

2025 Year of the Rural

Presented by
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Agenda

2025 Year of the Rural

Deliverables

Project Timeline

Inputs

Rural Element

Chapter Update

Code Updates

Reclassification Requests

Next Steps

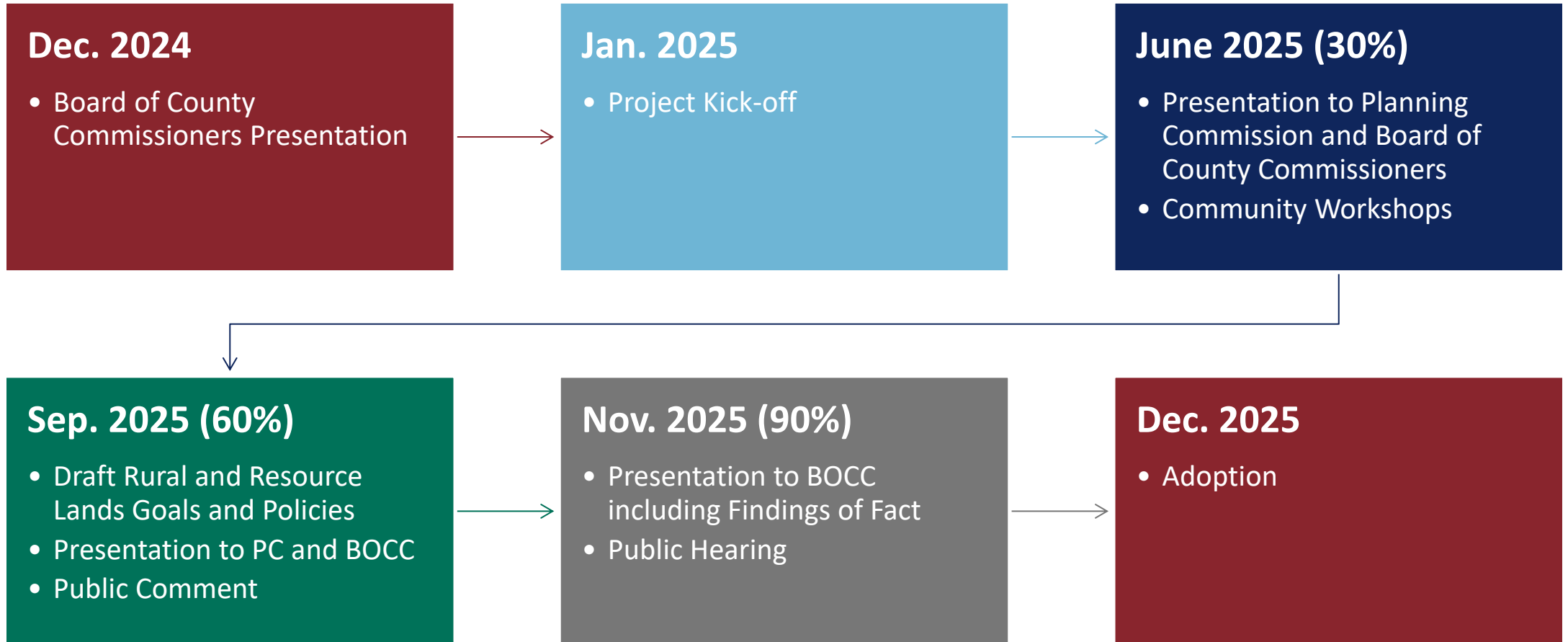
Deliverables |

Rural and Resource Lands Chapter Update

Potential Code Updates

Reclassification Request Recommendations

Timeline



Inputs |

Outreach

Gap Analysis & Research

Mapping & Data Analysis

RCW

36.70A.070 Comprehensive Plans – Mandatory elements.

(5) Rural element. Counties shall include a rural element including lands that are **not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest, or mineral resources**. The following provisions shall apply to the rural element:

- (a) Growth management act goals and local circumstances. Because circumstances vary from county to county, in establishing patterns of rural densities and uses, a county may consider local circumstances, but shall develop a written record explaining how the rural element harmonizes the planning goals in RCW [36.70A.020](#) and meets the requirements of this chapter.

RCW | 36.70A.070 Comprehensive Plans – Mandatory elements.

(5) Rural element. Counties shall include a rural element including lands that are **not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest, or mineral resources**. The following provisions shall apply to the rural element:

- (b) Rural development. The rural element shall permit rural development, forestry, and agriculture in rural areas. The rural element shall provide for a variety of rural densities, uses, essential public facilities, and rural governmental services needed to serve the permitted densities and uses. To achieve a variety of rural densities and uses, counties may provide for clustering, density transfer, design guidelines, conservation easements, and other innovative techniques that will accommodate appropriate rural economic advancement, densities, and uses that are not characterized by urban growth and that are consistent with rural character.

RCW | 36.70A.070 Comprehensive Plans – Mandatory elements.

