

DOCKET - RURAL LANDS ANALYSIS PROJECT SCOPE and ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

The following discussion elaborates the 2026 proposed docket. Please note the scope of the rural lands analysis program is anticipated to take all of 2026 and extend into 2027. Near the end of each calendar year, DCD will propose Comprehensive Plan amendments and code for adoption as analysis is understood and policies are developed.

2026 Docket

In 2025, during several proposed land use reclassifications and subsequent discussions with the Board, DCD learned rural lands are in need of a greater understanding. More conversation showed the need for the first post-GMA comprehensive analysis of rural lands. Elements of the Rural Lands Analysis are also described below as are the Silverdale Subarea Plan and the Illahee Neighborhood Plan.

1. Regional Context Analysis

The regional context analysis is formed by regional natural features, economic development efforts, transportation locations and decisions, and the plans and actions of nearby communities and other agencies. This is the data collection of the current conditions of the rural lands, natural features and limitations, transportation infrastructure, aquifer recharge areas, and more. This collection will also include plans and actions within the rural areas.

2. Demographic and Economic Data Interpretation

This analysis would include review of population growth and forecasts, age of population and workforce, workforce size and skills, and economic activity. Economic activity will be further reviewed to understand segmentation of commercial or industrial industry in rural Kitsap.

3. Natural Resources and Soils Analysis

Rural analysis will determine suitability of lands for future land uses. This will assist with agriculture lands evaluation, Rural Wooded use evaluation, lands suitable for certain development activities, and creation of overlays from the existing stock of resource maps. DCD is planning for:

- Analyzation of productivity for agriculture and forest resource lands.
- Determination if lands can withstand certain types of development.
- An ability to overlay ongoing natural resource projects for results to help determine land use development or conservatory options.

4. Watershed Planning, Aquifer Recharge policies

The Rural Lands Analysis will consider groundwater resource planning and ‘umbrella’ issues and policies related to water in Kitsap County, including:

5. Evaluating Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA 15) planning initiatives.
6. Understanding water quality, water quantity, aquifer recharge, and water rights.
 - Identifying areas that may be more sensitive to aquifer drawdown, and well off-set programs.
 - Understanding and planning for RCW 90.94, requiring watershed planning and mitigation to protect streamflows.
 - Recognizing and protecting agricultural use of water.

7. Map Growth Factors and Patterns

Rural analysis will include mapping and exhibiting the following growth factors for analysis:

- Past growth patterns.
- Watershed and drainage features and basins.
- Existing and conceptual wildlife corridors.
- Productive resource lands.
- Economic centers and parcels.
- Planned transportation projects.

8. Salmon Recovery and Land Use Planning

Review salmon recovery efforts, policies, and best management practices to inform on land use and development principles and policies. Consider existing partner agencies’ policy work and local and regional recommendations to inform on area-specific development regulations.

9. Create Buildout Alternatives with Existing Zoning

DCD will analyze what can be done under current zoning and alternative development scenarios. DCD will:

- Create visuals for what the future buildout could be through the existing land use element.
- Determine areas where future land development makes sense and where existing zones may be out of ‘alignment.’

10. Identify and map Kitsap’s legacy lots

DCD will map and characterize rural ‘legacy lots’ to inform on potential buildout and policy advisement. This will include discussion about developability of legacy lots in certain areas, including constrained areas, in rural Kitsap.

11. Policies for Ag and Forest Resource Lands

Evaluate resource lands to identify use of lands and compatibility of uses. Barriers and policy improvements will be considered alongside code development efforts. Stakeholder groups will discuss issues principally around sustainability, resilience, soils conditions, land use, and viability and economic opportunity. Policy development may lead to development code revision.

12. Mineral Resource Overlay

Somewhat recent efforts evaluated small-parcel removal of the MRO. However, there are small-to-medium parcels that would like to contemplate MRO removal as well. DCD will consider designations alongside the Washington Department of Natural Resource Maps, perhaps resulting in evaluation of County-wide mineral resource demand and removal of the MRO from undeveloped parcels.

13. Silverdale Subarea Plan

DCD will complete work on updating the Comprehensive Plan Silverdale Regional Center Subarea Plan. The update will examine several planning issues:

- Silverdale is a Regional Center and requires planning consistent with the regional centers framework recently updated by the Puget Sound Regional Council.
- The current design districts, originally developed in 2008, are numerous, in need of a current review, and need to be condensed to a few districts to be more predictable and user-friendly.
- The planning effort will recommend changes to development code that would reduce barriers to redevelopment of sites that are constrained in size. Examples of barriers include parking, landscaping, and frontage improvements.
- The subarea plan will recommend future road and roadside development scenarios.
- The planning effort is expected to include analysis of public facilities siting (eg, a Sheriffs' precinct, a community/senior center), parking, connectivity/wayfinding, including access to future Kitsap Transit and multi-modal transit points, water transit, and partnering with agencies.

14. Illahee Neighborhood Plan

The Board will consider amendments and revisions to the 2008 Illahee Community Plan. The scope will be developed in early 2026 and will be prepared in concert with input from the Enetai neighborhood.