

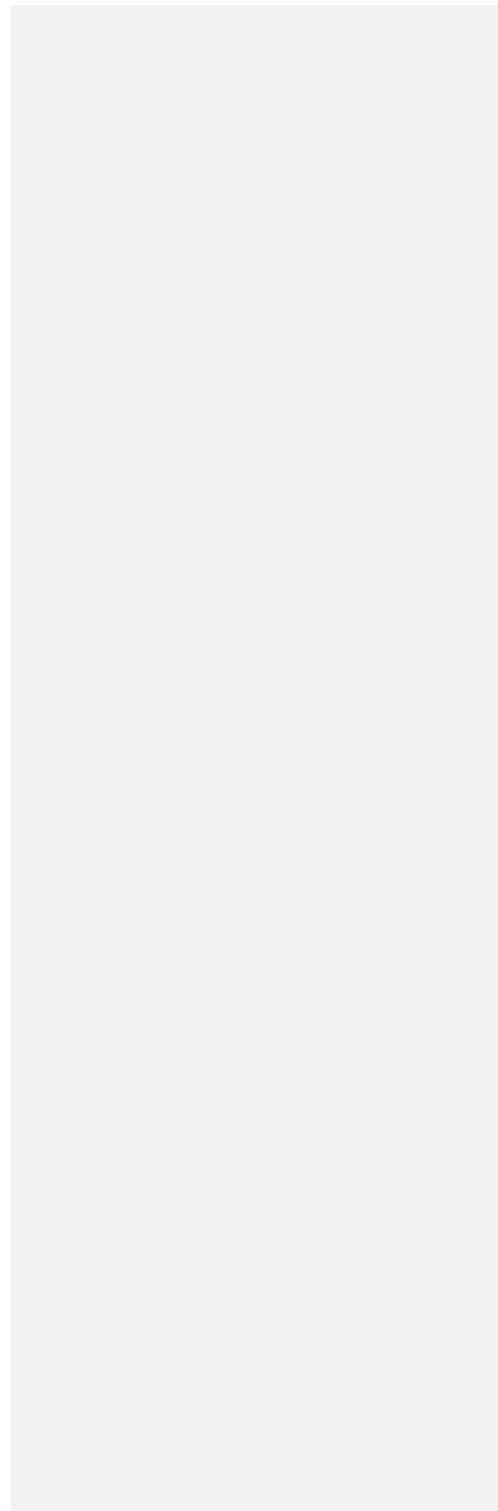


# Spokane County

Comprehensive Plan 2026 Periodic Update

Public Participation Program

~~April~~ March 2024



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## Overview of the Public Participation Program

Spokane County must update its Comprehensive Plan to meet recent requirements of the Growth Management Act, including local and regional requirements, by July 2026.

To ensure the public and community members are represented in the development and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, Spokane County will seek input, engagement, and recommendations from the public. The Spokane County Planning Department will use the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Program as the guiding document to describe how it will ensure public representation and meet specific state and local requirements for public participation.

The Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Program will also define opportunities to ensure that all segments of the population that may have been underrepresented in previous Comprehensive Plans can be involved in the planning process. During the periodic update process, Spokane County is making a ~~concentrated~~ concerted effort to include these populations that have been historically underrepresented in the planning process. These efforts include specific outreach strategies and stakeholder involvement, which are found in this document. During the 2026 periodic update, Spokane County will also ensure tribal participation to provide consistent planning efforts and representation of the Colville, Kalispel, and Spokane Tribes.

Overall, Spokane County's main objective is to ensure that all community members and stakeholders have adequate opportunities to be included and participate in the comprehensive planning process.

## Growth Management Act Requirements for Public Participation

The 2026 Spokane County Public Participation Program will meet the requirements of RCW 36.70A.140 and WAC 365-196-600. Spokane County has created the minimum public participation procedures that it will follow during the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and the Procedures for Public Forums. These sections can be found in Appendix A of the Public Participation Program. The Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Program will outline specific goals, objectives, and strategies on how Spokane County intends to meet and exceed these requirements during the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

The 2026 Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Program is for the exclusive use only of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

For the most up-to-date status on the efforts to implement the Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Program, please visit the county's 2026 Comprehensive Plan webpage.

## Early and Continuous Public Participation

The 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update will follow the requirements listed under the Growth Management Act public participation guidelines for early and continuous public involvement.

Spokane County will provide information for opportunities for the public to be involved throughout all stages of the 2026 periodic update while ensuring the inclusion of all population segments. Throughout the comprehensive planning process, Spokane County will create a calendar of relevant events, meetings, and public forums for the public to attend. Participation opportunities will be updated frequently and noticed to ensure early and continuous public participation.

## Public Participation Program Objective

The Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Program will serve as a toolkit for how Spokane County intends to interact with the public during the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, ~~and meet the statutory requirements outlined in the table above.~~

Throughout this process, Spokane County hopes to hear various voices, opinions, and ideas and implement the public's ideas in the 2026 comprehensive plan periodic update. Spokane County wants to ensure that no voice goes unheard by providing a safe and equal opportunity for every citizen to be involved in the planning process that will shape our County for the next 20 years.

Spokane County will strive for equitable opportunities for different segments of the population to become involved in this process and has created this Public Participation Program to meet and exceed this objective.

## Public Participation Program Goals

The Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Program includes goals planning staff hopes to achieve in ~~its~~~~their~~ efforts to implement public participation. These goals have been developed to help ensure that Spokane County will reach broad cross sections of the county, that early and continuous public participation is achieved throughout the comprehensive planning process, and that the public is appropriately informed and educated on GMA Comprehensive Planning topics. Below are the following goals of the Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Program.