(5) Rural element. Counties shall include a rural element including lands that are **not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest, or mineral resources**. The following provisions shall apply to the rural element:

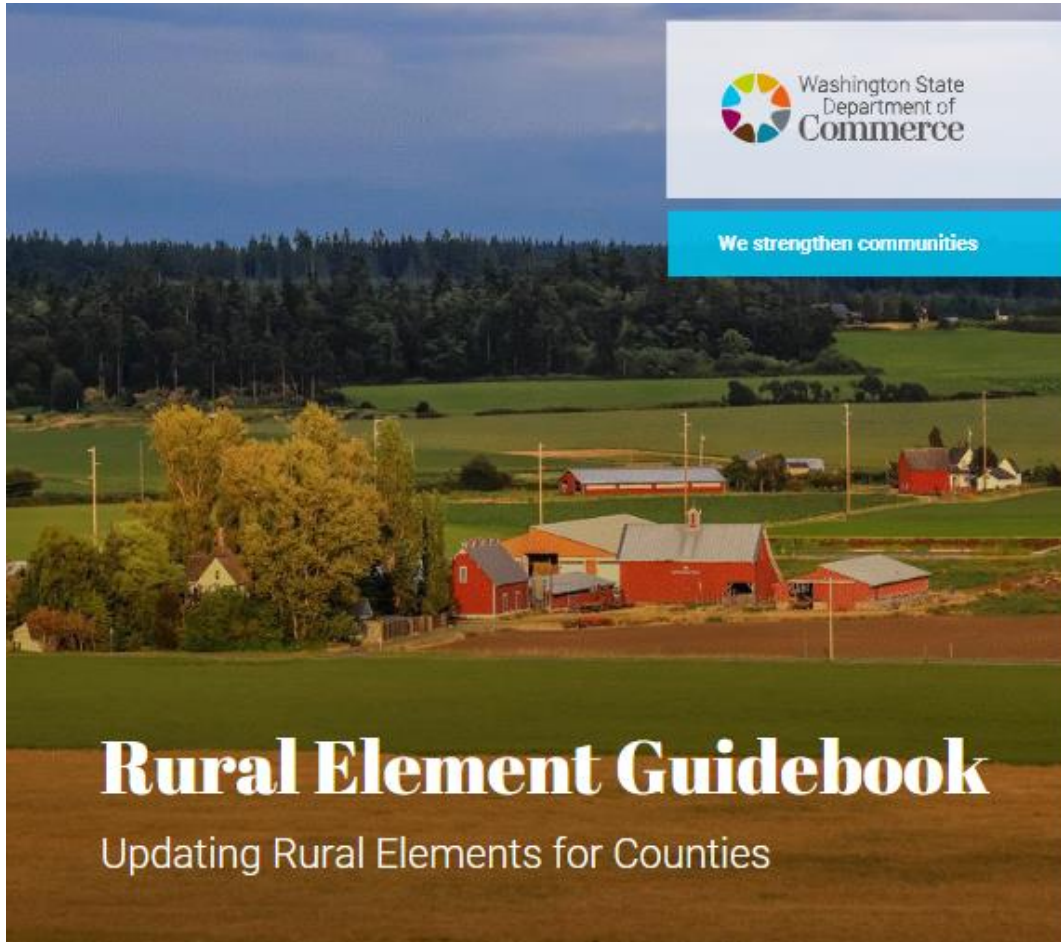
- (c) Measures governing rural development. The rural element shall include measures that apply to rural development and protect the rural character of the area, as established by the county, by:
 - (i) Containing or otherwise controlling rural development;
 - (ii) Assuring visual compatibility of rural development with the surrounding rural area;
 - (iii) Reducing the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development in the rural area;
 - (iv) Protecting critical areas, as provided in RCW [36.70A.060](#), and surface water and groundwater resources; and
 - (v) Protecting against conflicts with the use of agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated under RCW [36.70A.170](#).

RCW | 36.70A.070 Comprehensive Plans – Mandatory elements.

(5) Rural element. Counties shall include a rural element including lands that are **not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest, or mineral resources**. The following provisions shall apply to the rural element:

- (d) Limited areas of more intensive rural development. Subject to the requirements of this subsection and except as otherwise specifically provided in this subsection (5)(d), the rural element may allow for limited areas of more intensive rural development, including necessary public facilities and public services to serve the limited area as follows:
 - (i) Rural development consisting of the infill, development, or redevelopment of existing commercial, industrial, residential, or mixed-use areas, whether characterized as shoreline development, villages, hamlets, rural activity centers, or crossroads developments.

Department of Commerce



DRAFT Rural Element Guidebook

Counties have worked to balance the need to provide housing and employment opportunities while ensuring that places beyond urban centers remain rural in character for the long term.



