

ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' WORK SESSION SCHEDULE
MARCH 19, 2025

Those interested in attending the meeting virtually may use the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/98750832914?pwd=3eNmGtLyPYwKV5qvVHv4tc207uylo3.1>

or for voice only, **Dial by your location:** (253) 215-8782

Meeting ID: 987 5083 2914 **Passcode:** 777859

| | |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| 9:00 a.m. | Commissioners |
| 9:20 a.m. | Budget/Risk |
| 10:35 a.m. | Planning & Community Development |
| 11:35 a.m. | Assessor |
| 11:40 a.m. | Auditor |

NOON BREAK

| | |
|-----------|--------------|
| 1:00 p.m. | Public Works |
|-----------|--------------|

The Board of County Commissioners meets routinely in Work Session the first three Wednesdays of each month. Work Sessions are held in the Annex Building, Board of County Commissioners' Hearing Room, #B102, 1 NE 6th Street, Coupeville, WA.

Work Sessions are public meetings that provide an informal workshop format opportunity for the Board to review ongoing items with departments or to meet with other agencies, committees, or groups to discuss specific topics of mutual interest. Items are typically reviewed at Work Session before being scheduled on the agenda for the Board's regular Tuesday business meetings.

While Work Sessions do not have time set aside for verbal public comment, written public comment is welcomed and can be directed to the Clerk of the Board by submitting comments to CommentBOCC@islandcountywa.gov. If you have questions regarding public comment, you may call (360) 679-7385. Written public comments are considered a public record.

Times for each department are approximate; a time slot scheduled for a specific department may be revised as the Work Session progresses. Because of the workshop format and time sensitivity, certain items, topics, and materials may be presented that are not included in the published agenda. **If you are interested in reviewing those documents, please contact the Clerk of the Board at (360) 679-7354.**

ASSISTIVE LISTENING AVAILABLE: Please contact the clerk for an assistive listening device to use during the meeting. Please return the device at the end of the meeting.

NOTE: Audio recordings are posted within 48 hours of the meeting date. To listen to the recording visit the [Agenda Center](#) on the Island County website.



ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

WORK SESSION AGENDA

MEETING DATE: 3/19/2025

To: Melanie Bacon, Chair
Board of Island County Commissioners

From: BOCC Staff

Amount of time requested for agenda discussion. 20 minutes

DIVISION: Administrative

Agenda Item No.: 1

Subject: Reappointment to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

Description: The Board has received a request for reappointment to Position 2 of the Historic Preservation Commission. At this time the Board has determined the appointment will be for one year from the date of appointment.

Attachment: HPC Roster

Request: *(Check boxes that apply)*

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: Not Applicable

Budget Review: Not Applicable

P.A. Review: Not Applicable

DIVISION: Administrative

Agenda Item No.: 2

Subject: Gordon Thomas Honeywell Contract Discussion

Description: Gordon Thomas Honeywell contract discussion.

Attachment: Draft Consulting Agreement and Draft Professional Services Agreement

Request: *(Check boxes that apply)*

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: Not Applicable

Budget Review: Not Applicable

P.A. Review: Not Applicable

(Continued on next page)

DIVISION: Administrative

Agenda Item No.: 3

Subject: Harm Reduction Program

Description: Continued discussion with Human Services around aspects of the harm reduction program.

Attachment: None

Request: *(Check boxes that apply)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: Not Applicable

Budget Review: Not Applicable

P.A. Review: Not Applicable

DIVISION: Administrative

Agenda Item No.: 4

Subject: Federal Community Funding Project for 2026 and 2025

Description: Discussion of projects for the Federal Community Funding Project funds for fiscal year 2026 and any issues surrounding funds yet to be released for 2025.

Attachment: None

Request: *(Check boxes that apply)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: Not Applicable

Budget Review: Not Applicable

P.A. Review: Not Applicable

EBEY'S RESERVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC)

<https://townofcoupeville.org/government/boards-commissions/historic-preservation-commission/>



The Town and County established an Ebey's Reserve Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) through ICC 17.04A.060 consisting of seven members. Three members appointed by the Council of the Town of Coupeville, three members appointed by Island County, and one member appointed jointly by Island County and the Town of Coupeville upon recommendation of the Trust Board. For more information, contact the Planning and Community Development Office.

Three-year term

| MEMBERS | Appointed By | APPOINTMENT DATE | TERM EXPIRE |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Marshall Bronson | Joint Appointment | 06/26/18 | 12/31/26 |
| 2. Danielle Bishop | Island County | 03/15/22 | 03/15/25 |
| 3. Sheila Saul | Island County | 11/10/20 | 10/17/26 |
| 4. VACANT | Island County | | |
| 5. Kathy Baxter | Town of Coupeville | 01/22/19 | 12/31/24 |
| 6. Kevin Turkington | Town of Coupeville | 04/01/22 | 02/01/25 |
| 7. Jay Adams | Town of Coupeville | 03/28/23 | 12/31/25 |

The Board has received a request for reappointment to Position 2 from Danielle Bishop.

ASSIGNMENT OF CONSULTING AGREEMENT

This Assignment of Consulting Agreement ("Assignment") is entered into as of this ____ day of ____, 2025 (the "Effective Date"), by and between **GORDON THOMAS HONEYWELL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS** ("Assignor"); and **COLUMBIA POLICY ADVISORS LLC**, a Washington limited liability company ("Assignee").

RECITALS

WHEREAS, Assignor entered into a Consulting Agreement ("Original Agreement") with Island County dated October 22, 2024, under which Assignor agreed to provide lobbying services ("Services"); and

WHEREAS, Assignor desires to assign all of its rights, obligations, and interests under the Original Agreement to Assignee; and

WHEREAS, Assignee agrees to accept the assignment and assume all obligations and responsibilities under the Original Agreement; and

WHEREAS, Island County has consented to this Assignment, if required under the terms of the Original Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants contained herein and other good and valuable consideration, the parties agree as follows:

1. **Assignment:** Assignor hereby assigns, transfers, and conveys to Assignee all of its rights, title, interests, and obligations under the Original Agreement, effective May 1, 2025.
2. **Assumption:** Assignee hereby accepts the foregoing assignment and agrees to assume and perform all duties, responsibilities, and obligations of Assignor under the Original Agreement as of the Effective Date.
3. **Release of Assignor:** Upon execution of this Assignment and acceptance by Assignee, Assignor shall be released from all obligations and liabilities under the Original Agreement arising on or after the Effective Date.
4. **Governing Law:** This Assignment shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Washington.
5. **Entire Agreement:** This Assignment constitutes the entire agreement between the parties regarding the subject matter hereof and supersedes all prior agreements, understandings, and communications.
6. **Counterparts:** This Assignment may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument. Electronic signatures shall be deemed to have the same legal effect as originals.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Assignment as of the date first above written.

GORDON THOMAS HONEYWELL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

By: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____
Date: _____

COLUMBIA POLICY ADVISORS LLC

By: _____
Name: Josh Weiss
Title: Authorized Member
Date: _____

ISLAND COUNTY

By: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____
Date: _____

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT

This Agreement is entered into by and between Island County (hereinafter referred to as "Client") and Columbia Policy Advisors LLC (hereinafter referred to as "Consultant"), upon the following terms and conditions:

A. Scope of Work. Consultant will advise and assist Client in accordance with Consultant's Scope of Work, described in Attachment "A" hereto and incorporated herein. Consultant's services will be in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, rules, orders, licenses and permits, now or hereinafter in effect, and Consultant shall furnish such documents as may be required to effect or evidence such compliance.

B. Compensation; Expenses. Client will pay Consultant for satisfactorily rendered services in accordance with the specific terms set forth in Attachment "A."

C. Invoices; Payment. Consultant will furnish the Client with invoices at regular intervals, as set forth in Attachment "A."

D. Term. Consultant shall promptly begin the services hereunder on the date set forth in Attachment "A" and shall terminate same on the date set forth in Attachment "A," unless earlier terminated by mutual agreement. Client or Consultant may terminate this Agreement for convenience at any time prior to the termination date set forth in Attachment "A," provided that either party provides 30-days notice.

E. Ownership of Work Product. The product of all work performed under this agreement, including reports, and other related materials shall be the property of Client or its nominees, and the Client or its nominees shall have the sole right to use, sell, license, publish or otherwise disseminate or transfer rights in such work product.

F. Independent Contractor. Consultant is an independent contractor and nothing contained herein shall be deemed to make Consultant an employee of Client, or to empower Consultant to bind or obligate Client in any way. Consultant is solely responsible for paying all of Consultant's own tax obligations, as well as those due for any employee/subcontractor permitted to work for Consultant hereunder.

G. Release of Claims; Indemnity. Consultant hereby releases, and shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless Client from and against all claims, liabilities, damages and costs arising directly or indirectly out of, or related to, Consultant's fault, negligence, strict liability or product liability of Consultant, and/or that of any permitted employee or subcontract or Consultant, pertaining to the Services hereunder.

H. Insurance. The Consultant shall procure and maintain for the duration of the Agreement, insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damage to property which may arise from or in connection with the performance of the work hereunder by the Consultant, their agents, representatives, employees or subcontractors.

1. Minimum Scope of Insurance. Consultant shall obtain insurance of the types described below:

A. Commercial General Liability insurance with written limits no less than \$1,000,000 per claim and \$1,000,000 policy aggregate limit.

B. Workers' Compensation coverage as required by the industrial insurance laws of the State of Washington.

C. Automobile Liability insurance with a minimum combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage of \$1,000,000 per accident covering all owned, non-owned, hired and leased vehicles.

2. The Consultant's insurance shall be endorsed to state as follows:

A. The coverage shall not be cancelled by either party, except after thirty (30) days prior written notice to Client.

B. The coverage shall be primary insurance with respect to Client. Any insurance, self-insurance, or insurance pool coverage maintained by Client shall be excess of the Consultant's insurance and shall not contribute with it.

I. **Assignment.** Consultant's rights and obligations hereunder shall not be assigned or transferred without Client's prior written consent; subject thereto, this Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties' heirs, and successors.

J. **Governing Law; Severability.** This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Washington, U.S.A. If any term or provision of this Agreement is determined to be legally invalid or unenforceable by a court with lawful jurisdiction hereover (excluding arbitrators), such term or provision shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any remaining terms or provisions of this Agreement, and the court shall, so far as possible, construe the invalid portion to implement the original intent thereof.

K. **Arbitration.** Should any dispute arise concerning the enforcement, breach or interpretation of this Agreement, the parties shall first meet in a good faith attempt to resolve the dispute. In the event such dispute cannot be resolved by agreement of the parties, such dispute shall be resolved by binding arbitration pursuant to RCW 7.04A, as amended, and the Mandatory Rules of Arbitration (MAR); venue shall be placed in Olympia, Thurston County, Washington, the laws of the State of Washington shall apply, and the prevailing party shall be entitled to its reasonable attorney fees and costs.

L. Entire Agreement; Etc. This Agreement, and its incorporated attachments hereto, state the entire agreement between the parties regarding the subject matter hereof and supersede any prior agreements or understandings pertaining thereto. Any modification to this Agreement must be made in writing and signed by authorized representatives of both parties. Any provision hereof which may be reasonably deemed to survive the expiration or termination of this Agreement shall so survive, and remain in continuing effect. No delay or failure in exercising any right hereunder shall be deemed to constitute a waiver of any right granted hereunder or at law by either party.

Consultant:

Columbia Policy Advisors
Josh Weiss, Sole Member

Date: _____

Client:

Island County

Date: _____

**ATTACHMENT "A" TO
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT**

- A. Scope of Work:** Consultant will assist Island County in developing and implementing a legislative advocacy program. This will include helping to identify 3-4 budget and policy priorities per year, and developing and implementing strategies to advance these priorities with the governor and legislature. In addition to advancing these priorities, Consultant will respond to legislative issues that have the potential to uniquely harm Island County. Island County will primarily rely on the Washington State Association of Counties to represent its' interests that are shared in common with other counties. In carrying out this scope of work, the Contractor shall:
1. Act as Island County's principal state lobbyist and develop and maintain on-going relationships with appropriate state elected and appointed officials and staff;
 2. Develop and maintain on-going relationships with the Washington State Association of Counties and their lobbyists, as well as other lobbyists and interest groups whose priorities align with Island County's;
 3. Attend meetings and conferences as mutually agreed upon by the Consultant and Island County;
 4. The Contractor shall provide both written and oral reports to Island County and other project partners as mutually agreed upon by the Contractor and Island County; and
 5. Provide other governmental relations support to Island County as mutually agreed upon by Contractor and Island County.
- B. Compensation/Expenses:** Client shall pay Consultant a monthly fee of \$4000 for the services listed above. Client shall reimburse Consultant up to \$2,000 annually for work-related travel expenses such as:
- 1) Meals;
 - 2) Lodging, and;
 - 3) Mileage for assigned travel.
- C. Invoices/Payments:** (a) Consultant shall furnish Client with invoices for services performed on a monthly basis, and (b) Client shall pay each of Consultant's invoices within thirty (30) days after Client's receipt and verification of invoices.
- D. Term of Agreement:** Consultant's services shall commence on May 1, 2025 and shall terminate on December 31, 2026.



ISLAND COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA BILL

MEETING DATE:

10/22/24

Agenda Item No 7

☒ CONSENT AGENDA

☐ REGULAR AGENDA

☐ PUBLIC HEARING/MTG

Resolution/Ordinance No:

DEPARTMENT: COMMISSIONERS

DIVISION: NOT APPLICABLE

STAFF CONTACT: Jennifer Roll

DEPT. HEAD: BOCC Staff

AGENDA SUBJECT:

Agreement with Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Affairs for Continued Services. Term 1/1/2025 – 12/31/2025; Amount \$48,000 (RM-BOCC-2024-376)

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY:

WORK SESSION DATE: *(If applicable)* N/A

Request for signature to continue working with Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Affairs for 2025 to develop and implement a legislative advocacy program for Island County.

FISCAL IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE:

\$48,000/524110

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

☒ Approve/Adopt

☐ Schedule Public Hearing/Meeting

☐ Continue Public Hearing/Meeting

☐ Information/Discussion

☐ Other *(describe)* _____

SUGGESTED MOTION:

[BELOW TO BE COMPLETED BY CLERK OF BOARD]

BOCC ACTION:

☐ APPROVED

☐ DENIED

☐ TABLED/DEFERRED/NO ACTION TAKEN

☐ CONTINUED TO DATE: ____/____/____ TIME: _____

☐ OTHER _____

ISLAND COUNTY CONSULTING AGREEMENT

This Agreement is entered into by and between the Island County Board of County Commissioners (hereinafter referred to as "Island County") on behalf of Island County, a municipal corporation, and Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Relations (hereinafter referred to as "Consultant"), a Limited Liability Corporation licensed to do business in Washington as a governmental affairs firm, for the services described herein upon the following terms and conditions:

- A. Scope of Work.** Consultant will advise and assist Island County in accordance with Consultant's Scope of Work, described in Attachment "A" hereto and incorporated herein, and Consultant will do and produce such other things as are set forth in the Scope of Work (the "Services"). Consultant's Services will be in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, rules, orders, licenses and permits, now or hereinafter in effect, and Consultant shall furnish such documents as may be required to effect or evidence such compliance. Consultant's Services will not include the provision legal services and the protections of the attorney-client relationship will not exist between Consultant and Island County.
- B. Compensation; Expenses.** Island County will pay Consultant for satisfactorily rendered Services in accordance with the specific terms set forth in Attachment "A."
- C. Invoices; Payment.** Consultant will furnish Island County an invoice, as set forth in Attachment "A."
- D. Term.** Consultant shall promptly begin the Services hereunder on the date set forth in Attachment "A" and shall terminate same on the date set forth in Attachment "A," unless earlier terminated by mutual agreement. Island County or Consultant may terminate consultant Services for convenience at any time prior to the termination date set forth in Attachment A, provided that either party provides 30-days notice.
- E. Ownership of Work Product.** The product of all work performed under this agreement, including reports, and other related materials shall be the property of Island County or its nominees, and Island County or its nominees shall have the sole right to use, sell, license, publish or otherwise disseminate or transfer rights in such work product.
- G. Independent Contractor.** Consultant is an independent contractor and nothing contained herein shall be deemed to make Consultant an employee of Island County, or to empower consultant to bind or obligate Island County in any way. Consultant is solely responsible for paying all of Consultant's own tax obligations, as well as those due for any employee/subcontractor permitted to work for Consultant hereunder.
- H. Release of Claims; Indemnity.** The Contractor will defend, indemnify and hold the County, its officers, officials, employees, contractors and volunteers harmless from all claims, injuries, damages, losses or suits, including attorney fees, arising out of or resulting from the acts, errors or omissions of the Contractor in performing the Services, except for injuries and damages caused by the sole negligence of the County.

For purposes of this indemnification and hold harmless agreement, the Contractor waives any immunity that may be granted to it under the Washington State Industrial Insurance Act, Title 51 RCW. The parties expressly agree that this waiver of workers' compensation immunity has been negotiated.

I. Insurance. The Contractor will procure and maintain for the duration of the Agreement, insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damage to property which may arise from or in connection with the Contractor's performance of the Services.

1. Minimum Scope of Insurance. The insurance includes:
 - a. Automobile Liability insurance covering all owned, non-owned, hired and leased vehicles, with a minimum combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage of \$1,000,000 per accident.
 - b. Commercial General Liability insurance covering liability arising from premises, operations, independent contractors and personal injury and advertising injury, with limits no less than \$1,000,000 each occurrence, \$2,000,000 general aggregate. Island County shall be named as an insured under the Contractor's Commercial General Liability insurance policy with respect to the work performed for Island County.
 - c. Workers' Compensation coverage as required by the Industrial Insurance laws of the State of Washington.
2. Other Insurance Provisions. The insurance policies are to contain, or be endorsed to contain, the following provisions:
 - a. The Contractor's insurance coverage shall be the primary insurance with respect to Island County. Any insurance, self-insurance, or insurance pool coverage maintained by Island County shall be excess of the Contractor's insurance and shall not contribute with it.
 - b. The Contractor's insurance shall be endorsed to state that coverage shall not be cancelled by either party, except after 30 days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to the County.
3. Acceptability of Insurers. Insurance will be with insurers having a current A.M. Best rating of not less than A:VII.
4. Verification of Coverage. The Contractor will provide Island County with original certificates and a copy of the amendatory endorsements including, but not necessarily limited to, the additional insured endorsement,

evidencing the insurance requirements of the Contractor before commencement of the Services.

I. Assignment. Consultant's rights and obligations hereunder shall not be assigned or transferred without Island County's prior written consent; subject thereto, this Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties' heirs, and successors.

J. Governing Law; Severability. This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Washington, U.S.A. (excluding conflict of laws provisions). If any term or provision of this Agreement is determined to be legally invalid or unenforceable by a court with lawful jurisdiction (excluding arbitrators), such term or provision shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any remaining terms or provisions of this Agreement, and the court shall, so far as possible, construe the invalid portion to implement the original intent thereof.

K. Arbitration. Should any dispute arise concerning the enforcement, breach or interpretation of this Agreement, the parties shall first meet in a good faith attempt to resolve the dispute. In the event such dispute cannot be resolved by agreement of the parties, such dispute shall be resolved by binding arbitration pursuant to RCW 7.04A, as amended, and the Mandatory Rules of Arbitration (MAR); venue shall be placed in Island County, Washington, the laws of the State of Washington shall apply, and the prevailing party shall be entitled to its reasonable attorney fees and costs.

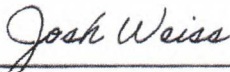
L. Miscellaneous.

1. Entire Agreement. This Agreement constitutes the sole agreement of the Parties with respect to the Services. It supersedes any prior written or oral agreements or communications between the Parties and may not be modified except in a writing signed by the Parties.
2. Waiver. If either party fails to require the other to perform any term of this Agreement, that failure does not prevent the party from later enforcing that term. If either party waives the other's breach of a term, that waiver is not treated as waiving a later breach of the term.
3. Binding Effect. This Agreement binds and inures to the benefit of the parties, and their respective heirs, personal representatives, successors and assigns.
4. Notices. All notices and other communications required or permitted under this Agreement must be in writing and must be sent to the party at that party's address set forth below or at whatever other address the party specifies in writing.
5. Severability. If any part of this Agreement is for any reason held to be invalid or unenforceable, the rest of it remains fully enforceable.
6. "Including." Unless the context requires otherwise, the term "including" means "including but not limited to."

7. Headings. Headings are for convenience and do not affect the interpretation of this Agreement.
8. Governing Law. Washington law applies to the Agreement without regard for any choice-of-law rules that might direct the application of the laws of any other jurisdiction.
9. Execution by Counterpart. This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which, when so executed and delivered, shall constitute an original, but all of which constitute one the same instrument. An electronic copy or facsimile transmission of a signed copy of this Agreement shall be deemed an original and has the same valid and binding effect.

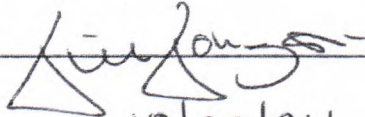
Consultant:
Gordon Thomas Honeywell
Governmental Affairs

Island County:



Josh Weiss, State Lobbyist and Partner
Date: 10/22/24

PO Box 1677
Tacoma, WA 98401



Date: 10/22/24

1 NE 7th St., Rm 214
Coupeville, WA
98239-5000

**ATTACHMENT "A" TO
ISLAND COUNTY CONSULTING AGREEMENT**

A. Scope of Work:

Consultant will assist Island County in developing and implementing a legislative advocacy program. This will include helping to identify 3-4 budget and policy priorities per year, and developing and implementing strategies to advance these priorities with the governor and legislature. In addition to advancing these priorities, Consultant will respond to legislative issues that have the potential to uniquely harm Island County. Island County will primarily rely on the Washington State Association of Counties to represent its' interests that are shared in common with other counties. In carrying out this scope of work, the Contractor shall:

1. Act as Island County's principal state lobbyist and develop and maintain on-going relationships with appropriate state elected and appointed officials and staff;
2. Develop and maintain on-going relationships with the Washington State Association of Counties and their lobbyists, as well as other lobbyists and interest groups whose priorities align with Island County's;
3. Attend meetings and conferences as mutually agreed upon by the Consultant and Island County;
4. The Contractor shall provide both written and oral reports to Island County and other project partners as mutually agreed upon by the Contractor and Island County; and
5. Provide other governmental relations support to Island County as mutually agreed upon by Contractor and Island County.

B. Compensation/Expenses: Island County shall pay Consultant a fee of \$4,000/month (\$48,000 total) for the Scope of Work listed in subsection A. Island County will reimburse Consultant for the cost of reasonable travel expenses including mileage, travel meals, participating in WSAC conferences, and overnight accommodations.

C. Invoices/Payments: (a) Consultant shall furnish Island County with an invoice for services performed, and (b) Island County shall pay Consultant's invoice within thirty (30) days after County's receipt and verification.

D. Term of Agreement: Consultant's services shall commence on January 1, 2025 and terminate on December 31, 2025.



ISLAND COUNTY BUDGET/RISK

WORK SESSION AGENDA

MEETING DATE: 3/19/2025

To: Melanie Bacon, Chair
Board of Island County Commissioners

From: Susan Geiger, Director

Amount of time requested for agenda discussion. 75 minutes

DIVISION: ARPA

Agenda Item No.: 1

Subject: Broadband Update

Description: An update on the status of the BEAD grant applications and the N Camano Broadband Project with Ziply Fiber NW using ARPA funds to bring broadband service to 112 locations on the north end of the island.

Attachment: Broadband Presentation slides

Request: *(Check boxes that apply)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: Not Applicable

Budget Review: Not Applicable

P.A. Review: Not Applicable

DIVISION: Administrative

Agenda Item No.: 2

Subject: Economic Development Council and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2024 Report

Description: Kristina Hines will provide an update on activities since publishing the CEDS in 2024 and outline a plan for moving forward.

Attachment: EDC Presentation slides, CEDS Annual Report SOW, IC CEDS 2024-2028

Request: *(Check boxes that apply)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: Not Applicable

Budget Review: Not Applicable

P.A. Review: Not Applicable

DIVISION: Administrative

Agenda Item No.: 3

Subject: Rural County Economic Development Program

Description: Review of the program status, policies, and balance in preparation of announcing the application window.

Attachment: RCED Balance sheet, RCED Application Guide, 2024 RCED Policy

Request: *(Check boxes that apply)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: Not Applicable

Budget Review: Not Applicable

P.A. Review: Not Applicable

BROADBAND UPDATE



WORK SESSION

PRESENTATION MARCH 19, 2025 | BOARD OF ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA

- 1. BEAD PROJECT AREAS**
- 2. N CAMANO PROJECT WITH ZIPLY**



March 19, 2025

BEAD ALLOCATIONS

WASHINGTON:

- 215,754 BSLS
 - 154,060 UNSERVED
 - 61,694 UNDERSERVED
 - 11,937 HIGH-COST
- 235 PROJECT AREAS
- 307 APPLICATIONS
- 49% OF LOCATIONS RECEIVED 2+ BIDS

ISLAND COUNTY:

- 3,593 BSLS
 - 2,109 UNSERVED
 - 1,484 UNDERSERVED
 - NO HIGH-COST
- 4 PROJECT AREAS
- 10 APPLICATIONS
- 2 PROJECT AREAS HAD 2 APPS
- 2 PROJECT AREAS HAD 3 APPS

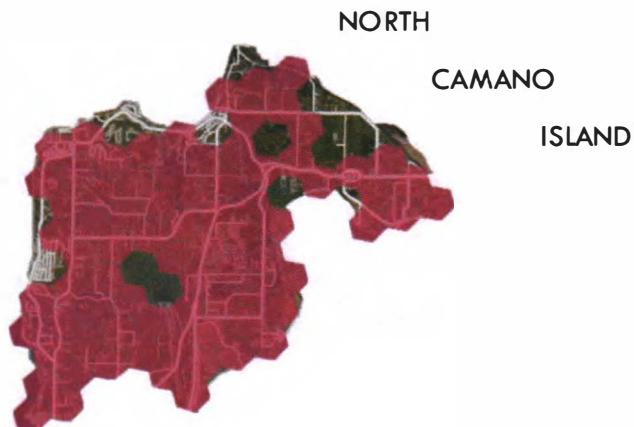


March 19, 2025

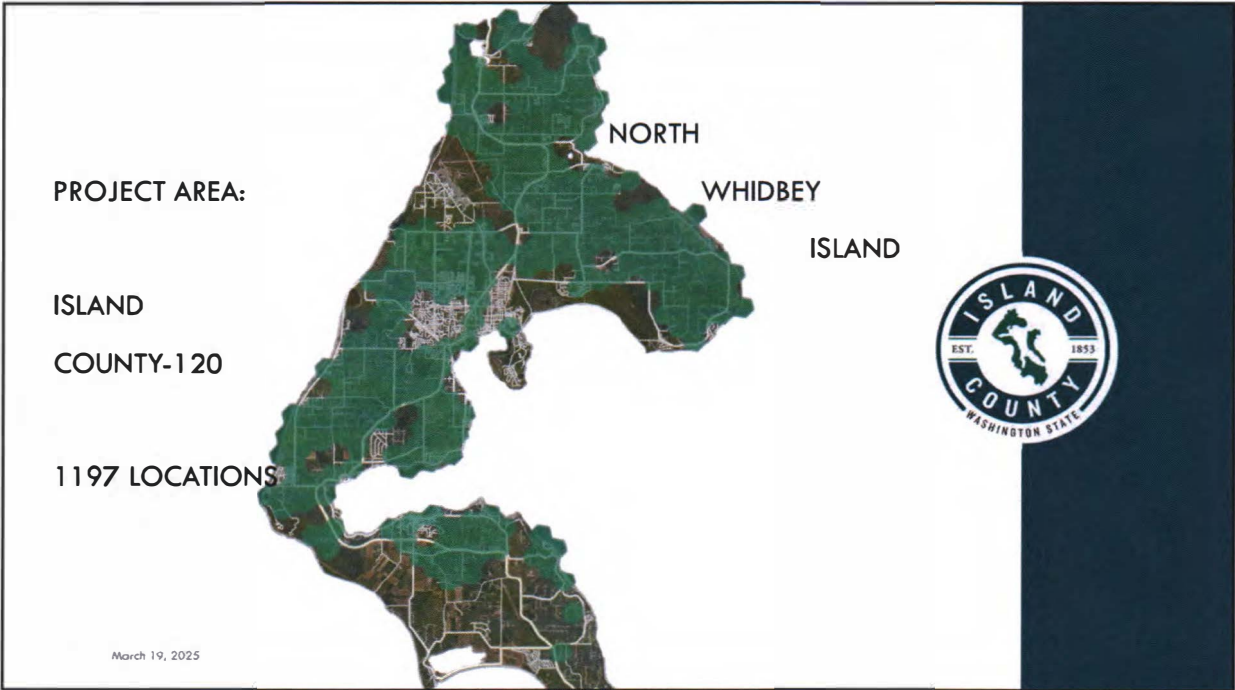
PROJECT AREA:

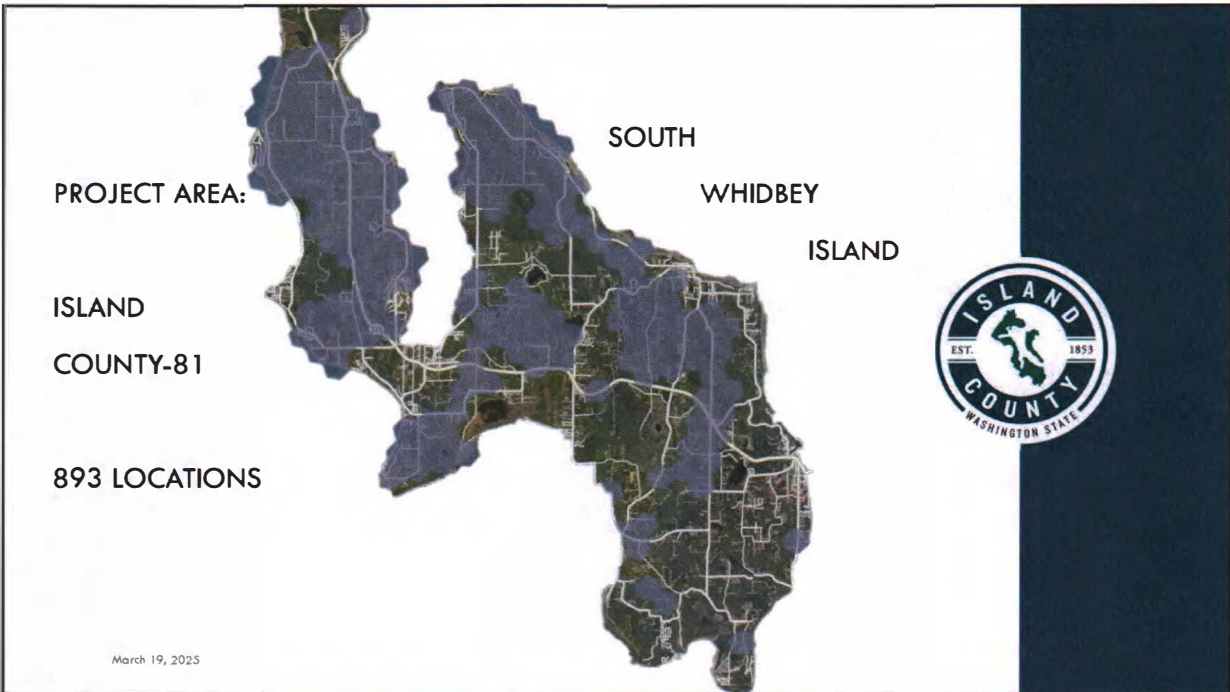
ISLAND
COUNTY-85

714 LOCATIONS



March 19, 2025





BEAD APPLICATIONS

Companies per Project Area

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SOUTH CAMANO<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ZIPLY FIBER NW• WHIDBEYTEL• ASTOUND• NORTH CAMANO<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ZIPLY FIBER NW• ASTOUND | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SOUTH WHIDBEY<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ZIPLY FIBER NW• WHIDBEYTEL• ASTOUND• NORTH WHIDBEY<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WHIDBEYTEL• ASTOUND |
|--|--|



March 19, 2025

BEAD APPLICATIONS

Project Areas per Company

- *ZIPLY FIBER NW*
 - SOUTH CAMANO
 - NORTH CAMANO
 - SOUTH WHIDBEY
- *WHIDBEYTEL*
 - SOUTH CAMANO
 - SOUTH WHIDBEY
 - NORTH WHIDBEY
- *ASTOUND*
 - ALL 4 PROJECT AREAS

March 19, 2025



N CAMANO PROJECT

ZIPLY HAS PLANNED FOR 30 PROJECT ZONES,
ESTIMATED NEED IS 6 PERMITS FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY

ALL ATTACHMENTS WILL BE AERIAL - EXCEPT 3
PLACES WILL BE BURIED:

- NEXT TO THE AIRPORT RUNWAY
- AMY PLACE – PRIVATE ROAD
- BRINDLE PLACE & ROLFSON ROAD – PRIVATE ROAD

[MICRO-TRENCHING PROCESS](#)

March 19, 2025



N CAMANO PROJECT

N CAMANO CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE:

- **MID-MARCH 2025** – PERMITS SUBMITTED TO PW
- **LATE APRIL 2025** – POLE ATTACHMENTS COMPLETED
- **LATE JUNE 2025** – CONSTRUCTION COMPLETED
- **JULY 31 2025** – CONTRACT CONCLUDED

March 19, 2025



THANK YOU.
QUESTIONS?

ISLANDCOUNTYWA.GOV

March 19, 2025



USEFUL BROADBAND TERMS

BEAD

DIGITAL EQUITY

BSL

FCC FABRIC

DIG ONCE

WSBO



March 19, 2025

BROADBAND TERMS

BROADBAND EQUITY, ACCESS, & DEVELOPMENT

(BEAD) PROGRAM

- \$1.3 BILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDING FOR WA
- 200+ PROJECT AREAS IN 38 COUNTIES
- ROUND 1 & 2 CONCURRENT
- ROUND 3 DISCRETIONARY ASSIGNMENTS BY WSBO
DIRECTOR WHEELER



March 19, 2025

BROADBAND TERMS

BROADBAND SERVICEABLE LOCATION (BSL)

- ALL RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES INCLUDING:
 - HOUSING UNITS (APARTMENT COMPLEXES)
 - GROUP QUARTERS (DORMS/BARRACKS)
- NON-RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES IF:
 - ON PROPERTY WITHOUT RESIDENCES
 - USES MASS-MARKET, NON-ENTERPRISE-GRADE INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE

broadbandmap.fcc.gov

March 19, 2025



BROADBAND TERMS

DIG ONCE

- WADOT POLICY TO INCLUDE A CONDUIT IN PLANS FOR CURRENT OR FUTURE BROADBAND

DIGITAL EQUITY

- [HAVING] THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CAPACITY NEEDED FOR FULL PARTICIPATION IN OUR SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY, AND ECONOMY
- NECESSARY FOR CIVIC AND CULTURAL PARTICIPATION, EMPLOYMENT, LIFELONG LEARNING, AND ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES.

digitalinclusion.org

March 19, 2025



BROADBAND TERMS

NATIONAL BROADBAND MAP

- REFERRED TO AS THE “FCC FABRIC”
- DATASET OF ALL LOCATIONS IN THE NATION THAT HAVE OR CAN HAVE FIXED/UNFIXED/WIRED/WIRELESS BROADBAND ACCESS FOR INTERNET SERVICE
- CONTAINS DATA ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY OF BROADBAND SERVICES AT LOCATIONS AS REPORTED BY SERVICE PROVIDERS EVERY 6 MONTHS

broadbandmap.fcc.gov

March 19, 2025



BROADBAND TERMS

WA STATE BROADBAND OFFICE (WSBO)

- UNDER COMMERCE, WROTE THE STATE BROADBAND PLAN VOLS I & II AND RELEASED THE NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ON NOV 12TH
- WILL ASSIGN REVIEW PANEL FOR PROJECT AWARDS

March 19, 2025





March 19, 2025

Presentation to
Island County
Commissioners



Dedicated to Promoting Economic Vitality



The EDC works to create a thriving economic environment where business can grow and create jobs for local residents in a way that enhances and preserves our unique quality of life.

EDC Solutions

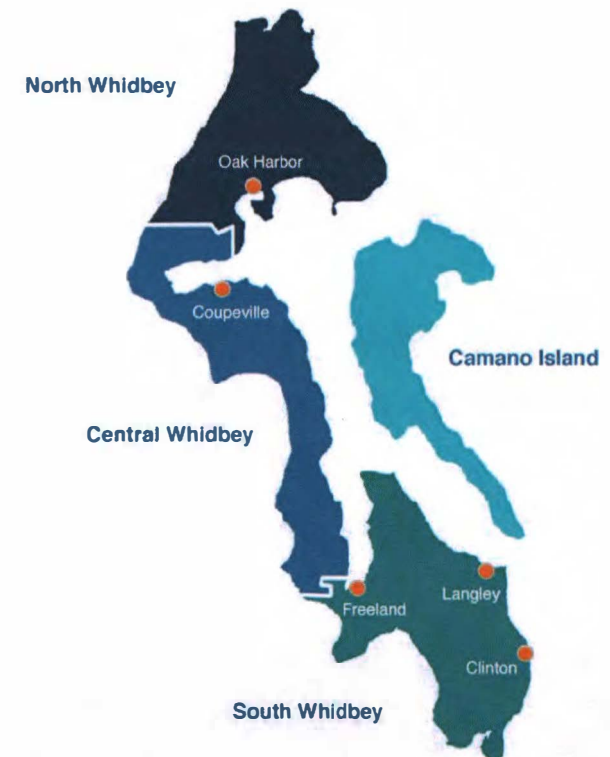


EDC supports equitable business ownership and wealth creation by ensuring all who want to open and grow businesses have access to premier business support services, including expert advice & education, to help solidify success.

- EDC focuses on collaboration and partnerships that lead to more effective solutions for growth and sustainability.
- EDC has access to best practices and monitors trends in economic development.
- EDC participates in advocacy, legislative updates and reviews to support economic development and business success in WA state.

Economic Development Services

- Provide Economic Development Programming for Island County
- Manage CEDS Evaluation Processes
- As the WA State Department of Commerce designated Associate Development Organization (ADO) for Island County, **further the goals and objectives** of economic development principles to serve Island County businesses.



EDC Strategic Priorities 2020 - 2025



| EDC First Tier | EDC Second Tier |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Economic Recovery & Resiliency * | Tourism, Hospitality & Recreation |
| Assistance with Business Attraction | Arts and Culture |
| Workforce Housing | Aging Population |
| Workforce Training & Development | |
| Information Technology & Broadband | |
| Rural Economy | |

Items not in order of priority.

* Economic Recovery & Resiliency includes Business Retention & Expansion, Entrepreneurship, Readiness & Capacity Building.

Looking Back to 2024



New Executive Director



- Sharon Sappington departed EDC in May 2024 after 6 years of leadership, leaving behind a lasting legacy of success, commitment, and service to the organization.
- Selected for her strategic vision, leadership experience and passion for community-driven impact, Kristina Hines assumed the role of Executive Director in August 2024 after serving 4 years as EDC's certified business advisor.

Core Work Elements



Business Retention & Expansion

- **Expert advice and education** otherwise unavailable to local businesses keeps them open and growing, contributing significantly to local jobs and a thriving community.
- **Provide in-depth business advising** - one-on-one, tailored solutions to address unique challenges for all stages and sectors of business.

New Business Creation / Entrepreneurship

- **Support to entrepreneurs/startups** - advising to all start-up stages from idea generation to feasibility study to implementation.
- **Enhance solutions** by providing time, space & opportunity in support of innovation.
- **Reduce noise** by providing quality referrals to resources and increasing networking opportunities.

Readiness & Capacity Building

- **Catalyst & project manager** for Island County's first-ever Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- **Enhance connections & partnerships** between local businesses, support organizations, lending institutions, state/local agencies and relevant stakeholders to help champion economic development efforts and facilitate collaboration.
- **Participate** in local leadership training and develop networks to help cultivate effective leaders within the community to improve advocacy efforts.
- **Collaboration** with local government on projects that align with economic vitality.
- **Provide** ongoing input to Commerce for new grant programs; provide support, promotion & distribution.

New Business Attraction

- **Data & Website** - Economic Development agencies are widely known for being the source of accurate and collated economic development reports.
- **Targeted recruitment** efforts highlighting Island County.
- **Advocate** for policies that attract investment, reduce regulatory burdens and minimize obstacles to business success.
- Regularly reviewed WA Department of Commerce's "Hot Project List" of businesses interested in Washington as potential destination state
- Worked with local commercial property owners looking for tenants and businesses considering Island County as possible location

Results

| | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) Initiated | Outreach interactions initiated | 4,100 |
| | Follow-up interactions initiated | 44 |
| BRE & Startup Business Assistance | Business requesting assistance | 106 |
| | Business assistance follow-up | 86 |
| Community Readiness & Capacity Building | In-person Participation | 168 |
| | Community activities | 17 |
| Recruitment & Marketing Activities | Business & Site Selector Contacts | 4 |
| EDC Board & Committee Meetings | Volunteer hours of board members | 390 |

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Island County CEDS Goals 2024-28

1. Improve and develop resilient critical infrastructure.

- 11 sub-goals, 65 Action Items

2. Support existing local businesses and community assets, increase business diversification, and promote Island County as an attractive business environment.

- 10 sub-goals, 52 Action Items

3. Align quality education and skills training programs with employer needs and create living wage job opportunities in Island County.

- 3 sub-goals, 16 Action Items

4. Sustainably manage the natural beauty and resources of Island County.

- 8 sub-goals, 34 Action Items

5. Deepen collaboration and coordination between Island County and regional partners.

- 5 sub-goals, 9 Action Items

Program Partnerships



- EDC continues to be a Program Partner along with SVC, Sno-Isle Libraries and Whidbey Institute. Also lead for Economic Vitality Day
 - Program Partners actively participate as members of Oversight Group, engage in program planning and development, community outreach, and provide financial/in-kind support
- Economic Vitality Day Lead
- EDC hired a 1099 contractor to provide support to the program with contractor fees 100% reimbursed from Skagit Valley College

SizeUp ISLAND COUNTY

- Soft launch of tool on website in 2021 (formal launch in 2022)
- Big data for small businesses that gives business intelligence and market research to companies so they can make smarter decisions through data.
 - Benchmark Performance
 - Advertising Analysis
 - Competition Intelligence
 - Demographic Analysis

Information and Data



Reports

| | |
|---|---|
| Island County Profile | Island County Demographics |
| Island County Living Wage | Island County Retail Leakage and Surplus Analysis |
| Summary Taxable Retail Sales | Detailed Taxable Retail Sales |
| Major Employers of Island County | Northwest Washington Labor Market |
| Economic Impacts of Travel to Island County | Island County Agricultural Profile |
| U.S. Navy - NASWI Economic Impact Report | Upcoming |

Moving Forward



Collaborations & Network Building

- **Collaboration and Partnerships** - EDC is continuing to build relationships and partnerships to enhance impact.
- **Leveraging Resources** - EDC continues to look for opportunities where organizations can come together to leverage resources resulting in more value.
- Continue focusing on those areas that are more critical, aligning with our contracts with Island County and WA Department of Commerce, as well as our EDC 5-year Strategic Priorities.
- **Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)** - Continue to address in all areas of EDC's work

Expanded Programing

- **Monthly Entrepreneur Meetups:** cultivate a strong entrepreneurial community that not only helps participants grow their ventures but also strengthens the broader local economy by supporting innovation, job creation, and sustainable business practices.
- **Bi-Weekly Zoom Chats:** creates space for knowledge sharing, resource exchange, and collaborative problem-solving to build a stronger, more informed community. By fostering connections and advancing economic education, the Zoom chat aims to inspire actionable outcomes that benefit residents, businesses, and the region as a whole.
- **Semi-Monthly Workshops (in-person 7 virtual):** learning experiences designed to equip entrepreneurs, small business owners, and professionals with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in today's competitive market. These workshops cover a broad spectrum of essential business topics, including financial management, marketing strategies, leadership development, operational efficiency, and business growth techniques.

ISLAND COUNTY

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2024-2028

Updated as of
June 21, 2024



Questions or comments?

Email: ceds@edcislандcounty.org



City of
Langley Washington



This project was generously funded by Island County, the Town of Coupeville, and the Cities of Langley and Oak Harbor.



The development of the Island County CEDS 2024-2028 was generously funded by Island County, the Town of Coupeville, and the Cities of Langley and Oak Harbor. The Economic Development Council (EDC) for Island County was selected to oversee the project and manage the contracted consultant. The project was managed and the report was written and prepared by Jennifer Noveck, Ph.D. **Questions or comments? Email ceds@edcislandcounty.org**

The entire process overseen by the CEDS Review Committee, and informed by broad stakeholder engagement within the community throughout the process.

Island County CEDS Review Committee 2024-2028

Karen Bishop, Former Conservation District Manager and Ebey Road Farm

Kelli Bragg, Camano Island Library Manager, Sno-Isle Libraries

Bristol Carter, Project Manager, EDC for Island County

Michael Clyburn, Clinton Community Council

Joshua Engelbrecht, Associate Planner, Town of Coupeville

Darren Greeno, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Skagit Valley College

Patricia Griffin, Project Manager, EDC for Island County

Jackie Henderson, Councilmember, Town of Coupeville + Tourism Committee Chair

Wendy Horn, Grants Administrator, City of Oak Harbor

Loren Imes, Master Gardener, WSU Extension Island County

Jill Johnson, Commissioner District No. 2, Board of Island County Commissioners

John Lanier, Senior Long Range Planner, Island County

Jessica McCready, Executive Director, Camano Chamber of Commerce

Chris Michalopoulos, Executive Director, Port of Coupeville

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Meredith Penny, Director, Community Planning and Building, City of Langley

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John Sternlicht, CEO, Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County

- **Aaron Weinberg**, Economic Development Manager, EDASC

Brian Tyhuis, Community Planning and Liaison Officer, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island

Former Members of the Island County CEDS Review Committee 2024-2028

Magi Aguilar, Former Executive Director, Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce

Garry Clark, Former Executive Director, Economic Alliance of Snohomish County

Donna Keeler, Former Planning Director, Town of Coupeville

Steve McCaslin, Economic Development Coordinator, City of Oak Harbor

Todd Morrow, Former Executive Director, Island Transit

Mark Rentfrow, Former City Administrator, City of Langley

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6. Vision
- 7.CEDS Goals 2024-2028
- 8.Evaluation Plan

01

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- 4.Infrastructure
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- 3.SWOT Survey and Results
- 4.Industry SWOT Results
- 5.Stakeholder Interviews
- 6.Data Sources and Relevant Reports, Studies, Strategies
- 7.Public Comment
- 8.CEDS Project List

A CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development and is the result of a locally-owned planning process designed to build capacity and guide economic prosperity and resiliency in the region.

1. Introduction

In April 2023, the Island County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) voted to cost-share the development of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Island County with the Town of Coupeville, and the Cities of Langley and Oak Harbor. The Economic Development Council (EDC) for Island County was selected to oversee the project and manage the contracted consultant. The EDC was chosen as it is the only countywide economic development organization in Island County and the EDC is also the associate development organization (ADO), a Washington State Department of Commerce designation, for Island County. This is the first time that Island County has developed a CEDS document or undertaken a countywide economic development strategy. The purpose in completing this process is to promote a more efficient, stable, programmatic approach to development in Island County and to fulfill Economic Development Administration (EDA) requirements in order to access funding opportunities.

2. CEDS Purpose, Process, and Review Committee

According to the EDA (2023), a CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development and is the result of a locally-owned planning process designed to build capacity and guide economic prosperity and resiliency in the region. The purpose of a CEDS document is threefold. First, having an active and up to date CEDS provides Island County, and all of the public agencies within it, with the opportunity to access EDA funding opportunities for infrastructure, workforce development, and resiliency. These are relatively large pools of funding for critically needed projects. Second, having a strategy allows development in Island County to be more programmatic and less ad hoc. Finally, the CEDS leverages existing strategies and plans, while also increasing alignment between them.

The CEDS cycle begins with the EDA, which issues guidance. The EDA engages with federal stakeholders and identifies strategic investment priorities. Each region has a local representative that public agencies, such as the County, work with on an array of programs and funding opportunities, including CEDS planning.

The EDA provides content guidelines for preparing a CEDS but also allows the flexibility for a CEDS to emphasize strategies or issues important to a region as long as the process and outcomes do not conflict with the guidelines. As neither Island County nor any other jurisdiction within the county received EDA funding to

prepare the CEDS, nor is Island County part of an EDA-designated economic development district (EDD), this CEDS document is considered an “alternative CEDS” and a “non-EDA funded CEDS.”

One requirement of the EDA for all CEDS is that a Review Committee be developed in order to advise and inform the process and the document. Island County CEDS Review Committee was created in May 2023 and held eight meetings over the 14-month planning period (April 2023 – June 2024), in which they provided extensive input and feedback to every aspect of CEDS report. This included but was not limited to review committee composition, SWOT survey questions, SWOT results and identified priorities and opportunities, sectors of focus, key stakeholders for targeted outreach. The Review Committee was also provided input and feedback to the vision, goals, sub-goals, action plan, evaluation framework, resiliency planning, public comments and resulting edits, as well as multiple drafts of the full document.

The 2024-2028 report development was led by the EDC. The project was managed and report was written by Jennifer Noveck, Ph.D. The entire process overseen by the CEDS Review Committee, and informed by broad stakeholder engagement within the community throughout the process. The Review Committee included representatives from Island County, the Town of Coupeville, the Cities of Langley and Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI), Clinton Community Council, Washington State University (WSU) Extension Island County, Skagit Valley College (SVC), Sno-Isle Libraries (Camano Island Branch), Island Transit, Camano Chamber of Commerce, Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce, and the EDC.

3. SWOT Analysis

Broad stakeholder engagement is another requirement of the CEDS process and as such extensive stakeholder engagement was conducted among Island County residents, businesses, and nonprofits via a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) survey and in-depth one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders.

SWOT analyses are often used as a strategic planning assessment tool, by private, public and nonprofit actors. According to the [EDA \(2024\)](#), a SWOT analysis is “a strategic planning tool used by organizations to ensure that there is a clear objective informed by a comprehensive understanding of a region’s capabilities and capacity.”

4. Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement ran from May 1, 2023 through May 17, 2024 and involved:

- A public SWOT survey that was open from May 1 – October 23, 2023, resulting in 181 responses
- Targeted stakeholder outreach to over 300 businesses and nonprofits that occurred from August – November 2023, resulting in 81 interviews (30 to 60 minutes each)

- Soliciting input and feedback from public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders on sector and jurisdictional SWOT analyses, vision, goals, sub-goals, strategic priorities, and the action plan
- A 30-day public comment period running from April to May 2024

Additional information on the stakeholder process, including SWOT results, interviews, and the public comment period can be found in **Section 2: SWOT Analysis and Asset Mapping** and the **Appendices**.

