



City of Monroe

2044

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN







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A Special Thanks...

To the residents of Monroe, and to all of those who participated in this process.



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1 INTRODUCTION

How do we see Monroe changing in the next twenty years? What brings us together now, and what path do we want to take together as a community? How can we grow in a way that best represents all our goals and priorities?

Welcome to the Monroe 2044 Comprehensive Plan, a transformational update to our city’s growth and development strategy. Building upon the 2015 plan, this new framework incorporates recent amendments to the Washington Growth Management Act (GMA). These updates introduce revised regulations and standards designed to foster sustainable and well-managed growth throughout the state, ensuring Monroe’s future is both forward-thinking and in alignment with statewide planning goals.

The Monroe 2044 Comprehensive Plan encapsulates the voices of Monroe heard through extensive public engagement over a two-year planning process. The Plan also establishes the framework and actionable steps towards making Imagine Monroe a reality that aligns with new and revised growth management requirements.

This document is organized into distinct elements, each addressing specific functions and aspects of Monroe’s operations. Within some of these sections, there are dedicated



Downtown Monroe
Source: Provided by the City of Monroe

plans that focus on citywide initiatives. These plans cover various aspects of city life, including infrastructure, services, and development.

Each element within the document provides detailed guidance on policies related to growth and change. By addressing these critical areas, the City can plan more effectively for its community’s needs, ensuring sustainable development and improved quality of life for residents.

In tandem with the development of the Monroe 2044 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Monroe has undertaken updates to several other citywide plans to ensure consistency and across all strategic documents. These citywide plans include:



- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (adopted in 2022)
- Transportation System Plan (adopted 2024)
- Wastewater Plan (2025-expected)
- Water Plan (2025-expected)
- Stormwater Plan (2025-expected)
- Trails Master Plan (adopted 2024)

These updated plans provide a series of prioritized projects necessary to meet the future development identified within the Comprehensive Plan and that comply with the Future Land Use Map (**Figure 3.4, page 3-12**), illustrating how development is expected to occur over the next 20 years in Monroe.

As part of the Monroe 2044 Comprehensive Plan update, the City is also updating its Development Code to implement new or support revised Comprehensive Plan policies. This update incorporates regulations that meet regional and state requirements and provide clarity for how and where development occurs in Monroe.

Planning Context

GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT

In 1990, Washington Legislature enacted the GMA, mandating rapidly growing cities and counties to develop comprehensive plans as a way to proactively manage their population growth and development.



City of Monroe Gateway Sign
Source: Provided by the City of Monroe



Figure 1.1 - REGIONAL AND STATEWIDE PLANNING CONTEXT

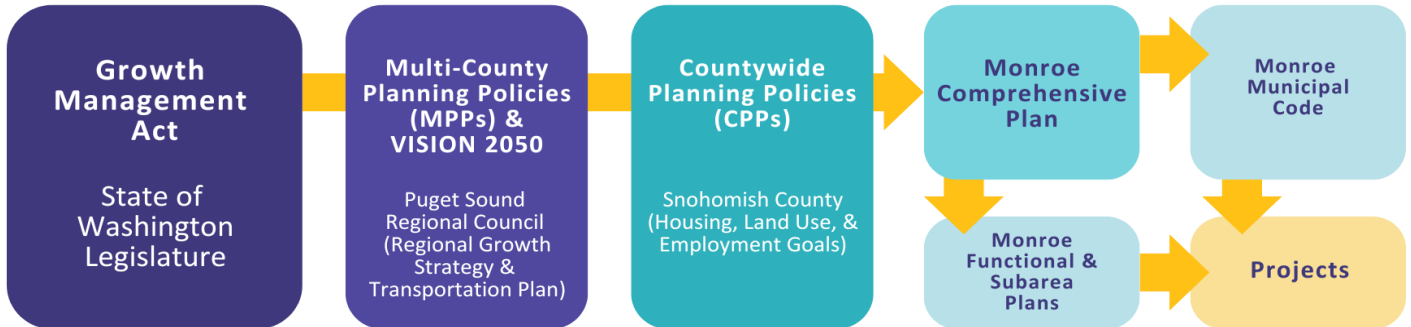


Figure 1.1 illustrates how State requirements inform regional and local land use planning. These plans serve as the centerpiece for local long-range planning efforts; with the GMA specifying both mandatory and optional elements to ensure statewide consistency and standards for most cities and counties in Washington.

Monroe’s 2044 Comprehensive Plan ensures the level of consistency required by the GMA.

Growth Management Act Goals

The GMA, under RCW 36.70A.020, outlines goals that should form the foundation of the comprehensive plans. These goals are not ranked by priority and are meant solely to guide planning and regulations. Additionally, the Shoreline Management Act’s goals are included as the fourteenth GMA goal (RCW 36.70A.480), detailed in RCW 90.58.020.

Urban growth. Encourage development in urban areas.

Reduce sprawl. Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land.

Transportation. Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems.

Housing. Plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments.

Economic development. Encourage economic development throughout the state.

Property rights. Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made.

Permits. Process applications in a timely and fair manner.

Natural resource industries. Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries.