## Public Participation Program Goals

- Create opportunities for vulnerable and underserved community groups in the planning process.
- Increase accessibility of planning topics to the public.
- Create opportunities for public comment throughout the public participation process.
- Create an innovative branding initiative to encourage public involvement.
- Create innovative communication strategies for public engagement.
- Create innovative communication strategies to ensure the broad dissemination of information.
- Utilization of Spokane County Building and Plannings website to increase public participation.
- Create, utilize, and update the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update stakeholder list to ensure optimal public involvement.
- Educate the public about the 2026 comprehensive plan periodic update.
- Communicate with stakeholders and the public throughout the process.

## Creating a Vision

For the 2026 Comprehensive Plan periodic update, Spokane County will create a visioning program that represents a 20- to 50-year vision of the County. The visioning process is essential for citizens to consider how their community might change and how they want it to change in the next 20 years. The vision entails gaining public input on the desired features for Spokane County. Spokane County will employ innovative techniques to help ensure that relevant stakeholders, community members, and typically underserved communities are involved in the visioning process for the comprehensive plan. Some of these techniques include creating a public vision workshop, which will entail visioning surveys for participants and opportunities for the public to comment and participate in choosing and creating different visions for the county.

- Spokane County will create vision workshops for the public, which will entail active interaction and participation. The County will also offer digital opportunities for community members to comment on its vision for the 2026 periodic update.

### Visioning Timeline

- Spokane County will provide relevant information on timeframes for the visioning process as they arise throughout the comprehensive planning process. Information and a schedule of activities will be provided on the county website for opportunities for the public to be involved in the visioning process.

## Planning Topics

Spokane County Building and Planning Staff have identified issues that will likely be prominent during the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and concerns that the public has historically had for comprehensive planning. Each topic will be considered in the context of relevant GMA Elements, its role in cumulative impacts, and its role as part of the Spokane County vision for growth.

Topics, problems, and concerns planning staff has identified include—and are not limited to—the following:

- Sprawl
- Housing Affordability
- Population Growth
- NIMBYism
- Economic Growth
- Gentrification of neighborhoods
- Urban Growth Areas
- Neighborhood Parks
- Traffic Congestion
- Open Space
- Homelessness
- Climate Change
- Lack of communication

## Comprehensive Plan Chapters

Spokane County will be building its comprehensive plan based off the following list of GMA Elements and current comprehensive plan chapters. Extensive and continuous public outreach and coordination with stakeholders will be included throughout the updating and development of these chapters.

- Housing
- Urban Land Use
- Rural Land Use
- Natural Resource Lands
- Economic Development
- Climate change and resiliency
- Transportation
- Parks and Recreation
- Economic Development
- Natural Environment
- Capital Facilities and Utilities
- Cultural Resources

This is a preliminary list of chapter titles. Chapter titles may change as staff continues its comprehensive planning research.



Each topic will be considered in the context of relevant GMA Elements, its role in cumulative impacts, and its role as part of the Spokane County vision for growth.

Throughout 2024 and 2025, Spokane County will contact the public and stakeholders to discuss their topics of concern for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan.

The public and stakeholder groups will have multiple opportunities to be involved in updating the comprehensive plan chapters. This will include public forums, such as visioning sessions, outreach sessions, charrettes, and public/stakeholder workshops. During these forums stakeholders and the public will have opportunities to provide feedback and discuss planning related topics with planning staff. Specific forums may also provide opportunities for the public to express their interest and vision for comprehensive planning in Spokane County

For the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Spokane County will incorporate the public's voice into the comprehensive plan through an extensive public participation strategy. This strategy will integrate the public's concerns and ideas to establish relevant goals and policies.

If you are interested in becoming more involved with the comprehensive plan, are interested in becoming a ~~stakeholder~~, ~~or stakeholder~~, or are interested in specific chapters/topics, please email the long-range planning staff at [2026CompPlan@SpokaneCounty.org](mailto:2026CompPlan@SpokaneCounty.org)

### Public Participation Integration Steps



## Public Participation Program Team

Spokane County staff will reach out to the public for participation and innovative strategies and techniques to include broad cross sections of the community, including vulnerable and underserved community members, throughout the comprehensive planning process.

### County Planning Staff

For the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update, Spokane County planning staff will primarily organize and direct public participation.

### Public Relations Coordinator

To help assist the long-range planning staff with ~~with~~ branding, social media, public service announcements, and scheduling of public participation forums, Spokane County is hiring a public relations specialist to ensure that this is completed in a timely and efficient manner.

### County Partners

The Spokane County Building and Planning Department will coordinate specific comprehensive planning elements with relevant county department staff. For example, Public Works Transportation staff will participate in the Transportation Element, while the Parks Department will participate in the Parks and Recreation Open Space Element for the Comprehensive Plan. Multiple departments will participate in the Capital Facilities Element.

### Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is the hub of public comment through workshops and public hearings throughout the periodic update calendar. The Planning Commission will follow the guidelines, implement specific public participation activities based on these guidelines, and employ any other methods that actively involve the public in the local GMA planning process.

At the end of the planning process, the Planning Commission will hold public hearings as they deliberate and recommend the Comprehensive Plan to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration and adoption.

### Board of County Commissioners

The Board of County Commissioners is responsible for adopting the 2026 Comprehensive Plan after receiving a recommendation from the planning commission. As part of the Comprehensive Plan, the PPP for the 2026 update will be reviewed and adopted similarly to the Comprehensive Plan. County Commissioners may also be present at comprehensive planning workshops.

## Stakeholder & Community Coordination

Stakeholders will play a critical role in the upcoming comprehensive plan update. Each required GMA Element will have a specific set of stakeholders that will be involved in the comprehensive planning process. Stakeholders will participate in staff organized public forums for each GMA element to discuss planning related topics. Each element will hold multiple public forums to ensure that the public is given early and continuous participation throughout the comprehensive planning process. The intent of establishing stakeholders is to provide representation to specific communities and their specific interests and values.

Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) will be created for specific GMA Elements and comprehensive planning chapters. TACs are not intended to be used for all GMA Elements/comprehensive plan chapters. Technical Advisory Committees are comprised of individuals with knowledge and expertise on specific planning related topics. The intent of TACs will be to assist and provide feedback and recommendations on comprehensive planning topics for planning staffs consideration. Technical advisors will take on an extra time commitment in comparison to stakeholders as they will be required to attend regularly scheduled meetings.

Spokane County will ensure communication and participation of relevant tribes, communities, and jurisdictions in creating the 2026 Comprehensive Plan by adding these groups to the 2026 Stakeholder List to offer public input early and continuously throughout the planning process.

The following parties and stakeholders may be interested in the periodic update process and should be included in the PPP. This list comprises relevant local, regional, and stakeholders. This will be the primary audience for the 2026 comprehensive plan periodic update. This list demonstrates some critical stakeholders for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. During the periodic update, Spokane County will contact different tribal governments, communities, and other jurisdictions to ensure coordination between these specific stakeholders during the planning process. Spokane County will also emphasize reaching out to vulnerable populations and overburdened communities within Spokane County. This will help ensure that groups typically disassociated from the planning process will have the opportunity to participate in the 2026 periodic update.

This preliminary list is an example of the type of stakeholders that will be included during the comprehensive planning process. The stakeholder list is subject to change throughout the process as more information is provided to county staff and as additional agencies and groups become involved in the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Planning staff has compiled a more extensive list of additional stakeholders outside of the example group provided in the public participation program. If you are interested in becoming a stakeholder for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Please email, [2026CompPlan@spokanecounty.org](mailto:2026CompPlan@spokanecounty.org) for more information on how to become involved as a stakeholder or if you wish to become more involved in the comprehensive plan update.

## Preliminary List List of Primary Stakeholders Examples

### **Spokane County Residents:**

All residents of Spokane County are primary stakeholders for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

### **Spokane County and Local Governments:**

All county municipalities are included as stakeholders and primary audience members.

### **Civic and community groups:**

**Spokane County will contact reach out to different Civic and Community groups t. Throughout the comprehensive planning process.**

### **Underserved Communities:**

As previously noted, Spokane County will reach out to underserved community groups. This includes vulnerable population groups typically disassociated from the planning process.

### **Fairchild Air Force Base**

Spokane County will closely coordinate public participation with Fairchild Air Force Base.

### **State Agencies:**

Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Ecology, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources, Washington State Conservation Commission, Washington State Farm Bureau, Washington State Parks, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, WSDOT, WSDOT Aviation

### **Regional Transportation and Transit Agencies:**

SRTC-  
STA

### **Tribes:**

Spokane County will contact and coordinate with local tribes, including the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, and the Spokane Tribe of Indians.

### **Environmental Advocacy Groups:**

350 Spokane, Spokane Climate Project, Spokane Riverkeeper, Citizens' Climate Lobby of Spokane, and Futurewise, for example.

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**Faith-Based Communities:**

Spokane County will reach out to faith-based communities within the county.

**Economic Organizations:**

Spokane County will reach out to relevant economic groups throughout this process.

**Civic and Community Groups:**

Spokane County has compiled a list of civic and community groups that will be included in the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

**School Districts:**

Central Valley School District #356, Cheney School District, Deer Park School District 414, Education Service District No. 101, Freeman School District 358, Great Northern School District 312, Liberty School District 362, Mead School District 354, Medical Lake School District, Newport School District No. 56-415, Nine Mile School District No. 325, Orchard Prairie School District No. 123, Reardan-Edwall School District No. 9, Riverside School District No. 416, Rosalia School District, Spokane District #81, Spokane Public Schools, St. George's School, East Valley School District 361, Upper Columbia Academy, and West Valley School District 363,-

**Veterans Groups:**

Veterans have typically been underserved as community members. Spokane County should reach out to relevant veterans' organizations and VFW programs. Spokane Vet Center, Blinded Veterans Associated (Spokane Inland Empire Regional Group), Spokane County Resources for Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, reaching out to relevant veteran groups and veteran advocacy groups.

**Federal Organizations:**

Spokane County will contact relevant federal organizations.

**Youth:**

Spokane County will reach out to relevant youth organizations.

**Elderly:**

Spokane County will reach out to relevant elderly organizations and senior organizations.

**Individuals facing homelessness:**

Spokane County will contact different organizations and advocacy groups relating to homelessness.

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**Water Districts:**

Spokane County will reach out to water districts throughout the county.

**Fire Districts:**

Spokane County will reach out to fire districts throughout the county.

**Neighborhood Associations and Groups-**

Spokane County has compiled a list of Neighborhood associations and groups that will be included as stakeholders.

**Libraries:**

Airway Heights, Argonne, Cheney, Deer Park, Fairfield, Linc (Mobile Services), Medical Lake Moran Prairie, North Spokane, Otis Orchards, Spokane County Library District, Spokane Public Library, Spokane Valley. – Spokane County Library District, Spokane Public Library, Liberty Lake Municipal Library, Otis Orchards Library, Kalama Library, Spokane Valley Library, Cheney Library, Airway Heights Library, Deer Park Library, Kelso Public Library, Argonne Library, Camas Public Library, North Spokane Library, and Castle Rock Public Library.

**Advocacy Groups:**

Spokane County will contact relevant advocacy groups for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

## Prioritizing Inclusivity

Spokane County intends to reach out to all community segments to help ensure we include diverse voices. It is committed to including underrepresented, vulnerable populations, overburdened communities, and historically underserved community groups in the planning process, such as people of different socio-economic classes, people of color, immigrants, people with disabilities, and people who have language barriers.

Spokane County will use innovative techniques and specific communication engagement programs to help ensure that all population segments are included in the planning process for the 2026 periodic update.

To help better implement prioritizing inclusivity within the 2026 comprehensive plan periodic update, Spokane County has created an equitable engagement program to ensure that all community segments are included in public participation and that vulnerable and underserved community groups are represented in the planning process.