5. Priorities and Opportunities Identified

Drawing on the regional SWOT results, the industry-level SWOTs, and extensive stakeholder engagement, including over 80 key stakeholder interviews, several high priority issues currently affecting business and economic development Island County were identified:

A lack of social and economic infrastructure including

- Available, affordable, quality housing
- Available, affordable, quality childcare
- Wages inconsistent with the cost of living and inflation
- Labor shortages in multiple sectors

A lack of physical infrastructure including

- All utilities, but in particular sewer, water, and internet
- Lack of redundancies for critical infrastructure
- Lack of industry-specific infrastructure (e.g. food processing, licensed available slaughter)
- Unreliable and inconsistent ferry service

In addition to identifying economic, physical, and social infrastructure needs, stakeholders consistently expressed their desire to protect the environment and natural beauty of Island County. These concerns ranged from shorelines and sea level rise to the broader impacts of climate change and tourism on the islands to everyday conservation of Whidbey and Camano Island's natural environment. The SWOT clearly demonstrates that the public believes that Island County's biggest asset is its geographic location and natural beauty. It is important to note this key consensus, as climate resilience is directly related to economic resilience.

6. Vision

The CEDS External Review Committee envisions a robust and diverse economy that leverages existing community assets; establishes, upgrades, and maintains resilient critical infrastructure; supports business and workforce vitality; sustainably manages natural resources; promotes equity and inclusivity; and increases resident quality of life.

7. Island County CEDS Goals 2024-2028



1. Improve and develop resilient critical infrastructure.



2. Support existing local businesses and community assets, increase diversification, and promote Island County as an attractive business environment.



3. Align quality education and skills training programs with employer needs and create living wage job opportunities in Island County.



4. Sustainably manage the natural beauty and resources of Island County.



5. Deepen collaboration and coordination between Island County and regional partners.

For every CEDS goal, there are multiple sub-goals and an associated action items. For details, see **Section 3: Action Plan**.

Evaluation Plan

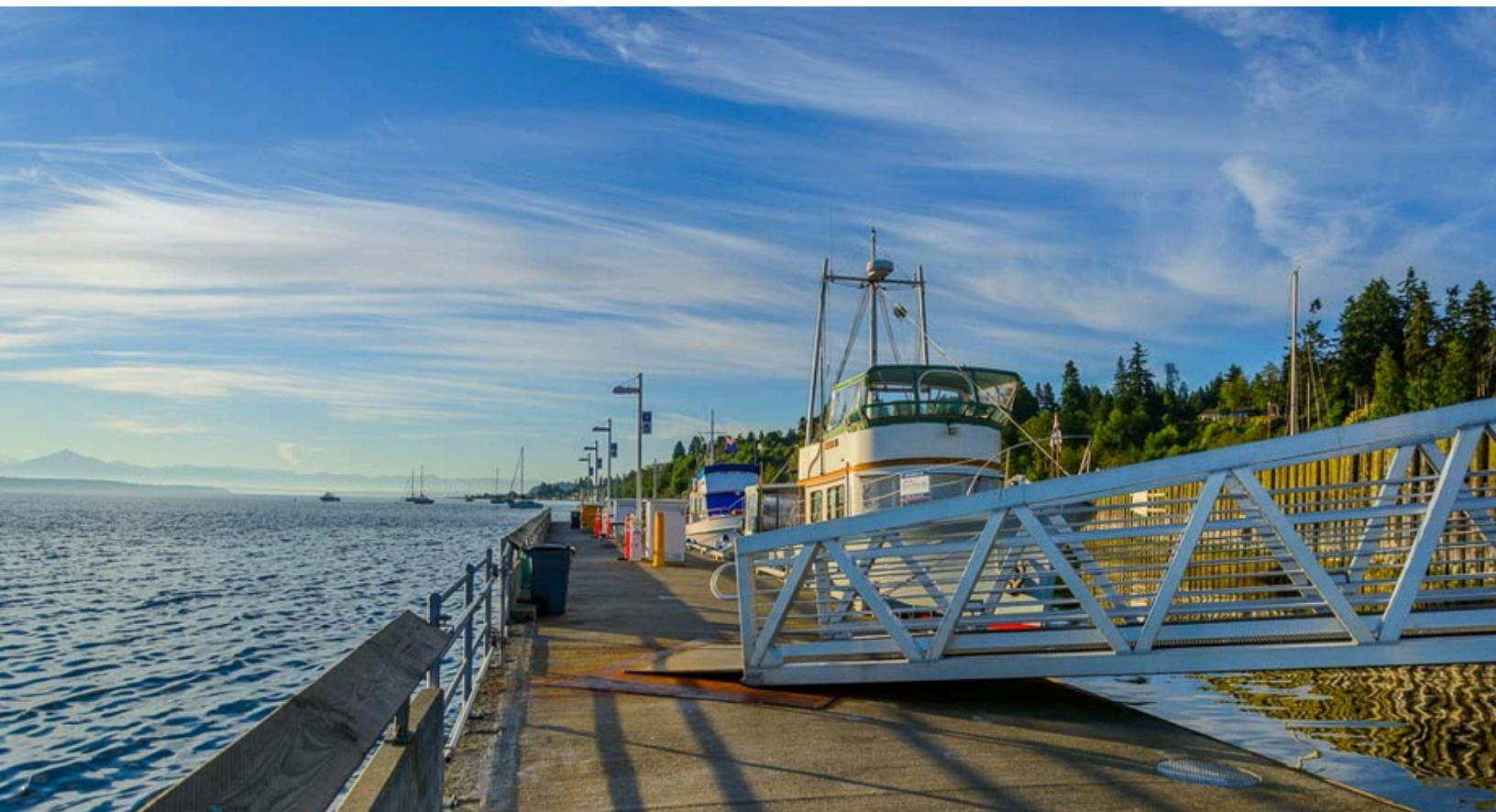
Island County intends to fund a third party responsible for evaluation monitoring and generating an annual progress report for all partners using Rural County Economic Development (RCED) funds. The third party will be responsible for coordinating an annual Review Committee meeting as well as maintaining a quarterly review schedule to meet with responsible partners and collaborators regularly.

On a quarterly basis, the evaluator will meet with relevant partners to discuss progress on the goals they are responsible for. Quarterly meetings can also be used to identify ongoing gaps, additional partners, funding, and so on, related to the specific goal or sub-goal. The evaluator will also coordinate with relevant established committees (e.g. Transportation, Tourism, Broadband, etc.) and will be responsible for updating the CEDS Project List annually and on an as needed emergency basis.

For additional detail on every section, please see the full plan below.



Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve. Photo courtesy of [Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands](#).



South Whidbey Harbor at Langley. Photo courtesy of [Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands](#).

A CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development and is the result of a locally-owned planning process designed to build capacity and guide economic prosperity and resiliency in the region.

1. Introduction

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2. CEDS Purpose, Process, and Review Committee

According to the EDA (2023), a CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development and is the result of a locally-owned planning process designed to build capacity and guide economic prosperity and resiliency in the region. The purpose of a CEDS document is threefold. First, having an active and up to date CEDS provides Island County, and all of the public agencies within it, with the opportunity to access EDA funding opportunities for infrastructure, workforce development, and resiliency. These are relatively large pools of funding for critically needed projects. Second, having a strategy allows development in Island County to be more programmatic and less ad hoc. Finally, the CEDS leverages existing strategies and plans, while also increasing alignment between them.

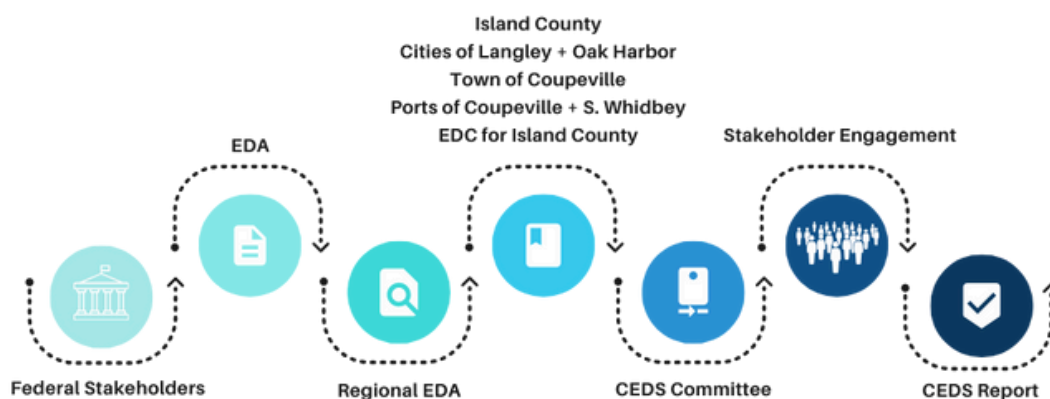


Figure 1: The CEDS Cycle and Stakeholder Engagement Process.

Figure 1 above illustrates the CEDS cycle and stakeholder engagement process. The CEDS cycle begins with the EDA, which issues guidance. The EDA engages with federal stakeholders and identifies strategic investment priorities. Each region has a local representative that public agencies, such as the County, work with on an array of programs and funding opportunities, including CEDS planning.

The EDA provides content guidelines for preparing a CEDS but also allows the flexibility for a CEDS to emphasize strategies or issues important to a region as long as the process and outcomes do not conflict with the guidelines. As neither Island County nor any other jurisdiction within the county received EDA funding to prepare the CEDS, nor is Island County part of an EDA-designated economic development district (EDD), this CEDS document is considered an “alternative CEDS” and a “non-EDA funded CEDS.”

While a CEDS report must be updated every five years to remain eligible to compete for EDA funding, a county is not mandated to do so if it does not plan to seek funds in any given year, or if it does not wish to have an overall economic development strategy. However, many states, including Washington, require counties to have an approved strategy in order to be eligible for certain funding programs that support local economic development. Island County could also eventually require that projects be linked to the CEDS goals and priorities for its own Rural County Economic Development (RCED) fund applications. There are also many other federal funders who either require projects be part of a regional strategy or who award more points to project applications that are a part of a regional strategy. Having a CEDS, therefore, provides Island County with many potential financial benefits and economic development opportunities.

One requirement of the EDA for all CEDS is that a Review Committee be developed in order to advise and inform the process and the document. Island County CEDS Review Committee was created in May 2023 and held eight meetings over the 14-month planning period (April 2023 – June 2024), in which they provided extensive input and feedback to the every aspect of CEDS report. Broad stakeholder engagement is another requirement of the CEDS process and as such extensive stakeholder engagement was conducted among Island County residents, businesses, and nonprofits via a SWOT survey and in-depth one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders.

The development of the 2024-2028 report was led by the EDC. The project was managed and report drafted by Jennifer Noveck, Ph.D. The entire process was overseen by the CEDS External Review Committee, and informed by broad stakeholder engagement within the community throughout the process. The Review Committee included representatives from Island County, Town of Coupeville, Cities of Langley and Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI), Clinton Community Council, Washington State University (WSU) Extension Island County, Skagit Valley College (SVC), Sno-Isle Libraries (Camano Island Branch), Island Transit, Camano Chamber of Commerce, Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce, and the EDC for Island County.

Recognizing the vital importance of Island County's economic and geographic connections to Skagit and Snohomish Counties, the Review Committee also included leadership from the Economic Alliance for Snohomish County (EASC) and the Economic Development Alliance for Skagit County (EDASC). Review committee members are listed below.

Island County CEDS 2024-2028 Review Committee

Karen Bishop, Former Conservation District Manager and Ebey Road Farm
Kelli Bragg, Camano Island Library Manager, Sno-Isle Libraries
Bristol Carter, Project Manager, EDC for Island County
Michael Clyburn, Clinton Community Council
Joshua Engelbrecht, Associate Planner, Town of Coupeville
Darren Greeno, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Skagit Valley College
Patricia Griffin, Project Manager, EDC for Island County
Jackie Henderson, Councilmember, Town of Coupeville + Tourism Committee Chair
Wendy Horn, Grants Administrator, City of Oak Harbor
Loren Imes, Master Gardener, WSU Extension Island County
Jill Johnson, Commissioner District No. 2, Board of Island County Commissioners
John Lanier, Senior Long Range Planner, Island County
Jessica McCready, Executive Director, Camano Chamber of Commerce
Chris Michalopoulos, Executive Director, Port of Coupeville

- **Mary Hogan**, Project Manager, Port of Coupeville¹

Angie Mozer, Executive Director, Port of South Whidbey
Meredith Penny, Director, Community Planning and Building, City of Langley
Sharon Sappington, Outgoing Executive Director, EDC for Island County
John Sternlicht, CEO, Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County

- **Aaron Weinberg**, Economic Development Manager, EDASC²

Brian Tyhuis, Community Planning and Liaison Officer, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island