Chapter Update

Vision and Character

Intent

GMA & Regional Coordination

Other Applicable State Laws

Key Terms

New Header

Rural Land Use Zones

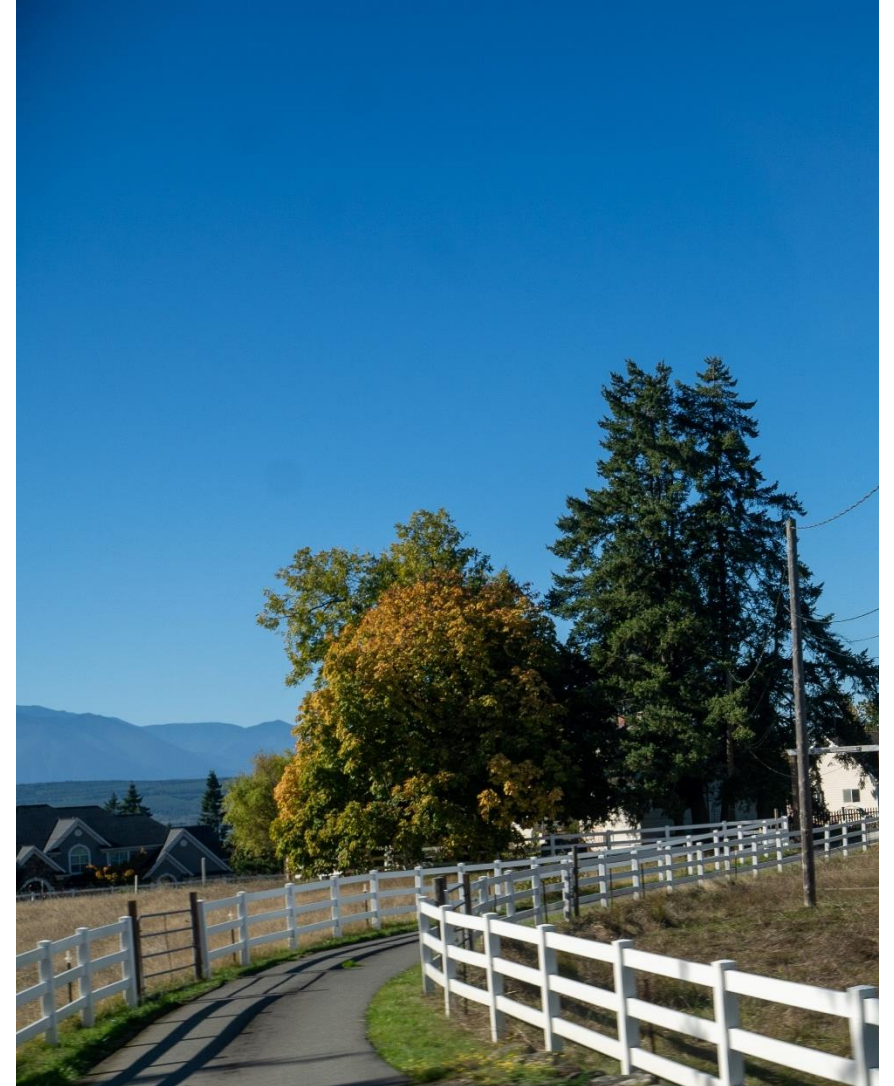
Resource Lands

Goals, Policies, Strategies

DRAFT. Kitsap County's **vision** is for the protection of rural areas and natural resource lands, including preservation of places of natural beauty, working agriculture and timber lands, and community identity and rural character.

GMA defined rural **character** (simplified):

- Dominated by natural landscapes and vegetation over built environments
- Support traditional rural lifestyles and economies
- Preserve rural visual character
- Compatible with wildlife habitat and use
- Limit low-density sprawl and land conversion
- Do not typically require urban government services
- Protect natural water flows and recharge/discharge areas



The intent of the Rural and Resource Lands Element is to guide land use decisions that preserve the distinct character, function, and value of Kitsap County's unincorporated lands outside of Urban Growth Areas (UGAs), including lands that are intended for agriculture, forestry, mineral resources, open space/critical area protection, and rural residential housing.



GMA & Regional Coordination



[RCW 36.070A.020: Planning Goals](#). The following GMA planning goal directly addresses rural and resource lands:

Goal 8, Natural Resource Industries: “Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forestlands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.”

As with the Comprehensive Plan as a whole, the goals and policies in the Rural and Resource Lands Element must reflect the requirements of the GMA as outline above, be consistent with the **Puget Sound Regional Council’s (PSRC) VISION 2050 plan** and its [Multicounty Planning Policies \(MPPs\)](#), and conform to the **Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs)** adopted by the **Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council (KRCC)**.

State Laws

In addition to the GMA, other state laws and rules apply to rural and resource lands, including but not limited to:



Right to Farm

[RCW 7.48.300-320](#): Right to Farm provisions, which protect existing agricultural activities and forest practices from being subjected to “nuisance” lawsuits.



Energy Sites

[RCW 80.50](#): Energy facility site locations, which addresses the siting of facilities such as power plants, transmission lines, alternative energy facilities (e.g., wind, solar), and energy storage (battery) facilities.



