

Pierce County is updating its Comprehensive Plan What does that mean?

DOWNTOWN: On the go!

1 Plan Overview

Comp Plans are documents which guide how a jurisdiction handles growth through consistent policy on land use, housing, climate, transportation, and more. This is a 20 year document required by the state which is updated every 10 years under the Growth Management Act. The Comp Plan sets the stage for the next decade's top priorities and policy decisions.

2 Affected Areas

The Pierce County Comp Plan only impacts unincorporated Pierce County - this means areas like Spanaway and Parkland are impacted, but cities like Tacoma or Lakewood are not. It's important to remember that we're all in this together - decisions made for unincorporated Pierce impact Tacoma, and decisions made for Tacoma impact the rest of the county.

3 Preferred Alternatives

1) No Action - No significant changes to policies & priorities
2) Centers & Corridors - Allows more housing development in urban areas, plus increasing transportation system efficiency
3) High-Capacity Transit - Encourages dense neighborhoods close to frequent transit, multi-modal transportation, and preservation of rural areas.

4 Learn More

The County Comp Plan website has information in categories: Environment & Climate, Housing & Land Use, and Capital Facilities & Transportation. Each sub-topic has a one page fact sheet, a longer staff report, and actual draft policy. This makes it easy to get just the information you're looking for and ease into the more complicated documents.

5 DOTG's Perspective

DOTG's focus is transportation. We're advocating for Alternative 3, because it prioritizes multi-modal transportation (not just cars!), transit-oriented development, density, and preservation of rural areas, while creating caps on roadway capacity expansion. Only Alternative 3 begins to meaningfully address climate concerns and issues with our transportation system.

6 Provide Comments

Send your comments in an email to CompPlanUpdate@PierceCountyWA.gov by Feb 26th. While it's important to reference specifics of the draft plan, don't stress about using all the right language. Let staff know what's important to you, and share your vision for how you'd like to see Pierce County grow and change over the next 10 years.

Comprehensive Plans can feel overwhelming, but it's important to make your voice heard early in the process. The decisions made in this plan will influence policy for a long time, and should reflect what the community wants.

Pierce County is updating it's Comprehensive Plan - Share early feedback

It's Comprehensive Plan update season in Washington, and Pierce County is taking early feedback until February 26th. Comprehensive Plans are required documents that guide how a jurisdiction manages its growth. They are updated every 10 years, and provide consistent policy guidance around land use, housing, climate, transportation, and more. The Comp Plan sets the stage for the next decade's top priorities and policy decisions. It's important that the policies adopted in 2024 reflect the increasing need for bold climate and transportation policies and decisions, making it easier to set and meet aggressive goals around greenhouse gas emissions, Vision Zero, and prioritizing active transportation and transit over the next decade.

County. This means areas that are not independent cities; think Parkland and Spanaway, not Tacoma or Puyallup. Even if you don't live or work in unincorporated Pierce County, it's important to remember that we're all in this together - decisions made for unincorporated Pierce impact Tacoma, and decisions made for Tacoma impact the rest of the county. Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan update will be coming in the next few months, and we'll share out information once it's available.

The main thing being decided right now is which "Preferred Alternative" the County will move forward with. These alternatives represent sets of policy changes. Alternative 1, No Change, provides no substantial update to the existing Comprehensive Plan. Alternative 2, Centers and Corridors, allows more housing development in urban areas of the County to promote affordability, and seeks to add efficiency to the transportation system in the County through connections to areas with transit. Alternative 3, High-Capacity Transit, presents the most significant changes to the existing Comp Plan. It focuses on creating dense neighborhoods near frequent transit, investment in active transportation, and the preservation of rural spaces.

DOTG is advocating for Alternative 3 because it prioritizes multimodal transportation, transit-oriented development, density, and rural preservation. We particularly like the language concerning "ultimate capacity," which would divert funds away from roadway capacity expansion projects and instead prioritizes active transportation and transit infrastructure projects on those roads. We feel that Alternative 3 is the only option which begins to meaningfully address climate concerns and issues with our transportation system.

Learn more about the Comprehensive Plan Update on [Pierce County's Comp Plan Website](#). You can access fact sheets and specific information on [the Draft Documents page](#).

Comments made before February 26th at 4:30pm will influence how the Comp Plan update moves forward. We encourage you to share your thoughts on the plan. Send your comments in an email to CompPlanUpdate@PierceCountyWA.gov by February 26th. While it's important to reference specifics of the draft plan, don't stress about using all the right language. Let staff know what's important to you, and share your vision for how you'd like to see Pierce County grow and change over the next 10 years. The decisions made in this plan will impact policy for the next decade, and it's important that it reflects what the community wants.

To learn more about what Downtown On the Go is advocating for or to ask questions on how to read the documents or write your comments, please email DOTG's advocacy manager Laura at LauraS@downtownonthego.org

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