
ISLAND COUNTY

2025 WSAC LEGISLATIVE AGENDA DEVELOPMENT

Josh Weiss and Annika Vaughn
GORDON THOMAS HONEYWELL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Two separate but related and overlapping processes:
 - WSAC legislative agenda development
 - Island County legislative agenda development
- This is not unusual
- Three kinds of issues:
 1. Issues of interest to the general public: abortion, gun control, education
 2. Issues of interest to most/all counties across the state, ie: county finance, GMA, housing, public health
 3. Issues that only Island County cares about, ie:
 1. Construction or transportation projects, funding for programs in Island County
 2. Policy issues that have a unique impact on Island County (saltwater intrusion on aquifers)
 3. Policy issues that impact most/all counties but that Island County is willing to invest the resources to spearhead

ISLAND COUNTY LEGISLATIVE AGENDA DEVELOPMENT

- Starting with our meeting on May 15
- Focused on third type of issue – those that only Island County cares about
 - Island County can “endorse” WSAC’s agenda, but shouldn’t repeat it
- Detailed process recommendations forthcoming, but be prepared for a much more aggressive timeline
 - Funding requests need to be ready by no later than September 30
 - Bill requests need to be ready by no later than December 2

WSAC LEGISLATIVE AGENDA DEVELOPMENT

- Three Criteria:
 1. Must be limited to county government operations, services, costs, revenues, or legislative or executive authority
 2. Must benefit multiple counties
 3. Must not directly harm any counties
- Six priorities or less
- Urban/rural balance
- Examples: 1% property tax cap, indigent defense/caseload standards, jail funding & standards, fish barrier funding, public records reform

WSAC TIMELINE

- April 19 – proposals submitted to WSAC staff
 - LSC members, WSAC affiliates, and WSAC policy staff
- May 16 & 17 - LSC planning retreat
 - LSC makes preliminary decisions
- September LSC meeting
 - LSC adopts agenda
- November County Leaders conference
 - LSC meeting
 - Agenda adopted by full membership

QUESTIONS?

Josh Weiss

State Lobbyist & Partner
jweiss@gth-gov.com

Annika Vaughn

State Lobbyist
avaughn@gth-gov.com



2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE



REVISIT SESSION

APRIL 3, 2024

Agenda

- Discuss water availability study funding.
- Share Planning Commission Feedback on Housing Element Goals and Policies.
- Review definitions that were requested to be brought back in previous work sessions.



Water Study Discussion

- Board requested funding for a water quality and quantity study; it was not included in 2025 legislative requests.
- Board to discuss other funding mechanisms or next steps.



Planning Commission Feedback on Housing Element Goals and Policies

Create a tracking system for all homes in Island County by intended use (e.g. long term residence, long-term rental, short-term rental, second home, etc.).

Increase the limit on Accessory Dwelling Units; restrict permit applications for short term rentals and vacation rentals; prioritize long-term rentals and permanent residences.

Siting of emergency shelters and short-term housing should be in locations within close proximity to services.

Consider expanding mixed-use land use designations in RAIDs and NMUGAs.

Consider service requirements for new housing types (e.g. fire trucks that can serve multi-story developments).

Concerned that RVs are not appropriate for housing due to safety and septic constraints.

Concerned that fully contained communities will constitute sprawl and should not be allowed in Island County.

Concerned that Planned Residential Developments will constitute sprawl.

Definitions:

- Best Available Science
- Productive Forests
- Agricultural Lands



Best Available Science

RCW 36.70A.172

1) In designating and protecting critical areas under this chapter, counties and cities shall include the best available science in developing policies and development regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas. In addition, counties and cities shall give special consideration to conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fisheries.

(2) If it determines that advice from scientific or other experts is necessary or will be of substantial assistance in reaching its decision, the growth management hearings board may retain scientific or other expert advice to assist in reviewing a petition under RCW 36.70A.290 that involves critical areas.



Productive Forests

Snohomish County Policy Example:

“Recognizing the ecosystem services of trees, including air quality, habitat value, and temperature and flood attenuation, the county shall require tree retention on county owned property and within newly proposed developments to the greatest extent feasible considering public safety, interference with utilities, barriers to housing, urban development density standards, reasonable use, and other factors as relevant.”



Ag Lands

Kittitas County Policy Example:

“Agricultural land” means land primarily devoted to the commercial production of horticultural, viticultural, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable, or animal products or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, Christmas trees subject to the excise tax imposed under *RCW 84.33.100 through 84.33.140, finfish in upland hatcheries, or livestock, and that has long-term commercial significance for agricultural production.