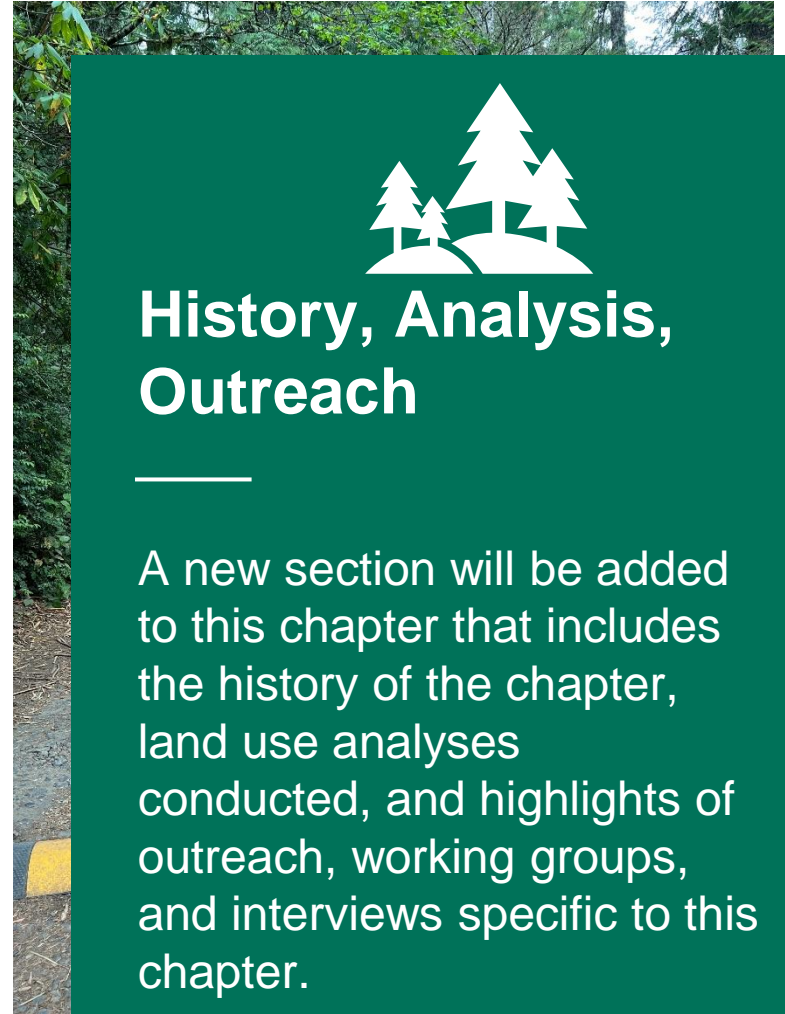
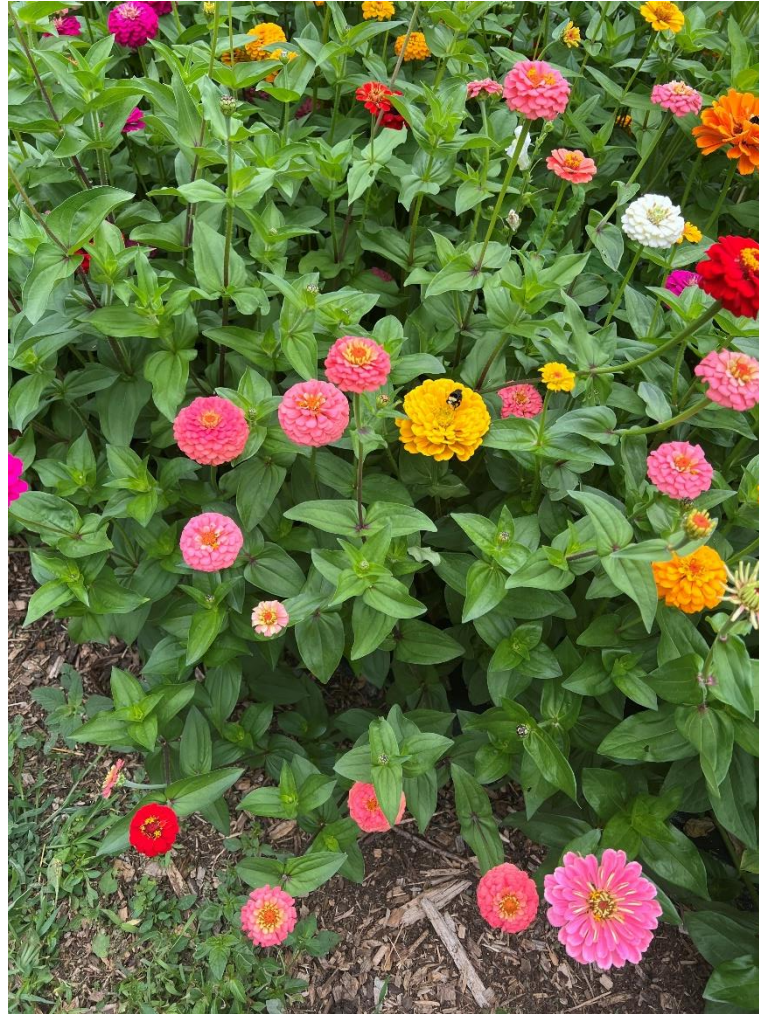
Current Use

[RCW 84.33-34](#): Classification and taxation for farm/agricultural, open space, and timber lands, to encourage their preservation and maintenance of their current uses.



