following information in their application for amendment:

- A statement of what is proposed to be changed and why.
- A statement of the anticipated impacts of the change, including geographic area affected and issues presented.
- A description as to how the proposed change is consistent with other goals and policies.
- A description of any changes to development regulations, capital improvement programs, or other plans required for implementation.

### **Review and Plan Amendment Process**

The annual review and plan amendment process provides an opportunity to refine and update the Comprehensive Plan and to monitor and evaluate the progress of the implementation strategies and policies incorporated therein. The review and

amendment process is also developed to meet the requirements of ESHB 1724 and any revisions to RCW 36.70A.

This annual review and plan amendment process provides the method by which the Town, private property owners, developers, community groups, or individual citizens may request changes to the planned land uses on property or propose changes to the goals and policies of the Plan. The process affords the opportunity to refine the Plan based on changing conditions and community needs.

During the review and amendment process, the Planning Commission and Town Council shall consider current development trends to determine the Town's progress in achieving the goals established in the Plan. Information to be considered may include land capacity, residential versus economic development, amounts and values of non-residential construction, number and types of housing units authorized by building permit, the status of critical area resources, as well as the number of permit approvals, including subdivisions, annexations, and building permits. Other information that may be relevant to consider includes the current capacity status of major infrastructure systems for which levels of service have been adopted in the Plan and the levels of police, fire, and park and recreational services being provided by the Town. The process may also include monitoring of overall population growth and relative comparison with the forecast growth projections contained in the Plan (and the inclusion of updated projections where appropriate).

The annual review and amendment process requires public participation, both through community meetings to familiarize the public with the amendment proposals, as well as a formal public hearing before the Town Council. Proposed plan amendments must be reviewed under the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA), and be submitted to the State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) for review at least 60 days prior to final Town Council adoption.

## **Policies**

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The following policies are recommended to reflect the annual plan review and amendment process:

- IA-P1      The Town of Skykomish shall schedule annual review of the Comprehensive Plan, to consider the need for amendments. At that time, both Town-initiated and private citizen or developer-initiated amendment requests will be considered.
  
- IA-P2      All Comprehensive Plan amendments shall be processed together with any necessary zoning, or other ordinance amendment, to ensure consistency.
  
- IA-P3      Amendment procedures shall be fully outlined in the Town of Skykomish's land development regulations.

## Plan Review and Amendment Schedule

The plan amendment process is designated to be flexible to accommodate unique conditions such as the nature, complexity, or amount of plan amendment requests in a single year. The annual “window” of plan amendment submittals from the public will be open throughout the year, (that is, the public can submit requests for amendments at any time). However, they will only be “processed” in accordance with the adopted regulations. The timing of the process is intended to conform to the following generalized schedule:

June 1st	Town solicits public requests for comprehensive plan amendments
July 15th	Deadline for submitting proposed amendments to the Town Clerk/Treasurer
July-August	Planning Commission culls the docket and forwards their recommendations to the Town Council for their consideration
Sept-Oct	Town Council decides which proposed amendments should be considered and establishes a schedule for evaluating and adopting proposed amendments
Oct-Feb	Planning Commission evaluates the proposed amendments and forwards their final recommendation to the Town Council
Mar-April	Town Council reviews the recommendation, holds a public hearing, and decides on adoption of the proposed amendments

All amendment proposals shall be considered concurrently by the Planning Commission and the Town Council so that their cumulative impacts can be determined.

### ▪ *Emergency Plan Amendment Consideration*

The Comprehensive Plan may be amended outside the normal schedule if findings are adopted (by Town Council resolution) to show that the amendment was necessary, due to an emergency of a neighborhood or Town-wide significance. Plan and zoning amendments related to annexations may be considered during the normal annexation process and need not necessarily be coordinated with the annual plan amendment schedule. The nature of the emergency shall be explained to the Town Council, which shall decide whether or not to allow the proposal to proceed ahead of the normal amendment schedule.

## Future Updates

The Town may continue to update and refine the Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the update and amendment process to address those issues in greater detail that

are of greatest importance to the community, to address changes to the Town as development occurs, and to reconcile new information that becomes available. The Town may also choose to develop a parks and recreation element, and to further develop the economic development element to meet the requirements of the GMA. However, development of these elements will likely be dependent on obtaining grant funding.

### **Economic Development and Park and Recreation Elements**

GMA requires cities to prepare economic development and parks and recreation elements (RCW 36.70A.070) and outlines requirements for each element. However, RCW 36.70A.070 provides an exception that states that cities are not obligated to complete economic development and parks and recreation elements unless adequate funding is provided.

An economic development element should provide a summary of economic conditions, including employment, payroll, sectors, businesses, sales, and other information. Some of this information is provided in the preliminary Economic Development Element, and specific goals, policies, and strategies supporting economic development have been developed. When funding becomes available, additional analysis, goal setting, policy development, and strategy identification should be conducted.

The Town may wish to develop a separate Parks and Recreation Element as funding becomes available. In accordance with GMA, a parks element should include an estimate of future demand, an evaluation of service needs, and an evaluation of approaches to meeting parks and recreation demands. In order to meet the community's park and recreation needs, additional review of the community's recreational needs through surveys and soliciting community input would be necessary. Development of a Parks Element that is certified by the state Office of Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) and consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan, will make the Town eligible to apply for grant funds through this agency.

At a time when additional funding is available, the Town will seek to conduct more detailed analysis and forecasting for parks and economic development.

### **Shoreline Master Program Integration**

GMA also requires integration of the Comprehensive Plan with the Shoreline Master Program. Skykomish adopted a Shoreline Master Program (SMP) in 1998, which is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Policy LU-P5 in the Plan specifically recognizes the Shoreline Master Program. The Town may look to further integrate the SMP with the Plan, perhaps even making the SMP goals and policies an additional element, when funding is available.

### **Transportation Modeling**

The Transportation Element provides goals and policies that direct strategies for future transportation improvements. The Element is based on the Land Use and Transportation Appendices that contain information about population growth, land

use, transportation conditions, and future transportation needs. In the relatively simple transportation environment that currently exists, transportation impacts can be readily identified. However, as growth continues, and depending on actions the state may take with improving SR2, it may be valuable to model future traffic conditions, especially peak conditions on SR2. This may be best managed in coordination with the state Department of Transportation.