



SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM PERIODIC REVIEW 2020

Clark County is performing a periodic review of its Shoreline Master Program. We hope these frequently asked questions will give you at least some introductory information to prepare you for coming discussions on the project.

What is a Shoreline Master Program?

A Shoreline Master Program (SMP) is a set of policies and regulations required by state law that has three basic policy areas: fostering reasonable and appropriate uses, protecting natural resources, and promoting public access.

Where does the SMP apply?

“Shorelines of the state” are special waterbodies that meet certain size or flow criteria in the Washington state Shoreline Management Act (SMA). These shorelines of the state include rivers and streams with mean annual flow more than 20 cubic feet per second and lakes 20 acres or larger. The shoreline jurisdiction extends 200 feet landward of the water’s edge and additionally includes associated wetlands, floodways, and the 100-year floodplain (based on the county’s flood hazard maps). Clark County shorelines of the state include the Columbia River, North Fork Lewis River, East Fork Lewis River, Salmon Creek, Washougal River, Burnt Bridge Creek, Vancouver Lake, Yale Lake, Lake Merwin, and several other waterbodies.

What is a periodic review of the SMP?

This periodic review will focus on: reviewing changes in state law and incorporating any applicable amendments; and ensuring consistency with other county policies and regulations, such as the Comprehensive Plan and critical areas code.

This periodic review will NOT: re-evaluate the ecological baseline that was established as part of the 2012 comprehensive 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 except to address a few known map issues.

Why now?

Washington state law requires jurisdictions to review and update their SMPs every eight years in accordance with the SMA and its current guidelines and legislative rules.

Clark County completed a comprehensive update to its SMP in 2012 and its periodic review is due June 30, 2020.

What type of activities and uses do shoreline regulations apply to?

ACTIVITIES AND USES

Shoreline regulations apply to any land use activity and development that occurs within the shoreline jurisdiction as defined in the SMP, including:

- New or expanded structures, such as houses, sheds, and decks;
- New or expanded in-water and over-water structures, such as docks, buoys, and boat launches;
- Land development and alteration, such as clearing, grading, dredging, or filling; and
- Other activities along the shorelines such as restoration (e.g., riparian planting, bank stabilization), trail construction, and public access.

EXISTING USES AND DEVELOPMENT

SMP regulations apply to new developments and uses. Existing uses and

developments legally established may be repaired, maintained, and operated. The SMP does apply to proposals for expansion or alteration of existing uses and structures.

SHORELINE EXEMPTIONS

Certain land uses and development activities are exempt from the requirement to obtain a shoreline substantial development permit, but are not exempt from compliance with the SMP. Only those developments that meet the precise terms of at least one of the listed exemptions in the SMP may be granted an exemption. Exemptions are issued in writing from the county after the submission of a complete application. Even though an activity is exempt from requiring a shoreline substantial development permit, a conditional use or variance permit may be required.



When will proposed SMP changes be considered?

The project is scheduled from fall 2019 to mid-2020.

Year	Season	Project Phase
2019	Early fall	Learn about the project at an initial open house
2019	Late fall	Review draft proposals at open houses
2020	Winter	Public comment period, SEPA
2020	Early Spring	Planning Commission Hearing
2020	Late Spring	County Council Hearing

Meeting locations and times will be announced in local newspapers, the project website, and through email.

How do I participate in this project?

Open houses: learn about the project, review draft proposals, ask questions to staff, and submit feedback.

Public comment period: submit comments in writing during a 30-day comment period.

Email: ask questions or submit written testimony to jenna.kay@clark.wa.gov.

Mail: written testimony can be mailed to Community Planning, PO Box 9810, Vancouver, WA 98666-9810.

Hearings: written and oral testimony can be given at Planning Commission and County Council hearings.

Sign-up for project updates: www.clark.wa.gov/community-planning/get-project-updates

All comments will be part of the official record.

For questions or more information, contact Jenna Kay, Program Manager at jenna.kay@clark.wa.gov or visit the project website at www.clark.wa.gov/smp2020.



For other formats, contact the Clark County ADA Office

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