



Determination of Significance & Request for Comments on Scope of Environmental Impact Statement Wenatchee 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update

Date of Issuance: April 24, 2025

Proponent: City of Wenatchee

Lead Agency: City of Wenatchee Community Development Department

Agency File Number: SEPA-25-02

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Description of Proposal

The City of Wenatchee is preparing its periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan as required by the Growth Management Act (GMA). Each chapter, or “element,” of the plan will be updated to address new growth targets to 2046 and to address recent changes to the GMA since 2017, including considerations around climate planning and planning for housing at all income levels. The Land Use Plan Map will likely be amended to create more housing and job opportunities and respond to growth targets, community needs, transportation investments, and environmental conditions. Zoning and other development regulations may also be amended to implement the Land Use Plan Map.

The Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will include environmental analysis of three plan alternatives. The EIS will describe existing conditions in the city, the alternatives (e.g., new policies and growth strategies, potential environmental impacts, ways to avoid or minimize negative impacts that could result from implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, and potential significant and unavoidable adverse impacts.

Location of Proposal

City of Wenatchee city limits and the unincorporated Wenatchee Urban Growth Area

Determination of Significance

The City of Wenatchee has determined that this proposal is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. The City will prepare an EIS as required under [RCW 43.21C.030\(2\)\(c\)](#).

The SEPA scoping period will seek input from the community on the topics and alternatives to be evaluated in the EIS. The EIS will analyze one No Action and two Action Alternatives that meet state and

local planning requirements and vary growth strategies and policies. Further details on the alternatives and the EIS process can be found at www.wenatcheewa.gov/get-involved/comprehensive-plan-2046.

The lead agency has identified the following topic areas for possible analysis in the EIS:

- Natural Environment (earth, air quality, water resources, plants/animals)
- Land Use Patterns & Urban Form
- Relationship to Plans & Policies
- Population, Housing, & Employment
- Transportation
- Public Services (parks, schools, police/fire)
- Utilities (public water supply, irrigation water supply, sewer, stormwater)

Scoping

Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on the proposed scope of the EIS. Comments will be accepted on the proposed growth alternatives, EIS topic areas for analysis, probable significant adverse impacts, and mitigation measures. **The 21-day EIS public scoping period begins at 5:00 pm PST on April 24, 2025 and ends at 5:00 pm PST on May 15, 2025.** All scoping comments must be submitted in writing by this date.

Comments may be submitted by email or by mail. **Written email comments are preferred—please put into the subject line: Comprehensive Plan EIS Scoping Comments.** Please include your contact information in your comment (including a valid mailing or email address; an address is required to be considered an official party of record).

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April 22, 2025

April 24, 2025

Signature

Date Signed

Date Issued

Appeal: There is no administrative appeal of the determination of significance for legislative action per [WCC 12.04.070](#) and [WAC 197-11-680](#).

SEPA Scoping Fact Sheet

Wenatchee 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update | April 2025

What is the Comprehensive Plan and why are we updating it?

The City of Wenatchee is preparing its periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan. A “comprehensive plan” is the name given to identify the community’s long-range plan for growth and is required by the Growth Management Act (GMA). It provides guidance for all aspects of the city’s growth and development over a long period, typically 20 years. The plan outlines the community’s vision through goals, policies, and actions. These direct how the city should grow physically, socially, and economically and guide day-to-day decisions, investments, and regulations for elected officials and City staff. Wenatchee’s Comprehensive Plan is the product of many, many people including hundreds of community members, Planning Commission, City Council, and the Mayor.

The City’s Comprehensive Plan was originally adopted in 1993 and the last periodic update was completed in 2017. A “periodic update” is the state’s term for a full review of a Comprehensive Plan to make sure it is in conformance with any legislative changes to state law. Each chapter, or “element,” of the plan will be updated to address new growth targets to 2046 and to meet changes to the GMA since 2017, including considerations around climate planning and planning for housing at all income levels. The Land Use Plan Map will likely be amended to create more housing and job opportunities and respond to growth targets, community needs, transportation investments, and environmental conditions. Zoning and other development regulations may also be amended to implement the Land Use Plan Map.

