



Community Development

2026 Kitsap County Stormwater Design Manual & Code Update Project

Project Charter



Author and Review

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Updates

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Table of Contents

1. Purpose2

2. Background.....2

 2.1 Compliance with the 2024 Comprehensive Plan3

 2.2 Geographic Description5

3. Project Approach.....5

 3.1 KCSDM Update5

 3.2 Code Updates5

 3.3 Procedural SDAP Improvements5

 3.4 Community Engagement.....6

4. Outcomes.....6

5. Deliverables7

6. Scope of Work.....7

7. Project Schedule8

8. Roles and Responsibilities9

9. Organization and Internal Communication9

1. Purpose

The purpose of this project is to update Kitsap County’s stormwater regulations and design standards to ensure consistency with the Washington State Department of Ecology’s newest [2024 Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington \(SWMMWW\)](#) and the County’s [2024-2029 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System \(NPDES\) Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit](#).

In parallel, the project will modernize, clarify, and align KCC ([Title 12](#) and related provisions) and the [KCSDM](#) to improve predictability, usability, and enforceability for applicants, reviewers, inspectors, and the public. This project will also lead to improved internal consistency throughout the review, construction, and post-approval phases of Site Development Activity Permits (SDAPs).

2. Background

The Kitsap County Stormwater Design Manual establishes the standards for stormwater management planning and design for new and redevelopment projects, consistent with Chapter 12.04 of the Kitsap County Code (KCC). The County’s Stormwater Code (Title 12) also meets applicable requirements of the Phase II Western Washington NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit. One condition of this permit requires the County to implement a local program to prevent and control the impacts of stormwater runoff from new development, redevelopment, and construction activities. This is primarily carried out through Title 12 of the KCC and the KCSDM.

Regulatory Drivers of the Project:

- 2024 Ecology SWMMWW adoption
- NPDES Phase II Permit requirements (2024–2029 cycle)
- Ecology expectations for local implementation, enforcement, and permit lifecycle tracking

Local Context:

- Kitsap County currently implements stormwater standards through:
 - KCC Title 12
 - Kitsap County Stormwater Design Manual (KCSDM)
 - The Site Development Activity Permit (SDAP) process

- Portions of the current code and stormwater manual predate:
 - Current Ecology guidance
 - Modernized permitting workflows
 - Clarified vesting and permit lifecycle expectations

2.1 Compliance with the 2024 Comprehensive Plan

The Growth Management Act (GMA) mandates Kitsap County’s Comprehensive Plan and development regulations to be reviewed and, if needed, revised at least every 8 years [RCW 36.70A.130(5)]. The most recent Kitsap County periodic update concluded with the adoption of the [2024 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan](#) on December 2, 2024.

The project supports the following goals, policies, and strategies set forth in the 2024 Kitsap County Comprehensive plan:

- Land Use Goal 2. Capital Facilities
 - **Land Use Strategy 2.e.** Ensure compliance with the current Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington.
- Environmental Goal 6. Use Best Practices
 - **Environment Strategy 6.d.** Identify and protect critical aquifer recharge areas by utilizing Low Impact Development (LID) site planning principles to the greatest extent possible for reducing stormwater runoff and facilitating water quantity recharge.
 - **Environment Strategy 6.e.** Use stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) to improve water quality and quantity.
- Capital Facilities and Utilities Goal 5. Coordinated with Development
 - **Capital Facilities and Utilities Strategy 5.b.** Review stormwater regulations and design manuals as required by state law to ensure that Kitsap County is using the most up-to-date Best Management Practices in accordance with changes in state and federal stormwater regulations.
- Climate Change Goal 8. Hydrology and Hydrogeology
 - **Climate Change Policy 8.1.** Prioritize green infrastructure and low-impact development techniques, where appropriate, to address increased storm

events, stormwater runoff, and local ocean acidification due to nutrient loading from runoff.