Open space and recreation. Retain open space and enhance recreational opportunities.

Environment. Protect the environment and enhance the state’s high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.

Citizen participation and coordination. Encourage the involvement of citizens.

Public facilities and services. Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate.



Springtime tulips outside of old City Hall
Source: Provided by the City of Monroe

Historic preservation. Identify and encourage preservation.

Climate change and resiliency. Ensure that comprehensive plans, development regulations, and regional policies, plans, and strategies adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate.

Shoreline management. Manage shorelines for habitat and development.

The GMA also requires certain elements, or chapters, to be included in each Comprehensive Plan. These elements include:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Capital Facilities Plan
- Utilities
- Rural Development - Counties only
- Transportation
- Climate Change/Resiliency - Added in 2023
- Ports - For cities with an annual maritime port revenue of > \$60 million

There are optional Comprehensive Plan Elements that include Economic Development and Parks and Recreation, that the City of Monroe has chosen to include in this Comprehensive Plan update due to their importance to the city and its residents.

Regional Planning Policies

Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is a metropolitan planning organization representing King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. PSRC developed the regional growth strategy, called VISION 2050, that provides a shared roadmap for the future and aligns policies across jurisdictions. Within VISION 2050, there are Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs) that set the groundwork for each county in preparing policies for Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs); which are more individualized and county-focused, and for cities preparing local comprehensive plans. As a partner in the Puget Sound region's growth and development, the City of Monroe is incorporating PSRC's VISION 2050's MPPs as well as GMA's requirements.

SNOHOMISH COUNTY PLANNING POLICIES

Snohomish County adopted its most current Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) in 2023. The CPPs provide a consistent framework to guide each local jurisdiction's comprehensive planning and include the 20-year adopted population, housing and employment allocations for the County and all Snohomish County cities (**Table 1.1**). In particular, the CPPs address issues that



cross jurisdictional boundaries, such as setting Urban Growth Areas, accommodating housing and employment demand, and addressing capital facilities that are regional in nature. Monroe’s 2044 Comprehensive Plan addresses Snohomish County’s CPPs related to Monroe.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

Monroe’s 2044 Comprehensive Plan provides guidance to decision makers, staff, residents, property owners, investors, and developers regarding an approach to growth and development in the City and where the City is allowed to expand its boundaries. The Plan emphasizes certain practices. The Plan provides local policy direction to realize the Imagine Monroe vision, shaped by extensive community input and reflecting the city’s aspirations for the next 20 years.

Policy Documents

- The Monroe 2044 Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that establishes a framework to implement Imagine Monroe, the city’s aspirational **future vision**. The Plan includes goals, policies, and actions that provide overall direction and can be used to measure performance in how policies are being met by the City and its partners.

System Plans

- System plans, including potable water, sanitary sewer, stormwater, transportation, and parks, open space, and trails plans, provide a set of prioritized projects. These

system plans are incorporated into the Monroe 2044 Comprehensive Plan as specific elements of the Plan.

Regulatory Documents

- Monroe’s Development Code implements the Future Land Use Map illustrated in the Monroe 2044 Comprehensive Plan. The Development Code regulates how development occurs **today**, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Subarea plans, such as for Downtown and North Kelsey, provide greater specificity than the Comprehensive Plan for a specific area or district in the city.

All of these documents implement the Imagine Monroe vision statement.

Table 1.1 - GROWTH ALLOCATIONS

Allocations	2020		2044
POPULATION			
City	19,699		24,302
Unincorporated	1,567		1,974
Total UGA	21,266		26,276
HOUSING			
City	6,163		8,379
Unincorporated	551		758
Total UGA	6,714		9,137*
EMPLOYMENT			
City	10,096		12,420
Unincorporated	164		241
Total UGA	10,260		12,660*

**Totals may be different due to rounding in UGA calculations.*



Community Engagement

The Monroe 2044 Comprehensive Plan is the community’s blueprint. Hundreds of people participated throughout the process. People living, working, and visiting Monroe interacted with City staff at in-person pop-up events and community gatherings, participated in surveys, and shared their perspectives at Planning Commission and City Council meetings.

There were many ways that Monroe residents, employees, business, and property owners were actively involved, including:



Visiting the project website to read about the project



Interviews with community leaders, service providers, and others active in Monroe



Participation in five Community Advisory Committee meetings



Attendance or participation at one or more of the following community pop-up events during the project, such as the Monroe Farmer’s Market, Monroe PRIDE, Juneteenth, Belonging, and Monroe Chamber of Commerce Block Party, Monroe 2044 In The Classroom, National Night Out Against Crime