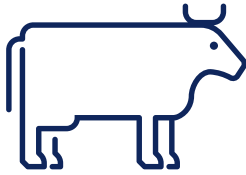
Resources

[WAC 365-190-050](#): Requirements for analysis and designation of agricultural resource lands.



History, Analysis, Outreach

A new section will be added to this chapter that includes the history of the chapter, land use analyses conducted, and highlights of outreach, working groups, and interviews specific to this chapter.



01 Agriculture

Uses and practices, primarily commercial in nature...



04 Rural Cluster

Residential site development that avoids and preserves critical areas



02 Farm

Any size parcel or... primary agriculture uses.



05 Transfer of Development Rights

A land use planning strategy that allows for the transfer of development rights



03 Forest

The use of land for producing and caring for a forest, including the harvesting of timber.



06 Open Space Plan

Follow...open space law which states in part: "... it is in the best interest of the state to maintain, preserve, conserve and otherwise continue in existence adequate open space lands...

The Rural and Resource Lands Chapter Update will include an inventory and analysis of Rural Land Use Zones and Resource Lands

Rural Land Use Zones

- Rural Residential
- Rural Protection
- Rural Wooded
- Rural Commercial
- Rural Industrial
- LAMIRDs



Resource Lands

- Forest Resource Lands
- Mineral Resource Lands
- Agriculture Resource Lands

Rural and Resource Lands Goals, Policies, and Strategies



2024 Comprehensive Plan (starting point)

- Rural Character and Development
- Agriculture
- Forest and Mineral Resources
- Rural Services and Infrastructure
- LAMIRDs
- Rural Business and Economic Opportunity
- Rural Environment

Code Updates

Agriculture

In-home Childcare

Rural Events

Rural Small Business/Land use Compatibility

Energy Siting

LAMIRDs

Boundary Line Adjustments

Chapter Update and Potential Code Update Next Steps

- Continued engagement
 - June Workshops
 - Subject Matter Experts
- September 60% Draft, Public Comment, Hearings

Reclassification Requests

17 Rural to Rural Reclassification Requests Deferred from the 2024 Comprehensive Plan

Two reclassification requests included in Alternative 2 (most like the Preferred Alternative)

- One Current Rural Protection - Proposed Rural Commercial
- One Current Rural Wooded – Proposed Rural Industrial

All others included in Alternative 3

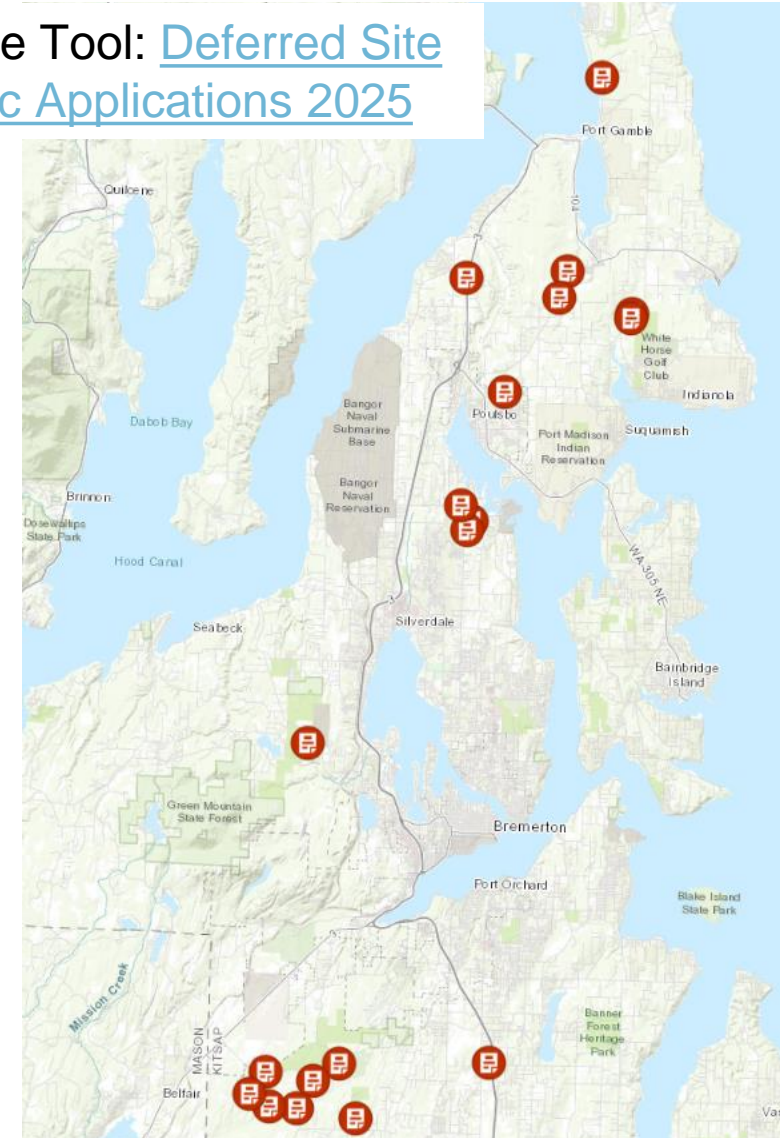
- One Rural Residential to Rural Industrial
- Fourteen Upzone Reclassification Requests