Former Island County CEDS 2024-2028 Review Committee Members

Magi Aguilar, Former Executive Director, Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce³
Garry Clark, Former Executive Director, Economic Alliance of Snohomish County⁴
Donna Keeler, Former Planning Director, Town of Coupeville⁵
Steve McCaslin, Economic Development Coordinator, City of Oak Harbor⁶
Todd Morrow, Former Executive Director, Island Transit⁷
Mark Rentfrow, Former City Administrator, City of Langley⁸

~~~~~  
1+2 Alternate when Executive Director cannot attend.

3 A member of the Review Committee from May 1, 2023 - May 31, 2024.

4 A member of the Review Committee from June 1 - December 31, 2023.

5 A member of the Review Committee from May 1 - October 21, 2023.

6 A member of the Review Committee from May 1, 2023 - March 1, 2024.

7 A member of the Review Committee from May 1, 2023 - May 31, 2024.

8 A member of the Review Committee from September 1 - December 31, 2023.

The CEDS Review Committee met eight times June 2023 – May 2024. The Review Committee reviewed and provided detail feedback and input on all parts of the CEDS planning process, including but not limited to: committee composition, SWOT survey, SWOT results and identified opportunities, sectors of focus, stakeholder outreach. They also provided input and feedback on the vision, goals, sub-goals, action plan, evaluation framework, resiliency planning, public comments and resulting edits, and reviewed multiple drafts of the full document.

Broad stakeholder engagement ran from May 1, 2023 through May 17, 2024 and involved:

- A public SWOT survey that was open from May 1 – October 23, 2023, resulting in 181 responses
- Targeted stakeholder outreach to over 300 businesses and nonprofits that occurred from August – November 2023, resulting in 81 interviews (30 to 60 minutes each)
- Soliciting input and feedback from public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders on sector and jurisdictional SWOT analyses, vision, goals, sub-goals, strategic priorities, and the action plan
- A 30-day public comment period running from April to May 2024

Additional information on the stakeholder process, including SWOT results, interviews, and the public comment period can be found in **Appendices 6.2-5** and **6.7**.

As part of the planning process, the consultant met with the EDA's Seattle Regional Office (SRO) representative, reviewed CEDS best practices, and identified multiple relevant examples of CEDS in other communities in Washington and the United States. Local reports, strategies, plans, and other relevant documents that were consulted for this report can be found in **Appendix 6.6**.

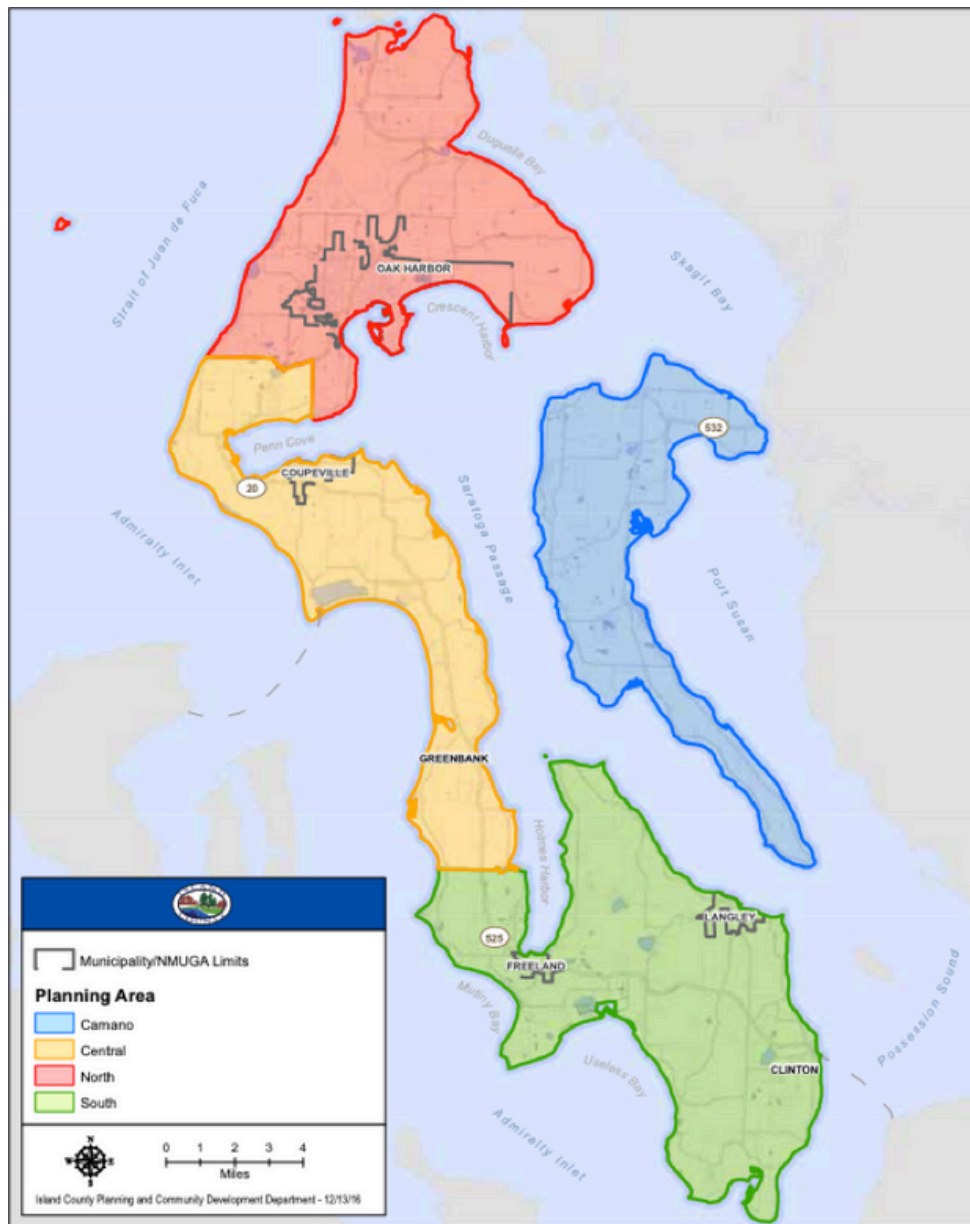
### 3. Geography

Island County is on the land of the Upper Skagit, Tulalip, dxws"qw"bš (Suquamish), and sduhubš (Snohomish) tribes and people past and present.<sup>9</sup> The county is entirely comprised of islands. The settled islands of Island County include Camano and Whidbey Islands. County jurisdiction also includes the small islands of Ben Ure, Smith, Deception, Strawberry, Baby, Minor, and Kalamut. Island County shares borders with Skagit and Snohomish Counties to north and east and the San Juan Islands and the Olympic Peninsula are to the west. Island County has a total land area of 208 square miles, making it the second smallest county in the state of Washington.

According to the Island County's Comprehensive Plan (2016), which will be updated by June 30, 2025, rural zoning is the largest zoning classification in Island County and 33% of rurally zoned land is undeveloped. As shown in **Figure 2**, there are four planning areas in Island County, which is also useful when considering regional economic, demographic, and environmental characteristics: Camano Island, North Whidbey, Central Whidbey, and South Whidbey.

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<sup>9</sup> Drawn from Native Land Digital, a mapping tool. The tool notes in its disclaimer that it does not represent or intend to represent official or legal boundaries of any Indigenous nations. To learn about definitive boundaries, contact the nations in question.



**Figure 2:** This map shows the four county planning areas, which are also Census Sub- Divisions. Camano Island is shown in blue, North Whidbey in red, Central Whidbey in yellow, and South Whidbey in green (Island County Planning and Community Development 2016).

There are two incorporated cities and one incorporated town (or urban growth areas) (UGAs) in Island County: the cities of Langley and Oak Harbor and the Town of Coupeville. There is one designated Non-Municipal Urban Growth Areas (NMUGAs), Freeland, as well as multiple Rural Areas of More Intense Development (RAIDs).

NMUGAs are areas where urban growth “will be encouraged and supported with urban levels of service, but are not incorporated.” RAIDs “permit the infill, development or redevelopment of preexisting rural communities outside of UGAs at a greater density than typical rural development” (Comprehensive Plan 2016, p. 6).

### 4. Infrastructure

Decaying or insufficient infrastructure is Island County's biggest challenge and Island County's biggest opportunity, according to public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders at the local, county, state, and federal level.

In particular, ensuring access to potable water, addressing aging septic systems, expanding sewage services, improving access to high-speed internet, reducing car traffic, and increasing the reliability of the ferry would greatly enhance economic resiliency and opportunities for development in Island County. The utilities and transportation sectors create living wage jobs in Island County, so investments have the added benefit of spurring job growth.

#### **Water**

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designates Island County as a sole source aquifer system. This means that the majority of Island County, including Camano Island and unincorporated Whidbey Island, is reliant upon groundwater as a potable water source. The entire county is part of the Island County Watershed or Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 6.

The majority of the potable water infrastructure in Island County is privately owned property. The notable exceptions are the municipal systems owned and operated by the Cities of Langley and Oak Harbor and the Town of Coupeville. The City of Oak Harbor operates the largest municipal water system in the county. The water is primarily sourced from Anacortes (via the Skagit River) through two pipelines. The City of Oak Harbor owns the pipelines and uses this source to supply the city and NASWI.

Accordingly, there are two options to acquire water in Island County. Users can connect to an existing water system (only available within Coupeville, Langley, and Oak Harbor UGAs) or use a permit-exempt well if the project meets the limits under Washington State law. In addition to the fact it is a sole source aquifer, Washington State Department of Ecology (2023, p. 2) notes that surface water closures, precipitation levels, and seawater intrusion may impact availability of water in Island County.

Developed shorelines and peninsular regions of Island County have been experiencing seawater intrusion (and thus potentially salinization of the water supply) for many years (Comprehensive Plan 2016, p.17-23). Island County has therefore proactively managed its water resources, including its groundwater resources, for which it has developed resource evaluation and management policies. This includes agency review of any project in Island County that involves Island County groundwater resources. The GMA also has a water adequacy requirement for building permits and subdivisions.

Additionally, much of South Whidbey and Camano Island populations are supplied potable water by local water districts, systems, or wells. According to Camano Water Association (2023), they are one of more than 300 water systems on Camano Island. In addition to associations, according to the Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts (WASWD) (2023) there are 19 official Sewer and Water Districts in Island County, which serve an estimated 13.8% of population water, and 2.2% with sewer services. Well construction and permitting is monitored and governed by the



Washington State Department of Ecology's Well Construction and Licensing Office. Ecology also maintains a mapping database, which logs water wells, resource protection wells, decommissioned wells, as well as multiple other well types.

Island County's Drinking Water program oversees and coordinates well and water systems review and approval for individual and public water systems, which includes wells serving only one single family residence, or two residences on the same property, as well as Group B (<15 connections, <25 people per day) public water systems. Group A (>=15 connections, >=25 per day for 60 or more days per year) systems are regulated by Washington State Department of Health.

In terms of protecting water as natural resource, the county collects, monitors, and analyzes multiple sources of water quality data, which is available for the public to access at the Island County Hydrogeology Dashboard. This is where data related to water quality and level are housed in order to monitor trends in groundwater quality, availability, as well as to estimate future groundwater capacity. Expanding efforts to survey water systems infrastructure is another opportunity for sustainable groundwater management. The Island County Public Health Board has a Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC), which can be activated at the Board's discretion and as their expertise is needed.

### ***Sewer and Septic Systems***

While most new development within UGAs is required to be served by public sewer and water, approximately 72% of Island County residents use an onsite sewage (septic) system (Island County On-Site Sewage Program 2023). Exceptions occur in NMUGAS where constraints can support granting waivers to allow private wells and septic systems (Comprehensive Plan 2016, p. 55). Island County has an Onsite Sewage System program, which provides education, advisory, and permitting services for owners of septic systems and septic professionals.

There is concern that many homes in Island County have aging or decaying septic systems. In 2007, Island County implemented the Homeowner Septic Training (HOST) program, which allows those who are not adjacent to a marine shoreline with simply gravity systems to become certified to inspect their own septic. The State Health Code requires annual inspection of all systems with a pump, and every three-years inspection of gravity only systems. Island County Public Health is currently developing a plan to push educational materials and videos out to property owners to further the understanding of the serious risks involved with septic systems that have aged beyond their designed lifespan.

Three potential opportunities to allay reliance upon private septic came up in SWOT results and stakeholder interviews. One opportunity is to plan for a sewer installation in Freeland, which is the County's only NMUGA and currently has a Public Water and Sewer District, which has the authority to annex and create Utility Local Improvement Districts (ULIDs). The second option is a sewer installation in Clinton. Clinton is quite similar to Freeland in terms of land use and has potential as a gateway, but also lacks a sewer installation and has been experiencing problems with aging septic systems, stormwater management, and slope stability (Comprehensive Plan 2016, p. 34). Although Clinton is a RAID, the County has previously identified it as being a location to potentially designate

as a NMUGA, which would set the stage for sewer system development. This option is controversial and lacks support in South Whidbey. It also does not have the full approval of the current Clinton Community Council.

Finally, there is also opportunity to incentivize alternatives to single family systems, include LOSS and Step Systems that support density and reduce risk of pollution in unincorporated Island County. The comprehensive wastewater study, which is currently underway, will outline opportunities to expand sustainable solutions. Overall, expanding access to potable water and sewage facilities are major opportunities and challenges for Island County moving forward.

### ***Energy***

Washington State's Energy Strategy (2020) was enacted into law in 2020 and was designed to provide a roadmap for meeting the state's greenhouse gas emission limits. The law commits the state to limits of 45% below 1990 levels by 2030, 70% below 1990 levels by 2040, and 95% below 1990 levels with net zero emissions by 2050 (p.15). The 2020 Strategy and 2023 Biennial Report outline strategies and metrics for transportation, buildings, electricity, and industry. For electricity, which accounts for 16% of the state's emissions, the law requires electricity to be 100% clean by 2030 and by 2050 providers are required to roughly double reliable output.

Whidbey and Camano Island residents and businesses get their power from two sources: Puget Sound Energy (PSE) and Snohomish County Public Utility District (SNOPUD). Whidbey Island gets electrical service from PSE, whereas Camano Island is served by SNOPUD. PSE serves approximately 37,000 commercial and residential locations on Whidbey Island and operates and maintains approximately 600 miles of overhead facilities and 500 miles of underground cables. SNOPUD operates and maintains 203.5 miles of overhead and 99.89 miles of underground cables on Camano Island.

Washington's Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA) was passed in May 2019 and committed Washington State to have an electricity supply free of greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. In response, PSE (2021) and the SNOPUD (2021) have developed Clean Energy Implementation Plans (CEIP), which provide a four-year roadmap to guide their investments and clean energy priorities for 2022-2025. For PSE, the plan includes a goal to have coal-free electricity by 2025, with 63% of electric supply being sourced from renewable or non-emitting resources, to be carbon neutral by 2030, and by 2045 to have 100% clean electricity. PSE also has updated its clean energy milestones in its Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) and 10-year Clean Energy Action Plan (CEAP).

Because SNOPUD's current portfolio does not include any carbon emitting sources, they have already met the requirement to have clean electricity. Their CEIP (2022) sets an energy efficiency target and is focused on acquiring conservation, demand response, and energy storage. The SNOPUD's IRP (2021) similarly outlines these goals.

In terms of the fuel mix that is used to generate electricity, PSE and SNOPUD have a different mix of fuel sources, found in **Table 1** below.

| Fuel Type      | PSE | SNOPUD |
|----------------|-----|--------|
| Coal           | 23% | 0%     |
| Hydroelectric  | 27% | 74.6%  |
| Natural gas    | 23% | 0%     |
| Nuclear        | <1% | 9.4%*  |
| Other**        | <1% | 0%     |
| Solar          | <1% | 3.3%   |
| Unspecified*** | 10% | 3.5%   |
| Wind           | 16% | 8.2%   |

**Table 1:** Electricity Fuel Mix for PSE (2022) and SNOPUD (2022).

\*Provided by Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

\*\*Other includes biomass non-biogenic, and petroleum.

\*\*\*According to the Fuel Mix Disclosure, "If the utility does not know the source of some electricity, it must label that portion as 'unspecified source.'"

The details of this energy transition are important to pay attention for many reasons, but especially as Island Transit transitions to zero emissions and many residents and businesses acquire electric vehicles. Island County will require additional charging station infrastructure to accommodate these changes, which will also ultimately put additional pressure on PSE and SNOPUD's existing electrical grids.

Both utility providers have completed several projects in recent years to improve service to Island County customers. For example, in 2016 PSE completed its Maxwellton substation to provide backup power to its Langley substation. This project also included installing additional distribution lines and rebuilding an existing transmission line (PSE 2015). Between 2007-2019, PSE's vegetation management crews trimmed and removed trees along 129 miles of transmission lines across Whidbey Island, as fallen trees and tree limbs were historically the main cause of power outages on the island (PSE 2023).

To increase reliability in Stanwood and Camano Island, the SNOPUD built a new double bank substation. Twin City Substation, which was completed in 2022, replaced the now decommissioned North Stanwood Substation. They also plan to rebuild the North Camano Substation by 2025 (SNOPUD 2023).

Continued improved reliability and reduction of outage hours, as well as reducing the number of consumers impacted by each outage, are goals of both utility providers and critical to economic development in Island County.

### **Internet**

The Washington State Broadband Office (WSBO) was established by the Washington State Legislature in 2022 and was tasked with promoting access, achieving minimum download/upload speeds for businesses, residents, and communities. It is the goal of the state of Washington that:

- By 2024: 25/3 megabits per second (Mbps) scalable to all residences and businesses
- By 2026: 1/1 gigabit per second (Gbps) for all anchor institutions
- By 2028: 150/150 Mbps for all residents and businesses

Additionally, WSBO is currently leading a state planning process to develop a Five-Year Action

Plan and State Digital Equity Plan. The [Internet for All Initiative \(2023\)](#) is intended to create reliable, high-speed internet across the state, ensuring that people not only have internet access, but the tools and skills required to take advantage of the benefits of connectivity and inclusion.

Island County's Broadband Action Team, coordinated by the Island County Commissioners and led by Island County Commissioner Janet St. Clair (District No. 3), have identified and outlined under and unserved areas of the county in Island County's Broadband and Digital Equity Local Action Plan (2023).

According to the Local Action Plan (2023, p. 6) there are 8,829 unserved entities in Island County, mostly in rural, unincorporated areas. About 50% of Camano Island is served at 100/20 Mbps or above. Whidbey Island is 93% served (Local Action Plan 2023 p.9-10). Unserved areas in Island County typically fall along the coastline. Unserved areas include central Whidbey in rural areas outside of Coupeville to Fort Ebey State Park, parts of north Whidbey, north Camano (Gateway), and south Camano. The middle of Whidbey Island struggles with service and while only three percent are completely unserved, 33% are underserved. The Plan (2023, p.10) also notes that some data sets suggest there are more significant underserved areas in south Camano Island than previously assessed. Hard-to-serve underserved areas are usually neighborhoods of 20-plus homes served by aging copper or coax or end-of-street outages due to the limitations of the infrastructure and the capacity of the network architecture.

NASWI is only ten percent served through commercial carriers and remaining on-base infrastructure is owned and managed by the Department of Defense. This technology is separate from, and not accessible to, local civilian infrastructure.

The plan also notes constraints to future broadband development in Island County, which include the combination of difficult topography, isolated locations, and prohibitive costs. Many areas are heavily treed, making terrestrial and wireless service difficult. In more rural areas with lower population densities, these geographic challenges make most service delivery cost prohibitive (Local Action Plan 2023, p. 10).

Internet connectivity and improved reliability and speed are major challenges that limit growth, particularly on some parts of Camano and South Whidbey. Therefore, increasing the reliability and resiliency of internet infrastructure is a major opportunity and priority for Island County. This is especially true given the increase of remote and hybrid work options, as well as the increasing needs of businesses, residents, schools, hospitals, and emergency services, all of which rely upon the internet to conduct large portions of their business and activities.

### ***Transportation***

Island County can be accessed via State Route 20 over Deception Pass, State Route 532 to Camano or the Washington State Ferries (WSF) system via the [Mukilteo-Clinton](#) and the [Port Townsend-Coupeville](#) ferry routes. State Route 525 highway serves Mukilteo and becomes the terminus of SR 526 before taking its ferry route to Clinton on Whidbey Island. SR 525 traverses



Whidbey Island's interior.

Island County has unique transportation challenges. This is in part due to being environmentally fragile islands, and in part due to being two disconnected islands. For example, in order to travel between Whidbey and Camano Islands, without personal water or aircraft, the options are to take the Clinton-Mukilteo Ferry from Whidbey and travel through Snohomish County to get to Camano or drive north and cross the Deception Pass Bridge, then travel through Skagit and Snohomish Counties to get to Camano. It takes a minimum of 90 minutes to travel less than five miles.

Currently the Mukilteo-Clinton ferry has two boats (Suquamish and Tokitae; both vehicle and passenger ferries that allow a maximum of 144 vehicles). The Port Townsend-Coupeville route has just one boat (Salish; a vehicle and passenger ferry that allows a maximum of 64 vehicles). All three are propelled by diesel. Both routes have experienced decreased reliability since 2020. In 2020, 96.1% of Mukilteo-Clinton ferries and 96.4% of Port Townsend-Coupeville ferries were on time. In 2022 that dropped to 92.7% and 90.6% on time (WSDOT 2023). Combined with a general reduction in the numbers of ferries per day, decreased reliability is presenting a major challenge to businesses and residents in Island County, especially those located in South Whidbey Island.

Island County founded the Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (IRTPO) in 2016, which carries out joint transportation efforts by Island County, municipalities, ports, Island Transit, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and major employers. Additional transportation related issues identified by the IRTPO and in Island Access 2045 are issues with off ferry speeds, bridge speeds, and traffic flow at every ingress and egress point.

Island Transit serves Whidbey and Camano Islands. Island Transit is the business name for the Island County Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA), and it is a municipal corporation. The PTBA is authorized by RCW 36.57A and is a separate governmental entity from Island County. Island Transit's Transit Development Plan (TDP) identifies how the agency has and will meet local and state long range priorities for public transportation through capital improvements, operating changes, and other programs. The plan also addresses how to fund such programs. The TDP aligns with Washington's transportation system goals (RCW 47.04.280), and supports regional and local comprehensive planning and economic objectives within Island County.

Recent federal and state funding allocations and bills provide tremendous opportunities for Island County's transportation infrastructure. At the federal level, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), provides unprecedented levels funding for infrastructure. The Move Ahead Washington State investment package also provides historic levels of state funding. Both provide funding for local transit agencies, such as Island Transit. Developing transportation infrastructure capacity is therefore a major opportunity in Island County.

### ***Blue Economy Infrastructure***

Given its island geography, Island County has both rural and marine characteristics. The county has two port districts: The Port of Coupeville (POC) and the Port of South Whidbey (POSW). In Washington State, port commissions establish long-term strategies for a port district, including creating policies to guide development, growth, and operations of the port. A port district's primary goal is economic development and family wage jobs that encourage prosperity throughout the port's district (WPPA About Our Ports 2023). Therefore, port districts are unique and special economic actors in the Washington State economy.

The Port of Coupeville's district boundaries range from the north side of Penn Cove, wraps around the west side of Penn Cove, encompasses all of Coupeville, and extends south through Greenbank South past Classic Road, just north of Freeland. The POC manages and maintains the Greenbank Farm and the Coupeville Wharf, which is currently undergoing a rehabilitation project. It is currently in the planning and permitting phase of a broadband project, which is projected to bring broadband to 1043 homes in Central Whidbey. Details of these and other POC projects can be found in their updated Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements and Strategic Plan for 2010-2026.

The Port of South Whidbey's district covers from south of Classic Road, including Freeland, Clinton, and Langley. The POSW owns and maintains several facilities, including the South Whidbey Harbor in Langley (a marina), the Whidbey Island Fairgrounds and Events Center, the associated Fairgrounds Campground, the Humphrey Road Ferry Parking Lot, the Bush Point Boat Ramp, Possession Beach Waterfront Park, and Clinton Beach Park, Pier and Dock. They are also considering an affordable workforce housing project as part of its plan for improvements to the Whidbey Island Fairgrounds and Events Center. More details can be found at their recently updated Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements for 2023.

Additionally, there are several marinas in Island County. Near Deception Pass, there are two marinas in Cornet Bay, Deception Pass Marina, which is privately owned, and Cornet Bay Marina, which is operated by Deception Pass State Park.

Oak Harbor Marina is the largest marina in Island County. 77% of the tenants are from Island County, including 49% percent from Oak Harbor. The City of Oak Harbor currently has a marina improvement project to redevelop a boat repair and storage facility and to dredge the marina, which they believe will increase revenue and jobs via increased dry boat storage and improved repair and maintenance services. This will ultimately make Oak Harbor Marina a full service marina. The City of Oak Harbor was awarded a \$675,000 RCED grant and is in the process of purchasing the Mariner's Haven property and full service boatyard. The city contributed an additional \$75,000 to the project. The last time the marina was dredged was 2010-2011, when 20,000 cubic yards of material were removed for \$2,750,000 (City of Oak Harbor RCED Grant Presentation 2023).

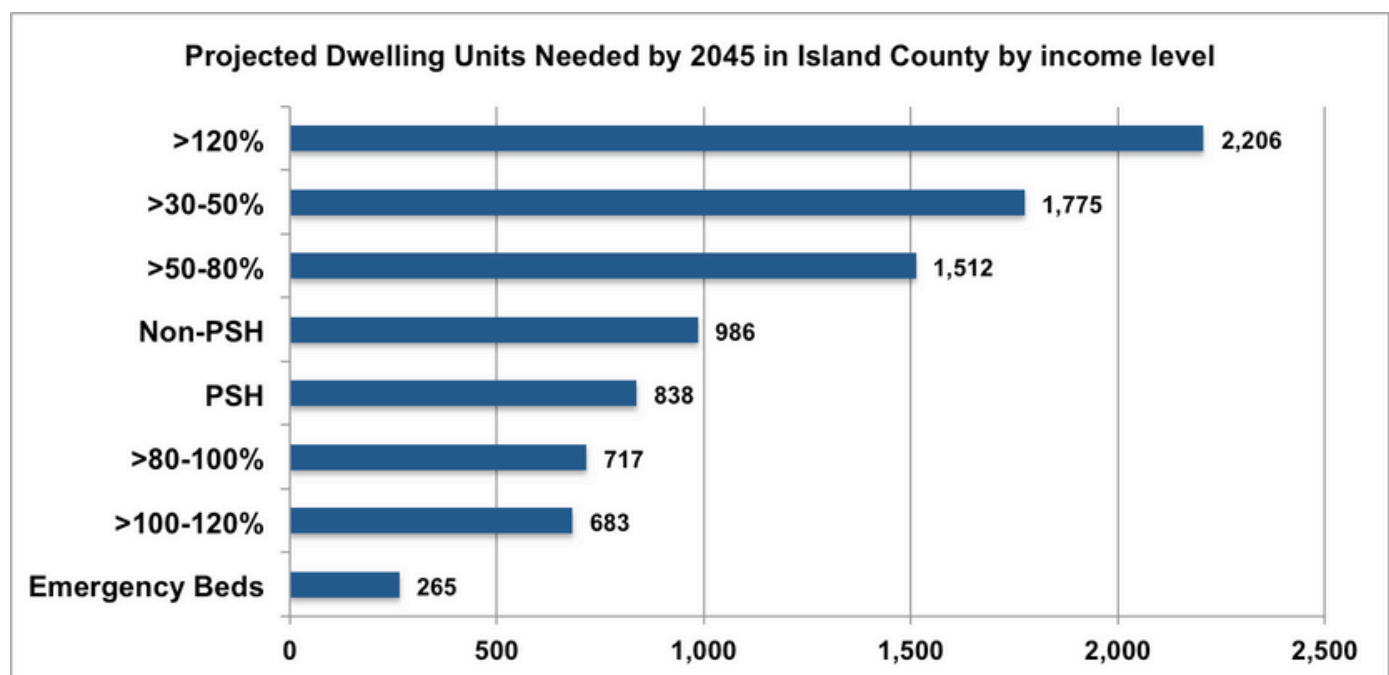
### Housing

Washington State estimates that 1.1 million new homes need to be built in the next 20 years ([WA Department of Commerce 2023](#)). [House Bill 1220 \(HB 1220\)](#) amends the GMA housing goal to “plan and accommodate” housing affordable to all income levels. HB 1220 directs the Department of Commerce to provide existing and future housing needs for communities in Washington, including units for moderate, low, very low and extremely low-income households, and for emergency housing, emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing (PSH).

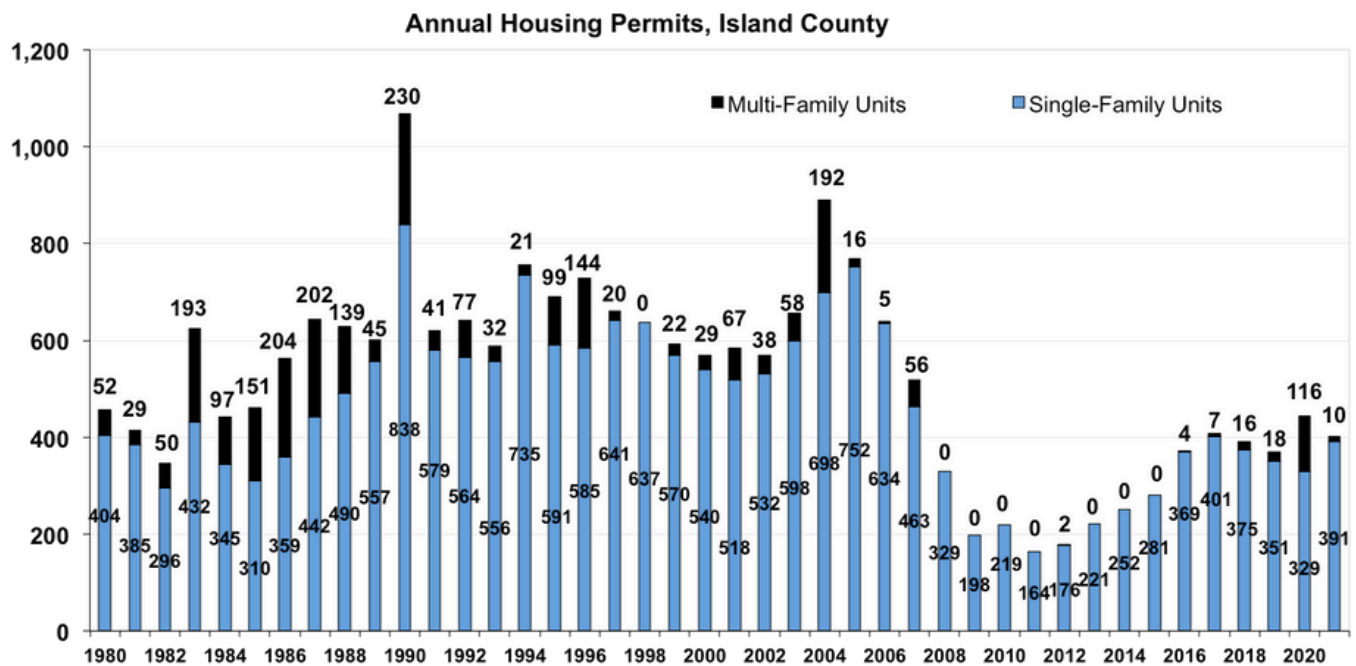
The housing availability crisis in Island County is acute. In terms of availability, according to the [2020 Census](#), 41,922 housing units were counted in Island County. The Census Bureau (2018–2022) estimated that 73.2% of housing units were owner occupied, which is higher than 63.6% owner occupation in Washington State.

The Washington State Department of Commerce’s [Housing All Planning Tool \(HAPT\)](#) indicates that a total of 8,717 housing units will need to be built within the 2025 – 2045 planning period in Island County. This is based on 2045 population projection adopted by the [Island County Board of County Commissioners in Resolution C-85-23, PLG-011-23](#). This requires building an average of 435 housing units per year, distributed across the four Island County jurisdictions.

Additionally, homes must be built to accommodate all income levels and thus must be affordable to various income levels. **Figure 3** below breaks down the distribution of homes needed in the next 20 years based on income bracket, according to the HAPT tool.



**Figure 3:** The breakdown of total housing needed by 2045 in Island County. PSH stands for permanently supportive housing units. Emergency beds is a count of the emergency beds needed to fulfill emergency shelter demand, whereas all other categories is a count of the dwelling units (Washington State Department of Commerce, March 2023).



**Figure 4:** This bar chart shows Annual Housing permits in Island County from 1980 – 2021, broken down by single family units permitted and multifamily units permitted (Census Bureau 2022).

According to **Figure 4**, which illustrates Census Bureau (2022) data on the number of units permitted 1980–2021, the year with the most permits issued in Island County was 1990, with 838 single family units permitted, and 230 multifamily units permitted. The next highest number of permits per year was 2004, which saw 698 single-family units permitted, and 192 multifamily units permitted.

Starting in 2005 the number of permits issued annually declines to its lowest point in 2011, when only 164 single-family units were permitted and zero multifamily units. In fact, between 2008–2015, only two multifamily units were permitted in all of Island County. Since 2016, 181 multifamily units have been permitted, however 116, or 64%, of those permits were issued in 2020 alone.

Affordability is also an issue. The real estate market in Island County, like the rest of Northwest Washington, has experienced significant increases in prices coupled with low vacancy rates and product availability. For example, in September 2023 88 homes were sold. This is down from 141 homes in September 2022, a decrease of 37.6% ([Redfin Market Insights 2023](#)). In September 2018, the median sale price for a home in Island County was \$364,500. In January 2020, right before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the price had dropped to \$340,000. However, the price has grown tremendously each year since 2020. By January 2021, the median sale price was up to \$442,000. The highest price in the last five years occurred in August 2023, when the price hit \$660,000 (16.8% year-over-year growth). The median sale price current stands at just below this high at \$652,500, which is still a 16.9% increase year-over-year.

As cost has increased, the number of days on the market for many homes has decreased. This was particularly acute during the COVID-19 pandemic. From August 2020 to July 2022, the median number of days a house was on the market in Island County did not exceed 10 days in any month.



As of September 2023, the median days on the market was up to 23, which is five more days than September 2022 ([Redfin Market Insights 2023](#)).

### **Childcare**

As with housing, the childcare crisis is a national issue that is impacted by affordability, availability, as well as worker and funding shortages. On September 30, 2023, one third or 70,000 of America's childcare programs that were supported by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, lost ARPA funding. [The Century Foundation \(2023\)](#) issued a report titled "Childcare Cliff: 3.2 Million Children Likely to Lose Spots with End of Federal Funds." This report predicts that many programs will close and more than three million children will lose their childcare spots. The childcare workforce was deeply impacted by the pandemic and is also expected to lose another 232,000 jobs if the Century Foundation's predictions are true.

According to their findings, if this happens and more parents are forced to leave their jobs, the loss in tax and business revenue will cost states an additional \$10.6 billion in lost economic activity. Additionally, parents will lose \$9 billion in earnings annually across the United States.

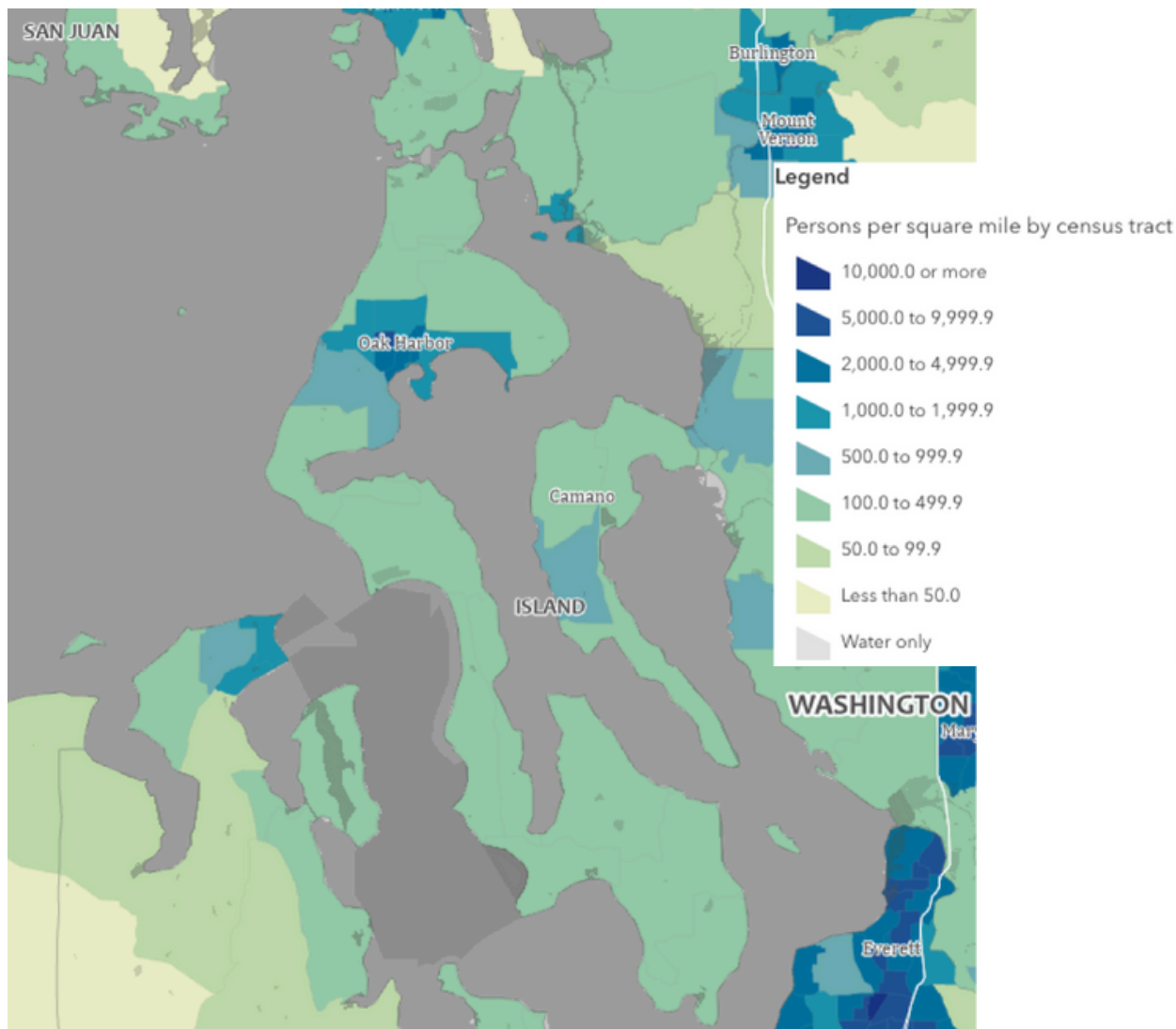
In 2021, Island County's Child Care Partnership Task Force came together to assess the state of childcare in Island County and to make recommendations that would improve access, affordability, and quality. The key findings of the [needs assessment](#) included that 4,299 children under the age of six have working parents with no access to childcare but would likely use it if available. Of the 4,299 children without childcare, 1,460 were infants and toddlers. In 2021 there were only 124 childcare slots available for that age group in all of Island County. Additionally 88% of the children eligible for Head Start do not have slots available to them. In order to meet childcare demand in Island County, the report estimated that 460 additional educators would need to be hired, not including administrative or support staff (June 2021 Recommendations, p. 2).

## **5. Economic Conditions and Statistical Description**

### **Population demographics**

As of July 1, 2023, Island County's population was estimated to be 86,267. In 2010, the population was 78,506, meaning that there was approximately a 9.88% increase in population ([Census 2023](#)). Of that population 10,943 are veterans ([EDC Island County Demographics Report 2023](#)). Island County therefore has the highest number of veterans per capita of any county in Washington State at 17.3%, which is more than double the national average of 6.9%.

Twenty-eight percent or 24,403 of Island County's population reside in Oak Harbor and approximately 68% (59,280) of the population lives in unincorporated areas. Camano Island, which is unincorporated, is home to an estimated 17,073 people (Census 2023). **Figure 5**, below, shows population density by census tract in Island County.



**Figure 5:** This map shows Island County’s population density by census tract. Darker blue indicates higher population density. Lighter green to yellow indicates lower population density ([Census Bureau 2020](#)).

### ***Race and ethnicity demographics***

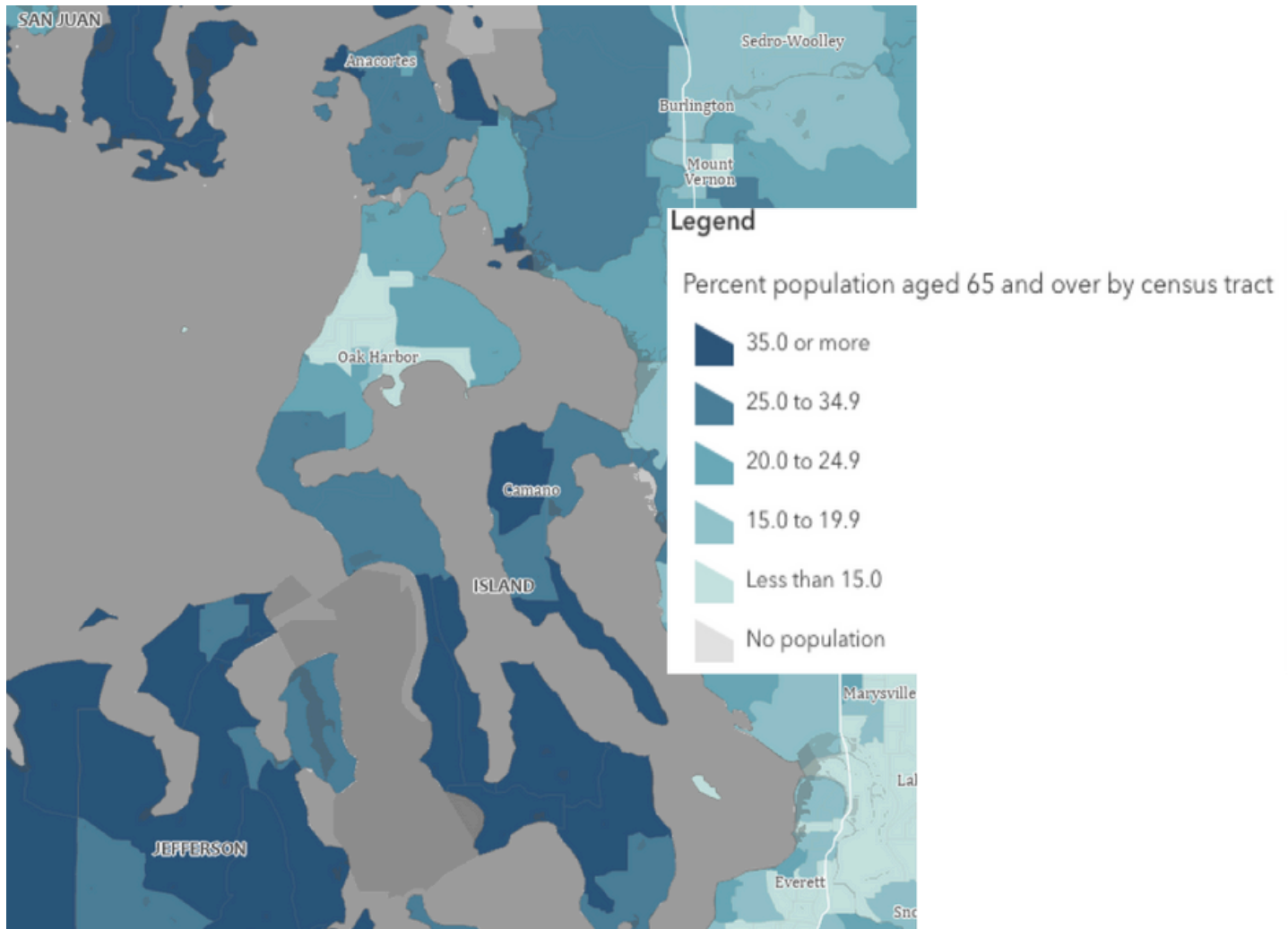
84.8% of Island County’s population self-identified as “white - alone” ([Census 2020](#)). This is higher than Washington state, which is 76.8% white.

However, Island County is more diverse than its closest neighbors according to the Census (2020), including Skagit County ([89.8% white](#)), Whatcom County ([85.5% white](#)) and San Juan County ([93.4% white](#)). 8.7% of the Island County population identified as Hispanic or Latino, 5.3% identified as Asian, 5.2% identified as being two or more races, 3.3% identified as Black or African American, and 1.5% identified as American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

Island County is also linguistically diverse. The [American Community Survey \(ACS\) \(2022\)](#) also found that in 21.1% of Island County homes speak a language other than English at home.

### Age demographics

When examined at the county level, Island County's population is aging. As of 2020, 27% of Island County's population was over 65 years of age, in comparison to 16.8% in Washington State ([Census 2023](#)). In comparison to Washington State, Island County has fewer people under 18 and more people over 65.



**Figure 6:** This map shows the percentage of population over 65 years of age by census tract. Darker blue indicate a higher percentage of people over 65, lighter blue indicates fewer ([Census Bureau 2020](#)).

However, it is important to note that not everywhere in Island County is aging. In Oak Harbor, 10.8% of the population was under 5, 28.6% was under 18, and only 12.4% were over 65 years of age. This means that Oak Harbor has more people under 18 and less people under 65 than the rest of Washington. This is the reverse of the countywide trend and can at least be partially explained by the influence of NASWI, which brings many young families onto Whidbey Island.

This means that the aging population in Island County is actually concentrated in particular areas – with 35% of the population in central and south Whidbey Island and north and south Camano Island being 65 or over.

Given this mixture of age groups, the median age in Island County is 45 years old ([Census 2023](#)). The age of Island County's population is an important consideration for workforce development efforts as well as business succession planning. [Project Equity \(2023\)](#) reports that approximately 68,700 businesses with 682,000 employees in Washington State owned by people who plan to retire in the near future.

### ***Local education infrastructure and attainment***

Island County is well educated. 36.7% of the population over 25 years of age holds a bachelor's degree or higher. 27.5% have some college, 20% have a high school diploma or equivalent, and 12.9% have an associate's degree ([Census Bureau 2020](#)).

Island County has four school districts: [Coupeville School District](#), [Oak Harbor School District](#), and [South Whidbey School District](#). Camano Island students attend the [Stanwood-Camano School District](#). The four districts combined have a total of 12,824 students enrolled for the 2023-2024 school year ([OSPI 2023](#)). There are currently 14 Career and Technical Education (CTE) Skills Centers in Washington State. CTE Skills Centers provide instruction in preparatory programs that are either too expensive or too specialized for school districts to operate individually. Sno-Isle TECH Skills Center, located in Everett, currently offers technical training for Island County high school students. Neither Whidbey nor Camano Island currently has its own Skills Center.

There is a broad range of options for adult and post-secondary education programs in Island County, ranging from technical training and certificates to graduate programs. There are five institutions that currently work within Island County: [Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University \(ERAU\)](#), [Skagit Valley College \(SVC\)](#), [Washington State University \(WSU\) Extension](#), [Grand Canyon University \(GCU\)](#), and [Columbia College-Whidbey Island](#). Island County residents also regularly access [Bellingham Technical College \(BTC\)](#) and [Western Washington University](#), for needs that cannot be fulfilled SVC, WSU Extension, or online.

### ***Employment and wages***

As of April 2024, Island County's civilian labor force count was at approximately 36,808, of which 35,088 are currently employed (not seasonally adjusted), for an unemployment rate of 4.7% ([ESD Labor Area Summaries 2024](#)).

The highest unemployment rate on record for Island County was 15.8%, which occurred in April 2020. By the end of 2020, it had returned to 7%. In 2023, the unemployment rate hovered between a high of 6.2% in February to a low of 3% in June ([ESD Labor Area Summaries 2024](#)). While this may be evidence of recovery from impacts of COVID-19, stakeholder outreach indicated that businesses in all industries continue to suffer from serious ongoing labor shortages, many even having to curtail business hours due to a lack of staff.



As shown in **Table 2**, below, the largest sub-sectors in terms of number of employment in Island County are in the service producing industries. As of 2023 Q2, there was an average of 15,912 jobs, the largest of which includes government (4,619), trade, transportation, and utilities (2,778) leisure and hospitality (2,633), education and health services (2,462), and professional and business services (1,705) (BLS QCEW 2023). Government comprises the largest of all service providing sub-sectors, with state and local governments employing on average 4,619 people. It is estimated that approximately 1,550 of those are employed at state and local education institutions. The largest of the educational institutions in Island County is Oak Harbor School District, which employs approximately 1,226 people, including substitute teachers (EDC 2023).

| 2-digit NAICS        | Industry subsectors                              | Firms | Total quarterly wages paid | Average employment | Average quarterly wage | Average weekly wage |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 54                   | Professional, scientific, and technical services | 306   | \$24,880,850               | 942                | \$26,413               | \$2,032             |
| 52                   | Finance and insurance                            | 67    | \$8,056,453                | 323                | \$24,943               | \$1,919             |
| 42                   | Wholesale trade                                  | 75    | \$4,643,311                | 215                | \$21,597               | \$1,661             |
| NEC                  | Not Elsewhere Classified                         | 16    | \$1,706,209                | 79                 | \$21,598               | \$1,661             |
| 55                   | Management of companies and enterprises          | 3     | \$1,465,562                | 83                 | \$17,657               | \$1,358             |
| GOV                  | Government                                       | 63    | \$76,917,483               | 4,619              | \$16,652               | \$1,281             |
| 51                   | Information                                      | 56    | \$4,353,999                | 267                | \$16,307               | \$1,254             |
| 48-49                | Transportation and warehousing                   | 19    | \$2,329,234                | 148                | \$15,738               | \$1,211             |
| 31-33                | Manufacturing                                    | 73    | \$10,439,656               | 707                | \$14,766               | \$1,136             |
| 23                   | Construction                                     | 361   | \$19,106,681               | 1,325              | \$14,420               | \$1,109             |
| 56                   | Administrative and waste services                | 170   | \$9,908,341                | 740                | \$13,390               | \$1,030             |
| 62                   | Healthcare and social assistance                 | 156   | \$21,670,920               | 2,006              | \$10,803               | \$831               |
| 81                   | Other services, except public administration     | 208   | \$8,728,977                | 845                | \$10,330               | \$795               |
| 11                   | Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting       | 41    | \$2,192,524                | 218                | \$10,057               | \$774               |
| 53                   | Real estate and rental and leasing               | 80    | \$3,134,602                | 320                | \$9,796                | \$754               |
| 44-45                | Retail trade                                     | 183   | \$20,744,504               | 2,315              | \$8,961                | \$689               |
| 61                   | Educational services                             | 54    | \$3,810,293                | 456                | \$8,356                | \$643               |
| 72                   | Accommodation and food services                  | 167   | \$15,365,811               | 2,234              | \$6,878                | \$529               |
| 71                   | Arts, entertainment, and recreation              | 47    | \$2,494,355                | 399                | \$6,252                | \$481               |
| 21                   | Mining                                           | *     | *                          | *                  | *                      | *                   |
| 22                   | Utilities                                        | *     | *                          | *                  | *                      | *                   |
| TOTAL ALL SUBSECTORS |                                                  | 2,145 | \$241,949,765              | 18,242             | \$13,263               | \$1,020             |

**Table 2:** Industry sub-sectors in Island County organized by average weekly wage using data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) (2023, Q2, revised). (BLS 2023; ESD Covered Employment 2024).

For goods producing sectors, there are 707 manufacturing jobs and 1,325 jobs in construction. Manufacturing jobs have not fully rebounded to pre-pandemic numbers for manufacturing, which in December 2019 was at 810 jobs. According to (ESD 2022), this “delayed drop in manufacturing employment was consistent with the statewide pattern,” which was caused by a decline in employment in the aerospace sector.

In terms of total quarterly wages paid in Island County, in 2023 Q2, the top five largest contributions come from government (\$76.9 million), professional, scientific, and technical services (\$24.8 million), healthcare and social assistance (\$21.6 million), retail trade (\$20.7 million), and construction (\$19.1 million). It is also important to note that while there were only 707 manufacturing jobs in Island County during 2023 Q2, the payroll contribution was over \$10.4 million for the quarter, meaning that the industry generates over \$40 million in wages annually.

Finally, when looking at the top ten sub-sectors by total quarterly wages, the top ten sub-sectors by employment count, and top ten sub-sectors by weekly wages, only seven industries fall on all three

lists: government, professional, scientific, and technical services, finance and insurance, manufacturing, construction, administrative and waste services, and healthcare and social assistance.

As for average annual wages, according to ESD (2023)'s profile for Island County, the 2020 average annual wage was \$46,301, which is below the state average annual wage of \$50,834. Similarly, the median hourly wage is less than the state median wage (\$23.32 versus \$29.28, adjusted for inflation). The median household income was \$72,066 in 2019, which is also below the state median of \$78,687 but above the national median of \$65,712.

Personal income, which includes earned income, investments, and government payments, is below the state and national trend. In 2020, Island County's per capita personal income was \$59,200. Washington State's per capita income was \$67,126 and the national per capita income was \$59,510. Regardless, Island County's per capita personal income is the sixth highest (of 39) in the state.

It is important to note that while wages are lower than the state average, wages in and of themselves are not the problem, but rather the mismatch between wages and the rapidly rising cost of living due to inflation, increased housing costs, increased childcare costs, and increased cost of other essential goods such as food and gas.

There are three important features of Island County's economy that are not captured by this data. First, there is a great deal of commuting off/on Island for work. This includes approximately 800 Island County residents who commute to Snohomish County to work at Boeing (EDC 2023). Second, there has also been an increase in remote work since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Finally, ESD's data on nonfarm and covered employment estimates do not include military or agriculture employment figures. Given the importance of NASWI and agriculture to Island County's economy, both will be covered separately in the following sections.

### ***Naval Air Station Whidbey Island***

The largest employer in Island County is Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI). Construction on NASWI started in 1941, which generated an influx of construction jobs, Navy personnel, and highly skilled workers.<sup>10</sup> The NASWI installation is located in North Whidbey and is approximately 8,030 acres. NASWI currently employs approximately 11,100 employees, of which 9,000 are considered active duty military and 2,100 are either civilians or federal contractors (EDC 2023). NASWI is the only naval aviation support installation in the Pacific Northwest and provides facilities, services, and products to the naval aviation community and all organizations using the air station.

According to the NASWI Economic Impact Assessment (2018), the installation's contribution to the regional economy in 2017 alone totaled \$1.04 billion and generated 12,925 jobs in Island and Skagit

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<sup>10</sup> For more on the history of NASWI see: <https://cnrnw.cnnc.navy.mil/Installations/NAS-Whidbey-Island/About/History/>

Counties, of which 9,078 were military and civilian personnel.<sup>11</sup> An estimated additional 3,847 jobs were stimulated by base operations and maintenance, personal and visitor spending.

