

# Climate Change and Your Growth Management Act Comprehensive Plan: A Guidebook

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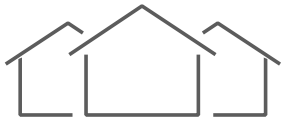
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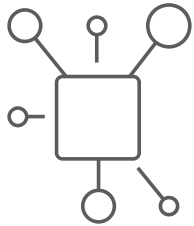
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# We strengthen communities

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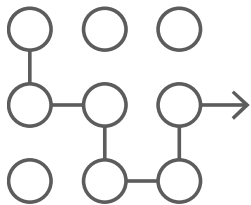
**INFRASTRUCTURE**



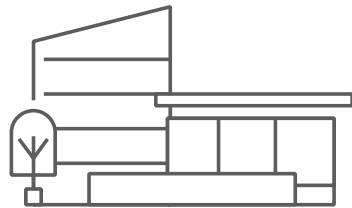
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# Introduction



# What the guidebook intends to do:

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- Explicate the natural connections between fulfilling the GMA requirements and preparing for climate change impacts.
- Delineate six steps planners should take to integrate climate change adaptation and mitigation policies into their GMA comprehensive plan or their next periodic update.
- Provide examples of Washington communities where climate change has already been considered in planning work, goals and policies or action agendas.
- Recommend best practices in communicating about climate change and the anticipated impacts to Washington State, including as it pertains to economics and social equity issues.

# Key Terms

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**Adaptation:** Actions taken to respond to and prepare for the current and anticipated effects of climate change in order to improve long-term outcomes for a community or the natural systems upon which it relies.

**Mitigation:** Actions taken to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases in order to reduce the rate and extent of climate change.

# The GMA and Climate Change

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## *Climate Change Impacts on GMA Comprehensive Plan Related Issues*

- ❖ *Water Resources*
- ❖ *Land Use and Housing*
- ❖ *Economics*
- ❖ *Environment*
- ❖ *Transportation*
- ❖ *Utilities and Capital Facilities*

# The GMA and Climate Change

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## *Independent Climate Change Impact Action Plans*

- ❖ Climate Change Planning Outside the GMA Comprehensive Plan
- ❖ Connecting an Existing Action Plan Document
- ❖ The Case for Integrating Climate Change Informed Policies in Your GMA Comprehensive Plan

# The GMA and Climate Change

Planning Option	Advantage	Disadvantage
GMA comprehensive plan w/ integrated climate change policies	Legal leverage to implement climate change policies, greater ease in consistency.	GMA deadlines could restrict research into options.
Single elements/chapters in a GMA comprehensive plan that address climate change e.g.: Health & Equity Energy Management Flood or Draught Management Public Health Risks	Legal leverage to implement climate change policies.	More difficult to maintain consistency throughout a plan.
Separate Climate Change Action Plans.	No restrictions to GMA deadlines.	More difficult to maintain consistency with a GMA plan. No legal leverage without a separate legislative action. Accountability is more difficult.
Incorporate Hazard Mitigation Plans (with climate change policies) into GMA plans.	Legal leverage to implement climate change policies, more ease to have consistency.	Possible conflicting GMA and Hazard Mitigation deadlines.



# Six Steps to Integrate Climate Change Impact Planning Into Your GMA Comprehensive Plan

**Step 1:** Convene a multi-disciplinary work group.

**Step 2:** Gather population growth projections.

**Step 3:** Assess vulnerabilities and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Step 4:** Develop goals, objectives and policies that promote adaptation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**Step 5:** Adopt the goals, objectives and policies into your GMA comprehensive plan.

