



## KINGSTON COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

May 14th, 2025

Heather Cleveland, Long Range Planner, Kitsap County

Re: KCAC Committee input on 2025 Year of the Rural

Dear Ms. Cleveland,

The Kingston Community Advisory Council (KCAC), in its role as liaison between the unincorporated town of Kingston and Kitsap County, would like to share our individual committee's input on **Kitsap's Year of the Rural** (YOTR) planning project.

Attached you will find submissions from the following committees:

- Environment and Land Use, Co-Chairs Beth Berglund (bethisgreen@gmail.com) and Dave Bomalaski (dbomal@hotmail.com)
- Transportation, Chair Tim Davis (cadbytim@gmail.com)
- Kingston Parks, Trails & Open Space, Chair Shep Griswold (shepgriz@gmail.com)
- Community Services, Chair Cynthia Logan (cynthialogan63@gmail.com)

We feel it is important for you, as the county representative for this critical project, to directly read the perspective of each committee.

It is important to note that KCAC, as a council, does not endorse any of the committee-level feedback, but is acting as the conduit for these committees to communicate their individual positions.

If you have any questions regarding their input, please contact the individual committee Chair(s).

Thank you for your consideration,

KCAC Co-Chairs, Tim Davis & Glen Hutchinson

cc: Commissioner Christine Rolfes, District 1

## **Environment & Land Use Committee**

While the members of the Environment & Land Use Committee were not in agreement regarding the pending rezone application(s), we reached consensus on several issues relevant to the Year of the Rural project.

- We embrace the Growth Management Act Goals under RCW 36.70A.020 as the planning compass for the Kingston Urban Growth Area (UGA) and its rural surroundings.
- Outside of the urban growth areas we recommend that standards for commercial signs, lighting, and other attention-drawing features be compatible with surrounding rural character in order to prevent visual nuisances.
- Increased residential or commercial zoning (up-zoning of individual rural lots) should only occur if there is a compelling public need and it protects and enhances the environment.
- We ask that the County perform an assessment of the public infrastructure needs of the existing rural community.

## **Transportation Committee**

- Review traffic flow and safety issues for pedestrian and vehicle traffic near two Kingston Elementary schools. Gordon Elementary School at SR104 and Barber Cut-off/Parcells Rd and at the entrance to Wolfle Elementary school, Highland Rd Ne and SR104 in collaboration with WSDOT. The dangerous and highly traveled Barber Cut-Off/104 intersection will see a considerable increase in traffic with the implementation of the forthcoming Active Traffic Management System (ATMS) in the summer of 2025. The Wolfle Elementary entrance makes ingress and egress to the school for autos and school buses challenging and dangerous.
- Rural road improvements between the communities of Kingston, Indianola, Hansville, Eglon, Port Gamble and Poulsbo to include expanded shoulders allowing for safe bicycling and motor vehicle pull off. Many miles of these highly traveled community connectors are without even a shoulder for emergency road exit.
- We encourage improved connectivity between existing developments and rural homes by providing alternate emergency access/egress routes for residential development currently served by a single access roadway. For example, if traffic is blocked by a downed tree, accident, etc. on Hansville Road north of NE 288th St, there are no alternative routes for inbound or outbound traffic.

## **Kingston Parks, Trails and Open Spaces Committee**

In order to preserve the rural character and advantages of use of rural open space for Greater Kingston and North Kitsap residents and visitors we ask that Kitsap County designate, zone and/or negotiate easements on appropriate rural lands to:

- Develop and maintain access roads and community connector trails to regional parks, regional pedestrian/bicycle trails, local parks, sports facilities, and public beaches for active and passive recreational use, and conservation of natural habitat.

- Designate and provide Greater Kingston/North Kitsap with dedicated land for active recreation including sports fields, courts, swimming and playground facilities to support recreation, healthy exercise and social activities for all members of the greater Kingston/North Kitsap population.
- Designate and zone appropriate shoreline lands in to support public access and to protect marine and riparian shoreline the various beaches and tidelands around Puget Sound and Hood Canal.

### **Community Services Committee**

- Is the Present Amount of Restricted Land in a Vicinity Meaningful?

With the decisions considering the Year of the Rural, is there consideration about the amount of land in a specific area that is not able to be utilized because it is already designated as a park, a preserve, a greenway or a public easement? Combine that with land not able to be utilized due to wetlands or environmental factors; is there sufficient land available to meet the needs of the neighboring population? Are equitable health, housing, childcare, recreation and economic opportunities available in the neighboring UGA?

- What Does Maintaining Rural Character Mean?

Is there a specific definition of activities that are destructive to “maintaining the rural character” of an area? Is there a guarantee that a resident on a 5 acre or a 20-acre property is not going to build a residence, easement road, garage/shop, barn, solar array and lighted parking area within the visual distance of the nearest neighbor or thoroughfare? Likewise, can't well-planned housing meeting a specific need in an area be constructed so it is not intrusive to the rural character? Is density the only indicator of rural character?

- Are Critical Area Reports a Consideration in Rezone Determination Decisions?

Is there value or a need for a rezone request to provide a comprehensive Critical Areas Report? Could such a report be grounds for rejection of a rezone, if for example significant area of the rezone property is wetland impacted? Likewise, if a Critical Area Report indicated there are not conditions that would merit locational restrictions, could this be favorable to rezone opportunities?

- What constitutes a *healthy* community?

Vibrant and healthy communities are comprised of people of all ages, ethnicities, financial levels, careers, talents and interests who reside in that community and are thereby invested in its success and future. Without moving forward to make rental and ownership housing available at all financial income levels the resulting challenges to the community will be systemic. School enrollments will decrease, business opportunities will decline and the tax base will narrow. Affordable housing through the advocacy of inclusionary zoning and integrity-planning creates communities with vital futures.