Completing one or more of the two online surveys



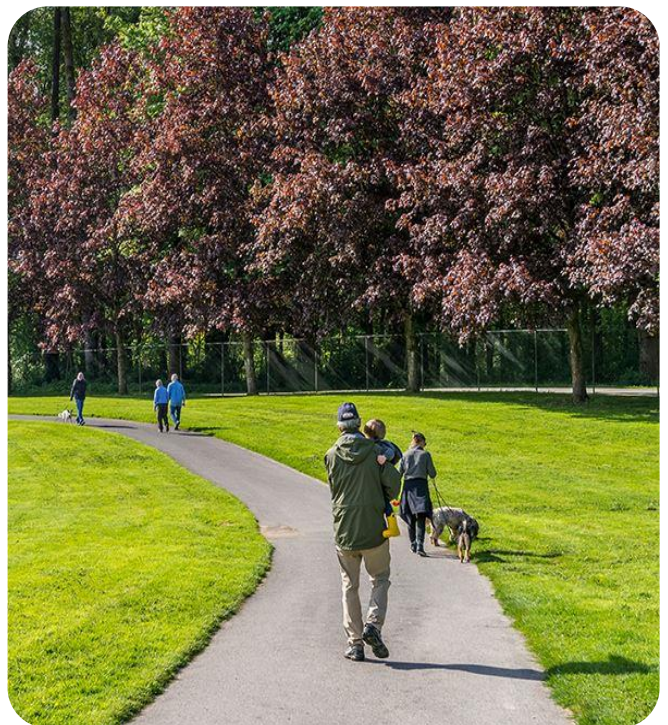
Attendance and participation at many City-led committee meetings,

such as the Community Human Services Advisory Board, the Economic Development Advisory Board, Parks Board, and the Monroe Planning Commission



Attendance and participation at City Council meetings

People in Monroe are engaged and invested in the community, contributing to a visionary comprehensive plan that achieves a broader community vision. Chapter 2: Vision and Guiding Principles provides more details about public engagement conducted to create a roadmap for the future of Monroe.



*Paved trail through Sky River Park
Source: Provided by the City of Monroe*

Key Outreach Activities



City staff and event participants
Source: Provided by the City of Monroe and MIG, Inc.



Community Kickoff
50+ Attendees



One-on-One Interviews
9 Interviews

Monroe City Council | Evergreen Health | Evergreen Drug Rehab | Downtown Monroe Association | Monroe Historical Society | Monroe Parks Board | Monroe's Economic Advisory Board | The Boys and Girls Club | City of Monroe Staff



Community Advisory Committee
5 Public Meetings



Focus Groups
English - Spanish

Challenges and Values of Monroe | Pandemic Issues | Imagine Monroe Vision Statement | New- and Long-Term Resident Goals



Three Online Surveys
English - Spanish
500+ participants



Youth Participants
140+



Plan Organization

Monroe’s 2044 Comprehensive Plan is organized as a series of chapters that address Washington’s GMA requirements. Each chapter provides an overview of the requirements and context for policies contained within each plan. While each chapter focuses on one element of the Comprehensive Plan, many policies are inter-related. In those cases, policies may reference other elements.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the plan and how the community and City will use it. This chapter describes the public engagement process and other information used to develop the Monroe 2044 Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 2: Imagine Monroe and Guiding Principles

Chapter 2 provides the overarching framework for the Comprehensive Plan by describing the following:

Imagine Monroe. The City of Monroe’s vision statement

The Comprehensive Plan’s Guiding Principles. Guiding Principles are general statements that address one element of Imagine Monroe and provide direction for the Policy Framework in Chapters 3-10.

Chapters 3-10: Comprehensive Plan Elements

The Comprehensive Plan is organized into dedicated chapters, each focusing on a specific element such as Land Use, Transportation, Economic Development, Housing, Parks, Recreation & Open Space, Capital Facilities, Utilities, and Shoreline & Environment, respectively.

Chapters 3 through 10 are the required elements in Washington’s GMA. Each element includes supporting, technical information in the appendices. When compiled together, these elements make up the “Policy Framework” for the Comprehensive Plan. The Policy Framework includes goals, policies, and actions that implement Imagine Monroe and Guiding Principles described in Chapter 2. They are sorted by element to provide clarity on how each part of the Comprehensive Plan is working to achieve Imagine Monroe and Guiding Principles.

Information within each element includes the following:

Purpose and Element Background. This describes the individual element and relevant background information.

Goals related to the element. Goals are statements that help set direction for future policies and actions.

Policies related to the goal. Policies are statements that provide guidance for implementing a goal. Each goal has one or more policies.



Action Items related to the policy.

Action items are projects, programs, or activities that support implementation of goals and policies and are measurable. Not every policy is supported by action. Certain policies reflect direction and expectations as opposed to an explicit project.

Chapter 11: Plan Implementation.

This chapter outlines the priorities, timing, and implementing **partners** for each action.

Appendices

The appendices include technical documentation related to the Comprehensive Plan. Appendices for the Monroe 2044 Comprehensive Plan include:

- A glossary of definitions;
- State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) documentation to identify potential impacts and ways to address those challenges;
- Summary of community outreach and feedback;
- Monroe Transportation Plan;
- Utilities systems plans;
- Racially Disparate Impacts and other housing-related analysis;
- Economic Development existing conditions and themes;
- Watershed Analysis Memorandum; and
- Climate Impacts Memorandum.



Breaking new ground
Source: Provided by the City of Monroe

“

[A] Safe place for families and continued commitment to community.”

- Anonymous



Monroe Farmers Market
Source: Provided by the City of Monroe