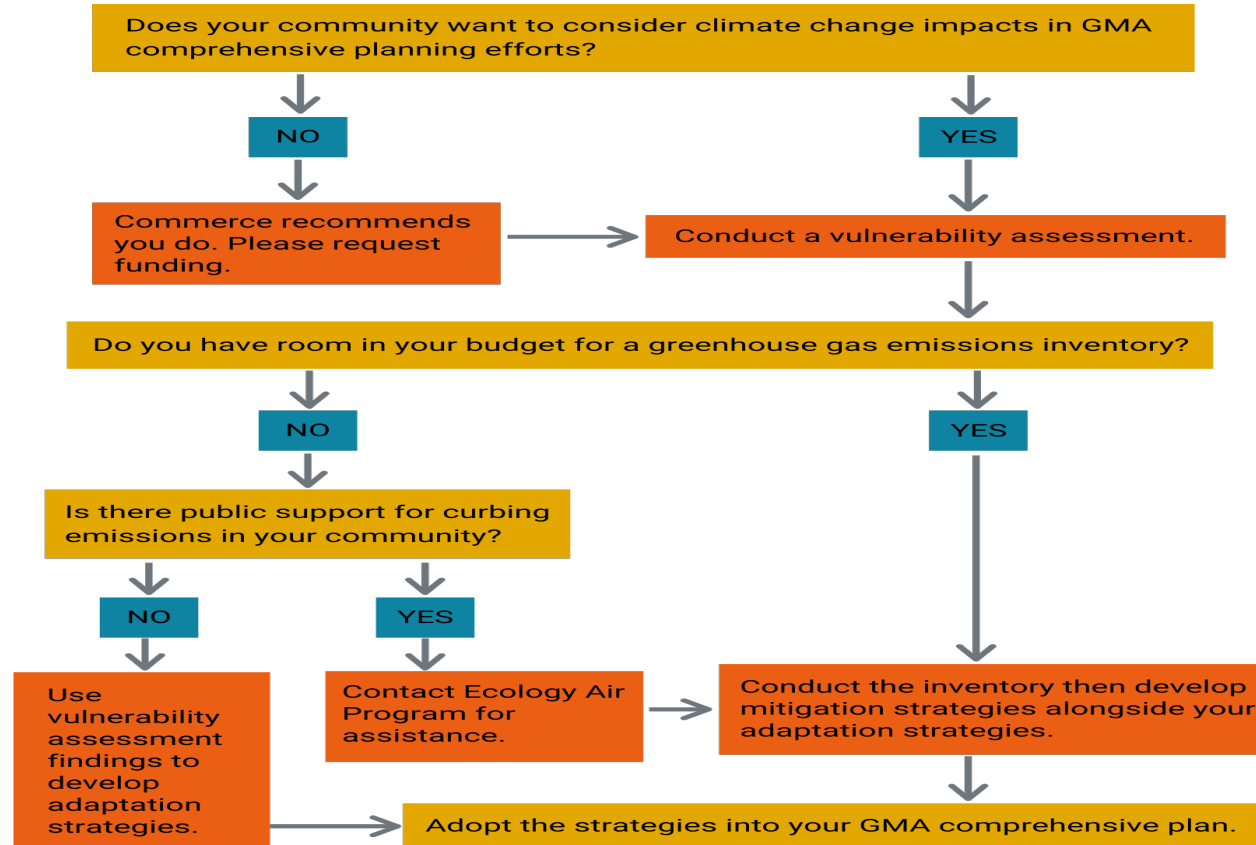
**Step 6:** Implement your climate change informed GMA comprehensive plan.

# Step1- Convene a multi-disciplinary work group

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- **Members** - planning, public works, legal, finance and administration.
- **Expectations**
  - The members of group must be willing to
    - 1) educate themselves about climate change science and the potential impacts to our region and
    - 2) educate others about climate change realities.
- **Adaptation v. Mitigation**
- **What if we are a small city or county with limited personnel to develop a comprehensive plan?**

# Choosing Your Strategy– Adaptation, Mitigation or Adaptation and Mitigation



# Step 2 - Gather population growth projections

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## ❖ County and city coordination and cooperation

- ❖ Growth targets

- ❖ UGA Boundaries

## ❖ Equity and equality

- ❖ Vulnerable populations

- ❖ Disproportionate impact

# Step 3 - Assess vulnerabilities and greenhouse gas emissions

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- ✓ **Adaptation**
- ✓ **Mitigation**
- ✓ **Mitigation and Adaptation**

# Step 4- Develop goals, objectives and policies that promote adaptation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions

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- ✓ **Be creative**
- ✓ **Borrow from others**
- ✓ **Involve your citizens**

# Step 5 - Adopt the goals, objectives and policies into your GMA comprehensive plan.

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## Checklist for General Adoption Processes

- Review by planning commission
- Conduct planning commission public hearing(s)
- Complete SEPA environmental review
- Give the state 60-day notice before adopting
- Conduct city or county council public hearing(s)
- Complete comprehensive plan and policies
- City or county council adopts the comprehensive plan
- Document that your plan and process is complete in a summary finding or separate resolution
- Update development regulations
- Update/complete critical areas regulations

# Step 6 - Implement your climate change informed GMA comprehensive plan

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We recommend taking these four measures to assist in the implementation of your updated comprehensive plan:

- **Create a GMA comprehensive plan implementation team.** Designate staff and managers to track the elements in your comprehensive plan.
- **Integrate climate change information into all decision -making processes.** Continuously update your understanding of the latest relevant information and apply your best knowledge of how climate change will affect your community in all local decisions. This can and should be coordinated with the hazard mitigation planning in your community.
- **Develop and require a Climate Assessment Certification (CAC) process.** This allows climate change climate policies to be implemented directly through zoning and land use decisions. More specifically, planners would require evidence that any project proponent (including local government) has assessed future site/operating conditions and evaluated its readiness for negative climate change related impacts. Current planners would apply this certification process prior to any permitting decision.
- **Prepare a summary document.** This allows an interested party or stakeholder to understand how and why your jurisdiction is going to address climate change without having to read your entire comprehensive plan.



# Appendicies

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- A. What is climate change and what does it mean for you?**
- B. Communicating about climate change**
- C. Economics of climate change**
- D. Social equity and equality**
- E. Planning for climate change and public health resilience**
- F. Technical resources for climate change planning**
- G. Funding resources for climate change related planning**

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