NASWI's industry output, which totaled \$488 million in 2017 includes: \$246 million in payroll, \$235 million in operations and contracts, and \$7 million in visitor spending. Additionally, NASWI's economic activity in 2017 is estimated to have generated \$35 million in state and local tax revenue (\$21 million payroll taxes, \$13 million in taxes associated with operations and maintenance, and \$787,000 from visitor spending).

According to the Washington State Department of Commerce, NASWI has the third biggest economic impact of any installation in Washington, with an estimated economic impact of \$5.92 billion. Joint Base Lewis-McChord and Naval Base Kitsap are tied for first at \$6.1 billion each (Choose Washington: Military & Defense 2023). Needless to say, NASWI is a critical part of Island County and Washington State's economy.

As with many American military bases around the world, the presence of NASWI in Island County is controversial among some community members. While most support the base, particularly in North Whidbey, some community members believe that the base has negative impacts to the environment and public health.

### **Agriculture**

Agriculture on Whidbey and Camano Islands is a vital part of Island County's economy and culture. Local food system resiliency, and food systems that are ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable and equitable, are key to food security.

According to the USDA's (2022, p. 1-2) profile for Island County, in 2022 there were 377 farms in Island County, totaling 17,038 acres, with an average farm being 45 acres. This indicates that there was a decrease in the number of farms (-3%) but an increase in the total acres farmed (+7%) over the five year period. 98% of all farms in Island County were considered family farms, 27% hired farm labor, and 29% sold directly to consumers (the most in Washington State).

Of the 17,083 acres of agriculture land in Island County in 2022, 55.9% was being used as cropland, 16.7% as pastureland, 16.3% as woodland, and 11% was other uses. In terms of land use practices, 15% (2,520) acres were irrigated, which is a slight increase since 2017. 12% of Island County farms were no till, 8% reduced till, 13% used cover crops, and 6% were intensive till.

Given that there over 10,715 cattle and calves, 3,705 layers, and thousands of other livestock in

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<sup>11</sup> Data used for this assessment is for the Region of Interest (ROI), which is Island and Skagit Counties. Disaggregated data for just Island County is not available. Washington State will be completing an updated economic impact assessment of the state's defense industry in 2024-5.

Island County, the lack of easily accessible, affordable, humane slaughter services causes a lot of problems for Island County's farmers (USDA 2022, p. 2). In order to take advantage of the myriad opportunities within agriculture, Island County's agriculture sector requires additional humane animal slaughter and food processing infrastructure.

**Table 3** below shows the breakdown of farms by size. The vast majority of Island County farms are small.<sup>12</sup> As of 2022, 82% of all farms in Island County are 49 acres or less, which is a slight decrease from 84% in 2017. Interestingly, the smallest farms (1 to 9 acres) saw the largest increase since 2017, growing from 113 farms to 140. Given that 10 to 49 acre farms decreased from 213 to 169, some of those many not have fully closed but instead downsized to a smaller farm. Four farms also moved into the 50 to 179 acre size, increasing from 42 in 2017 to 46 in 2022.

|                  | 2017       | 2017          | 2022       | 2022          |
|------------------|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Farm size        | # of Farms | Percent Total | # of Farms | Percent Total |
| 1 to 9 acres     | 113        | 29%           | 140        | 37%           |
| 10 to 49 acres   | 213        | 55%           | 169        | 45%           |
| 50 to 179 acres  | 42         | 11%           | 46         | 12%           |
| 180 to 499 acres | 19         | 5%            | 16         | 4%            |
| 500 to 999 acres | 3          | 1%            | 5          | 1             |
| 1,000+ acres     | 0          | 0             | 1          | <1%           |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>390</b> |               | <b>377</b> |               |

**Table 3:** Number of farms by farm size. USDA County Profiles: Island County, WA (2017, 2022).

According to ESD's most recent Agricultural Workforce Statistics (2023), which uses the 2017 data, of the 390 farms in Island County, only 34 establishments and 153 jobs are considered "covered employment," meaning that workers are covered by state unemployment insurance. The number of covered jobs supported by the sector has not only recovered since jobs hit a low of 93 in 2020 (lower than 2012 numbers), but 60 new jobs have been added. This is important to note, both because covered jobs are growing and because it highlights the fact that many of Island County's farmers are not covered by unemployment insurance. Interviews within the sector also confirmed that many farmers may also be unable to maintain decent healthcare insurance, and those that do have insurance often do not have the time to access care. The USDA (2022, p.2) also found that only 87% of the 377 farms had internet access.

The Whidbey Island Grown Cooperative's Food Hub currently sells products for 50 direct-to-consumer farmers and total sales in 2022 was \$433,099. In 2023, the Food Hub's gross sales had

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 12 The USDA does not measure farm size by acreage. To be considered a 'small family farm' a farm has to have a gross cash farm income (GCFI) of \$350,000 or less (USDA Family Farms 2017). In Island County in 2017, only 12 out of 390 farms had sales valuing over \$100,000. This increased to 23 farms in 2022. Therefore, at least 94% of all farms in Island County are small family farms.

increased to \$572,499, an outstanding 32% year-over-year increase. Similarly, Bayview Farmer's Market's year to date total sales was \$536,236 in July 2022 and \$631,236 in July 2023, an 18% increase in sales.

Tourism: Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands

Tourism is a key sector in Island County, integrally related to agriculture and the natural beauty and marine landscape of Whidbey and Camano Islands. Visitors come to Whidbey and Camano for its great four season recreation opportunities, beautiful views and shorelines, amazing and myriad events, abundant options for agritourism and local farm stand trails, and importantly, to visit family, friends, and NASWI. Tourism has guaranteed economic impacts to multiple sectors, including but not limited to agriculture, the creative economy, lodging, retail, restaurants, and transportation.

Island County is a part of the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area, which is a non-regulatory, regional partnership program designed to share and connect the state's maritime communities and resources. In 2022, the Management Plan for the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area was approved by the Secretary of the Interior, which may bring additional grant resources to the region.

According to data provided by Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands (2023), trips to Whidbey and Camano Islands have increased by 48.6% and visitor days have increased by 39.6% when comparing pre-pandemic (February 2018 - March 2020) to present (April 2020 - August 2023) trends.¹³

The average length of stay has slightly decreased to 1.3 days and the number of unique visitors decreased by 19% to Island County during the same time period. This is likely due to the fact that Island County has many repeat visitors as well as local visitors who do not necessarily stay overnight. The largest market for both islands are Snohomish, Skagit, and King Counties, followed by Island County (within Island trips), and Whatcom County. Since February 2018, when data first becomes available, Island County saw anywhere from 511,800 to 1.2 million visitors monthly.

When examining the demographics of visitors, 33.4% of all visitors are 45-64 years of age, 28.6% are 25-44, 28.1% are 65 or over, and 9.9% are 16-24. Of these visitors, 42.5% have an income of over \$100,000, 25.7% have an income up to \$50,000. These trends reflect the fact that many retirees are traveling to Whidbey and Camano Islands, some for day trips, some to visit their second homes. However, there are also many young families who are visiting Island County, which could be an impact of NASWI or adult children visiting parents who are aging place.

¹³ This data comes from Datafy, which many Washington State tourism agencies currently use to try to better understand the economic impact of tourism in their area. Datafy collects data on traffic using cellphone data (location services and application data) and transaction data (credit cards). These are all linked to a unique identifier on an individual smartphone, which allows Datafy to track individual locations and spending while in those locations.

In 2021 the locations within Island County that were most traveled to were: Whidbey Island, Oak Harbor, Camano Island, the Clinton Ferry, Clinton, Coupeville, and [Deception Pass State Park](#). Deception Pass is also the most visited state park in Washington State ([Seattle Times 2024](#)).

Given the large number of visitors and the huge economic impact of the tourism industry in Island County, the County Tourism Board undertook the process of created a tourism strategy, the [Destination Regeneration Plan](#), which is focused upon transformational travel and regenerative tourism. The Island County BOCC has also directed Island County Public Health to evaluate land conservation programs alongside recreation and tourism needs. This will allow Island County to be more strategic about acquisition of conservation lands and ensure that there is combined benefit to tourism and conservation.

Creative Economy

The creative economy in Washington is vast and growing. The creative economy includes creative technology, music and performing arts, visual arts, as well as many other sectors and professional occupations. Whidbey and Camano Islands are home to artists of every sort (filmmakers, writers, painters, potters, woodworkers, sculptors, actors, musicians, etc.). Therefore, investing in and supporting the creative economies on both islands is a major economic opportunity.

As with tourism, gauging the economic impact of the creative economy is difficult as it touches many sectors of the economy. According to Washington State's [Creative Economy Strategic Plan \(2022\)](#) that the state's creative economy brought in \$71 billion in 2021, growing by 17% from 2020 to 2021. That means that Washington's creative economy is 10.3% of the state's GDP, which makes it the large creative economy in the United States in terms of contributions to GDP ([Choose Washington: Creative Economy 2023](#)). Washington State Department of Commerce recognizes this opportunity and thus the creative economy is considered a key sector and high-growth industry with many associated programs and funding opportunities. [ArtsWA](#) provides Creative Districts with specialized resources, grant opportunities, technical assistance, training, and networking with other Creative Districts, as well as data analyses to track the progress of creative economies.

Some jurisdictions of Island County have already moved forward with supporting this vital industry by establishing [Creative District](#). Langley has an its own Creative District, branded as [Langley Creates](#). The [Langley Chamber of Commerce](#) and the Chamber's 501c3 Advance Langley serve as Langley Creates fiscal administrator. In February 2024, the Town of Coupeville voted to support the creation of the Coupeville Creative District. If the application is approved, [the Pacific Northwest Art School](#) will serve as its fiscal administrator.

It is also important to mention [Whidbey Island Center for the Arts \(WICA\)](#), which is the largest arts organization on Whidbey Island and is located in the center of the Langley Creative District. Its mission is to support homegrown economic opportunities by supporting and growing the local creative economy.

Oak Harbor Opportunity Zone

Opportunity Zones are federal census tracts that are eligible for certain types of investment. Investors can defer paying taxes on capital gains that are invested in Qualified Opportunity Funds, which are then invested in distressed communities.

In Island County, the only Opportunity Zone is in Oak Harbor. The governor of each state is allowed to designate up to 25% of the total eligible census tracts as Opportunity Zones. In Washington, the Governor designated a total of 139 Opportunity Zones (Department of Commerce 2023).



Deception Pass Bridge. This bridge connects Island and Skagit Counties. In January 2023 Deception Pass State Park was ranked the fifth most beautiful state park in the United States by Travel Lens magazine (Seattle Times 2023). Photo by Taisia Karaseva on Unsplash.

1. Regional SWOT Analyses

To meet EDA requirements, a SWOT analysis was conducted using multiple forms of stakeholder engagement. SWOT analyses are often used as a strategic planning assessment tool, by private, public and nonprofit actors. According to the [EDA \(2024\)](#), a SWOT is “a strategic planning tool used by organizations to ensure that there is a clear objective informed by a comprehensive understanding of a region’s capabilities and capacity” that should identify competitive advantages as well as obstacles preventing the region from reaching its fullest potential.

Inputs for the Island County SWOT analysis were gathered in three ways. First, there was a public SWOT analysis survey open May 1 to October 23, 2023, that resulted in 181 responses. Second, SWOT analysis inputs were gathered from every partner with jurisdictional authority, including the governments of Island County, the Town of Coupeville, the Cities of Langley and Oak Harbor, as well as the Port of Coupeville and Port South of Whidbey. Third, other entities such as the Camano Chamber of Commerce, Langley Chamber of Commerce, and Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce, Island Transit, Sno-Isle Libraries (Camano Branch), as well as other private, public, and nonprofit stakeholders provided direct inputs into the SWOT regional analysis. The consolidated regional SWOT analysis results are listed below.

Strengths

Natural Environment

- Four seasons outdoor recreation
- Beautiful natural landscape
- Clean air, fresh water, temperate climate
- Forests, farms, shorelines with vistas
- Rich animal habitats

Creative Economy and Tourism

- Thriving artist communities
- Unique, diverse, plentiful events
- Home to world-renowned arts organizations
- Two Creative Districts (Langley, Coupeville)
- Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands
- Strong brand potential (Whidbey + Camano Grown/Made)
- Transformational tourism options
- Large amount of public land, forests, parks

Community

- High quality of life
- Strong sense of commitment to community
- High rate of volunteerism, engagement
- Regional diversity in race, age, income, culture
- Many social services, nonprofits
- Strong entrepreneurial spirit
- Safe with low crime rates

Infrastructure

- Military installation (NASWI)
- Multimodal transportation options
- Accessible public transportation
- Some walkable cities, towns
- Two Port districts
- Island County Fairgrounds & Event Center
- Two WSDOT ferry terminals (Clinton, Coupeville)
- Multiple full-service marinas and boatyards

Business Resources

- Active Chambers and EDC
- Active local industry associations
- EDC reports, market research
- Leadership Whidbey

Workforce

- Multiple training and post-secondary programs
- Educated workforce
- High levels of high school completion
- Skilled labor from NASWI spouses, veterans, retirees
- Retiree mentoring capacity

Geographic Location

- Proximity to Seattle, Skagit and Snohomish Counties, Canada, the Salish Sea, and the I-5 Corridor

Weaknesses

Infrastructure

- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of affordable childcare
- Inadequate supply of commercial, industrial buildings
- Freight challenges
- No shovel ready business parks
- Inadequate potable water supply
- Inadequate sewage treatment options
- Aging septs
- Aging marinas
- Decreased number of ferries
- Decreased ferry reliability
- High reliance on ferry, bridge access
- Areas of county without internet or cellular service
- Unreliable, slow, expensive internet in some places
- Limited medical facilities, providers
- EV charging gaps
- Off ferry traffic flows, speeds
- Lack of accessible sidewalks in Freeland

Community

- Limited nightlife
- Small youth population in S. Whidbey
- Perceptions of differences between regions
- Lack of mental health resources

Opportunities

Infrastructure

- Build affordable housing
- Support expansion of affordable childcare
- Develop commercial, industrial buildings
- Identify parcels to create shovel ready business parks
- Sewer installation in Freeland +/- or Clinton
- Address aging septs
- Redevelop marinas
- Passenger ferries linked to public transit options
- Expand access, reliability and speed of internet, cell service
- Crawford Road redevelopment
- DeLaurentis Airport commercialization
- State and federal infrastructure funding

Regulatory

- Stabilization of Planning Departments
- Educate public on regulatory policies
- Review events code
- Review code to encourage affordable housing
- Develop workforce housing policies
- Explore options to limit commercial vacancies/closures

Natural Environment

- Fragile marine and shoreline environments
- Many critical areas (steep slopes, shorelines, habitats)
- Increases cost of building
- Increases difficulty of building

Regulatory

- Lack of consistency in regulatory interpretations
- Permitting times can be long
- Increases cost of building
- Increases difficulty of building

Workforce

- Low unemployment rate
- Labor shortages across sectors
- High rates of turnover in many sectors
- Limited trade workers (construction, plumbers, electrician, HVAC)
- Some commute off-island for work
- Lack of opportunities for NASWI spouses
- Lack of opportunities for veterans
- Cost of living increases outpacing wages

Business Resources

- Increased DEI programming
- Increased disaster resiliency
- Marketing campaigns highlighting agritourism, Whidbey + Camano Island Grown / Made brand
- Educate public on business resources already available

Industry

- Diversify employers
- Support expansion of existing businesses
- Creative Economy
- Transformational Tourism, Agritourism
- Value-added agriculture, food processing
- Nonprofit mergers
- Expansion of healthcare facilities + providers

Opportunities Continued

Workforce

- NASWI spouses, veteran skills
- Incorporating retirees
- Certification of veteran skills
- Employee ownership
- Engaging the youth population
- Increasing vocational skills
- Increasing vocational trades participation
- Telework, Telehealth
- Expand post-secondary education access

Climate Resilience

- Become a leader in climate resilience
- Encourage rideshare, car share programs
- Support updated heat pump installations
- Improve bike lanes and trail systems
- Create more incentives for landowners to keep forest + farm land
- Encourage use of passenger ferries
- Expanded community solar
- Wetlands restoration
- State and federal climate resilience funding

Threats

Climate Resilience

- Sea level rise, shoreline erosion
- Floods, earthquake, tsunami, king tides
- Wildfires, smoke from wildfires
- Lack of emergency coordination
- Lack of insurance coverage
- Lack of grid redundancies
- Salinization and contamination of water
- Salinization and contamination of soil
- Loss of trees, shade
- Unreliable or fewer ferries
- Potable water and sewage access not guaranteed
- Limited number of gateways

Regulatory

- Federal reallocation of defense funding
- Closure or reduction of funding to NASWI or Boeing
- Increased interest rates

Inflation and Rising Costs

- Increasing labor costs
- Increasing input costs
- Increasing cost of living
- Increasing housing and childcare costs



Tokitae, one of two Mukilteo-Clinton ferries. Photo by Daniel Schwen on [Wikimedia Commons](#).

Industry SWOTs for fourteen industries were developed for Island County via stakeholder engagement with local business owners. Those industries were chosen with several factors in mind, which are detailed in **Appendix 6.4**, and were commented and added to by the Review Committee. The final list of industries for SWOTs and targeted stakeholder engagement included: Agriculture, Construction, the Creative Economy, Education, Infrastructure (includes Energy, Transit, Utilities), Healthcare, Manufacturing, Maritime, Military and Defense (includes Aerospace), Retail, Tourism (includes Events, Recreation and Leisure), and Nonprofits.

Business owners participated either by emailing in written responses to the SWOT survey or by scheduling 30-60 minute interviews with the consultant. Results can be found in **Appendix 6.4**.

2. Priorities

Drawing on the regional SWOT results, the industry-level SWOTs, and extensive stakeholder engagement, including over 80 key stakeholder interviews, several high priority issues currently affecting business and economic development Island County were identified:

A lack of social and economic infrastructure including

- Available, affordable, quality housing
- Available, affordable, quality childcare
- Wages inconsistent with the cost of living and inflation
- Labor shortages in multiple sectors

A lack of physical infrastructure including

- All utilities, but in particular sewer, water, and internet
- Lack of redundancies for critical infrastructure
- Lack of industry-specific infrastructure (e.g. food processing, licensed available slaughter)
- Unreliable and inconsistent ferry service

In addition to identifying economic, physical, and social infrastructure needs, stakeholders consistently expressed their desire to protect the environment and natural beauty of Island County. These concerns ranged from shoreline degradation and sea level rise to the broader impacts of climate change and tourism on the islands to everyday conservation of Whidbey and Camano Island's natural environment. The SWOT clearly demonstrates that the public believes that Island County's biggest asset is its natural environment and beauty. It is important to note this key consensus, as climate resilience is directly related to economic resilience.

The Action Plan that follows reflects the priorities identified during stakeholder engagement.

The CEDS Review Committee envisions “a robust and diverse economy that leverages existing community assets; establishes, upgrades, and maintains resilient critical infrastructure; supports business and workforce vitality; sustainably manages natural resources; promotes equity and inclusivity; and increases resident quality of life” in Island County.

1. Vision

The CEDS Review Committee envisions “a robust and diverse economy that leverages existing community assets; establishes, upgrades, and maintains resilient critical infrastructure; supports business and workforce vitality; sustainably manages natural resources; promotes equity and inclusivity; and increases resident quality of life.”

2. Goals and Sub-goals

Drawing on the SWOT analyses, regional priorities outlined in other Island County or regional strategies, plans and reports, immense stakeholder engagement, as well as a thorough review of CEDS and economic development best practices, below are the goals and sub-goals.

Please note that the numbering of the goal or sub-goal is not an indication of priority. All of these goals are critically important to Island County’s economy and priorities will vary based on partner or stakeholder. The intention of numbering is simply to make discussion of the goals and sub-goals easier.

Goal 1: Improve and develop critical resilient infrastructure.

- 1.Improve and expand water and wastewater infrastructure.
- 2.Improve and expand cellular and internet services to unserved and underserved areas and populations.
- 3.Improve and expand local emergency services to all areas of Island County.
- 4.Advocate for consistent and reliable ferry services.
- 5.Promote the use of Public Transportation (Island Transit) and Active Transportation (pedestrian, bicycle, other).
- 6.Improve roads throughout Island County for all users.
- 7.Explore and support options to increase energy resiliency.
- 8.Explore programs and expansion opportunities for solid waste, recycling, and composting services.
- 9.Maintain existing healthcare services and facilities and explore opportunities for generating additional and varied healthcare services and facilities, including mental health services, with a focus on unserved and underserved communities.
- 10.Work with public, private, and nonprofit partners to inform, assist, and invest in the development of affordable housing choices for all income levels.
- 11.Promote and support affordable and accessible quality childcare options for all income levels.

Goal 2: Support existing local businesses and community assets, increase diversification, and promote Island County as an attractive business environment.

1. Support local governments and economic development service providers in creating responsive, helpful, and expedient services and resources.
2. Promote Island County as a great place to do business.
3. Continue to support existing businesses.
4. Explore options to recruit employers that complement and leverage the existing industry mix and aligns with local values.
5. Promote and support innovation and value-added upgrading in key economic sectors of agriculture, construction, military / defense, marine trades, tourism, and advanced manufacturing.
6. Strengthen, better define, and build entrepreneurial resources in order to create opportunities for mentoring, financing, exporting, legal and tax services, and networking.
7. Support the creation of shovel-ready commercial, residential, and industrial sites in locations that are not in critical areas or habitats.
8. Continue to support Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands (county-wide Tourism).
9. Explore options to conduct or participate in economic impact studies for key sectors of Island County's economy.
10. Promote and support the development of local financial resources and financial literacy for businesses.

Goal 3: Align quality education and skills training programs with employer needs and create living wage job opportunities in Island County.

1. Continue to participate in regional workforce partnerships and organizations.
2. Address ongoing labor shortages in several industries by focusing on unserved and underserved worker groups.
3. Improve educational attainment outcomes and create opportunities for all to prosper.

Goal 4: Sustainably manage the natural beauty and resources of Island County.

1. Prioritize actions for climate resilience.
2. Support, promote, and educate the public on required adaptations to sea level rise.
3. Develop additional local incentives for forest, wetland, and farmland conservation.
4. Support and promote the development of the Green and Blue economies.
5. Support opportunities for salmon habitat restoration and rehabilitation.
6. Support and promote improvements to Island County's public lands, reserves, and parks.
7. Prepare for population growth and in-migration.
8. Increase disaster preparedness among small business owners and entrepreneurs.

Goal 5: Deepen collaboration and coordination between Island County and regional partners.

1. Further develop relationships with regional economic development agencies and strategic associate development organization (ADO) partners.
2. Explore opportunities for collaboration and business support in Stanwood and Anacortes.
3. Explore opportunities for developing the creative economy across Snohomish, Skagit, and Island Counties.
4. Explore opportunities to enhance disaster preparedness and resiliency between Island, Skagit, and Snohomish Counties.
5. Explore additional opportunities for equipment and technology sharing between Island, Skagit, and Snohomish Counties.



An aerial photo of the Coupeville Wharf with Whidbey Island in the background. Photo gifted to the Port of Coupeville.

Goal 1: Improve and develop critical resilient infrastructure.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|--|--|---|
| 1. Improve and expand water and wastewater infrastructure. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete a comprehensive study of wastewater infrastructure to determine where alternative systems, such as Large Onsite Sewage Systems (LOSS) and Step Systems, to single family onsite systems can benefit and support housing and climate resiliency. 2. Request funding from the Legislature to conduct a comprehensive study of existing water system infrastructure and hydrogeological monitoring system upgrades. 3. Strengthen adaptive management approaches to addressing aging single-family septic infrastructure. 4. Adopt best available science for quality improvement and water quality monitoring. 5. Take regulatory action on failing systems impacting sensitive ecosystems, shorelines, and aquifer recharge zones. 6. Update groundwater protection, drinking water, and wastewater codes to improve stewardship of water resources. | <p>1.1.1-1.1.6: Island County, Washington State Department of Commerce Defense Community Compatibility Account (DCCA), Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) under the Department of Defense Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation</p> <p>Support: Port of South Whidbey</p> | 1.1.1-1.1.6: Ongoing + long-term |
| 2. Improve and expand cellular and internet services to unserved and underserved areas and populations. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to work with local partners to implement the Washington Statewide Broadband Act goals locally. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By 2024: 25/3 Mbps scalable to all residences and businesses. 2. By 2026: 1/1 Gbps speed for all anchor institutions. 3. By 2028: 150/150 Mbps | <p>1.2.1: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of South Whidbey, Port of Coupeville, Island County Broadband Action Team, Whidbey Telecom</p> | <p>1.2.1.1: End of 2024</p> <p>1.2.1.2: End of 2026</p> <p>1.2.1.3: End of 2028</p> |

Goal 1: Improve and develop critical resilient infrastructure.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| 2. Improve and expand cellular and internet services to unserved and underserved areas and populations. | <p>2. Advocate for improved 5G cellular coverage throughout Whidbey and Camano Islands.</p> <p>3. Support Whidbey Telecom’s route expansion through Whidbey Island.</p> <p>1. Partner with Whidbey Telecom to expand fiber from Green Bank Farm to Admiral’s Cove.</p> <p>2. Partner with Port of Coupeville and Ebey’s Reserve for the route segment that runs from Admirals’ Cove to Ebey’s Reserve (passing 1400 residents).</p> <p>3. Implement the middle mile grant, which includes fiber facilities from Admiral’s Cove drop off point through Oak Harbor, Keystone Ferry, and wraps around NASWI.</p> <p>4. Support expansion and improved reliability.</p> <p>1. Support connection to key commercial areas of Camano Island, including the airport business park.</p> <p>2. Submit Community Connect Grant for South Camano, if successful implement South Camano expansion project.</p> <p>3. Continue to file relevant challenges to FCC where local data and experience do not match.</p> <p>5. Advocate for affordable, quality internet connections throughout Island County.</p> | <p>1.2.2 Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of South Whidbey, Port of Coupeville, Island County Broadband Action Team, Whidbey Telecom</p> <p>1.2.3: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey, Ebey’s Landing National Historic Reserve, Island County Broadband Action Team, Whidbey Telecom, conservation districts</p> <p>1.2.4: Island County, Island County Broadband Action Team</p> <p>1.2.4.2: FiberCloudNW (Whidbey Telecom subsidiary)</p> <p>1.2.5: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey, Island County Broadband Action Team</p> | 1.2.2-1.2.5: Ongoing + long- term |

Goal 1: Improve and develop critical resilient infrastructure.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|---|---|--|---|
| 3. Improve and expand local emergency services to all areas. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase resiliency by updating communications, the network, power, and water supply. 2. Update and expand the critical infrastructure GIS inventory database for Island County. 3. Collaborate with County Planning during the Comprehensive Plan updates to ensure alignment between elements and County Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan (NHMP). 4. Explore options for solar powered micro grid as a backup source for the Langley area. | <p>1.3.1-1.3.2: Island County Emergency Management</p> <p>1.3.3: Island County (Emergency Management, Planning)</p> <p>1.3.4: City of Langley, Port of South Whidbey</p> | 1.3.1-1.3.4: Ongoing + long- term |
| 4. Advocate for consistent reliable ferry services to all areas. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborate with all available partners to work with WSDOT to re-establish reliable ferry schedules, particularly the Port Townsend- Coupeville, and Mukilteo-Clinton routes. 2. Implement a trial, proof-of-concept passenger only ferry service for tourist season. 3. Provide long-term passenger only ferry service and supporting facilities. | 1.4.1-1.4.3: Island County, Island Transit, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey, Washington State Department of Transportation, Washington State Ferry System | 1.4.1-1.4.3: Ongoing + long- term |
| 5. Promote the use of Public Transportation (Island Transit) and Active Transportation (pedestrian, bicycle, other). | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an Active Transportation Plan. 2. Incentivize public transportation options through community planning approaches. | <p>1.5.1: City of Oak Harbor, Town of Coupeville</p> <p>1.5.2: Island County, Island Transit, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor</p> | <p>1.5.1: 2024-2025 (City of Oak Harbor); 2025-2028 (Town of Coupeville)</p> <p>1.5.2: Ongoing + long- term</p> |

Goal 1: Improve and develop critical resilient infrastructure.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| 5. Promote the use of Public Transportation (Island Transit) and Active Transportation (pedestrian, bicycle, other). | 3. Support the implementation of the <u>Island Regional Transportation Plan Update 2024-2028</u> . | 1.5.3: Island County, Island Transit, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey, EDC for Island County | 1.5.3: 2024-2028 |
| | 4. Improve, expand, and promote multimodal transportation facilities and infrastructure. 1. Improve walkability and accessibility of sidewalks, including installation of curb ramps. | 1.5.4: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor | 1.5.4: Ongoing + long- term |
| 6. Improve roads throughout Island County for all users. | 1. Improve Crawford Road. | 1.6.1: Island County | 1.6.1-1.6.6: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 2. Identify roads for improvement in Clinton and Freeland that improve safety, improve traffic flows, create business opportunities, and enhance resiliency. | 1.6.2: Island County, Clinton Community Council | |
| | 3. Develop a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan for Island County. | 1.6.3: IRTPO | |
| | 4. Identify projects for Safe Streets for All grant program. | 1.6.4: City of Oak Harbor | |
| | 5. Identify improvements to the State routes to improve safety, mobility, resilience and business opportunities. | 1.6.5: WSDOT, Island County | |
| | 6. Adopting a level of service criteria that includes pedestrian multi-modal transportation. | 1.6.6: City of Langley | |
| 7. Support options to increase energy resiliency. | 1. Continue to work with PSE and SNOPUD to identify options to improve energy reliability and reduce outage times. | 1.7.1: Island County, Island Transit, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey | 1.7.1: Ongoing + long- term |

Goal 1: Improve and develop critical resilient infrastructure.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| 7. Support options to increase energy resiliency. | 2. Replace fuel tanks at the Port of Coupeville. 3. Support the development of level 3 and 4 electric vehicle charging stations throughout Island County. 4. Support Island Transit's transition to Zero Emissions. 5. Support local efforts to establish distributed energy systems such as micro grids. 6. Support organizations that assist local residents and businesses transition from fossil fuel sources for heating, cooling, cooking, and electricity. | 1.7.2: Port of Coupeville, Town of Coupeville, Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation, Department of Ecology 1.7.3-4: Island County, Island Transit, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey 1.7.5-6: City of Langley | 1.7.2-1.7.6: Ongoing + long- term |
| 8. Explore programs and expansion opportunities for solid waste, recycling, and composting services. | 1. Expand and modernize the Coupeville Solid Waste Transfer Center. 1. Seek grant and legislative funding for expansion. 2. Plan for expansion of Camano Solid Waste Transfer Center, including acquisition of new site. | 1.8.1-1.8.2: Island County | 1.8.1-1.8.2: Ongoing + long- term |
| 9. Maintain existing healthcare services and facilities and explore opportunities for generating additional and varied healthcare services and facilities, including mental health services, with a focus on unserved and underserved communities. | 1. Support the expansion of behavioral health services and increase the number of beds at the Ithua Stabilization Center. 2. Continue to support the Opportunity Council's related work. 3. Continue to support the STEPS program related work. | 1.9.1: Island County 1.9.2: Island County, Opportunity Council 1.9.3: Island County, STEPS | 1.9.1-1.9.3: Ongoing + long- term |

Goal 1: Improve and develop critical resilient infrastructure.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| 9. Maintain existing healthcare services and facilities and explore opportunities for generating additional and varied healthcare services and facilities, including mental health services, with a focus on unserved and underserved communities. | 4. Expand integrated physical and behavioral health services and care linkages through coordinate mobile outreach, which includes community- based mental health providers, public health nurses, and outreach workers. | 1.9.4: Island County, Help Me Grow, Partners for Young Children, North South Accountable Community of Health Action | 1.9.4-1.9.7: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 5. Strengthen behavioral health services available at school districts by advocating for increased staffing by the Northwest Education Services District (NWESD) and the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). | 1.9.5: Island County, NWESD, OSPI 1.9.6: Island County, WhidbeyHealth | |
| | 6. Support continued growth of WhidbeyHealth Behavioral Health programs and Rural Health Clinic (RHC) services. | | |
| | 7. Continue to provide Community Health Worker training to existing staff and partners to grow the network in Island County. | 1.9.7: Island County | |
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| | | | |
| 10. Work with public, private, and nonprofit partners to inform, assist, and invest in the development of affordable housing choices for all income levels. | 1. Fully utilize all available tools, resources, and funding streams available for affordable housing at the local, state, and federal level. | 1.10.1: All public, private, and housing-focused nonprofit stakeholders | 1.10.1: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 1. Explore options to direct .09 funds towards infrastructure and programs that support affordable housing development. | 1.10.1.1-2: Island County | |
| | 2. Explore utilizing REET 2 funds for affordable housing. | | |

Goal 1: Improve and develop critical resilient infrastructure.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 10. Work with public, private, and nonprofit partners to inform, assist, and invest in the development of affordable housing choices for all income levels. | <p>2. Continue to support the active affordable housing projects (Swanton Road, Camas Flats, LIHI, and Generations Place (2nd & DeBruyn)).</p> <p>3. Work to incentivize and mandate affordable housing.</p> <p>4. Support inclusive and mixed-use zoning changes.</p> <p>5. Explore and support options for employer-assisted workforce housing.</p> <p>6. Explore options to identify housing for seasonal workers.</p> <p>7. Evaluate options to encourage the development of long-term ADU and DADUs.</p> <p>8. Continue to develop stronger relationships with contractors and builders through events such as the Builders Listening Session.</p> <p>9. Pursue development of workforce housing at the Fairgrounds.</p> | <p>1.10.2: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey, Island Roots Housing / Goosefoot Community Fund</p> <p>1.10.3-1.10.4: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor</p> <p>1.10.5-1.10.8: Island County</p> <p>1.10.7: Town of Coupeville</p> <p>1.10.9: Port of South Whidbey</p> | 1.10.2-9: Ongoing + long-term |
| 11. Promote and support affordable and accessible quality childcare options for all income levels in Island County. | <p>1. Fully utilize all available tools, resources, and funding available for childcare at the local, state, and federal level.</p> <p>2. Support the Opportunity Council's coordinated entry work, including support for childcare providers.</p> <p>3. Increase opportunities and technical assistance for Whidbey Island childcare program expansion.</p> <p>4. Expand training options and support for those interested in starting a childcare business.</p> | <p>1.11.1: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor</p> <p>1.11.2: Island County, Opportunity Council</p> <p>1.11.3-1.11.4: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor</p> | 1.11.1-4: Ongoing + long-term |

Goal 2: Support existing local businesses and community assets, increase diversification, and promote Island County as an attractive business environment.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Support local governments and economic development service providers in creating responsive, helpful, and expedient services and resources. | 1. Explore options and create a plan for the stabilization of planning departments throughout Island County, which includes a strategy for reducing turnover. | 2.1.1: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor | 2.1.1-2.1.7: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 2. Create a plan to increase the consistency in interpretation of policies. | 2.1.2: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor | |
| | 3. Explore options for a public information campaign to educate the public and business owners on regulatory policies. | 2.1.3: Island County, City of Oak Harbor | |
| | 4. Explore options for expedited, transparent permitting process for green, sustainable projects, especially those related to affordable or worker housing. | 2.1.4: Island County, City of Oak Harbor, Town of Coupeville | |
| | 5. Review the County events code with a goal of simplifying and modifying to account for small businesses. | 2.1.5-2.1.6: Island County, Agriculture Resources Committee of Island County (ARCIC) | |
| | 6. Review and streamline County codes around food processing and farm stand permitting. | 2.1.7: EDC for Island County, City of Oak Harbor | |
| | 7. Collaborate with Island County by sharing information and expertise on projects and topics related to economic and business development. | | |
| 2. Promote Island County as a great place to do business. | 1. Continue to maintain and update County and regional economic information and data, such as the County profile and industry data, on the EDC's website. | 2.2.1: EDC for Island County | 2.2.1: Ongoing + long- term |

Goal 2: Support existing local businesses and community assets, increase diversification, and promote Island County as an attractive business environment.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| 2. Promote Island County as a great place to do business. | 2. Continue to collaborate with San Juan, Skagit, and Whatcom County ADOs to market Northwest Washington as an attractive location for businesses. | 2.2.2: EDC for Island County | 2.2.2: Ongoing + long- term |
| 3. Continue to support existing businesses. | 1. Conduct business outreach and monitoring efforts to identify and address challenges and opportunities faced by businesses. 2. Provide information to businesses on such resources as access to funds, business growth, and educational programs and opportunities. 3. Provide referrals to partner agencies as appropriate. 4. Advocate for existing major employers and strengthen public understanding of their value to the local economy. 5. Continue to support Port tenants and businesses. 6. Develop business-specific workshops on an as needed basis. 7. Continue to host Business Builder Seminars. 8. Support workforce skill development throughout incumbent working training (existing workforce), on-the-job training (new workers), and support creating a talent pipeline for future workforce needs. | 2.3.1-2.3.5: EDC for Island County 2.3.5: Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey 2.3.6: Goosefoot Community Fund 2.3.7: Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce, Oak Harbor Main Street Association, City of Oak Harbor 2.3.8: Northwest Workforce Council | 2.3.1-2.3.8: Ongoing + long- term |

Goal 2: Support existing local businesses and community assets, increase diversification, and promote Island County as an attractive business environment.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|--|--|------------------------------|
| 4. Explore options for recruitment of employers that complements and leverages the existing industry mix and aligns with local values. | 1. Provide interested businesses from outside the county with site location and other pertinent information. | 2.4.1-2.4.4: EDC for Island County, City of Oak Harbor | 2.4.1-5: Ongoing + long-term |
| | 2. Proactively market Island County to potential businesses and industries utilizing website and networking opportunities. | 2.4.5: Island County, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey | |
| | 3. Follow up on discovered opportunities including lead generation from the state. | | |
| | 4. Provide expertise and input in specific projects such as the designated Opportunity Zone in Oak Harbor. | | |
| | 5. Create shovel ready sites and a diverse building supply for businesses that align with local needs and values. | | |
| 5. Promote and support innovation and value-added upgrading in key economic sectors of agriculture, construction, military / defense, marine trades, tourism, and advanced manufacturing. | 1. Support leveraging local funds to increase food-processing infrastructure. | 2.5.1: ARCIC, NABC, USDA | 2.5.1-4: Ongoing + long-term |
| | 2. Complete feasibility study for meat and poultry processing facilities in Island County. | 2.5.2: ARCIC | |
| | 3. Support the development and improvement of commercial kitchens for value-added food processing and food truck usage. | 2.5.3: Goosefoot Community Fund, Port of South Whidbey | |
| | 4. Support the development of an Island County food systems study and plan. | 2.5.4: Island County, Town of Coupeville, ARCIC | |

Goal 2: Support existing local businesses and community assets, increase diversification, and promote Island County as an attractive business environment.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------|
| 5. Promote and support innovation and value-added upgrading in key economic sectors of agriculture, construction, military / defense, marine trades, tourism, and advanced manufacturing. | 5. Continue to support food recovery programs. | 2.5.5: City of Langley, Langley Zero Waste | 2.5.5-8: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 6. Continue to work with NABC to promote agriculture business resources and funding opportunities. | 2.5.6: EDC for Island County, Goosefoot Community Fund, NABC | |
| | 7. Provide space for distribution of agricultural products, the marine trades, and tourist lodging. | 2.5.7: Port of South Whidbey | |
| | 8. Improve infrastructure for advanced manufacturing. | 2.5.8: Island County, City of Oak Harbor, Port of South Whidbey | |
| 6. Strengthen and better define and build entrepreneurial resources in order to create opportunities for mentoring, financing, exporting, legal and tax services, and networking. | 1. Build out the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Initiative. | 2.6.1-2.6.2: EDC for Island County | 2.6.1-2: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 1.Explore and take advantage of future entrepreneurship funding opportunities. | | |
| | 2.Continue to expand entrepreneurship work on Camano Island. | | |
| | 3.Explore options for expanding local entrepreneurship lending programs. | | |
