



INITIAL RELEASE SUMMARY

SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM PERIODIC REVIEW

Planning and Economic Development

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INTRODUCTION

Poulsbo has initiated a periodic review of our Shoreline Master Program (SMP) as mandated by the Washington State Shoreline Management Act (SMA), RCW 90.58.080(4), and in coordination with the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). The SMA requires each local SMP to be reviewed and revised, if needed, every eight years to ensure consistency with changes to state laws and rules, other city plans and regulations, and responsiveness to changed circumstances, new information, and improved data. The SMP is a planning and regulatory document that establishes goals, policies, and regulations for activities on or near Poulsbo's shorelines of the state. The City's shorelines of the state include Liberty Bay and the portion of Dogfish Creek from the mouth of Liberty Bay to the extent of saltwater influence (end of estuary).

The SMP was originally approved and adopted in 1976 and underwent a comprehensive update in 2012. The SMP includes goals and polices which are adopted within [Chapter 5 \(Natural Environment\)](#) of the [Comprehensive Plan](#), regulations related to shoreline development in Poulsbo Municipal Code (PMC) [16.08](#), shoreline administration and procedures in PMC [16.09](#), and the [official shoreline map](#). Other supporting documents of the SMP include the [Inventory and Characterization Report](#), [Cumulative Impacts and No Net Loss Report](#), and [Restoration Plan](#).

Shoreline Master Programs (SMPs) are local land use policies and regulations that guide the use of Washington shorelines. SMPs apply to both public and private uses.

SHORELINE MANAGEMENT ACT

The Shoreline Management Act (SMA) was passed by the Washington Legislature in 1971 and adopted by voters in 1972 "to prevent the inherent harm in an uncoordinated and piecemeal development of the state's shorelines." There are three basic SMA policy areas:

- Shoreline Use | to control pollution and prevent damage to the natural environment.
- Environmental Protection | to protect shoreline natural resources including the land, vegetation, wildlife, and aquatic habitats against adverse environmental effects. All allowed uses are required to offset these impacts as much as possible and preserve the natural character and aesthetics of the shoreline.
- Public Access | SMPs include a public access element, including provisions for public access to publicly owned areas. The SMA also implements the common law Public Trust Doctrine. This doctrine conveys that the waters of the state are a public resource for the purposes of navigation, conducting commerce, fishing, recreation, and similar uses. The Public Trust Doctrine is not invalidated by private ownership of the underlying land.

REVIEW AND UPDATE

The 2012 comprehensive update was a lengthy and intensive planning process that resulted in a complete overhaul of the SMP, while the scope of this periodic review is narrower and designed to ensure the SMP stays current and adaptable. The periodic review is distinct from the comprehensive updates required by RCW 90.58.080(2).

The purpose and scope of this periodic is to:

- assure that the SMP complies with applicable law and guidelines in effect at the time of the review;
- assure consistency with the local government's comprehensive plan and development regulations;
- incorporate amendments that reflect changed circumstances, new information, or improved data.

This periodic review will not:

- re-evaluate the ecological baseline that was established as part of the 2012 SMP update;
- extensively assess no net loss criteria other than to ensure that proposed amendments do not result in degradation of the baseline condition; or
- change shoreline jurisdiction, environment designations, or shoreline buffers for private shoreline property owners.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

At this stage of the periodic review process, staff has drafted language for the draft amended SMP including proposed text and map changes. A summary of the proposed amendments is available [online](#). In addition, complete project documents can be found on the 2021 SMP Update Website: <https://cityofpoulsbo.com/planning-economic-development/shorelineupdate/>.

PUBLIC AND AGENCY REVIEW TIMELINE

A Public Participation Plan (PPP) is required to describe how Poulsbo will encourage early and continuous public participation throughout the process of reviewing the SMP. This PPP describes the steps that Poulsbo will take to provide opportunities for public engagement and public comment, as well as contact information and web addresses. This plan is in addition to any other minimum requirements for public participation required by Poulsbo Municipal Code 19.40.050. The PPP is available [online](#).

INFORMATION AVAILABILITY

The City's Planning and Economic Development (PED) Department webpage will house the SMP Update where interested citizens and community members may visit for status updates, draft documents, official notices, minutes, and project information: <https://cityofpoulsbo.com/planning-economic-development/shorelineupdate/>

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