## Creating Equitable Engagement

Spokane County strives to reach out and listen to diverse community voices, many of whom have been typically underserved, underrepresented, or systemically disassociated from the planning process. This includes, but is not limited to, BIPOC communities, overburdened communities, economically underserved communities, individuals with disabilities, immigrants, refugee communities, individuals with language barriers, unhoused community members, and veterans groups.

Spokane understands that racism, prejudice, and inequality may have prevented community members from having the opportunity to participate in the planning process. Spokane County will make additional efforts to reach out to underserved community members and work towards better inclusion of these members of the community. Spokane County will create a combination of in-person and digital public participation programs to ensure that underserved communities have meaningful access to participate in the planning process.

## Decreasing Language Barriers

Spokane County will may contact and coordinate with different advocacy groups that serve communities of people with language barriers.

## Including Underserved Community Members

Spokane County will contact relevant civic and advocacy groups to help serve all community segments and compile diverse voices.

## Coordination with community leaders and advocacy groups

Spokane County recognizes that local community members have a better understanding of the issues facing their communities. Spokane County may will consider coordinating with

community leaders and advocacy groups throughout the comprehensive planning process to understand how we can include members from their communities. Spokane County will may want to specifically reach out to community groups representing vulnerable populations and overburdened community members. The following is a list of programs Spokane County will may implement to increase equitable engagement within these communities.

## Equitable Engagement Programs

Programs to help with equitable engagement	Program Descriptions
<p><b>Programs to assist community members for whom English is not their first language or who have language barriers.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination with advocacy and language <b>groups</b></li> </ul>	<p>Spokane County <u>will</u> <u>may</u> contact and coordinate with different advocacy groups that serve communities of people with language barriers.</p>
<p><b><u>Virtual/Remote Participation</u></b></p>	<p><u>Spokane County recognizes the importance of accessibility and equity in the planning process. It may be difficult for members of the public to attend and participate in the planning process. To help ensure that the public is given adequate opportunities to participate in this process, Spokane County is committed to providing a virtual option for all meetings, workshops, and public forums. This commitment will help improve community engagement and equity in planning, while ensuring that typically underserved communities are given more accessible participation methods.</u></p>
<p><b>Programs for unhoused organizations.</b></p>	<p>Spokane County will contact homelessness organizations and advocacy groups to ensure they are notified of <u>the comprehensive plan update and are given opportunities to be stakeholders.</u> <del>public participation programs.</del></p>
<p><b>Promoting Accessibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>Accessible Meeting Places</del></li> <li>• <del>Electronic Accessibility</del></li> <li>• <del>Accessibility Statements</del></li> </ul>	<p>Public meetings and forums for the periodic update should be accessible to the community. They should be held in areas with accessible infrastructure and include a remote access option to video conferencing resources to help increase accessibility.</p>



	<p>All posted public participation meetings and public forums should include an accessibility statement for people needing accommodation for the meeting.</p>
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<p><b>Reaching out to people where they are.</b></p>	<p>Spokane County intends to meet community members where they are in their communities to help ensure that diverse segments of the population are included in the planning process.</p> <p>This program entails communicating with, interviewing, and surveying people at community events. Meeting people where they are will help create more opportunities and provide more information for community members with limited access to events to participate in the planning process.</p> <p><u>Spokane County will consider participating in events that are led by underserved, vulnerable, and overburdened community members.</u></p>
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<p><b>Use of social media for equitable engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facebook</li> <li>• Instagram</li> <li>• Threads</li> <li>• X (formerly known as Twitter)</li> </ul>	<p>To improve accessibility for underserved community groups, Spokane County may consider live-streaming public participation meetings and forums when practical. This may help reach more significant segments of the community.</p>
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## will develop Communication Engagement Programs & Strategies

The County will use communication engagement strategies to help increase public participation and engagement for Spokane County's 2026 Periodic Update. Spokane County will utilize communication engagement strategies to fulfill public participation requirements found in RCW 36.70A.140 and WAC 365-196-600 and fulfill broad dissemination requirements. These programs and strategies will demonstrate how the established public participation requirements of the PPP will be met to better inform and engage the public.

### Utilization of County Webpage

For the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Spokane County will utilize the Spokane County Building and Planning website to increase public awareness for the comprehensive plan and increase public involvement for the 2026 update comprehensive plan. The Spokane County Building and Planning Website will be the central hub for information for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. This will be the best place for the public to find the most up-to-date comprehensive planning drafts, along with information about the comprehensive planning process and different ways the community can become involved in the comprehensive planning process. The following is a list of ways Spokane County will utilize the building and planning website.

#### *Fact Sheets*

The comprehensive plan fact sheet is a primary communication and educational tool, that will be available for public viewing on the Spokane County Comprehensive Plan webpage. The project fact sheet will provide a broad overview of the 2026 periodic update, the project timeline, and the importance of comprehensive planning to the community. The fact sheet will also explain the role of the public in the 2026 periodic update and how to be involved in the public participation program. Spokane County will create an individual comprehensive plan fact sheet for each element of the comprehensive plan. These fact sheets will create a broad overview of the content required for each element and explain the element's importance to the public and stakeholders, providing the public with the knowledge to respond accordingly.

#### *Draft Plans*

Spokane County will utilize the county website to post drafts of planning documents. These drafts will be available before the Planning Commission's recommendation and the Board of County Commissioners' adoption. Stakeholders and the public can post comments on drafts in multiple formats.

#### *Surveys*

Spokane County will use county websites to post surveys to engage the public. The information provided by the public will inform county staff's decision-making process while implementing goals and policies for each element of the comprehensive plan.

### *GIS Story Maps*

For the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update, Spokane County will create a culmination of GIS Story Maps. The story maps will demonstrate important information about the comprehensive planning process to the public while providing an engaging educational opportunity.