| 7. Support the creation of shovel-ready commercial, residential, and industrial sites in locations that are not in critical areas or habitats. | 2. Continue to host entrepreneurship programs and workshops. | | |
| | 1. Identify remaining buildable lands that are already appropriately zoned for industrial and commercial development. | 2.7.1: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey | 2.7.1: Ongoing + long- term |

Goal 2: Support existing local businesses and community assets, increase diversification, and promote Island County as an attractive business environment.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|
| 7. Support the creation of shovel-ready commercial, residential, and industrial sites in locations that are not in critical areas or habitats. | 2. Identify remaining building lands that are already appropriately zoned for residential and RAID and identify infrastructure gaps. | 2.7.2: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, conservation districts | 2.7.2-5: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 3. Explore options for expanding DeLaurentis Airport business sites. | 2.7.3: Island County, Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve | |
| | 4. Promote and advertise the retail space openings at the Greenbank Farm and Port of Coupeville Wharf. | 2.7.4: Port of Coupeville | |
| | 5. Support development of Industrial North. | 2.7.5: Island County, City of Oak Harbor, Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce, NASWI | |
| | | | |
| 8. Continue to support Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands (county-wide Tourism). | 1. Participate, support, and promote Washington State's <u>Eat Local First</u> campaign. | 2.8.1-2.8.3: Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands | 2.8.1-5: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 2. Support and promote farm and sea-to-table marketing. | 2.8.4-2.8.5: Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands, Island County, Town of Coupeville, Port of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Arts Districts, ArtsWA | |
| | 3. Explore options to support and create marketing campaigns for Whidbey and Camano Island grown and made products. | | |
| | 4. Support and promote environmentally responsible, sustainable, economically impactful events throughout Island County. | 2.8.4.1: Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands | |
| | 1. Explore options to identify key events, impacts, and return on investments. | | |
| | 5. Explore options to support the creative economy, with a particular emphasis on Langley Creates and Coupeville Arts District. | | |

Goal 2: Support existing local businesses and community assets, increase diversification, and promote Island County as an attractive business environment.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|
| 8. Continue to support Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands (county-wide Tourism). | 6. Provide support to County Tourism Committee. | 2.8.6: EDC for Island County | 2.8.6: Ongoing + long- term |
| 9. Explore options to conduct or participate in economic impact studies for key sectors of Island County's economy. | 1. Explore options to conduct an economic impact study for the agriculture sector. 2. Collaborate with the South Sound Military Community Partnership (SSMCP) and the Lt Governor's Office on the statewide defense / military sector economic impact assessment. 3. Explore options to conduct economic impact studies related to Port business. | 2.9.1: ARCIC 2.9.2: Island County, City of Oak Harbor, NASWI, SSMCP 2.9.3: Port of South Whidbey | 2.9.1-3: Ongoing + long- term |
| 10. Promote and support the development of local financial resources and financial literacy for businesses. | 1. Continue to market and advertise opportunities for Whidbey Island Local Lending (WILL). 2. Continue to offer financial literacy workshops for businesses on Whidbey and Camano Island. 3. Design and offer business specific workshops and trainings. | 2.10.1: EDC for Island County 2.10.2: EDC for Island County 2.10.3: Goosefoot Community Fund | 2.10.1-3: Ongoing + long- term |

Goal 3: Align quality education and skills training programs with employer needs and create living wage job opportunities in Island County.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. Continue to participate in regional workforce partnerships and organizations. | 1.Continue to serve on the board of the Northwest Workforce Council. | 3.1.1-3.1.3: EDC for Island County | 3.1.1-3: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 2.Continue to serve on the Skagit Valley College worker retraining committee. | | |
| | 3.Continue to have an EDC Board member who represents post-secondary education. | | |
| 2. Address the ongoing labor shortage by focusing on unserved and underserved worker groups. | 1.Support veterans re-entering the civilian workforce. | 3.2.1: Island County, City of Oak Harbor, Department of Veterans Affairs | 3.2.1-7: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 2.Support and promote employment opportunities for Military Spouses. | 3.2.2: SSMCP, NASWI | |
| | 3.Support partnership between NASWI and credentialing programs for active duty personnel and veterans to become certified in their myriad skills. | 3.2.3: NASWI, SVC, City of Oak Harbor | |
| | 4.Support youth training and job opportunities. | 3.2.1-3.2.7: Northwest Workforce Council | |
| | 5.Support apprenticeship and work-based training opportunities. | | |
| | 6.Explore options for retiree employment and volunteer opportunities. | | |
| | 7.Explore employment options for formerly incarcerated people. | | |

Goal 3: Align quality education and skills training programs with employer needs and create living wage job opportunities in Island County.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 3. Improve education attainment outcomes and create opportunities for all to prosper. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Align skills and training options with living wage opportunities. 2.Increase access and public awareness about trades and vocational opportunities. 3.Increase access to early childhood education and services. 4.Increase educational attainment rates. 5.Expand access to STEAM programming. 6.Explore options for a local Skills Center. | <p>3.3.1: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, School Districts, Northwest Workforce Council, Skagit Valley College (Worker Retraining Advisory Committee)</p> <p>3.3.2: School Districts, Northwest Workforce Council, NWESD</p> <p>3.3.3-6: School Districts, NWESD, OSPI</p> <p>3.3.5: School Districts, Career Connect</p> | 3.1.1-3: Ongoing + long- term |



Whidbey and Camano Islands are home to over 300 small family farms. Photo courtesy of [Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands](#).

Goal 4: Sustainably manage the natural beauty and resources of Island County.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|---|--|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Prioritize actions for climate resilience. | 1. Support shorelines and sensitive environment through evidence-based approaches. | 4.1.1.1-4.1.1.3: Island County (Public Works, Planning and Community Development, Public Health, Marine Resources Committee), Whidbey Island Conservation District, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor | 4.1.1-6: Ongoing + long-term |
| | 1. Incentivize Low Impact Design (LID), green infrastructure for stormwater management. | | |
| | 2. Improve adaptive management approaches to tracking and mitigating nonpoint source pollution. | | |
| | 3. Restrict development and septic infrastructure in flood prone and critical areas. | 4.1.2-4.1.4: Island County (Public Works, Planning and Community Development, Public Health, GIS Manager, Marine Resources Committee), Whidbey Island Conservation District, Town of Coupeville | |
| | 2. Use sea level rise and rainfall project modeling and historical data to inform short and long term decisions, policymaking in order to guide planning and development near shorelines and critical areas. | | |
| | 3. Develop county modeling and data to identify vulnerable shoreline structures. | 4.1.5: Island County (Planning, Public Health,) Whidbey Conservation District | |
| | 4. Support the development of green infrastructure and environmentally friendly building practices through zoning and health regulations. | 4.1.6: Island County (Public Health, Water Districts), Washington State Department of Health | |
| | 5. Plan for warmer temperatures, wildfires, wildfire smoke, and rising sea levels through community planning and design guidelines. | | |
| | 6. Strengthen hydrogeological monitoring of seawater intrusion and drinking water systems in Island County. | | |

Goal 4: Sustainably manage the natural beauty and resources of Island County.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Prioritize actions for climate resilience. | 7. Explore options to apply for grants for additional electric vehicle charging stations. | 4.1.7: Port of Coupeville, Town of Coupeville | 4.1.7-10: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 8. Explore options and identify funding to raise the Coupeville Wharf. | 4.1.8: Port of Coupeville | |
| | 9. Incorporate Climate Change and Resilience element into Comprehensive Plan Updates per GMA requirements. | 4.1.9: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor | |
| | 10. Prioritize climate strategies that have the lowest possible long-term costs to the public, whenever possible. | 4.1.10: Island County | |
| 2. Support, promote, and educate the public on required adaptations to sea level rise. | 1. Expand outreach and engagement campaigns through in-person events and social media, strengthening existing resiliency programs and working with local partners. | 4.2.1: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Sno-Isle Libraries, Coupeville School District, Langley School District, Oak Harbor School District, Stanwood Camano Island School District, Sound Water Stewards, Whidbey Island Conservation District, Marine Resources Committee | 4.2.1: Ongoing + long- term |
| 3. Develop additional local incentives for forest, wetland, and farmland conservation. | 1. Reexamine the Public Benefit Rating System using results and feedback from recent years and refine as needed. | 4.3.1: Island County (Planning and Natural Resources), Whidbey Island Conservation District, Town of Coupeville | 4.3.1: Ongoing + long- term |

Goal 4: Sustainably manage the natural beauty and resources of Island County.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| 3. Develop additional local incentives for forest, wetland, and farmland conservation. | 2. Reexamine the Conservation Futures Fund program to provide more equitable access as well as climate resilience elements such as the additional use of conserved land for stormwater parks; refine as needed. | 4.3.2-4.3.5: Island County (Planning and Natural Resources), Whidbey Island Conservation District, Town of Coupeville | 4.3.2-5: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 3. Explore options to develop watershed plans. 4. Explore options to develop a local wetland mitigation bank. 5. For all actions, consider impacts on affordable housing, with a focus on urban growth, preserving rural lands for forest, wetlands, and agriculture. | 4.3.1-4.3.2: Whidbey Camano Land Trust | |
| 4. Support and promote the development of the Green and Blue economies. | 1. Develop resilient public infrastructure to support Green and Blue zones. | 4.4.1-4.4.2: Island County (Public Works, Planning, Public Health), Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Embrace Whidbey Camano Islands, private sector | 4.4.1-4.4.3: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 2. Share the evidence-based benefits of Green and Blue infrastructure through community outreach and education. 3. Provide facilities and infrastructure for commercial fishing and crabbing, charter boats, and boat rentals. | 4.4.3: Port of South Whidbey | |

Goal 4: Sustainably manage the natural beauty and resources of Island County.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 5. Support opportunities for salmon habitat restoration and rehabilitation. | 1. Strengthen salmon recovery efforts through Salmon Recovery Technical and Citizen's Advisory Committee (SRTCC) and the Lead Entity coordinator by integrating an environmental justice and climate lens. | 4.5.1: Island County, Local Integrating Organization, Northwest Straits Foundation, Marine Resources Committees, Tribes, Whidbey Camano Land Trust | 4.5.1-3: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 2. Continue to participate in the annual salmon release events. | | |
| | 3. Continue to protect riparian areas through County regulations. | 4.5.2: City of Oak Harbor, Whidbey Camano Land Trust | |
| 6. Support and promote improvements to Island County's public lands, reserves, and parks. | | 4.5.3: Island County | |
| | 1. Expand environmental justice project review criteria for conservation land acquisitions to incentivize public access to green spaces and waterfronts, as a social driver of health, particularly for low-income communities. | 4.6.1: Island County (Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Citizens Advisory Board (CAB)), Whidbey Camano Land Trust | 4.6.1-5: Ongoing + long- term |
| | 2. Intentionally create connected environments and expand recreational opportunities when designing community infrastructure, intentionally allocating infrastructure resources to low-income communities. | 4.6.2+5: Island County (Planning, Public Works, Health), Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Whidbey Camano Land Trust, Embrace Whidbey Camano Islands, private sector, community groups | |
| | 3. Explore options for Conservations Future Funding for Freund Marsh. | | |
| | 4. Maintain and improve Port recreational boat ramps and parks. | 4.6.3: City of Oak Harbor, Whidbey Camano Land Trust | |
| | 5. Increase equitable access to recreational environments through inclusive practices. | 4.6.4: Port of South Whidbey | |

Goal 4: Sustainably manage the natural beauty and resources of Island County.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|
| 7. Be prepared for population growth and in-migration. | 1. Support the Comprehensive Plan period update process, which includes updating population projections and housing unit allocations. | 4.7.1: Island County Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey Support: EDC for Island County | 4.7.1: 2024-2025 |
| 8. Increase disaster preparedness among small business owners and entrepreneurs. | 1. Incorporate and share information about preparedness best practices (FEMA, WA EMD) with businesses as part of business assistance work. 2. Collaborate with Chambers and Emergency Management partners to have a coordinated effort to develop courses and business continuity plans. | 4.8.1: EDC for Island County 4.8.2: EDC for Island County, Island County Chambers of Commerce, Island County Emergency Management | 4.8.1-2: Ongoing + long- term |



RESOLVE TO BE READY

Resolve to be ready for future disasters today. Visit <https://www.ready.gov/business> for business resources. Photo provided by Ready.gov social media toolkits at <https://www.ready.gov/toolkits>.

Goal 5: Deepen collaboration and coordination between Island County and regional partners.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|---|---|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Further develop relationships with regional economic development agencies and strategic ADO partners. | 1. Continue to participate in Washington Economic Development Association (WEDA). 2. Continue to build relationships with ADOs around Washington State. 3. Continue to participate in and build relationship with Washington Public Ports Association (WPPA). | 5.1.1-5.1.2: EDC for Island County 5.1.3: Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey | 5.1.1-2: Ongoing + long-term |
| 2. Explore opportunities for collaboration and business support in Stanwood and Anacortes. | 1. Explore options to support maritime business growth in Stanwood and Anacortes. | 5.2.1: City of Oak Harbor, EDC for Island County, EDASC, EASC, Island County, Skagit County, Snohomish County | 5.2.1: Ongoing + long-term |
| 3. Explore opportunities for developing the creative economy across Snohomish, Skagit, and Island Counties. | 1. Explore options to develop the creative economy across Snohomish, Skagit, and Island Counties | 5.3: EDC for Island County, EDASC, EASC, Island County, Skagit County, Snohomish County, Coupeville Creative District, Langleigh Creates, ArtsWA | 5.3.1: Ongoing + long-term |
| 4. Explore opportunities to enhance disaster preparedness and resiliency between Island, Skagit, and Snohomish Counties. | 1. Advance public health regional preparedness through continued resource sharing, continuity of operations planning, and mutual assistance agreements. 2. Continue to collaborate with Whatcom, Skagit, and San Juan Island on food system resiliency. | 5.4.1: Island County (Emergency Management, Public Health), Snohomish County, Skagit County 5.4.2: Island County, Skagit County, Whatcom County, San Juan County, ARCIC, NABC, USDA | 5.4.1-2: Ongoing + long-term |

Goal 5: Deepen collaboration and coordination between Island County and regional partners.

| Sub-Goal | Action Items | Partners | Timeline |
|--|--|---|------------------------------|
| 5. Explore additional opportunities for equipment and technology sharing between Island, Skagit, and Snohomish Counties. | <div>1. Explore options to work with Skagit and Whatcom County to develop shared agricultural infrastructure, such as a mobile slaughter unit.</div> <div>2. Explore options to work with Skagit and Whatcom Counties to develop a regional Wetland Mitigation Bank.</div> | <div>5.5.1: Island County, Town of Coupeville, City of Langley, City of Oak Harbor, Port of Coupeville, Port of South Whidbey, ARCIC</div> <div>5.5.2: Island County, Skagit County, Whatcom County, USDA, Northwest Agriculture Business Center, Washington State Department of Ecology, ARCIC</div> | 5.5.1-2: Ongoing + long-term |



The City of Oak Harbor and Oak Harbor Marina from the water with Mount Baker in the background during moonrise. Photo provided by the City of Oak Harbor.

This section provides information about how progress will be measured and what metrics will be tracked to gauge the progress and implementation of the Island County CEDS Action Plan.

1. Broad Performance Measures

Through the implementation of the vision, goals, and action strategies, the Review Committee expects the following long-term benefits:

- Living wage jobs that can support families will be created and retained.
- Infrastructure development and improvements will support residential and appropriate industrial development in non-critical areas.
- Economic development programming, coordination, communication, and information networks will be improved and strengthened, resulting in increased economic resiliency.
- Island County's highly valued quality of life and natural beauty will be maintained and conditions will improve for residents regardless of ability, race, gender, class, or religion.

Data and measurements can provide a snapshot of the region's economic health at a point in time or over time. Therefore, on an annual basis, the following metrics will be evaluated:

- Number of jobs by sector (WA ESD / BLS)
- Per capita personal income / average hourly and annual wages (WA ESD / BLS)

Island County has many stakeholders involved with economic development that have both distinct and overlapping responsibilities and authority. Therefore, it is important to note that outcomes may not be solely attributed to implementation of the economic strategy by any single partner and is likely due to a coordination of efforts. Additionally, Island County's economic system exists in a local, state, and global context. Some economic metrics are strongly influenced by factors outside of local control. For example, while affordable and available housing and childcare are both strongly influenced by state and federal policies and funding, as well as market forces, such as inflation and interest rates.

Therefore, in-depth local knowledge combined with available quantitative and qualitative data will be required to understand why changes may be occurring and obtain a holistic picture of the economic health of the region.

2. Specific Performance Measures

In addition to regularly reviewing econometric data related to Island County, specific performance measures will be evaluated as they relate to the details found in **Section 3, the Action Plan**. The metrics below will be measured over time and across different geographies and demographics (age, race, gender, etc.), where possible and data is available, to understand changes.

Goal 1: Infrastructure Metrics

- Grant investments in infrastructure projects (all types)
- System efficiency (water loss, electricity consumption, etc.) from Consumer Confidence Reports
- Water/wastewater: capacity limitations, number of systems with compliance issues, consumption rates
- Transportation: Transit ridership by purpose, number of fixed routes

- Broadband: Increase in number with access to high-speed internet, affordability rate
- Energy: Megawatts of installed local power generation, outage time per year
- Housing: New units built, housing stock volume, housing prices, permits issued by unit type; local ordinances updates related to affordability, ADUs/DADUs, vacancy rates
- Childcare: Number of providers, number of slots available

Goal 2: Business Support Metrics

- Job creation in key sectors
- Net increase in average annual wage
- Number of networking events and number of attendees
- Number of entrepreneurs receiving counseling services
- Number of recruitment leads responded to
- Number of companies in key sectors
- Increase volume of small business lending
- Annual cost of living comparison

Goal 3: Workforce Development Metrics

- Graduation / GED achievement rates
- Enrollment rates in postsecondary education
- Labor force participation rates
- Number of military spouses employed locally
- Jobs that align with the skills of Island County's workforce

Goal 4: Climate Resiliency Metrics

- Number of public information events regarding required adaptations to sea rise
- Number of public information events regarding wildfires and wildfire smoke
- Number of events for business disaster preparedness
- Communications sent to businesses and residents regarding climate resiliency
- Number of local ordinances reviewed and amended to create incentives for forest, wetland, and farmland conservation
- Investments in public lands, reserves, parks
- Investments in blue and green infrastructure

Goal 5: Regional Collaboration

- Increased communication between organizations, businesses, municipalities, counties
- Increased collaboration between municipalities and county
- Number of SWISS meetings with Island County elected officials in attendance
- Number of regional meetings related to economic resiliency
- Number of regional meetings related to workforce development
- Number of regional meetings related to transportation

3. Evaluation Plan

The evaluation framework serves as a tool to gauge progress on the successful implementation of the CEDS goals. The CEDS planning process and the creation of **Section 1.5**, Economic Conditions, required a review of “How are we doing?” and “What is our current situation?” As part of the evaluation process, CEDS stakeholders will be asked, “How are we doing now?” “What has been done?” and “Where do we need to focus more efforts?” Oversight and monitoring will provide the accountability required to ensure that the Island County CEDS 2024-2028 remains an active, living document with clear, meaningful, impactful economic development deliverables.

Per the recommendation the Review Committee, and with the consensus of the Board of Island County Commissioners, Island County intends to fund a third party responsible for evaluation monitoring and generating an annual progress report for all partners using RCED funds. The third party will be responsible for coordinating the annual Review Committee meeting as well as a quarterly review schedule to meet with responsible partners and collaborators regularly.

On a quarterly basis, the evaluator will meet with relevant partners to discuss progress on the goals they are responsible for. Quarterly meetings can also be used to identify ongoing gaps, additional partners, funding, and so on, related to the specific goal or sub-goal. The evaluator will also coordinate with relevant established committees (e.g. Transportation, Tourism, Broadband, etc.) and will be responsible for updating the CEDS Project List annually and on an as needed emergency basis.

In addition to evaluation of economic development activities countywide, as the ADO for Island County the EDC regularly reports deliverables and targets to Island County and the Washington State Department of Commerce on a quarterly basis. This includes financial reporting and reporting on business assistance efforts conducted during the quarter. The EDC also completes an ADO Best Practices report annually, which is submitted to the Department of Commerce and the Washington State Legislature.

Regional economic prosperity requires resiliency. The [EDA \(2023\)](#) defines resilience as “the ability to recover quickly from a shock, the ability to withstand a shock, and the ability to avoid the shock altogether. Establishing economic resilience in a local or regional economy requires the ability to anticipate risk, evaluate how that risk can impact key economic assets, and build a responsive capacity.”

Examples of disruptions include:

- Downturns in economy or specific industries and sectors
- Changes in demand for locally produced goods or consumer spending
- External shocks such as the exit of a major employer or a disaster of any sort, including a pandemic

As outlined in [Island County’s Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan](#), Island County is susceptible to many natural hazards and has experienced several disasters that resulted in a federal declaration. Since the Mount Saint Helen’s eruption in 1980, Island County’s disasters have primarily been from high tides and severe storms resulting in flooding, high winds, mudslides, and landslides.

Of particular concern to many in Island County is sea level rise. Currently there are already properties that are being submerged due to sea level rise, which has and will incur myriad economic impacts to Island County.

Those may include a reduction in property tax base, costs to the public of removing derelict and abandoned structures on the coast and holding back the sea, removal of ineffective shoreline armoring, as well as costs to recreation, tourism, fishing, and other maritime sectors due to the degradation of the coastal environment.

1. Planning

Island County, the Town of Coupeville, the Cities of Langley and Oak Harbor, and the Port of Coupeville and Port of South Whidbey are all undertaking various planning efforts related to generating resiliency, of which economic and climate resiliency are major parts.

The Island County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) works directly with Washington State Emergency Management Division (EMD), FEMA Region X, and Homeland Security Region 1. The DEM is responsible for planning and coordinating actions for the preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery from emergencies and disasters. This includes updating and maintaining two related planning documents: The Island County [Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan](#) (CEMP) and the [Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan](#). The DEM is in the process of updating its Hazard Mitigation Plan, the most recently approved plan was in [2020](#).

In addition to being up to date with Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning, Island County and its municipalities subject to the GMA may also be required to include a new climate element in its 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update. In 2023, Washington State passed an update that added two sub-elements: Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction and Resilience.

Aside from emergency and disaster-related resilience, many aspects of the Island County CEDS helps generate and increase economic and climate resilience. For example, working with partners to create more affordable and available housing and childcare options will reduce employee turnover and make it easier for employers in Island County to find workers. This generates economic resilience. Workforce development and economic diversification also builds resilience to loss of major employers. By expanding access and inclusion, employers are less likely to overlook the talent and skills of people who are already living in Island County, which contributes to economic and climate resilience by retaining talent and reducing commute in/out of Island County. By improving accessibility to our marketing outreach efforts, more companies could get information critical to the health of their business, also increasing economic resilience. Finally, **Goal 4** is entirely about climate resilience.

2. Information Networks

There are several established communication and information networks in Island County that many key stakeholders regularly participate in, such as the Island County Council of Governments (COG). COG is lead by three members of the council, which is comprised of elected officials from Island County, the Cities of Oak Harbor and Langley, the Town of Coupeville, as well as the Ports of Coupeville and South Whidbey. This is an important venue for discussion and to gain consensus from elected leadership in Island County.

During the development of the Island County CEDS, two EDA representatives visited COG to provide an introduction to the EDA's work in March-April 2023. The EDC Executive Director and consultant again visited COG to provide information on the process, the intended use and benefits of the document, and to provide a progress report. In March 2024 COG reviewed, discussed, agreed upon the Evaluation Plan outlined in **Section 4.3** above.

Many elected official stakeholders in Island County also participate in the SWISS Counties Collaborative. SWISS Counties have adopted areas of focus, which include Internet expansion, behavioral health resources, and transportation investments. They also work together as a region to support disaster preparedness and coordinate emergency management plans. This effort intends to strengthen existing relationships in order to expand and to advocate to the State Legislature on issues that affect all five counties.

Likewise, multiple key stakeholders convene in industry specific workgroups in Island County, such as the Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism Board, the Oversight Group for Leadership Whidbey, and the Skagit/Island Counties Builders Association.

1. Frequently Asked Questions by Stakeholders

What is a CEDS?

CEDS stands for Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. It is a long-term planning document that is intended to guide economic development throughout a region.

What are the benefits of having a CEDS?

The CEDS is a requirement to be eligible to compete for EDA and other federal funding opportunities. It is also a requirement to be eligible for many Washington State funding opportunities. The CEDS also provides a long-term vision and plan for economic development in the region, making development more programmatic and efficient.

How will feedback be evaluated and incorporated?

The consultant managing edits for the document will review each comment and piece of feedback with the EDC for Island County and the CEDS Review Committee and assess what changes, if any, should be made to the document. The most important factors will be if the feedback complies with the CEDS purpose and guidelines and if it fits within the vision, priorities, goals, and objectives established by the CEDS Review Committee in the document.

Who will implement the CEDS?

Every partner that is listed in **Section 3.3 Action Plan** as a partner (Column 3) will be responsible for implementation within their jurisdiction or agency.

How often will the CEDS be updated?

Minimally, the CEDS will be amended annually to update the CEDS Project List. It will also be updated on an as needed basis in order to address external shocks or new situations. The entire document will be updated every five years.

What is the difference between a CEDS and a Comprehensive Plan? And do we need both?

Yes, we need both as the documents satisfy different requirements. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) oversees the CEDS requirements, process, and document. The EDA is the federal bureau for economic development in the United States. In order to access EDA funding, counties must have an up to date CEDS with a clear evaluation plan.

Comprehensive Plans are required for some counties, cities, and towns, based upon the Growth Management Act (GMA), which is Washington State law. An economic element is currently still optional, though a climate resilience element was mandated as part of the 2024-2025 update.

2. Key Stakeholders

From May 1, 2023 – February 29, 2023, several key stakeholder groups were solicited to engage in providing input and feedback into the CEDS process as well as the actual content to generate this document.

Those stakeholder groups were:

- Public agencies: city, county, tribal governments, public utility districts, regional planning groups
- Public advisory boards and committees: select groups that advise public agencies listed above on issues related to economic development
- Private sector: businesses, entrepreneurs
- Post-secondary institutions: institutions offering post-secondary course work, degrees, and workforce training
- Other economic, social, or health organizations, including nonprofits

The Review Committee identified key sectors within the private sector for targeted outreach. Those sectors were chosen based on several pieces of information. First, the consultant reviewed data on the largest employment and payroll sectors in Island County with the Review Committee. Second, the consultant also reviewed and provided information to the Review Committee on Washington State Department of Commerce's sector and cluster focus, as well as the Northwest Workforce Council's sector of focus for the Northwest Workforce Development Area, which Island County is a part of. This information weighs employment numbers, wages, as well as available local, state, and federal resources.

After the sectors of interest were agreed upon, the Review Committee agreed that the EDC for Island County would work with the consultant to generate a preliminary list of business owners and nonprofit leaders from each sector for targeted outreach. The list was then reviewed at a Review Committee meeting and distributed for comments and suggestions.

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Agriculture (62) | • Manufacturing (5) |
| • Construction (72) | • Maritime / Marine Trades (4) |
| • Creative Economy (13) | • Military / Defense (5) |
| • Education (16) | • Nonprofits (26) |
| • Healthcare (16) | • Real Estate (11) |
| • Infrastructure (includes energy, utilities) (29) | • Retail (includes restaurants) (18) |
| | • Tourism (includes events, leisure, recreation) (45) |

After the list was developed, the Review Committee members also provided contact information where possible. An initial email introducing the stakeholders to the CEDS process and requesting their feedback was sent to all stakeholders emails were identified for in September 2023. Additional follow up emails for those that did not respond were sent in September and October 2023. In total, over 600 emails were sent for targeted stakeholder outreach, not including follow ups, thank you notes, or responding to stakeholder questions.

3. SWOT Survey and Results

The SWOT survey was available for response from May 1 – February 29, 2024. Review Committee members actively advertising the opportunity to participate from May 1 – August 30, 2023.

The marketing and advertising of the SWOT survey included but was not limited to the following places:

- EDC for Island County newsletter to businesses and entrepreneurs
- EDC for Island County social media posts (Facebook and Instagram)
- EDC for Island County email to economic development partners to share via newsletter or social media posts templates
- EDC annual membership meeting (QR codes on all tables)
- Langley Chamber of Commerce social media posts and membership meeting
- Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce social media posts and board input
- Town of Coupeville newsletter

We consciously chose to order this survey as strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities so that survey respondents would end the survey on a positive, rather than negative note.

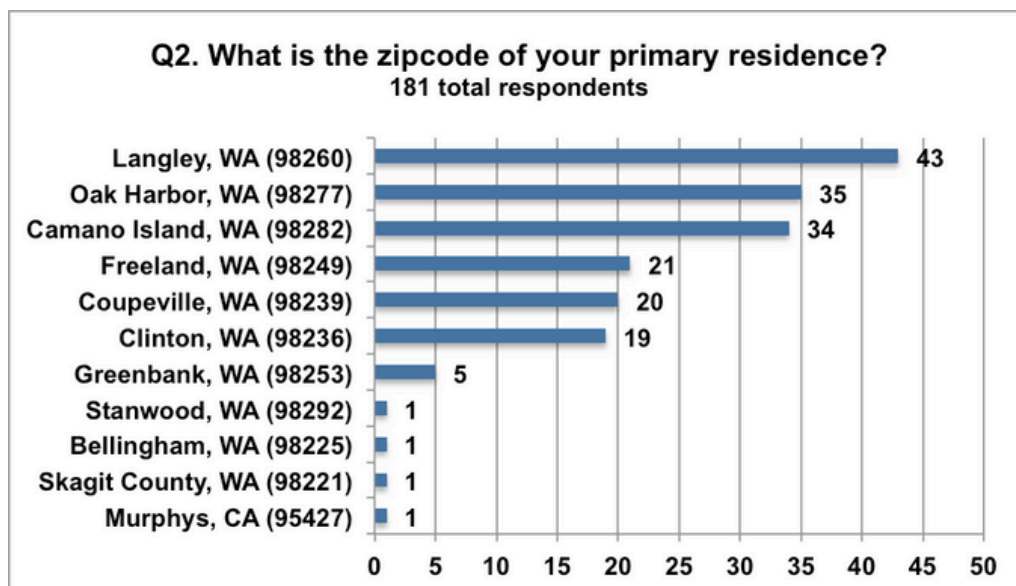
The English survey questions were as follows, with graphics and summarized data where aggregation is possible.

Identification

1. What is your first and last name? This data will be kept anonymous.

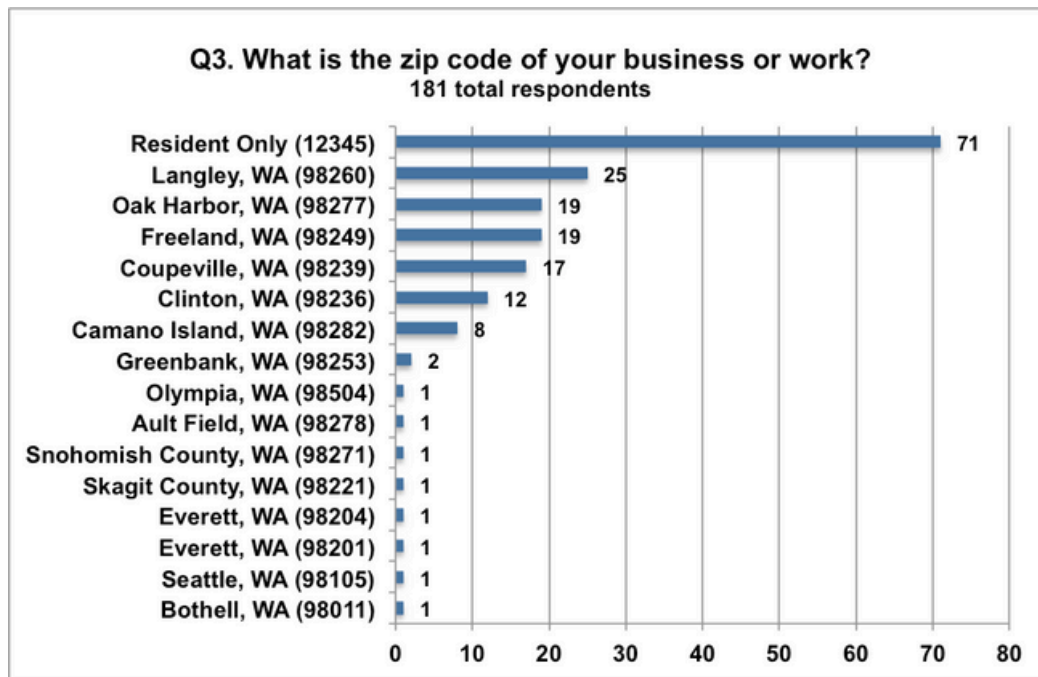
2. What is the zip code of your primary residence?

Out of 181 responses to the survey, the most responses were from individuals residing in Langley with 43 responses (23.75%). The next largest responses were from Oak Harbor (19.3%) and Camano Island (18.8%). There were only three responses from outside of Island County.



3. What is the zip code of your business or work? If you are retired, or are answering this survey as a resident only, please enter 12345.

Among the 181 responses, 71 indicated that they were answering from the perspective of a resident, rather than an employee or business owner. The top four answering from a business or work perspective were based in Langley (25), Oak Harbor (19), Freeland (19), and Coupeville (17). Only eight responded that their business or work was located outside of Island County.



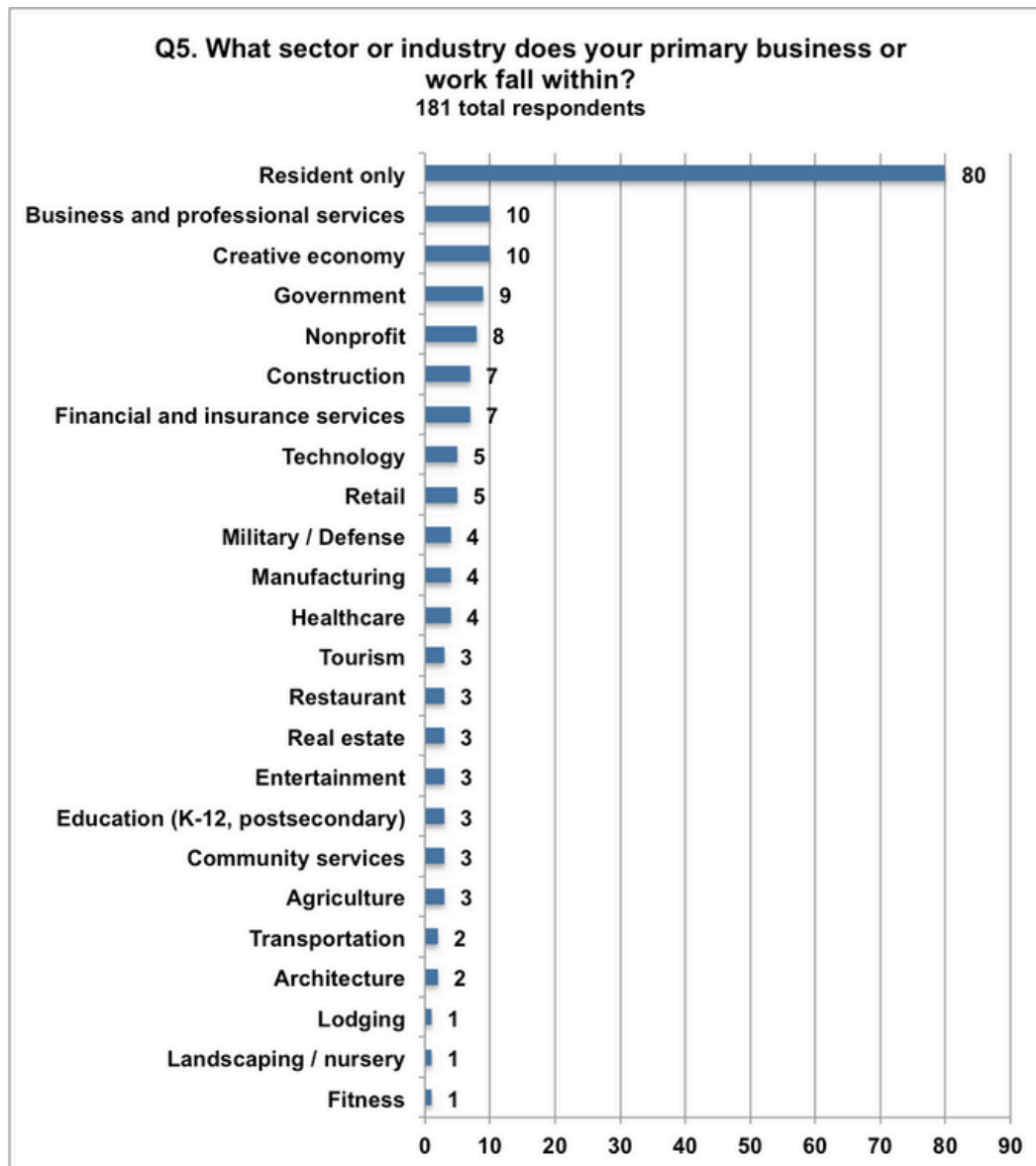
4. If you would like follow up information regarding the Island County CEDS, including future opportunities to provide comment, what is the best email address to reach you at?

This data will be kept anonymous.

5. What sector or industry does your primary business or work fall within?

While 71 of the 181 respondents indicated that they were answering from a resident only perspective in Q3, 80 respondents indicated that they were answering from a resident only perspective when asked what sector or industry their work or business was within. The top five sectors of responses after resident only were business and professional services, creative economy, government, nonprofit, and construction. For additional breakdown, see the Q5 figure below.

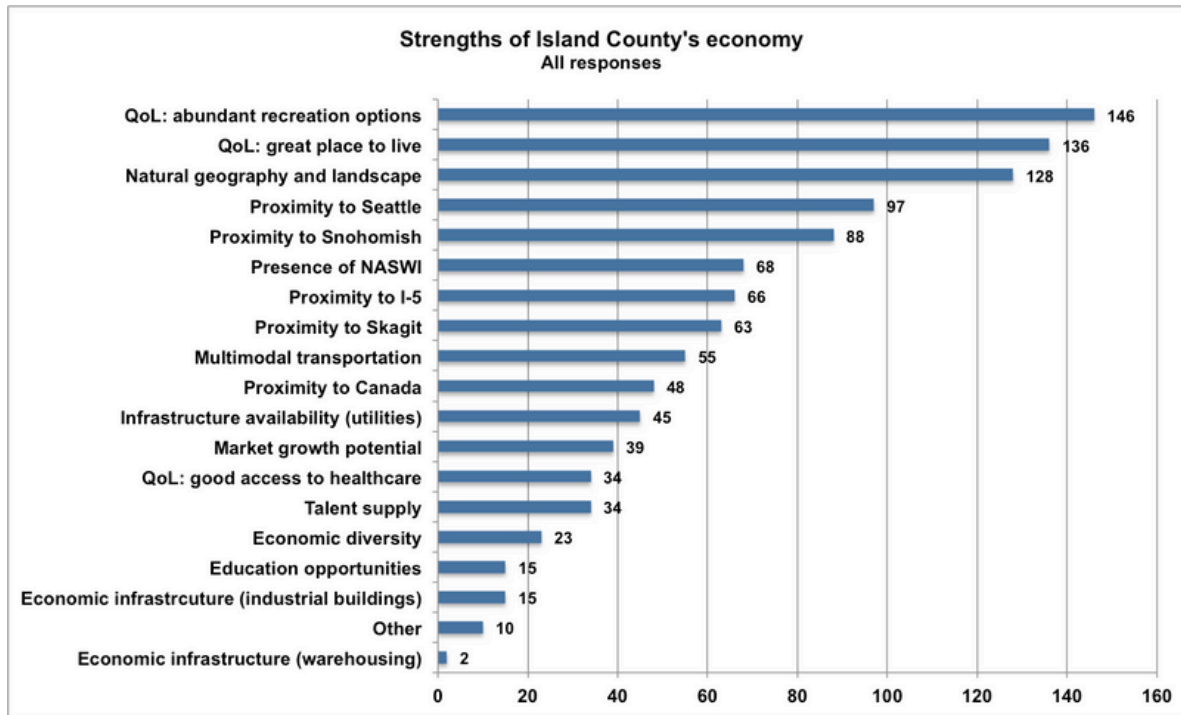
5. What sector or industry does your primary business or work fall within?



Identifying Strengths

6. Would you consider any of the following characteristics to be strengths of the Island County economy, as it relates to your particular business or sector? Below is a list of strengths commonly identified in other communities. Some have been localized to make sense within Island County's context. *Check all that you believe apply to Island County. If you do not believe any to be true, please check Other.*

Identifying Strengths



Far and away, respondents answered that Island County's greatest strengths are related to its high quality of life and geography, which results in abundant natural beauty and landscapes and offers many opportunities for recreation and tourism. While Island County is not as directly connected to I-5, Seattle, and Vancouver, many respondents believe that proximity to Seattle, Canada, and Snohomish and Skagit counties are a major strength and benefit to Island County. 68 respondents also noted that the presence of NASWI is a major strength of Island County's economy.

7. Do you have any other feedback or inputs regarding strengths of your industry or sector or Island County's economy generally? Topics of particular interest include economic diversity, business attraction, talent supply, business resources, infrastructure, and quality of life.

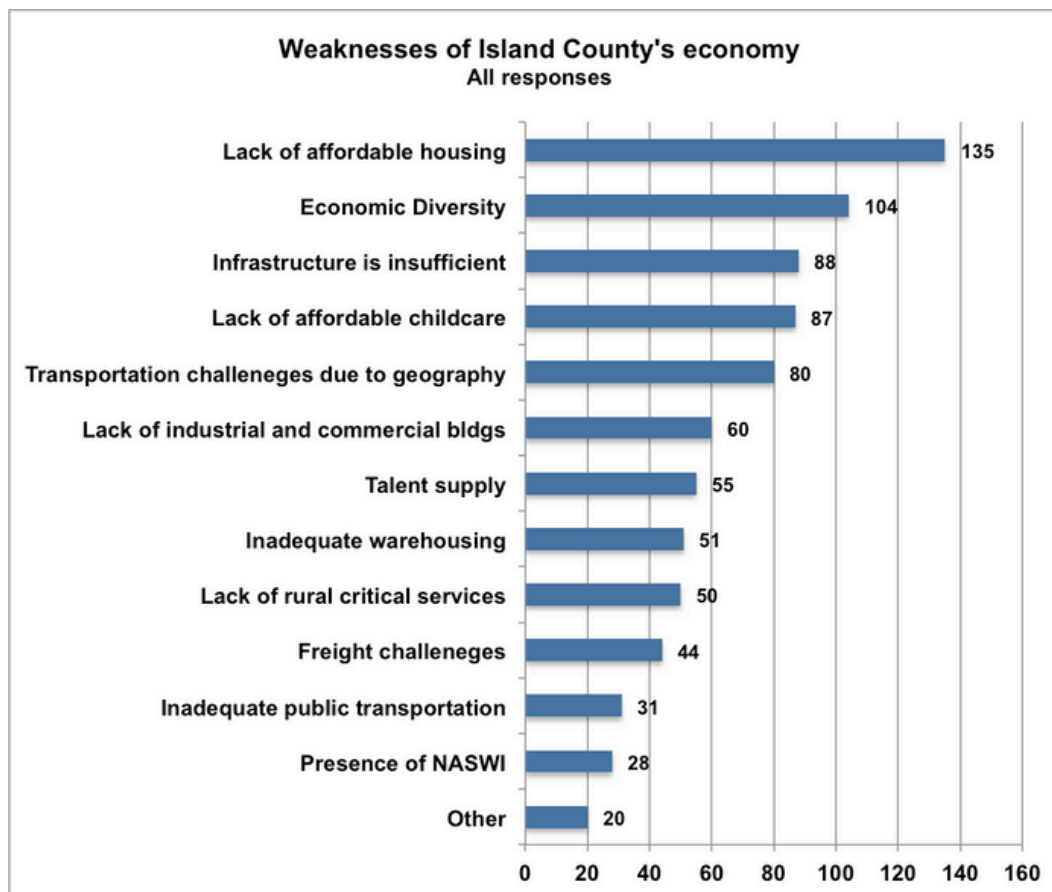
Respondents wrote in several additional strengths for this question, including but not limited to:

- People choose to live in Island County, resulting in very passionate communities
- Great business resources
- Tourism and agritourism creating business opportunities
- Many small farmers turning to more sustainable methods, small scale production
- Low crime rates
- A lot of housing expertise (construction, real estate, mortgage brokers, planners)
- Politically diverse communities

In addition, many respondents included weaknesses and threats in their optional write in. Those details are included appropriately under the weaknesses and threats descriptions below.

Identifying Weaknesses

8. Would you consider any of the following characteristics to be weaknesses of the Island County economy, as it relates to your particular business or sector? Below is a list of weaknesses commonly identified in other communities. Some have been localized to make sense within Island County's context. *Check all that you believe apply to Island County. If you do not believe any to be true, please check Other.*



By far, the biggest challenge in Island County according to employers, residents, local elected leadership, nonprofits, and more is affordable housing. This is followed by the perceived lack of economic diversity, insufficient infrastructure, a lack of affordable childcare, and transportation issues due to island geography. This is not surprising as housing, childcare, and infrastructure are issues in nearly every county in the United States.

The transportation issues, however, are primarily local and stem from the nature of Island County's geography. The biggest of these issues being, 1) the unreliability of both the two ferries that go to/from Island County, but particularly the Mukilteo-Clinton route, and 2) the lack of connection between Camano and Whidbey Islands.

9. Do you have any other feedback or inputs regarding weaknesses of your industry or sector or Island County's economy generally? Topics of particular interest include economic diversity, business attraction, talent supply, business resources, infrastructure, and quality of life.

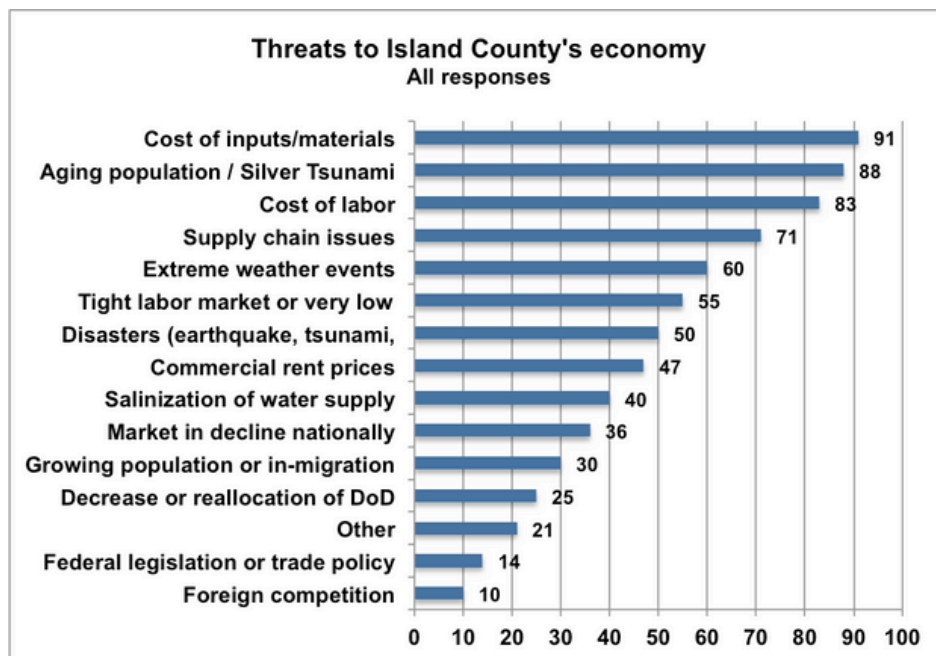
Identifying Weaknesses

Respondents wrote in several additional weaknesses for this question (as well as in other write in areas), including but not limited to:

- Too many government jobs (not enough economic diversification)
- Lack of adequate sewer / water infrastructure (infrastructure inadequate)
- Low wages
- Lack of engineering jobs
- Many vacant commercial properties in some areas
- Permitting process too long and expensive for affordable housing
- Confusion over County's economic goals
- Commuting off Island to get some services and products is basically required
- Tight knit communities appear cold and closed off to newcomers
- Not enough entry level employees
- Small number of retail and restaurant options in some areas
- Lack of animal slaughter and processing resources
- Loss of Dutch colonial heritage
- Lack of easy access to veteran's centers and health services
- Lack of workforce / aging workforce
- Lack of youth night light and non-school activities
- Perceived misalignment between community wants/needs and government plans
- Very small market for certain services and products

Identifying Threats

10. Would you consider any of the following characteristics to be threats to the Island County economy, as it relates to your particular business or sector? Below is a list of threats commonly identified in other communities. Some have been localized to make sense within Island County's context. *Check all that you believe apply to Island County. If you do not believe any to be true, please check Other.*



Identifying Threats

As shown above, the biggest threats to Island County's economy, according to the 181 respondents, are primarily cost related (inputs, materials, labor), labor market related (aging population and very low unemployment), and disaster related (extreme weather, etc.).

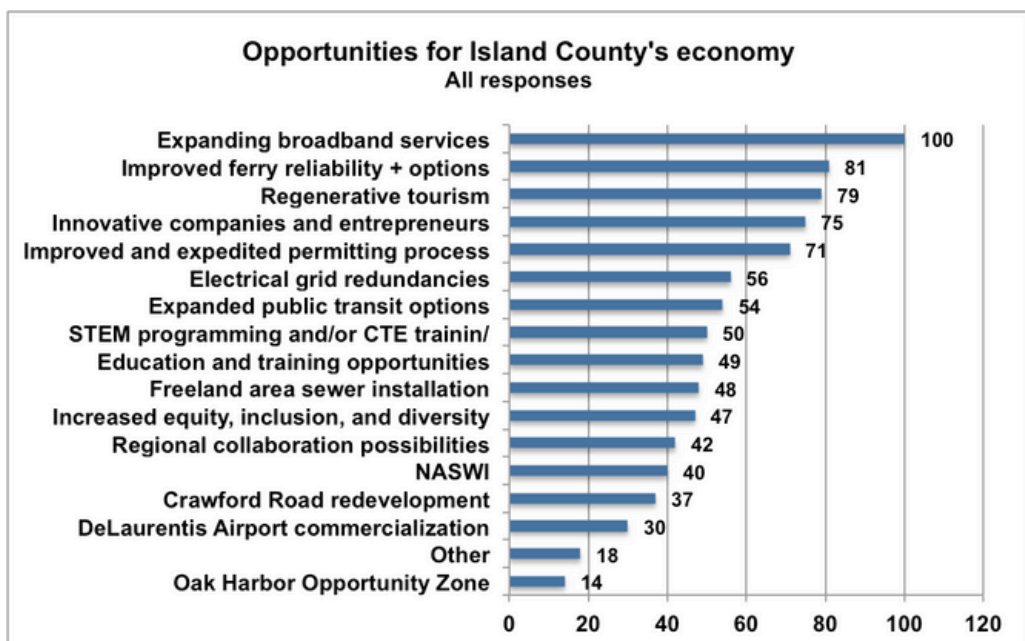
11. Do you have any other feedback or inputs regarding threats of your industry or sector or Island County's economy generally? Topics of particular interest include economic diversity, business attraction, talent supply, business resources, infrastructure, and quality of life.

Respondents wrote in several additional threats for this question (as well as in other write in areas), including but not limited to:

- Increased state regulations
- Impacts on land and resources due to tourism popularity
- Jet noise harming children's education experience
- Limited points of ingress/egress
- Loss of DOD funding / loss or cuts to NASWI
- Sprawl and lack of incentives to preserve and conserve Island County's environment
- Perceived racist culture
- Anti-development culture
- Us vs. Them mentalities related to the four census districts (N. Whidbey vs. S. Whidbey, Whidbey vs. Camano, etc.)
- NIMBYism

Identifying Opportunities

12. Would you consider any of the following characteristics to be opportunities for the Island County economy, as it relates to your particular business or sector? Below is a list of weaknesses commonly identified in other communities. Some have been localized to make sense within Island County's context. *Check all that you believe apply to Island County. If you do not believe any to be true, please check Other.*



Identifying Opportunities

13. Do you have any other feedback or inputs regarding opportunities in your industry or sector or Island County's economy generally? Topics of particular interest include economic diversity, business attraction, talent supply, business resources, infrastructure, and quality of life.

Respondents wrote in several additional opportunities for this question (as well as in other write in areas), including but not limited to:

- Lower road speeds, improving traffic flows
- Increasing walk/run/bike path availability
- Additional small health clinics
- Additional mental health services
- Public support for the creative economy, artisans
- Island Transit 7-day a week fare-free service
- Stabilizing planning departments throughout the county, reducing staff turnover
- Increasing predictability of code interpretation
- Expedited permitting for green, affordable housing projects
- Local, community solar projects
- Tighter relationship between County government and NASWI
- Increasing wages
- Aging population (many skills, knowledge to share)
- NASWI veterans and spouses (many skills, knowledge to share)
- Relationship building and listening sessions between planners and builders

Outreach to Non-English Speaking Communities and Business

The survey was initially only available in English, however after discussion with the Review Committee and Island County, we decided to translate the a simplified version of the survey into Spanish and Tagalog, as well as social media assets for the EDC and partners to post. Island County generously funded the translation of the SWOT surveys and social media assets. The EDC for Island County, the City of Oak Harbor, the Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce, and Camano Island Chamber of Commerce all advertised the Spanish and Tagalog surveys on their social media or in their newsletters. Oak Harbor and Camano Island were targeted because they have the most diverse populations within Island County.

The survey was open from December 15, 2023 through March 15, 2024.

After receiving only one response to the Spanish SWOT by mid-February, additional outreach attempts were made by working with the Washington State Department of Commerce Community Engagement Team. This team is explicitly tasked with working with diverse community and business organizations. As a result, we were connected with the Center for Inclusive Entrepreneurship (CIE) and the Asian Pacific Cultural Center. While willing to share the information, CIE noted that in the past they often had to discuss surveys face-to-face with respondents and sometimes help them fill them out. The Asian Pacific Cultural Center responded that they did not have any business connection located within Island County.

One of the lessons learned from this is that while translations are a necessary first step in reaching unserved and underserved population, it is not sufficient on its own and requires trauma-informed, culturally appropriate, trust-based outreach.

In discussion with staff experts at the Western Washing University Small Business Development Center (WWU SBDC) and CIE, this population of business owners and workers are unlikely to respond to emails or social media, especially from entities they do not personally know and have experience with. CIE also noted that in their other survey work, they first have to establish trust-based relationships with each individual business owner or worker in order to make them feel comfortable with responding to a survey. This population is very unlikely to respond to surveys or emails from organizations or individuals they do not have personal experience with.

