

THE BELLINGHAM PLAN



CLIMATE

Chapter Update Summary | November 2024





Proposed *New Chapter* for the 2025 Plan

Why are we proposing this new chapter?

State Requirements: We must meet legislative requirement to address climate mitigation and resilience.

Community feedback: We heard how important climate issues are to the community.

Significance: This topic is important and should be consolidated so relevant information is easier to find.

Where are we in the process of developing this chapter?

Collecting feedback: This chapter summary is higher level than others. Because this is a new chapter, we want to get feedback from the community and community partners before developing it too far.

Integrating feedback: Next, we will integrate feedback as we develop the new chapter.

How can you help shape this chapter?

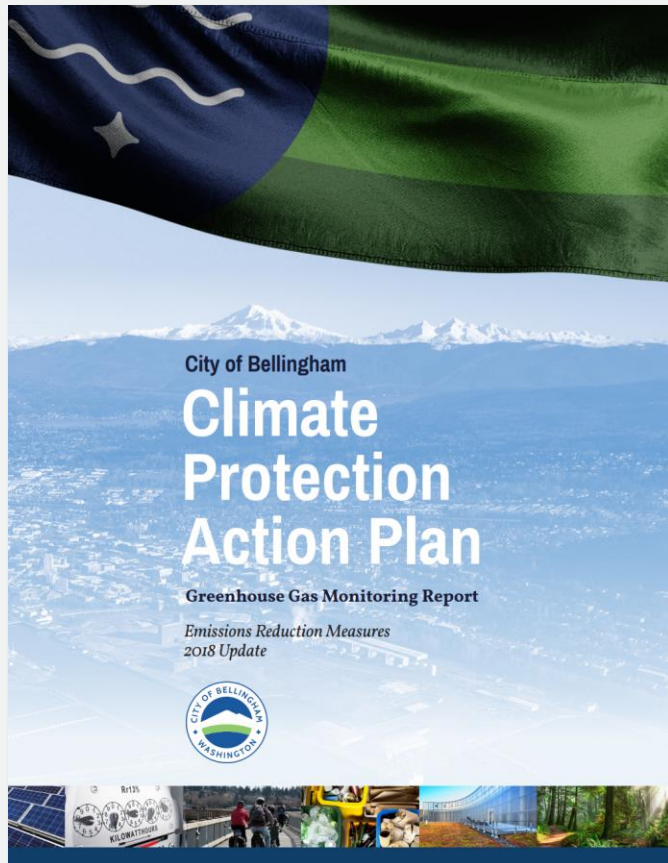
Provide feedback: This is new and we are sharing our ideas now to ensure there's time to collect and integrate your feedback. Let us know what's missing and what you'd like to see in this chapter.

Review the final draft: We will have a final draft chapter later, which you are also invited to provide feedback on.



Existing Action Plan

The City also has a Climate Protection Action Plan, which includes both an inventory of current emissions and dozens of specific measures to reduce these emissions.



This document focuses on monitoring and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It addresses both the City's emissions as an organization and the community's emissions overall.

(originally adopted in 2007 and amended in 2018)

The Comprehensive Plan (soon to be renamed "The Bellingham Plan") guides this type of document with high level policies. This action plan is adopted by reference within the Comprehensive Plan and is more detailed.



What the Community Said

These descriptions summarize the most common opinions we heard relevant to this chapter.

Combatting climate change is critical. It should be integrated into our growth choices.

I'm not sure what we can or should be doing about rising sea levels, wildfires, and other changing conditions.

I want to make sure my children can enjoy the same natural elements I have been able to.

We want more places to cool off in the hotter summers.

Transportation, housing, and land use are intertwined with climate. We need to consider them as a whole.

I am worried about the housing cost implications of climate approaches.





Comprehensive Plan Themes Related to Climate

We are proposing a variety of updates to our 2016 Comprehensive Plan. While the plan is divided into distinct chapters, there are updates that touch multiple chapters.

Here are the most significant updates related to climate. These themes span multiple chapters beyond this one.

- >> Fostering a connected and resilient community
- >> Inclusive and equitable citywide planning
- >> Collaborative “One City” approach
- >> Linking and integrating climate with other plan topics

Get a quick overview of the most significant updates we're proposing.

If you haven't yet, take a look at the [Summary of Proposed Updates](#). It describes the most significant updates we are proposing. We recommend viewing that the summary first, and then diving in here for more details on the new climate chapter.



Climate: What exists today?

While the Climate chapter is new as an individual chapter, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan references climate mitigation in most chapters, either directly or indirectly. Here are some of the main ways.

In the Land Use Chapter

Smart and sustainable development patterns

In the Transportation Chapter

Transportation-related emissions reductions

In the Environment Chapter

Countywide natural hazard mitigation planning

Planning for climate impacts on water supply

Carbon sequestration in nature (trees)

Partnerships to address climate change

In the Housing, Community Design, Capital Facilities Chapters

Low-impact development techniques

Renewable energy sources

Energy efficiency measures (public and private)



Climate Chapter: Proposed Topic Areas

We are proposing taking those climate topics already in the 2016 plan today, adding new climate topics, and further emphasizing others to form the new Climate chapter for the 2025 plan.

Existing Concept from 2016 Plan

Mitigate Transportation Emissions

Use and Generate Renewable Energy

Mitigate Building Emissions

These areas relate to mitigating emissions. These policies will mostly be pulled from existing chapters.

New Concept/ Major Updates

“One City” Collaborative Approach

Prepare for Extreme Weather

Sustainable, Resilient Resources

Justice & Equity Climate Work

Prepare for Wildfire Impacts

Protect Ecosystems

Prepare for Sea Level Rise

These topics emphasize collaboration and equity as key components of our climate approach. They also speak to the impacts of climate change. While the plan alludes to some of these topics, most of these concepts are new or expanded topics for the plan.



Climate Chapter: Proposed Topic Areas

Here again are the topics we are proposing including in the new Climate chapter. On this page, they are grouped so you can see them by type of climate work and associated state requirements.

General

- “One City” Collaborative Approach
- Justice & Equity Climate Work


Resilience/Adaptation

- Prepare for Extreme Weather
- Prepare for Wildfire Impacts
- Sustainable, Resilient Resources
- Prepare for Sea Level Rise
- Protect Ecosystems


Mitigation

- Mitigate Transportation Emissions
- Use and Generate Renewable Energy
- Mitigate Building Emissions



HB 1181 (2023): Crosscutting, general climate approach 



HB 1181 (2023): Address climate resiliency/adaptation 



HB 1181 (2023): Mitigating emissions; Linked to existing actions outlined in the Climate Protection Action Plan 



Community Feedback

This chapter is new and we are sharing our ideas now to ensure there's time to collect and integrate your feedback. Let us know what you think! Consider...

Is anything big missing?

What are some of the details that you want to make sure get covered under these topics?