- **Climate Change Strategy 8.b.** Provide guidance to promote the use of smart irrigation, stormwater nutrient management, preventative maintenance, water conservation and wastewater reuse, plant selection, and landscape management.
- **Manchester Goal 9.** Promote stormwater management systems that preserve natural drainage systems, such as streams, and construct facilities that complement these systems by taking advantage of opportunities for filtration, infiltration, and flow control where feasible.
- Suquamish Goal 14. Expand and improve Suquamish stormwater and sewer facilities
 - **Suquamish Policy 14.1.** Support development of a comprehensive and natural approach to stormwater management to implement projects to control flows, reduce flooding, and enhance water quality.
- Gorst Goal 3. Improve water quality and reduce flooding in the Gorst UGA
 - **Gorst Policy 3.1.** Require enhanced water quality consistent with the Sinclair Inlet Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) (USEPA 2012) throughout the watershed and UGA. Reduction of impervious surfaces and onsite treatment of stormwater should be required in accordance with best management practices specified in the 2019 Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington (Ecology 2019), or its equivalent or successor, with a preference for infiltration to reduce fecal coliform.
 - **Gorst Policy 3.4.** Wherever practicable, require low impact development measures such as infiltration for new development and redevelopment. Where impractical, stormwater detention may be allowed.
 - **Gorst Policy 3.7.** Policy UGA-10. Allow zero direct and untreated discharge to streams and marine water bodies in association with development and redevelopment. Apply vegetation management, clearing and grading, and stormwater rules that minimize erosion and protect water quality and habitat.
- Keyport Goal 20. Encourage sustainable practices and green building in Keyport.
 - **Keyport Policy 20.1.** Implement Low Impact Develop Standards for Keyport Stormwater development and improvements.

2.2 Geographic Description

The KCSDM Update and associated code amendments do not have a specific geographic focus and will apply to all of Unincorporated Kitsap County.

3. Project Approach

This project is organized into three focused components: The KCSDM Update, Updates to Title 12 and associated code sections, and improvements to SDAP procedures and guidance.

3.1 KCSDM Update

The Kitsap County Community Development Department will update the KCSDM to align with the Washington State Department of Ecology's SWMMWW which was recently updated in 2024. The County's deadline for adopting changes from the 2024 SWMMWW is June 30, 2027. A gap analysis will be conducted to compare the 2021 KCSDM provisions against the 2024 SWMMWW and the requirements of the County's 2024-2029 NPDES Phase II permit.

3.2 Code Updates

In addition to the KCSDM update, the Department of Community Development proposes updates to KCC Title 12 and related provisions to modernize, clarify, and align Kitsap County Code (Title 12 and related provisions) and the Kitsap County Stormwater Design Manual (KCSDM) to improve predictability, usability, and enforceability for applicants, reviewers, inspectors, and the public. A gap analysis will be conducted to compare the provisions of Title 12 against the 2024 SWMMWW and the requirements of the County's 2024-2029 NPDES Phase II permit. The analysis will serve to identify any outdated standards, procedural gaps, and areas of ambiguity or inconsistent interpretation.

3.3 Procedural SDAP Improvements

Over time, technical standards, procedures, and enforcement tools have evolved unevenly. This has resulted in unclear triggers for engineered designs, limited procedural clarity for addendums, revisions, and field changes, and enforcement tools that are not well integrated with permit conditions and construction oversight. The gap analysis conducted for the KCSDM and Title 12 updates will inform process improvements for SDAPs. Structured involvement of the projects' internal review team will guide the revision of internal and external procedures to modernize the County's SDAP process.

3.4 Community Engagement

- Outreach and Engagement will include:
 - Dedicated project website
 - SEPA open public comment period
 - Legal notice published in Kitsap Sun
 - Email to subscribers of the DCD GovDelivery “Code Update” list.
 - DCD newsletter mail list.
 - Technical Advisory Committee Meetings
 - Presentations to Community Advisory Councils
 - Presentation at DCD Tribal Coordination Meeting
 - Presentation to the Kitsap Builders Association
- Planning Commission
 - June 16, 2026 - Briefing
 - December 2026 - Work Study (if needed)
 - January 2027 - Public Hearing
- Board of County Commissioners
 - June 22, 2026 - Briefing
 - March 2027 - Work Study
 - April 2027 - Public Hearing
 - May 2027 - Deliberations
 - May 2027 - Adoption