Additionally, it is important to note that a large segment of Northwest Washington's population from Central and South America are actually not Spanish speakers. Many are Indigenous and either do not speak Spanish at all or Spanish may be their second language. During the Nooksack and Skagit River floods in 2021, which impacted Skagit and Whatcom Counties, FEMA translated emergency materials into Spanish, Russian, and Punjabi, Quechua, Mam, K'iche, Mixteco-Bajo, Mixteco Alto, and Triqui. Indigenous language translations occurred via negotiations between FEMA and the Guatemalan and Mexican Consulates.

Many workforce and economic development organizations in the region do not have the resources (staff or funding) to translate materials into every language that is truly needed. Additionally for some Indigenous languages there are only one to two translators available in the entire United States.



Camano Commons home to many shops and annual events on Camano Island. Photo courtesy of Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands.

4. Industry SWOT Results

Industry SWOTs are the consolidated results of the survey, stakeholder interviews, Review Committee input, and other targeted sector input.

Agriculture

Strengths

- Approximately 370 small family farms
- Growing number of products grown
- Growing number of product-to-table growers
- Growing number of value-added products produced
- Contributes to conservation and land stewardship
- Contributes to natural beauty and scenic views
- Enhances local quality of life
- Increase local food security and resiliency
- Northwest Agriculture Business Center programs + resources
- Multiple local agriculture education options
- WSU Extension
- Organic Farm School
- Pacific Rim Institute
- Multiple farmer's markets, Whidbey Island Grown Cooperative
- Agricultural Resources Committee for Island County
- Tight-knit well connected industry

Weaknesses

- Labor shortage, hard to find seasonal workers
- Many farmers have inadequate access to healthcare
- Many farmers are aging with no retirement or succession plans
- Lack of workforce housing
- Lack of local slaughter services / mobile slaughter unit
- Perceived differences within industry between larger family farms and "hobby farms"
- Perceived conflict between industry and environmental groups
- Unreliability of Mukilteo-Clinton ferry

Opportunities

- Agritourism (Whidbey and Camano as Floating Farm Stands)
- Mobile slaughter unit
- Employee Ownership
- Revised Events code presents opportunities to aging and new farmers for alternative streams of income

Agriculture

Threats

- Environmental degradation
- Climate change impacts
- Rising input costs
- Aging farmers
- Rapidly increasing land costs/value

Construction

Strengths

- Growing number of businesses and jobs
- Industry forecasts indicate growth for 20+ years
- Many small local, on Island, builders
- Many in industry are well educated in local code
- Local businesses committed to hiring local workers
- Community wants to hire local construction companies
- Very tight knit industry
- Deeply involved with local community

Weaknesses

- Labor shortage
- Lack of affordable, accessible workforce housing
- Employee turnover in county, city, town planning departments
- Perceptions of arbitrary, lengthy government processes
- Lack of contractors results in off-Island, higher price services to commute in
- Long wait times for certain services (plumbing, sewage, water, electricians, etc.)
- Most construction focused on new builds, large projects, not small fixes

Opportunities

- Explore options to stabilize planning department staffing
- Explore options to standardize and increase predictability of code interpretation
- Additional Builder's Listening Sessions with County and other jurisdictions
- State Housing laws will require significant growth in this industry
- Workforce housing

Threats

- Rising cost of inputs / materials
- Cost of living creating wage pressure on small businesses

Creative Economy

Strengths

- Two Creative Districts (Langley, Coupeville)
- Multiple artists; art nonprofits; galleries; sculpture gardens, forest, parks

Creative Economy

Strengths

- Events and education opportunities for all types of artists (painters, writers, sculptors, actors, photographers, etc.)
- Flexible work hours and locations
- A lot of information and resource sharing within the industry
- A lot of industry knowledge

Weaknesses

- Many small arts nonprofits contributing to difficult operating environment
- Many artists require additional jobs to make ends meet
- Business training and resources available for creatives
- Cost of housing
- Cost of studio space / square footage available
- Aging industry with unclear succession and replacements

Opportunities

- Large consolidated performing arts center
- Entrepreneurial and leadership training for artists
- Pool of part time and flexible potential workforce
- Mentorship and networking events for young artists

Threats

- Economic cycles, downturns
- Lack of funding

Education

Strengths

- Skagit Valley College, WSU Extension in Oak Harbor
- Proximity to WWU, WWC, BTC in Bellingham
- Multiple schools with remote options and local in-person supervision available
- Highly educated local population
- Four K-12 School Districts (3 in Island, 1 in Stanwood/Snohomish County)

Weaknesses

- Wages not in alignment with cost of living
- No Skills Center within Island County
- Students often have to commute off island to access programs
- K-12 early education readiness rates low
- Misperceptions about education and local job opportunities
- Lack of affordable housing is creating additional costs for school districts
- Lack of affordable housing and increased houselessness among students puts students in precarious, unstable positions, often resulting in poorer performance

Education

Weaknesses

- Many youth training programs cut or limited due to budget cuts

Opportunities

- Engaging with school districts, teachers, parents to educate them about the trades, manufacturing, construction, healthcare
- Island County Skills Center
- Affordable, accessible housing
- Affordable, accessible childcare and early education learning opportunities

Threats

- Inadequate or reduced state and federal funding

Infrastructure (includes Energy, Transit, Utilities)

Strengths

- Island Transit 7 days a week, zero-fare system
- Good working relationship between PSE-Island County and SNOPUD-Island County
- Good working relationship between ISPs and Island County jurisdictions
- Committed, active Broadband Action Team
- Several new routes planned for fiber internet expansion

Weaknesses

- Whidbey Island is a sole aquifer system
- Majority of potable water and septic systems are privately owned
- Many aging septic systems on both islands
- Resident concerns about PFAS and other water and soil contaminants
- Some areas of both islands lack stable cellular services
- Some areas of both islands lack reliable, quality high-speed internet services
- Several areas where traffic bottlenecks, especially at ingress/egress points such as Clinton, Coupeville, Deception Pass, and Stanwood
- Lack of redundancies (particularly energy)
- Residential and commercial solar expansion slow
- Unreliability of ferries to/from Whidbey Island
- Lack of connection between Whidbey and Camano Islands
- Currently not enough Level 4 chargers for electric vehicles on both islands
- Rapidly increasing utility rates

Opportunities

- Exploring options for electrical grid redundancies (community solar)
- Improving and expanding quality, affordable internet services
- Improving cellular network coverage
- Supporting Island Transit zero emission transition

Infrastructure

Opportunities

- Create Active Transportation Plans
- Expand number of Level 3 chargers
- Educate the public on septic system maintenance and repair

Threats

- Disasters, especially weather related
- Increasing materials / inputs costs

Healthcare

Strengths

- Largest private employment sector within Island County
- Growing employment sector, growing wages
- Family wage jobs with career paths for growth
- Growing demand due to aging population and expanding disabled population
- Tons of interest by youth for jobs and training this industry

Weaknesses

- Skills and certification are a barrier/bottleneck to creating more jobs
- Not enough trainers (nurses) because they are underpaid as trainers
- Trouble maintaining and retaining staff, services in some areas of the county
- Many private healthcare providers are increasingly having trouble with insurance payments and system set up
- Small number of large providers, some with long wait times
- High-rate of burnout in the industry since March 2020

Opportunities

- Maintain existing services and staff
- Aging populations in S. Whidbey and Camano require additional healthcare, eldercare and aging adult services
- Expanded mental health and substance abuse recovery services
- Telehealth industry expansion

Threats

- Additional certification requirements
- Legislation that preferences large conglomerates over private providers

Manufacturing

Strengths

- Industry offers family wage jobs
- Close proximity to aerospace, food, and marine manufacturing centers
- Expanding support from State for sub-sectors (marine trades, food processing)

Manufacturing

Weaknesses

- Small number of jobs within Island County, most require commuting
- Limited number of appropriate industrial sites with infrastructure available in Island County
- Many residents and elected officials in Island County oppose additional manufacturing, particularly heavy industry, due to environmental concerns
- Smaller contractors have difficulty obtaining military and aerospace contracts

Opportunities

- Expanded, value-added food processing
- Expanded, value-added light industrial in existing, appropriately zoned non-critical areas
- Oak Harbor Opportunity Zone
- Oak Harbor's Industrial North

Threats

- Vulnerable to economic cycles
- Vulnerable to global competition

Maritime / Marine Trades

Strengths

- Three Ports, multiple marinas, two ferry route connections
- Strong regional ties to marine trades in Whatcom, Skagit, and Snohomish
- Strong ties to manufacturing and construction industries
- Home to Nichol's Brothers Boat Builders
- Hundreds of miles of coastline

Weaknesses

- Lack of affordable, quality childcare
- Lack of affordable, quality workforce housing
- Cost of living increases creating wage pressure on employers
- Unreliable ferry between Snohomish-Island County

Opportunities

- Capitalizing on Maritime Blue and industry cluster resources
- Workforce housing
- Improved ferry services
- Electrification of maritime industry products (boats, batteries, etc.)
- Value added innovation
- Orca and marine life and environment stewardship

Threats

- Disasters (tsunamis, winter storms, King tides)

Military / Defense

Strengths

- Proximity to Boeing, Paine Field
- Oak Harbor and Camano Island within reasonable commuting distance to Boeing
- NASWI is the only naval air station in the PNW
- Aerospace jobs pay higher wages

Weaknesses

- Majority of aerospace manufacturing industry located outside of Island County (e.g. Snohomish, Skagit Counties); requires commuting off-Island
- Workforce housing
- Lack of affordable, accessible childcare
- Negative public perceptions of the industry
- Lack of accreditation and certification of veterans

Opportunities

- Industrial North
- Light, environmentally friendly manufacturing
- Veterans with related skills and knowledge
- Military spouses with related skills and knowledge
- Certification of veterans for skills that can be used off-base

Threats

- Changes to Department of Defense spending
- Industry highly impacted by economic cycles

Real Estate

Strengths

- Huge demand for all types of housing product
- Tight knit real estate community
- Good relationship with the construction and mortgage/banking industry
- Very knowledgeable realtors throughout the county

Weaknesses

- Outside realtors uninformed and not knowledge about Island County can create long-term problems for buyers, realtors, local governments
- Not enough product, not enough diversity of product
- High interest rates putting borrowers in precarious situations
- Extremely high median prices
- Housing and childcare costs impacting realtors themselves

Opportunities

- Develop permanently affordable units

Real Estate

Opportunities

- Develop more of all types of units
- Create workforce housing
- Expedited permitting process for affordable housing, green projects
- Revised ADU / DADU codes

Threats

- Rising interest rates
- Changing fee structures

Retail

Strengths

- Large employment sector
- Varied sector with many types of services and products
- Supports multiple other sectors (e.g. creative economy, tourism)
- Lots of opportunities for youth and seasonal employment

Weaknesses

- Labor shortages causing some businesses to limit operations/hours
- Main Street businesses not keeping regular M-F, 9-5pm hours
- Retail wages are low
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of affordable childcare

Opportunities

- Work share programs
- Workforce housing
- Affordable, quality childcare

Tourism (includes Events, Recreation + Leisure)

Strengths

- Hundreds of miles of pristine coastline
- Forested areas, scenic views, myriad hiking, walking, running options
- Many state and county parks
- Multiple marinas and harbors
- Amazing farm stands, farm visit, and organic food opportunities
- Most visited State Park in WA (Deception Pass)
- Booming events industry throughout the year and on both islands
- Easy day trip for Seattle area population
- Embrace Camano and Whidbey Islands / Tourism Committee

Tourism (includes Events, Recreation + Leisure)

Weaknesses

- Jobs are lower wage, hard to find workers, especially seasonal workers
- Lack of workforce housing
- Impacts of tourism on land, water, housing, traffic
- Negative perceptions that housing is being used for short-term rentals
- Potentially too many events
- Not all events have the same degree of positive impact on business
- Unclear messaging and marketing to date on new direction

Opportunities

- Creating a strategy and action plan to implement Transformative Tourism
- Expansion of agritourism
- Expansion of the number of DADU and ADUs
- Work share programs
- Workforce housing
- Affordable, quality childcare
- Whidbey and Camano wide events calendar
- Some events consolidation
- Events and tourism impact study

Threats

- Climate change impacts (including wildfire smoke)
- Disasters

Nonprofits

Strengths

- Many engaged, caring local citizens
- Nonprofits provide many services and goods to local population
- Strong network increases local economic and disaster resiliency
- Cover many topics, something for all interests and passionates

Weaknesses

- High number of nonprofits creates difficult operating environments
 - Increased difficulty with fundraising
 - Increased difficulty differentiating products / services
 - Increased difficult finding workers
- Cost of living increases creating wage pressure nonprofits cannot afford
- County/City/Town departments recruiting for similar positions at higher pay, resulting in staffshortages and some nonprofits defunded
- Many nonprofits staffed by aging volunteers

Nonprofits

Opportunities

- Nonprofit mergers
- Work share programs
- Workforce housing
- Affordable, quality childcare
- Relationship building with County staff

Threats

- Federal, state, and local reductions to funding



A gray whale feeding off of Tillicum Beach, Camano Island. Photo by [John Storbeck](#) on [Unsplash](#).

5. Stakeholder Interviews

As detailed in **Appendix 6.2** above, key sectors and stakeholders for targeted outreach were identified by the EDC, then reviewed and added to by the Island County CEDS Review Committee. Island County Planning and Community Development provided key stakeholder information for regular customers and users of planning and development services in the construction and real estate industries. Likewise, Island County Public Health provided names of key stakeholders in the childcare and healthcare industries.

This outreach, which included sending over 600 emails and follow up emails to key stakeholders, resulted in 81 interviews. Of those 81 interviews, approximately 19 interviewees were located in North Whidbey, 14 in Central Whidbey, 28 in South Whidbey, 8 on Camano Island, and 12 were county-wide businesses / agencies or roles. The interviewees included 45 women, 33 men, and three non-binary or gender non-conforming individuals, of who seven were Black, Indigenous, or People of Color, and four were veterans. Interviews were conducted over the phone or Zoom and ran 30 to 90 minutes in length, with the vast majority running approximately one hour.

At least one interview was conducted within every sector, with the bulk of interviews being conducted in the following with those working in agriculture, construction, infrastructure, government, education, and nonprofits.

Interview Questions

All interviews were conducted using structured interview methods for the beginning of the interview and open-ended interview methods towards the end of the interview. In other words, all stakeholders were asked the same questions. Interviewees were provided the guarantee of anonymity.

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself, your business, and why you find yourself working or doing business in Island County.
2. What are some of the strengths of working in Island County? What is currently working well?
3. What are some of the challenges of working in Island County? What is currently not working?
4. What are some opportunities you see for Island County's economy?
5. What are some threats or issues you worry about for Island County's economy?

Interviews Summary

Question #2 Strengths

Many of the people interviewed were very positive about Island County's economy. A number of themes emerged from the interviews, which support and contextualize the survey results.

Key themes included:

- Extremely knowledgeable and passionate population / communities
- New direction of Embrace Camano and Whidbey Islands very promising

- Agritourism options are abundant and growing
 - Whidbey and Camano Islands as “floating farm stands”
- Small farms and farm to table options increasing Island County food security
- Variety of types of farms and products creating niche markets and food processing opportunities
- Construction and real estate industry well versed in code interpretation and compliance
- Nonprofit provide many valuable important community services
- Amazing natural geography and resources

Question #3 Weaknesses

Despite positivity and excitement about Island County’s economy, interviewees also had a number of concerns. Key themes included:

- Lack of affordable housing and workforce housing throughout Island County, but particularly in N. and S. Whidbey
- Misalignment between the cost of living and wages
- Lack of entry level workers, especially retail, restaurant and tourism workers
- Unreliability of both ferries causes myriad problems for businesses and workers
- County, city, and town employee turnover delaying projects and development progress
- Lack of consistency in planning and development code interpretation
- Misalignment between residents knowing more housing is needed and not wanting more housing built in their neighborhood or area
- Sole aquifer water system, aging septic systems, PFAS contamination
- County departments hiring nonprofit staff, reducing pool of available workers
- Lack of connections and communications between Whidbey and Camano Islands
- Communication lacking between County and some funded nonprofit partners
- Potentially too many events, too many nonprofits

Question #4 Opportunities

Interviewees had many ideas regarding opportunities for Island County’s economy. Some of those ideas were to turn weaknesses into opportunities (e.g. build afford housing) and some were unique opportunities (e.g. DeLaurentis Airport commercialization).

Key opportunities included:

- Build affordable housing
- Build workforce housing
- Support and promote the expansion of affordable, quality childcare slots
- Build relationships between County, EDC, and key industry associations (such as builders, realtors)
- Commercialization of DeLaurentis Airport
- Paving Crawford Road
- Including and working with construction and infrastructure industry whenever considering building and planning regulations that impact the cost and speed of their work
- Expedited permitting process

- Stabilization of employee turnover at the County, Cities, Town
- Considering additional sewer treatment installation in S. Whidbey
- Oak Harbor marina improvements
- Oak Harbor's Industrial North
- Improved, reliable high-speed internet throughout both islands
- Improved, reliable cell service, especially in rural areas
- Community solar programs
- Revised events code
- Revised benefits and rating systems so that people use it more
- Create more incentives to conserve and preserve forests, shorelines, farmland
- Reducing or consolidating events / do an events study to evaluate impacts
- Limit events that are high impact to the environment but low impact and benefit to the local community and economy
- Promote events that are low impact to the environment and high impact and benefit to the local community and economy
- Developing how to and explanatory resources for businesses
- Expanding entrepreneurship programming to Camano Island
- Better prepare businesses and entrepreneurs for disasters and financial downturns
- To be a leader in climate resiliency action
- To be a leader in addressing the affordable housing crisis

Question #5 Threats

Overall interviews were less focused on external threats and much more focused on issues interviewees to be particularly acute in Island County. For example, when asked about threats, the vast majority focused on the lack of affordable housing, childcare, and the unreliability of the ferry system. Most did not identify federal level issues or external shocks as a primary concern.

However, some key threats were still identified through the interviews, including:

- Climate change
- Climate refugees impacting in-migration
- Disasters and extreme weather events (king tides, tsunamis, earthquake, wildfires, smoke)
- Quickly changing state regulations that require financial capacity and workforce skills that many businesses and nonprofits do not currently have
- Rising interest rates
- Certain sectors highly subject to global competition
- Certain sectors very vulnerable to economic cycles and recessions (aerospace, military, manufacturing, construction)
- Ongoing supply chain issues and materials issues

Sector specific comments can be found in the **Appendix 6.4** Industry SWOT above.

6. Data Sources and Relevant Reports, Studies, Strategies.

This report is meant for electronic use. As such, the majority of data sources are cited and linked in text or below figures and tables. For those that are not, information and data was drawn from the following key websites, reports, plans, and studies.

2024. ArtsWA. [Creative Districts.](#)

2024. Choose Washington. [Washington's growth industries.](#)

2022. Childcare Aware of Washington. [Childcare in Island County.](#)

2020. City of Langley. [Comprehensive Plan.](#)

2024. City of Langley. [2025 Comprehensive Plan Update.](#)

2022. City of Oak Harbor. [Comprehensive Plan.](#)

2024. City of Oak Harbor. [Adopted Plans.](#)

2024. Economic Development Council for Island County. [Island County Profile.](#)

2023. Economic Development Council for Island County. [Major Employers of Island County.](#)

2022. Economic Development Council for Island County. [Seasonal Housing Report.](#)

2023. Embrace Whidbey and Camano Islands. [Regenerative Guide.](#)

2023. Employment Security Department. Washington State. [Agricultural employment and wages.](#)

2023. Employment Security Department. Washington State. [County Profiles: Island County.](#)

2023. Employment Security Department. Washington State. [Labor Area Summaries.](#)

2024. Island Access 2045. [Island County Regional Transportation Plan.](#)

2024. Island County. [2023-2024 Community Health Assessment \(CHA\).](#)

2024. Island County. [Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.](#)

2016. Island County. [Comprehensive Plan Update.](#)

2021. Island County. [Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update.](#)

2020. Island County. [Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan](#).
2024. Island County. [Parks and Trails Documents](#).
2021. Island County Child Care Partnership Task Force. [Special Report](#).
2021. Island County Child Care Partnership Task Force. [June 2021 Needs Assessment](#).
2024. [Island Transit](#).
2024. [Langley Creates Creative District](#).
2018. Naval Air Station Whidbey Island. [Economic Impact Assessment](#).
2024. Puget Sound Energy. [Clean Energy Implementation Plan](#).
2024. SNOPUD. [Integrated Resource Plan](#).
2023. Town of Coupeville. [Comprehensive Plan](#).
2017. US Department of Agriculture. Census of Agriculture. [County Profile: Island County, Washington](#).
2022. US Department of Agriculture. Census of Agriculture. [County Profile: Island County, Washington](#).
2024. Washington State Department of Commerce. [Community Economic Revitalization Board \(CERB\)](#).
2024. Washington State Department of Commerce. [Economic Partnerships](#).
2024. Washington State Department of Commerce. [Housing](#).
2024. Washington State Department of Commerce. [Internet for All in Washington](#).

7. Public Comment

A 30-day public comment was held from Monday, April 15, 2024 to Friday, May 17, 2024. The document was posted on the EDC's [CEDS webpage](#) on Monday, April 15, 2024 with a link to the PDF and instructions for how to submit comments.

In addition to posting the document for comment on the website, an email was sent out to all Board members and EDC members and partners announcing the opportunity for public comment and asking partners to please share the opportunity with their members, employees, or constituents. The consultant provided the EDC and all Review Committee members with two social media and email templates for their convenience, one being an announcement and the other being a follow up reminder. Partners posted or emailed the announcement out to their networks at their convenience.

The consultant also provided the EDC and Review Committee with a press release announcing the public comment period. The EDC sent out an additional email blast to their members with the press release details and posted the opportunity for public comment on their social media (Facebook) on April 15, April 22, May 6, and May 15, 2024 (478 followers). The EDC Facebook posts tagged partner Chambers and Tourism agencies (over 10,000 followers combined), and were directly shared by the City of Oak Harbor (6,300 followers), the Clinton Chamber of Commerce (2,000 followers), and three accounts related to WSU Extension – Island County (approximately 1,000 followers combined). Island County government also posted the opportunity for comment on their social media (Facebook) on April 15, 2024. In addition, many agencies distributed the CEDS draft and public comment form within their organizations.

For example, the City of Langley shared the opportunity with the Langley Planning and Building Updates email list (245 recipients) as well as a reminder and posted two fliers on their bulletin boards in City Hall and at the Post Office. The City of Oak Harbor also included a link on the City's economic development page. NASWI included links to the draft and comment form in their "All Hands" distribution email, which goes to all NASWI personnel, with approximately 11,000 recipients. The opportunity to comment was also shared on the Camano Island Library webpage and with Island County library managers. The Clinton Community Council shared the opportunity with council members and community stakeholders. The Camano Chamber of Commerce shared the opportunity in their e-newsletter twice (650 recipients) and their social media (3,800 followers), and Board of Directors (16 individuals and business owners). Many other Review Committee members and agencies shared this opportunity to comment and overall, the opportunity to comment was widely publicized and distributed throughout Whidbey and Camano Islands.

Comments received were carefully evaluated by the EDC consultant and staff, with every comment categorized, necessity and content of edit discussed, required edits were then made and reviewed by all. Comments and edits made to date were then discussed at the May 2024 Review Committee meeting. Additional comments received after the meeting were catalogued, reviewed, and sent out to the Review Committee with an updated draft for their review. Any remaining questions about comments were reviewed with the EDC and Island County. The Review Committee agreed to the

substantive changes as well as the reporting method of comments via this summary appendix.

There were eleven unique commenters who provided a total of 38 comments, though many comments included anywhere from three to five sub-comments. Comments were received via the EDC website comment form and email.

Given space considerations, the following list contains a non-exhaustive high-level summary of comments received regarding the Island County CEDS 2024-2028, organized by topic. A 16-page detailed document with all of the public comments and actions taken is available upon request.

Summary of Comments and Responses

| Comment Topic | Summary of Comments |
|--------------------|---|
| Climate Resilience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add organizations as partners to climate goals • Gear actions towards permanent protection • Gear actions towards prevention, not response • Add more about sea level rise and the costs to Island County • Require low impact design green infrastructure • Do not allow any development in flood prone or critical areas • Do not allow any new bulkheads • Do not allow any more shoreline armoring • Identify funding to remove existing derelict and lost structures and shoreline armoring • Specify how climate data and modeling will be used • Determine which areas will be estuarine and begin public acquisition of those properties • Add a commitment to build a community center for climate refugees and provisions for mass distribution of air filters • Adopt regulations for farm and livestock management, considering how changing environmental conditions impact water quality and zoonotic disease transmission • Create a county-wide biodiversity conservation plan • Create a county-wide dispersed recreation and trails plan • Add more detailed salmon conservations strategies • Add strategies to reduce light pollution and preserve dark skies • Do not focus on vehicle electrification, there is not enough power • Keep Island County rural • Conduct studies on the economic value of ecosystem services, including the costs of challenges and damages to those ecosystems |
| Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not limit the goals to STEM, add art / STEAM |

Summary of Comments and Responses

| Comment Topic | Summary of Comments |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Housing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding needed to support building the number of housing units required by the 2045 by the state Promote the use of modular housing as a strategy for increasing housing on the islands No new housing infrastructure and no additional housing on Whidbey Island No low income housing unless it guarantees plant and animal biodiversity and conservation |
| Industrial and business parks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One 10 acre shovel ready parcel available in Oak Harbor |
| NASWI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns regarding negative impacts of the base on the environment and community health |
| Overall document | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very comprehensive Overwhelming in scope, recommend a summary Include a general strategy to prefer strategies with the lowest long-term costs to the public |
| Tourism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include reference to the Maritime Heritage Plan and Area |
| Transportation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the SWOT to say “some” cities are walkable as some cities in South Whidbey lack sidewalks and ramps Add sidewalk and curb ramps in Freeland to improve safety and walkability |
| Updating information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update information about Langley Creates fiscal sponsor Update information from the USDA County Profile 2022 |

8. CEDS Project List

The following table is Island County’s CEDS Project List for 2024. This is the first time that Island County has had a consolidated economic development project list.

As noted in **Section 4**, the Evaluation Plan, the Island County CEDS Project List will be updated on an annual and as needed basis, in the event of an emergency.

| Project Name | Project Location | Project Description | Project Type | Estimated Total Cost | Potential Funding Sources | Secured Funding Amount (Source) | Island CED funding? | EDA funding? | Other funding? |
|--|---|--|---|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Short name | City, Island | Brief 1-3 sentences describing basics of project. Connect to biz or ecdev if not obvious. | Potential project types include: Public Works, Economic Development, Public Health, Workforce, Education, Public Safety, Parks & Rec, Tourism, Climate Resilience | As of the most recent estimate | Potential funding sources include but are not limited to: if any (with source of funding noted) | Amount secured / committed to date, if any (with source of funding noted) | Do you plan to apply for Island County CED funding for this project? Yes / No | Do you plan to apply for EDA funding for this project? Yes / No | Do you plan to apply for other funding for this project? Yes / No |
| Town of Coupeville | | | | | | | | | |
| Rural Water Service Water Main Extension | Big Cedar Ln to Patmore Rd. | Out of Town water service extension | Public Works, Climate Resilience, Public Health | \$1,400,000.00 | Water Fund, Grants | | \$0 Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Rural Water Service Water Main Extension | Patmore Rd. to Wanamaker Rd. | Out of Town water service extension | Public Works, Climate Resilience, Public Health | \$800,000.00 | Water Fund, Grants | | \$0 Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Rural Water Service Water Main Extension | Engle Rd. / SR20 | Out of Town water service extension | Public Works, Climate Resilience, Public Health | \$1,105,000.00 | Water Fund, Grants | | \$0 Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Water System Consolidation | Central Whidbey | Consolidate smaller water systems Within the Town's Water Service area | Public Works, Climate Resilience, Public Health | \$1,000,000.00 | Water Fund, Grants | | \$0 Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Sewer Line Extension | Moore Pl. to Town Limits | Sewer Extension | Public Works, Climate Resilience, Public Health | \$1,300,000.00 | Sewer Fund, Grants | | \$0 Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Phase II: WWTP Water Reuse | Coupeville, WWTP | follow up to wastewater treatment plant water reuse feasibility study | Public Works, Climate Resilience, Public Health | \$3,000,000.00 | Sewer Fund, Grants | | \$0 Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Boat Ramp Improvements | Coupeville, Thomas Coupe Park | Rehabilitate boat ramps, reconstruct small boat launch with storage and access. Install marine/ RV sewage pump out station. | Public Works, Parks & Rec | \$1,000,000.00 | General Fund, Grants | | \$0 Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Active Transportation Plan | Coupeville | Develop an Active Transportation Plan to explore projects and investments to improve walk- and roll-ability within Town Limits and connections to regional trail | Parks & Rec, Tourism | \$80,000.00 | General Fund, Grants | | \$0 Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Parks and Recreation Plan | Coupeville | Develop a Parks and Rec Plan to explore improvements and investments to park facilities | Parks & Rec, Tourism, Climate Resilience | \$50,000.00 | General Fund, Grants | | \$0 Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Island County | | | | | | | | | |
| Airport Compatability and Economic Development Study | Whidbey Airpark; DeLaurtentis Airport; Camano Island Airfield | Study improvements near private airports to promote economic development. | Planning | TBD | Grants, Island County | | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD |
| Sewer/Septic Study and Design for Clinton | Clinton RAID | Assess the scope and design considerations for a sewer or community septic system for Clinton. | Planning, Public Works | TBD | Grants, Island County | | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD |
| Transportation Improvement Program - Bike Trails | Hwy 20/Hwy 525 | Bridge to Boat implementation; connecting existing segments of trails with new or planned segments. | Planning, Public Works | TBD | Grants, Island County | | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD |
| Land Acquisition for Affordable Housing | Island County | County to work with developers and builders to identify land acquisitions to serve as a model for workforce housing. | Planning, Human Services | TBD | Grants, Island County | | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD |
| Water Study | Island County | Study to assess the water quantity and quality of our sole source aquifers to better understand locations that can support development and | Planning, Health | TBD | Grants, Island County | | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD |
| State Route 20 Shoulder Widening, Race Road to Welcher Road | Central Whidbey | Construct highway shoulders and improve intersections as needed. | Public works, Economic Devleopment, Public Safety, Tourism | \$7,000,000 | Grants, WSDOT, Island County | \$1,600,000 | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| State Route Intersection Improvement at Bush Point Road/Honeymoon Bay Road | Whidbey Island Greenland Area | Construct a roundabout at the intersection | Public works, Economic Development, Public Safety | \$3,000,000 | Grants, WSDOT, Island County | | \$0 TBD | TBD | Yes |
| Clinton Ferry Terminal Pedestrian Connectivity | South Whidbey | Construct improved pedestrian access between WSDOT park and ride on SR 525 and | Public works, Economic Development, Public Safety, Tourism | \$1,500,000 | Grants, WSDOT, Island County | | \$0 Yes | Yes | Yes |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--|--|-----------------|--|--|---------------|-----|-----|
| Island County Solid Waste Transfer Station | Near Coupeville | Design and construction of a solid waste transfer station | Public works and public safety. All economic and tourism interests on Whidbey are ultimately dependent on this essential infrastructure. | \$7,600,000 | Island County tipping fees, grants | \$2,100,000 | TBD | TBD | Yes |
| New Camano Island Solid Waste Transfer Station--preliminary engineering and site acquisition/selection | Camano | Perform preliminary engineering and acquire/select a site to build a new solid waste transfer station on Camano Island. Cost estimated for preliminary engineering only. | Public works and public safety. All economic and tourism interests on Camano are ultimately dependent on this essential infrastructure. | \$500,000 | Island County tipping fees, grants | \$0 | TBD | TBD | Yes |
| Whidbey Airpark Access Improvements | South Whidbey | Develop public road improvements to the Whidbey Airpark | Public works, Economic Development, Tourism | \$10,000,000 | oad District, EDA, RCED | \$ 50,000 | TBD | TBD | TBD |
| SE Pioneer Way Revitalization/Reuse Study | Oak Harbor | Oak Harbor will conduct a site clean up of 1081 and 1091 Pioneer Way in conjunction with a revitalization / reuse study focused on the downtown corridor. | Economic Development; Tourism | \$1,000,000.00 | EPA, WA State Ecology | \$200,000 - WA State Ecology grant | No | No | Yes |
| Shoreline Restoration | Oak Harbor | This project would be a combined effort from Streets, Sewer, Storm Drain and Streets to improve our infrastructure from Midway to Regatta. | Public Works, Public Safety, Economic Development | \$2,000,000.00 | Streets Operation/REET, Water, Wastewater, Storm Drain | \$1,099,075 - Streets/REET, Water, Wastewater, Storm Drain | No | No | No |
| Pioneer Way - SR20 to City Beach Street | Oak Harbor | Water main replacement and other utility upgrades. Multimodal improvements including re-channelizing the road and full repaving of the street. | Public Works, Economic Development | \$3,000,000.00 | Arterials, Unsecured grant | \$0 | No | No | Yes |
| SR20-SW Eagle Vista Ave to SW 24th | Oak Harbor | Pedestrian and safety improvements, including providing crossings on SR20, improved access to transit and traffic calming treatments. Work may include construction of roundabouts at the intersections and speed limits reductions to promote a safe transition from rural highway to | Public Works, Public Safety, Economic Development | \$5,000,000.00 | Arterials, Unsecured grant | \$0 | No | No | Yes |
| Midway Blvd Reconstruction | Oak Harbor | Pavement Preservation / ADA upgrades on Midway Blvd - Road Diet | Public Works, Public Safety, Economic Development | \$950,000.00 | STBG/IRTPO grant, Arterials | \$821,750 - STBG/IRTPO grant; \$128,250 - Arterials | No | No | No |
| Industrial Avenue Tie-In | Oak Harbor | This project includes a tie-in connection between the 12-inch water pipe in Goldie Rd right-of-way to the existing 8-inch PVC parallel line at Industrial Avenue. This will help provide adequate fire flows to meet the 3,500 gpm requirement for businesses in the area. | Public Works, Economic Development | \$60,000.00 | Water, Reserves | \$24,000-Water; \$36,000-Reserves | No | No | No |
| N. Whidbey Sewer Expansion | Oak Harbor | This project is to begin the design process for the installation of a lift station and all related infrastructure to serve the North Enterprise Zone. | Public Works, Economic Development | \$250,000.00 | Unsecured grant | \$0 | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Marina Additional Improvements | Oak Harbor | This project will consist of removing and replacing the whalers on the north and south side of the main walkway. It will also consist of upgrading or replacing 2-3 electrical junction boxes along the main walkway. | Public Works, Public Safety, Parks and Recreation, Economic Development; Tourism | \$250,000.00 | Marina funds | \$250,000 - Marina | No | No | No |
| Marina Boat Yard Acquisition | Oak Harbor | Purchase the boat yard at the south end of the Marina parking lot. | Parks and Recreation, Economic Development | \$673,688.00 | Marina funds; RCED grant secured | \$675,000 - Grant; \$24,813 - Marina funds | Yes - secured | No | No |
| Marina Dredging | Oak Harbor | Complete the Pre-design study and then dredge the Marina | Parks and Recreation, Economic Development; Tourism | \$12,000,000.00 | Marina funds; Grant-CPP; Bonds; Unsecured grant | \$150,000 - Rates; \$150,000-Grant-CPP | Yes | Yes | Yes |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|--|---|-----------------|--|-----|-----|----|------------|
| Channel Dredging | Oak Harbor | Work with the Army Corps of Engineers on design and dredge of the channel between Oak Harbor Bay and Saratoga | Parks and Recreation, Economic Development, Tourism | \$15,000,000.00 | Federal | \$0 | No | No | Yes |
| 7th Avenue Wetlands Trail Feasibility Study | Oak Harbor | Planning and feasibility studies required to construct trails on city-owned property in the Northern section of the City. Trail network will provide passive recreation and pedestrian access to local residents, service providers and businesses in the area. | Parks and Recreation, Economic Development | \$110,000.00 | TAP Grant; Paths & Trails fund | \$0 | Yes | No | Yes |
| N. Whidbey Broadband Study | Oak Harbor | Conduct a study on the broadband needs of the City and North Whidbey Island. The study will focus on unserved and underserved areas within City limits as well as other areas in North Whidbey Island that have less than the State broadband download and upload speed and connectivity | Economic Development | \$75,000.00 | CERB grant; IC Matching Funds; City General Fund | \$0 | Yes | No | Yes - CERB |
| Whidbey Island Regional Sports Complex Study | Oak Harbor | Conduct a study on the viability of building an indoor sports complex for Whidbey Island | Parks and Recreation, Tourism; Economic Development | \$200,000.00 | State legislature Community Project | \$0 | No | No | Yes |
| North Industrial Park Feasibility Study | Oak Harbor | Conduct an Economic Development study for the North Industrial Park area of Oak Harbor | Economic Development | \$75,000.00 | CERB grant (\$50,000) | \$0 | Yes | No | Yes |
| Internet/Broadband expansion through Midtown | Oak Harbor | Whidbey Telecom has a Middle Mile grant to expand its service from Coupeville north of Oak Harbor. Oak Harbor can connect for \$24/foot. Looking at connecting Fire Station 82, Swantown to CWF, Downtown/Citywide Wireless, Heller to Navy base & City shop on 16th. | Economic Development, Tourism | \$24,000.00 | Broadband grant | \$0 | Yes | No | Yes |
| Athletic Fields Renovation | Oak Harbor | Give citizens a sense of pride in our community and positive places to play baseball, football and soccer. Fields need to be renovated to ensure children and adults have safe playing | Parks and Recreation, Economic Development, Tourism | \$300,000.00 | RCO grant | \$0 | No | No | Yes |
| Active Transportation Plan Implementation | Oak Harbor | Implement strategies to enhance quality of life, increase sustainability, support local economies and improve mobility and safety | Economic Development, Tourism | \$1,000,000.00 | grants | \$0 | No | No | Yes |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|--|--|-------------|--|--|-----|-----|----|
| Central Whidbey Broadband | Central Whidbey | Bringing broadband to 1043 premises | Public Works, Broadband, Economic Development | \$6,557,244 | Grants | Public Works Board \$4,842,933 & Dept of Commerce \$ 1,614,311 | NO | No | No |
| EV Charging Stations | Greenbank Farm | Adding 6 Fast EV charging stations | Public Works, Transportation, Climate Resilience | Unknown | WAEVCP grant \$550,000.00 (been awarded, waiting for contract) | Dept. of Commerce DOC \$172,000.00 | No | No | No |
| Pond Rehabilitation | Greenbank Farm | This is our firesuppression system for the barn as well as ag. Provides water for farmers on our land. | Agriculture, Public Safety, | Unknown | IDD funds | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD | |
| Envelope Repair | Coupeville Wharf | Remove siding, install weather protection and stabilization, replace siding, windows and doors. | Tourism; Economic Development | \$800,000 | Grants, IDD funds | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD | |
| Raising the Wharf | Coupeville Wharf | Due to sea level rising, we plan to raise the wharf to save it from rising sea levels 2025. | Tourism, Economic Development | \$6,000,000 | Grants, earmarks | \$0 TBD | TBD | Yes | |
| Stadium Lights | Greenbank Farm | Replacing lights on extra parking area | Tourism, Economic Development, Public | \$70,000 | IDD funds | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD | |
| Dock Replacement | Coupeville Wharf | Dock Replacement | Tourism, Economic Dev., Public Works, | Unknown | Unknown | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD | |
| Bulkhead Emergency Repair | Coupeville Wharf | Bulk head emergency repair | Public Safety | Unknown | Unknown | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD | |
| Barn A Roof Replacement | Greenbank Farm | Barn A roof replacement | Tourism, Public Works | \$300,000 | Unknown | \$0 TBD | TBD | TBD | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|--|--|-------------|---|-------------|-----|----|-----|
| Clinton Passenger-Only Ferry Dock | Clinton, WA | The Clinton recreational dock was damaged in storms. The Port is planning to replace the dock with one capable of accommodating passenger-only ferries. | Public Works, Transportation, Economic Development, Recreation, Emergency Preparedness | \$4,600,000 | Federal (FHWA, FTA), State (WSDOT, Washington State Ferries, appropriations), Island County CED | \$1,700,000 | No | No | Yes |
| Possession and Bush Point Boarding Float Replacements | Clinton WA, Freelan | The boarding floats at two Port of South Whidbey boat ramps are reaching the end of their useful lives. The Port plans to replace these critical assets. | Public Works, Recreation | \$2,000,000 | State (Recreation and Conservation Office) | \$0 | No | No | Yes |
| Workforce Housing | Langley, WA | The Port is pursuing workforce housing as a secondary use at the Whidbey Island Fairgrounds and Events Center. The project is in feasibility assessment phase (architectural and engineering). | Public Works, Economic Development, Workforce | \$500,000 | Island County CED, State (CERB) | \$150,000 | Yes | No | No |
| Campground Improvements | Langley, WA | The Port plans to continue development of the campgrounds at the Whidbey Island Fairgrounds and Events Center. | Public Works, Economic Development, Lodging, Recreation | TBD | Island County CED, State (Recreation and Conservation Office), City of Langley (LTAC) | \$337,500 | Yes | No | Yes |