### *Workshops/Public Forums*

Throughout the 2026 comprehensive plan update, Spokane County Long-Range planning staff will direct workshops for the public to attend. These workshops and public forums will include participation from the public, stakeholders, the Planning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners. Information on public workshops and opportunities to attend will be posted on the Spokane County Building and Planning website. All seminars and public forums will have ~~a~~ [an in](#)-person, hybrid, and virtual option.

### *Community Consultations*

Throughout the 2026 comprehensive plan update, Spokane County Long-Range planning staff will be available for community consultations. Community members/groups can schedule a meeting with long-range planners to discuss the comprehensive plan update.

### *Public Comments*

Throughout the 2026 comprehensive plan update, the public can submit comments and feedback through the web and other methods to planning staff for review and consideration.

[Staff recognizes](#)

## Additional Engagement Programs & Strategies

Communication Engagement Programs	Description of the Project
<p><b>Social Media Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>Facebook</del></li> <li>• <del>Threads</del></li> <li>• <del>Instagram</del></li> <li>• <del>X (Twitter)</del></li> </ul>	<p>Spokane County will use social media to educate and inform the public on the plan's status/progress and direct them to further information on the county website.</p> <p>Spokane County will <del>utilize</del> <u>create a comprehensive plan for</u> Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), and Instagram pages to <del>poll the public on topics related to the 2026 periodic update.</del> <u>provide information to the public on comprehensive planning related topics.</u></p>
<p><b>Community Consultations</b></p>	<p>Communities and stakeholders will be able to request to schedule an in-person or online consultation for details related to the Comprehensive Plan. This will help ensure that different community segments have equitable access to information.</p>
<p><b>Media Outlets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>Radio</del></li> <li>• <del>Television</del></li> </ul>	<p><del>Local Radio Announcements:</del> Spokane County may notify local <u>media</u> <del>radio channels</del> about the comprehensive plan update.</p> <p><del>Local Television Engagements:</del> <u>Spokane County may notify local television outlets about the comprehensive plan.</u></p>
<p><b>Direct Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>Updates from Staff</del></li> <li>• <del>Podcasts</del></li> <li>• <del>Informative Videos</del></li> </ul>	<p>Spokane County may create a video demonstrating the importance of public participation for the 2026 periodic update.</p> <p>Planning staff may post scheduled videos explaining details about the 2026 periodic update process. The videos will explain upcoming opportunities for public participation.</p> <p>These videos may be posted on the county's relevant social media accounts.</p>
<p><b>In-Person Workshops</b></p>	<p>The county will establish workshops to involve the public in the planning process and provide opportunities for public input.</p>
<p><b>Electronic Mailing List</b></p>	<p>The county will create an electronic mailing list for interested parties and citizens for the 2026 comprehensive plan, periodically updating news and relevant information.</p>

	The county <del>will</del> <del>may</del> also send updates for the comprehensive planning process to interested parties.
<b>Virtual Meetings/Forums</b>	Spokane County will have Zoom alternatives for the public participation plan. Spokane County <del>will</del> <del>may</del> create a virtual alternative to in-person meetings and public forums for all announced meetings.
<b>News</b>	Spokane County <del>will</del> <del>may</del> create and post news, relevant information, and articles on its website regarding Spokane County Growth Management, local planning issues, meetings, public forums, or hearing notices.
<b>Design, display, and distribution of material</b>	For the 2026 periodic update, Spokane County <del>will</del> <del>may</del> design, display, and distribute printed and digital/electronic material to inform the public about the local planning process and engage them in relevant discussions.
<b>Press Releases, Public Service Announcements, and Media Packets</b>	For the 2026 periodic update, these mediums will inform the public on GMA <del>issues</del> <del>issues</del> , the 2026 comprehensive plan update, document availability, opportunities to participate virtually, meetings, public forums, <del>and</del> hearing dates.

## Meeting People Where They Are

Historically, fully involving citizens in public participation has not been easy. Various barriers have kept underserved communities and jurisdictions from actively participating in community planning. For the 2026 periodic update, Spokane County wants to ensure that individuals from all county segments are aware, engaged, and heard in all phases of the update.

Spokane County can create interest in the planning process and increase public participation by meeting people where they are in their communities rather than only holding public events in areas where only the most vocal individuals participate. This program will help ensure a diverse cross-section of community members and stakeholders are included in the participation process. Staff members and informed volunteers will go to local community events and public spaces to conduct interviews, surveys, questionnaires, and table events with the public.

Spokane County will begin this program in the summer of 2024 to solicit the public's thoughts on the upcoming comprehensive planning process.

The following are examples of areas in which Spokane county could attend.

Examples of Strategies for Meeting People Where They Are	
<b>Farmers Markets</b>	Spokane County may operate a table, distribute surveys, and create opportunities for public comment at local farmers' markets.
<b>Universities</b>	Spokane County may operate a table at Eastern Washington University to provide students with more information on the comprehensive plan update.
<b>Fairs</b>	Spokane County staff and volunteers should create opportunities for public comment at local fairs to ensure diverse voices are heard.
<b>Community Parades</b>	Spokane County may distribute surveys and create opportunities for public comment at local parades within the county.

~~Cultural events for historically underrepresented communities.~~

~~Spokane County may reach out to the public at different cultural events throughout the community.~~

## Broad Dissemination

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires fully planning counties and communities to comply with broad dissemination (RCW 36.70A.130(2)). In the context of the GMA, “broad dissemination” means that a county or city has made the documents widely available and provided information on how to access them and provide comments. Spokane County will may use many innovative and traditional methods to ensure the county can make documents accessible to the public. This includes making all relevant documents for the comprehensive plan available to the public on the Spokane County Building and Planning website and at the planning department office.