4. Outcomes

Local Outcomes

- Clear, defensible stormwater standards aligned with Ecology guidance
- Predictable SDAP triggers and design expectations
- Improved consistency between plan review, inspection, and enforcement
- Reduced rework and mid-construction surprises
- A stormwater code and manual that are easier to train, apply, and maintain

Regulatory Outcomes

- Demonstrated compliance with NPDES Phase II permit
- Reduced regulatory risk through clearer procedures and documentation
- Stronger enforcement authority grounded in adopted standards

5. Deliverables

- Updated Kitsap County Stormwater Design Manual
- Updated Title 12 stormwater code provisions
 - Possible minor updates in other Titles of KCC
- Clarified SDAP procedures and guidance
- Internal implementation (checklists, decision points, inspector tools)

6. Scope of Work

A. Technical Standards Alignment

- Update KCSDM for consistency with 2024 SWMMWW
- Clarify infiltration testing requirements
- Review and update engineered design thresholds and assumptions
- PCBs
- Incorporate grading requirements for sites adjacent to landfills from KPHD ordinances

B. SDAP Triggers & Design Thresholds

- Evaluate SDAP triggers
- Clarify when engineered stormwater designs are required
- Identify 60% design submittal requirements for preliminary design review

C. Permit Lifecycle & Vesting

- Incorporate vesting rules consistent with NPDES permit requirements
 - Clarify how vesting applies to revisions, addendums, and construction sequencing
- Evaluate duration of SDAP approvals
 - Grading permits
 - Extensions
 - Reactivation of expired permits
- Clarify performance and maintenance bonding procedures

D. Revisions, Addendums & Field Changes

- Evaluate and clarify triggers and procedures for addendums
- Identify procedures for field revisions

- Distinguish between minor field adjustments, substantive design changes, and changes requiring re-approval or enforcement action

E. Construction, Inspection & Enforcement

- Enhance enforcement procedures to align with permit conditions and SWPPP requirements
- Evaluate pre-construction (Pre-Con) processes
- Strengthen the connection between approved plans, inspection checkpoints, and corrective action authority

7. Project Schedule

- Charter – May 2026
- Website Launch – June 2026
- Planning Commission (PC) Briefing - June 16, 2026
- Board of County Commissioner’s (BoCC) Briefing – June-July 2026
- Initial Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting – August-September 2026
- Presentation at DCD Tribal Coordination Meeting - July 28 or August 25, 2026
- Technical Advisory Council Meeting to Discuss Draft Materials – November 2026
- Presentation to the KBA on Draft Materials – September – November-December 2026
- Planning Commission Work Study Ahead of Public Hearing (if needed) – December 2026
- Send Gov Delivery Notices and Notice of Public Hearing, Post Materials on Webpage and Open 15-day Public Comment Period – December 2026
- Planning Commission Public Hearing – January 2027
- Distribute SEPA Noticing – January 2027
- Planning Commission Deliberations – February 2027
- Planning Commission Findings of Fact – February 2027
- Submit 60-day notice of intent to adopt to Commerce – March 2027
- Board of County Commissioners Work Study on Planning Commission Process – March 2027
- Send Gov Delivery Notices and Notice of Public Hearing, Post Materials on Webpage and Open 2-week Public Comment Period – March 2027
- Board of County Commissioners Public Hearing – April 2027
- Board of County Commissioners Deliberations – May 2027
- Board of County Commissioners Adoption – May 2027

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Name	Organization	Role	Responsibility
Bri Ellis	Kitsap County	Development Engineering Supervisor	Project Lead
Cecilia Olsen	Kitsap County	DCD Assistant Director	Project Lead
Garrett Ballew	Kitsap County	Long Range Planner	Project Management

9. Organization and Internal Communication

Project meetings will be held as needed. Project progress will be tracked using Microsoft Planner.