| Mooring buoys at the South Whidbey Harbor | Langley, WA | The Port plans to pursue additional moorage options at the South Whidbey Harbor in Langley, including potential mooring buoys. | Public Works, Economic Development, Tourism, Recreation | \$100,000 | State (Recreation and Conservation Office) | \$0 | No | No | Yes |



Rural County Economic Development Infrastructure Investment Program 2024 Policies & Guidelines

Island County is authorized by [RCW 82.14.370](#) to retain a portion of the state's share of sales and use taxes to finance public facilities. The goal of Island County's Rural County Economic Development Infrastructure Investment Program is to improve the economy of Island County by creating and retaining ongoing, private sector jobs. To achieve this, the Rural County Economic Development Infrastructure Investment Program offers grants to local governments with qualifying proposals to assist in financing the cost of public facilities that will assist businesses in creating and retaining jobs.

Local government agencies and port districts within Island County are eligible to apply for grant awards. Local governments include the county, cities, port districts, water and sewer districts and other districts that may implement projects consistent with the objectives of this program.

Public facilities mean

... bridges, roads, domestic and industrial water facilities, sanitary sewer facilities, earth stabilization, storm sewer facilities, railroads, electrical facilities, natural gas facilities, research, testing, training, and incubation facilities in innovation partnership zones designated under [RCW 43.330.270](#), buildings, structures, telecommunications infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, or commercial infrastructure, and port facilities in the state of Washington.

Public facility projects include acquisition, design, permitting, construction, repair, reconstruction, replacement, or rehabilitation or improvement to existing facilities.

Affordable workforce housing infrastructure means infrastructure that a public agency uses to support the development or preservation of housing by a qualifying provider for a single person, family, or unrelated persons living together whose income is no more than 120 percent of the area median income, adjusted for housing size. One or more occupant in each housing unit supported must be employed in Island County. It does not include actual housing units.

Qualifying provider means a nonprofit entity as defined in [RCW 84.36.560](#), a nonprofit entity or qualified cooperative association as defined in [RCW 84.36.049](#), a housing authority created under [RCW 35.82.030](#) or [35.82.300](#), a public corporation established under [RCW 35.21.660](#) or [35.21.730](#), or a county or municipal corporation.

Project initiation means submittal of a complete and accurate reimbursement request to Island County.

Program Objectives

The objectives of the program are to assist in financing public facilities that will stimulate private capital investments which benefit the community and public-at-large and

- A. Increase the number of ongoing, family wage jobs available to local residents.
- B. Retain businesses and/or facilitate the expansion of existing businesses within Island County.
- C. Attract new businesses to Island County that create family wage jobs.
- D. Support a stable and diversified local economy.
- E. Support a stable work force.
- F. Preserve public infrastructure that supports the employment base.
- G. To build capacity by effectively managing the Rural County Economic Development fund.

Project Selection

In selecting proposals for funding, Island County may give additional consideration to projects based upon

- Number of jobs created or retained.
- Clearly quantifiable jobs created or retained vs. potential jobs created or retained.
- Broad impact to Island County.
- Local business and community support.
- Leverage Rural County Economic Development funds to the greatest degree for maximum economic impact within Island County.
- Immediacy of the resulting benefit to the community.
- Readiness to proceed.
- Number of housing units supported.
- Relationship of funding amount requested compared to either jobs created, jobs retained, or housing units supported (or combination thereof).
- Housing units are evaluated qualitatively by number of bedrooms and mix of unit size, such that more total bedrooms supported are preferred, and a mix of unit size is a positive evaluation factor.
- Planning/feasibility only projects are not eligible for funding.

Program Policies

- 1) Island County will only award funds to qualifying projects that:
 - a. Comply with all federal, state, county, and other applicable local regulations;

- b. Are listed in the Island County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; or
 - c. Clearly align with action steps in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; or
 - d. Are supported by **specific** language in the economic development element of the County's Comprehensive plan or the Comprehensive Plan of a city or town within the County, see RCW 82.14.370(3)(a); and
 - e. Meet the program objectives of the Rural County Economic Development Fund program.
- 2) Awards will be allocated through an annual application process. The Board of Island County Commissioners may choose to forgo the annual application and award process at their sole discretion. There is no obligation or commitment to award any funds in an application cycle. The Board also reserves the right to fund requests made outside of the annual application process.
- 3) Awards shall be made under three general parameters:
- a. For projects expected to lead to development of additional jobs without a demonstrated job expansion prospect, or for the preservation of existing jobs, funding will be awarded at 50-percent grant with the remaining 50-percent in match and/or loan. Examples of these projects are utility improvements and road development into unserved or underserved areas.
 - i. Larger job numbers are preferred over fewer job numbers and increase likelihood of award.
 - b. For projects expected to support development or preservation of more than five full time equivalent jobs from a specifically designated private sector partner funding will be awarded at 25-percent match and 75-percent grant. Examples of this project category would be street frontage improvements and utility service development for an industrial or commercial development with a defined future tenant or an existing tenant.
 - i. Larger job numbers are preferred over fewer job numbers and increase likelihood of award.
 - c. For projects that develop infrastructure to support housing for those earning 120% of AMI or below, with a guarantee of affordability for a minimum of 20-years, will be awarded at 50-percent grant and 50-percent match.
- 4) For all categories:
- a. Larger match portions are encouraged and will be considered an advantage in the competitive process.
 - b. The Board of County Commissioners may adjust parameters within the limits of RCW 82.14.370 at the sole discretion of the Board.

- c. Matching funds can be in the form of a loan from the RCED program to be paid back over a time frame and at an interest negotiated between the County and the recipient.
 - d. Matching funds may be provided by the recipient, a private partner, or non-profit partner.
- 5) The Board of Island County Commissioners may at its sole discretion reduce or partially fund requests based upon review of the applications and funds available.
- 6) Applications must be submitted using the Rural County Economic Development Fund Application online form. Supplemental materials may be included in a submittal package.
 - a. Applications for non-housing projects must include job and wage information to be considered complete.
 - b. Applications for housing infrastructure projects should provide information on local workforce housing needs/deficiencies and should illustrate the impact of the project on that need.
 - c. Applications must cite specific reference(s) to the subject project or project type in the pursuant to Section 1 (document title, adopting date, and page number) to be considered complete.
 - d. In order to be considered, applications must be complete and submitted by the announced deadline.
- 7) Each project application must have a project description that identifies distinct project objectives directly related to the program objectives. Measurable milestones should be included.
- 8) Rural County Economic Development grants may be used to leverage other funding sources toward financing the total project. Funding awarded to any project shall be contingent on the project securing matching funds (if applicable) from additional sources (grants, loans, etc.) within the timeline proposed in the application.
- 9) The applicant's match may be reduced to ten percent (10%) of the total project costs at the discretion of the Board. The local match can be provided by investing cash in the project, grants, loans, in-kind contribution, donations, private investment, or other appropriate revenue source.
- 10) Project proposals must demonstrate a budget or complete financial plan that will be used to successfully complete the project. Projects that initiate operation of a facility should include information in the application that shows long-term operational viability such as a funding stream.

- 11) The applicant documents all permits required to complete the project and describe the anticipated timeframe for securing such permits.
- 12) Only design, A&E services, permits and construction costs will be reimbursed. Construction costs include project materials, payments to contractors for work performed, etc. Rural County Economic Development monies may not be spent on soft costs such as planning and feasibility studies or administrative costs. However, soft costs may be used as matching funds. In the rare occurrence of a project being cancelled, stopped, or otherwise ended before completion, any reimbursements for design costs and A&E services must be repaid to the Rural County Economic Development Infrastructure Investment Program. Funds may not be used to reimburse work performed prior to the start date of the grant award agreement with Island County, unless otherwise approved.
- 13) Island County will not increase grant awards to pay for project overruns. Therefore, applicants should rationally anticipate contingency costs associated with the project.
- 14) Awards will be withdrawn if project initiation does not occur within 12 months of the award date. At the time of grant award, the Board may authorize a 24-month project initiation due to complex permitting factors. The Board does not grant extensions for project initiation. Projects that do not begin in a timely manner will have funding withdrawn. Applicants may reapply if funding is withdrawn.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into an Interlocal grant agreement and to submit annual project reports and data necessary for reporting to the State Auditor's Office.

Selection Process

- I. Applications will be reviewed for completeness by county personnel.
- II. Projects meeting the minimum requirements will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration. Some, all, or none of the applicants may be asked to make an oral presentation to the Board of County Commissioners at a public meeting. Representatives from the cities, town, and port districts with Island County and the Economic Development Council will be invited to attend presentations, and asked to provide written comments on each application presented within 2 weeks after presentations.

- III. Within 60 days of applicant presentations, the Board of County Commissioners will consider awards, if any. The Board of Island County Commissioners is the decision-making authority for all Rural County Economic Development fund awards.

Timeline

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Prior to March 15 annually | County Commissioners review financial projections and sustainability of the Rural County Economic Development Program and determine whether or not to call for applications. |
| No later than March 15 | Eligible entities will be notified of an award cycle. |
| March 31 | Deadline for submittal of applications |
| April | County personnel review applications for completeness and minimum program requirements. |
| May/June | Qualifying applicants make oral presentations at Commissioners' meeting. Written comments by cities, town, ports, and EDC on each application presented are due 2 weeks after oral presentations. |
| Within 60 days of presentations | County Commissioners consider awards. |

Program Administration

- 1) The Island County Rural County Economic Development fund is administered by the County Administrator's office under the supervision of the Board of Island County Commissioners.
- 2) Rural County Economic Development funds will be used to pay for administrative costs of managing the program.
- 3) The County Administrator will
 - a. Administer the application process according to the policy and procedures.
 - b. Monitor the financial performance of the Rural County Economic Development Fund program and promptly inform the Board of Island County Commissioners of any matters requiring its attention.
 - c. Review reimbursement requests to ensure such costs are eligible for reimbursement under the terms of the grant award.
 - d. Prepare an annual Rural County Economic Development budget submittal as part of the overall county budget.
 - e. Prepare and submit to the Board of Island County Commissioners an annual program report. This report will include:
 - i. Rural County Economic Development fund financial performance.
 - ii. Summary of activities financed during the reporting period.
 - iii. Summary of data and statistics reported by each agency receiving Rural County Economic Development funds.

Part 1: Applicant Information

- Organization Name
- Address
- Primary Contact Name
- Phone
- Email

Part 2: Project Information

RCW definitions for operation

- Project Name
- Physical Location
- Project - Overall Description (*brief*)
- Use of Funds (*specifics of what funds will be spent on, labor, materials, equipment*)

Part 3: Required Resources

- Total Funding Requested
- Primary Sponsor's Funded Amount (*contribution or match*)
- Other Funding Sources (*optional multiple*)
- Total Project Cost
- Comments (*impact if not fully funded*)

Part 4: Growth Management

must align with Island County CEDS or Comprehensive Plan or city/town Comprehensive Plan

- Name of Plan
if not CEDS, attach resolution or ordinance showing appropriate that the authority included this project in their comp plan
- Project Location
- Zoning type
- Compatibility (*not required*)
- Page Numbers in applicable documents (*not required*)

Part 5: Value Proposition

is project supportive of a specific business or several?

add all below

- Infrastructure & Community Support: Value Proposition
how will this project improve local infrastructure capacity?
how much additional capacity will be provided for future development?
 - Infrastructure Benefit (*make required*)
provide evidence of local commitment - financial & community
how does this project stimulate private capital investments that benefit the community and public-at-large? specify
 - Community Benefit (*make required*)

- **Supports Businesses?** *(checkbox, not required)*
 - **Business Support: Value Proposition** *(required response options drop down if selected)*
Describe in specific detail how this project will create jobs and/or allow for the retention of current jobs.
 - **Jobs Impact**
 - **Are specific business partners adding new jobs?** *(not required)*
add specific businesses that will see job growth
provide information on the following: the average wage/benefits and number of NEW jobs/FTEs; and the average wage/benefits of PROJECT jobs
please be specific where possible
do not include construction-related jobs
 - **Number of Jobs/FTEs Retained**
 - **Average Wage Retained**
 - **Number of Jobs/FTEs Created 1-3 years**
 - **Number of Jobs/FTEs Created 4 years**
 - **Average Wage Created 1-3 years**
 - **Average Wage Created 4 years**
- **Supports Housing?** *(checkbox, not required)*
 - **Housing Support: Value Proposition** *(required response options drop down if selected)*
 - **Housing: Construction Benefits**
 - **Housing Affordability Guarantee / Partner Name**
 - **Partner Address**
 - **Letters of Support**
 - **Housing Type / Units**
 - **"Other" Description** *(not required)*
 - **Income Brackets: Description** *(not required)*
 - **Years of Affordability Guaranteed**
 - **Easement Holder**
 - **Easement or Covenant** *(document upload, not required)*

Part 6: Project Timeline

- **Start Date**
- **End Date**
- **Project Phases** *(not required)*
- **Efforts To Date**
planning, engineering, feasibility

Part 7: Action Plan

- **Action Plan Description**
quantifiable measures for tracking success of project

Part 8: Miscellaneous

- **Other Information** *(not required)*

information related to the project, that would assist the Commissioners in evaluating the request - emergency declarations, bird-in-hand industry, volunteer efforts, links to other priority projects

- **Supporting Documents** (*multiple allowed, not required*)

Part 9: Applicant Certification

certify and affirm

- **Signature** (*draw / type*)
- **Certification Date**
- **Printed Name**
- **Title**

RURAL COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SALES TAXES
FUND 121
6 YEAR CASH PROJECTIONS
3/11/2025

| | Completion Date / Status | Awarded | Expended | Remaining Obligation | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| ESTIMATED BEGINNING CASH AVAILABLE | | | | | \$5,491,554 | \$6,508,155 | \$7,569,172 | \$8,280,897 | \$9,118,213 | \$10,645,226 | \$12,204,275 | \$13,796,300 |
| ADD: REVENUES | | | | | | | | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| Sales Taxes | | | | | \$1,571,094 | \$1,667,203 | \$1,700,418 | \$1,734,000 | \$1,769,000 | \$1,804,000 | \$1,840,000 | \$1,877,000 |
| Miscellaneous | | | | | \$0 | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL REVENUES | | | | | \$1,571,094 | \$1,667,203 | \$1,700,418 | \$1,734,000 | \$1,769,000 | \$1,804,000 | \$1,840,000 | \$1,877,000 |
| LESS: EXPENDITURES | | | | | | | | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| Economic Development Council | | | | | 134,750.00 | 134,750.00 | 134,750.00 | 161,019.25 | 148,225.00 | 151,189.00 | 154,213.00 | 157,298.00 |
| EDC Contract Amendment | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2018 Awards | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Port of South Whidbey Fairgrounds Economic Dev. RM-GSA-2018-274 | 12/31/2025 | 688,610.00 | 252,444.00 | 436,166.00 | 26,175.00 | 14,274.00 | 63,965.65 | 77,134.91 | | | | |
| 2019 Awards | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| City of Langley Infrastructure Improvement RM-GSA-2020-15 | 12/31/2025 | 3,000,000.00 | 1,371,600.31 | 1,628,399.69 | 257,275.00 | 318,648.73 | | 430,957.81 | | | | |
| Port of Coupeville Pier Restoration RM-GSA-2019-302 | Completed | 870,804.00 | 840,499.62 | | 6,420.00 | 58,284.31 | 684,353.00 | 91,442.31 | | | | |
| Port of Coupeville Fiber Optic Feasibility Study RM-GSA-2019-304 | Completed | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2020 Awards | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| City of Oak Harbor Marina Boatyard Acquisition RM-GSA-2020-386 | Withdrawn | 675,000.00 | 74,364.91 | | | 14,909.00 | 11,215.00 | 48,240.91 | | | | |
| 2021 Awards | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Port of Coupeville Broadband RM-GSA-2021-201 | Completed | 100,000.00 | 100,000.03 | | 15,000.00 | 25,453.03 | 59,547.00 | | | | | |
| 2022 Awards | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Port of South Whidbey Fairground Feasibility RM-BUD-2022-355 | 12/31/2025 | 150,000.00 | 38,958.35 | 111,041.65 | | | | 38,958.35 | | | | |
| 2023 Awards | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| City of Oak Harbor Marina Dredging RM-CA-2023-429 | 6/30/2026 | 1,000,000.00 | | 1,000,000.00 | | | | | | | | |
| 2025 Awards | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Estimated County Indirect Cost Allocation Charge | | | | | 114,873.00 | 39,867.00 | 34,862.00 | 48,930.00 | 93,762.00 | 93,762.00 | 93,762.00 | 93,762.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | | | | | \$3,175,607 | \$554,493 | \$988,693 | \$896,684 | \$241,987 | \$244,951 | \$247,975 | \$251,060 |
| ANNUAL NET CHANGE = REV MINUS EXP | | | | | \$1,016,601 | \$1,061,017 | \$711,725 | \$837,316 | \$1,527,013 | \$1,559,049 | \$1,592,025 | \$1,625,940 |
| ESTIMATED CARRY FORWARD TO FOLLOWING YEAR | | | | | \$6,508,155 | \$7,569,172 | \$8,280,897 | \$9,118,213 | \$10,645,226 | \$12,204,275 | \$13,796,300 | \$15,422,240 |



ISLAND COUNTY PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEV.

WORK SESSION AGENDA

MEETING DATE: 3/19/2025

To: Melanie Bacon, Chair
Board of Island County Commissioners

From: Jonathan Lange, Director

Amount of time requested for agenda discussion. 60 minutes

DIVISION: Long Range Planning

Agenda Item No.: 1

Subject: Community Based Organizations Recommendations

Description: Long Range Planning will be presenting on the Planning Commission review of recommendations made by Island Roots Housing, Whidbey Environmental Action Network, Agriculture Resource Committee Island County, and the Camano American Legion.

Attachments: ARCIC Report Plan to Commission, Expanded Final-IRH slides, WEAN Environmental Perspectives Survey, Camano Island Input to IC Comp Plan, and CBO Debrief for BOCC March 2025

Request: *(Check boxes that apply)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: Not Applicable

Budget Review: Not Applicable

P.A. Review: Not Applicable



Island County Planning and Community Development

Jonathan Lange, AICP, CFM
Director

1 NE 7th St., Coupeville, WA 98239

Ph: Whidbey 360-679-7339 | Camano 360-387-3443 | Fax: 360-679-7306

Email: PlanningDept@islandcountywa.gov | <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/207/Planning-Community-Development>

~ MEMORANDUM ~

TO: Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Long Range Planning
DATE: March 19, 2024
SUBJECT: Community Based Organization Recommendations

As part of the Climate Commitment Act funding, the Department of Commerce [awarded grants to Community Based Organizations \(CBOs\)](#) to support participation in local land use comprehensive planning for 2025 jurisdictions. The grant recipients for Island County include the American Legion of Camano Post No. 207, and Goosefoot (which is a consortium between Agricultural Resource Committee of Island County, Island Roots Housing, and Whidbey Environmental Action Network).

Previously, the CBOs presented their outreach and engagement work plans with the Planning Commission and returned to share their findings and recommendations. Long Range Planning will be reviewing the recommendations made by the community based organizations for our Comprehensive Plan Update.

Staff seeks Board input on the recommendations from the community based organizations.

Attachments:

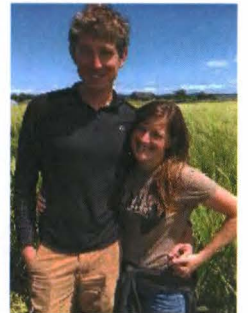
- ARCIC Report Plan to Commission
- Expanded Final-IRH slides
- WEAN Environmental Perspectives Survey
- Camano Island Input to IC Comp Plan
- CBO Debrief for BOCC March 2025



Island County Comprehensive Plan Recommendations for Agriculture

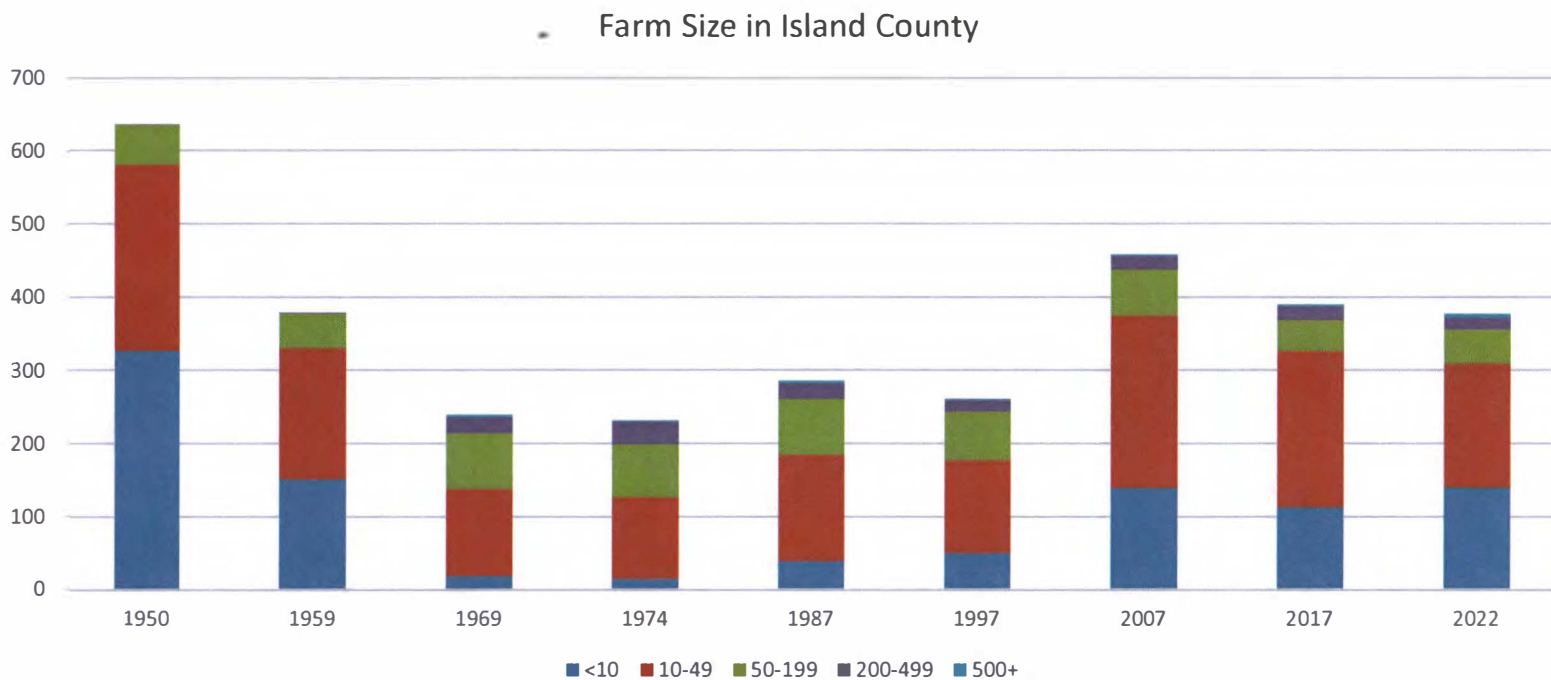
Island County Planning Commission
February 6, 2025

Island County Farmers



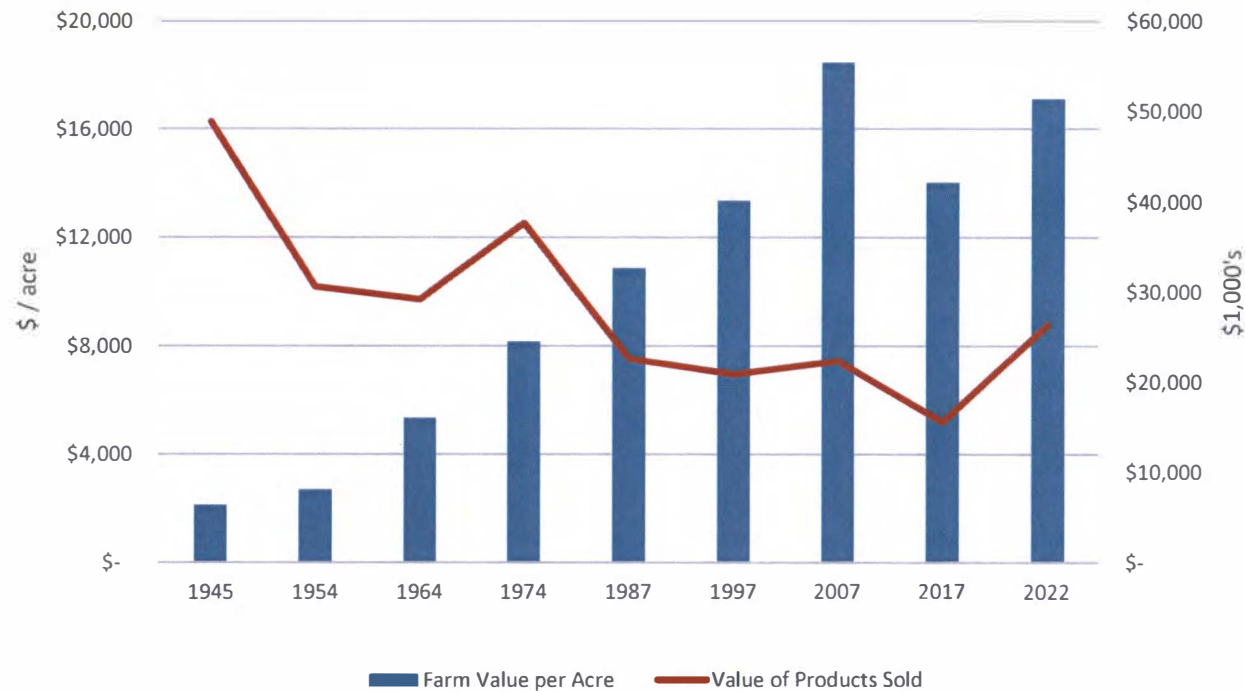
Island County Agricultural Trends

- 377 farms; 17,038 acres in farmland
- Average farm size 45 acres; 62 acres on average historically.



Source: USDA-NASS – Census of Agriculture

Island County Agricultural Trends



Source: USDA-NASS – Census of Agriculture; US Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI Inflation Calculator

Island County Agricultural Trends

- **\$23 million Industry**

- Wholesale (restaurants, grocery stores, retail outlets)
- Direct sales & CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture)
- Farmers Markets
- Whidbey Island Grown Cooperative

- **Agricultural Sectors**

30 different crops grown in Island County
(vegetables are counted as one crop)

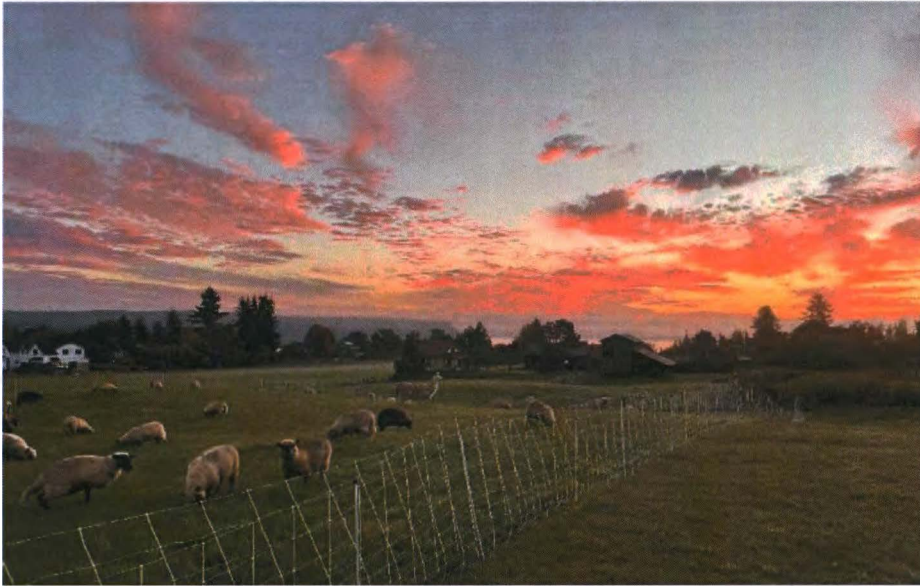
- Fruits & Vegetables
- Livestock & Poultry
- Forage & Grain
- Seed



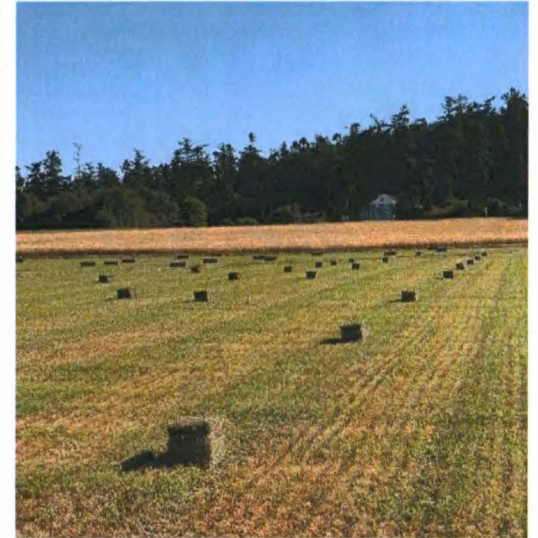
Fruits and Vegetables



Livestock and Poultry

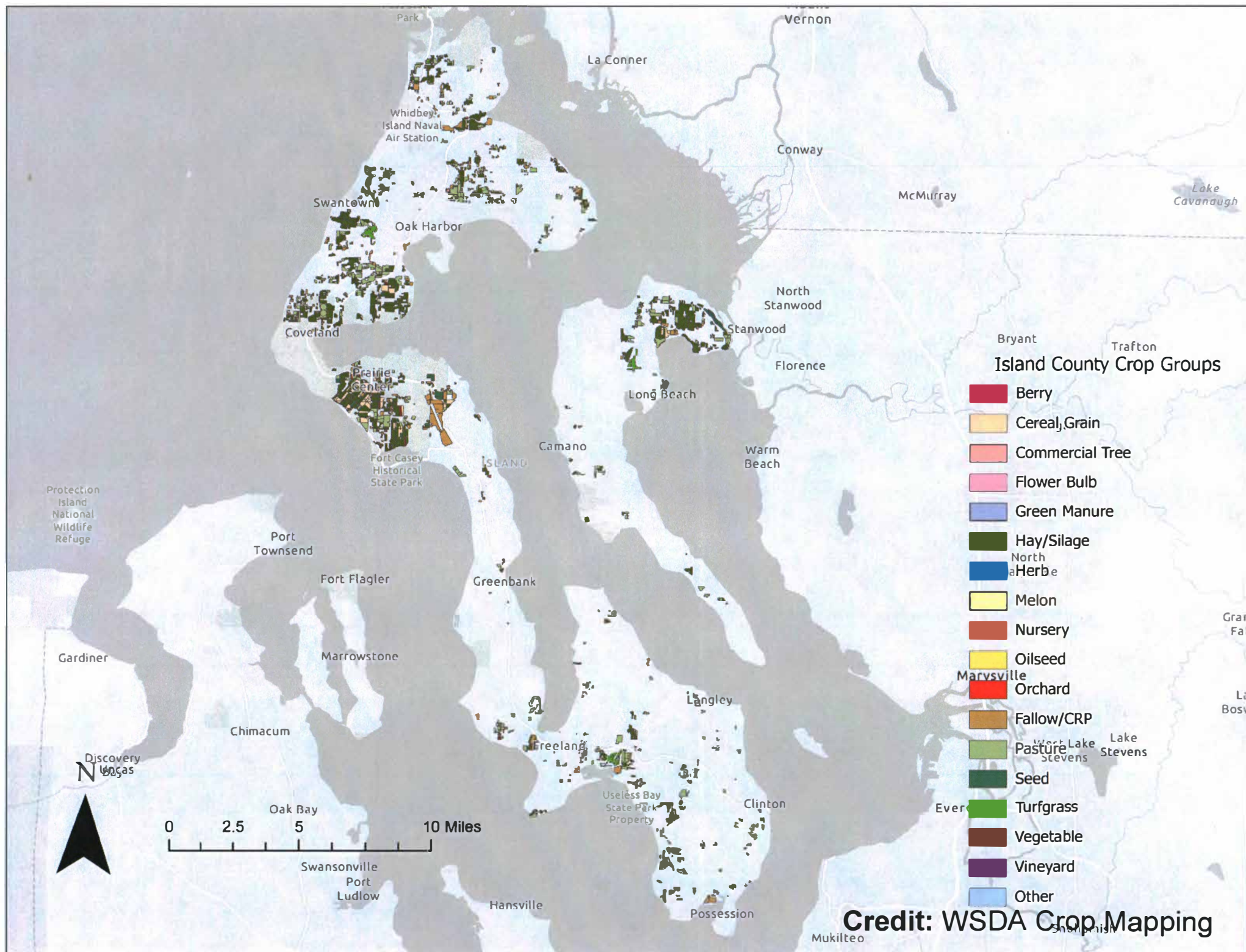


Forage and Grain



Seed Crops





Process for Input



- ARCIC Comp Plan Subcommittee
- American Farmland Trust meetings
 - Review of current plan
 - Other county plans
 - Local factors
- Farmers Town Hall Meeting
- Planning Commission



Priorities

1. Economic Viability
2. Connecting Farmers to County Administration
3. Housing
4. Water Availability



Recommendations

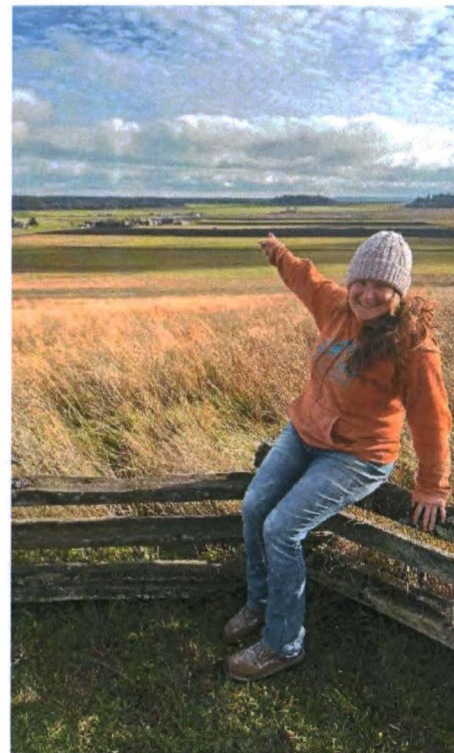
Farming adds value to the community!



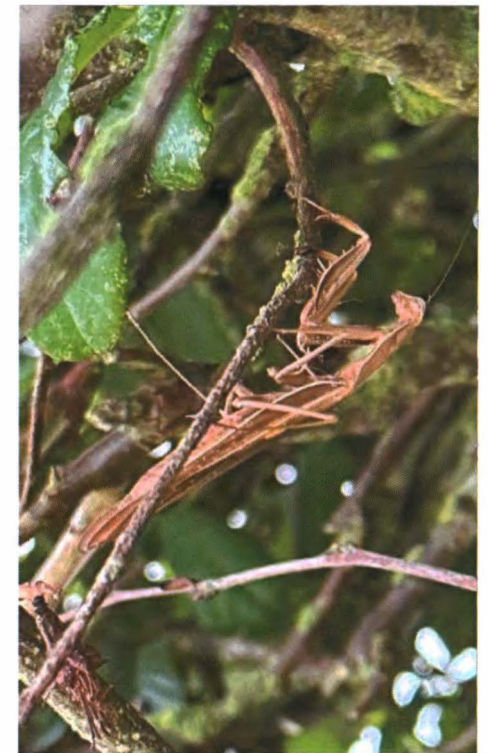
**Food Security/
Emergency Preparedness**



Local Economy



Open Space



**Ecological
Services**

Policies that support agriculture enhance the quality of life for all county residents.

Recommendations: Land Use

Land Use Goal:

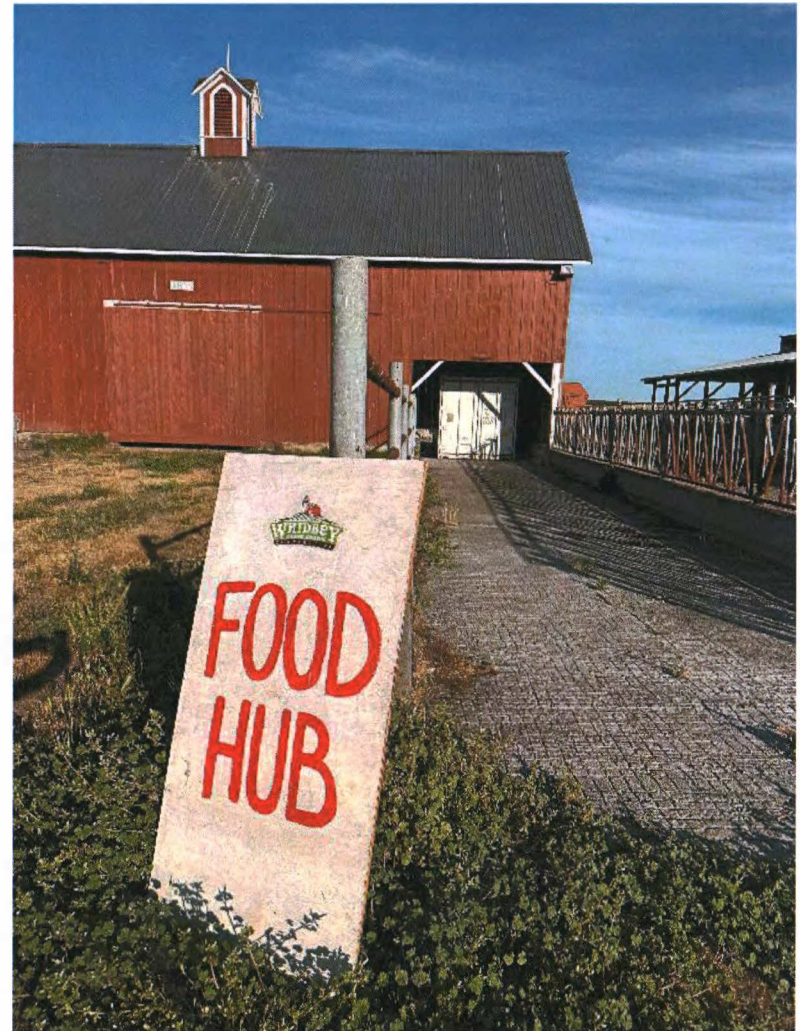
Protect farmland and promote diverse agricultural activities ... that enhance stewardship, food security, economic viability, and the agricultural elements of the rural character of Island County.



- **Create a County agriculture advisory committee**
- Create a County agricultural ombudsperson position
- Develop a strategic plan for farmland preservation and agriculture
- **Identify and address the need for farmworker housing**
- Review Island County code for barriers to agri-tourism activities
- Ensure that right-to-farm laws are enforced

Recommendations: Economic Development

- **Advance Ag Recommendations in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**
- Develop a countywide food system plan that includes an economic impact study of agriculture



Recommendations: Natural Resources

- **Coordinate the development of a proactive strategy to address future water availability**
- Support incentive-based approaches to environmental stewardship



Recommendations: Climate



- Support farmers in accessing resources and technical assistance regarding regenerative farming practices to:
 - Enhance carbon sequestration & soil health
 - Respond to changing weather patterns
 - Recover from extreme weather events

Next Steps

- Consortium gathering
 - WEAN, ARCIC, & IRH
- Small group meetings with government officials



Thank you!



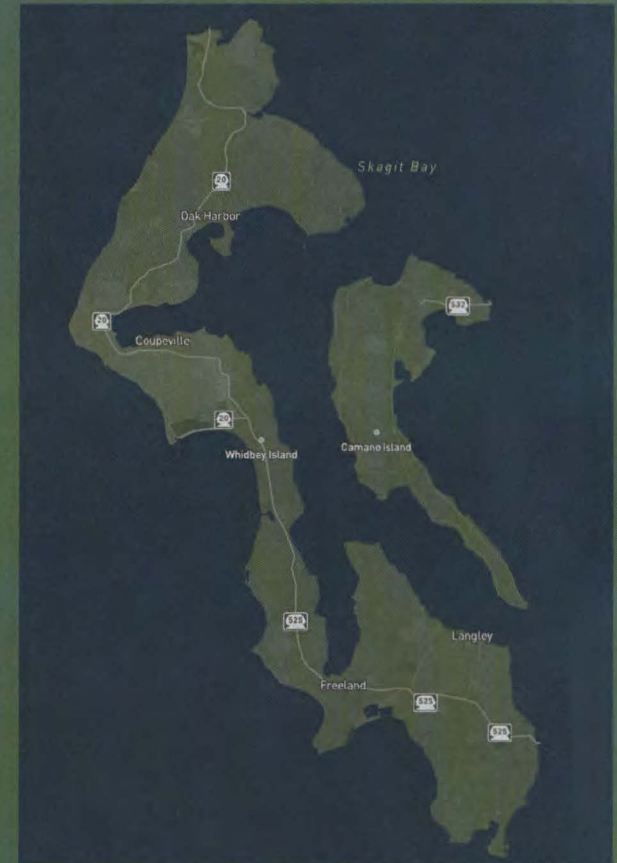
WA Dept. of Commerce Grant
Community-Based Organizations

Public Participation Findings & Recommendations



As of Feb. 12th 2025

Rose Hughes
Island Roots Housing
Presentation to Island County Planning Commission





“CBO” Consortium

Recent state law requires Commerce to advance participation of vulnerable populations and overburdened communities in comprehensive planning processes.

In response, Commerce established this new grant program to increase participation via local Community Based Organizations



Interconnected Focus Areas

- **Housing, Agriculture, and Environment** are deeply connected—planning policies impact all three.

The Power of Partnership

- **WEAN (Whidbey Environmental Action Network)**: Advocating for **environmental** protections,
- **IRH (Island Roots Housing)**: Collaborative **affordable housing** advocacy,
- **ARCIC (Agricultural & Resource Committee Island County)**: Bringing together **agricultural** economic perspectives

... to support rural communities.

Why This Collaboration Matters

- Shared knowledge has **enhanced our Comprehensive Plan recommendations** by integrating diverse perspectives.
- Working together has **bridged gaps between sectors and plan “elements”**, ensuring solutions are **holistic**.
- Cooperation has led to **greater community engagement** and **more inclusive planning recommendations**.

Collaboration / Integration

Island Roots Housing hosts “**Housing Resiliency Group**” bi-monthly meetings

Participants:

- CADA
 - Habitat for Humanity for Island County
 - Home on Whidbey Community Land Trust
 - Opportunity Council
 - Tiny Home groups (THINC & Whidbey Island Living Legacies)
 - Whidbey Home-Raising (Upper Langley)
 - Whidbey Homeless Coalition
 - Island County Human Services
- **Two meetings devoted to workshops on the Housing Element (Dec., Feb.)**
- IRH also participated in **two county-led cross-sector housing focus groups** and a **Camano Island specific workshop**



Outreach to BIPOC

BIPOC Community Engagement Consultant conducted relationship-building outreach:

Direct Engagement

- Conducted **manual & digital surveys** in key locations (businesses, churches, commerce meetings)
- Outreach at public engagement events (Pamoja Place, Boys & Girls Club, MLK Celebration, Lunar New Year)

Key Contributions

- Spanish-speaking outreach, surveys in English, Spanish & Tagalog
- Created trust & legitimacy within marginalized communities
- Facilitated active participation in Comprehensive Plan discussions

Challenges & Insights

- Need for culturally relevant engagement strategies
- Barriers to outreach efforts (institutional policies, federal DEI hostility, ICE-related concerns)
- Impact of inclusive language in policy discussions (e.g., “rural character” / “rural lifestyle”)

“Thank you – I’ve never been asked before”



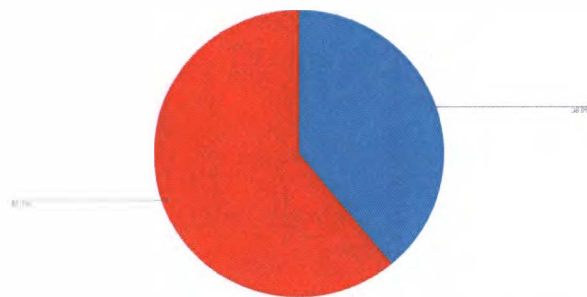
Summary BIPOC outreach survey Housing Demographics

Findings from the manual / in-person survey:

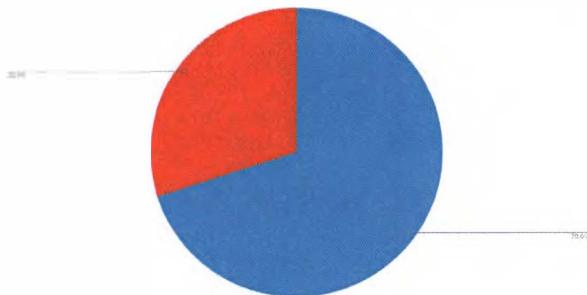
- 95% are housed (5% reported being unhoused)
- 0% receive any housing assistance (no section 8, Opportunity Council programs, rent assistance)
- 48% homeownership rate



Summary BIPOC outreach survey: Housing Demographics



**39% have experienced
housing insecurity**



**70% can afford to own or rent
a home in Island County**

Outreach to BIPOC

WHAT DO YOU WANT THE COUNTY TO KNOW:

“For them to not create an economic border between North and South Whidbey. Housing growth and economic diversity and opportunity should be equitable across the island. Not just the North”

– BIPOC Engagement Survey Respondent

“More parks for kids with updated equipment. An athletic center for children to enjoy sports year-round. Access to farms and stands year-round. Water, sewer, garbage bill to be reduced. Lower taxes on everything.”

– BIPOC Engagement Survey Respondent

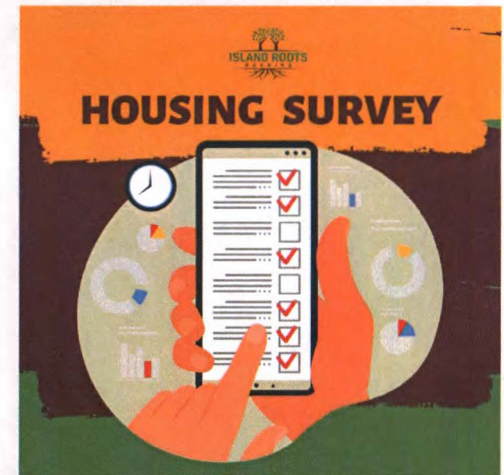


Summary of Housing Survey Data

225+ individuals and 12+ organizations across housing, social services, education, advocacy, business, and environmental sectors.

Survey Respondent Organizations:

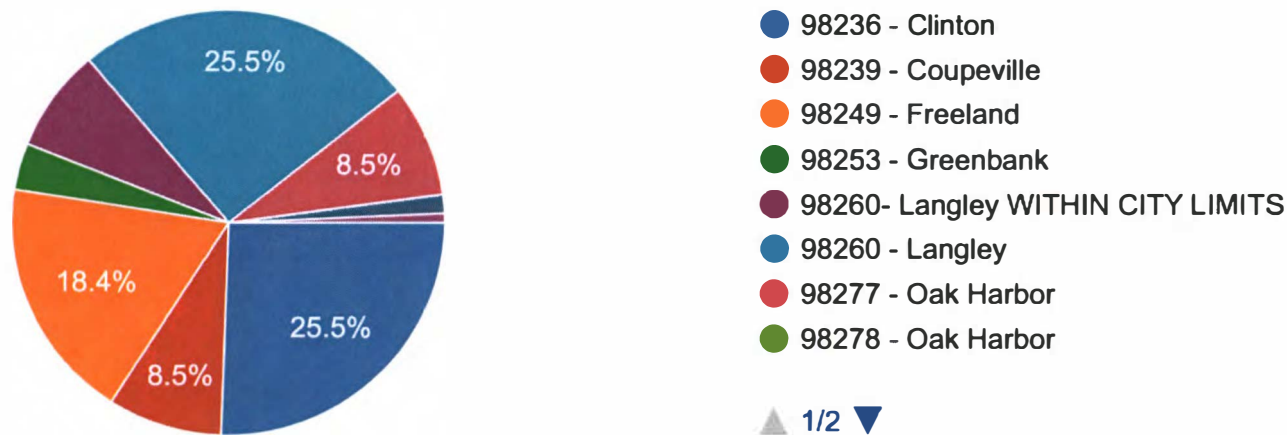
- In-Home Suites
- AROW: Affordable Rentals on Whidbey
- Snohomish County Camano Association of REALTORS
- Coupeville Chamber of Commerce
- CADA
- MarvL Homes (local single-family home developer)
- Whidbey Environmental Action Network
- Farmer Veteran Coalition
- Readiness To Learn
- Whidbey Homeless Coalition
- Whidbey Home-Raising



Survey Respondent Residency:

What is your zip code?

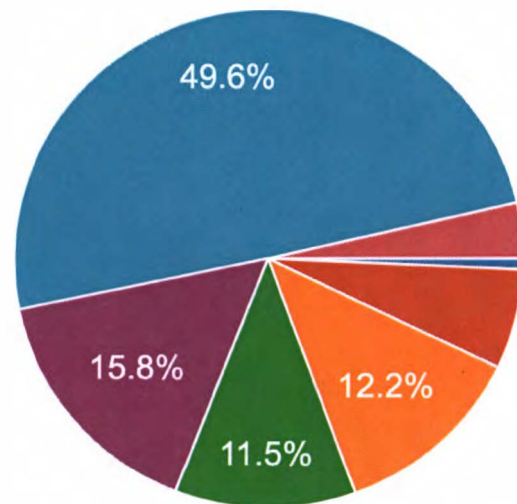
141 responses



Survey Respondents Age:

What is your age group?

139 responses



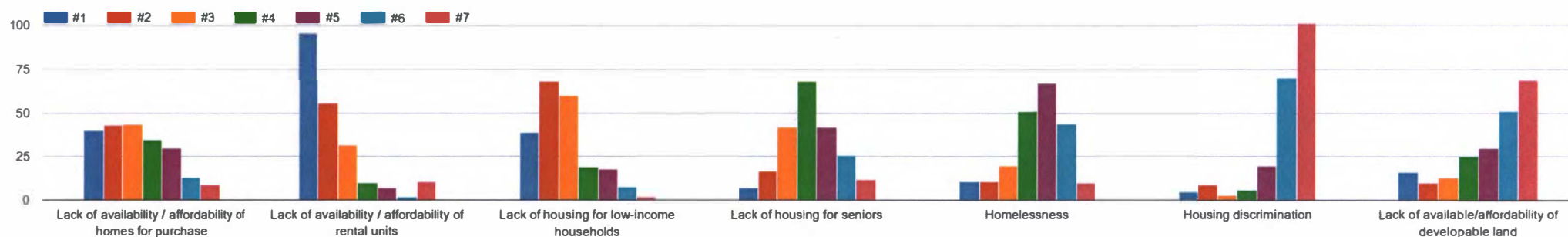
- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 or over
- Prefer not to answer

Pressing Housing Challenges:



- Lack of availability / affordability of rental units - all income levels
- Lack of housing for low-income households
- Lack of availability / affordability of homes for purchase
- Lack of housing for seniors
- Amount of homelessness

What do you believe are the most pressing housing challenges in Island County? (Rank 1-8, 1 being most important)



KEY HOUSING NEEDS Identified:

- **Emergency Housing Gaps:** Inadequate emergency shelters and support services.
- **Temporary Housing Solutions:** RVs are currently being used as a transitional/permanent housing type, at a growing rate.
- **Housing for Specific Demographics:** Seniors (56% cited as a need), farm or temporary workers (34%)



WHO IS ‘WORKFORCE’?

EARN up to 80% OF AREA MEDIAN INCOME

- Teachers
- Restaurant staff
- Childcare providers
- Landscapers
- Social service providers
- Retail salespeople
- Librarians
- Road crews



Family of 4 (2024 HUD HOME limits):

60% - earning up to \$61,200/yr

80% - Earning up to \$81,600/yr

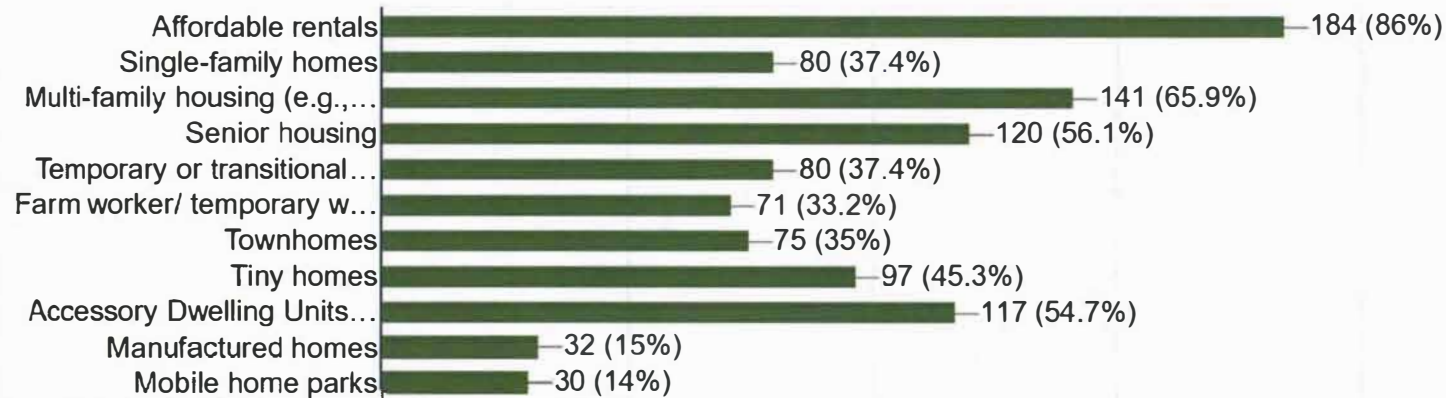


SUPPORT FOR: Diverse Housing Type



What types of housing do you think Island County needs more of? (Select all that apply)

214 responses



1. Multifamily type 66%
2. Senior (accessible, supported) 56%
3. Accessory Dwelling Units 54%
4. Single Family 37%
5. Manufactured 15%
6. Mobile Home Parks 14%

Input on Growth Strategies:

- Strong support for focusing growth in UGAs
(58% strongly support, 25% support)
- Support for focusing growth in RAIDs
(36% strongly support, 30% support)

Input on Growth Strategies:

Concept of "Rural Clusters" was introduced.

(Planned Residential Developments with Affordable Housing mandate)

32% of respondents strongly support

25% support

8% oppose

11% strongly oppose



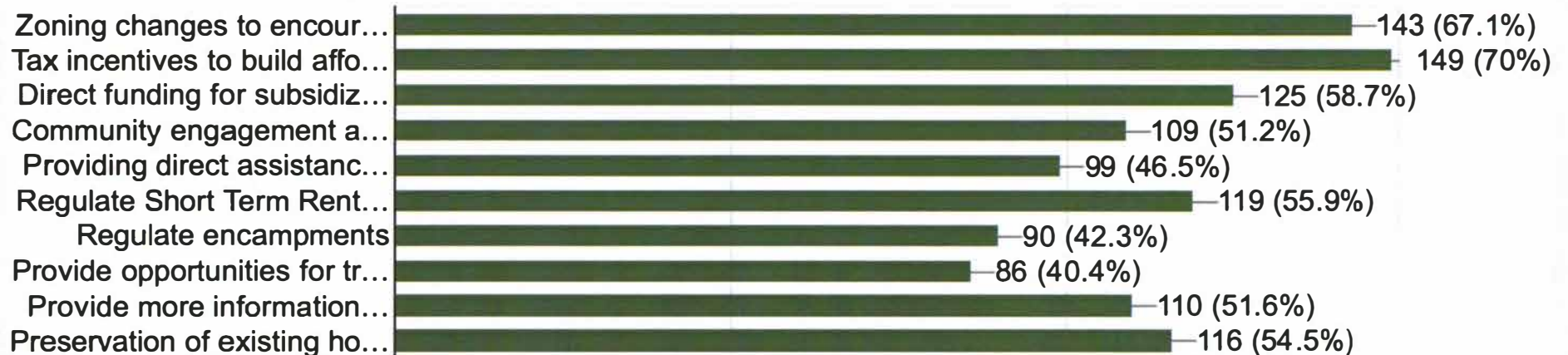
Perceived Role for County Government:

- 70% Tax incentives to build A.H.
- 67% Zoning changes to encourage A.H.
- 59% Direct funding of A.H.
- 56% Regulate short term rentals
- 55% Preservation of existing "naturally affordable"
- 51% Provide info/programs to stay in homes
(repairs, adaptations)
- 51% More community engagement in planning



What role should the local government play in supporting affordable housing development and addressing housing needs? (Select all that apply)

213 responses



Emergency & Transitional Housing

87% agree that current emergency housing services are inadequate.

Recommendations:

- Expand shelter options and integrate support services.
- Designate locations for temporary and transitional housing, including RV parks and modular housing.



Emergency & Transitional Housing

71%+ support permitting RVs as temporary housing, provided they have access to utilities and septic (88%) and health and safety inspections (56%)

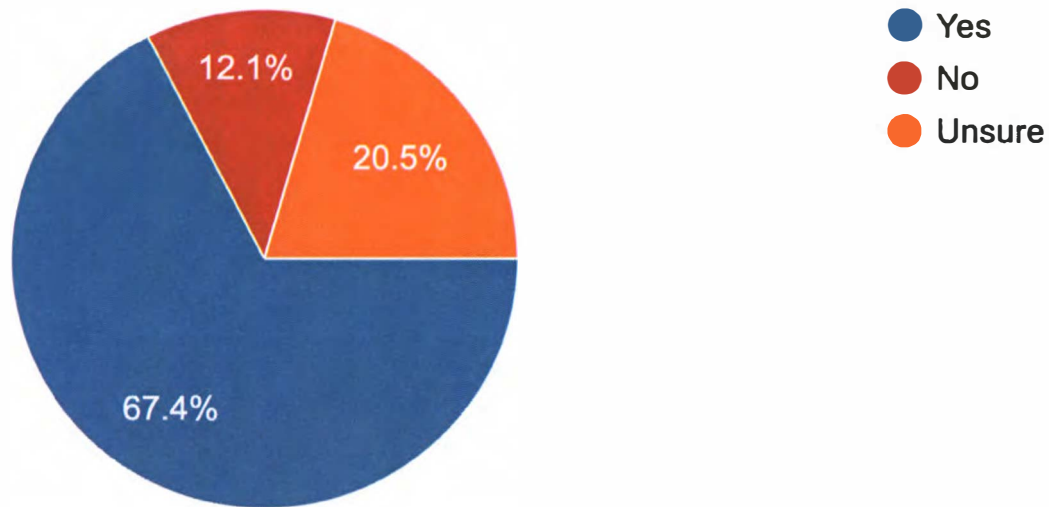
67% support designated RV areas for transitional and emergency housing solutions.



Emergency & Transitional Housing

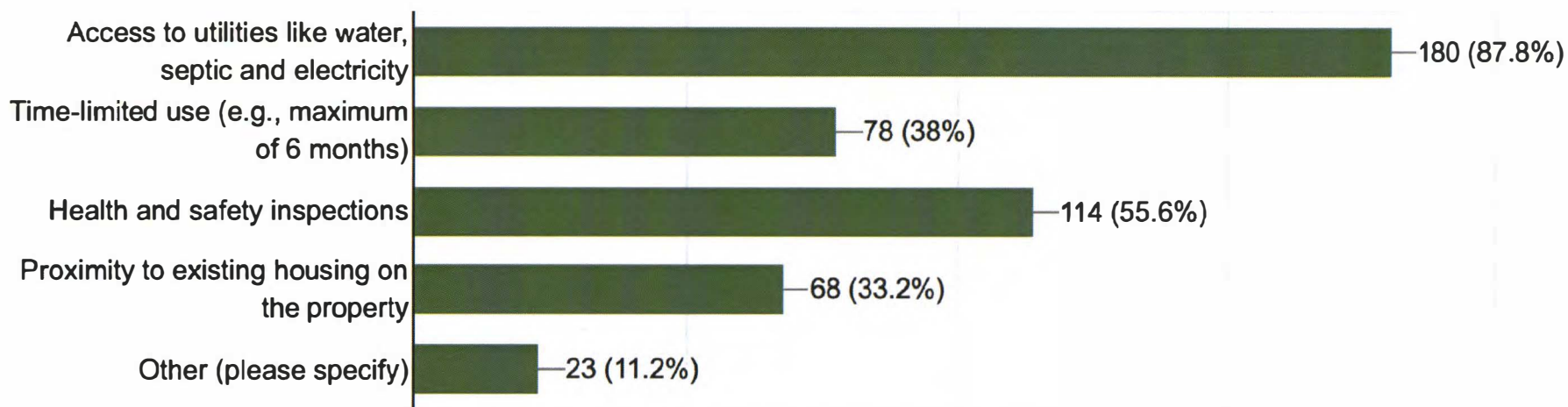
Should RVs be permitted as temporary housing in designated areas, such as RV parks or transitional housing sites, to help address homelessness or emergency housing needs?

215 responses



What conditions should apply if RVs are allowed as temporary housing on private property? (Select all that apply)

205 responses

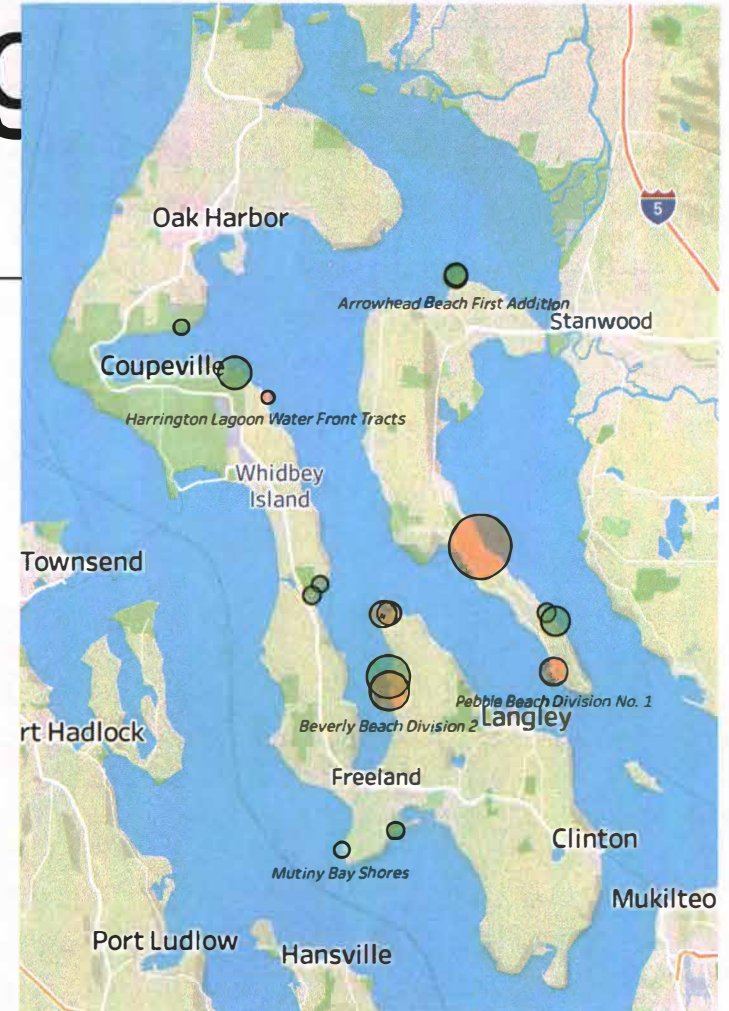


Legacy of Housing Exclusion

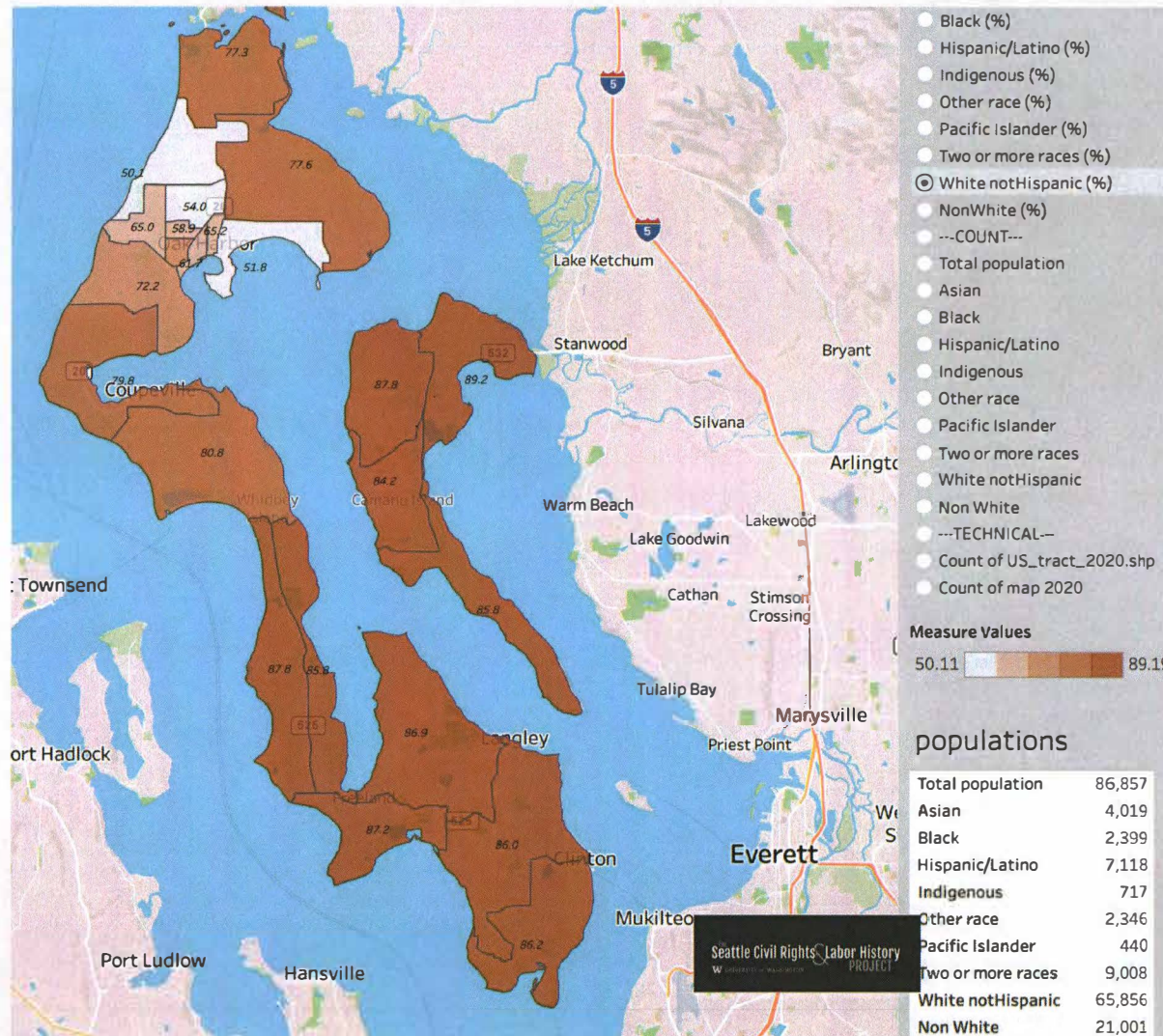
22 Subdivisions with deed-restricted covenants.
E.g.

"Said land shall not be sold, conveyed, rented nor leased in whole or in part to any person not of the white race, nor shall any person not of the white race be permitted to occupy any portion of said land or of any building thereon excepting a domestic servant actually employed by a white occupant of said building.

955 parcels with racial deed restrictions have been found to date.

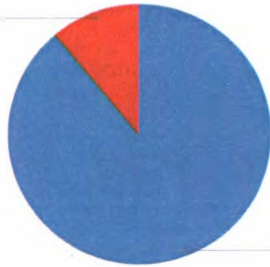


Residential Distribution By Race / Ethnicity



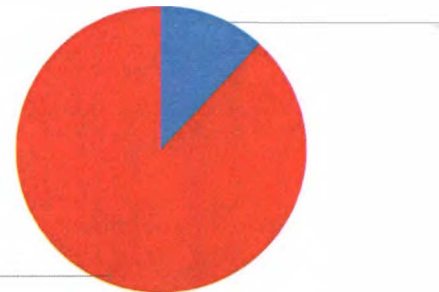
BIPOC Community Engagement Consultant findings

manual survey:



**89% concerned about the future of housing in
Island County**

12% have experienced housing discrimination



Addressing BIPOC & Marginalize Communities' Housing Needs:

- 8% of Housing Survey (digital) respondents cited discrimination as a housing barrier, roughly aligning with Island County demographics.

Recommendations:

- Increase representation of BIPOC and marginalized voices in planning processes.
- Strengthen policies against discrimination in rental and homeownership opportunities.
- Adopt goals and policies related to strengthening Fair Housing compliance.



Existing Housing Stock

How old is your home? Is it healthy?

"46 years old. No, it needs new windows and siding, updated drain field."

"It's 35 years old, and has draft windows and doors, mold and mildew, so not a healthy home."

"70 years and no it is not healthy."

"We have 2 buildings, the first is 45 years old, the second home is 31 years old"

"1940's Rental House. Beautiful area, energy inefficient and costly utilities"

"(*Home is* 45 yrs. old. renovated in 2021. NOW is a healthy environment"

"43 years old, some improvements need to be made to maintain a healthy environment."

"Why on earth would you assume everyone lives in a building?"



HOUSING DISPLACEMENT

THE HOUSING CRISIS EFFECTS EVERYONE IN ISLAND COUNTY

“I am renting, but concerned because my landlord could sell at anytime, leaving my family homeless. There are little to no affordable rentals for families of four or larger.”

— 2021 Survey Respondent

“Over the past 4 years, the number of people living in trailers and RVs has really skyrocketed. 5 years ago when I started this job in South Whidbey I had maybe 3 families, and now I have 34 families living in trailers.

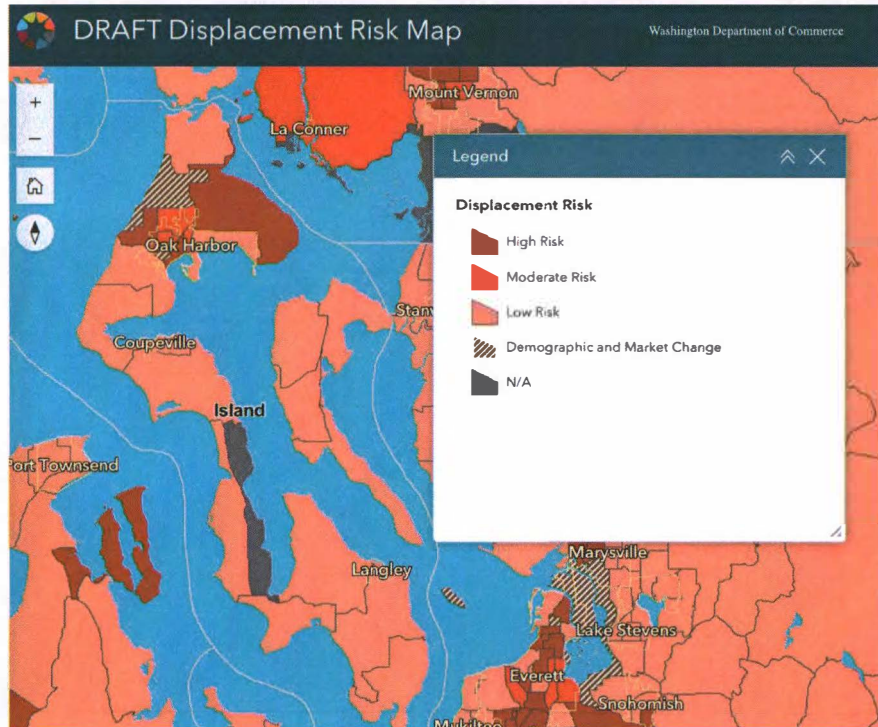
No one that I work with can afford the rent that’s out there.”

- School District Housing Liaison



MAP / ANALYZE

Risk of Displacement



Analysis and mapping of where (and when) these pressures are highest may lead to specific and targeted remedies.

ADDRESS SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

- #1 High rental cost
- #2 Unattainable house prices
- #3 Lack of housing options
- #4 High cost to purchase land & build
- #5 Lack of housing near jobs
- #6 Limited availability of rental units
- #7 Discrimination

**#1 Increase Affordable Housing development
(81%)**

#2 Provide rental assistance or subsidies (62%)

**#3 Improve access to housing support
services (54%)**

**#4 Promote inclusive housing policies for
marginalized communities (50%)**

#5 Implement stronger tenant protections (31%)

#6 Limit short term rentals

#7 Address regulatory barriers



Next Steps

In process:

- Consultant report on existing Island County Comprehensive Plan for policies, concepts, language, and ways of conveying policy direction for disparate racial and ethnic impacts.
- Written specific recommendations to Island County planning staff related to Housing Element Goals & Policies.
- Create public education products related to today's presentations

In future (summer 2025):

- Review draft Housing Element update for disparate racial and ethnic impacts and other policy recommendations/feedback.
- Provide public outreach regarding draft update to the Housing Element and amplify opportunities for public engagement.



Turning Input into Policy

Adopt core principals, for example:

- Definitions matter – be precise
- Preserve rural economic activity and spacial relationships, not subjective aesthetics (e.g. a front porch doesn't make it "rural character")
- Don't silo Comp Plan elements – plan holistically
- Reward and encourage innovation
- Encourage cross-sector collaboration
- Address systemic or structural inequities that preference one group over another
- Allow flexibility
- Diversify (type, tenure, location, programming, funding sources)



Turning Input into Policy

Increase Permanently Affordable Housing Supply...

- **by increasing local funding, e.g.:**
 - Devote Lodging Taxes to an A.H. bond program and rental assistance
 - Adopt Multi-Family Tax Exemption
 - Create cross-sector and cross-region partnerships for "impact funds" that simultaneously leverage private philanthropy and public subsidy funding
- **by addressing access inequities, e.g.:**
 - Allow greater densities and heights in all appropriate zones
 - Prioritize affordable developments near amenities and services
 - Allow flexibility and adjacent diversities in housing types, tenures, and income levels
- **by adopting inclusionary policies, e.g.:**
 - Mandate % of permanently affordable units in projects of a certain size



Turning Input into Policy

Preserve existing "naturally affordable" housing stock, rural services and open spaces...

➤ **by increasing housing assistance, e.g.:**

- Strengthen public-nonprofit partnerships (repairs, adaptation, foreclosure forbearance, "Kicking Gas")

➤ **by supporting local landlords/land owners to "do the right thing", e.g.:**

- Create permanently affordable deed restriction/tax abatement program
- Fair Housing education
- Legal information re: tenants rights/landlord rights
- Retrofit/rehab programs for "missing middle" multifamily and conversion of large single family units

➤ **by limiting Short Term Rentals, e.g.:**

- to owner-occupied properties only
- licensed number of STRs, with registration fees that pay for compliance enforcement

➤ **by preserving rural economic activity and ecological services / open spaces, e.g.**

- Create regulatory regimes for working farms to convert existing building stock for farmer/farmworker housing
- Enforce rural forest/working forest and other open space rules consistently and uniformly



Turning Input into Policy

Decrease regulatory and public opposition barriers and conflicts...

➤ **by ensuring adequate permitting staff resources and staff technical competency, e.g.:**

- Create clearer definitions and requirements in land use code, to ensure continuity of interpretations regardless of assigned staff
- Minimize avenues to appeal land use decisions for permanently affordable (<80%AMI) or emergency/transitional housing and service centers
- Increase permit fees if nec. – devote revenue to staffing (allow waivers for affordable units)
- Adopt graduated impact fees to ensure adequate staffing in related direct services

➤ **by addressing infrastructure issues, e.g.:**

- Size septic requirements based on local soil types and actual capacity need, not generalities
- (Work with DOE to) permit alternative septic types, compost toilets, greywater, and water catchment

➤ **by enforcing environmental protections uniformly and consistently, e.g.:**

- Minimize exceptions to critical areas and shoreline requirements
- Create meaningful avenues to mitigate and replace loss of tree canopy



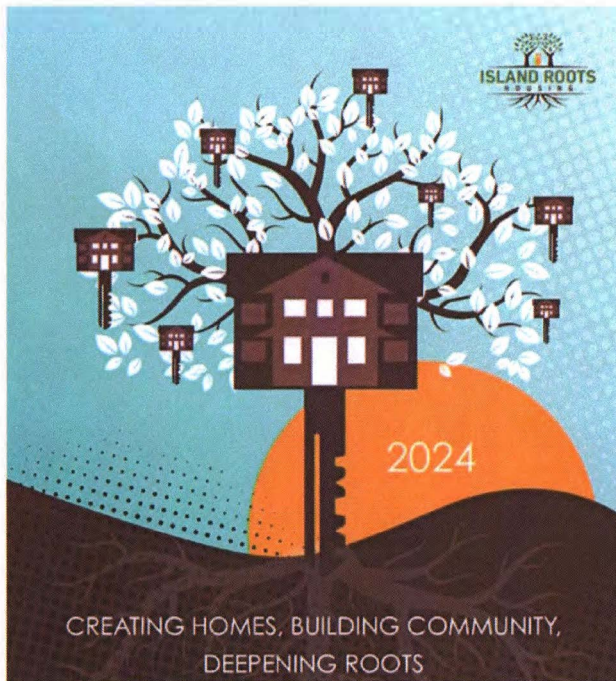
Turning Input into Policy

Strengthen housing stability across all demographics...

- **by creating a housing continuum** from shelters to homeownership, e.g.
 - Advocate for income-based policies that reflect actual cost of living.
 - Collaborate with city and county entities to create aligned housing policies.
 - Develop intergenerational/mixed use housing models, such as senior housing with daycare.
 - Address gaps in shelter for single fathers, men, and survivors of non-intimate violence and exploitation.
 - Ensure / encourage ADA compliance in all new developments.



KEEPING IN TOUCH



TELEPHONE

Island Roots: 360.720.4509

E-MAIL

community@islandrootshousing.org

ONLINE

www.islandrootshousing.org

<https://www.facebook.com/islandrootshousing>

[Follow us on LinkedIn](#)

Community Perspectives on Environmental Aspects of Planning

FEBRUARY 2025

Presented by Marnie Jackson, WEAN Executive Director
Photos by Linda LaMar, WEAN Vice Chair



LESSONS FROM OUR CBO CONSORTIUM WORK

- 
- Working from different perspectives with common goals
 - Weaving interconnected issues, priorities, needs, and solutions
 - Seeking diverse and historically marginalized perspectives
 - Looking for “yes, and”
 - The process is a product

LESSONS FROM SURVEYED COMMUNITY

WEAN'S Environment and Planning Survey

This brief survey provided a chance for community to share perspectives on the environmental issues of concern, ecosystems of importance, and places worthy of care.

Fewer than half of survey respondents heard about the survey through WEAN's website and newsletter, while more than half heard about it through Island County, the Whidbey News Times, the South Whidbey Record, or other channels.

Results from this survey will be shared in today's presentation.

Consortium's BIPOC Engagement & Surveying

With WEAN, Island Roots Housing, and Agricultural Resources Committee of Island County, contractor Mary Elizabeth Himes and subcontractor Maria Diaz engaged in both open-ended and survey-driven dialog with community members of Color.

Questions were presented in a variety of methods and languages, including written/spoken, online/in person, English/Spanish/Tagalog.

Feedback about the survey was at least as informative as survey results themselves.

ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING: LOCATION OF RESPONDENTS

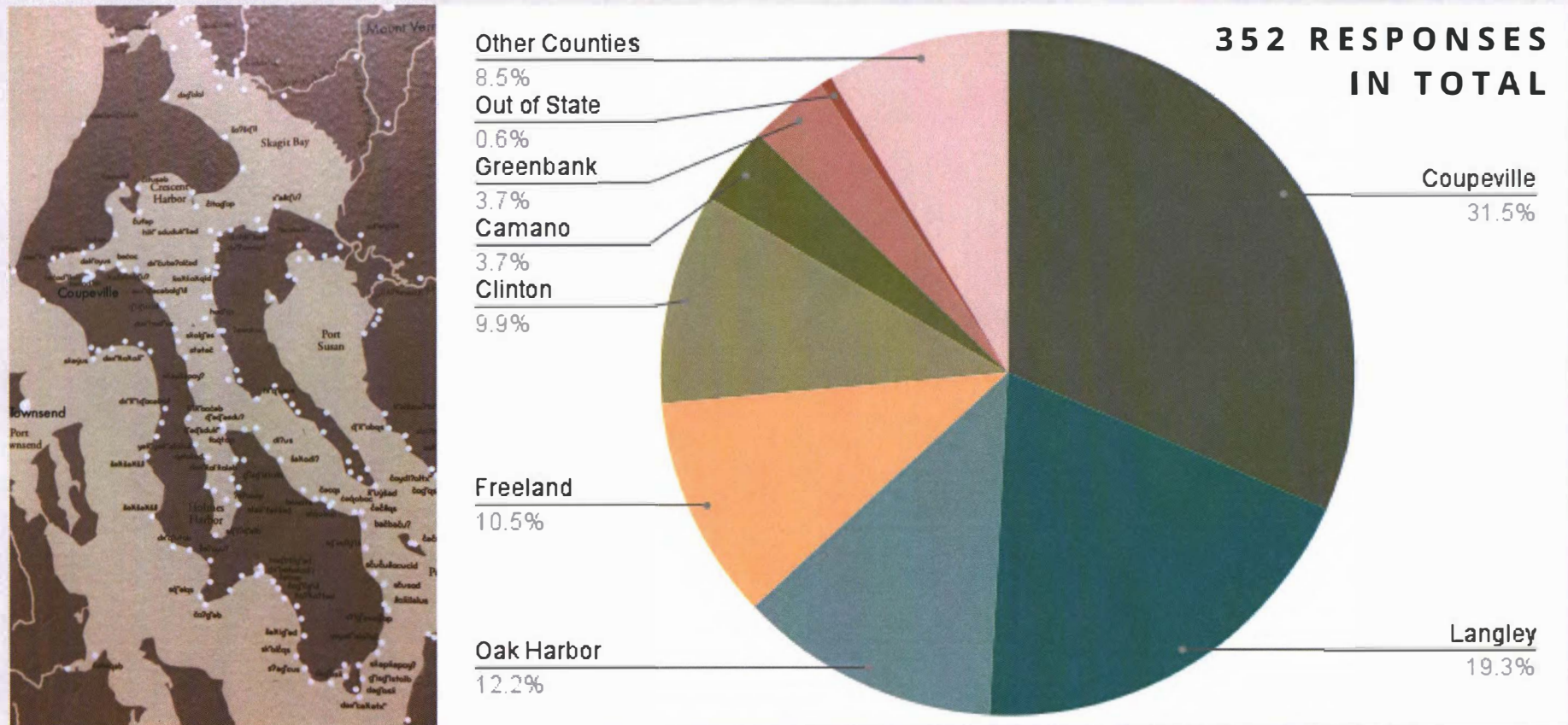
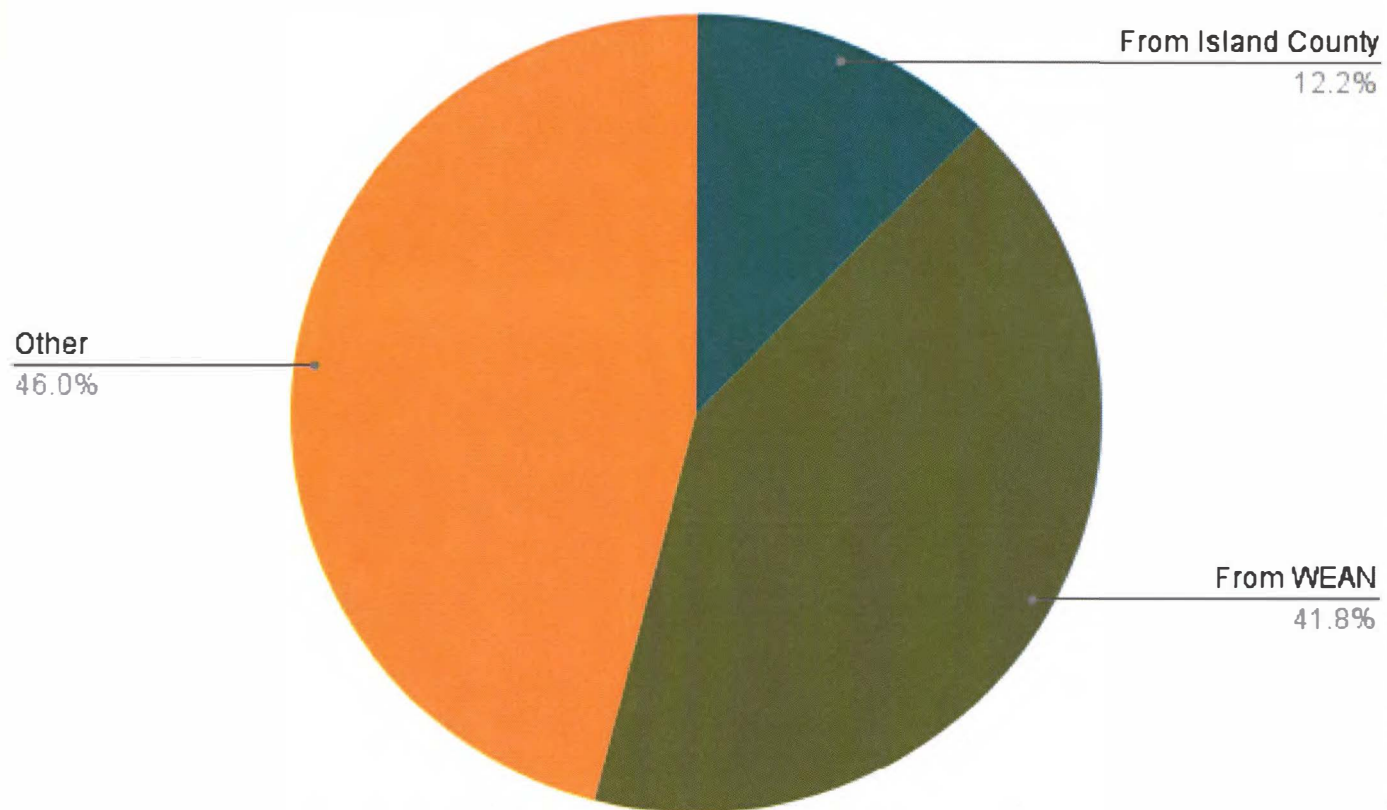


Photo of an exhibit of indigenous place names, from Hibelb Cultural Center

HOW RESPONDENTS LEARNED OF THIS SURVEY OPPORTUNITY



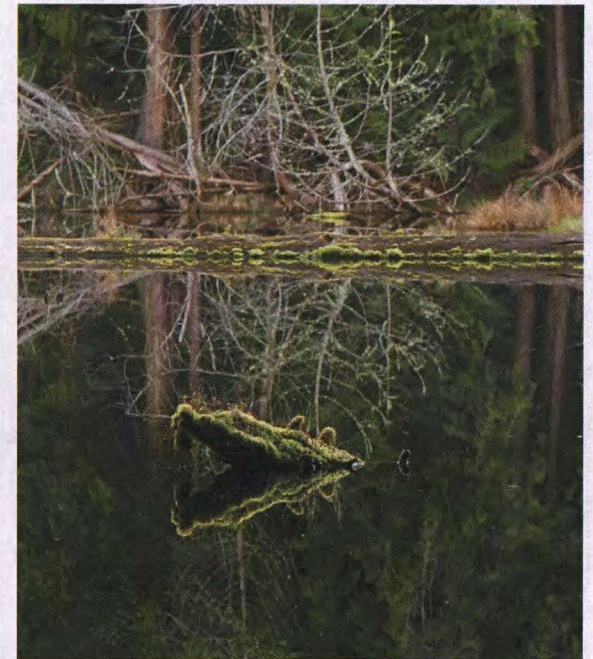
**PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO ARE "VERY" OR
"SOMEWHAT" CONCERNED WITH:**

| | |
|--------|---------------------------|
| 98.58% | Groundwater Contamination |
| 92.90% | Habitat Decline |
| 90.63% | Aquifer Recharge |
| 90.34% | Wetland Loss |
| 89.49% | Stream Health |
| 87.50% | Farmland Loss |

| | |
|--------|-------------------------------|
| 83.52% | Natural and Climate Disasters |
| 82.39% | Growler Noise |
| 81.82% | Beach Loss |
| 81.53% | Invasive Weeds |
| 80.97% | Prairie Loss |
| 76.70% | Fireworks |
| 75.85% | Logging |

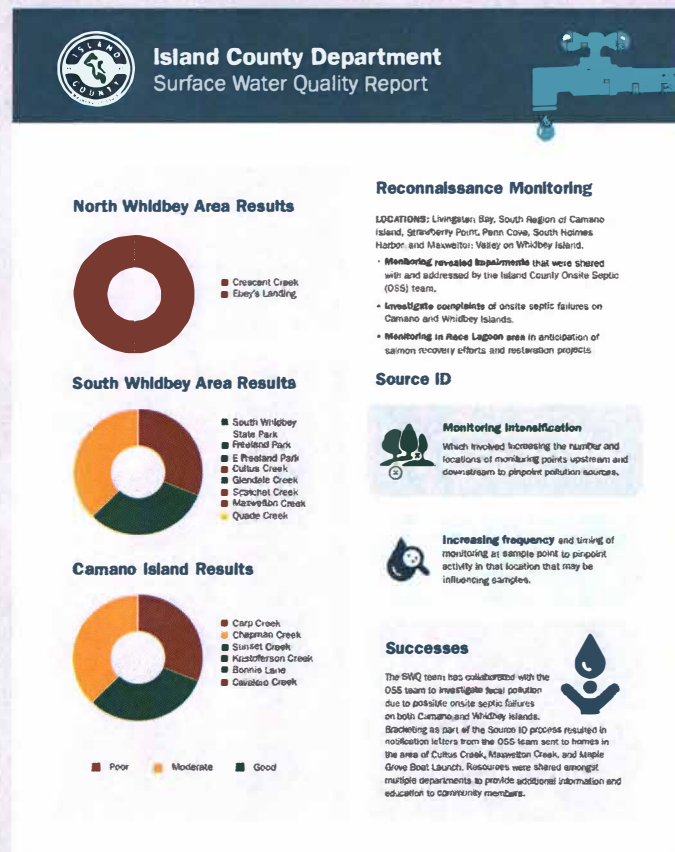
AREAS WITH STRONGEST "VERY CONCERNED" RESPONSE

| |
|---|
| 76.1% are "very concerned" about groundwater contamination. |
| 69.3% are "very concerned" about habitat decline. |
| 61.1% are "very concerned" about growler noise. |
| 60.2% are "very concerned" about wetland loss. |
| 58.5% of respondents are "very concerned" about aquifer recharge. |
| 55.7% are "very concerned" about stream health. |



9 out of 10 respondents were "very" or "somewhat" concerned about groundwater contamination, habitat decline, aquifer recharge, and wetland loss. Other areas of heightened concern are growler noise, farmland loss, and stream health. Notably, ZERO respondents selected "not at all concerned" about stream health—every single respondent had some level of concern.

CONCERNS ABOUT STREAM HEALTH SHARED BY COUNTY



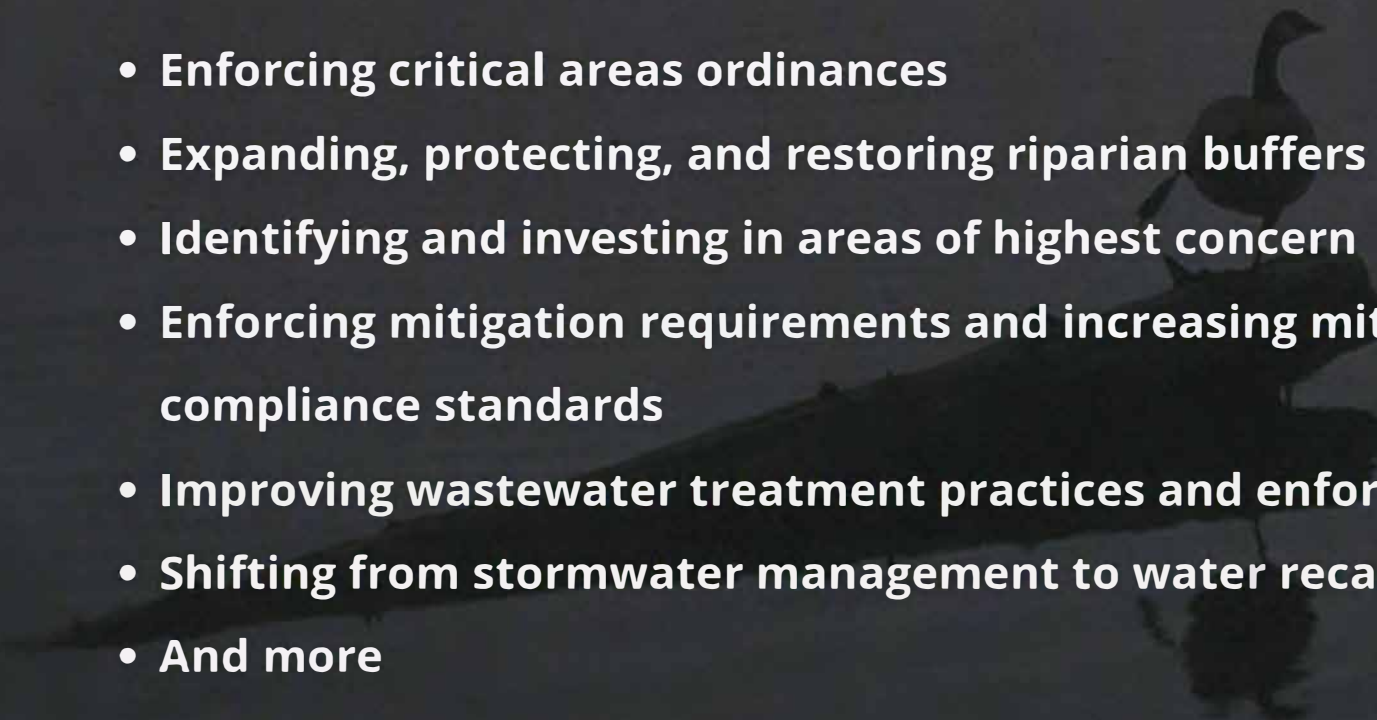
Concerns about stream health were discussed in detail by county commissioners and health department staff at a March 13, 2024 work session. These survey results may in part show that the county has succeeded in educating the public about this out-of-balance aspect of ecosystem care.

To see the Island County Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program 2022-2023 Annual Report, visit https://www.islandcountywa.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_03132024-717

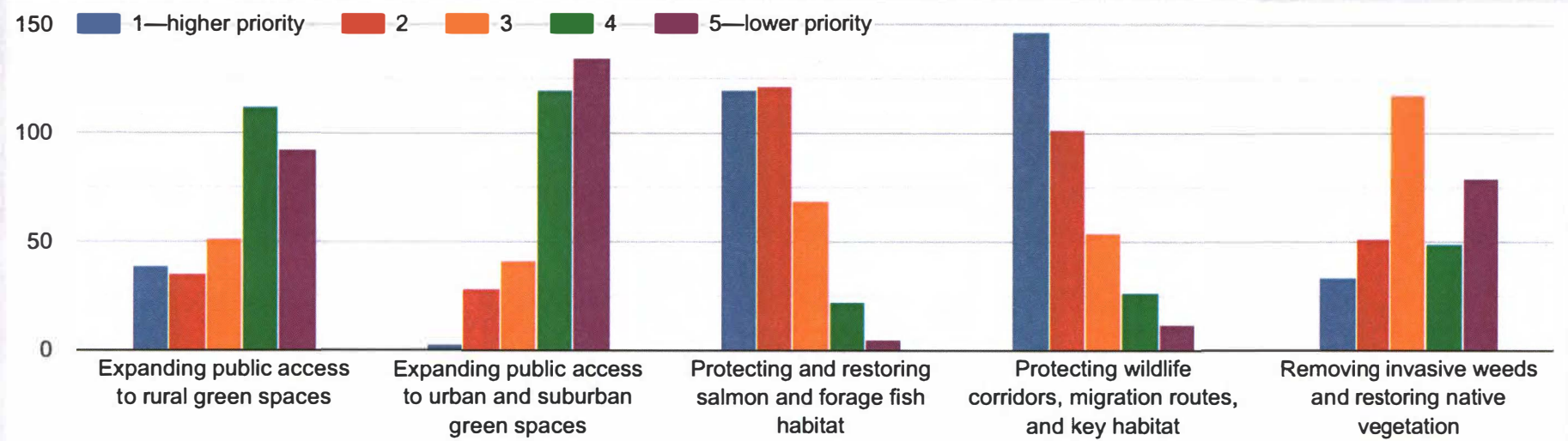
"The data are 'pretty horrifying,' Commissioner Melanie Bacon said at the March 13 Island County work session. 'This is saying we have as many bad as we have good, and so it seems to me this is something we should be addressing in our comp plan.'"

—Whidbey News Times, March 26, 2024

OPPORTUNITIES IN STREAM & WETLAND PROTECTION

- 
- **Enforcing critical areas ordinances**
 - **Expanding, protecting, and restoring riparian buffers**
 - **Identifying and investing in areas of highest concern**
 - **Enforcing mitigation requirements and increasing mitigation compliance standards**
 - **Improving wastewater treatment practices and enforcement**
 - **Shifting from stormwater management to water recapture**
 - **And more**

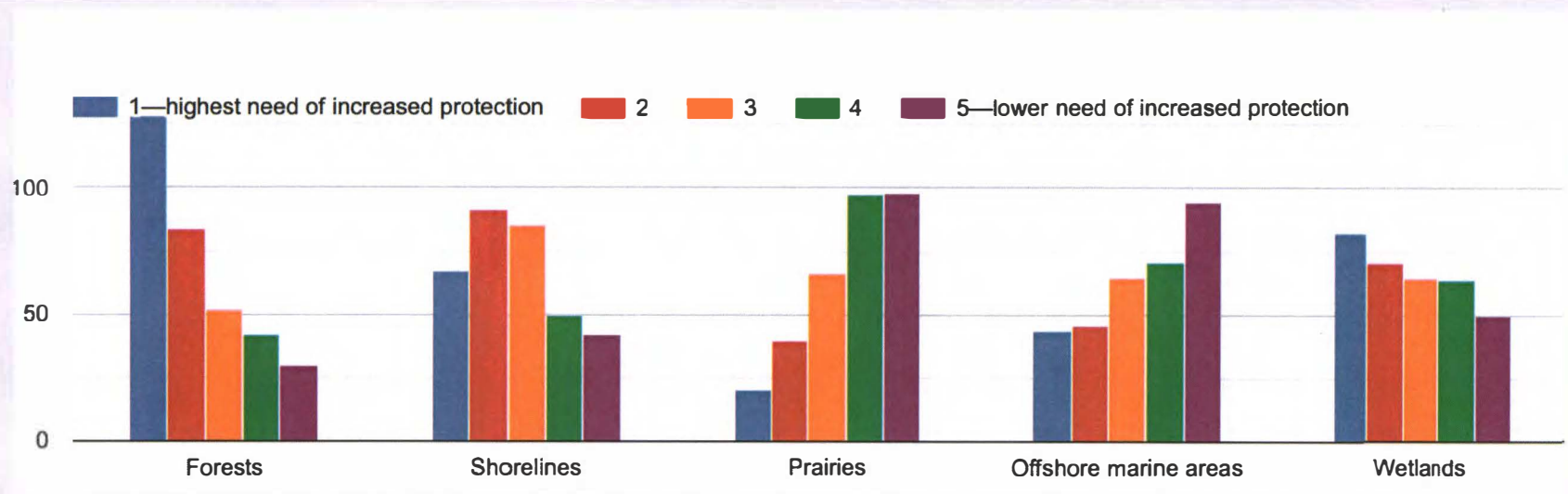
PROTECTING WILDLIFE CORRIDORS, MIGRATION ROUTES, KEY HABITAT THE HIGHEST PRIORITY OF RESPONDENTS



The second highest priority conservation action for survey respondents was protecting and restoring salmon & forage fish habitat.



FORESTS IDENTIFIED AS IN HIGHEST NEED OF INCREASED PROTECTION BY MORE THAN 1/3 OF RESPONDENTS



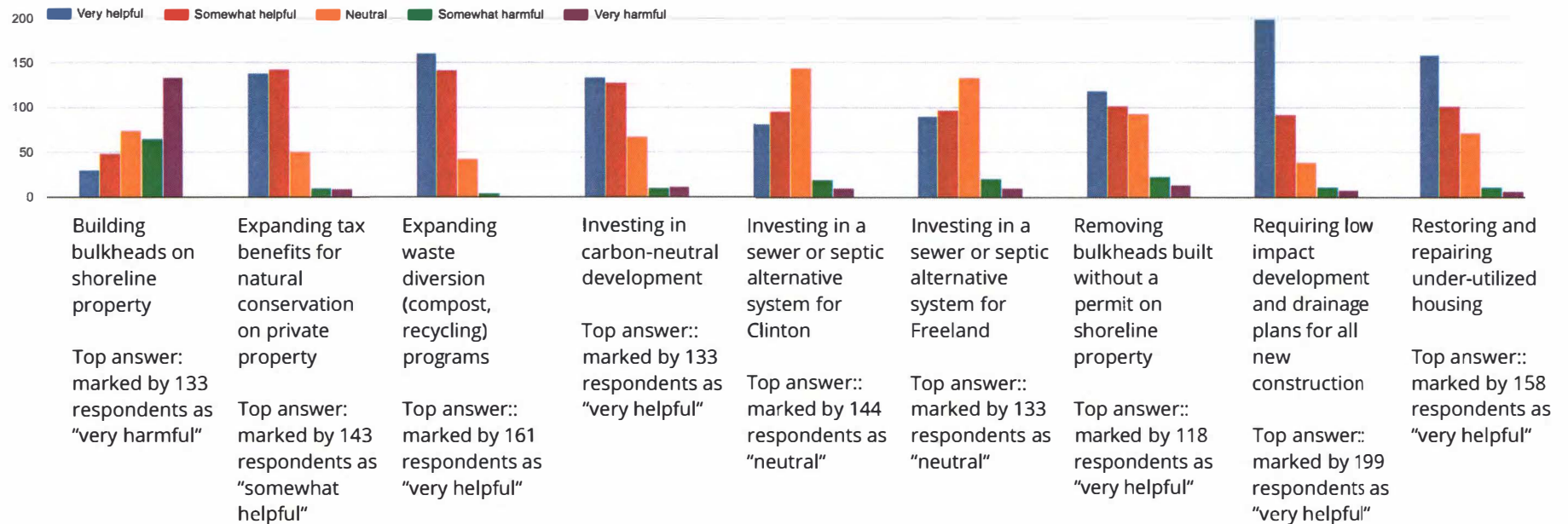
Wetlands were identified by one in four respondents as the ecosystem in highest need of increased protection; shorelines by one in five.



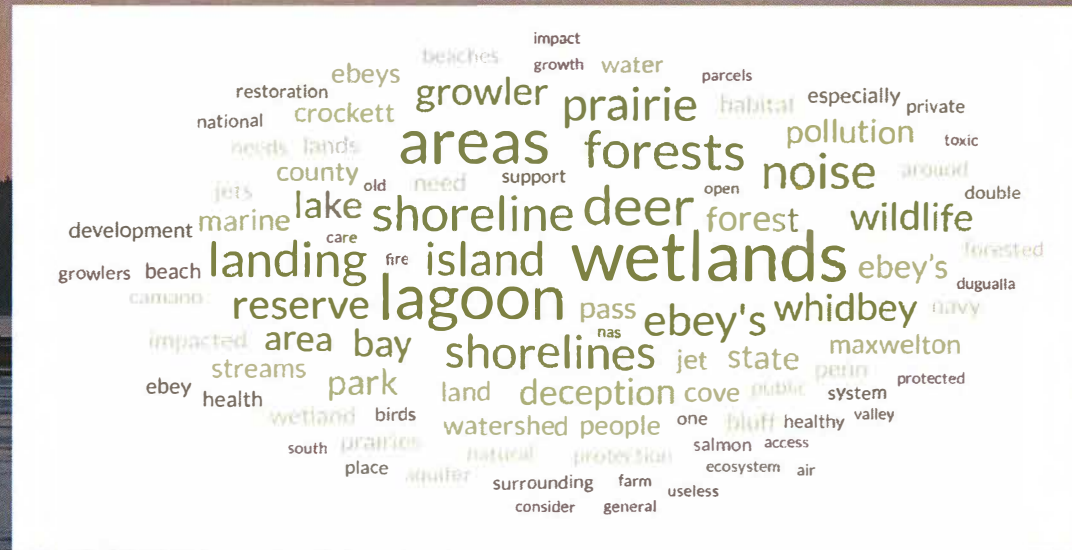
OPPORTUNITIES IN FOREST & AQUIFER PROTECTION

- **Reforming PBRS & CFF to incentivize conservation**
- **Expanding Critical Drainage Areas**
- **Prohibiting lifting development moratoria on some logged land**
- **Advocating to Washington State for island-specific considerations**
- **Incentivizing restoration of contiguous and interconnected habitat**
- **Monitoring the health and habitat of indicator species populations**
- **Improving utilities and infrastructure**
- **And more**

REQUIRING LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND DRAINAGE PLANS FOR ALL NEW CONSTRUCTION A PREFERRED STRATEGY, MARKED “VERY HELPFUL” BY 199 (56.5% OF) RESPONDENTS



Deer Lagoon, Maxwelton wetlands, Holmes Harbor, Penn Cove, and more were highlighted as in need of restoration. Full list of ecosystems and places highlighted as in need of care will be shared via email.



EXAMPLE QUESTIONS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS

What processes are in place to protect our shoreline areas from hard armoring?

What can be done to improve the enforcement of Island County environmental regulations?

How are we going to plan for managed retreat from coastal areas that are or will be experiencing more flooding?

How are we going to encourage second-home owners to stop doing short term rentals, making their housing available for working families of Island County?