Applications assessments in progress

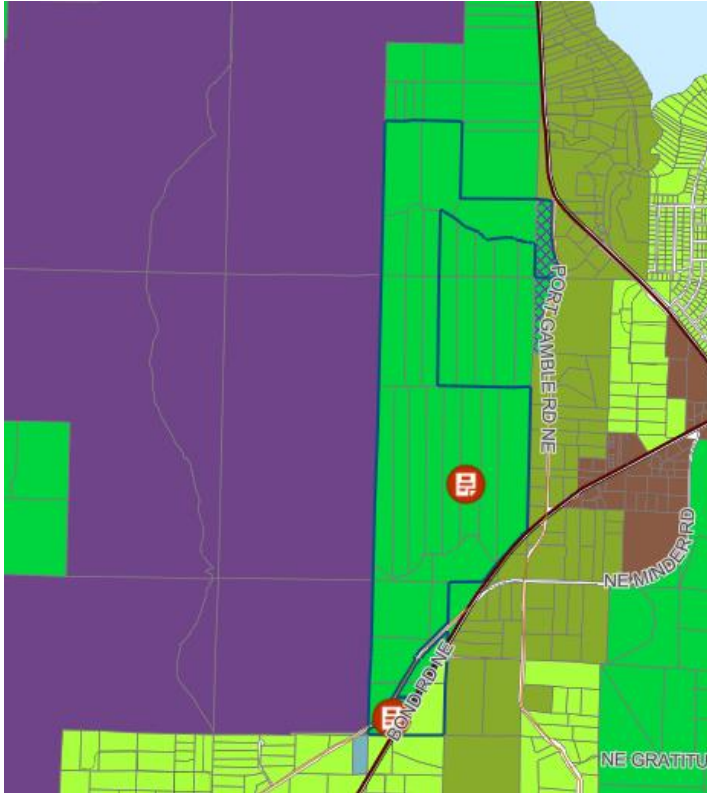
- KCC 21.08. 070 Criteria for recommendation or decision
 - E.g. “The proposed amendment is consistent with the GMA, Kitsap County-wide Planning Policy, state and local laws and other applicable inter-jurisdictional policies or agreements.”

Considering a recommendation to update the docket in June/July.

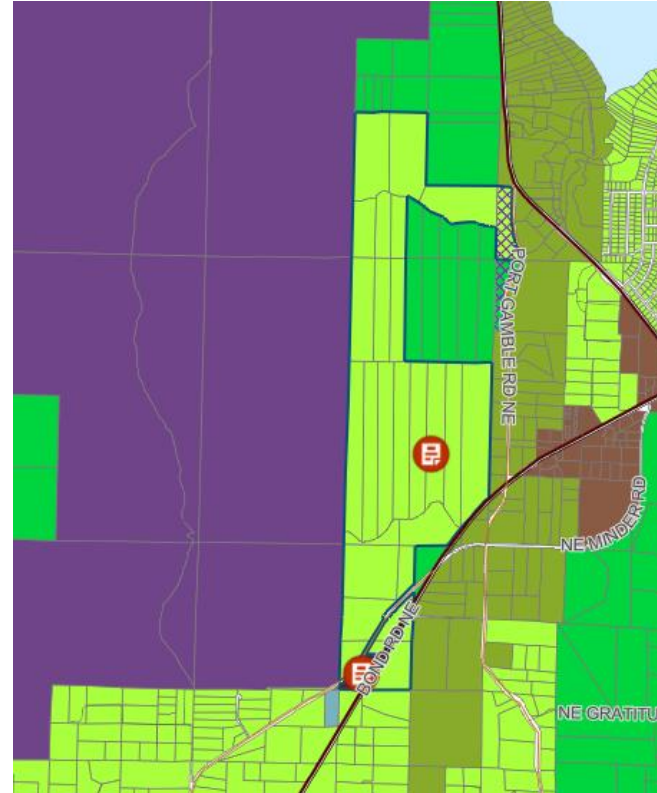
Website Tool: [Deferred Site Specific Applications 2025](#)