### Broad Dissemination Programs & Techniques

Broad Dissemination Strategy	Specific techniques to fulfill these programs
<b>Online presence</b>	Spokane County will digitally post and distribute documents related to the 2026 periodic update to be readily available to all who want to review them.
<b>Physical Presence</b>	Physical copies of documents related to the 2026 periodic update will be available at Spokane County’s planning office.
<b>Social Media Platforms</b>	<p>Spokane County <u>may use</u> <u>will use</u> <u>relevant</u> social media platforms to notify the public of where documents are posted and when they will be made available.</p> <p>Social Media programs may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facebook, Threads, Instagram</li> <li>• X (formerly known as Twitter)</li> </ul>
<b>Physical Addresses</b>	Spokane County may distribute information regarding how to access documents at local libraries throughout the county and in other relevant areas.

<b>Media Outlets</b>	<p>Spokane County <del>will</del> <del>may</del> also create information programs in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press <del>releases</del> <del>releases</del>.</li> <li>• Public service announcements</li> <li>• Media packets</li> </ul>
<b>Email Contact List</b>	<p>Spokane County <del>will</del> <del>may</del> also create an email contact list where community members interested in the comprehensive planning update process can be sent periodic information on the comprehensive planning process and other relevant topics.</p>
<b>News Updates</b>	<p>Spokane County <del>will</del> <del>may</del> post relevant information and articles regarding Spokane County Growth Management, local planning issues, meetings, public forums, or hearing notices.</p>

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## Public Participation Program Timeline

Spokane County will involve the public and inform them of all opportunities to participate in meetings and public forums during the comprehensive planning process. The following table demonstrates opportunities for the public to participate in each stage of the planning process.

Preliminary Project Timeline for 2026 Update	
Comprehensive Plan Steps	Methods of Public Outreach
<b>2024</b>	
Data gathering for population projections/plan crafting.	Public Meetings and Public Forums
Initial Urban Growth Areas projections and study areas. Initial crafting of chapters.	Workshops/Visioning
<b>2025</b>	
Detailed analysis of GMA elements	Public Meetings and Public Forums
Crafting Chapters into Plan	Studio workshops
<b>2026</b>	
Refining the chapters	Coordination with partners and stakeholders
Final draft Plan	Public Meetings and studio workshops, Public Forums
Refining the Plan	Public Meetings, Public Forums, and Hearings
<b>Plan Adoption</b>	

Specific dates, schedules, and public participation events are subject to change throughout the periodic update process. Adequate information and notice will be given for opportunities to participate in public participation.

## Preliminary Public Participation Timeline For 2026 Update

2024

<p>Quarter 1</p>	<p>Public Participation Project Launch. Launch of the website and Public Service Announcements to provide the public with accurate information for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update.</p> <p><del>Initial outreach on the planning website to obtain public input on relevant, comprehensive planning topics.</del></p>
<p>Quarter 2</p>	<p>Initial Visioning Session with the public to create an overarching vision statement for the comprehensive plan.</p> <p>Public forums to receive initial input from the public for comprehensive plan elements to help begin crafting goals and policies.</p> <p>Meet stakeholders to receive initial input from the public for comprehensive plan elements to help review initially drafted goals and policies for the comprehensive plan.</p> <p><del>Labeling</del> <u>Attend and have a table</u> at public events to inform the public about the periodic update and reach out to individuals who have typically not been involved.</p>
<p>Quarter 3</p>	<p>Workshops/meetings with stakeholders to provide the public with information on staff progress for individual <del>elements</del><u>elements</u>.</p> <p>Public Participation Summary to provide the public with a summary of the county's public participation</p>

Quarter 4	Workshops/meetings with stakeholders to provide the public with information on staff progress for individual elements
<b>2025</b>	
Quarter 1	Public studio workshops/ Public forums to receive additional input from the public while refining comprehensive plan documents.  Stakeholder Meetings to receive further input from stakeholders for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan while refining comprehensive plan chapters
Quarter 2	Tabling to provide the public with information on the current stage of the planning process.  Public Forums to receive input from the public while refining comprehensive plan documents.  Stakeholder meetings to receive further input from stakeholders for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan while refining comprehensive plan chapters
Quarter 3	Public forums
Quarter 4	Public forums and stakeholder meetings
<b>2026</b>	
Quarter 1	Public Forums to share the draft plan update with the public
Quarter 2	Planning Commission public hearings
<b>Plan Adoption – June 2026</b>	

## Public Outreach Performance Measures

For the 2026 Comprehensive Periodic Update, Spokane County wants to ensure we accurately track our performance measures for public participation. Spokane County Planning staff will create a semi-annual report highlighting and tracking our public outreach efforts during the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update. This report will include public participation events that staff held and participated in, summarization of feedback from the public, and the number of responses from the public. This will help ensure that the public is informed about the engagement process.

Spokane County will be hiring a professional communications/public relations staff consultant for the comprehensive plan update. One of their responsibilities will be to help create goals for public outreach, so planning staff can measure the success of public engagement. The consultant will also help refine the public outreach performance metrics that staff will use to measure public outreach.

The following are examples of public outreach preliminary list. During this process, Spokane County may follow of public outreach specific metrics that Spokane County may use to report back to the public. Public Outreach metrics will be further refined when a professional communications/pr consultant is hired. Current performance measures This includes but is not limited to:

- Number of members of the public who viewed the comprehensive plan website.
- Number of public meetings that Spokane County has held.
- Number of stakeholder groups that Spokane County has reached out to.
- Number of public members who have shown up to public meetings.
- Number of comments that Spokane County has received from the public.
- A summary of comments/concerns Spokane County received during public participation.
- Number of public forums held, location held, and number of participants.
- Locations where public meetings are being held.
- Locations of where participants are visiting from. This will help Spokane County understand which geographical locations of the county are involved with public participation. (This will help Spokane County focus on reaching out to geographical locations that have not been involved in the public participation program.
- A brief summarization of media exposures of Spokane County's comprehensive plan. This includes (Public Service Announcements, Print Media, and Digital Media)
- Summarization of Social Media Metrics (Number of posts on social media platforms and comments from the public).