How are we going to allow for smaller home or unconventional housing to be built in urban growth areas?

*How will you mitigate the noise emitted by the Navy's Growler jets?**

How do you intend to implement protections for listed species and habitats?

How are marine life and marine shores cared for?

**A significant majority of questions related to jet noise, and a desire to understand Island County's willingness and ability to intervene and protect community from Growler noise and pollution.*

TAKEAWAYS: STRATEGIES FOR GREATER ENGAGEMENT

Look for common goals

Farmers, environmental advocates, and affordable housing advocates share the goals of enhancing community infrastructure to support health, increase resilience, and more equitably enhance the best qualities of our islands.

Seek needed voices

Our laws, policies, and previous comprehensive plans—in Island County and around the state—have disproportionately been shaped by people with identities of privilege. Some voices are missing from the conversation.

Host creative space

Our community has changed a lot since 2016 and will continue to change. Circumstances—including climate change—require us to become more nimble, adaptive, regenerative, and interdependent. We need creativity in planning.

The process is a product

Time, space, and thoughtful design for collaborative and inclusive dialog is, in itself, an exercise in being the kind of community we need—well-resourced, interconnected, and moving together toward a healthy, equitable, and resilient future.

Questions?

Email ed@whidbeyenvironment.org with any questions that can't be answered today.



Camano Island Residents' Input to the 2025 Island County Comprehensive Plan

Dan Abshere
Camano Island American Legion
Director of Veteran Support &
Treasurer



Missions and Role

- CBO Mission: To reach out to local veterans, first responders, and their families; access their needs, advocate for resources, and provide or coordinate care to help improve their mental, physical, and overall wellness.
- Role in Island County Comprehensive Planning: Contracted by the Department of Commerce to help provide information to Camano residents, and feed residents' input to the county.



Efforts to date

- Developed network on Camano with existing organizations
- Since May 2024, attended Wednesday night Comprehensive Plan meetings
- Attended Island County-sponsored meetings on Camano Island
- Advertised for input via print media, social media, and organizations' websites
- Hosted two Camano residents' meetings with Island County planners (compressed down to two due to timeline)
- Conducted follow up calls with residents who had unanswered questions, or to clarify input
- Input received from seven organizations and 78 residents
- Created new website and posted detailed input spreadsheet, this summary, and existing plan elements



Economic Development Element

- Include Camano when talking about impact on economic development
- Revise objective discussing support facilities for retirement community to specify working with private and community-based nonprofit organizations, and enhancing physical and mental healthcare capacity



Housing Element

- Add goal to balance affordable housing incentives with restraint on property tax increases
 - Property tax increases also make housing less affordable
- Analyze differences in affordable housing needs between Whidbey and Camano. Camano has limited job opportunities, limited internet, and requires long commute making it less desirable for those looking for affordable housing.
 - May require “waiver” for GMA if affordable housing development different within the county?



Historic Preservation Element

- Adjust Goal 1 to include historical sites on Camano and Whidbey Island, other than Ebey's Landing Natural Historic Reserve, or make Ebey a separate goal...and perhaps not the #1 goal
- Add an objective to update the historical sites database and work with community-based and private organizations to help fund and preserve them



Parks and Recreation Element

- Overall- Remove distinction between passive vs active and low-impact vs high-impact recreation; or remove negative wording about sports being harmful to the environment, and need to defund and remove sports fields
 - Sports are critical to both physical and mental health, and enhances social interaction which is especially important for our older residents...and all residents since the pandemic isolation
 - Sports fields have similar environmental impact as a park with parking lot and restrooms
- Remove objectives to double the amount of spending on park maintenance with increases every year, as well as “develop tax base”, “tax levy”, “utility tax”, etc.
- Revise objective to reject land donations that don’t support passive recreation in favor of working with private and nonprofits to manage them



Parks and Recreation Element

- Explore with Camano residents, with caution, the creation of a Camano Parks and Recreation District



Utilities Element

- Increase importance, and highlight lack of adequate coverage, of cell phone and internet service in inventory and analysis section
- Add objective to work with businesses, nonprofits, HOAs, and service providers to take advantage of federal and state grants to improve high speed internet access, especially in rural areas
- Potentially add objective to provide incentives to cell phone and internet service providers if can do so without increasing taxes



Capital Facilities Element

- Add objective and input to Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to collaborate with veterans organizations, nonprofits, and legislators to seek funding from multiple sources to create integrated healthcare (case management, counseling, peer support, and benefits) for veterans
- Add objective and input to CIP to collaborate with nonprofits and legislators to seek funding from multiple sources to create a nonprofit, community-based organization, behavioral health center on Camano



Parks & Rec/Trans/Capital Facilities

- Plan for walking/jogging/bike path, like the Whidbey Island Kettles Trails, around the perimeter of Camano
 - Existing roads unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists...especially with increased cellphone use while driving
 - Improves connections to transportation hubs, tourism, recreation, physical health, and environment
 - Meets multiple goals in Transportation, Land Use, and Natural Resources Elements



Questions

- This summary & detailed spreadsheet posted at <https://www.camanolegion.org/island-county-comprehensive-plan>
- Dan Abshere, Director of Veteran Support, 360-913-1272, walegionpost207@gmail.com
- Kevin James, Commander (President), 425-501-5390, kjammeron@gmail.com



CBO Debrief 2025 Comprehensive Plan

**Long Range Planning
March 19, 2025**

Community Based Organizations

- As part of the Climate Commitment Act funding, the Department of Commerce awarded grants to Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to support participation in local land use comprehensive planning for 2025 jurisdictions.
- The grant recipients for Island County include:
 - American Legion of Camano Post No. 207
 - Goosefoot: a consortium between Agricultural Resource Committee of Island County (ARCIC), Island Roots Housing (IRH), and Whidbey Environmental Action Network (WEAN)
- The CBOs conducted outreach to gather feedback on comp plan issues and presented to the Planning Commission in March 2025.

Before We Start...

- Each CBO submitted materials to Planning prior to presenting at the Planning Commission.
- The recommendations on the next few slides are high level summaries of what was presented.
- Long Range Planning will explore all recommendations presented by the CBOs and will include those that fit within the County's vision for the Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendations - American Legion of Camano

- Balance affordable housing incentives with restraint on property tax increases.
- Analyze differences between affordable housing needs between Whidbey and Camano.
- Increase importance, and highlight lack of adequate coverage, of cell phone and internet service in the Utilities Element.
- Create a trail around the perimeter of Camano Island.
- Revise Economic Development policy discussing retirement facilities to specify working with private and community-based non-profit organizations.
- Support the creation and sustainability of physical and mental healthcare facilities in policies.

Underlined recommendations were supported by Planning Commission

Recommendations - ARCIC

- Define agriculture in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Create a County agriculture advisory committee and/or hire an agricultural ombudsperson position.
- Review ICC for barriers to agritourism activities.
- Include all Ag policies from the CEDS report in the Economic Development Element.
- Coordinate the development of a proactive strategy to address future water availability.
- Identify and address the need for farmworker housing.
- Support farmers in accessing resources and technical assistance regarding regenerative farming practices.

Underlined recommendations were supported by Planning Commission

Recommendations – Island Roots Housing

- Expand shelter options and integrate support services.
- Designate locations for temporary and transitional housing, including RV parks and modular housing.
- Increase representation of BIPOC and marginalized voices in planning processes.
- Strengthen policies against discrimination in rental and homeownership opportunities.
- Preserve existing "naturally affordable" housing stock, rural services, and open spaces.

Underlined recommendations were supported by Planning Commission

Recommendations - WEAN

- Expanding, protecting, and restoring riparian buffers.
- Improving wastewater treatment practices and enforcement.
- Enforcing mitigation requirements and increasing mitigation compliance standards
- Prohibiting lifting development moratoria on some logged land.
- Incentivizing restoration of contiguous and interconnected habitat.
- Advocating to Washington State for island-specific considerations.

Underlined recommendations were supported by Planning Commission



Questions?

Long Range Planning

CompPlan@islandcountywa.gov

www.islandcounty2045.com



ISLAND COUNTY ASSESSOR

WORK SESSION AGENDA

MEETING DATE: 3/19/2025

To: Melanie Bacon, Chair
Board of Island County Commissioners

From: Kelly Mauck, Assessor

Amount of time requested for agenda discussion. 5 minutes

DIVISION: Not Applicable

Agenda Item No.: 1

Subject: Spatialest Contract with Schneider Geospatial

Description: Approval of Spatialest three-year Contract. This provides an array of data analysis tools that will benefit both the Assessor's Office staff and the citizens of Island County. The service allows taxpayers to easily review their property data and recent sales that were used to determine the assessed value in the form of a comparable sales grid. A more complex and in-depth version of the sales grid is provided to Assessor staff for use in Board of Equalization appeals. Perhaps the most beneficial service provided by Spatialist is the "Community" portal. Community is a map-based dashboard that collates data from various sources and provides insights to market trends and analysis. Users can easily select properties from the map and access links to property data, the comparable sales tool, and potentially other county applications not directly related to the Assessor's Office, such as tax payments and permit applications.

Attachment: Contract

Request: *(Check boxes that apply)*

- ☒ Move to Consent ☐ Move to Regular
☐ None/Informational ☐ Schedule a Public Hearing
☐ Signature Request ☐ Other: _____

IT Review: In process

Budget Review: In process

P.A. Review: Not Applicable

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT

This Agreement is made and entered into by and between **Schneider Geospatial, LLC**, a Delaware Limited Liability Company, whose place of business is 8901 Otis Avenue, Suite 300, Indianapolis, IN 46216 ("PROFESSIONAL") and **Island County Assessor's Office**, whose place of business is: 1 7th ST NE #208, Coupeville, WA 98239 ("CLIENT").

1 Services.

PROFESSIONAL shall provide CLIENT with the following services ("Services"):

A. Comper Pro

Comper Pro is a revolutionary online Comparable Sales selector. Comper Pro helps validate or present assessment information, assists with appeal management and improves accessing or disseminating property information. The associated Comp Grid allows the appraisers to make adjustments to the comps and generate a value. It provides the ability for appraisers to generate their own URAR form/Fee Appraiser style report. Product functionality shall include the following:

a. Comparable Sales Selector

- i. **User protected Login** – user access is controlled via login credentials. Two user profiles exist. One for Administrators and one for standard Users, providing different permissions.
- ii. **Subject Property Search** – the Subject Property is quickly searchable via a dynamic search that can search across multiple identification categories including but not limited to Street Address, Parcel No. or Account No. etc.
- iii. **Filters** – customizable filters can be activated, deactivated, or adjusted to allow the user to refine the list of potential comparable sales.
- iv. **Attribute Information** – Subject and Comp info displays are customized to allow easy comparison and review of the most relevant data for decision-making. There is also a link for quick access to the full source data.
- v. **Comp Selection** – the comp selection tool allows the user to quickly and easily add or remove properties from the comparable sales list.
- vi. **Comp History** – a history of the saved comps is recorded, including information about the User, Date and Time they were saved. (Optional – clients with AppraisalEst have the ability for the Comps generated via the Comp Model to also be saved to the comp history.)
- vii. **Street/Satellite imagery** – the map-based solution provides spatial context of the Subject Property and Comparable Sales using either street or satellite imagery. Map extent dynamically updates as the filters and selected comparable sales are adjusted.
- viii. **Comparable Sales Print Report** – a customizable pdf comp report can be generated that displays a side-by-side comparison of the Subject Property and selected Comparable Sales.

b. Comparable Sales Adjustment Grid (Comp Grid)

The Comp Grid is a professional side-by-side analysis table that makes line-item adjustments of the comparable sales attributes to be 'like' the Subject based on a defined set of criteria, thus reflecting an indicated Market Value.

- i. **Adjustment Rates** – Comp Grid rates are configured to make a variety of adjustment types that include dollar/unit, % adjustment, dollar for dollar, qualitative factoring as well as Min/Max adjustments.
- ii. **Grid Estimate** – the estimate of value is determined based on the net adjusted sale prices of the comparable sales and can be calculated using mean, median or moving average.
- iii. **Editing Adjustments** – users are able to manually change any adjustments as well as add additional line items that may be appropriate.
- iv. **Add Notes** – users can make notes against individual line-item adjustments as well as analysis or summary notes regarding the full report.
- v. **Grid Report** – a highly detailed pdf comp report provides a side-by-side comparison of the Subject Property and selected Comparable Sales with the adjustments, notes and estimate of value.

B. Comper for Citizen

Comper for Citizen is an interactive map-based application that allows the taxpayer to view their property in comparison to similar, nearby properties that have recently sold. Simple, easy to use filters allow the citizen to select the sales evidence they feel best represents their property. Product functionality shall include the following:

- a. **User Access** – Public user profiles can access Comper using an open public url with no login required. (Internal user profiles have secure password protected access).
- b. **Subject Property Search** – the Subject Property is quickly searchable via a dynamic search that can search across multiple identification categories including but not limited to Street Address, Parcel No. or Account No. etc.
- c. **Filters** – customizable filters can be activated, deactivated, or adjusted to allow the user to refine the list of potential comparable sales.
- d. **Attribute Information** – Subject and Comp info displays are customized to allow easy comparison and review of the most relevant data for decision-making. There is also a link for quick access to the full source data.
- e. **Comp Selection** – the comp selection tool allows the user to quickly and easily add or remove properties from the comparable sales list.
- f. **Comp History** – a history of the saved comps is recorded for internal management, including information about the User, Date and Time they were saved.
- g. **Street/Satellite imagery** – the map-based solution provides spatial context of the Subject Property and Comparable Sales using either street or satellite imagery. Map extent dynamically updates as the filters and selected comparable sales are adjusted.
- h. **Comparable Sales Print Report** – a customizable pdf comp report can be generated that displays a side-by-side comparison of the Subject Property and selected Comparable Sales

C. Property Portal

Property Portal consolidates your entire parcel and property details in a single place offering 'one stop shop' access for staff and citizens alike. Any data can be included to provide one source of reliable information. Deeds, Permits, Sales, Ownership and more all in one place.

- a. **Open Access** – user access is obtained through a web browser using a public url that is shared by CLIENT with their citizens. There is no login required.
- b. **Subject Property Search** – properties are quickly searchable via a dynamic search that can search across multiple identification categories including, but not limited to Owner Name, Street Address, Parcel No. or Account No. etc.
- c. **Filters** – customizable filters can be activated, deactivated, or adjusted to allow the user to refine the list of results, making it easy to find specific groups of properties
- d. **Map View** – results can be displayed on an interactive map where other spatial data and map layers can viewed, giving context to property searches
- e. **Attribute Data** – land, building, sales and assessment data is displayed in organized sections for easy reference.
- f. **Images & Sketches** – display multiple property images, improvement sketches or oblique aerial imagery.
- g. **Documents** - important documents such as Tax or Assessment Notices can be views and downloaded.
- h. **Data Change Requests**
- i. **Links** - easy access to other integrated solutions (Comper for Citizen and Community), other county applications and third party sites.
- j. **Property Record Card** – ability to print individual property records for offline use.

D. Community

Community is an interactive map-based dashboard centralized information hub that collates data from various sources, bringing a jurisdiction or county into focus and providing powerful insights from market trends to demographics to political outcomes. The dashboard of information is layered upon a dynamic map interface that provides a coherent, analytical and reliable decision support system. Product functionality will include the following:

- a. **User Access** - users can access Community using an open, public url with no login required.
- b. **Search – Community** provides the ability to:
 - i. **Search by Category** - searching by sub-strata categories such as Commissioner Districts, School Districts or Zip codes allows the user to quickly view analytics for these area
 - ii. **Search by Property** - individual properties are quickly found via a dynamic search that can search across multiple identification categories including but not limited to Street Address, Parcel No. or Account No. etc
 - iii. **Search by Custom Defined Areas** - users can define their own area on the map using selection tools to view insights into specific areas
- c. **Area Overview** – customizable landing page provides client with the ability to highlight the most important or relevant insights as the first thing a user sees

- d. **Assessment Data** – display current market and assessed values for the entire jurisdiction, including historical trends and distribution of values among property types
- e. **Census Data** – provides demographic information to assist decision making
- f. **Sales Data** – display historic market trends such as sales growth and median property prices. View neighborhood sales on the map and export sales reports for further analysis.
- g. **Street/Satellite imagery** - the map-based solution provides spatial context using either street or satellite imagery. Map extent dynamically updates as the search parameters are adjusted
- h. **Map Layers** - multiple map layers can be added. The user can enable or disable the layers or adjust their opacity depending on their analysis.
- i. **Links** - easy access to other integrated solutions (Property Portal and Comper for Citizen), other county applications such as tax payments or permit applications and any third-party sites.

Other Fixed Fee phases of this project may be developed during the course of this agreement. Once the estimates are accepted, an Authorization to Proceed will have to be signed and submitted before work will begin.

2 Payment for Services.

CLIENT shall compensate PROFESSIONAL for the Services as follows:

A. Product/Service

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| a. One-time Setup Cost: | \$9,800 |
| Setup items: | |
| Comper Pro | Included |
| Comper for Citizen | Included |
| Property Portal: | Included |
| <u>Community:</u> | <u>Included</u> |
| Subtotal | \$34,800 |
| Discount | (\$25,000) |
| Total | \$9,800 |
| | |
| b. Annual Hosting: | \$48,000 |
| Hosting items: | |
| Comper Pro | Included |
| Comper for Citizen | Included |
| Property Portal: | Included |
| <u>Community:</u> | <u>Included</u> |
| Subtotal | \$55,200 |
| Discount | (\$7,200) |
| Total | \$48,000 |

B. Payment Schedule

| | | |
|---------------|--|-----------------|
| Year 1 | February 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025: | \$53,800 |
| | (Setup: \$9,800, Hosting: \$44,000) | |
| Year 2 | January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026: | \$50,400 |
| Year 3 | January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2027: | \$52,920 |

Invoicing will be done on an annual basis at the beginning of the term unless otherwise specified.

If the CLIENT cancels the agreement before end of initial multi-year term, any waived discounts and promotional fees will be included in the final invoice.

Balances due thirty (30) days after the due date for non-government clients and sixty (60) days after the due date for government clients shall be assessed an interest rate of 1½% per month (18% per year). CLIENT agrees to pay for any and all costs of collection including, but not limited to interest, lien costs, court costs, expert fees, attorney's fees and other fees or costs involved in or arising out of collecting any unpaid or past due balances, including late fees or penalties. If payment is not received within thirty (30) days of the due date, PROFESSIONAL reserves the right, after giving seven (7) days written notice to CLIENT, to suspend services to CLIENT or to terminate this Agreement.

3 Terms of Service. Each party's rights and responsibilities under this Agreement are conditioned upon and subject to the Terms of Service which can be found at <http://schneiderGIS.com/termsofservice>. By executing this Agreement, CLIENT acknowledges that it has read the above-described Terms of Service and agrees that such Terms of Service are incorporated herein and made a part of this Agreement. PROFESSIONAL reserves the right to update or modify the Terms of Service upon ten (10) days prior notice to CLIENT. Such notice may be provided by PROFESSIONAL to CLIENT by e-mail.

4 Term, Termination and Renewal. The initial term of this Agreement shall be defined in the Scope of Services or Payment Schedule above. If the services provided are for an annual rate and extend for multiple years, PROFESSIONAL will prorate the first year of the agreement to match the fiscal year for the CLIENT, followed by consecutive, twelve (12) month periods. This Agreement shall automatically renew for successive terms which consist of a twelve (12) month period, subject to earlier termination as set forth in this Agreement or upon written notification by either party thirty (30) days prior to the end of a term. If, for any reason, this Agreement is terminated prior to the end of a term, any waived or discounted fees or specified promotional items provided by PROFESSIONAL shall be invoiced by PROFESSIONAL and paid by CLIENT. PROFESSIONAL reserves the right to update the pricing applicable to this Agreement after the initial term for any renewal terms and/or any subsequent terms occurring after the initial term of the Agreement; PROFESSIONAL shall provide prior written notice to CLIENT of any pricing adjustments applicable to any such renewal and/or subsequent terms.

5 Additional Data Hosting. PROFESSIONAL's website hosting services allow for storage of up to ten (10) Gigabytes of data and files to include as content for CLIENT's website hosted in PROFESSIONAL's web data server environment. Additional storage and transfer requirements may be negotiated, at PROFESSIONAL's discretion, if CLIENT decides to add additional content to the website – such as orthophotos, scanned documents, etc.

6 Assignment. PROFESSIONAL has the right to assign or transfer any rights under or interest in this Agreement upon fifteen (15) days' written or electronic notice to CLIENT. Nothing in this Paragraph shall prevent PROFESSIONAL from employing consultants or subcontractors to assist in the performance of the Services.

7 Rights and Benefits. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to give any rights or benefits in this Agreement to anyone other than CLIENT and PROFESSIONAL. CLIENT and PROFESSIONAL expressly state there are no third-party beneficiaries to this Agreement.

8 Successors. This Agreement is binding on the partners, successors, executors, administrators and assigns of both parties.

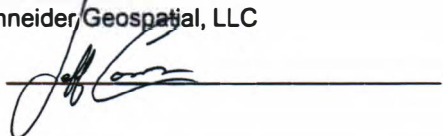
9 Applicable Law. The terms and conditions of this Agreement are subject to the laws of the State of Indiana.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this Agreement by affixing their signatures below.

Pricing is valid through January 31st 2025.

PROFESSIONAL:
Schneider Geospatial, LLC

By: _____



CLIENT:
Island County Assessor's Office

By: _____



Print: Jeff Coms, GISP

Title: President & CEO

Date: February 4, 2025

Print: Kelly T. Maxx

Title: Assessor

Date: 2/03/2025



ISLAND COUNTY AUDITOR

WORK SESSION AGENDA

MEETING DATE: 3/19/2025

To: Melanie Bacon, Chair
Board of Island County Commissioners

From: Sheilah Crider, Auditor

Amount of time requested for agenda discussion. 10 minutes

DIVISION: Not Applicable

Agenda Item No.: 1

Subject: Elections Ballot Sorter/Scanner

Description: To reduce staff costs and time processing ballots, the Elections Office is seeking a ballot sorter/scanner. We received two quotes and would like to move forward with Tritex. The initial costs will be fully grant funded from our 2020 HAVA grant funds (\$141,910) and 2025 security grant funds from the Secretary of State (\$71,602). The vendors require a 50% downpayment to build the equipment with the remaining due upon delivery. The software license and maintenance costs are billable elections costs. This was not included in the 2025 budget.

Attachment: Memo

Request: *(Check boxes that apply)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: In process

Budget Review: In process

P.A. Review: Not Applicable



Island County Auditor

Sheilah Crider, Auditor

1 NE 7th Street, Ste 103, Coupeville, WA 98239

Ph: Whidbey 360-679-7367

Email: S.Crider@islandcountywa.gov | www.islandcountywa.gov

MEMORANDUM

March 19, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Sheilah Crider, Auditor
Emily Del Prete, Chief Deputy Auditor

RE: Ballot Sorter/Scanner Equipment

| Sorting Machine Process | Current Process |
|--|---|
| High-speed scanner will count, scan barcodes and capture signature images of each ballot envelope, assign to a tray/batch and print a tray label for each. | Ballots are counted by hand and put into trays/batches. The barcode from each ballot envelope is manually scanned by a wand scanner into an Excel file. Wand scanners are not capable of scanning signature images. |
| Sorter files are uploaded into the state's VoteWA election system to await signature verification. | The Excel file is imported into VoteWA system for signature verification. |
| Uploaded files display the voter registration information from the scanned barcode, along with the signature images in the voter's record, next to the scanned signature from the ballot envelope. Only ballots with questioned or missing signatures must be removed from the secured ballot storage area for review. | Workers bring a tray of ballots to their desk for verification. The file uploaded to VoteWA of scanned barcodes displays the voter registration information and signatures, which must be manually compared to each ballot envelope in the tray on the worker's desk. Ballots with questioned or missing signatures are segregated from the tray and must be logged onto the worksheet that accompanies the tray. |

The logs created by the sorter process can track chain of custody and ballot dispensation. Manually created logs must currently be used to track this information.

Sorter files are signature verified entirely on screen. Currently, we must hold each ballot envelope up to the screen to compare to the displayed signature from the voter record. This is a slow and labor-intensive process.

Using a sorter means that moving through the check-in and signature verification process, ballots are handled only once. When processed manually, the ballot envelopes are handled a minimum of five times.

Using a sorter for counting has been shown by counties currently using this process to have significantly shortened the amount of time and staff hours needed to scan, verify and credit the ballots, moving them into the extracting and counting process earlier, avoiding the opportunity for “bottleneck”.

As an Elections Equipment/Software maintenance cost, it would be a billable elections expense, as is other software and equipment.

| Quotes (w/out Optional envelope opener) | | | Quotes (w/ Optional envelope opener) | | |
|---|----------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| | Tritek | Runbeck | | Tritek | Runbeck |
| Initial Costs (2025) | 178,499 | 290,000 | Initial Costs (2025) | 178,499 | 290,000 |
| | | | Envelope Opener | 18,400 | 35,000 |
| Sales Tax (8.8%) | 15,708 | 25,520 | Sales Tax (8.8%) | 17,327 | 28,600 |
| Total w/ Sales Tax | 194,207 | 315,520 | Total w/ Sales Tax | 214,226 | 353,600 |
| Optional (not included in totals): | | | Optional (not included in totals): | | |
| Envelope Opener | 18,400 | 35,000 | | | |
| Inline Printer | 29,900 | - | Inline Printer | 29,900 | - |
| Funding | | | Funding | | |
| 2020 HAVA Grant-expires in 2027 | | 141,910 | 2020 HAVA Grant-expires in 2027 | | 141,910 |
| 2025 Security Grant-expires May 2025 | | 71,602 | 2025 Security Grant-expires May 2025 | | 71,602 |
| Over(under) funded | 19,305 | (102,008) | Over(under) funded | (714) | (140,088) |
| Billable Elections Costs | | | Billable Elections Costs | | |
| Software & Support - Years 1-5 | | | Software & Support - Years 1-5 | | |
| 2025 | 33,001 | 35,000 | 2025 | 33,001 | 35,000 |
| 2026 | 33,661 | 36,050 | 2026 | 33,661 | 36,050 |
| 2027 | 34,334 | 37,132 | 2027 | 34,334 | 37,132 |
| 2028 | 35,021 | 38,246 | 2028 | 35,021 | 38,246 |
| 2029 | 35,721 | 39,393 | 2029 | 35,721 | 39,393 |

Note: Runbeck's software and support term is 5 years. Tritек does not include an end date.

Dimensions:

Election Office Room: 26' x 22.5'

Tritek Sorter/Scanner w/out envelope opener: 15.75' x 4.5' (21.75' x 10.5' inc. working space)

Tritek Sorter/Scanner with envelope opener: 19.1' x 4.5' (25.1' x 10.5' inc. working space)



ISLAND COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS

WORK SESSION AGENDA

MEETING DATE: 3/19/2025

To: Melanie Bacon, Chair
Board of Island County Commissioners

From: Fred Snoderly, Director

Amount of time requested for agenda discussion. 30 minutes

DIVISION: County Roads

Agenda Item No.: 1

Subject: Utsalady at Olsen Road Culvert Replacement, JL 00601- 1201

Description: County Drainage Project (CDP) initiation with the updated Engineering Estimate

Attachment: Memorandum, Resolution

Request: (Check boxes that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: Not Applicable

Budget Review: Not Applicable

P.A. Review: Not Applicable

DIVISION: County Roads

Agenda Item No.: 2

Subject: 2025 County Road Administration Board Annual Reports

Description: Review of the Annual Reports due to the County Road Administration Board April 1, 2025

Attachment: Memorandum, Draft Reports, 2025 Public Works Organizational Chart

Request: (Check boxes that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Move to Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> Move to Regular |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None/Informational | <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule a Public Hearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signature Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

IT Review: Not Applicable

Budget Review: In process

P.A. Review: Not Applicable



Island County Public Works

Ed Sewester, P.E., County Engineer

1 NE 7th Street, Coupeville, WA 98239

Ph: Whidbey 360-679-7331 | Camano 360-387-3443 | S Whidbey 360-321-5111

Email: Ed.Sewester@islandcountywa.gov | www.islandcountywa.gov

MEMORANDUM

March 19, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners – Island County

FROM: Nick Tuttle, Engineering Manager

RE: CDP for Utsalady @ Olsen Culvert Replacement Fish Passage, JL 00601-1201

Existing Culverts 774 and 775 across Utsalady Rd are undersized and need replacement. During storm events, water backs up the ditch along the east side of Olsen Road and floods property owners. The project includes replacing the pipe and working along the ditch on Olsen for better flow. This project will also provide fish passage through the culvert. It is expected that Easements and Permitting, both for stream and wetland reasons, will be included as part of the project.

The CDP appropriation of \$300,000 for this project was adopted on February 1, 2022. In the process of developing the design plan prior to the construction, several fish passage culvert requirements from the permitting agencies needed to be addressed, which includes realignment/ regrading of the existing ditch/stream, and additional stream features required for such a fish passage culvert. Also, adjustments needed to be made to account for inflation since 2022. These updates raised the project's Engineering cost estimate to \$575,000 which includes \$75,000 contingencies.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nick Tuttle", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Nick Tuttle
Engineering Manager

Maint. Dist. Camano

Resolution No. **C-** -25
R- -25

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS of Island County, Washington.

In the matter of amending a County Drainage Project designated as

CDP 22-01 **JL** 00601-1201

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT Utsalady at Olsen Culvert Replacement Road Log No. M.P. N/A to M.P. N/A
located in Sec. 18 TWP. 32N Rge 3E, WM will be improved as follows:

to M.P. N/A, located in Sec. 18, Twp. 32 N, Rg 3E, WM be improved as follows:

Existing Culverts 774 and 775 (24" and 18" RCP) across Utsalady Rd are undersized and need replacement. During storm events water backs up the ditch along the east side of Olsen Road and floods property owners. The project includes replacing the pipe and working along the ditch on Olsen for better flow. This project will also provide fish passage

This project is hereby declared to be a public necessity and the County Road Engineer is hereby ordered and authorized to report and proceed thereon as by law provided. (RCW 36.75.050, 36.80.030, 36.80.070)

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that, based on the County Engineer's estimate, an appropriation from the officially adopted road fund budget is hereby made in the amounts and for the purposes shown:

| <u>PURPOSE</u> | <u>AMOUNT OF APPROPRIATION</u> |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Engineering | |
| Preliminary | <u>\$125,000</u> |
| Construction | <u>\$25,000</u> |
| Sub-Total | <u>\$150,000</u> |
| Right of Way Acquisition | <u>\$25,000</u> |
| Engineering & R/W Sub-Total | <u>\$175,000</u> |
| (Not subject to 36.77.065) | |
| Construction | <u>\$325,000.00</u> |
| Project Sub-Total | <u>\$500,000</u> |
| Contingencies | <u>\$75,000</u> |
| TOTAL APPROPRIATION | <u>\$575,000</u> |

Source of Funds: Roads: X Grant: Other:
Funds Allocated: Planned: Secured: X Source: 6 Yr. TIP #31 (2025-2030)

 This project is included in the officially adopted Annual Road Program as Item No. : .

 The project is hereby made a part of the officially adopted Annual Road Program in accordance with RCW 36.81.130 as Item No. .

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that:

X The construction is to be accomplished by contract in accordance with RCW 36.77.020 et seq.

 The construction is to be accomplished by County forces in accordance with RCW 36.77.065 and WAC 136-18.

ADOPTED this day of , 2025.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ISLAND COUNTY WASHINGTON

Melanie Bacon, Chair

Jill Johnson, Member

ATTEST:
Jennifer Roll
Clerk of the Board

Janet St. Clair, Member



Island County Public Works

Ed Sewester, P.E., County Engineer

Matthew Lander, P.E., Assistant County Engineer

1 NE 7th Street, Coupeville, WA 98239 | www.islandcountywa.gov

Ph: Whidbey 360-679-7331 | Camano 360-387-3443 | S Whidbey 360-321-5111

Email: Ed.Sewester@islandcountywa.gov | M.Lander@islandcountywa.gov

MEMORANDUM

March 19, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners – Island County

FROM: Ed Sewester, P.E., County Engineer

RE: 2025 County Road Administration Board Annual Reports

Public Works is bringing forward the annual reports as required by WAC 136-11 (Standard of Good Practice) to be submitted to the County Road Administration Board (CRAB). The reports certify calendar 2024 Road Fund expenditures and Program updates specified in various WACs or RCWs and include the following topics:

- Change or vacancy in position of County Engineer (WAC 36-12)
- County Road Accident Reports (WAC 136-28)
- Work performed by County Forces (RCW 36.77.065)
- Annual Construction Program (WAC 136-16-040)
- Road Levy (WAC 136-150-021)
- Road Log changes (WAC 136-60-050)
- Equipment Rental and Revolving funds certification, policy, rates (WAC 136-600-070)
- Fish Passage Barrier Removal Projects outside right of way (RCW 36.79.140)
- County Arterial Preservation Program (WAC 136-300)
- Policy updates: PW Organization Chart (2025 attached), Survey Monument Preservation (WAC 136-50-050)
- Marine Navigation and Moorage (RCW 36.82.070)
- Bridge Inspection Reports (WAC 136-20-060)

Reports are submitted electronically in the CRAB portal of the WA State Secure Access Washington. The various reports are certified one or a combination of the Chair of Board of Island County Commissioners, County Engineer, Auditor, and Sheriff.

Signature Certification – Forms Due April 1st (Island - 2024)

- Please complete the mandatory questions below.
- If you wish to communicate with staff regarding your application, use the **Notes** tab located within the left side menu.

* **Primary Contact:** Ed Sewester **Report Open Date:** 02/01/2025

Final Report Due Date: 04/01/2025 **Initial Report Due Date:** 04/01/2025

Report Year: 2024

eSign Information

Please enter the full name and address of the cosigners.

* **Chair/Executive Full Name:** Melanie Bacon * **Chair/Executive Email Address:** melanie.bacon@islandcount

Auditor Full Name: Sheila Crider **Auditor Email:** s.crider@islandcountywa.gov

Sheriff Full Name: Rick Felici **Sheriff Email:** RickF@islandcountywa.gov

Digital Submittal Certification for Forms Due April 1st

RAP Certification of Diversion and Road Fund Expenditures for Traffic Law Enforcement for the report year

Required signatures – BOCC or Council Chair/County Executive, County Sheriff, and County Auditor or CFO

I hereby certify that the above report is true and accurate and that I have reviewed and approved the report for submission to the County Road Administration Board in accordance with WAC 136

Certification of Road Fund Expenditures for Fish Passage Barrier Removal for the report year

Annual Certification for the report year

Required signatures – BOCC or Council Chair/County Executive and County Engineer

I hereby certify that the Fish Passage Removal and Annual Certifications are true and accurate and that I have reviewed and approved the report for submission to the County Road Administration Board in accordance with WAC 136.

Annual Construction Report for the report year

County Arterial Preservation Report for the report year

DRAFT

Maintenance Management Annual Certification for the report year

Signature Certification – Forms Due April 1st (Island - 2024)

County Road Actual Revenue and Expenditure Summary for the previous year

Marine Navigation and Moorage for the current year (Island, San Juan)

Required signatures – County Engineer

I hereby certify that the County Ferry System Operations Report, Annual Construction Report, County Arterial Preservation Report, and Maintenance Management Certification are true and accurate and that I have reviewed, approved, and submitted said reports to the County Road Administration Board in accordance with WAC 136.

Certification of Diversion and Road Fund Expenditures for Traffic Law Enforcement

WAC 136-150-022

Island

2024

Total Road Levy

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Budgeted Road Levy revenue (as listed on the Road Levy Certification - WAC 136-150-021): | \$9,940,269.95 |
| Actual Road Levy revenue produced: | \$9,857,493.81 |

Road Levy Diversion

| | |
|--|--------|
| Budgeted Road Levy Diversion (as listed on the Road Levy Certification - WAC 136-150-021): | \$0.00 |
| Actual amount of Diverted Road Levy: | \$0.00 |
| Was Diverted Road Levy deposited in a specific and identifiable account (RCW 36.82.040): | No |

Traffic Law Enforcement Paid by Road Fund Expenditures

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Budgeted cost reimbursements and/or operating transfers from the Road Fund: | |
| Actual total amount of cost reimbursements and/or operating transfers from the Road Fund: | \$1,115,114.00 |
| Total Road Portion Traffic Law Enforcement Expenditures: | \$1,115,114.00 |
| Total Traffic Law Enforcement Expense (ALL COUNTY FUNDS): | \$1,729,990.00 |

RCW 36.79.140 provides that only those counties that during the preceding twelve months have spent all revenues collected for road purposes only for such purposes, including traffic law enforcement, as are allowed by Article II, Section 40 of the Washington State Constitution, are eligible to receive funds from the Rural Arterial Trust Account.

This form must be reviewed and certified (on the "April Engineer Certification") by:

- County Sheriff
- County Auditor OR Charter designated Chief Financial Officer
- Char, Board of County Council/Commissioners OR County Executive

DRAFT

Fish Passage Certification

WAC 136-150-023

Island

2024

Fish Passage Barrier Removal Projects

| Project Name | Total Project Cost | Cost Outside of ROW | % of Total Cost (25% Allowed by WAC) |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|---|
|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|---|

Total Expenditures for Fish Passage Barrier Removal Outside County Rights-of-Way

Total Annual Road Construction Budget:

| | |
|--|---------|
| | x 0.005 |
| 1/2% of Total Annual Road (Limit of "Outside of Right-of-Way" expense) | \$0.00 |
| Total Expenditure for Fish Passage Barrier Removal Outside County Right-of-Way | \$0.00 |

RCW 36.79.140 provides that only those counties that during the preceding twelve months have spent all revenues collected for road purposes only for such purposes, including removal of barriers to fish passage and accompanying streambed and stream bank repair as specified and limited by RCW 36.82.070 , as are allowed by Article II, Section 40 of the Washington State Constitution, are eligible to receive funds from the Rural Arterial Trust Account.

DRAFT

Annual Certification

Island County
2024

General

- 1 During the reporting year the County Engineer performed the duties and had the responsibilities specified in RCW 36.80.030 Yes
Explanation:
- 2 At any time during the reporting year was there a vacancy/change in the position of County Engineer? If so, were the procedures in WAC 136-12 followed? No
Explanation:
- 3 The processing of County Road Accident Reports during the reporting year complied with WAC 136-28 Yes
Explanation:
- 4 Priority Programming techniques were applied to the ranking of all potential projects on the arterial road system in the reporting year per WAC 136-14-020. Yes
Explanation:
- 5 Projects to which expenditures were charged were all on the originally adopted Annual Construction Program of the reporting year and expenditures for maintenance and road equipment purchases and planned major repairs were consistent with originally adopted Annual Road Program or as amended per WAC 136-16-042 Yes
Explanation:
- 6 Attached Amendments
- 7 The county's construction by county forces limit for the reporting year computed by CRAB in accordance with RCW 36.77.065
- 8 The actual expenditure for construction by county forces as reported in the reporting year Annual Construction Report
- 9 Date of which a written Bridge and Inspection Report for the reporting year was furnished to the Legislative Authority as required by WAC 136-20-060
- 10 Uploaded Engineer's Stamped Cover/Title Page for the Bridge and Inspection Report

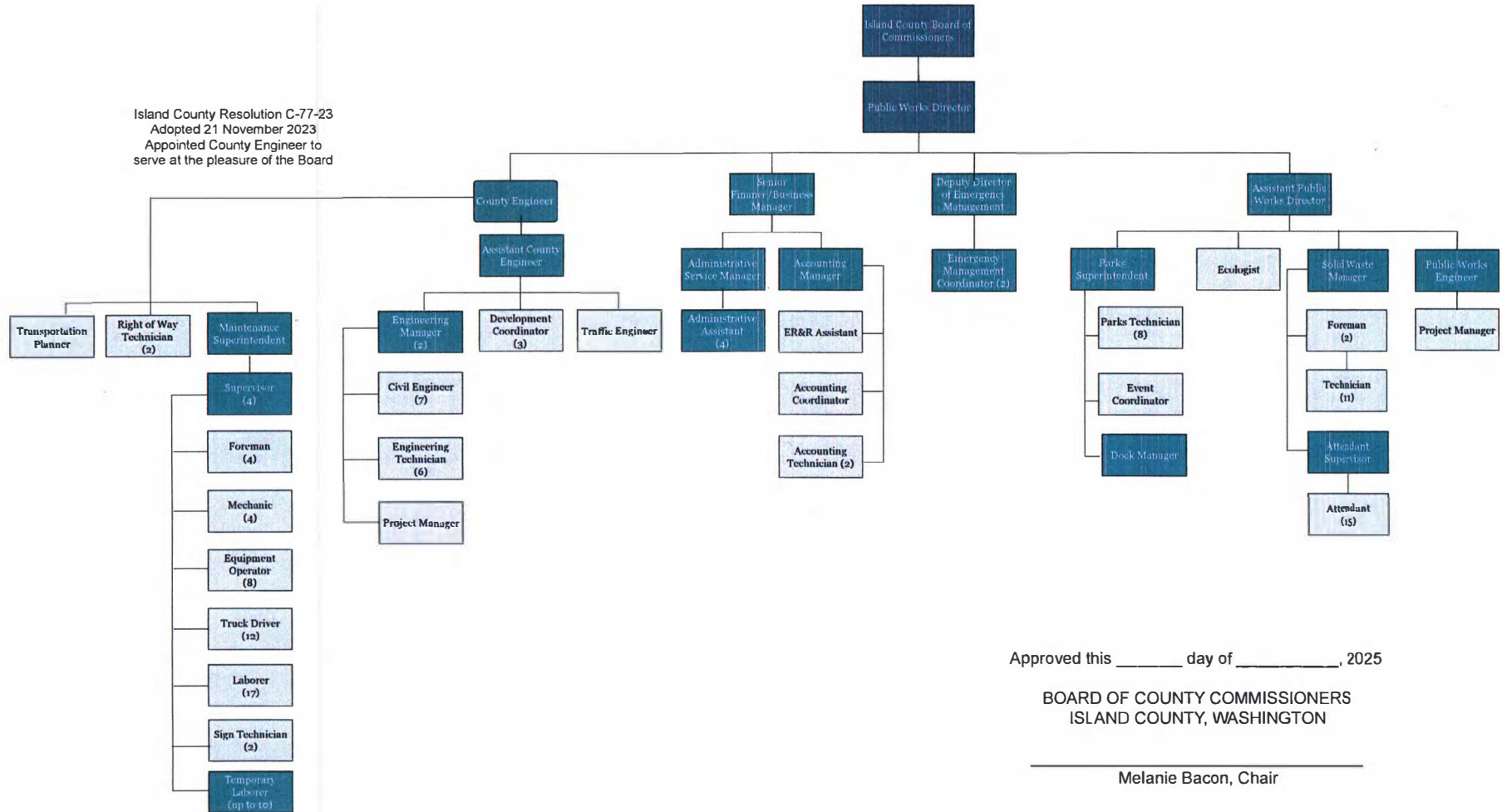
Policies and Documents

| Policy | WAC | Date of Current Version | Uploaded Resolution | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Re: Organization | WAC 136-50-050(1) | Yes | | |
| Re: Complaint Handling | WAC 136-50-050(2) | No | 1974-01-06 | |
| Re: Work for Others | WAC 136-50-050(3) | No | 1975-07-07 | |
| Re: County Road Standards | WAC 136-50-050(4) | No | 1990-12-10 | |
| Survey Monument Preservation | WAC 136-50-050(5) | No | 2023-11-01 | |
| Priority Programming | WAC 136-14-030 | No | 1990-12-10 | |
| ER & R Policy | WAC 136-600-070 | No | 2023-06-27 | |
| ER & R Policy (Adopted Records) | WAC 136-600-070 | N/A | N/A | 2024_Rental_Rates.xlsx |
| ER & R Policy (Adopting Resolution) | WAC 136-600-070 | N/A | N/A | Adopting_Resolution_2024.pdf |

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| Document | WAC | Due Date | Date Of Adoption | Date Sent to CRAB |
|---|---------------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Six-Year Program | 136-15-050 | 2023-12-31 | 2023-07-18 | 2023-12-29 |
| Annual Construction Program & Report | 136-16-040 & 136-300-090 | 2023-12-31 | 2023-11-07 | 2023-03-31 |
| CAPP Program & Accomplishments Report | 136-300-060 & 136-300-090 | 2023-12-31 | 2023-03-31 | 2023-03-31 |
| Road Fund Budget Summary | | 2023-12-31 | 2025-12-29 | 2023-12-29 |
| Maintenance Management Work Plan & Budget | 136-11-040 | 2023-12-31 | 2023-12-29 | 2023-12-29 |
| Road Levy Certification | 136-150-021 | 2024-02-01 | 2024-02-27 | 2024-02-28 |
| Certification of Diversion and Road Fund Exp. For Traffic Law Enforcement | 136-150-022 | 2024-04-01 | 2024-04-02 | 2024-04-08 |
| Engineer's Certification of Fish Barrier Removal Costs | 136-150-023 | 2024-04-01 | 2024-04-02 | 2024-03-29 |
| Certification of Road Fund Exp. for Marine Navigation and Moorage | 136-150-025 | 2024-04-01 | | 2024-03-29 |
| Annual Construction Report | 136-16-050 | 2024-04-01 | 2024-04-02 | 2024-05-20 |
| CAPP Report | 136-300-090 | 2024-04-01 | 2025-04-02 | 2024-07-18 |
| Maintenance Management Certification | 136-11-050 | 2024-04-01 | 2024-04-02 | 2024-03-29 |
| Annual Certification | 136-04-030 | 2024-04-01 | 2024-04-02 | 2024-04-08 |
| Road Log Update | 136-60-030 | 2024-04-01 | | |
| PMS Certification for CAPA Eligibility | 136-07-070 | 2024-12-31 | 2025-12-26 | 2024-12-16 |
| ER & R Submittals: Adopted Rates | 136-600-070 | 2024-12-31 | 2023-12-04 | 03/04/2025 10:43 AM |
| ER & R Submittals: Adopting Resolution | 136-600-070 | 2024-12-31 | 2023-12-04 | 03/04/2025 10:49 AM |

Island County Resolution C-77-23
 Adopted 21 November 2023
 Appointed County Engineer to
 serve at the pleasure of the Board



Approved this _____ day of _____, 2025

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
 ISLAND COUNTY, WASHINGTON

 Melanie Bacon, Chair

 Janet St. Clair, Member

 Jill Johnson, Member

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