What is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is an informational document that provides the City, public, Tribes, and other agencies with environmental information to be considered in the decision-making process. An EIS is required under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for larger projects or major plans, regulations, or programs where the proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact. An EIS describes existing conditions in the city, reasonable Alternatives (e.g., new policies and growth strategies), potential environmental impacts, ways to avoid or minimize negative impacts that could result from implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, and potential significant and unavoidable adverse impacts. The EIS focuses on identifying and avoiding adverse impacts but can also identify potential beneficial outcomes. The EIS evaluation and mitigation measures will help inform development of the Wenatchee Comprehensive Plan periodic update.

The public, Tribes, and agencies will be invited to review and provide comments on the Draft EIS. The City will then prepare a Final EIS which will document all comments received on the Draft EIS and include responses from the City of Wenatchee. The Final EIS will evaluate a Preferred Alternative and may include revisions to the Draft EIS based on the comments received and new information learned.

What topics will be evaluated in the EIS?

Natural and built environment topics proposed for study in the Comprehensive Plan EIS include those listed below. For each topic, the EIS will describe existing conditions, potential impacts of alternatives, mitigation measures to address these impacts, and potential significant, unavoidable adverse impacts.

- Natural Environment (earth, air quality, water resources, plants/animals)
- Land Use Patterns & Urban Form
- Relationship to Plans & Policies
- Population, Housing, & Employment
- Transportation
- Public Services (parks, schools, police/fire)
- Utilities (public water supply, irrigation water supply, sewer, stormwater)

What Alternatives will be studied in the EIS?

An EIS is required to identify and analyze Alternative approaches to meeting the goals of a proposal. In the case of Comprehensive Plans, these “EIS Alternatives” represent different growth strategies. Alternatives should represent a diverse range of reasonable options that can highlight the impacts of different potential choices. The Alternatives should be broad enough that the final Preferred Alternative, which is included in the final plan, will fall within the range of the Alternatives studied.

The City anticipates studying three alternatives in the Draft EIS described below and summarized in the table on the following page. These will be refined and defined in more detail following scoping.

- **No Action Alternative:** SEPA requires a “No Action Alternatives” which is the continuation of the current Comprehensive Plan and associated zoning and regulations. Growth would continue as planned under current rules. Under this Alternative, the Comprehensive Plan would not be updated.
- **Action Alternatives:** Two Action Alternatives will be evaluated in the Draft EIS. The Alternatives are under development and will explore different ways the City can both meet Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements and support local goals to ensure a vibrant, thriving, and sustainable city. Public, Tribal, and agency input during the scoping process will help Wenatchee define the Alternatives for study in the EIS. Alternative features are anticipated to include:
 - Meet Wenatchee’s population and housing growth targets for the period 2026-2046.
 - Consider changes to land use or residential density where there is access to existing or planned transit and other services that could support additional growth.
 - Consider new or expanded locations for small-scale commercial services in residential areas.