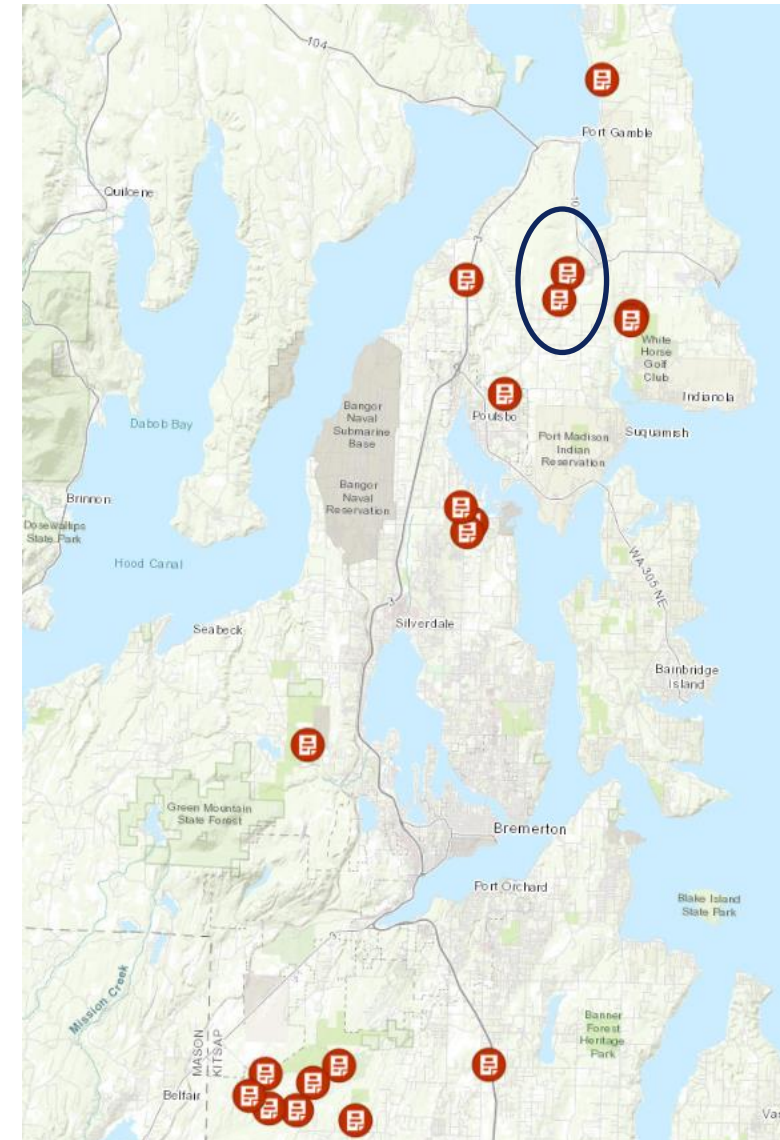
Reclassification Requests



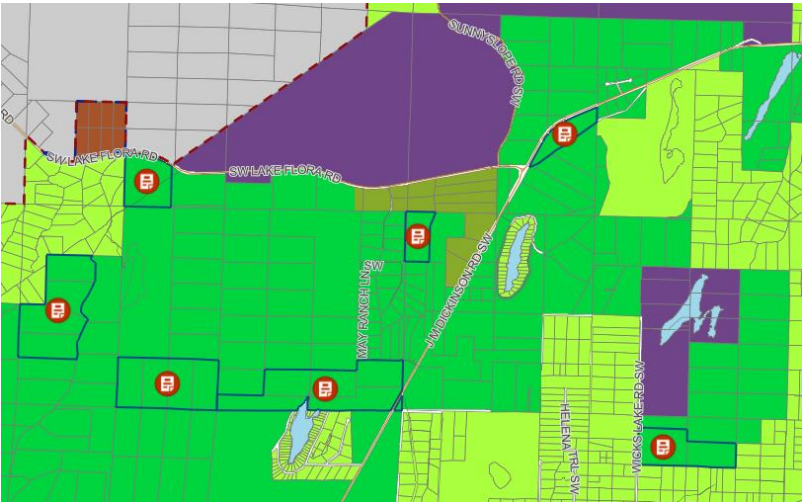
Current Zoning: RW 1DU/20Ac



Proposed Zoning: Rr 1DU/5Ac



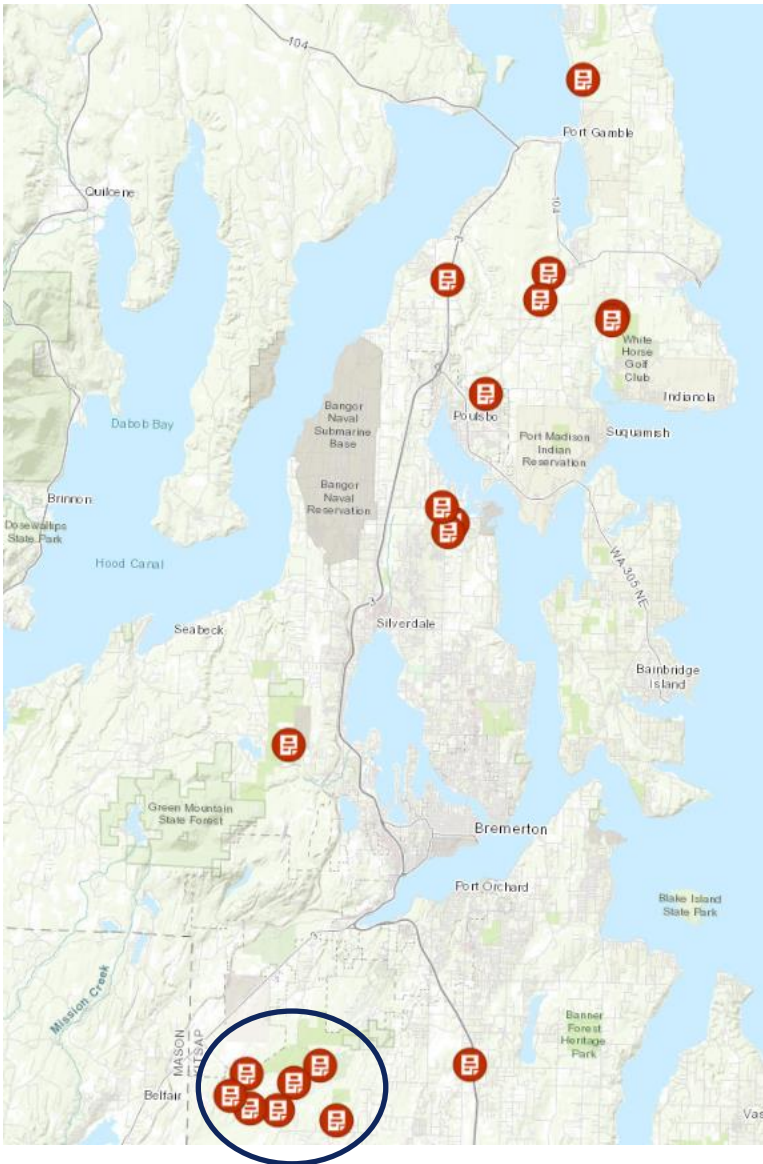
Reclassification Requests



Current Zoning:
RW 1DU/20Ac



Proposed Zoning:
RR 1DU/5Ac
RP 1DU/10Ac
Rural Industrial



Initial Findings - Buckets

Residential Site Specific

Residential Areawide

Commercial/Industrial

Site Specific Amendment versus Area Wide Amendment

- 21.02.306 “Site-specific amendment” means an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and/or land use map that affects no more than five contiguous parcels. A site-specific amendment only affects the land use map, and not the text of the Comprehensive Plan or a development regulation.
- 21.02.054 “Area-wide amendment” means a proposed change or revision to the Comprehensive Plan land use map and/or zoning map that affects an area which is comprehensive in nature, and which addresses a homogeneous community, is geographically distinctive, and has a unified interest within the county, such as community, LAMIRD, or subarea plans. An area-wide amendment, unlike a site-specific land use reclassification request, is of area-wide significance, and includes many separate properties under various ownerships. Area-wide amendments typically accompany text amendments to goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.



Reclassification Requests were submitted during the 2024 Comprehensive Plan process in 2022. Seventeen applications were deferred to 2025.



