



Draft Land Use Goals & Policies

2025 Comprehensive Plan Update

Long Range Planning
June 11, 2025

Purpose

- Establishes the land use designations for Island County to accommodate growth for the next twenty years.
- Guides future land use and conservation decisions.
- Sets the direction for future growth of the community.

GMA Requirements

- Policies limiting nonagricultural uses to lands with poor soils or otherwise not suitable for agricultural purposes.
- Innovative techniques that accommodate appropriate rural densities and uses that are not characterized by urban growth and that are consistent with rural areas (e.g., clustering, density transfer, etc.).
- Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
- Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.

New GMA Requirements

- **Rural Element – including within Land Use Element**
- **Consideration of urban planning approaches to promote physical activity and reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled within the jurisdiction.**
- **Policies encouraging the conservation of productive forest and agricultural lands and discouraging incompatible uses.**
- **Relating to climate resilience, the land use element must "give special consideration to achieving environmental justice in its goals and policies, including efforts to avoid creating or worsening environmental health disparities"; and "reduce and mitigate the risk to lives and property posed by wildfires by using land use planning tools".**

What Changed?

- Improved organization of policies; consolidated similar goals and policies.
- Strengthened verbiage to be actionable & clear.
- Supported the Board's goals of equity, health, and climate in all policies .
- Maintained protections for resource (agricultural, mineral, and forestry) lands.
- Removed policies that have been enacted in County or State code.
- Removed policies that were internal department policies, policies that were phrased as code, and policies that were repetitive to the Countywide Planning Policies.

What Changed?

- Removed policies relating to Planned Residential Developments as ICC 16.17 is proposed to be replaced with a new cluster code.
- Strengthened and added policies regarding infrastructure and preserving affordable housing in Urban Growth Areas (UGAs).
- Strengthened infrastructure requirements for new development in Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development (LAMIRDs).
- Added policies to support the siting and development of affordable housing in rural areas.

What Changed?

- Added a policy to create a Subarea Plan for the Camano Gateway before the 2035 Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Cross-walked Land Use with policies in the new Climate Resilience Element
- Strengthened agricultural policies to review ICC for barriers to agritourism, conserve farmland, and continue use of buffers to protect from opposing uses.
- Combined resource lands goals into one goal.

How to Comment on Draft Goals & Policies

- **The public comment period is open until July 14, 2025.**
- **There are multiple ways to submit a comment:**
 - Email: CompPlan@IslandCountyWA.gov
 - Website: www.islandcounty2045.com/compplan
 - Mail: Planning and Community Development Department, 1 NE 7th St, Coupeville, WA 98239
 - In Person/Virtual at Planning Commission (6 PM June 11, 18, & 25, July 9)
 - In Person/Virtual at BOCC Regular Sessions (10 AM June 17 & 24, July 1 & 8)

Draft Goals & Policies are at: www.islandcounty2045.com/compplan



Questions?

Submit comments or questions to

complan@islandcountywa.gov or via our website www.islandcounty2045.com