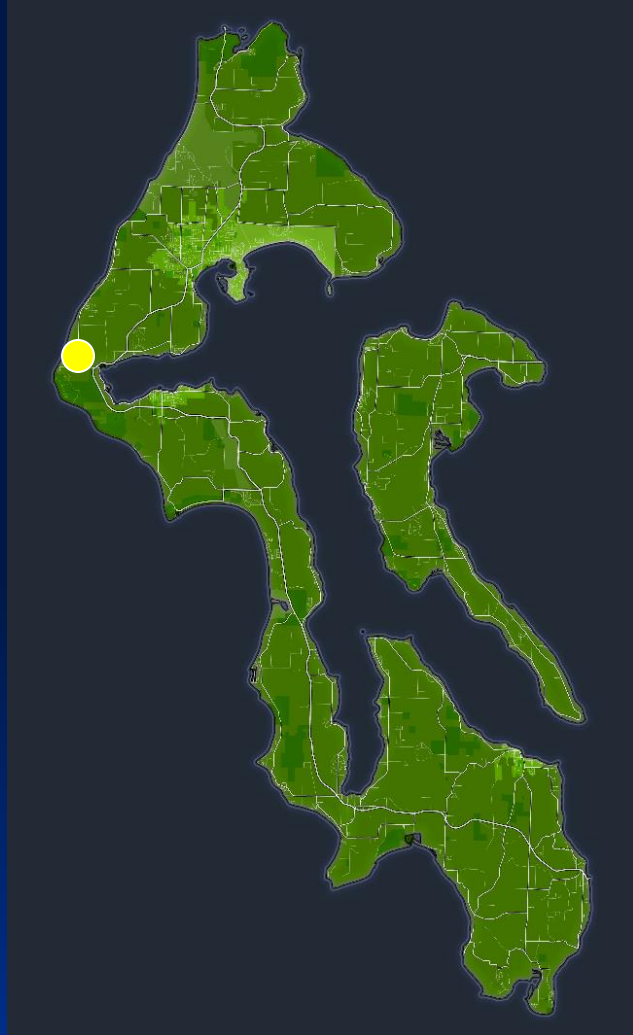
“Long-term commercial significance” includes the growing capacity, productivity, and soil composition of the land for long-term commercial production, in consideration with the land’s proximity to population areas, and the possibility of more intense uses of the land.”



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COMPPLAN@ISLANDCOUNTYWA.GOV





FRANCHISE EXPANSION

No. PW 2019-0110

SIERRA COUNTRY CLUB INC.
DIVISION # 1-3
(WATER SYSTEM)

WORK SESSION

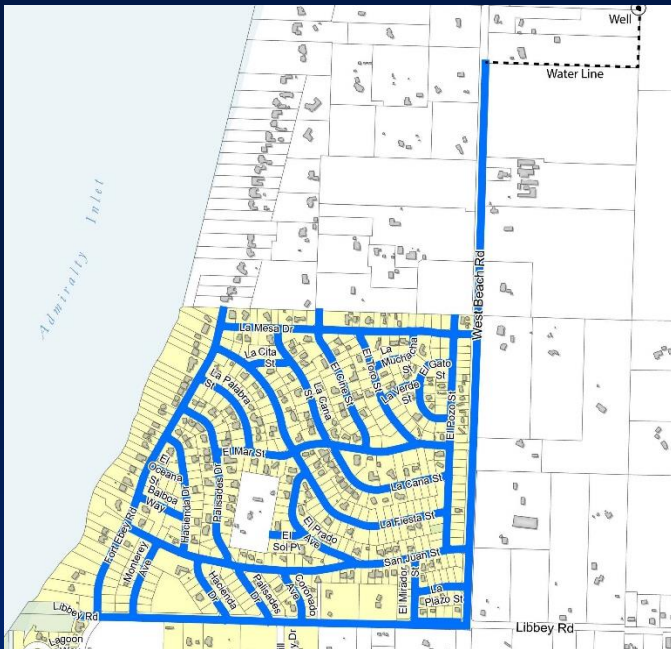
April 3, 2024



SIERRA COUNTRY CLUB INC., DIVISION # 1-3

FRANCHISE EXPANSION (WHIDBEY ISLAND)

Water Distribution System



- County roads proposed for franchise
- Plat of Sierra Country Club Div 1-3
- Private property easement to well

Background:

- Location: Plat of Sierra Division # 1-3, Oak Harbor
- Approximately 2,200 feet of County roads (West Beach Rd) to be added to new well site parcels R03224-281-4520 & R03224-177-4700
- Duration: 10 years -- with option to extend an additional 10 years
 - Previous franchise duration was 25 years

Requirements:

- No interference with County road travel
- Obtain Permits, when required
- 24 hour / 7 days emergency response
- Maintain necessary insurances
- Comply with Federal & State law



QUESTIONS