### Integration with SEPA

Consistent with WAC 197-11-210, Spokane County will integrate the requirements of SEPA and the Growth Management Act (GMA) to ensure that environmental analyses under SEPA

**Commented [JW1]:** This was new addition, for some reason track changes didn't translate to this.

can occur concurrently with and as an integral part of the planning and decision-making under GMA.

Where a formal SEPA document is issued concurrently with a proposed GMA action that has a public comment period, the public comment period on the formal SEPA document shall be the same as the comment period on the GMA action, provided the comment period is not less than otherwise required of a SEPA document consistent with WAC 197-11-230.

## Reaching out for more information

Spokane County urges all community members to participate actively in the periodic update. This plan should constitute the public's vision for what they want their community to look like for the next twenty years. This is an exciting opportunity for Spokane County residents to be involved in shaping their community's future, and all are welcome and encouraged to participate.

If any Spokane County residents have any questions, feedback, or ideas on how they can be involved in the public participation process for the 2026 periodic update, please get in touch with the Spokane County Building and Planning Department at [2026CompPlan@spokanecounty.org](mailto:2026CompPlan@spokanecounty.org) or call the department at 509-477-1500. Additional information on public participation can be found at Spokane County Building and Planning's public participation page on the department's website, [www.spokanecounty.org/BP](http://www.spokanecounty.org/BP).

## Compliance with State, Regional, and Local Requirements

The Spokane County Public Participation Program for the 2026 Periodic Update was coordinated with the relevant requirements in the RCW and WACs for the Washington State Growth Management Act.

## Compliance Disclaimer

Exact guidelines, schedules, dates, and programs are subject to change throughout the planning process. Adequate notice (as established by statute, such as publishing in the newspaper, online, and on social media no less than 15 days before a hearing) will be given to ensure that the public has provided accurate information on how to participate in the planning process.

Errors in exact compliance with the established program and procedures shall not render the comprehensive land use plan or development regulations invalid if the spirit of the program and procedures is observed (RCW 36.70A.140).

**Appendix A**  
Minimum Public Participation Procedures for the 2026  
Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

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**Minimum Public Participation Procedures for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.**

This section provides the minimum procedural requirements for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. This list of procedures is for the exclusive use of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update only. The following list of procedures supersedes all other county codes related to comprehensive plan or development regulation amendments for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan update.

**General Procedures for Approval of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update**

Before adoption, all proposed amendments will go through the following procedure at a minimum:

- 1) Building and Planning Public Involvement
  - a) Spokane County Building and Planning Staff shall hold at least one public forum on any proposed amendments.
  - b) Spokane County Building and Planning Staff shall meet with stakeholders at least twice before any Planning Commission public hearing on proposed amendments.
- 2) Planning Commission Review and Recommendation
  - a) The Planning Commission may hold one or more workshops before recommending to the Board of County Commissioners.
  - b) The Planning Commission shall hold at least one public hearing before recommending any proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan or development regulations.
  - c) After the hearing and deliberations, the Planning Commission shall recommend any proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan and development regulations and forward the same to the Board of County Commissioners.
- 3) Board of County Commissioners Review and Decisions
  - a) Upon receipt of the Planning Commission's recommendation, the Board shall, at its next available regular meeting, set a date for a public meeting to consider the Commission's recommendation on any amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and/or development regulations.
  - b) At the established meeting, the Board may do one of the following:
    - i) Adopt, make minor modifications, or deny the proposed recommendation(s).
    - ii) Written findings of fact shall accompany the board's decision.
    - iii) Should the Board change a recommendation from the Commission, the Board shall hold a public hearing.
  - c) Written findings of fact shall accompany the Board's decision.

- d) At least 60 days before any final action by the BOCC, the proposed amendments shall be sent to the Washington State Department of Commerce for comment.
- e) The Board shall publish a notice of adoption and the time frame for appeal after the decision under RCW 36.70A.290. The decision shall be forwarded to the Washington State Department of Commerce, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.106.