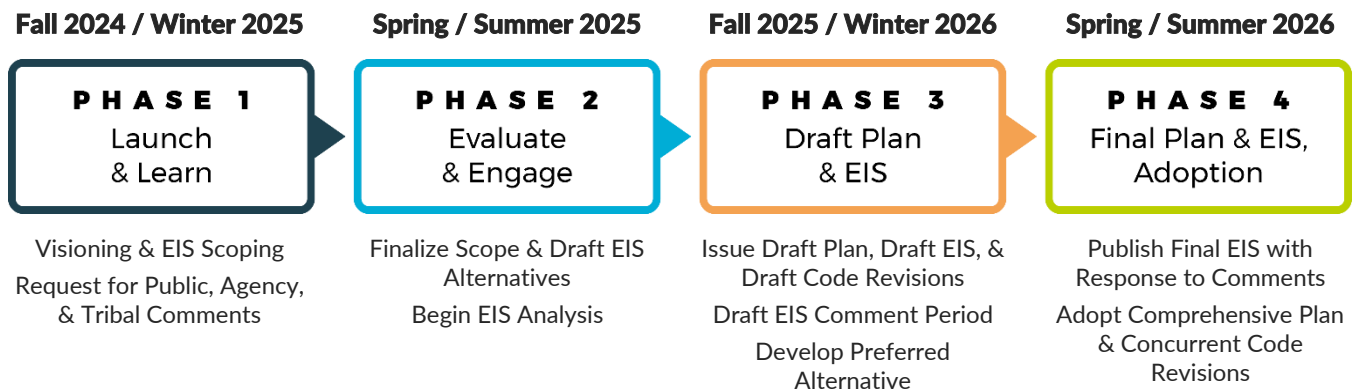
| | Alternative 1 No Action | Alternative 2 | Alternative 3 |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Updated Comprehensive Plan | No change to existing Comprehensive Plan or regulations, goals and policies remain the same. | Yes , updated Comprehensive Plan prepared with revised goals, policies, and regulations to meet state requirements and local planning goals. Includes new element addressing climate resiliency and edits for consistency with more recent system plan. Most subarea plans repealed with policies and remaining projects incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. | |
| Growth Strategy | Population, housing, and employment growth consistent with adopted targets and existing growth trends. No changes to future land use or zoning districts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residential growth consistent with adopted targets expected throughout the urban area, highest densities in the mixed-use districts and RH areas. ▪ Employment growth expected primarily in existing commercial and industrial areas. ▪ Simplified land use and zoning districts with targeted rezones to reflect existing conditions and environmental constraints. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residential growth consistent with adopted targets expected throughout the urban area, slightly higher residential densities than Alternative 2 allowed in areas with access to transit and other services. ▪ Slightly higher employment growth than Alternative 2 with additional growth spread throughout the urban area. New opportunities for small-scale commercial uses on corner lots in some residential areas. ▪ Simplified land use and zoning districts with targeted rezones to reflect existing conditions and environmental constraints, including expanded RH zones (beyond Alternative 2) in areas with access to transit and other services. |
| Policy & Code Updates | No change to existing regulations or policies. New middle housing code regulations adopted at the end of 2024 apply. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Code and policy revisions to support additional housing development (particularly housing available to households with lower and moderate incomes), clarify and simplify the development process, and remove existing barriers. ▪ New multimodal LOS for bike, pedestrian, and transit. ▪ Reduced parking standards. ▪ Updated capital facility policies and projects to support growth through 2046. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Code and policy revisions to support additional housing development (particularly housing available to households with lower and moderate incomes), clarify and simplify the development process, and remove existing barriers. Includes more policy tools than Alternative 2 to further encourage development. ▪ New multimodal LOS for bike, pedestrian, and transit. ▪ Reduced parking standards (more than Alternative 2). ▪ Updated capital facility policies and projects to support growth through 2046. |

Source: City of Wenatchee, 2025; BERK, 2025.

The City will use feedback from the comment period to select a Preferred Alternative in the range of the Alternatives examined in the Draft EIS. The Preferred Alternative will be based on public comment and direction from the Planning Commission and City Council, potentially including components from each of the different Draft EIS alternatives, and will be evaluated in the Final EIS.

What is the schedule?

The City will match Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements for the periodic update schedule. After scoping, the City will finalize the alternatives and topics to be evaluated in the Draft EIS. The City is currently planning to issue the Draft EIS in late fall 2025 and the Final EIS in spring 2026. The City intends to integrate the SEPA and GMA process by issuing the Draft Plan and Draft EIS concurrently.



When can I provide comments on the EIS?

The City is providing a 21-day comment window during the scoping period in April of 2025. See the **Determination of Significance and Scoping Notice** for how to provide your comments in writing. The notice is available on the project website, linked below.

Scoping comments are due by 5:00 pm April XX, 2025.

There will be an additional EIS comment period following release of the Draft EIS. Additional information on dates and how to provide comment will be provided in the Draft EIS and on the project website. Comments on the Comprehensive Plan are accepted throughout the periodic update process. Please see below on how to participate.

How can I participate in the Comprehensive Plan Update?

The City of Wenatchee invites you to participate in the Comprehensive Plan periodic update. You can:



Visit our **website** to learn about the Comprehensive Plan update process. This page will be updated throughout the project with updates, events, materials, and additional opportunities to comment.



Sign up for our **email list**.

- Attend workshops, meetings, and hearings hosted by the City or community-based organizations.
- Respond to surveys.
- Provide written comments.

Let's plan for a strong, vibrant community together!