Applicant Feedback

Critical Areas

Timber Commercial Significance

Rural Protection more protective

Surrounding development patterns

Proximity to UGA or City

Development

RP and RR are rural character

Initial Criteria for Amending the Comprehensive Plan

KCC 21.08.070.A.1. Significant Change

- Conditions in the area or topic have changed since the plan was adopted.

KCC 21.080.070.A.2. Outdated Assumptions or New Information

- The original basis for the plan is no longer valid, or new information has become available.

KCC 21.080.070.A.3. Public Benefit & Consistency

- The change serves the public interest and aligns with the overall Comprehensive Plan.

Initial Criteria – Review Matrix

Additional rural capacity

Effects a logical zoning boundary

Increases development pressure on area

Conversion of forestry or agricultural use

Decrease forest cover

Potential to impact critical areas

Potentially area-wide amendment, or consider with conservation/clustering

Scenarios for Docket Update

Scenario 1

- All Residential move forward
- All Industrial/Commercial move forward

Scenario 2

- Only some, or potentially none, of the Residential move forward
- All Industrial/Commercial move forward

Scenario 3

- Residential areawide
 - Defer to 2026
 - Remove
- No Residential site-specific
- All Industrial/Commercial move forward

Reclassification Request Next Steps

June 9, 2025, BOCC Work Study:

- Initial Reclassification Request Review Summary
- Decision to update Docket

If docket update moves forward

- Public comment
- Hearing