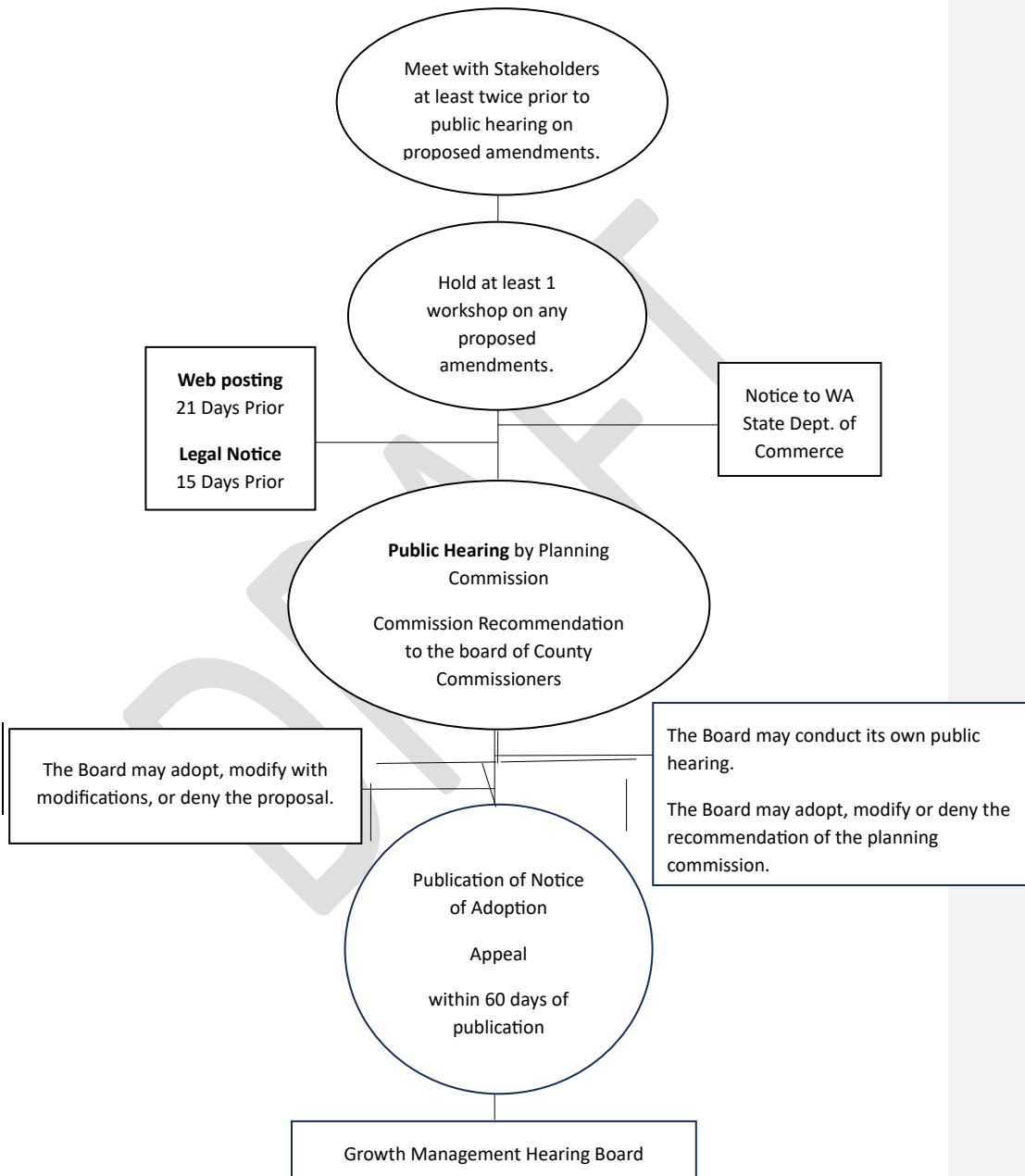
4) Public Notice

Notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of public hearings for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update shall be, at a minimum, given by the following:

- a) One publication in Spokane County's official newspaper at least 15 days before the hearing.
- b) Post on the County website at least 15 days before the hearing.
- c) Emailed notice to agency mailing lists.
- d) Notifying public or private groups that have signed up for electronic notice of the 2026 comprehensive plan update.
- e) Documents and presentations related to the public hearing should be made available at least 21 days before the public hearing.



**Flow Chart for 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update**



## Procedures for Public Forums

This section provides general procedures for public forums for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Spokane County will strive to meet these procedures during the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

For the context of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, public forums shall include and are defined, but are not limited to, activities such as open houses, charrettes, and visioning sessions or design studios. These are opportunities for open discussion between the public, staff, and decision-makers on particular topics and ideas related to the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

The following public notice will be provided before public forums about the 2026 Spokane County Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

- Public forum notices shall be advertised via the Spokesman-Review and Spokane County Comprehensive Plan web page no fewer than fifteen (15) days before the forum date.
- Notices shall include the following:
  - The scheduled date and time of the forum.
  - The address of the forum and the virtual link to attend the forum.
  - The agenda of the forum
- Forums shall have a virtual option made available.
- ~~Digital and hard copies of documents related to the comprehensive plan update shall be made available via the Building & Planning web at least seven days before the forum for in office review at the Building & Planning office and, as appropriate, through other divisions or agencies.~~
- Digital and hard copies of documents related to the scheduled forum shall be made available via the Building & Planning webpage and at the Building & Planning office at least seven days prior to the public forum and, as appropriate, through other divisions or agencies.
- For the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, documents and exhibits presented at public forums shall be made available on the county website no fewer than seven days after the public forum.
- Sign-in sheets shall be offered at each public forum and may be used to create a specific mailing list for persons or parties interested in receiving updates on the 2026 Comprehensive Plan.
- Special arrangements for forums shall be made under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with advance notice to the public forum facilitator.

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- For public forums, Spokane County will, at minimum, provide notice of forums on the county web page but may also provide additional notice via relevant social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, X “formerly Twitter.”
- Web presentations may be posted before public forum (s) to involve and educate the public and solicit their opinions, reactions, or suggestions. Web presentations, documents, and agency comments may be available for viewing and public comment 24 hours a day.

Spokane County will ensure that all public forums allow for an open discussion of the relevant issues at hand. An agenda shall clearly define the purpose of the forum, the items to be considered, and the actions that will not be taken at these events. The agenda should provide a brief overview of any documents or proposals to be presented. It should be included or summarized in the notices.

- The scheduled date, time, and place—virtual and physical—should be convenient to encourage the greatest number of people to participate.
- A designated facilitator will conduct the forum in an orderly fashion to ensure that all attendees can discuss issues and offer comments.
- The facilitator should provide introductory remarks outlining the purpose of the public forum and describing how the attendees can best participate and how their input may be used.

For the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Spokane County strongly encourages submitting written comments or testimony throughout the planning process. Spokane County may provide many opportunities to comment throughout the comprehensive planning process.

- Web-based opportunities for comment will be made available throughout the planning process. Comments may be submitted via the county webpage or in writing and submitted to the planning department.
- Persons speaking, testifying, or electronically submitting comments will be expected to concisely express their comments verbally and provide specific details in written format.
- Spokane County shall consider all relevant public comments and testimony in decision-making.

Substantive comments about studies, analyses, or reports, along with necessary responses, will be included or linked to the subject planning document.

The record, including recordings, written and web-based comments or testimony, documents, summaries, etc., will be compiled and maintained by the Spokane County Building & Planning Department. That record will be made available to the decision-makers for their consideration and review before a decision is made.

Relevant comments or testimony shall be addressed through the findings-of-fact portion of the decision-maker's written decision or recommendation.

Errors in exact compliance with the established program and procedures shall not render the comprehensive land use plan or development regulations invalid if the spirit of the program and procedures are observed.

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