

# Kitsap County Critical Areas Ordinance Update

Project webpage: [kcowa.us/cao](http://kcowa.us/cao)

Comments & Questions: [codeupdates@kitsap.gov](mailto:codeupdates@kitsap.gov)

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# Overview:

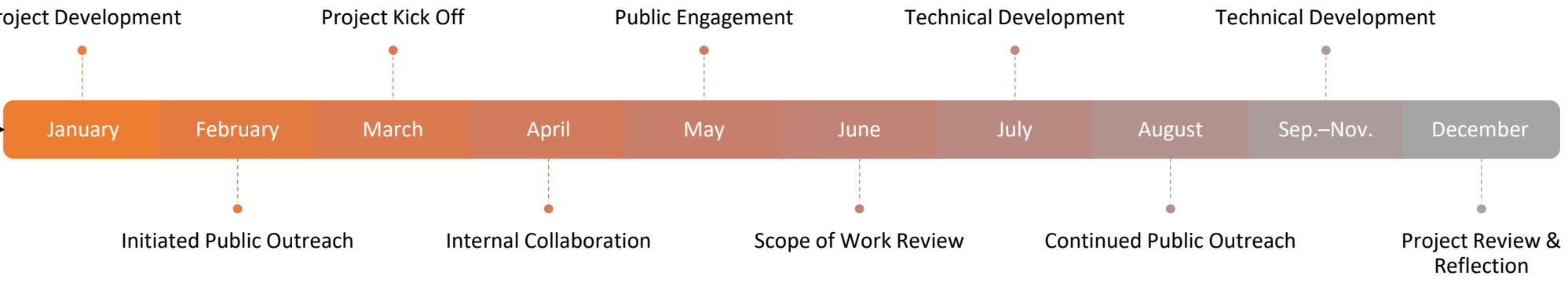
- Policies and regulations that guide environment protections and promotes public safety in the County's critical areas
- Assure consistency of the CAO with the County's comprehensive plan and development regulations; and
- Provide clarifications to improve usability and predictability of the CAO for applicants and reviewers.
- Based on Best Available Science (BAS) and Gap Analysis review
- Last review conducted in 2017
- Required update was every 8 years, now every 10 years with Comprehensive Plan
- Target adoption date **September 2024\***

# Process:

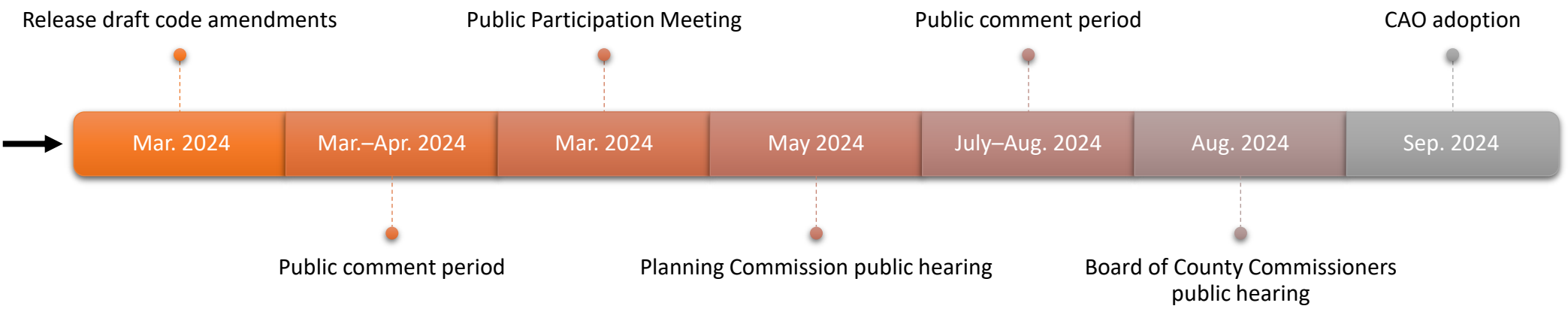
- Scope of Work – Identify Required, Recommended & Discretionary Changes.
- Public Outreach – Including Tribal Coordination Meetings, Community Consultations, In-person community event, Public Participation Meeting, Community Advisory Council.
- Working Groups – Included State Agencies, Tribes, Development Organizations, Environmental Organizations, Consultant, County Staff.
- Technical Development – Review & Interpretation of Best Available Science summary and Gap Analysis Report, Interdepartmental Collaboration, Briefings with Planning Commission & Board of County Commissioners.
- Public process – Legal notification, Release of Draft Code Amendments, Public Comment Period, Public Hearing.



2023  
Progress →



2024  
Next Steps →



# Riparian Management Zones

- WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife recommends transition from stream typing and their related buffer widths, to identifying “Riparian Management Zones” (RMZ)
- Utilize “Site Potential Tree Height” (SPTH) to determine the distance required for protection from a stream.
- “SPTH200” refers to the “the average maximum height of the tallest dominant trees (200 years or more) for a given site class.”
- Assumption that old-growth forest conditions are needed for full riparian ecosystem functions.

## Other Topics:

- Dept. of Ecology: Consider providing more detail on standard buffer condition requirements and remove buffer reduction options.
- Critical aquifer recharge areas at risk of seawater intrusion
- Consider use of other data for mapping and/or protecting frequently flooded areas
- Additional and/or enhanced mapping needs
- Potential code changes to Wetlands (19.200), such as use of minimization measures, methods of compensatory mitigation, mitigation compliance
- Staff Identified optional code changes







